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A STUDY OF EXISTENTIALISM IN CERTAIN POEMS

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A STUDY OF EXISTENTIALISM IN CERTAIN POEMS BY
CHARLES BAUDELAIRE, R. M. RILKE, AND T. S. ELIOT

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PREFACE

This study deals with three poets from three different countries--Germany, France, and England--and therefore may be considered a dissertation in comparative literature. It examines the reflection of a complex philosophical concept in an aesthetic form--literature--and thereby involves the two distinct disciplines of philosophy and literature. The interdisciplinary emphasis of this dissertation represents a distinguishing aspect of the Intercollegiate Program.

The dissertation falls into two parts: 1) an examination of existential thought in some of its leading philosophers, and 2) an examination of three important poetical works by each of three important modern poets. The first part aims at producing a clear, coherent, and valid conception of the basic nature of existential thought and the themes which characterize it. The second part examines the poems to see to what extent the basic aspects of Existentialism may be perceived in them.

I wish to express my thanks to the following people: Dr. Edward Weismiller and Dr. Cecil Y. Lang of Pomona College and Claremont Graduate School for help in selecting this subject; Dr. William E. Umbach for help in German; Dr. Mary Welles Coulter for criticism of the chapter

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I also wish to express my appreciation to my dissertation committee, who read the rough draft and gave valuable criticism and needed direction: Dr. William W. Main (chairman), Assistant Professor of English, University of Redlands; Dr. Basil Busacca, Associate Professor of English and Comparative Literature, Occidental College; and Dr. Kenneth A. Oliver, Chairman, Educational Council, Intercollegiate Program of Graduate Studies, and Chairman, Department of English and Comparative Literature, Occidental College.

I gratefully acknowledge a grant from the Intercollegiate Program which freed me to bring the dissertation to early completion.

Finally, my deepest thanks go to Dr. Lawrence E. Nelson, Dean of Graduate Studies, University of Redlands, who moved quietly behind the scenes and yet without whom this dissertation would never have been written nor graduate study in the Program ever undertaken. For getting me started in the Program, for hours of counsel and encouragement freely

given, I can never adequately show my thanks. If this dissertation were to carry a dedication, that dedication would be to Dr. Lawrence E. Nelson.

R. E. P.
May, 1959

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EXISTENTIALISM:

THE PRESENT DEFINITIONAL CONFUSION

Existentialism has, since World War II, been the object of extravagant praise and shrill denunciation. It has been embraced with enthusiasm by frustrated adolescents as well as by serious theologians. One critic has deplored Existentialism as the last gasp of decadence, a form of social and ethical anarchy, and even suggested it as a factor in the rise of Hitler.¹ On the other hand, Existentialism has been hailed as a foundation for a more genuine and adequate ethics, as a revolutionary new beginning in philosophical thought after centuries of essentialistic approaches to man.² Herr Martin Heidegger even goes so far as to suggest that Being holds "the spiritual destiny of the West."³

Several leading theologians have been profoundly influenced by Existentialism--to the consternation of many of their more conservative colleagues. A recent paperback anthology makes the views of four of these "existentialist" theologians available to a wide reading audience.⁴

¹Norberto Bobbio, The Philosophy of Decadentism: A Study in Existentialism, trans. David Moore (Oxford, 1948).

²John Wild, "Existentialist Ethics: Integrity and Decision," ch. 5 in his The Challenge of Existentialism (Bloomington, Indiana, 1955), pp. 116-150.

³Einführung in die Metaphysik (Tübingen, 1953), p. 29.

⁴Will Herberg, ed., Four Existentialist Theologians: A Reader from the Works of Jacques Maritain, Nicolas Berdyaev, Martin Buber, and Paul Tillich (Garden City, N.Y., 1958).

The profound importance of the impact of Existentialism in theology is attested to by the collection of sympathetic essays edited by Carl Michalson.⁵ Of course, Existentialism is hardly without opposition in theological quarters, as the furious letters to the editor of Time magazine in reaction to an extended article on Tillich illustrate only too clearly.⁶ The article did not assert that Tillich was without opposition. On the contrary, it recognized distinguished opposition in noting that Karl Barth has referred to Tillich's "Unconditional" (a term for God) as "a frigid monstrosity" and that in the United States the distinguished theologian, Nels F. S. Ferré, has characterized Tillich as "the most dangerous theological leader alive."⁷ A more thoughtful and comprehensive theological attack is made by Arthur C.

⁵Christianity and the Existentialists (New York, 1956). Among the contributors to this collection of essays were Carl Michalson, Professor of Systematic Theology, Drew University; H. Richard Niebuhr, Sterling Professor of Theology and Christian Ethics, Yale Divinity School; John A. Mackay, President, Princeton Theological Seminary; Matthew Spinka, Waldo Professor of Church History, The Hartford Seminary Foundation; J. V. Langmead Casserley, Mary Crook Hoffman Professor of Dogmatic Theology, The General Theological Seminary; Erich Dinkler, Professor of New Testament Literature, Yale Divinity School; Paul Tillich, University Professor, Harvard University; and Stanley Romaine Hopper, Dean of the Graduate School, Drew University.

⁶"To Be or Not to Be," Time LXXIII, No. 11 (March 16, 1959) 46-52. See also the "Letters to the Editor" section in succeeding issues: March 30, April 6, April 13, and April 20, 1959.

⁷Same, 51.

Cochrane in his book, The Existentialists and God, which treats of the concepts of Being and the Being of God in the thought of Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Heidegger, Sartre, Tillich, Gilson, and Barth.⁸ And so the battle among theologians concerning Existentialism continues on levels both high and low.

Yet in all the controversy for and against Existentialism there seems to be little agreement as to an adequate definition of the term "Existentialism." This fact is equally as true outside as inside theological circles. Even among the sympathetic non-theological commentary on the thought of Existentialists there seems to be little agreement on this matter. Professor F. W. Heinemann characterizes the movement as primarily a reaction against technology, and after figuratively taking the pulse of the movement at the present time, pronounces it dead.⁹ On the other hand, William Barrett, in his valuable but scantily documented Irrational Man, asserts that the movement is still very much alive. Barrett views Existentialism as a twentieth century analogue of the romantic protest against the omnipotence of reason.¹⁰ John Wild's The Challenge of Existentialism relates existential thought

⁸(Philadelphia, 1956).

⁹Existentialism and the Modern Predicament, 1st Torchbook ed. (New York, 1958), p. 181.

¹⁰(Garden City, N.Y., 1958).

to realism and presents a systematic apology for the movement as a philosophical reaction against essentialism.

[Work cited] Professor Arland Ussher emphasizes the importance of anxiety in his characterization of the thought of Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Sartre as embodying a "shudder" before God, death, and the "Other," respectively.¹¹ Marjorie Grene's interpretation of the existential philosophers in her book, Dreadful Freedom, leans heavily toward Sartre's values on self-centeredness and freedom.¹² Yet as one examines one commentary after another,¹³ there emerges little unity as to any adequate idea of the basic nature of Existentialism.

Another factor adding to the confusion surrounding the term "Existentialism" has been the vogue of French Existentialism centering around Jean-Paul Sartre. The

¹¹Journey through Dread (London, 1955).

¹²(Chicago, 1948).

¹³Notable among book-length commentary in addition to those volumes already cited are the following: E. L. Allen, Existentialism from Within (New York, 1953); H. J. Blackham, Six Existentialist Thinkers (New York, 1952); Ralph Harper, Existentialism: A Theory of Man (Cambridge, Mass., 1948); Kurt Hoffman, "Existential Philosophy: A Study of its Past and Present Forms," (unpubl. diss., Harvard, 1949); Hinrich Knittermeyer, Die Philosophie der Existenz von der Renaissance bis zur Gegenwart (Wien, 1952); Helmut Kuhn, Encounter with Nothingness (Chicago, 1949); K. F. Reinhardt, The Existentialist Revolt, (Milwaukee, 1952); J. A. Wahl, A Short History of Existentialism [trans. from the French] (New York, 1949).

enormous popularity of Professor Sartre's novels and plays has not only brought their author fame and wealth; it has brought Existentialism to the attention of the world and made the term (but not its definition) familiar to a vast number of people. Shortly after World War II was over, New York and Paris were, in certain quarters, buzzing with the new fad; Vogue carried an article by Sartre and Mademoiselle (a magazine for seventeen-year-old young ladies) was devoting an article to "existential" literature.¹⁴ With the popularity of Existentialism as a fad came the widespread use (or misuse) of the term by individuals neither acquainted nor concerned with the content of the term prior to Sartre. Indeed, some did not even trouble themselves to understand Sartre in any serious, philosophical sense. By 1954, Sartre was protesting that Existentialism was a humanism, not a scandalous nihilism. He asserted that most of those ~~who used~~ the term could not define it, that it now meant nothing at all:

La plupart des gens qui utilisent ce mot seraient bien embarrassés pour le justifier, puisque aujourd'hui, que c'est devenu une mode, on déclare volontiers qu'un musicien ou qu'un peintre est existentialiste. Un échoirier des Clartés signe l'Existentialiste; et au fond le mot a pris aujourd'hui une telle largeur et une telle extension qu'il ne signifie plus rien du tout.¹⁵

¹⁴See Jean Wahl, Petite Histoire de "l'Existentialisme" (Paris, 1947), pp. 11-12.

¹⁵l'Existentialisme est un Humanisme (Paris, 1954), pp. 15-16.

Small wonder, then, that Maurice Natanson, in his study of Sartre's ontology, asserts that Existentialism can no longer be defined:

"Existentialism" today refers to faddism, decadentism, morbidity, the "philosophy of the graveyard"; to words like fear, dread, anxiety, anguish, suffering, aloneness, death; to novelists such as Jean-Paul Sartre, Dostoievski, Camus, Kafka; to philosophers like Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Marcel, Jaspers, and Sartre--and because it refers to, and is concerned with, all of these ideas and persons, existentialism has lost any clearer meaning it may have originally possessed. Because it has so many definitions, it can no longer be defined.¹⁶

Existentialism has come to mean so many things to so many different people that it no longer means anything at all.

This situation poses a grave problem to a study of the nature of this dissertation. Indeed, it tends to block any effort at a serious study of Existentialism in poetry, the novel, or anywhere else in literature. Unless the conception of Existentialism is clear and distinct, the study of Existentialism in poetry or elsewhere will be as confused as the definition.

Clarity and distinctness are necessities, then. But these alone are not enough. The basic validity of the study will also hinge on the validity of the definition which is used. It is of paramount importance, therefore,

¹⁶A Critique of Jean-Paul Sartre's Ontology, University of Nebraska Studies, No. 6 (Lincoln, 1951), p. 1.

that this dissertation document with care the definition it submits. To this end, the first half of the dissertation will attempt to establish a clear and at the same time valid conception of Existentialism.

How can this be done with the welter of novels, plays, paintings, and so forth, that are called "existential"? The approach of this dissertation will be to seek a definition of Existentialism from its major philosophers--and from them only. An attempt will be made to present a well-rounded characterization of the thought of each of the following: Kierkegaard, Marcel, Jaspers, Heidegger, and Sartre. In each case dominant and characteristic themes will be sought. A concluding section will attempt to weld these characterizations and themes into a valid and adequate conception of the nature of Existentialism.

The second half of the dissertation will turn to certain important modern poems and examine them in an effort to determine whether or to what extent they express aspects of Existentialism. Preliminarily, one may note that Paul Tillich has already asserted the presence of Existentialism in modern painting [see his ~~Existentialist Aspects of Modern Art~~ "Existential Aspects of Modern Art," in Michalson, pp. 128-147] and other areas as indicated in a statement with profoundest implications for this study:

It [Existentialism] is a cultural movement which is manifest in dance as well as in sculpture, in painting as well as in music, poetry, and drama....Its conceptualization is the Existentialist philosophy ... its

ground is a unique encounter of man with reality in all functions of man's spiritual life.¹⁷

This dissertation will attempt to give a definite content to what Tillich calls the "conceptualization" of Existentialism. Then it will examine some important modern poems. If what is conceptualized in existential philosophy is fundamentally similar to what is poetically expressed in the works examined, then this dissertation will have furnished concrete evidence in support of Tillich's contention quoted above that Existentialism may be found in some modern poetry.

¹⁷"The Nature and the Significance of Existentialist Thought," Journal of Philosophy, LII (November 8, 1956), 740.

KIERKEGAARD

Kierkegaard's Anti-Academicism. One may well hesitate before any effort to "systematize" or treat systematically the thought of Kierkegaard. This is one of the fates that he feared most--that his thought should revert to the professors. He feared that his thought would be considered of merely academic relevance. He did not want professors summarizing him in a paragraph or outlining his thought for students to transfer into their notebooks. Kierkegaard desired no disciples (he even schemed at how to avoid making disciples); he only wanted to move men's hearts to a consciousness of their own subjectivities and to a desire to serve subjective truth.

Truth as Subjectivity. A primary reason for this anti-academicism mentioned above was that he considered that intellectualization destroyed truth. Important truth is not objective, but subjective. In his Concluding Unscientific Postscript, he asserts that truth is inwardness:

[Here is] a definition of truth: An objective uncertainty held fast in an appropriation-process of the most passionate inwardness is the truth, the highest truth attainable for an existing individual.¹

The terms "appropriation-process" and "existing" individual

¹Kierkegaard's Concluding Unscientific Postscript, trans. David F. Swenson and Walter Lowrie (Princeton, 1941), p. 182. Hereinafter abbreviated to "CUP."

are used in a special Kierkegaardian sense. Because of the nature of truth, as stated above, it is not acquired through an intellectual grasp, or logically, but is appropriated by the willed suspension of disbelief which inevitably accompanies something which is not objectively provable. An existing individual, by the nature of his being, is in a relationship to all other being, and the proper apprehension of this relationship is not achieved through abstraction and objectivity about life, but by recognizing that existence is experienced subjectively and that the truth about it must be derived from the nature of this subjective experience--the nature of which is destroyed by objectivity.

Why is truth destroyed by objectivity? Because objectivity involves abstracting from experience. In this process, the experience loses its uniqueness and takes on universality; it loses its flux and becomes static, for logic cannot accommodate motion or change; also, in a number of ways upon which this dissertation will elaborate shortly, logic loses the experiential validity so necessary to truth.

Objectivism and Aestheticism. Indeed, effort toward objectivism in thought is actually a movement toward depersonalizing and universalizing reality. It corresponds to "aestheticism" in art. Professor Ulrich Sonnemann, in

his Existence and Therapy, asserts that Kierkegaard was one of the first thinkers in the nineteenth century to point out the aesthetic character of all-out objectivism.² Kierkegaard, one might add, also treated of the weaknesses of aestheticism in a way that is hardly rivalled in the nineteenth century.³ At one point in Either/Or, the analysis sounds strikingly as if Kierkegaard had the aestheticism of Baudelairean melancholy in mind:

I can imagine nothing more excruciating than an intriguing mind, which has lost the thread of its continuity and now turns its whole acumen against itself, when conscience awakens and compels the schemer to extricate himself from this confusion. It is in vain that he has many exits from his foxhole; at the moment his anxious soul believes that it already sees daylight breaking through, it turns out to be a new entrance, and like a startled deer, pursued by despair, he constantly seeks a way out, and finds only a way in, through which he goes back into himself. Such a man is not always what we might call a criminal, he is even frequently disappointed by his intrigues, and yet a more terrible punishment overtakes him than befalls a criminal. [EO, I, 255]

Conscience and the norms of what Kierkegaard would call the ethical and religious stages of existence do not have a normative power over such a man, but are apprehended objectively--are distanced from him and aestheticized. Certainly, conscience irritates him, but as to yielding to

²(New York, 1954), p. 99.

³See especially Either/Or, trans. Walter Lowrie, D. F. Swenson, and L. M. Swenson (Princeton, 1944), 2 vols. Also see Stages on Life's Way, trans. W. Lowrie (Princeton, 1940). The former work will hereinafter be abbreviated "EO" and the latter work "SLW."

its power, this does not take place, for this would mark a transition from the aesthetic sphere of existence to the ethical. When conscience is objective, impersonal, abstract, then it no longer has normative power.

Conscience exists for him [the individual described above] only as a higher degree of consciousness, which expresses itself in a disquietude that does not, in a more profound sense, accuse him, but which keeps him awake, and gives him no rest in his barren activity.
[EO, I,255]

The nature of the aesthetic sphere of existence will be dealt with subsequently. The connection to be noted here is ~~with~~ its correlation with objectivism, and the manifold weaknesses of objectivism as compared with the unrecognized importance of subjective, existential reality. Let us turn now, however, to a consideration of Kierkegaard's criticisms of the weaknesses of the intellectualization of reality as a consequence of the use of logic.

The Weaknesses of Logic. Professor David F. Swenson has given a valuable summary of Kierkegaard's four major criticisms of the adequacy of logic:

1) Logic cannot, from its own resources, provide for transitions from one quality to another; in the world of fact, such transitions take place by a leap.

2) Logic cannot acknowledge, within its own sphere, the contingent, but the contingent is an essential constituent of the actual.

3) Logic deals only with universals; the particular, however, is absolutely inseparable from the actual.

4) Logic deals only with essences, whose being consists in their conceivability; factual existence is not an essence, and it involves a kind of being which cannot

be logic

be logically conceived.⁴

In order to establish clearly the basic validity of Kierkegaard's argument, we must give each of these weaknesses the clarification it deserves.

Elaborating upon the first of the weaknesses, one may note Kierkegaard's assertion that there is a distinction between logical and actual transition. He asserts that the changes from one concept to another which are involved in the revision of judgments or in the course of history are not the consequence of the working of logic, but rather involve a leap in which something which does not belong in the logical system and which cannot be fitted into it suddenly appears for perhaps no apparent reason. A system is self-contained and self-perpetuating:

In a logical system of concepts, every movement is immanent, since the relations by which the system is constituted are, by the existence of the system, rendered internal relations; the whole is therefore presupposed in every part, and that which emerges from the logical development of such a system is exactly the same as that which was there at the beginning. Movement, transition, mediation, are all transcendent concepts, and have no legitimate place in logic.⁵

Logic, then, is antithetical to existence, for the realm of existence is the realm of the actual; its salient characteristic is change and striving. Kierkegaard asserts that "actual" transition always involves a breach of continuity--

⁴Something about Kierkegaard, rev. ed. (Minneapolis, 1945), p. 146.

⁵Same, pp. 147-8.

exactly what a logical system cannot tolerate and still remain logical. Every breach of continuity, that is, every leap, is logically incomprehensible and requires another system in which it is part of the "given" before the system is constructed, and that system, by accommodating it, tends to remove the leap which is the very quality of its actuality. In accommodating actual transition to a system the very qualities which comprise the nature of transition are lost, for a logical system is essentially static and antithetical to motion and change--indeed, there can be no true change in a system, for every movement is in consequence of a logical ground and takes place by virtue of a pre-existing cause.

The first weakness suggests the second, that is, the inability of logic to assimilate or acknowledge the contingent aspect of the actual, within its own realm of truth. As was said above, in a logical system all relations are necessary, the result of causes within the system; but in the realm of actual existence, all change is contingent and thus transcends the realm of logic.

The third weakness is that logic must be abstract, must deal with general rules. Logic deals with universals, but real existence deals with particulars. Precisely what makes an immediate actuality particular and unique is what is lost in accommodating that actuality to a system.

This fact points to the impotence of logic to deal with particulars. In this sense, logic is unreal, and cannot deal with immediate reality; it has its own reality and its own truth, but this is the truth of consistency and coherence, not a truth of correspondence to actuality. Kierkegaard, then, did not say that logic had no place, nor did he attack natural science as a futile and meaningless pursuit. What he did protest against most passionately, however, was the assumption that logical systems and natural science could account for, or even meaningfully deal with, the ultimate nature of human being-in-the-world. World history, logic, science--these could not deal meaningfully with the real problems of spiritual moment to existing human beings.

The fourth weakness of logic is that it deals only with essences or qualities. Its object is demonstration. Factual existence is not a quality, however, nor an essence; it is the "given" from which the quality or essence is taken. The given accounts for the essence, and it is the most ironic reversal to expect the quality or essence to account for the given. Indeed, it is absolutely impossible to reach existence by means of a demonstration. A demonstration, for instance, of the existence of God would be, according to Kierkegaard, not only impossible but insulting--as if one were to attempt to demonstrate in the presence of someone that he exists. This is ridiculous because existence is

higher than demonstration. The proper acknowledgment of the existence of God is worship, for the attempt to demonstrate His existence is consciously or unconsciously to ignore His presence. One reasons from existence; no reasoning is toward existence.

Communication difficulties: Indirection. Language, like logic, is an abstraction from existence. All communication, therefore, is necessarily abstract; but life is experienced directly and immediately. Life, then, by its very nature resists language; life is essentially a secret. Words cannot reproduce an experience except in the aspects of it which are universal. But the uniqueness, the full frequency range of its immediacy, is inevitably lost in communication. Thus Kierkegaard asserts the radical incommunicability of experience. Perhaps the closest one can come is through art, and, in language, through parable. But any effort to systematize life is to impose a logical order on a phenomenon which is antithetical to logic. Any effort to systematize life is only to further abstract and remove the very traits which make it real.

Kierkegaard as Hegelian and Anti-Hegelian. The discussion above of Kierkegaard's opposition to logic and to systems suggests a treatment of Kierkegaard's famous opposition to Hegelian absolute idealism. This opposition to Hegel is generally interpreted as the genesis of the

existential revolt. John Wild sees Kierkegaard's thought, and Existentialism as a whole, as a revolt against four major weaknesses of idealism:

[The weaknesses are] inattention to the immediate data of concrete experience; neglect of existence and first philosophy; a physicalist approach to the problem of human awareness, leading to subjectivism; and a radical separation of theory from practice, leading to the de-rationalization of ethics. [Wild, p. 25-6]

Professor Wild goes on to define Existentialism in terms of Kierkegaard's revolt against Hegel:

[Kierkegaard] laid the foundations of that ... way of thought which now goes by the name of existentialism. This philosophy is best understood as a rebellion against the abstract objectivism or essentialism of modern thought, with an intensive emphasis on the concrete subjective existence which it has consistently ignored. Kierkegaard attacked the four major phases of this essentialism as they are expressed in the idealism of Hegel. Thus in one of its most influential manifestations, he criticized the non-descriptive, speculative method of modern philosophy, its essentialist metaphysics, its neglect of practical awareness, and its repudiation of personal ethics. [Wild, p. 28]

Here in short compass is a definition of the existential protest against some of the major weaknesses of modern thought.

What were Kierkegaard's reasons for these objections, and what was the nature of his alternative? Kierkegaard did not concern himself with Hegelian philosophy for its own sake, but rather opposed it because he held that this type of thought was watering down innerness, individuality, personal ethics, and Christian belief. Kierkegaard's avowed aim in all his writing was, as he put it in The Point of

View and elsewhere in his writings, "becoming a Christian."⁶ He felt that Christianity was not practiced by Christendom and any belief that it was commonly practiced was "a prodigious illusion." [PV, p. 22-7] Kierkegaard looked upon Hegel's endeavor to integrate Christianity into his system as a monstrous distortion of Christianity. Hegel did not see that Christianity was personal; idealism was not. Christianity was not a consistent logical system, but riddled with paradox and ambiguities; moreover it was not a system but a way of being in the world. Indeed, the act of finite existing cannot, by its nature, be subsumed within an abstract system of finite thought, no matter how broad and inclusive its principles and method.

Christianity deals with becoming, with how to become a Christian; but because a system cannot accommodate becoming and change, Hegelian idealism (despite his creditable efforts to incorporate motion and becoming into his idea of synthesis) tends to deal with being rather than becoming, with what rather than how Christianity is. For Kierkegaard, the two genuinely real modes of being are that of God and that of an existing individual; Hegel fails to deal adequately with either of these modes of being.⁷

⁶Point of View, Etc., trans. Walter Lowrie (London, 1939).

⁷See esp. James Collins, The Mind of Kierkegaard, Ch. 4: "The Attack upon Hegelianism," (Chicago, 1953), pp. 98-136.

Kierkegaard believed that the historical may be a system--for God, but not for any man. Furthermore, the effort to see man from the vantage point of world history tends to undermine ethics, for then the criteria invoked are not the purpose and rectitude of the individual will, but the interplay of large forces, of the cosmic wave of past becoming future. Man, in this view, is a helpless creature caught in the web of destiny. Morality vanishes because the abstract categories of world history do not lend themselves to valid application to individual cases. Soon a crime committed for the State (or for the "Party") is "objectively moral" even if subjectively revolting, and morality has become impersonal, abstract, intellectualized, objective. History and the Destiny of the State seem to become more real than human beings. Thus, one may say that Kierkegaard's objection to historicism in Hegel is in terms of what historicism does to personal ethics.

Hegelian historicism was pernicious, Kierkegaard believed, for another reason which bears on ethics: it tends to establish a fallacious conception of God and of man's relationship to Him. Historicism tends to externalize God, to turn him into a spectator who does not see the guilt of the individual as it makes itself evident in his intentions, but sees the external action swallowed up in the totality. As Kierkegaard puts it,

He [God] sees, therefore, what is wholly confusing and nonsensical, that the well-meant, quite as often as the ill-meant, deed brings the same consequence in its train; the best of kings and a tyrant bring about the same misfortune.... He sees what is ethically scandalous, namely, that he is compelled world-historically to ignore the true distinction between good and evil, as this exists only in the individual, and in the last analysis only in each individual in his God-relationship. [CUP, p. 139]

World-historical orientations see things as if they were dead and past, and therefore destroy "the possibility relationship which every individual has to God." [Same] Only in the relationship of direct sovereignty over man is God a living, acting, ethical force in the life of an individual. With characteristic humor Kierkegaard concludes,

In the world-historical process, God is metaphysically imprisoned in a conventional strait-jacket, half metaphysical and half aesthetic-dramatic, that is, the immanental system. It must be the very devil to be God in that manner. [CUP, p. 140]

Human existence, then, must remain unfettered by a system, must remain contingent, in order to offer the fullest opportunity for the growth of human freedom and responsibility and for the working of divine Providence. Hegel's system is a travesty on the traits of true human existence as well as on the nature of the Eternal. Only through the restoration of the proper "possibility-relationship" of God and man can there be brought about a genuine deepening of human existence.

Ironically, however, Kierkegaard was more Hegelian than he knew. As Professor Paul Ramsey has pointed out, both Hegel and Kierkegaard believed in God; both criticized

the use of proofs of the existence of God; and "both Hegel and Kierkegaard are more interested in how the finite world or self stands in relation to God, than in what God is."⁸

Ramsey makes Hegel more "existential" than he knew, too, calling him an "existential idealist." [Ramsey, p. 170]

Ramsey asserts that Hegel's "mediation with self" is an existential principle, involving subjectivity and concerned truth. Indeed, Ramsey almost succeeds in transforming Kierkegaard's arch-enemy, Hegel, into an Existentialist:

Hegel's logical process of "mediation" can ... be regarded as transforming "speculative philosophy" in the abstract into something in which individual human beings are existentially involved. [Ramsey, p. 163]

Kierkegaard's use of the dialectic, however, is the factor which more than anything else marks him with an undeniable sort of Hegelianism. Professor Arland Ussher, in his Journey through Dread, even goes so far as to say that

[Kierkegaard] remained entirely Hegelian in his way of thought. With him, as he once said, all is dialectical; guilt, despair, remorse, anguish--everything in his burdened and stricken life goes like a ballet. [Ussher, pp. 42-3. (Cited in Ch. I)]

Thus, in this predilection for the dialectic, Kierkegaard links himself to Hegel even when in opposition. Indeed, the impact of Hegel on Kierkegaard must have been profound. As Ussher has put it,

⁸Paul Ramsey, "Existenz and the Existence of God: A Study of Kierkegaard and Hegel," The Journal of Religion, XXVIII (July, 1948), 163.

Kierkegaard said that if Hegel had proposed the Logic as a hypothesis merely, he would be remembered as the greatest of human minds; and though this was of course a boutade, it makes us realise a little of Hegel's impact upon another, and not sympathetic, great mind. [Ussher, p. 40]

For all his opposition, the influence of Hegel is still felt in the thought of Kierkegaard. Since the dialectic figures so largely in Kierkegaard's thought, his use of an existential dialectic will be considered next.

Kierkegaard's Existential Dialectic. Kierkegaard's dialectic may^{be} described as a 1) personal, practical, particular, and paradoxical dialectic; 2) an "either-or" dialectic; 3) a finite-infinite dialectic; 4) a leap-dialectic; and 5) a dialectic of freedom and becoming.

1) A personal, practical, particular, and paradoxical dialectic. Kierkegaard's dialectic, in this respect, may be said to be the antithesis of the Hegelian dialectic, which tends to be impersonal, theoretical, general or universal, and does not admit of any absolute paradoxes or irresolvable antitheses. Kierkegaard's existential dialectic is personal because it deals with matters which are of deep personal concern to individual people. It is practical because it answers questions that might really be asked and because it is usable in particular situations. It deals and can deal only with existence, that is, with an individual situation. It is often paradoxical and absurd; it deals with opposites which cannot be mediated, with the "either-or"'s of existence.

2) An "either-or" dialectic. The Hegelian dialectic is relevant to an observer contemplating the world-process; the existential dialectic is relevant to an individual who confronts the future as an active participant in life. A merely contemplative consciousness sees nowhere any absolute opposition, but rather attempts to synthesize opposites. This synthesis presumes to preserve the essence of both, while at the same time annihilating their separateness. This is the "both-and" approach, as Kierkegaard calls it. Kierkegaard's existential dialectic operates with qualitative distinctions (which are, as previously noted, impossible in a logical system) and discovers absolute disjunctions which cannot be mediated. When the individual takes himself out of existence and contemplates himself as he is, statically, he perceives that he is, admittedly, both good and bad. But when he plunges into actual existence and confronts the future ethically, he cannot become (and man is always becoming) both good and bad at the same time; he must move either in one direction or another. This makes life not a matter of "both-and" but of "either-or." With characteristic incisiveness, Kierkegaard asserts: "Either-or is the key to heaven; "both-and" is the road to hell." [See Swenson, p. 120]

Characteristically, then, the "either-or" dialectic is related to ethics, and forms some of the basis for later Existentialists' opposition to the externality of ethical

relativism. Ethics must never become impersonal, Kierkegaard believed. The ethical relativist occupies either the irrelevant standpoint of a disinterested observer, in which case he cannot truly see and understand the issue, or else he is bankrupt of subjective ethical enthusiasm. Without the passion of subjectivity there are nowhere any decisive distinctions in life. But when the individual has once chosen to exist in ethical categories, the distinction between good and evil comes into being for him in all its absoluteness, being essentially the distinction between realizing and failing his own deeper self.

3) A finite-infinite dialectic. For human beings, the dialectic of existing involves the interaction of finite and infinite, temporal and eternal, being and becoming. Man must operate in and with time; yet time alone does not determine and describe man's existence, but rather to the dimension of time must be added the infinite dimension of eternity. For Kierkegaard, each moment in finite time can be decisive, "filled with the eternal."⁹ This kind of moment, Kierkegaard asserts, ought to have a distinctive name; he suggests "the Fullness of Time." [PF, p. 13] When the eternal is perceived, the temporal becomes a mere point of departure:

The temporal point of departure is nothing; for as soon as I discover that I have known the Truth from eter-

⁹Philosophical Fragments, David F. Swenson, trans. (Princeton, 1936), p. 13.

nity without being aware of it, the same instant this moment of occasion is hidden in the eternal.... Now if things are to be otherwise, the moment in time must have a decisive significance, so that I will never be able to forget it either in time or eternity; because the eternal, which hitherto did not exist, came into being in this moment. [PF, p. 8]

Suddenly the finitude of time is filled with the infinity of the eternal.

4) A "leap" dialectic. In terms of being and non-being, the all-important moment described above deals with or involves the radical change in a human life from non-being to being. This transition from non-being to its opposite is not a matter of synthesis, but of a radical disjunction, a leap. It is a change like that of being born:

In so far as the learner was in Error, and now receives the Truth and with it the condition for understanding it, a change takes place within him like the change from non-being to being. But this transition from non-being to being is the transition we call birth. ... [The Moment, then, has decisive significance, for] the breach is made, and man cannot return. He will take no pleasure in remembering what Recollection brings to his mind....[PF, pp. 13-14]

This decisive temporal moment has come to be commonly referred to as the "leap of faith," and involves a complex of the factors with which we have been dealing in connection with the existential dialectic: the transition from non-being to being (in moral terms, from sin to purity of heart), the action of the eternal in time through a decisive moment, the consciousness of eternity (that is, of being "before God"), and consequently the consciousness of being "in sin." A

passage from the "moral" which concludes the Philosophical Fragments gives Kierkegaard's own statement of the relationship of these factors:

The projected hypothesis [of this work] indisputably makes an advance upon Socrates, which is apparent at every point. Whether it is therefore more true than the Socratic doctrine is an entirely different question, which cannot be decided in the same breath, since we have here assumed a new organ: Faith; a new presupposition: the consciousness of Sin; a new decision: the Moment; and a new Teacher: God in Time. [PF, p. 93]

The organ is faith; the presupposition, consciousness of Sin; the instrument, the moment of decision; the all-important factor, God acting in time.

5) A dialectic of freedom and becoming. In addition to the aspects of the existential dialectic which have been treated above, two other factors are important: creative freedom and the nature of becoming. Freedom and becoming are interdependent factors and a proper understanding of the existential interpretation of them is vital to any adequate conception of Existentialism.

What is the nature of becoming? If something comes into being (becomes), it either was there before or was not. But if it was there before, nothing has become, since it was already there. If, on the other hand, nothing was there, then there was nothing to actually do the becoming. Kierkegaard faces this problem by positing a being which is at the same time a non-being. In a passage which illustrates his typically tortuous prose, he states:

But this non-being which the subject of becoming leaves behind must have some sort of being; for otherwise we could not say, as we said above, that the "subject of becoming remains unchanged in the process of becoming"; unless we propose to say that it has no being of any kind, whereby the change we call becoming would again for another reason be absolutely different from every other kind of change, in that it would not be a change at all; for every change presupposes a something. But a being of this kind, which is nevertheless a non-being, is what we know as possibility; and a being which is being is actual being, or actuality; so that the change involved in becoming is the transition from possibility to actuality. [PF, p. 60]

In this passage one can see the genesis of conception of man as Being and nothingness which is so prominent in the thought of Sartre and Heidegger. The dialectical relationship and importance of potentiality and actuality in existential thought can hardly be overestimated.

The being-non-being and actuality-potentiality problems relate themselves to the problem of freedom and necessity. A system is a set of necessary relationships; it cannot accommodate becoming (or freedom). Kierkegaard asserts that the necessary cannot come into existence, cannot become: "Becoming is a change; but the necessary cannot undergo any change, since it is always related to itself ... in the same manner." [PF, p. 60] Indeed, necessity is a form of actuality which is antithetical to possibility, to potentiality in the existential sense:

Everything that comes into being proves precisely by coming into being that it is not necessary; for the necessary is the only thing that cannot come into being, because the necessary is. [PF, p. 61]

Nothing necessary can come into being because it is already in existence; therefore what comes into being does so not by necessity ~~but~~ in freedom:

The change involved in becoming is an actual change; the transition takes place with freedom. Becoming is never necessary. It was not necessary before it came into being, for then it could not come into being; nor after it came into being, for then it has not come into being. 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. [PF, p. 61]

Freedom, then, is intimately related to becoming, and becoming is absolutely outside the realm of the necessary.

Existential freedom, then, is qualitatively different from freedom as it is ordinarily conceived. Freedom, as often conceived, is usually a determinant that enters a situation in which the factors are already given. All that remains is the exercise of freedom with regard to them. Thus, it is not the presence of freedom that gives being to the possibilities in the situation; the possibilities that can be chosen pre-exist, and all freedom does is to allow a choice of one or another of these possibilities. Not so with Kierkegaard. For him freedom is truly creative. Freedom as part of becoming tends to create ontologically what it chooses. For Kierkegaard freedom is a matter of inward transformation, of the appropriation of truth and being.¹⁰

¹⁰Concerning Kierkegaard's freedom, becoming, and ontology see the excellent study by Michael Wyschogrod, Kierkegaard and Heidegger: The Ontology of Existence (London, 1964), esp. p. 38.

Existential freedom, then, is not a mere freedom of choice, but a much more complete freedom, a creative freedom. It is not a matter of objective choice among pre-existing possibilities, but a matter of subjective change.

The Concept of Existenz. Because Existenzphilosophie began with Kierkegaard, it is vital that one know how Kierkegaard defined Existenz. Existenz is used in a special sense among Existentialist philosophers and is not synonymous with the English word "existence." Existence may refer to the existence of God, the existence of things, the existence of human beings, the existence of animals. It carries with it the idea of the being-in-actuality of those things which are said to possess it. But Existenz is completely different. Existenz refers to the consciousness of an individual man of his own being. It can never be other than a subjective apprehension, and it cannot accurately be applied to God, things, or animals--only man. Existenz implies man's sense of his finitude and at the same time of his potentialities to partially transcend this finitude.

Man can never lose his Existenz, but he may suppress it. This forms the existential dichotomy between authenticity and inauthenticity. In the former the subject is striving to realize his Existenz; in the latter he is denying it. In the former the subject is realizing being; in the latter he is resisting transformation to higher levels of being.

Authenticity involves becoming, and therefore also transcendence, for what animates true becoming is the consciousness of the potential self and action of the infinite. As Kierkegaard puts it, "The more awareness of God, the more self; the more self, the more awareness of God."¹¹ The awareness of God is the realization of the self. Conversely, inauthenticity is the refusal to be transparent "before God."¹² Inauthenticity is a willing to be only a finite self; it is a denial of infinity and refusal to recognize that one is grounded in infinity--that is, in God--and that God is sovereign. [FTSD, p. 208]

Existenz is, in all the Existentialists which the first half of this dissertation treats of, intimately related to the instinctive understanding which the self has of its own being, its own potential being. Authenticity is generally associated with it, and is generally understood to represent the process of the realization of Existenz.

Man as a Fallen Creature. Kierkegaard calls man's attention to the fact that he is a finite, a limited, being. Man's knowledge is imperfect and there are some things that can never be known. There are some decisions that only faith

¹¹Kurt Hoffman, "Existential Philosophy: A Study of its Past and Present Forms," unpubl. diss. (Harvard, 1949), p. 67.

¹²See "Fear and Trembling" and "Sickness unto Death," trans. Walter Lowrie (Garden City, N.Y., 1953), p. 213. Hereinafter abbreviated "FTSD."

can prompt. Indeed, Kierkegaard goes so far as to say that what seems to the intellect "absurd" may be highest wisdom, the wisdom of subjectivity and faith.

Kierkegaard, then, may be said to be a believer in original sin. Indeed, Leon Chestov's book, Kierkegaard et la Philosophie Existentielle (Vox clamantis in deserto),¹³ limits itself to the question of original sin:

Je me limiterai à l'examen d'une seule question: comment Kierkegaard et Dostoïevsky concevaient-ils le péché originel? Autrement dit--car c'est la même chose--je parlerai de la vérité spéculative et de la vérité révélée.¹³

The question of original sin, then, involves whether knowledge is, in itself, evil and whether the way to salvation is through knowledge or faith. Chestov asserts, regarding the fall of Adam, that "Hegel affirme sans la moindre hésitation: le serpent n'a pas trompé l'homme, les fruits de l'arbre de la science sont devenus la source de la philosophie pour tous les temps." [Chestov, p. 13] Further, he states that through the history of the Church, the forbidden fruit has consistently been reinstated:

Les philosophes, non seulement les païens, complètement étrangers à l'écriture, mais les juifs et les chrétiens qui considéraient la Bible comme un livre inspiré, tous les philosophes étaient scientistes et ne voulaient pas renoncer aux fruits de l'arbre interdit. [Chestov, pp. 13-14]

¹³ traduit du Russe par Rageot et B. de Schloezer (Paris, n.d.), p. 13.

Kierkegaard, in an age when the idea of original sin was unpopular and in an age which regarded reason as man's greatest blessing, asserted the fallenness and fallibility of man, and believed that subjective faith rather than objective knowledge was the only way to authentic existence, or in religious terms, to salvation. In Kierkegaard's opinion, man was not naturally good and getting better and better, but rather was hopelessly in sin and in despair.

Anguish. When man realizes that he is a fallen creature, that he can hope for no perfect knowledge, that he is hopelessly in sin, his reaction is Angst (dread or anguish) and despair. The thread of a tortured sensibility runs through most of Kierkegaard's works. Anguish, dread, fear, trembling, guilt, despair--these are the characteristic attitudes found time after time. Indeed, the personal consciousness of sin and the obsession with the need for faith seem to dominate much of his thought. This is the reason for the mastery of his two works which treat of the psychological aspects of sin: The Concept of Dread and The Sickness unto Death. A basic kinship with Dostoevsky can be felt as these works examine the dynamics of tortured souls and repeatedly stress the importance of suffering.

Anguish seems to be a characteristic of all existential thought. The concept of Angst in Heidegger is not given the religious name of sin as a generating factor, but

is said to be the reaction of the self to non-being. The change of terminology, however, does not involve a basic change in concept, since sin is related to spiritual non-being, to the failure to realize being. Basically, even Kierkegaard's dread of being "in sin" was essentially dread at spiritual non-being. For Kierkegaard, however, having to be always "before God" made him even more vividly aware of his finitude and imperfection, his being "in sin."

Individualism and anti-collectivism. Kierkegaard's concept of subjectivity and his consciousness of being alone "before God" could not but tend to give him an individualistic point of view. It is well known that Kierkegaard wanted his grave marked merely "That Individual," and that he repeatedly identified the feeling of being merely part of a larger group with inauthenticity. This, he believed, was only an effort to escape being an individual existing human being:

The more the collective idea comes to dominate even the ordinary consciousness, the more forbidding seems the transition to becoming a particular existing human being instead of losing oneself in the race, and saying "we," "our age," "the nineteenth century." ... Each age has its own characteristic depravity. Ours is perhaps not pleasure or indulgence or sensuality, but rather a dissolute pantheistic contempt for the individual man. [CUP, p. 317]

Kierkegaard goes on with an indictment of his age, an indictment equally as applicable to the twentieth century:

In the midst of all our exultation over the achievements of the age and the nineteenth century, there sounds a note of poorly conceived contempt for the individual

man; in the midst of the self-importance of the contemporary generation there is revealed a sense of despair over being human. Everything must attach itself so as to be a part of some movement; men are determined to lose themselves in the totality of things, in world-history, fascinated and deceived by magic witchery; no one wants to be an individual man. [CUP, p. 317]

Precisely the fact that becoming an individual brings on an isolation and opprobrium is a condemnation of the age. To be an individual is to be doomed and isolated:

As particular human beings they fear that they will be doomed to a more isolated and forgotten existence than that of a man in the country; for if a man lets go of Hegel he will not even be in a position to have a letter addressed to him. [That is, apart from history, the individual has no identity.] ... Just as desert travellers combine into great caravans from fear of robbers and wild beasts, so the individuals of the contemporary generation are fearful of existence, because it is God-forsaken; only in great masses do they dare to live, and they cluster together en masse in order to feel that they amount to something. [CUP, pp. 317-8]

The "mass man," as he may be called, becomes in the twentieth century even more fearful and conformist, and continues to be a favorite target of Existentialist analysis and invective.

The Three Spheres of Existence. Kierkegaard propounded three spheres or stages of human existence: the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious. One might define these spheres as "value-orientations," for each sphere involves a prevailing value-system which is either aesthetically, ethically, or religiously determined. These spheres do not appear in a work or two only, but run through the whole corpus of his work, providing a conceptual framework for his thought.

Either/Or is a study in contrasting aesthetic and ethical valuations; Stages on Life's Way resumes this study and adds a specific religious system of valuation in the "Story of Suffering." Concluding Unscientific Postscript explores still further subjectivity in the ethical and religious spheres. Even one of the last products of his pen, the theological essay on the difference between a genius and an apostle, makes a contrast between the aesthetic and the religious orientation in order to point the moral of a modern confusion in theological thought.

The three spheres are not to be construed as mutually exclusive, but as ascending levels of existence. The man who passes from the aesthetic stage to the ethical does not lose all aesthetic passion; the ethical individual has the aesthetic passion precisely as the non-ethical individual, but the higher passion subordinates the lower. Thus, the ethical and religious individuals have a higher passion which dominates and sets limits and determines the expression of the lower.

1) The Aesthetic Sphere. The person whose values are aesthetically oriented finds significance in the realization of the maximum amount of pleasure from life. Human happiness is, for this individual, synonymous with enjoyment. The ethically oriented individual, on the other hand, conceives of human happiness as the performance of an obligatory task,

a task so essentially related to the personality as to be immanent within it, being nothing more nor less than the realization in this performance of one's true and given self. This self is given in the form of a task and the possibility of performing it ^{is} dependent upon the individual's own free co-operation for its realization.

The aesthetic orientation is static; the ethical is dynamic. This is because the aesthetically oriented person (and this does not refer to an "aesthete" only, but to all who do not belong to the other categories--all who see pleasure as the highest goal in life, in other words a large fraction of the population) lives in and by that in his personality which already ^{is} given and completed; that is, he lives on the basis of that which he is, taken immediately; he is a natural man. The aesthetic man does not become, for the nature of enjoyment is that it accompanies a functioning whose organ is already adequate to its task. On the other hand, the ethically oriented person lives in and by the effort and strain of an essential and profound becoming. Ethical categories are ideal; they place an obligation on one to become something more than one is. Aesthetic categories leave one right where one is; consequently they are self-defeating, not really satisfying, and often bring a hang-over of melancholy in the wake of short-lived happiness.

The contrast between the aesthetic and the other two spheres might be characterized as the difference between what David Riesman has recently called "other-directedness" and "inner-directedness."¹³ The aesthetically oriented person is bound to postulate an external or uncertain condition, as for example prosperity or good fortune, success, and so on, as determining his happiness. This external condition is, whatever may be the appearance, created by the accidental facts and is always somewhat beyond his control. Even when he seems to be seeking the meaning of life in something within the personality, as in the unfolding of a talent, then he still posits a condition which is relatively external, since the condition is not given in and through his own will merely, but is in the personality without having been placed there by the personality.

This other-directedness of the aesthetic man stands in contrast to the ethical man who concentrates the meaning of life on that which he himself is able to give to life, for he postulates no external condition for happiness, no condition over which he does not himself have full control. Thus the ethical man has his essential happiness always in his own control, and is not, like the aesthetical man, always dependent on externalities and elements beyond his control.

When one examines the aesthetic sphere, one sees that it is the most inclusive of the three categories. It includes

¹³The Lonely Crowd (New Haven, 1950).

those who live for their health, or in the conscious enjoyment of beauty and the distinction of fine physical appearances; those who seek the meaning of life in the successful development of a business talent, a poetic talent, a philosophical talent, etc. It includes the reflective talent who succeeds in enjoying himself in the pleasures, rather than the pleasures directly. It includes the epicurean, who chooses the plain and simple pleasure of the plain and simple life as offering the greatest promise of security. And it includes the highly complicated personality who perceives the vanity of life and enjoys reflection upon his own despair. And, of course, it includes all mediocrities, in so far as their lives are determined essentially by the contrast between the agreeable and the disagreeable.

There are five chief incarnations of the aesthetic type of man which Kierkegaard has limned with especial enthusiasm. They are all sophisticated and reflective, and thus represent very specialized forms of the aesthetic type of man. Briefly, they are:

a) The Young Person—author of the first part of Either/Or, creator of the demoniac figure of John the Seducer, and the person absorbed in the psychological study of the unhappy consciousness, not from sympathy but auto-pathically and egoistically. The "Young Person" seeks to

grasp life without plunging into it, to swim without entering the water, to get experience through reflection alone. In the Stages on Life's Way, therefore, he finds love a riddle and marriage a mystery, because his thought cannot explain beforehand such an experience, but rather finds it ridiculous and contradictory. He is always possibility and never decisive action and all his thought only serves to plunge him further into his characteristic mood--reflective melancholy.

b) Constantin Constantius--author of Repetition and arranger of the banquet in Stages on Life's Way. This type represents a cold and superior intelligence who has despaired of the possibility of a successful repetition of life's happiest moments.

c) Victor Eremita--publisher of A's and B's papers in Either/Or and author of a speech about Woman in the Stages. This type is characterized by sympathetic irony; this is the individual who is cognizant of the ethical categories, but uses them only to recall them again as inapplicable.

d) John the Seducer--whose diary is published in Either/Or and who expounds his view of life in the Stages. This individual is one who sees woman as a lure of the gods whom only he knows how to enjoy without being caught and imprisoned in the illusion and drudgery of life. He is morally dead, and the ruin of his personality is evident the moment

he opens his mouth to speak.

e)The Dressmaker--that fanatic figure who devotes his life to making woman appear as ridiculous as she is. This type is the expression of aesthetic despair. His method is to entice women to a worship of fashion--the crazier the better.¹⁴

The "Young Person" is perhaps the most effective presentation of the underlying despair of the aesthetic life and its moral bankruptcy. He uses memory or forgetfulness to tamper with and contest these emotional experiences, the chief requisite for which is a freedom from every deeper enthusiasm, detachment from every intense hope and aspiration, a refusal to enter into any permanent or binding commitment, such as marriage, friendship, or a career. By the use of extraordinary skill, and with the aid of freedom from economic cares, this individual devotes himself to staving off boredom. (With variations, this type of individual reappears with frequency in the twentieth century novel.)

2)The Ethical Sphere. In Kierkegaard, the ethical is almost invariably tinged with the religious, since it presupposes the existence in the background of a divine being. As previously stated, the ethical man sets for himself the realization of his possible self through the performance of

¹⁴I am indebted to Professor Swenson's Something about Kierkegaard [prev. cited], pp. 166-177 for his presentation of the five aesthetic types which I have paraphrased here.

his duty before God. The ethical man, however, has no other relation to God than that which is universal to all men, and universal as a common public tie which binds them together. His relation to God is never private; it is without secrets, without mysteries, and without privacies. God is the universal background for his life, but He does not in any special sense break into it.

The ethical mood is one of action, action with victory assured. Ethical faith is the resolute faith in the victory, and ethical enthusiasm is sharply distinguished from all forms of aesthetic enthusiasm. Aesthetic pathos receives its adequate expression in words or in other forms of art; ethical pathos has no other expression than in the transformation of existence in its transition from potentiality to actuality. Aesthetic pathos leads a man to forget himself and lose himself in or fuse with the object or idea; ethical pathos leads a man to forget the whole world in order solely to attend to himself and his own ethical transformation. Aesthetic pathos is essentially imaginative, the pathos of distance; for ethical pathos, the imagination and its products are irrelevant.

From the standpoint of the personality, all aesthetic pathos is immaturity; ethical pathos is maturity. Aesthetic pathos is differential pathos, aristocratic pathos, varying in depth and quality with the aesthetic endowment of the

personality; ethical pathos is equally accessible to all human beings, and is thus the poor man's pathos. Aesthetic pathos is essentially determined by the accidental; ethical pathos has liberated itself from the accidental and the uncertain, and bases itself securely on the essential and the eternal in the personality.

3) The Religious Sphere. The ethical sphere requires committal to certain ends. Soon the individual finds himself absolutely committed to relative ends, thus interfering with his absolute commitment to the absolute end. In this situation the individual must first be changed, and the change must come from the eternal and divine, towards which the imperfect, actual self assumes a passive attitude. One must submit himself passively to the divine in order that the imperfect may be rooted out. This process is felt in the human being as suffering, and suffering is therefore a decisive category for the religious life, just as enjoyment is the decisive category for the aesthetic life. Kierkegaard does not teach that all suffering is religious by being incorporated into a God-relation of ~~the~~ only the type just described, but all religious life involves suffering, so that if the suffering is taken away the religious life is also abolished.

But why suffering? Suffering arises out of the incommensurability between the individual and his task. Pleasure,

in contrast, lies precisely in the commensurability of the individual to his task, as was stated earlier. But why is the individual unequal to the task, thus requiring the transforming discipline of suffering? The answer at bottom is guilt. As the personality advances to this higher stage, he has to relate himself to his ideal through the never-suspended consciousness of, and everlasting memory of, guilt. The sense of guilt is not the memory of an individual wrongful act, but a consciousness of a quality affecting the whole personality, a total and all-pervasive coloring, which does not admit of differences of degree when viewed essentially and from within. Between man and God, guilt is guilt, and that is the end of the matter, the quality being essential and the degree irrelevant.

Religion A and Religion B. More original than Kierkegaard's views of original sin, suffering, and guilt in the religious sphere is his valuable distinction between immanent and transcendent religion, or Religion A and Religion B, as he calls them in the Concluding Unscientific Postscript.

Religion A is roughly what was described above: the passive relationship to the divine, with the accompanying suffering and sense of guilt. In this immanent form of religion, the tie that binds the individual to the divine is still, in spite of all tension, essentially intact. Such a form is more like paganism than like true Christianity.

Transcendent religion--Religion B--modifies the sense of guilt into the sense of sin, by which all continuity is broken off between the actual self and the ideal self, the temporal self and the eternal self. The personality is invalidated, and thus made free from the law of God because it is unable to comply with its demands. By sin, man becomes absolutely different from God, and there is no fundamental contact left with the divine.

Religion B is Christianity. It is marked by an absolute transcendence, by the introduction of a new passion: faith. It is marked by a new contact with the divine and a new point of departure in the consciousness of the individual: conversion. All of these conceptions are, from the standpoint of the old, invalidated personality, seen as paradoxical and absurd: the doctrine of sin, the doctrine of the God-man in Christ, the doctrine of the forgiveness and absolution of sins--all are contrary to reason, are "absurd."

Indeed, reason and faith are contrary passions, for reason is the self-assertion of the personality, its sense of fundamental integrity, while faith embraces a re-integration of the personality as a divine gift, under which reason is subject and made subservient, just as self-love is subjected in true love. Thus, Kierkegaard does not mean by "reason" any abstract logical faculty, but the systematized common sense of the personality in its fundamental self-confidence and self-assertiveness.

Summary. The major themes of Kierkegaard may be grouped into three categories which will include most of what has here been presented: 1) Anti-depersonalization; 2) Emphasis on the individual human being, the self; and 3) Being "before God." The principle which seems to underlie all three of these categories is that in all thought about human life the direct and immediate experience of existence (and through it of one's own being and that of God) must come first, for man has, given with this existence, a subjective knowledge about his own being (his Existenz). In all thought about human life, then, human existence must come first.

1) Anti-depersonalization. Kierkegaard's opposition to the depersonalization and despiritualization and desubjectivization of man expressed itself in the negative form of a protest against factors which he held were partially responsible^{for}/man's loss of himself, his subjective self. This protest was against systems and systematic knowledge, the use of logic, intellectualizing human reality, objectivism, abstraction, determinism, Hegelian idealism and essentialism, and philosophical speculation about history. These factors tended to overlook subjectivity and to deny the real existence and real problems of the individual.

2) Seeking the self: individualism. The positive side of Kierkegaard's views on individuality and subjectivity

expressed themselves in a theory of the existing self which provides the basis for much later Existentialist thought. He submitted the concept of Existenz; the concept of becoming as a transition from non-being to true being, a concept of human life as constant becoming; the concept of freedom as absolute contingency, as a creative factor in life; the concept of the need for a moment of decision, a leap, a break in logical continuity; the concept of absolute responsibility for one's acts because of the existential freedom of choice (absolute power of choice entails absolute responsibility); the concept of a personal reality, of life as a secret which cannot be communicated, therefore positing the radical incommunicability of reality and requiring indirection (communication through parables, etc.) because life cannot be communicated logically; the concept of the need for increased subjectivity and inwardness; the concept of inwardness as truth and the transfer of truth as an "appropriation" of an "objective uncertainty"; the concept of the value of action rather than reflection, for the ethical and religious man acts rather than reflects--life is dynamic, passionate, strenuous; and the concept of the process of life/^{as}involving not a progressive evolution, but a radical and logically unaccountable breach (a leap) of continuity at every important juncture. Thus, Kierkegaard does not merely protest against systems, but submits a positive set of values, a theory of the self.

3) Being "before God." Kierkegaard does not submit a theory of the self as alone in nothingness, but as "before God" at all times. The inauthentically existing human being does not consciously recognize this relationship to God, but with authenticity comes the recognition of this relationship and a whole series of related recognitions. Indeed, it was because of Kierkegaard's recognition of his being "before God" that he came to the recognition of the basic and pervasive fallenness of man, his finitude, his "original sin"; the recognition of the impossibility of salvation through knowledge or reason; the recognition of the need to absolutely transcend one's finite self, and the recognition of the need for God in order to achieve this transcendence; the recognition that man can do nothing, that self-realization can come only through God, through a realization of the transparency of the self before God, a leap of faith in Him, and a free granting by Him of the gift of grace; and the recognition of the central role of suffering in the religious life. These recognitions bring about the consequent recognition that the finite-infinite antithesis is a basic dialectic of life; the recognition of the defeat of aestheticism and all orientations in which pleasure values are primary; the recognition that the basic doctrines and truths of the Christian faith are impervious to human reason, seem to be absurd and paradoxical; and finally there is the recognition

of man as a choosing creature, facing the moral either-or's of life, choosing between inauthentic existence (characterized by despair) and authentic existence (characterized by suffering and transcendence).

Kierkegaard conceives of man as finite and infinite; fallen, yet free to choose transcendence; surrounded by externality and objectivity, yet needing desperately to achieve innerness and the truth of subjectivity.

MARCEL

The thought of Gabriel Marcel eludes easy summary, for his writings tend to be in the form of jottings which are unsystematic, discursive, arriving at points dialectically. In point of time, the Journal Métaphysique (which in the first volume dates from 1914-1923) precedes the work of the other major Existentialist thinkers, and a large part of Marcel's thought about existence was set down before he became acquainted with Kierkegaard.

This dissertation will consider Marcel's contribution to the thought of Existentialism briefly in six areas: 1) The resolution of so-called dualisms; 2) the mystery of Being; 3) Being and having; 4) transcendence through Christian virtues; and 5) the I-Thou relationship.

1) The resolution of so-called dualisms. A basic desire in Marcel is to overcome such traditional separations as subject and object, body and soul, and the "I" and God. Indeed, Marcel might seem initially in his attempt at a "higher unity" to be a disciple of Hegel. But Marcel refuses to construct a dialectic system; each problem, and with it each duality, which is overcome stands by itself. The duality of subject and object yields to a higher unity in Christian love. The duality of subject and predicates is based only on an abstracting consciousness; it is not a duality in itself or in life. Similarly, Marcel strives to

overcome the opposition between being and thought, between knowledge and the will, between body and soul, between "I" and "Thou," and most important of all, between "I" and God. The oppositions, Marcel asserts, are really only apparent oppositions; one must seek in the depths of true reality for what lies ontologically behind them.

There are, however, some much more genuine oppositions which he wrestles with in his Journal: the objective, abstract, so-called "pure" reason of the Kantians as against an understanding and grasp of the concrete, immediate, particular, individual existence; the "problem" in science and sociology and the tendency to look on life in problem terms as over against life as "mystery," as the "mystery of Being"; technology versus metaphysics; having versus being; shallow optimism versus true hope; seeing the "he" versus seeing the "thou." In each case the first term tends to be abstract and empty and the second more nearly to approach concrete reality in all its richness, fullness, and mystery. Reason must yield to understanding, the abstract to the concrete, the objectified problem to the inexplicable mystery, mere technology to metaphysics, having to being, optimism to hope, and the impersonal "he" to the personal "thou."

2) Being as a mystery. Marcel considers that in trying to achieve a knowledge of the being of the self, one must be careful not to see the self as an object, as something

to be observed, but rather as something mysterious--a mystery. Life is a mystery, something into which I must enter with my concrete individual existence. The mystery of being can be known directly, but it cannot be known discursively or treated dialectically. Modern man tries to live in a world devoid of mystery; he refuses to admit or see mystery. Yet mystery is an important component of reality:

Un monde d'où le mystérieux serait exclu et un monde où tout ce qui aurait la puissance de se communiquer se communiquerait directement, spontanément--ce monde-là n'est sûrement pas le nôtre.¹

Marcel would agree with Kierkegaard that life is inner, life is incommunicable, life is a secret. Marcel demands of philosophy that it become aware of the significance of the mysterious aspects of life. The method of treating a mystery is not to be objective and analytical, but a feeling into things with the understanding; the method is not an analysis (literally a "breaking up" of things) but a putting things together, a gathering up of things, a "recueillement."

Recueillement, Marcel asserts, substitutes for the endless taking apart of things by the analytical method a synthetic method, a method which puts things together again. Reality must be inwardly reconstructed. It may appear to be split up and divided into many parts, but a "second reflection"

¹Journal Métaphysique, 4th ed. (Paris, 1935), p. 160. Hereinafter abbreviated "JM."

upon this breaking up leads to an awareness of its impossibility. Like Bergson, Marcel asserts that true philosophy aims at a reconstitution of concrete reality, which has been broken up by disconnected, fruitless efforts of abstract thought.

Indeed, when one tries to think about Being, its mysteriousness becomes obvious (Being and Mystery are very close to each other; "problem" is related to having), for the very person who studies Being has Being:

I do not even clearly know the meaning of the question "what am I?" though I am obsessed by it. So we see the problem of Being here encroaching upon its own data, and being studied actually inside the subject who states it. In the process, it is denied (or transcended) as problem, and becomes metamorphosed into mystery.²

Because one is personally involved in Being, it cannot be studied as a problem. This furnishes Marcel's distinction between problem and mystery:

A problem is something which I meet, which I find complete before me, but which I can therefore lay siege to and reduce. But a mystery is something in which I am myself involved, and it can therefore only be thought of as a sphere where the distinction between what is in me and what is before me loses its meaning and its initial validity. [BH, p. 117]

The dichotomy between subject and object loses its validity in the mystery of my own Being.

²Being and Having [Etre et Avoir], trans. Katharine Farrer (Westminster, 1949), p. 117. Hereinafter abbreviated "BH."

3) Being and having. Being, as noted above, is in the realm of mystery because one participates in it even in the very act of defining it. Having, however, is in the area of the objective, what one can possess and manipulate, the area separate from the self, the area of "problem." Marcel contends that Having dominates present thought, and that the awareness of Being has progressively declined since the Middle Ages. This awareness of Being would be an awareness of participating in Being, of sensing the importance of mystery. This awareness would, if properly felt, give one the sense of belonging to Being--which transcends oneself--rather than to oneself.

Marcel's endeavor, then, is to restore a proper understanding of the nature of Having. This understanding will, of course, lead to a renewed consciousness and appreciation of Being. This understanding of Having will be phenomenological rather than psychological:

A phenomenological analysis of Having might well be a useful introduction to a renewed analysis of Being. By "phenomenological analysis" I mean the analysis of an implicit content of thought, as opposed to a psychological analysis of "states." [BH, p. 151]

The realm of Having is the realm of objectivity, of the characterizable, of the opposition of "without" and "within":

we cannot express ourselves in terms of Having except when we are moving on a level where, in whatever manner or in however analogical a sense, the opposition of without and within retains its meaning; [it seems] that this order is manifested to our thought as essentially involving the reference to another qua other. [BH, p. 151]

One can characterize and possess (physically or intellectually) what one has, but one can neither characterize nor possess what one is (or how one is):

The order of having is the order of predication or the characterisable. But the metaphysical problem which faces us here is to what extent a genuine reality, a reality as such, lends itself to characterisation; and also whether being is not essentially uncharacterisable.... The uncharacterisable is also that which cannot be possessed. This brings us back to presence. We return to the difference between the Thou and the He. It is clear that the Thou, treated as He, comes under the jurisdiction of a characterising judgment. But it is no less clear that the Thou treated as Thou stands on a different level. [BH, pp. 151-2]

The level of the He is the level of possession; the level of the Thou is the level of participation. The He is impersonal; the Thou is personal and involves the very self of the person who says Thou. The difference between Desire and Love is the difference between Having and Being, between possession and participation:

The opposition of desire to love is a very important illustration of the opposition of Having to Being. Desire is, in fact, having and not having. Desire may be regarded as autocentric and heterocentric at once (the polarity of the same and the other). But love transcends the opposition of the same to the other by planting us in Being. [BH, p. 152]

This returns us to Marcel's desire to unite the dichotomous, and it gives us an idea of his basic technique: the fact that one is mysteriously grounded in Being.

Unfortunately, modern thought insists on remaining on the level of Having, on the level of dichotomies and separation.

The world of the Same and the Other is the world of the identifiable. In so far as I remain its prisoner,

I surround myself with a zone of separation. Only on condition that I take my stand in this zone can I think myself according to the category of Having. [BH, p. 153]

The finality and exaggerated importance of death comes because of an insistence on thinking of Being as having a body:

The dead man is the man who no longer has anything (at least if we take the word "have" in those senses which we can make precise). We are tempted to think that no longer having anything is the same as no longer being anything; and in fact the general trend of life on the natural level is to identify one's-self with what one has: and here the ontological category tends to be blotted out. [BH, p. 84]

The possession of a body, then, is a significant case of having, and Marcel gives it considerable attention. Ultimately, however, the relationship of the self to the body is more than possession; it is actualization, the mystery of incarnation: I am not able to identify myself completely with my body, nor distinguish myself completely from it; I appear to myself as a body, yet I am more than body. The mystery of the intimacy of incarnation is a relationship which one should strive to achieve with things outside of the body, with other people:

Le monde existe pour moi, au sens fort du mot exister, dans la mesure où j'entretiens avec lui des relations du type de celles que j'entretiens avec mon propre corps--c'est-à-dire pour autant que je suis incarné. [JM, p. 261]

Man's relationship to his world should not be one of objective manipulation, but one of intimacy, of incarnation.

For Marcel, then, Being is mysterious, uncharacterizable, unpossessable. It is personally encountered, and one participates in it without ever having it in the sense of being able to dispose of it. (Rather, man is at the disposal, ideally, of Being.) Being is the ontological basis for life, the factor which, through love and other means, unites the separated.³ Being unites; Having separates. Having is the antithesis of mystery; it deals with a problem rather than a mystery. Having is the realm of possession and manipulation of ideas and things. In having, one does not participate in what one has but only possesses it externally. One can dispose of what one has, but one can never dispose of Being. The realm of Having is the realm of desire rather than love, possession rather than participation.⁴

4) Transcendence through Christian virtues. The Christian virtues stressed by Marcel are faith, hope, and love. For Marcel, faith is especially important, for faith is an act of spiritual transcendence:

La foi est l'acte par lequel l'esprit comble le vide entre le moi pensant et le moi empirique en affirmant leur liaison transcendante; ou plutôt la foi est l'acte par lequel l'esprit se fait, l'esprit et non plus le sujet pensant, l'esprit réalité vivante et active. [JM, p.45]

³Paul Tillich, in his Love, Power, and Justice: Ontological and Ethical Applications (New York, 1954), asserts the same thing: that the ontological basis of love is a uniting of the separated.

⁴In The Waste Land desire replaces love, and in the Duino Elegies, Rilke asserts that man should participate in nature and in things, not merely manipulate and possess them.

If one pledges faith to a vow, how can one know whether his present constitution will keep on being? Faith is an assertion of the freedom of the self to determine the future; it is a projection of the self into the future. Faith, in a sense, may seem to be a sacrifice of freedom in the future, but it is equally an assertion of freedom. It is a remaking of the self in a unity with Being.

Hope is distinguished by Marcel from mere optimism. Optimism is based on something to be experienced; hope is based on a direct revelation of the goodness of God and brings a part of the realization of what is hoped for into the present. Hope, in other words, implies living in hope and standing in the relation to time which is peculiar to Christian hope. Hope contains an inner readiness to sacrifice in confidence in God. In hope, the self is in availability (disponibilité) to God, is ready to transcend the duality of knowledge and the will in unconditional action which affirms his experience of God's "living permanence." For this permanence hope is both a guarantee and a presupposition.

Love^{is} interrelated with faith, grounded in Being, and connected with testimony. Marcel asserts that love and faith cannot and ought not to be separated:

Lorsque la foi cesse d'être amour, elle se fige en une croyance objective à une puissance plus ou moins physiquement conçue; et d'autre part, l'amour qui n'est pas la foi (et qui ne pose pas la transcendance du Dieu aimé) n'est qu'une sorte de jeu abstrait. [JM, p. 58]

Love is grounded in Being, and the way that it unites, absorbs, transcends, all dualisms is an evidence and expression of this fact of being grounded in Being. Love is also connected with testimony, for testimony is meaningful only in love and in it the "I" loses its subjectivity and Being loses its objectivity. Love is the ontological ground of all the Christian virtues insofar as they participate in Being, that is, in the Thou that is God.

5) The "I-Thou" relationship. For Marcel, the use of the second-person pronoun, in reference either to another person or to God, is of decided significance. The third-person tends to make its referent objective and to sever the involvement and participation of the person using the pronoun and the one to whom the pronoun refers (even as in this sentence one feels that the situation is externalized, presented as an objective problem). The third-person is the ideal pronoun for the objectivity of science. Science, indeed only recognizes the objective, observable fact, for this reason Marcel asserts, "La science ne parle du réel qu'à la troisième personne." [JM, p. 137] However, for man, "Dieu est le toi absolu qui ne peut jamais devenir un lui." [Same]

The use of "thou" emphatically asserts a tie between the subject and that which is addressed. It is also a recognition that the addressee is a knowing subject, a subject

that is capable of response:

Je ne m'adresse à la deuxième personne qu'à ce qui est regardé par moi comme susceptible de me répondre, de quelque façon que ce soit--même si cette réponse est un "silence intelligent." Là où aucune réponse n'est possible, il n'y a place que pour le "lui." L'idée de réponse est donc la clef. [JM, p. 138]

There is a sense of reciprocity in using the "thou," a sense of participation. Moreover, there is a concession of the addressed subject's freedom. In I-Thou communication, I take part in the freedom of the other, who takes part, in turn, in my own freedom. If I ask a question in the second person, I do not ask in the same manner as I ask a "he" for information. Into my question enters the loving communication which in turn is only possible on the ground of faith.

Thus, the "thou" is an indication of openness on the part of the subject to another subject, the kind of openness which enables both to move toward a more genuine existence. One must strive for the love and freedom of this openness to another subject which displays itself in the use of "thou." And an openness to "Thou" (God) tends to create the ontological basis (love) for mysterious and loving communication between one subject and another subject. Without this sort of communication one is locked in the circle of himself and exists in a destructive relationship to others:

The other, in so far as he is other, only exists for me in so far as I am open to him, in so far as he is a Thou. But I am only open to him in so far as I cease to form a circle with myself, inside which I somehow place the other, or rather his idea; for inside this circle

the other becomes the idea of the other, and the idea of the other is no longer the other qua other, but the other qua related to me; and in this condition he is uprooted and taken to bits, or at least in process of being taken to bits. [BH, p. 107]

The difference between "thou" and "he" is the basic difference between Marcel's other major and unifying opposition, Being and Having. The use of "thou" puts one on the level of Being; the use of "he" puts one on the objective level of having. The use of "he" separates; using "thou" unites. "He" makes the addressee objective and abstracts the person from what is addressed. One unconsciously attempts to possess and manipulate the "he" for one's own purposes; one unconsciously recognizes the freedom of the "thou" and participates in it. The "thou" recognizes the mystery and subjectivity of the other person; the "he" makes him an object. The "thou" shows an openness to the Being of the other person; the "he" shows that one is locked in a closed circle of himself.

Heidegger has asserted that Being is the spiritual destiny of the West.⁵ Perhaps Marcel would bring this to the personal level by asserting that one's personal spiritual realization hinges on the relationship that one has to the "thou" and the "Thou."

⁵Einführung in die Metaphysik (Tübingen, 1953), p. 28.

JASPERS

Existenzerhellung. Karl Jaspers wished in his philosophy to achieve what he called an Existenzerhellung, an "illumination of Existenz." In such an endeavor, Jaspers was influenced by the fact that he was an M.D. to be more concrete, realistic, practical, and empirical about existence than Heidegger, with his Jesuit scholastic background, his admiration for Bergson, Dilthey, Husserl, Rilke, etc. While Heidegger was exploiting the rich etymological possibilities of the German and Greek languages and returning to the pre-Socratic philosophers, Jaspers was concerning himself with Die geistige Situation der Zeit, with the inroads of technological thought on modern man and the proper relationship of science and philosophy.

The Scientific Method and the Philosophic Method. In going about his task of Existenzerhellung, Jaspers makes a basic distinction between the scientific method (into which philosophy has unwittingly fallen, to its own impoverishment) and the method of philosophy. The method of philosophy is not empirical and rigidly objective, for philosophy deals with data which cannot be approached in this manner: Existenz and the transcendental. Science has no capacity (on account of its method) to deal with these; it is for the philosophers to do so. Jaspers asserts that present-day philosophy has allowed itself to become so hypnotized

with science that it has forgotten that its province is not to imitate the scientist but to do something the scientist is incapable of sensing the need for; the more valuable and indeed tragically necessary contribution the philosophers can make is to engage themselves in an analysis of Being in an age that has forgotten it.

In science, man views himself solely as an object; this is the scientist's basic manner of dealing with phenomena. But science crucially fails to deal with man from the inside, thus creating a false concept of man as an object. Thus Jaspers asserts that Being may be thought of as Objektsein or as Ichsein, but the task of philosophy is in the area of Ichsein.¹

Defining Existenz. Existenz in Jaspers is metaphysical, transcendental being, rather than the sum of empirical becoming in a human being. It is more like "being-potential" expressing itself or making itself felt as restlessness or anxiety. This Unbefriedigung comes upon one especially in moments when one has temporarily suspended the practical and theoretical consideration of one's existence. In these moments one becomes conscious of himself as possibility, as Existenz. It is to the illumination of this Unbefriedigung, this Existenz, that Jaspers devotes himself. [See Phil., pp. 299, 301] But, as noted above, the method

¹Philosophie, 2nd ed. in one vol. (Berlin, 1948), p. 4. Hereinafter abbreviated "Phil."

must be non-scientific:

...Was in mythischer Ausdrucksweise Seele und Gott heisst, in philosophischer Sprache Existenz und Transzendenz, ist nicht Welt. Sie sind nicht im selben Sinne wie die Dinge in der Welt als Wissbarkeiten, aber sie könnten auf andere Weise sein.... [Phil., p. 295]

In attempting to arrive at what Existenz is, Jaspers asks, "Was gibt es dem gesamten Weltsein gegenüber?" His answer is: "Das Sein, das--in der Erscheinung des Daseins--nicht ist, sondern sein kann und sein soll und darum zeitlich entscheidet, ob es ewig ist." [Phil., p. 295] This eternal part of ourselves, our soul (in a sense), is our Existenz. We are Existenz insofar as we are not objects; Existenz is that non-material part of us which is like consciousness but more than consciousness.

Existenz and Dasein. A clearer idea of Jaspers' conception of Existenz is gained in comparing it to his use of the term Dasein. Dasein is somewhat inaccurately translated into English as "existence." Literally, it means "being-there," but in German it is used to refer to the objective and materially verifiable part of existing, the what one might call "mere-existing-thereness" without excessive metaphysical overtones. Existenz is something like an opposite, more like pure or transcendental being, potentiality.

Nicht mein Dasein also ist Existenz, sondern der Mensch ist im Dasein mögliche Existenz. Jenes ist da oder nicht da, Existenz aber, weil sie möglich ist, tut Schritte zu ihrem Sein oder von ihm hinweg ins Nichts durch Wahl und Entscheidung. Mein Dasein hat gegen-

über anderem eine Umfangsverschiedenheit zwischen engem und weitem Weltsein, Existenz aber ist von anderer Existenz wesensverschieden aus dem Grunde ihrer Freiheit. [Phil., p. 296]

Dasein, then, is inevitably and by definition always da. Its essence is actuality and non-transcendence. Existenz is by nature transcendence and potentiality. Its essence is to choose, to take strides toward Being or toward Non-being. Existenz has a certain eternality which stands in contrast to the temporality of Dasein:

Dasein als Sein lebt und stirbt; Existenz weiss keinen Tod, sondern steht zu ihrem Sein im Aufschwung oder Abfall. Dasein ist empirisch da, Existenz nur als Freiheit. Dasein ist schlechthin zeitlich, Existenz ist in der Zeit mehr als Zeit. [Same]

Dasein stands for empirical thereness; Existenz stands for freedom, permanence, transcendence of time.

Jaspers makes a distinction between closed and open being which recalls the circle image of the self in Marcel: Dasein is essentially closed to transcendence and potentiality, but Existenz is essentially open:

Mein Dasein ist endlich, sofern es nicht alles Dasein ist, und doch für sich in sich beschlossen; auch Existenz ist nicht für sich allein und nicht alles; denn sie ist nur, wenn sie bezogen ist auf andere Existenz und auf Transzendenz, vor der als dem schlechthin Anderen sie sich bewusst wird, nicht durch sich selbst allein zu sein; während aber Dasein als relative Rundung eines Endlosen unendlich genannt werden kann, ist die Unendlichkeit der Existenz ohne Rundung als offene Möglichkeit. [Same]

Dasein is endlich, but the characteristic of Existenz is Unendlichkeit and transcendence of the temporal restrictions

of the present. Dasein is essentially closed and determined, but Existenz is "ohne Rundung" as open potentiality.

Thus, even in the brief compass of this clarification of the distinction between Dasein and Existenz, one encounters other concerns which are characteristic of the thought of Jaspers: the basic concern with a realm of the temporal and finite as against the eternal and infinite; a basic concern with transcendence of the finite; an exploration of the idea of possibility or potentiality; an emphasis on choice and on freedom; and finally the suggestion that Existenz is characterized by an attitude of openness to possibility.

The Encompassing. Like Marcel, Jaspers wishes to overcome the subject-object dichotomy. However he tries to do this in a much more complex and systematic way; he submits his concept of the Umgreifende, that is, the comprehensive or encompassing.

The Encompassing is that which unites and comprehends both myself as a subject and the world as perceived object; it is what one might call Being. Jaspers, then, asserts that the Encompassing expresses itself in two forms: the Being in itself or "as such" that surrounds us, and the Being that we are.

a) The Being that surrounds us. This Being is the Being that is, even if we are not. It is of a two-fold

nature: it is the world, that is to say, the being of which one aspect of our essence constitutes an infinitesimal part, if the world as a whole be considered as something that is not ourselves and in which we are immersed; it is transcendence, that is to say, 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.

The world as a whole is not an object, but an idea. What we know is in the world, but is never the world. Transcendence, on the other hand, is the being that never becomes world but that speaks as it were through the being that is in the world. There is transcendence only if the world does not consist only of itself, is not built upon itself, but points beyond itself. If the world is everything, then there is no transcendence. But if there is transcendence, perhaps there is something in the world's being that points to it. [See the subsequent treatment of ciphers of transcendence.]

b) The Being that we are. Jaspers describes four modes in which we become conscious of our own being: 1) dasein, 2) consciousness as such, 3) ideas, and 4) potential Existenz.

1) Dasein, "being-there." Like all living things, we live in an environment. The Encompassing in this being alive and so concrete becomes an object of inquiry in its manifestations, in the products of life, in physical forms, in psycho-

logical functions, in hereditary morphological contexts, in behavior patterns, in environmental structures. In addition, man, and only man, produces languages, tools, ideas, acts; in short, he produces himself. All life except for man is merely being-there within its environment. What completes man's being-there is that the following modes of Encompassing enter into it, either through man as a vehicle or forced by man into his service.

2) Consciousness as such. We are consciousness as such in the division of subject and object. Only what enters into this consciousness is being for us. We are the encompassing consciousness in which everything that is can be known, recognized, intended as an object. We break through our mere environment to the idea of the world to which all environments belong; indeed, we think beyond the world, and in our thoughts we can make it disappear as though it were nothing.

3) Ideas. We are mind. The life of the mind is the life of ideas. Ideas--for example the practical idea embodied in our professions and tasks, the theoretical ideas of world, soul, life, and so on--function as impulses in us, as an abstract of the total purpose inherent in the object, as systematic method of penetration, adaptation, and realization. And as such they lead us. They are not objects, but manifest themselves in schemata and forms. They are effective and actual, and at the same time infinite tasks.

These three modes of the Encompassing--dasein, consciousness as such, and ideas--are the modes in which we are objects in the world; in other words, as this Encompassing is objectified into a thing that confronts us, we ourselves become adequate empirical objects of biological, psychological, sociological and historical inquiry. But this does not yet exhaust our being; we are also Existenz.

4) Existenz. We are potential existence. We take our life from a primal source that lies beyond the being--there that becomes empirical and objective. This source is beyond consciousness and beyond mind or ideas. This aspect of man's nature is revealed in several ways: a) in man's experience of restlessness and dissatisfaction with himself, for man feels constantly that he is inadequate to what he is, to his knowledge, his intellectual world; b) in the Absolute, to which he subordinates his empirical existence as to his own authentic selfhood, or as to that which is said to him intelligibly and convincingly; c) in the unremitting urge for unity, for man is not content in one mode of the Encompassing, or in all modes taken together, but presses toward the fundamental unity which alone is being and eternity; d) in the consciousness of an indefinable memory, as though man shared in the knowledge of creation, or as though he remembered something beheld before any world existed (Plato); and e) in the consciousness of immortality, that is not a

type of survival in another form, but a time-negating immersion in eternity, appearing to man as a path of action forever continued in time.²

As Existenz, then, man finds a constant feeling of being more than mere existence. Existenz is a pointer to the Beyond. Its five forms listed above were all only ways that man seems to become conscious of, or to point to, the Beyond: dissatisfaction with oneself, recognition of the Absolute, the urge for unity, the higher memory, and the consciousness of immortality.

Jaspers notes that the four aspects of the Encompassing that I am form an implied polarity of the self relating itself to a sort of non-self within the self, that is, to Being. On the four levels the polarity becomes: (dasein) inner world and environment; (consciousness as such) consciousness and object; (idea) the idea that is in me and the objective idea that comes to me from things; and (Existenz) existence and transcendence. Thus, the Encompassing that I am relates itself to the two major aspects of the Being that surrounds me (previously discussed), that is, to "world" and to "transcendence." For, the first three modes (dasein, consciousness, idea) relate themselves to "world," and the mode of Existenz relates itself to transcendence.

²This presentation of the Encompassing is condensed from The Perennial Scope of Philosophy [Der philosophische Glaube], trans. R. Manheim (London, 1950), pp. 17-20. Hereinafter abbreviated "PSP."

Philosophical Faith. A basic aim in Jaspers' philosophy is the achievement of what he calls "philosophical faith." Jaspers has set forth his concept of philosophical faith in his series of lectures published under the title, Der philosophische Glaube.³ Philosophical faith is based on and intimately related to the concept of Encompassing. Philosophical faith is like a sense of reality, a sense of the way things are, a sense of "presence," a sense of Being. Thus Jaspers asserts that one feels a compelling need to recognize a thing as true or false. [PSP, p. 21] And this compelling need "comes from a source of its own, which I cannot will, but through which I will, am, and know." [PSP, p. 20] On the idea-level, or mode, of the Encompassing, this sense of presence manifests itself in the urge to unify and render ideas comprehensible. Even what is fragmented in the understanding is held together in the mind. Ideas are like the binding force of faith, for "where ideas vanish, the world collapses into an infinity of scattered objects." [PSP, p. 21]

Of the modes of Encompassing, the experience of transcendence in existence is perhaps the most important ground for faith. One senses transcendence in the realization that "I am not by virtue of my decision alone. Even my freedom, my being-through-myself has been given me." [PSP, p. 21]

³(Zürich, 1948).

Indeed, faith is, in itself, an expression of transcendence and at the same time even encompasses the Encompassing:

faith proper is the existential act by which transcendence becomes conscious of its actuality. Faith is life out of the Comprehensive [the Encompassing], it is guidance and fulfilment through the Comprehensive. Faith that springs from the Comprehensive is free, because it is not fixed in any finite thing that has been made into an absolute. [PSP, pp. 21-2]

To fix faith on any finite thing--even a conceptual idea of God--approaches idolatry, asserts Jaspers. It is essentially to finitize what cannot be made finite at all. Even to speak of faith as such involves the constant effort to remember that one is a prisoner of what could be called "object thinking," a kind of thinking that must reduce the inconceivable to a concept.

Thus, even to speak of philosophical faith requires the operation of philosophical faith, of transcendence of object thinking. Ultimately one can only use object thinking to point to the Beyond--and one realizes that even the act of pointing seems to imply a choice among finite directions; one realizes, in other words, that one must exist, as it were, in a prison of the nature of human reason. Thus Jaspers asserts that the basic operation of philosophical faith is to ascertain the Encompassing "by transcending the object within the object thinking which remains forever inevitable." [PSP, p.22]

But there is something in us that resists this basic operation and thus resists philosophical thought itself.

We tend, in other words, always to strive for something tangible. We fight against the vertigo of philosophy, and "wish to remain 'sane' by holding on to our objects and evading the rebirth of our nature in the act of transcending."

[Same]

Thus, philosophical faith is in open opposition to all dogmatic creeds (which falsely seek to objectify the un-objectifiable) and asserts something very close to what Tillich calls the "Protestant principle" that only God is holy, and no Church, no doctrine, no saint, and no rite is holy in itself. The Unconditional and Infinite cannot be made conditional and finite.⁴ It follows, too, that the world cannot be God, that the assertion that the world is God is idolatrous. Jaspers therefore calls the tendency to objectivize the world, and to assert that the world is everything, unfaith:

The propositions of unfaith are:

First: there is no God, for there is only the world and the laws of nature; the world is God.

Second: there is no absolute, for the commandments that I follow came into being and are conditioned by habit, practice, tradition, obedience; everything is relative ad infinitum.

Third: the world is everything, the sole and authentic reality. Everything in the world is indeed transient, but the world itself is absolute, eternal, not ephemeral, not suspended in transition. [PSP, p. 40]

In each of these three propositions of unfaith there is

⁴Paul Tillich's version of faith, too, rests on this principle. See his Dynamics of Faith, paperback ed., (New York, 1958), p. 29. Also see The Protestant Era, trans. James Luther Adams (Chicago, 1948).

a denial of transcendence and of the Transcendent.

Philosophical faith, however, asserts in its propositions that there is transcendence. The corresponding three propositions of philosophical faith are: 1) God is; 2) there is an absolute imperative; and 3) the world is an ephemeral stage between God and existence. Jaspers explains these three propositions as follows:

1) God is. Transcendence beyond the world or before the world is called God. There is the profoundest difference whether I regard the universe as being in itself and nature as God, or whether I regard the universe as not grounded in itself and find the foundation of the world and myself in something outside the world.

God is therefore completely distinct from this finite world. Therefore one does not start from the finite world and prove God; God cannot be proved in this way. Only he who starts from God can truly seek him:

God is not ... something that stands in finite form before the eyes or the mind. But finite things serve as metaphor, symbol, analogy, enabling us to realize the presence of the divine. [PSP, p. 36]

One will never gain a scientifically cogent proof of God. A certainty of the existence of God, however rudimentary and intangible it may be, is a premise not a result of all philosophical activity.

2) There is an absolute imperative. Jaspers means by an absolute imperative the command of one's authentic

self (his Existenz) to one's empirical self. This is the command of what I am eternally (in the face of the transcendent) to the temporality of my present life. The Absolute itself does not become temporal. Wherever it is, it cuts across time. (This is the essential relationship of the Transcendent, that it "cuts across" time.) By way of our freedom, the Absolute erupts from the Transcendent into this world. [PSP, p. 37]

3) The reality of the world subsists ephemerally between God and existence. The indeterminate character of all modes of known reality, the interpretive character of all cognition, and the fact that we apprehend all being through a dichotomy of subject and object bring one inevitably to the philosophical insight that the world is merely ephemeral.

The phenomenality of the empirical world is a basic insight of philosophical thought. This insight is not empirical; it can be attained only by an act of transcendence. [PSP, p. 38]

The assumption of God as eternal and transcendent goes hand in hand, then, with the assumption of the ephemerality and phenomenality of this world. This world may in various ways point to the Beyond, may seem to be the "speech of God" [PSP, p. 39], but the world will remain distinct from Him, something created by him, the "language" of God.

What is the significance of the world to philosophical faith? The world is the place where the infinite intersects the finite:

For such faith [philosophical faith] our being 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. The world is the meeting point of that which is eternal and that which manifests itself in time. [PSP, p. 39]

Philosophical faith, then, is faith without an object--for the eternal can never be object--yet it is grounded in an unshakable certainty of transcendence and the Beyond.

Freedom. Jaspers asserts that there are two ways of looking at man: either as an object of inquiry, or as freedom. [PSP, p. 56] The first way (associated with science) may seem to give results that are decisive, but only the second can furnish results that are truly important and fundamental for man. The first way merely deals with a substratum of man, and when its data are mistakenly generalized into a theory of man a positive loss of freedom occurs:

Man cannot be derived from something else, but is immediately at the base of all things. To be aware of this signifies man's freedom, which is lost in every other total determination of his being, and comes entirely into its own only in this one total determination.

Every insight into man, if it is absolutized into a supposed knowledge of man as a whole, destroys his freedom. And this is the case with such theories of man, meaningful for limited perspectives, as have been propounded by psychoanalysis, Marxism, racial theory. They veil man himself as soon as they attempt to investigate anything more than aspects of his nature. [PSP, p. 61]

For Jaspers, man's freedom is fundamentally based on a relationship to transcendence. Man is imprisoned by his finitude, but transcendence gives him freedom--and his

use of freedom in decision gives him the power of transcending finitude. By an absoluteness of decision man feels the transcendence that is freedom and thereby transforms and revitalizes even the mode of his finitude:

But if in the absoluteness of his decision in the face of everything finite in the world, he becomes through his independence, certain of his infinity as his authentic selfhood, this infinity also reveals a new mode of his finiteness. This finiteness as existence means that even as himself man cannot ascribe himself to himself.[PSP, p. 66]

Because man cannot ascribe himself to himself, Jaspers asserts that man is actually given to himself over and over again by transcendence and only with the help of the hand of transcendence can man have freedom at all:

If man maintains his inner integrity in the face of fate and even of death, he cannot do so by himself alone. What helps him here is of a different kind than any help in the world. Transcendent help reveals itself to him solely in the fact that he can be himself. That he can stand by himself, he owes to an intangible hand, extended to him from transcendence, a hand whose presence he can feel only in his freedom. [Same]

Freedom is the proof, then, of transcendence. Because of this relationship to transcendence it is also intimately related to faith:

Faith stands on the road to freedom that is not an absolute and not an empty freedom, but that is experienced as the possibility of being given or not given to oneself. It is only through freedom that I become certain of transcendence. [Same]

Transcendence and freedom, then, are somewhat different in Jaspers than in Sartre. God does not figure

in Sartre's conception. Thus, while Jaspers' Transcendenz relates itself to God, Sartre's transcendence is more like Überschreitung; that is, it is not so much a relationship to infinite Being as merely an over-stepping of certain limitations, a surpassing of the self by the self without outside help. For Jaspers and for Marcel, man's relationship is as much with the Beyond as with the world about him and with himself; a removal of this intimate relationship would radically affect their conceptions. Thus, one sees in the conception of freedom a basic difference between the theistic and the non-theistic orientations; in the theistic orientation, transcendence is the evidence and manifestation of a real external power, while in the non-theistic orientation transcendence is merely man surpassing himself.

History: Geschichtlichkeit and Geschichtsphilosophie.

With reference to the relationship of man to history, Jaspers asserts his idea that man is an infinite Existenz which must find realization and actualization in a finite time and place, that is, in history. History, then, is the finite arena in which man must operate. Further, man is always already in time and space; he does not choose his place in history. The idea that man is always already in history and the idea that he must actualize his Existenz in and through history Jaspers calls Geschichtlichkeit, generally translated as

"historicity." Authentic existence requires an historical consciousness, a realization that man must always be "in-situation," so to speak, and that this situation is an historical situation whose proper dimensions extend into the past and the future.

Because history is the arena in which the Existenz expresses itself, the proper study of history is not a scientific study of history but a philosophical examination of the past for evidence of the way Existenz has expressed itself. This more philosophical approach to history Jaspers calls Geschichtsphilosophie. History must receive its usefulness from a relation to Existenz; thus, Jaspers is concerned with distinguishing between a dead scientific history of mere facts and a history that is an expression of, and otherwise related to, Existenz. In other words, history as mere knowledge must be distinguished from history as philosophy; otherwise true history will sink into oblivion:

Damit Existenz sich mit Existenzen in dem gemeinsamen geschichtlichen Grunde verstehe, bedarf es des Wissens vom Vergangenen. Dieses Wissen, als Wissen methodisch-kritisch geprüft, ist Historie als Wissenschaft; verwandelt in existentielles Selbstverständnis, ist es Geschichtsphilosophie. Beide sind als Anspruch Gegenstand eines Kampfes, der schliesslich im Willen zur Geschichtslosigkeit versinken kann. [Phil., p. 635]

Scientific history and accurate data are necessary, but without an historical consciousness which gives them significance in relationship to self-understanding they may degenerate into mere objective Historie:

Wenn die historische Forschung die Tendenz hat, sich vom geschichtlichen Bewusstsein der Existenz zu lösen, um als historisches Bewusstsein nur noch Wissen zu sein, so bringt diese Verwandlung zwei Gefahren: die eigentliche Geschichtlichkeit kann mir verlorengehen bis zu der Resterscheinung eines endlosen historischen Wissens; oder ich will mich von ihr lösen zu einem allgemeinen menschlichen Wahren für alle, das ich in historischer Objektivität als Autorität kenne. [Phil., p. 636]

History, then, can never be objective knowledge in the scientific sense, for it treats of man. And because it treats of man in time and space as a manifestation of something non-objective, the attempt to reduce it to objectivity is actually another form of what Jaspers has called unfaith.

To avoid the loss of a proper historical consciousness, Jaspers submits his Geschichtsphilosophie. Geschichtsphilosophie involves a systematic relating of encompassing and transcendence and Existenz to history. In brief, it involves a perception of the limitations of historical data and history itself, the limitations of man's consciousness of history, and finally the symbolic nature of history as a cipher of transcendence. [See esp. Phil., p. 638]

In conclusion, one may say that Jaspers' concept of Geschichtlichkeit contains both an affirmation and a denial. It affirms the necessity for man's Existenz to be actualized in an historical place and time. At the same time, it denies the finality of history, ~~that~~ for man can overcome history in history by finding in it an expression of more than history.⁵

⁵For eight ways of overcoming history see The Origin and Goal of History, trans. M. Bullock (London, 1953), pp. 272-6.

Ciphers. Jaspers' Philosophie culminates with an elaboration of his concept of ciphers (Chiffre, Chiffreschrift). All through the Philosophie the essential limitations of the world, of human existence, and of human thought, were shown to seem to point to something beyond, something like an ultimate, infinite, inconceivable, encompassing Being. Myth, theology, and philosophy are limited human creations, but can point to transcendence. With his concept of ciphers, Jaspers attempts to elaborate more specifically on the manner of this pointing to transcendence.

For Jaspers, reality is ultimately symbolical. The world is by nature ephemeral and unstable, and its phenomena disappear as soon as they have spoken (as ciphers of transcendence) to Existenz. One might say that what experience is for consciousness-as-such (namely the link between object and subject) the cipher is for Existenz--the link to transcendence. Ciphers are not identical with appearances as such, but are the language spoken through them by transcendence.

A cipher, in other words, may be considered to be a type of symbol. However, symbols may be of two kinds, Jaspers asserts--a deutbares Symbol, in which case it points to something in the world, or a schaubares Symbol, which cannot be interpreted but only intuited, which refers not to a specific and determined something, but instead to a reality different

in kind. The deutbares Symbol is the world speaking in its empirical dimension to consciousness-as-such; the schaubares Symbol speaks symbolically (as a cipher) to Existenz. A cipher is not a deutbares Symbol, but a schaubares Symbol. It does not point to something in the world, but is, in a sense, what is pointed at as it subsists super-empirically in the empirically given world and in the experience of human beings.

Ciphers will be illustrated in the subsequent consideration of Scheitern, or "shipwreck," for shipwreck may be a cipher of transcendence. Freedom, too, is a cipher, for it points to Transcendence. Ciphers are related to the concept of Geschichtlichkeit, for history must be read as a cipher and one tends to transcend history when it is considered as a cipher. The cipher, then, is that within an object or action or power which, though not empirically conceivable, speaks to Existenz to indicate transcendence. It is the "language" of transcendence.

Grenzsituationen. The concept of the Grenzsituation, generally translated as "boundary situation" or "ultimate situation," is one of the most characteristic aspects of Jaspers' philosophy. Ultimate situations are those situations which all human beings must experience. The six major examples of these ultimate and inescapable "situations" in which man finds himself both involved and restricted are:

1) Geschichtlichkeit, 2) death, 3) suffering, 4) struggle, 5) guilt, and 6) Fragwürdigkeit. It is equally as senseless, Jaspers asserts, to seek the ultimate situations as it is to try to blind oneself to them. The proper attitude is to dare to face them while not seeking to bring them on. In this attitude one may realize his Existenz in the very process of "coming up against a wall."

Jaspers presents a Systematik of these six boundary situations [Phil., p. 474] which may^{be} summarized as follows:

- I. One must always be in-situation. One cannot get out of history, change the fact that he is a man or that he is young or old or that he is well-formed or ill. These remind man that while he possesses potentiality, he is not pure potentiality.
- II. Particular ultimate situations. This second category includes situations involving a personal and individual and particular encounter with various forms of one's finitude:
 - A. Death
 - B. Suffering
 - C. Struggle
 - D. Guilt
- III. Fragwürdigkeit is the third category, and is in part a product of the first two. It is essentially the human encounter with ultimate questionability--the questionability of the being of the world and finally the questionability of my being itself.

These three categories correspond to the major divisions of the Philosophie, as Jaspers indicates in a section called "Stufen des Sprunges der in den Grenzsituationen werdenden Existenz," that is, "Stages of the Leap by the becoming Existenz in Ultimate Situations":

Die drei Sprünge gingen vom Weltdasein angesichts der Fragwürdigkeit von allem zur substantiellen Einsamkeit des universal Wissenden, vom Betrachten der Dinge

angesichts meiner notwendigen Teilnahme an der Welt des Scheiterns zum Erhellen möglicher Existenz, vom Dasein als möglicher Existenz zur wirklichen Existenz in Grenzsituationen. Der erste führt zum Philosophieren in Weltbildern, der zweite zum Philosophieren als Existenzserhellung, der dritte zum philosophischen Leben der Existenz. [Phil., p. 472]

These are leaps to establish a proper relationship with world, with existence, and with transcendental Existenz--the three major efforts of the Philosophie.

Professor Edwin Latzel distinguishes five pervasive and fundamental ideas in Jaspers with reference to ultimate situations: 1) "The senselessness of a direct seeking of the ultimate situation"; 2) "The unavoidability of the ultimate situation"; 3) "The dual aspect of the ultimate situation"; 4) "The awakening of Existenz in the ultimate situation"; 5) "The 'existential' necessity of the ultimate situation."⁶

The senselessness of a direct seeking of the ultimate situation has been discussed earlier, as well as the unavoidability of it. One note may be added regarding unavoidability, and that is concerning guilt. Guilt is unavoidable. Jaspers asserts that merely by actively participating in life one takes something away from others; on the other hand, if one does not participate, one is guilty of denying his own potential, his Existenz:

⁶"The Concept of 'Ultimate Situation' in Jaspers' Philosophy," in The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers, "Library of Living Philosophers" series, ed. P.A. Schilpp (New York, 1957), pp. 196-201.

Dadurch, dass ich tätig das Leben ergreife, nehme ich also anderen weg, lasse ich in den Verstrickungen die Unreinheit der Seele entstehen, verletze ich durch meine ausschliessende Verwirklichung im Zurückweisen mögliche Existenz. [Phil., p. 507]

Thus, if I act or do not act, in either case I am in guilt.

The dual aspect of the ultimate situation refers to the fact that it is both creative and destructive, and that is, in a sense, paradoxical. Geschichtlichkeit, for instance, involves the idea that only in destruction can come the positive realization of one's being and of transcendence:

Die Geschichtlichkeit als das sich stets zerstörende Hervorbringen ist die Erscheinung, in der allein ich meiner selbst und der Transzendenz gewiss werde. Nur in dieser Erscheinung ergreife ich das Sein. [Phil., p. 512]

Happiness, too, has a negative value for true being; only suffering and shipwreck give true joy, or the truth of joy:

Wäre nur Glück des Daseins, so bliebe mögliche Existenz im Schlummer. Es ist wunderbar, dass das reine Glück leer wirkt. Wie Leiden das faktische Dasein vernichtet, so scheint Glück das eigentliche Sein zu bedrohen. Im Glücklichsein ist ein Selbsteinwand durch ein Wissen, das es nicht bestehen lässt. Das Glück muss in Frage gestellt sein, um als wiederhergestellt erst eigentlich Glück zu werden; die Wahrheit des Glücks ~~merkt~~ steht auf dem Grunde des Scheiterns. [Phil., p. 493]

Paradoxically, then, just as suffering tends to negate one's factual being, so happiness threatens one's actual being. Mere happiness obstructs the realization of one's being, but suffering is the gate to joy and transcendence. Shipwreck has the dual aspect of being apparently destructive but actually creative--the ground of transcendence.

Ultimate situations, then, seem to be the negation and end of one's being; but in the shipwreck of the ultimate situation there comes the awakening of one's Existenz. For if all of existence were happiness, Existenz would remain dormant. Struggle and suffering create the authentic man, even while leaving their marks on him. And it is the ultimate questionableness of the world and of man's being that turns him decisively to Existenz.

Ultimate situations, finally, are an existential necessity. "Pure happiness is empty," says Jaspers; suffering is a necessity. Guilt is needed to shatter the self-righteousness of man. Fragwürdigkeit turns man to his own Existenz. Thus, one is not surprised to hear Jaspers say that true Being is experienced in Grenzsituationen or not at all:

Da also das wahre Sein nur in der Grenzsituation oder gar nicht erfahren wird, so hätte in einer Welt ohne Antinomik, mit bestehender absoluter Wahrheit als objektiv vorhandener, Existenz aufgehört zu sein und mit ihr das Sein im Dasein, dem Transzendenz fühlbar werden kann. [Phil., p. 511]

Grenzsituationen are the result of the existence of antinomies. Without antinomies, life as it is experienced by human beings would cease. Without antinomies, transcendence and equally Existenz could by definition no longer be, for there would be nothing to transcend and possibilities would vanish; only in an existence characterized by antinomies and ultimate situations do Existenz and transcendence have any meaning.

Scheitern. Scheitern is generally translated either "shipwreck" or "foundering." The ultimate situations discussed immediately above are themselves illustrations of this foundering. What is foundering? Foundering is the essential relationship of man to the Transcendent. It is a result of man's inability to actually encompass the Encompassing; it is an expression of man's inability to think transcendence; it is involved in the process of the individual Existenz pointing the Dasein to the ground of all being; it presents the experience of human beings trying to overcome the necessity inherent in their finitude and coming up against a wall. All the forms of existing where human beings striving for authenticity "come up against a wall" are forms of foundering.

Antinomies are responsible, or at least integral, for foundering. Jaspers takes into account the power of passion when it gains ascendancy over reason, as a form of foundering, as may be seen in his famous chapter, "Das Gesetz des Tages und die Leidenschaft zur Nacht." [Phil., pp. 762-74] Jaspers does not place a positive value on passion, however; rather "passion for the night" is an ultimate, insurmountable experience not assimilable to order. The power of night (passion) asserts itself as an obstacle to any neat conception of the reasonableness and order of man. Jaspers posits other antinomies in which even as man

strives for one pole, he finds himself foundering on the other:⁷ Trotz und Hingabe, Abfall und Aufstieg, and Unity and diversity. Foundering, then, is inescapably built into the existence of man.

In the final portions of the Philosophie, Jaspers shows foundering as a cipher. This includes all foundering except ultimate foundering, for since a cipher is a pointer at transcendence, ultimate foundering would not be ultimate if it pointed beyond. All other forms of foundering are ciphers, however, because of the fact that as one comes up against the barriers involved in foundering one becomes keenly aware of the barrier as a barrier. The awareness of the barrier as barrier is equally an awareness of something beyond the barrier, so the very process of coming up against that barrier becomes a cipher of transcendence.

Ultimate foundering, however, creates a situation where the cipher becomes uninterpretable.⁸ Jaspers considers, in this connection, ruinous wholesale destruction, the early extinguishing of human potentialities through insanity or death, and the possibility of the annihilation of historical continuity (through the loss of documents and all evidence telling of human activity). In these cases foundering is

⁷"Uns aber, wo wir Eines meinen, ganz, /ist schon des ander Aufwand fühlbar....Da wird für eines Augenblickes Zeichnung/ein Grund von Gegenteil bereitet, mühsam, dass wir sie sähen...." Rilke, Duino Elegy IV, 9-10, 14-16.

⁸The death of a child in Rilke's Duino Elegy IV "ist unbeschreiblich." This is ultimate foundering.

no longer a cipher, but only the presence of nothingness. This creates the radical despair and Angst for which there is no answer--only silence.

Nur vor der undeutbaren Chiffre wird schliesslich das Ende der Welt das Sein. Während für das Wissen jedes Ende in der Welt und in der Zeit ist, niemals ein Ende der Welt und der Zeit, steht das Schweigen vor der undeutbaren Chiffre des universalen Scheiterns in bezug auf das Sein der Transzendenz, vor dem die Welt vergangen ist. Das Nichtsein allen uns zugänglichen Seins, das sich im Scheitern offenbart, ist das Sein der Transzendenz.

Keine dieser Formeln sagt etwas, jede sagt dasselbe, alle sagen nur: Sein. Es ist, als ob sie nichts sagten, denn sie sind ein Brechen des Schweigens, ohne es brechen zu können. [Phil., p. 876]

Anguish in its ultimate form, then, is anguish before the experience of uninterpretable foundering. It is anguish before nothingness, before meaninglessness. And it is this ultimate foundering and anguish which "resonates" all the milder, interpretable forms of foundering. But what does Jaspers propose at this point (which occupies the final pages of the Philosophie)? The only answer is an irrational and incomprehensible leap. Thus, in the end of his Philosophie the ultimate action of the anguished being is, when there is no way out, to leap from anguish to peace. Like Kierkegaard's ultimate leap, the "leap of faith" into the irrational and absurd, Jaspers' leap is irrational and perhaps could as easily be a leap into nothingness as into Being. But then this is precisely the reason that it is in both cases a leap of faith:

die eigentliche Angst ist die, die sich für das Letzte hält, aus der kein Weg mehr ist. Der Sprung in ein angstloses Sein scheint ihr wie eine leere Möglichkeit: ich will springen, aber ich weiss schon, dass ich nicht herüberkomme, sondern nur in den bodenlosen Abgrund der endgültig letzten Angst versinke.

Der Sprung aus der Angst zur Ruhe ist der ungeheuerste, den der Mensch tun kann. Dass er ihm gelingt, muss seinen Grund über die Existenz des Selbstseins hinaus haben; sein Glaube knüpft ihn unbestimmbar an das Sein der Transzendenz. [Phil., p. 877]

Ultimate foundering leads to the ultimate irrational, incomprehensible leap of faith. But in a shipwreck, who knows but that such a leap is an invalid solution? And in Jaspers even ultimate foundering seems to affirm or facet Being.

Communication. Only with an understanding of Jaspers' concepts of Existenz, of Geschichtlichkeit, of ciphers, and of transcendence, can a proper appreciation of his idea of communication be achieved. Communication takes place on many levels, but the most authentic level is the communication between Existenz and Existenz. It involves a certain Geschichtlichkeit even as it transcends it, because the communion is between two existing beings in an historical time and place. It involves the idea of the cipher because for the Existenz, the fact of communication with a co-Existenz is a cipher of transcendence. It involves transcendence, because the ultimate basis of true communication is the common ground in Being.

True communication, then, is a form of communion. This is noted by Professor Fritz Kaufmann in his valuable

article on communication in Jaspers:

Man's love for God has its proper actuality only in this loving communication with his actual Thou in a concrete situation of human life. Although this love evaporates if squandered in unworldly reverie, it becomes substantial and productive in the absolute seriousness of the partnership between man and man, as sustained appeal to one another's self-hood. Such co-Existenz is, within the medium of this world, a kind of holy communion and divine service.⁹

Not only does man show his love for God through loving communication, true communication is grounded in God:

Being founded in actuality proper and by it, being oriented by and towards its unity, all true communication has its locus in God--is an amare in Deo (a loving in God)--even though there seems to be no communication with Him. [Same, pp. 223-4]

Jaspers' concept of loving communication is, in many ways, an extension of Marcel's ideas on communication. Loving communication is the only genuine communication; it is the communication which recognizes, appreciates, and respects the individuality of the other Existenz on a level which calls for the pronoun, "thou." Loving communication is ultimately grounded in God.

Jaspers also treats of the communication involved in an artist's "feeling into" nature and into his work. Man and especially the artist must commune with things, must come to be able to say "thou" to things as well as to other beings. Man must constantly strive to overcome mere juxta-

⁹"Karl Jaspers and a Philosophy of Communication," in The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers, ed. P. A. Schilpp, [prev. cited] p. 223.

position, must strive to transform this juxtaposition into a higher relationship of communion with other selves and with things. True art-objects are a product of true communion and continue it; they are ciphers of transcendence. Indeed, they are more than ciphers--that is, more than something to be merely read; they are to be communed with as being (like other selves) a concretization of Being.

Communication involves community, and Jaspers even goes so far as to say that philosophical truth may be gauged in terms of whether it promotes true community. But community in this sense is not conceived externally in terms of a social group, but in terms of the relationship of Existenz to co-Existenz, a relationship of common grounding in love and Being. Professor Kaufmann states this relationship as follows:

Our fellow being is our companion as partner in a common love for Being as such--for Being as Transcendence proper. Transcendence is the ground--not merely the sum total--of all phenomena, the "common depth" which is not our habitation, and in which, nevertheless, we live, move and have our particular being; it is the "other side of nature"; and it is the only locus in which two lines of personal life, surpassing this world and independent in their original spring, can ultimately meet. A philosophical thought is true as far as its actualization both needs and promotes communication and community--without losing, however, its root in individual Existenz.
[Same, p. 224]

Thus, Jaspers (more than any of the other Existentialist philosophers considered in this dissertation) recognizes that without the co-Existenz, the solitary Existenz,

for all its self-consciousness, is nothing. Existenz must exist in relationships with others. These relationships may be in various forms--the feeling of "we," sympathy, interest, understanding, or the highest form, love. In any case, loving communication is the highest possibility to which an existing, temporal being can attain. Jaspers, himself, puts it masterfully in Von der Wahrheit:

In allen diesen Fällen des Miteinanderseins--Ansteckung, Mitgefühl, Miteinandererleben, Verstehen--wird dieses erfüllt von den Weisen des Umgreifenden, von der Einheit des Lebensstroms (der Interessen, Gewohnheiten, Gegnerschaften), der Einheit des Bewusstseins überhaupt, der Einheit des Geistes. Eigentliche Liebe aber ist erst aus dem Ursprung des Selbstseins (der Existenz). Liebe in Kommunikation selbstseiender Menschen ist die letzte Möglichkeit im Zeitdasein.¹⁰

This is a significant statement of Jaspers' positive position, and a vindication of love as an existential reality. Communication among authentically existing selves is the path to the realization of Existenz, and it is a keystone in the whole philosophical structure of Jaspers' thought.

Art. Art in its genuine form is, as one might anticipate, a cipher of transcendence. It is a product of reading the ciphers of nature, history, and man, but what it says can be said in no other way:

Das Lesen der Chiffre in Natur, Geschichte und im Menschen mitzuteilen, ist Kunst, wenn die Mitteilung in der Anschaulichkeit als solcher, nicht im spekulativen Gedanken erfolgt. Da Kunst die Chiffren sprechen lässt, aber was sie als Kunst sagt, auf keine andere Weise.

¹⁰(München, 1947), p. 1010.

gesagt werden kann, und das so Gesagte doch das eigentliche Sein trifft, um das alles Philosophieren sich bewegt, wird hier die Kunst das Organon der Philosophie (Schelling). [Phil., p. 840]

Because art involves a contemplation of the ciphers of transcendence, it serves to illuminate Existenz.

In ihrem Ursprung ist Kunst die Erhellung der Existenz durch eine Vergewisserung, welche das Sein im Dasein anschauend zur Gegenwart bringt. [Phil., p. 283]

Art is a sort of actualization of Being.

Since, however, Being suffers and is in some sense travestied and betrayed by every attempt to make it objective, art founders in its attempt to render Being--indeed, it must founder to the very extent it is genuine art. Art, then, is between the finitude of temporal existence and the infinity of eternal Being; it is, as Professor Johannes Pfeiffer sums it up, both more and at the same time less than reality:

the perception of the artistic imagination is at one and the same time both more and less than the reality of our existence in time: more, if one proceeds from the mere factuality of the dull cares of existence; less, if one looks at authentic Existenz in the concentrated seriousness of its responsible openness. From the point of view of the former, art is a soaring which liberates; from that of the latter, a non-committal suspension; but this suspended self-oblivion is at the same time a condition for the possibility of authentic self-being: In so far as it frees us from the narrowness and constraint of our own purpose-circumscribed private existence. Or vice versa: In the world's transfiguring of itself into a cipher, phenomena gain their beauty in themselves and grand us, for fleeting moments, the consciousness of time-conquering fulfillment.¹¹

¹¹"Jaspers' Interpretation of Art," in The Philosophy of Jaspers, ed. P. A. Schilpp, [prev. cited] p. 710.

However important time-conquering fulfillment is, its achievement in contemplative form through art must never become a substitute for action:

To be non-committal is, indeed a danger which belongs to the essence of art as such ... its detachment ... brings the totality and depth of life to present completion.... Therein lies the seduction: in artistic creation as in imitation, to lose oneself, in contemplative enjoyment, to a timeless fulfillment in the present. In the perception of the whole, which takes up into itself everything dark and fragile, something akin to salvation from temporal existence is finally anticipated, at the price, however, of an 'existential' de-realization....[Same, p. 708]

One must exercise the greatest care that the entering into the detached calm of the symbolic presence of Being not be a one-way trip, that it always be only a temporary withdrawal from, and then return to, the Existenz which at once enters into and comprehends it. One cannot enter into a detached and non-committal aestheticism, for one then abandons the spiritual-moral basis of life.

For Jaspers, then, transcendence through art is of great value; but if it leads to a permanently detached and contemplative attitude toward life, it loses value. It can even be antithetical to authenticity, if it seeks to take a detached and impersonal attitude toward, for instance, the ultimate situations. If one takes a detached attitude toward death, or toward guilt, then it is robbed of its power to bring the individual to authentic Existenz realization. Only as one faces actively the ultimate situation as my death, or my guilt, can one come to transcendence through shipwreck.

In conclusion, one may say that Jaspers sees art as a cipher of transcendence, but is quick to note the inherent dangers in the artistic attitude of detached contemplation.

Summary. An effort has been made in all-too-brief a compass to characterize some of the fundamental concepts in the Existenzphilosophie of Karl Jaspers. Perhaps the most central concepts to Jaspers' way of philosophizing could be said to be Encompassing, Existenz, and transcendence. But of basic importance also are freedom, Geschichtlichkeit, ultimate situations, foundering, and ciphers. Loving communication is a keystone to fulfillment in his philosophy, as is faith and the ultimate leap of faith. Important, too, in understanding his thought is his threefold division of his Philosophie into world, individual Existenz, and metaphysics, for these indicate the nature of the kind of orientation to Being which he is trying to suggest. In each of these levels (which remotely parallel the three stages of Kierkegaard), the individual is obliged to exist and to cope with certain problems and realities. Jaspers has furnished an exploration of these realities and at the same time related his thought to the tradition in philosophy; he has made the existential attitude which was originally anti-philosophical into an almost systematic philosophy of Existenz. In a sense, Jaspers has transformed Kierkegaard's experientialism into a meta-

physics. The emphasis is shifted from inwardness to a philosophy of disclosure of transcendence. From passionate religious fear and trembling and self-torture, the emphasis shifts to the multiple modes of Encompassing and to the foundering on the rock of transcendence. Existentialism has become a philosophy.

To consider it a philosophy in the conventional sense would be inaccurate and even unjust; more correctly, it is a way of philosophizing--one might even use the word Tao. The message of his philosophy is not in any set of propositions so much as in the movement and manner of his philosophizing. Jaspers has asserted that conceptual knowledge is doomed to founder. By this token, one may assert that Jaspers' philosophy itself is also doomed to founder. But in the very mode of this foundering something other than the specific propositions comes through. The intangible "content" and élan convey something that is not translatable into words. Perhaps Jaspers has at least partially succeeded in what he considers the central and difficult task of philosophy and the basic objective of his own thinking: to convey with objective thinking and objective concepts what is not objective; to convey with and through words what cannot really be put into words.

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A fundamental ontology. Heidegger calls his philosophy a "fundamental ontology." While his ultimate concern is with Being as such, he asserts that the best way to study it is through a phenomenological examination of the human being; for man is the being that is in the world and has a consciousness of his own being. Since man is being and is "there" in the world, Heidegger calls him "Dasein," literally, "being-there."

Heidegger's central concern, then, is with Being. His concern with man is largely as he is an expression of Being; he wishes to see man as a mode of being. His analysis, then, is not to be taken as a psychological, sociological, or scientific analysis; rather he is concerned with the nature of the mode of being of man: He is not concerned with "that which is" (das Seiende) but with the "being of that which is" (das Sein des Seienden).

His terms and designations, too, are not to be taken in the ordinary senses of those words in everyday language, but in a special sense, as a concrete term for an attribute of Being. Sorge, for instance, is not to be taken as synonymous with worldly cares, but as an element or mode of abstract Being, as a tendency to direct attention forward toward the fulfillment of possibility. One must bear in mind, then, that Heidegger is attempting to "start again" in a

radically different way of thinking from that of the present. His aim is to stimulate a new kind of awareness of Being which will be most like that done by pre-Socratic philosophers. In this effort to create a new type of philosophizing, Heidegger has eschewed traditional terminology because it tends to carry with it the static and erroneous conceptions of essentialistic thinking; he has, in short, literally had to create a new terminology to clothe a new type of thinking about Being.

Heidegger's thought is, consequently, more revolutionary (and at the same time more reactionary) than Jaspers. Jaspers tries to use the older categories of philosophy, such as metaphysics and transcendence in new ways (much in the same way as Hegel tried to incorporate motion into his philosophy by means of the dialectic); Heidegger, however, scraps the traditional categories (Will, Idea, and so forth) and starts all over again with man's awareness of Being.

Seinsverständnis. The understanding of Being which is given to man with his own being is called by Heidegger Seinsverständnis. This understanding is super-rational, vague, and general--but an undeniable fact, a positively existing phenomenon:

Dieses durchschnittliche und vage Seinsverständnis ist ein Faktum. Dieses Seinsverständnis mag noch so sehr schwanden und verschwimmen und sich hart an der Grenze einer blossen Wortkenntnis bewegen--diese Unbestimmtheit des je schon verfügbaren Seinsverständnisses ist selbst ein positives Phänomen, das der Auf-

klärung bedarf.¹

The exploration and explanation of this Seinsverständnis is the basic and underlying aim of all of Heidegger's thought.

Das Sein und das Seiende. Heidegger makes a distinction between Being (permanent and unchanging) and an individual being as it subsists empirically in the realm of change and becoming. The first, he calls "das Sein"; the second, he terms "das Seiende." Das Sein is something like "pure Being," while "das Seiende" is the human being from the point of view of all the empirical attributes of his finitude.² Heidegger's concern is the "das Sein des Seienden" through Seinsverständnis. He is interested in the "ontological" rather than the "ontic" structures of Being.

Ontological and ontic. The word "ontological" in Heidegger refers to attributes and structures in the nature of Being, that is, in the way things are; "ontic" comes close to the traditional word "empirical," or "actual" in its conventional sense. "Ontological" refers to the unchanging structures and dynamics of the reality above all actual being, which both permit and determine the real structures of actual events in the empirical world. "Ontic" refers to attributes of actual processes of change and becoming.

¹Sein und Zeit (Tübingen, 1927), pp.15-6. Hereinafter abbreviated "SZ."

²Das Seiende corresponds to Jaspers' das Dasein. Heidegger's use of Dasein is more general in its connotation than Jaspers', and may often be translated as the "human being."

The distinction between ontological and ontic leads to a distinction between the attributes which are ontological, which Heidegger puts in the category of "Existentiale," and the attributes which are ontic, which he calls "Existentielle." Heidegger's "fundamental ontology" is basically a study of Existentiale, but involves beginning with the human being rather than trying to approach Being-as-such directly. Thus, Heidegger's ontology is predicated on an analysis of human being:

Die Analytik des Daseins ... soll die fundamental ontologische Problematik, die Frage nach dem Sinn von Sein überhaupt, vorbereiten. [SZ, p. 183]

Heidegger's ontology is a foundation-laying ontology; one might even say a pre-fundamental ontology. Heidegger uses the word "fundamental" largely to indicate that he is not dealing with a special branch of ontology, but with its most fundamental aspects.

Heidegger versus Jaspers. What, then, are the basic differences between the thought of Heidegger and that of Jaspers? Heidegger contends that Jaspers remains too much on the level of das Seiende, analyzing actual situations in their finite and psychological regions. Thus, he tends to reason from the shipwreck in the realm of das Seiende to a transcendence that is little different from the traditional conception. Instead of furnishing ontological structures of Being, Jaspers (Heidegger asserts) submits merely ontic

analyses. Instead of digging away at a new exploration of Being and a new definition of metaphysics, Jaspers accepts the tradition of metaphysics and constructs a metaphysics instead of an ontology. Altogether, Jaspers is not radical enough to suit Heidegger.

Jaspers, then, seems always to move from existence to transcendence; Heidegger conceives of motion as always from Being to existence. This is a difficult distinction to make since both emphasize the priority of Being, but Heidegger asserts that Jaspers seems always to be inferring transcendence from physical foundering and from human limitations; Heidegger thinks of himself as concerned with Being as it emerges into actualization and temporality in truth, in, for instance, the naming of the gods. Heidegger considers that Jaspers has remained bound to tradition, while he has achieved a radical break with present philosophy with a new conception of Being in his ontology, and a new conception of time in his ecstatic theory of time. Jaspers has tended to remain more restrained, more methodical, more traditional.

Among Heidegger's ardent admirers there is sometimes something approaching disdain for Jaspers--as for instance in a valuable article on Heidegger by Karl Löwith, in which Jaspers' "philosophical faith" is unfairly characterized as the last echo of secularized Christianity in German idealism:

In the last analysis, the religious positions of Jaspers and Heidegger are even strangely inversed: the intellectual background of Jaspers, who has a certain leaning toward religion and a definite affinity to liberal protestantism, is positive science, while Heidegger, from whose philosophy Sartre has drawn atheistic conclusions, was nurtured by theology and still retains much more of a religious pathos than Jaspers' "philosophical faith," which is no more than the last echo of secularized Christianity in German idealism.³

Professor Löwith finds Jaspers riddled with relativism (which has led one critic to characterize him as "the gliding philosopher" [Heinemann, p. 74]) while Heidegger is more modern and radical:

He [Heidegger] is more radical because his analysis of Being within the horizon of Time does not, like the "elucidation of existence" by Jaspers, presuppose, and then relativize, the objective knowledge of positive science and aim at a traditional though relativised metaphysics of objective transcendence. [Löwith, p. 348]

The most crucial distinction between the thought of Heidegger and Jaspers, however, occurs with reference to finitude and temporality. Jaspers posits a realm of the infinite and eternal; Heidegger posits no such realm and his concept of time is both ecstatic and horizontal. Being, then, for the two thinkers is radically different in nature, for in Jaspers it is infinite and eternal and "cuts across" time, while in Heidegger Being as such is within the horizon of time. Being, for Heidegger, is finite. These contrasts create the striking differences between the metaphysics of Heidegger and

³"Heidegger: Problem and Background of Existentialism," Social Research, XV (September, 1948), 349.

that of Jaspers, as Professor Löwith notes:

Heidegger rejects the whole enterprise of "metaphysics in the traditional sense of this word where it indicates something eternal, infinite, perfect. Instead he proposes to understand man's being in particular and Being in general within the horizon of Time. What Heidegger calls metaphysics is bound up with the structure of man's finite existence in the world. It is metaphysics in an entirely untraditional sense, namely, a "finite metaphysics of finiteness." And since Heidegger neither starts with positive science nor aims at metaphysics, the middle concept of Jaspers' philosophy, "existence," also has a different meaning for him. It is true that human existence as understood by Heidegger also oversteps or "transcends" itself, but not toward a perfect Being. Existence transcends itself toward its own world, and nothing else. Heidegger's existentialism is uncompromisingly "worldly," not even this-worldly but simply worldly, without any positive or negative concern about a beyond; and yet it is not at all a positivistic secularism. [Same, p. 348-9]

A final distinction between Jaspers and Heidegger is made by Löwith in reference to their "styles of thinking":

with regard to their style of thinking: Jaspers retains the Hegelian ambition of embracing the totality of possible levels and attitudes. He built up a system which is in principle finished, though fluid and undulating. Heidegger is cutting through and digging in, and the apodictic form of his diction should deceive no one about the unresolved tensions of an unfinished and still maturing conception. [Same, p. 349]

Jaspers, Löwith contends, is trying to construct a system à-la-Hegel, while Heidegger is presenting a tentative and still (after thirty years) unfinished conception of Being and time. Although Professor Löwith tends to exaggerate and give an unjustly pejorative view of Jaspers, his contrasts between Heidegger and Jaspers furnish some of the differences (from a Heideggerian point of view) between the two thinkers and help to clarify some of Heidegger's basic aims.

Dasein and Vorhandenheit. Heidegger distinguishes two major modes of Being: Dasein and Vorhandenheit. Vorhandenheit is the mode of being of things, and is analyzed in terms of Kategorien and static "qualities." Dasein is the human, conscious mode of being, and is analyzed in terms of modes, ways of being, Existenzialien. Man, Heidegger asserts, is too often analyzed in terms of Kategorien and qualities, in terms which are more applicable to mere physical objects. Any approach to man presupposes a view of man either as an object, as Vorhandenheit, or as freedom, possibility, consciousness, as Existenzialität:

Alle Explikate, die der Analytik des Daseins entspringen, sind gewonnen im Hinblick auf seine Existenzstruktur. Weil sie sich aus der Existenzialität bestimmen, nennen wir die Seinscharaktere des Daseins Existenzialien. Sie sind scharf zu trennen von den Seinsbestimmungen des nicht daseinsmässigen Seienden, die wir Kategorien nennen. [SZ, p. 44]

The term Existenz can only be applied to Dasein--not Vorhandenheit. The becoming being, "das Seiende," can be analyzed as a physical thing or as Existenz; as Heidegger puts it, he may be analyzed as a "who" or as a "what": "Seiende ist ein Wer (Existenz) oder ein Was (Vorhandenheit im weitesten Sinne)." [SZ, p. 45] Heidegger contends that too many people would rather be a what than a who; they would rather be thought of in terms of "categories" into which they fall than as authentically existing human beings. Sartre speaks of this phenomenon from an almost psychological point of

view, as a fear of freedom, a secret yearning to become a thing which is acted upon rather than a responsible, inner-directed being who can ask: Who am I?

Heidegger contends that man in the Western tradition has been philosophically conceived in static terms of essence and substance. "What"-thinking and "thing"-thinking have tended to dim man's apprehension of being as temporal and in flux. Man has too often been considered in terms of a qualitative description of whatness, in terms of substance, in Cartesian terms of being a thinking thing, rather than in terms of man defined in terms of the special manner in which man stands in relation to time and exists in and through time. An analysis of this latter type is what Heidegger is attempting to introduce in his Sein und Zeit. Indeed, one critic has cogently interpreted Heidegger's overall aim as being to destroy the Cartesianism of the present day, since Existentialists tend to identify Descartes with the genesis of objective, substance-oriented thinking.⁴

Heidegger's central concern, as one might guess, is not with Vorhandenheit, but with an analysis of Dasein. Vorhandenheit involves a manner of being which is not easily knowable, for man is not readily able to communicate with the being of things. Heidegger does, however, distinguish between things which have little relationship to man (Vorhandene) and those things which are related to man as

⁴Werner Marx, "Heidegger's New Conception of Philosophy: The Second Phase of 'Existentialism,'" Social Research, XXII (Winter. 1955). 451-474.

utensils, as tools or objects which receive part of their identity from the very way they are "at hand" (Zuhandene, Zeug). Heidegger's analysis of Dasein is of central importance to his total effort to feel into the nature of Being as such, however, and it is to this analysis that we now turn.

Dasein as "geworfene Entwurf." These two words, "geworfene Entwurf," more than any other two words seem to summarize Heidegger's view of man. The first indicates that man is "thrown" into the world, into history, into his situation. The second term indicates that man's essential mode of being is projective--man projects himself into the future. Man, then, is a "thrown pro-jéct," (putting the accent on the second syllable), a "geworfene Entwurf." While he is admittedly thrown and determined, he also throws himself --into the future; while ^{he} is created, he is also creative; while he is confined, he is also free. Man is partly the situation into which he is thrust and partly a creator of his future situation; he is partly given, partly self-given.

Heidegger's whole analysis of man could be divided into these two aspects of man's mode of being. Geworfenheit indicates the fact that Being, in becoming being (small "b," human being), must be in the world, and in coming into this form of disclosure (Erschlossenheit) it must submit to the modes of being-in-the-world, the modes of "In-sein," in-being.

Entwurf, the second of the two major terms, would include those portions of Heidegger's analysis which seek to show the ways in which ontological potentialities are realized in the "ecstatic" temporal structure of Dasein as it extends itself into the future towards death. These portions, then, would include discussions of Sorge ("concern" in a purely ontological and non-ontic sense), mögliche Ganzsein (potential unity), Sein zum Tode (being towards death), eigentliche Seinkönnen (authentic capacity for being), and so forth.

Three modes of In-sein: Befindlichkeit, Verstehen, Rede. In-sein is an exploration of the ontological content of the "Da" in Dasein. Three important modes of In-sein are those above, but Heidegger lists others which belong specifically to inauthentically existing individuals, which Heidegger has epitomized in his conception of das Man, the dead, conformist, public man. These inauthentic modes will be discussed in a succeeding section.

1) Befindlichkeit. This term indicates the way in which a Dasein is "placed" or "finds himself" (sich befinden) in life and in the world. This is revealed to the individual especially in the way in which he is "tuned" to his environment and in "mood." Professor Werner Brock has described the three aspects of the way in which the disclosure (Erschlossenheit) of Befindlichkeit takes place through "mood":

The "Befindlichkeit" and its self-revelation through "moods" is analysed in three main respects: (a) Though the "wherefrom" and the "whereto" of Dasein remain veiled, the fact "that it is", i.e. the "thrownness" (Geworfenheit) of Dasein into its "There", and that it is left to its own devices and responsibility (Überantwortung) is disclosed to it undisguisedly. The "mood", in its deeper meaning, brings the Dasein face to face with the "That", the fact, of the "There". (b) The "mood" has already always disclosed the "Being-in-the-world" as a whole and makes it possible that the Dasein directs itself towards, and concerns itself with, some things, persons, itself in the world. (c) The Dasein which is circumspect can be affected, impressed, and also threatened, in its "There" by the things and the persons.⁵

The above quotation is a good example of the fact that Heidegger's thought is not any more understandable when condensed and translated into English than it is in the original German. In any event, in Befindlichkeit, the character of man's present "thereness" in the world is disclosed to him through the particular way in which he is tuned to his environment as this is revealed to him in "moods."

2) Verstehen. Verstehen is the aspect of In-sein which makes man aware of his potential. It is not a disclosure of the fact that man is in the world. It is a part of man that suggests to him "for the sake of what" man is in the world. It is, therefore, a part of the projective nature of the being of man, and is intimately linked with possibility, for it is the perception of possibility.

⁵Martin Heidegger, Existence and Being, [four important essays trans. into English plus an extended introduction containing an account of Sein und Zeit] ed. and introduced by Werner Brock (London, 1949), p. 48. Hereinafter abbreviated "EB."

As Heidegger states,

Das Dasein ist ihm selbst überantwortetes Möglichsein, durch und durch geworfene Möglichkeit. Das Dasein ist die Möglichkeit des Freiseins für das eigenste Seinkönnen. [SZ, p. 143]

Verstehen is the perception of this possibility.

Verstehen is not only the perception of possibility but a condition of possibility, and an inner grasping of the "woran," the "wherefore," the significance of being-in-the-world. It is a "given" with being-in-the-world and cannot be conceived separately; yet it is more, for it involves the reaching into possibility, into the very "way things are" for the possibilities of realizing oneself in the world:

Dieses "Wissen" ist nicht erst einer immanenten Selbstwahrnehmung erwachsen, sondern gehört zum Sein des Da, das sein Da ist, kann es sich verlaufen und verkennen. Und sofern Verstehen befindliches ist und als dieses existenzial der Geworfenheit ausgeliefertes, hat das Dasein sich je schon verlaufen und erkannt. In seinem Seinkönnen ist es daher der Möglichkeit überantwortet, sich in seinen Möglichkeiten erst wieder zu finden.

Verstehen ist das existenziale Sein des eigenen Seinkönnens des Daseins selbst, so zwar, dass dieses Sein an ihm selbst das Woran des mit ihm selbst Seins erschliesst. [SZ, p. 144]

Because Verstehen involves this instinctive grasp of possibilities, it is related to that part of man called the Entwurf, the part of man that reaches into the future:

Warum dringt das Verstehen nach allen wesenhaften Dimensionen des in ihm Erschliessbaren immer in die Möglichkeiten? Weil das Verstehen an ihm selbst die existenziale Struktur hat, die wir den Entwurf nennen. Es entwirft das Sein des Daseins auf sein Worumwillen ebenso ursprünglich wie auf die Bedeutsamkeit als die Weltlichkeit seiner jeweiligen Welt. Der Entwurf-

charakter des Verstehens konstituiert das In-der-Welt-sein hinsichtlich der Erschlossenheit seines Da als Da eines Seinkönnens.... Das Verstehen ist, als Entwerfen, die Seinsart des Daseins, in der es seine Möglichkeiten als Möglichkeiten ist. [SZ, p. 145]

Verstehen is both the instrument of the disclosure of possibilities and the very way of being of possibilities.

3) Rede. Rede is not to be understood as an ontic structure, but the ontological superstructure to language. It is an explanation of the way things must be in order that there may be language as such. Heidegger is quick to say that Rede is "gleichursprünglich" with Befindlichkeit and Verstehen, for the first (Befindlichkeit) senses the fact, the second (Verstehen) penetrates the meaning and possibilities of the fact and of being, and the third (Rede) supplies the sign, the articulation of Verständlichkeit. Although Rede is not an ontic structure (rather it is "das existenzial-ontologische Fundament der Sprache," [SZ, p. 160]), it is nevertheless an aspect of the In-sein explanation (of the Da of Dasein) because it is weltlich in character:

Wenn die Rede, die Artikulation der Verständlichkeit des Da, ursprüngliches Existenzial der Erschlossenheit ist, diese aber primär konstituiert wird durch das In-der-Welt-sein, muss auch die Rede wesentlich eine spezifisch weltliche Seinsart haben. Die befindliche Verständlichkeit des In-der-Welt-seins spricht sich als Rede aus. Das Bedeutungs ganze der Verständlichkeit kommt zu Wort. Den Bedeutungen wachsen Worte zu. Nicht aber werden Wörterdinge mit Bedeutungen versehen. [SZ, p. 161]

Coëvil with Rede, too, is meaningful listening and silence:

Zum redenden Sprechen gehören als Möglichkeiten Hören und Schweigen. An diesen Phänomenen wird die konstitutiv Funktion der Rede für die Existenzialität der Existenz erst völlig deutlich. Zunächst geht es um die Herausarbeitung der Struktur der Rede als solcher. [SZ, p. 161]

Through Rede the Existenzialität der Existenz first becomes fully clear.

Although Heidegger treats of "constitutive" characteristics of speech, such as das Worüber der Rede (what is spoken of), das Beredete (what is said as such), Mitteilung (communication), and Bekundung (the information given), these are not to be taken as qualities empirically gathered, but as Existenziale, the traits rooted in the constitution of Dasein which make something such as language ontologically possible. Heidegger points out that former attempts to grasp the "essence of language" have concentrated on one or the other of these aspects, but an adequate conception would attempt to elaborate the structure of Rede on the basis of the analytics of Dasein rather than isolating and objectifying language.

Alltäglichkeit and "das Man." The inauthentic orientation to existing is called by Heidegger "Alltäglichkeit." This orientation is characterized by a rigid and thoughtless conformity to the established everyday pattern. One senses in it a decreasing amount of consciousness, a depressing monotony, as the power of routine and pattern becomes absolute. In this type of existence, man becomes a robot,

a pawn with only enough consciousness to do mechanical tasks. In this type of existence, man denies his essential freedom and sacrifices the realization of creative possibility.

Heidegger has created a model or prototype for this type of existing and has called him "das Man." Das Man is the person of whom one speaks when one uses the impersonal pronoun "man" in such expressions as "man sagt." Das Man is the completely public man; he is the person who is not trying to be himself but succumbing to the pull of the force which whirls him into a mode of existence as one of the crowd. This whirl, this downward spiral, Heidegger calls "das Verfallen des Daseins," that is, the decline or degeneration of the self. Das Man is what Riesmann [prev. cited] calls the "other-directed" man, the man without a face and without identity because he is not distinguishable from "everybody." He is dailiness (Alltäglichkeit) incarnated in a human being.

How do the three modes of In-sein (Befindlichkeit, Verstehen, Rede) apply to das Man? Does he have any true understanding of the way he is placed in the world or of his potentialities? This creates a problem for Heidegger, and he attempts to remedy the situation by setting up three modes which externally and inauthentically correspond to the more genuine modes of In-sein.

Three inauthentic modes of In-sein: Gerede, Neugier, Zweideutigkeit. Three modes of "alltägliche Sein" are analyzed in connection with Verfallen, the declining, or inauthentic mode of being in the world. These three modes seem to be a perversion of Verstehen and Rede, a perversion where the understanding is external and grasps only accepted interpretations and where speech becomes mere talk without depth.

1) Gerede. Gerede (talk) is a modification of Rede which Werner Brock asserts occurs when

...what is spoken of is not so much understood, but where one listens only to what is said; it implies an indifferent and superficial, but no "genuine" understanding and moves in the wide realm of common and accepted interpretations; like the other two [Neugier and Zweideutigkeit] it is a positive and constitutive mode in which everyday Dasein understands and interprets events, things, persons, the world and Dasein itself. [EB, p. 55]

2) Neugier. Neugier is superficial curiosity. It does not look at the world in order to understand what is seen, but merely to see what things look like. The new (neu) is merely attractive because of its novelty. It is a perversion of true sight; it is sight without insight.

3) Zweideutigkeit. Zweideutigkeit (ambiguity) involves a weakness of understanding, an inability to discern what is truly a reflection of Being and what is a form of Verfallenheit. It cannot tell what is authentically disclosed by Verstehen and what is not; it is lost in a world of dailiness and cannot tell the voice of others from its own:

Wenn im alltäglichen Miteinandersein dergleichen begegnet, was jedem zugänglich ist, und worüber jeder jedes sagen kann, wird bald nicht mehr entscheidbar, was in echtem Verstehen erschlossen ist und was nicht. Diese Zweideutigkeit erstreckt sich nicht allein auf die Welt, sondern ebenso sehr auf das Miteinandersein als solches, sogar auf das Sein des Daseins zu ihm selbst. [SZ, p. 173]

All three of the inauthentic modes involve a loss of meaning, and this loss is the consequence of a view of things based on externalities; all three are marked by a failure of any inner understanding. Paradoxically, in an age in which man thinks he is seeing deeper and deeper into things, there is the problem of a loss of meaning that betokens a loss of understanding, an inner failure.

Verfallen. The preceding quotation indicated that there were inherent dangers in the mere being-with-others involved in being in the world. When Miteinandersein becomes a controlling factor rather than Selbstsein, Seinsverständnis, and the realization of mögliche Dasein, then one surrenders to the crowd and becomes das Man. This leads to a denial, in effect, of one's being and constitutes being in a mode of decline which Heidegger calls "Verfallen." Indeed, there is a force (related to the original Geworfenheit) which subtly draws one into the pattern. In following in the pattern one feels a sort of appeasement (Beruhigung); one deceives himself that all is in order. Paradoxically, however, this Beruhigung does not bring peace or rest (Ruhe), but on the contrary, restlessness and meaningless activity. It

only brings an Entfremdung (self-estrangement) which entangles the Dasein, conceals potentiality of being, and throws the Dasein into a tail-spin, the downward spiral of Verfallen:

Die versuchend-beruhigende Entfremdung des Verfallens führt in ihrer eigenen Bewegtheit dazu, dass sich das Dasein in ihm selbst verfängt.

Die aufgezeigten Phänomene der Versuchung[temptation], Beruhigung, der Entfremdung und des Sichverfangens (das Verfängnis) charakterisieren die spezifische Seinsart des Verfallens. Wir nennen diese "Bewegtheit" des Daseins in seinem eigenen Sein den Absturz. Das Dasein stürzt aus ihm selbst in es selbst, in die Bodenlosigkeit und Nichtigkeit der uneigentlichen Alltäglichkeit. [SZ, p. 178]

Paradoxically, one may externally seem to be in the ascendancy when one is actually in decline:

Dieser Sturz aber bleibt ihm durch die öffentliche Ausgelegtheit verborgen, so zwar, dass er ausgelebt wird als "Aufstieg" und "konkretes Leben." [Same]

This Sturz, this Verfallen, is a yielding to the throwness of the geworfene Entwurf, and is a denial of the realization of the potentialities implied in being Entwurf. Indeed it continues the downward motion of the throwness in a whirl (Wirbel) which swings it down into das Man. Verfallen is, then, a native and inherent tendency in all existing beings whether they be authentically existing or not; the authentically existing individual, however, struggles against Verfallen and asserts himself against its power.

The "Da" and the "Sein" of Dasein. As was stated earlier, Heidegger's analysis divides into a consideration

of the aspects of "Da" and the aspects of "Sein." The analysis thus far has dealt with aspects of "Da." Heidegger summarizes these aspects as follows and then turns to a consideration of the aspects of the "Sein" half of Dasein:

Die leitende Frage dieses Kapitels ging nach dem Sein des Da. Thema wurde die ontologische Konstitution der zum Dasein wesentlich gehörenden Erschlossenheit. Ihr Sein konstituiert sich in Befindlichkeit, Verstehen und Rede. Die alltägliche Seinsart der Erschlossenheit wird charakterisiert durch Gerede, Neugier und Zweideutigkeit. Diese selbst zeigen die Bewegtheit des Verfallens mit den wesenhaften Charakteren der Versuchung, Beruhigung, Entfremdung und des Verhängnisses.

Mit dieser Analyse ist aber das Ganze der Existenzialen Verfassung des Daseins in der Hauptzügen freigelegt und der phänomenale Boden gewonnen für die "zusammenfassende" Interpretation des Seins des Daseins als Sorge. [SZ, p. 182]

This turning represents the crossing of a major division in Heidegger's analysis: from the Da of the Dasein to the Sein of Dasein, from the Geworfenheit aspect to the Entwurf aspect, from being as Faktizität to being as Existenz. And the Sein of the Sein in Dasein expresses itself as Sorge.

Die Sorge als Sein des Daseins. Sorge is Heidegger's term to describe man's involvement in the world. The nature of this relationship is that man is being with, man always has an "already" (a past) and stands in a certain relationship to it, and finally man's involvement seems to be more than the relationship to the past (the already) and the present (the with), for it is really above both of these and looking back on them from the future. These aspects form what Heidegger calls the "structure" of Sorge: being already

in the world, being with, and being ahead of itself (im-schon-sein-in, Sein-bei, and Sich-vorweg-sein). This structure may be called the three-fold structure of Sorge.

Of the three parts of the structure, the Sich-vorweg-sein is the most important aspect of Sorge, for this represents the way in which the self projects itself into the future, into possibility, into Existenzialität. But whether one exists primarily in the past, present, or future (in Verfallen, Faktizität, or Existenzialität), one cannot escape the simultaneous influence of all three modes of Care or Involvement (Sorge):

Die Sorge charakterisiert nicht etwa nur Existenzialität abgelöst von Faktizität und Verfallen, sondern umgreift die Einheit dieser Seinsbestimmungen. Sorge meint daher auch nicht primär und ausschliesslich ein isoliertes Verhalten des Ich zu ihm selbst.... Sorge kann nicht ein besonderes Verhalten zum Selbst meinen, weil dieses ontologisch schon durch das Sich-vorweg-sein charakterisiert ist; in dieser Bestimmung sind aber auch die beiden anderen strukturalen Momente der Sorge, das Schon-sein-in... und das Sein-bei... mit-gesetzt. [SZ, 192-3]

Thus, Sorge posits a three-fold structure of involvement, and this structure seems to hinge on the factor of time, since the three aspects emphasize past, present, and future.

Das Zeitlichkeit als der ontologische Sinn der Sorge.

At this point Heidegger adds perhaps the most crucial turn to his whole message in Sein und Zeit, for he superimposes and unites the three-fold structure of Sorge with the three-fold structure of time. Involvement (Sorge) is the "Sein

des Daseins" and Zeitlichkeit is the ontological meaning of Involvement. This creates a three-fold parallel:

Sich-vorweg-sein	--	Existenzialität	--	Zukunft
Schon-sein-in...	--	Faktizität	--	Gewesenheit
Sein bei...	--	Verfallen	--	Gegenwart

This three-fold structure of Involvement means that one lives in the future, present, and past--all at the same time, that (in other words) these three aspects of time are actually ways that Dasein stands out from Being. These three temporal ways of standing out from Being Heidegger calls "ec-stasies" (from the Greek $\epsilon\chi$ -["out"] $\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\iota\kappa\omicron\nu$ ["to stand"]) of Zeitlichkeit. One can see, at this point, how important time is in Heidegger's thinking: Time (Zeitlichkeit) is the essential mode of, and key to, Being.

Existenzialität, Faktizität, and Verfallen have all been analyzed in connection with man's "da," his "being-there-ness." Now they are identified with aspects of time, and although all three are modes which are existed simultaneously the three above have been identified with future, past, and present, respectively. They necessarily all co-exist in varying valences depending on one's predominant mode of being. Verfallen (decline) is associated with the present tense because it represents "compromise" with the world into which Being is thrown; Faktizität is associated with the past since it emphasizes the past of the individual and his essential thrownness; Existenzialität extends itself into

the future in its emphasis on the potentialities of the Dasein.

The second half of the portion of Sein und Zeit which was presented in 1927 (and which was to be continued but never has been) endeavors to bring Heidegger's conception of Zeitlichkeit to bear on the major analyses presented in the first half, especially in elucidating the authentic and inauthentic modes of In-sein and in elaborating on the ontological structure of Sorge. And aspects of the unity of both Sorge and Zeitlichkeit are brought to bear on such human and existential problems as death, conscience, guilt, resolve, authenticity, and Ganzseinkönnen. It is to these problems in the second half of Sein und Zeit that we now turn.

Death and "Sein zum Tode." The preoccupation with death is a major aspect of Heidegger's thought. Without death, Zeitlichkeit would have little meaning; death is a factor which intensifies and gives meaning to all of life. Both the authentic and inauthentic man realize that they must die; the difference lies in whether the consciousness of death is suppressed or made into something creative. Death is a major dynamic of life, then, for all human beings.

The aspects of Verfallen mentioned earlier may be said to be a part of the inauthentic attitude toward death. These aspects--Beruhigung, Versuchung, Entfremdung--(appease-

ment, temptation, self-estrangement)--typify the way in which the inauthentic man tries to deny and turn away from death as a personal fact through misinterpretation, inauthentic understanding, and disguise. Yet despite these, death retains its certainty (Gewissheit) and indefinability (Unbestimmtheit). The inauthentically existing person makes this certainty merely an external and objective fact, not a personal fate. Because death is indefinable and indefinite as to when it will occur, it yields itself to being objectified into a general feeling, "Well, we all must die sometime." Yet despite all the illusions and objectivising by the alltägliche Dasein, death remains "die eigenste, unbezügliche, unüberholbare Möglichkeit" (the unique, unrelated and absolute, unovertakable eventuality). [SZ, p. 250] Death is something which all must eventually face; no man can relieve another man of his having to die ("Keiner kann dem Anderen sein Sterben abnehmen."). [SZ, p. 240]

On the other hand, the authentic Dasein faces death as the innermost and absolutely irrelative potentiality or eventuality of being. He extends himself in thought (Vorlaufen) towards death and allows its full significance for his existence to be felt. Heidegger treats of five aspects of the significance of death which particularly affect the authentic Dasein: 1) its personalness, 2) its absoluteness, 3) its inescapability, 4) its certainty, and 5) its indefinite-

ness. The reaction of the Dasein in each of these ~~five~~^{be} categories may/described as follows:

- 1) Death as one's own innermost eventuality ("eigenste Möglichkeit"): The authentic Dasein realizes that death is not impersonal and objective but his own innermost potentiality; he perceives the unconsciousness of death in das Man and stands aloof from this attitude.
- 2) Death as the absolute and unrelated eventuality ("unbezügliche Möglichkeit"): The authentic Dasein is primarily concerned with his own absolute death unrelated to anything outside himself; the absoluteness of death is an individual absoluteness.
- 3) Death as unovercomable and unvertakable ("unüberholbare Möglichkeit"): Death must be faced. In ultimate renunciation, the authentically existing Dasein gains a sense of freedom and proper dimension in his life which das Man never experiences. Das Man never experiences freedom, then, paradoxically because he will not face squarely his ultimate limitation--death--and see himself in relationship to it.
- 4) Death as a certainty (Gewissheit): Death becomes for the authentic Dasein a more fundamental certainty than anything rationally proved, because it does not have to be proved.
- 5) Death as indefinite (Unbestimmtheit): Because death is indefinite as to when it will occur, the authentic Dasein experiences the creative dread which is a prerequisite of freedom. Authentic, creative being-towards death becomes

"freedom towards death":

Die Charakteristik des existenzial entworfenen eigentlichen Seins zum Tode lässt sich dergestalt zusammenfassen: Das Vorlaufen enthüllt dem Dasein die Verlorenheit in das Man selbst und bringt es vor die Möglichkeit, auf die besorgende Fürsorge primär ungestützt, es selbst zu sein, selbst aber in der leidenschaftlichen, von den Illusionen des Man gelösten, faktischen, ihrer selbst gewissen und sich hingenden Freiheit zum Tode. [SZ, p. 266]

One sees in this quotation a fairly clear picture of Heidegger's authentic man: one whose running forward in thought reveals its complete lostness as a mere self, and its potentiality for being a true self, free from the undue influence of others, free of the illusions of das Man and open to death. The quotation presents man as essentially vor die Möglichkeit, and one may say that for Heidegger man is judged before his own potentialities, just as in Kierkegaard man is "before God." The reference to illusion is significant and is a characteristic existential condemnation of the inauthentic man. Finally one may note that only by actually facing death authentically does one achieve existential freedom.

But how is freedom ultimately related to death? And why, exactly, does authentic Being-towards-death have the ontological capacity to generate freedom? To answer these questions properly takes one into an exploration of the interrelationship of Being, truth, freedom, and Being-towards-death. The following brief explanation may be made. Freedom is the essence of truth (this is the burden of Heidegger's

essay, "Vom Wesen der Wahrheit," 1949 [trans. in EB]).

Truth emerges from Being in freedom; freedom is an essential expression of the nature of Being. Thus, Being-towards-death, since it is essentially a process of realization of Being, inevitably generates freedom.

Ganzseinkönnen. Heidegger repeatedly asserts that while Jaspers sees man on the three levels of his philosophy (Man in the world, Existenzerhellung, and Metaphysik), he sees man's being only ontologically and consequently as a "whole," as a single unified structure of interacting Existenzialen. The validity of this assertion regarding himself and Jaspers is not our concern here; but this assertion has relevance to the above consideration of Being-towards-death and the relative significance of death in the thought of Heidegger and Jaspers. For Jaspers, death is another gate to transcendence; for Heidegger death is the opposite of transcendence, for it is the ultimate and unvertakable eventuality of our being. For Heidegger, death is the end of our being. For Jaspers, the Encompassing never quite encompasses all of Being and for the human being Encompassing ultimately founders. For Heidegger, death means that life has an end and can be said to constitute a "whole." Thus, an authentic mode of Being-towards-death takes account of death as the end of Dasein and thus enables the Dasein to grasp its own being as a whole of past, present, and bounded

future. Only as one grasps his Dasein as a whole--as not only past and present, but extending in thought into the future, clear to the end of the future: death--does one exist authentically. Naturally, the prospect of the end of the future, of nothingness in a sense, produces anxiety (Angst). But anxiety, as we shall see presently is not only dread at this nothingness but dread at being-in-the-world as such. For this reason Angst is a fundamental and ever-present Befindlichkeit des Daseins (that is, "way the Dasein is tuned to the situation in which he finds himself 'placed' in the world," or the mood at being-in-the-world). Therefore, Being-towards-death is a prime requisite of the capacity to be a whole (Ganzseinkönnen).

Authenticity--and Conscience, Guilt, and Resolve.

Being-towards-death has above been said to be a condition of and point to the making real to human beings of Being; it contributes to the realization of Being. Authenticity may also be defined as that mode of human existing which points to and tends toward true Being. To this end, an abundance of factors act upon the Dasein. Of these factors, Heidegger singles out three phenomena for his ontological analysis: 1) Gewissen (conscience), 2) Schuld (guilt), and 3) Wahl Gewissen-haben-wollen (resolve). The three are, of course, interrelated, for conscience reminds one of his lostness and guilt, and at the same time calls for decision, for choice

of one's true self. Guilt furnishes motivation for the decision, and the choice is a resolve to have conscience, to open oneself to one's inner potentialities.

1) Conscience. Conscience is to be sharply distinguished from the usual meaning of a sense of having deviated from certain socially accepted norms of behavior. Rather, conscience is the call of the true self in the Da-sein to the realization of its own potentialities rather than to vegetate in the publicity and inertness of das Man:

Das Gewissen ruft das Selbst des Daseins auf aus der Verlorenheit in das Man....

Das Dasein ruft im Gewissen sich selbst.... Der Ruf wird ja gerade nicht und nie von uns selbst weder geplant, noch vorbereitet, noch willentlich vollzogen. "es" ruft, widererwarten und gar widerwillen. Andererseits kommt der Ruf zweifellos nicht von einem Anderen, der mit mir in der Welt ist. Der Ruf kommt aus mir und doch über mich. [SZ, pp. 274-5]

The call comes from the self above the self to that self below the true self--das Man. It is not something which arises after the deed (as with conventional conscience in many cases) but always before; it is always present and awake. It is, despite its vagueness, unambiguous in pointing the direction for the Dasein to move: towards authentic Being, towards realization of one's own being.

In its three-fold sensing of one's lostness and compulsory being in the world and finally one's potentiality, conscience definitely relates itself to Care (Sorge) and might even be said to be the voice of Care itself:

Der Satz: Das Dasein ist der Rufer und der Angerufene zumal, hat jetzt seine formale Leere und Selbstverständlichkeit verloren. Das Gewissen offenbart sich als Ruf der Sorge: der Rufer ist das Dasein, sich ängstend in der Geworfenheit (Schon-sein-in...) um sein Seinkönnen. Der Angerufene ist eben dieses Dasein, aufgerufen zu seinem eigensten Seinkönnen (Sich-vorweg...). Und aufgerufen ist das Dasein durch den Anruf aus dem Verfallen in das Man (Schon-sein-bei der besorgten Welt). Der Ruf des Gewissens, d.h. dieses selbst, hat seine ontologische Möglichkeit darin, dass das Dasein im Grunde seines Seins Sorge ist. [SZ, pp. 277-8]

Heidegger then proceeds to identify Sorge with guilt. ("Das Schuldigsein konstituiert das Sein, das wir Sorge nennen." [SZ, pp. 286-7]) A further elucidation of conscience therefore requires a consideration of the nature of guilt.

2) Schuld (guilt). Guilt is the necessary and unavoidable consequence of the fact that we are always already in the world and involved in it. We cannot escape involvement; we are all guilty. It is not that we become guilty; we are intrinsically guilty because we, as finite beings, are existing in the world. It is a constituent aspect of thrownness. We have Sorge (involvement) as a structure of our being, and however authentic we may become in a consciousness of potentialities in the future (our Existenz), we nevertheless cannot divorce ourselves from being in the world at present and from having our past: However much Sorge may emphasize its Existenzialität, it is still also composed of Faktizität (the past) and Verfallenheit (present compromise and consequent decline) in its three-fold structure.

Guilt, however, is even more complicated than this, for it is not merely the inevitable consequence of being-in-the-world, but is also a form of negation--of the authentic self. It is, therefore, integrally related to Heidegger's concept of nothingness, which will be discussed in detail subsequently. At this point, however, the negation involved will be discussed without exploring the nature of nothingness as such. Nevertheless, one fact may be borne in mind: that nothingness and negation are not the same; rather negation is grounded in nothingness and is only one expression of it.

A negation of Being is shown when the self seeks its self only, for then it takes on the "not" character of the inauthentic self which asserts itself and not Being:

Der Nichtcharakter dieses Nicht bestimmt sich existenzial: Selbst seiend ist das Dasein das geworfene Seiende als Selbst. Nicht durch es selbst, sondern an es selbst entlassen aus dem Grunde, um als dieser zu sein. Das Dasein ist nicht insofern selbst der Grund seines Seins, als dieser aus eigenem Entwurf erst entspringt, wohl aber ist es als Selbstseins das Sein des Grundes. Dieser ist immer nur Grund eines Seienden, dessen Sein das Grundsein zu übernehmen hat. [SZ, pp. 284-5]

This negation is a tendency inherent in the thrownness of Dasein, but at the same time it also negates the potential, too, of Dasein--the Entwurf aspect of its mode of being.

The Entwurf, however, is also essentially negative. This is not, as one might suppose, merely because Entwurf necessarily involves something which has not yet "come into being," so to speak, but rather because of the fundamental

relationship of negativity to the nature of freedom and possibility:

Das Dasein ist sein Grund existierend, d.h. so, dass es sich aus Möglichkeiten versteht und dergestalt sich verstehend das geworfene Seiende ist. Darin liegt aber: seinkönnend steht es je in der einen oder anderen Möglichkeit, ständig ist es andere nicht und hat sich ihrer im existenziellen Entwurf begeben. Er Entwurf ist nicht nur als je geworfener durch die Nichtigkeit des Grundseins bestimmt, sondern als Entwurf selbst wesentlich nichtig. Diese Bestimmung meint wiederum keineswegs die ontische Eigenschaft des "erfolglos" oder "unwertig", sondern ein existenziales Konstitutivum der Seinsstruktur des Entwerfens. Die gemeinte Nichtigkeit gehört zum Freisein des Daseins für seine existenziellen Möglichkeiten. Die Freiheit aber ist nur in der Wahl der einen, d.h. im Tragen des Nichtgewählthabens und Nichtauchwählenkönnens der anderen. [SZ, p. 285]

Thus, freedom depends on nothingness. (And it depends on Being in its function as the essence of truth.) Freedom demands the possibility of the choice to negate.

One may say, then, that nothingness is to be found both in Geworfenheit and in the Entwurf. But how is nothingness related to guilt? Dasein as Dasein is guilty because of its intrinsic not-character. Another aspect of this is the fact that the very Sein of Dasein is Sorge, and Sorge, as previously noted, is structurally shot-through with nothingness. Thus, Dasein as such is guilty:

In der Struktur der Geworfenheit sowohl wie in der des Entwurfs liegt wesentlich eine Nichtigkeit des uneigentlichen Daseins im Verfallen, als welches es je schon immer faktisch ist. Die Sorge selbst ist in ihrem Wesen durch und durch von Nichtigkeit durchsetzt. Die Sorge--das Sein des Daseins--besagt demnach als geworfener Entwurf: Das (nichtige) Grund-sein einer

Nichtigkeit. Und das bedeutet: Das Dasein ist als solches schuldig, wenn anders die formale existenziale Bestimmung der Schuld als Grundsein einer Nichtigkeit zurecht besteht. [Same]

With this understanding of guilt, we are now able to grasp the idea that conscience not only points forward to unfulfilled possibility but backward to the present and past to testify that man is guilty. The call of conscience, as Heidegger puts it, is a "vorrufender Rückruf"; it not only reminds man of his Existenzialität, but also of his Faktizität and Verfallenheit. One will recall that these three aspects form the three-fold structure of Sorge. The call of conscience, then, is an expression of Sorge; it is the call of Sorge:

Der Ruf ist Ruf der Sorge. Das Schuldigsein konstituiert das Sein, das wir Sorge nennen. In der Unheimlichkeit steht das Dasein ursprünglich mit sich selbst zusammen. Sie bringt dieses Seiende vor seine unverstellte Nichtigkeit, die zur Möglichkeit seines eigensten Seinkönnens gehört. Sofern es dem Dasein--als Sorge--um sein Sein geht, ruft es aus der Unheimlichkeit sich selbst als faktisch-verfallendes Man selbst auf zu seinem Seinkönnen. [SZ, pp. 286-7]

Since the call of conscience is also the call of Sorge, it expresses the three-fold structure of Sorge in the fact that it incorporates into its call a backward and forward movement at the same time:

Der Anruf ist vorrufender Rückruf, vor: in die Möglichkeit, selbst das geworfene Seiende, das es ist, existierend zu übernehmen, zurück: in die Geworfenheit, um sie als den nichtigen Grund zu verstehen, den es in die Existenz aufzuheben hat. Der vorrufende Rückruf des Gewissens gibt dem Dasein zu verstehen, dass es--nichtiger Grund seines nichtigen Entwurfs in der Möglich-

keit seines Seinsstehend--aus der Verlorenheit in das Man sich zu ihm selbst zurückholen soll, d.h. schuldig ist. [Same]

With the recognition of guilt, the Dasein is enabled to see what is closed to das Man, and to listen to the call of conscience to choose oneself:

Mit dieser Wahl ermöglicht sich das Dasein sein eigenstes Schuldigsein, das dem Man-selbst verschlossen bleibt. Die Verständigkeit des Man kennt nur Genügen und Ungenügen hinsichtlich der dhanlichen Regel und öffentlichen Norm. Verstösse dagegen verrechnet es und sucht Ausgleich. Vom eigensten Schuldigsein hat es sich fortgeschlichen, um desto absoluter Fehler zu bereden. In Anruf aber wird das Manselbst auf das eigenste Schuldigsein das Selbst angerufen. (SZ, p. 288]

Genuine conscience, then, is not known to the inauthentic man, for the inauthentic man also knows no true guilt; on the other hand, the authentic man hears in conscience the call to recognize his essential guilt.

3)Resolve. Above, it has been noted that conscience and authentic guilt involve a third factor: choice. To truly understand the call is to accept guilt and to will to have (choose to have) conscience:

Das Rufverstehen ist das Wählen--nicht des Gewissens, das als solches nicht gewählt werden kann. Gewählt wird das Gewissen-haben als Freisein für das eigenste Schuldsein. Anrufverstehen besagt: Gewissen-haben-wollen. [Same]

And this resolve (Gewissen-haben-wollen) is a condition for the achievement of authentic guilt and thereby authentic Being:

Das Gewissen-haben-wollen ist vielmehr die ursprünglichste existenzielle Voraussetzung für die Möglichkeit

des faktischen Schuldigwerdens. Rufverstehend lässt das Dasein das eigenste Selbst aus seinem gewählten Sein-können in sich handeln. Nur so kann es verantwortlich sein. [Same]

Resolve, too, relates itself to nothingness, through its decision to accept authentic guilt. It is, therefore, also a decision to accept dread, since this is a product of being-in-the-world authentically and of encountering nothingness. Indeed, we shall see that the very Entwurf character of Dasein is a projection into nothingness, while existing authentically in the world. Werner Brock interprets this so-called "resolve" as follows:

This projecting of oneself, in silence and in readiness for dread, into one's own Being-guilty--an outstanding mode of the disclosed state of Dasein, testified by the conscience--is termed "resolve." The "resolve" is characterised as the "authentic self-Being," which means not a Dasein isolated from the world, but "Being-authentically-in-the-world." [EB, p. 85]

Heidegger's emphasis on the factor of resolve, of having to choose authenticity and genuine guilt or else remain in the state of das Man, corresponds to Kierkegaard's stress on the importance of decision. The five Existentialists with which this dissertation deals all stress the need for decision, the need to come up out of the anonymity of the crowd and actively choose authentic being. In choosing authentic being one chooses oneself--but not the self of das Man.

Interestingly enough, in Heidegger's thought guilt and conscience (often treated as ethical sanctions) do not

have an ethical content (in the conventional social sense of ethics). Heidegger's is an ethics of self-realization and self-realization only. Conscience, for Heidegger, often involves the denial of the norms of das Man; it is not a form of repentance for social transgression, but even a justification of some forms of transgression. Nor is guilt a result of transgression as such; it is a result of being-in-the-world and partially the result of the denial of the self in deference to social norms--exactly the reverse of social ethics. Thus, precisely where one might expect some ontological basis for ethics--namely in the areas of conscience and guilt--one finds a concern only with the self and its quest for realization of authentic being. Existentialism, then, would seem to be anti-ethical.

One may, perhaps, hypothesize as to what Heidegger's reply to such a charge would be. First, such a charge is illustrative and symptomatic of practical thinking, thinking in terms of cause and effect, in the terms of science and das Man. In any case, one may still assert the ontological priority of Being to any form of human ethics, and point out that in the expression of Being in freedom and truth lies the ultimate basis for any adequate ethics. Heidegger's ethics is an ethics of authentic being, of being in a manner that involves integrity and decision and openness to Being. Any ethics which attempts to negate these personal factors

by invoking external social norms is at the same time negating Being and thereby a form of inauthenticity.

In any event, the three aspects of authenticity here under discussion--conscience, guilt, and resolve--are not matters of social ethics but of purely personal purity. They are matters of self-realization through authenticity, through a self that^{is}/open to Being.

Freedom is the essence of truth. This assertion is the subject of one of Heidegger's best-known essays. [trans. into English in EB, pp. 317-351]. In this essay, "Vom Wesen der Wahrheit," Heidegger contends that truth reveals something which is already in existence, is already in the realm of the overt (das Offene). Truth is identified with the rightness of a representative statement about something which is already overt. And the nature of "that which is," by the fact that it is overt, is able to enjoin the representing statement to express it rightly, for "the statement submits to a directive enjoining it to express what-is 'such-as' or just as it is." [EB, p. 329] By following this directive the statement "rights itself" (sich richtet nach) by what-is. Directing itself in this way the statement is right (true). And what is thus stated is rightness (truth). This is one level of truth.

But where does one find a criterion for this rightness? At this point freedom enters the picture in the essay,

for the statement must have absolute freedom in order to "right itself":

The statement derives its rightness from the overt-ness of behaviour, for it is only through this that anything manifest can become the criterion for the approximation implicit in the representative statement.... But if rightness (truth) of statement is only made possible by the overt character of behaviour, then it follows that the thing that makes rightness possible in the first place must have a more original claim to be regarded as the essence of truth. [Same]

And the thing which makes rightness possible is freedom.

Therefore, freedom is the essence of truth. The essence of truth, then, is not in any proposition, but in freedom:

Thus the traditional practice of attributing truth exclusively to the statement as its sole and essential place of origin, falls to the ground. Truth does not possess its original seat in the proposition. [Same]

But even freedom itself is not, standing alone, adequate to explain the essence of truth; freedom itself must be elaborated. Freedom is grounded in the ultimate form of truth found in Being, what one might call the truth of Being:

freedom is the basis of the inner possibility of rightness only because it receives its own essence from that thing of earlier origin: the uniquely essential truth. [EB, pp. 332-3]

In order to understand this higher level of freedom and truth one must move into a consideration of the nature of freedom itself.

Freedom as the "letting-be" of what-is. Heidegger explains the relationship of freedom to "letting-be" as follows:

Freedom was initially defined as freedom for the revelation of something already overt. How are we to think of the essence of freedom so conceived? The Manifest (das Offenbare), to which a representative statement approximates in its rightness, is that which obviously "is" all the time and has some manifest form of behaviour. The freedom to reveal something overt lets whatever "is" at the moment be what it is. Freedom reveals itself as the "letting-be" of what-is. [EB, p. 333]

We usually talk of "letting-be" when we stand away from something and have nothing more to do with it. This is the negative sense of "letting-be," a sense that can even mean renunciation, indifference, or neglect. However, the letting-be of what-is is the very opposite of neglect:

To let something be (Seinlassen) is in fact to have something to do with it (sich einlassen auf). This is not to be taken merely in the sense of pursuing, conserving, cultivating and planning some actuality casually met with or sought out. To let what-is be what it is means participating in something overt and its overt-ness, in which everything that "is" takes up its position and which entails such overtness. [Same]

Thus, letting-be allows the what-is to reveal itself, and this revealment is "truth"--non-concealment, a-leitheia:

[Conceiving of truth as dis-covering the overt] requires us to revise our ordinary idea of truth in the sense of propositional correctitude and trace it back to that still uncomprehended quality: the revealedness (Entborgenheit) and revelation (Entbergung) of what-is. [EB, p. 334]

This revealed nature of what-is then acts as a criterion for the authentic being who takes the proper attitude of participating retirement before it, "so that what-is may reveal itself as what and how it is." [Same] "Letting-be" (freedom) thus becomes a participant in the very process it is letting

be; freedom itself becomes a process of revelation of the revealed nature of what-is.

Freedom, then, is for Heidegger emphatically different from the usual conception of freedom as non-interference in choice, a conception with no relationship to truth. Freedom, rather, is more adequately conceived as a participation in the revealment of what-is-as-such (das Seiende als ein solches), and truth is more adequately conceived as the actual revelation of what-is.

Untruth as mystery and erring. Heidegger distinguishes between two types of not-truth: "mystery" and "erring." The former is authentic, because it refers to the overt which has not been disconcealed (revealed) in truth. It is still in the realm of not-truth, however. This authentic not-truth may consist partly of what can never be adequately disconcealed and partly of what is not yet disconcealed. Mystery is coeval with truth, as one is a form of revealed the other of unrevealed overttness. Indeed, mystery may be said to precede truth, for truth emerges from the untruth of mystery.

Error, on the other hand, is not unrevealed rightness but the counter-essence of rightness: Wrong. It is "the manifest theatre for all counter-play to essential truth." [EB, p. 345] Erring is the opposite of mystery; it consists in taking man himself as the uh-mysterious measure of all things, in taking accessibility and practicality as

the be-all and end-all of creation. Error is turning away from mystery: "Man's drifting from the mystery to the practicable and from one practicability to the next, always missing the mystery, is erring (das Irren)."

 [EB, p. 344]

Thus Heidegger asserts, "The mystery rules and the erring oppresses; and man, in the Ex-sistence of his Dasein, is subject to both of them." [EB, p. 179]

Because error is so basic--the essential counter-essence (das wesentliche Gegenwesen) of the original essence of truth--it is not something that man falls into. Like guilt, it is something which is in the inner structure of Dasein; it is a consequence of the fact that, as Heidegger says, "Da-sein not only ex-sists but in-sists at the same time, i.e. obstinately holds fast to (besteht auf) that which actuality (das Seiende), as though open of and in itself, offers him." [EB, p. 344] The Dasein not only stands out into Being--ex-sists--but also inevitably stands into the world and into its own Faktizität.

Thus both error and truth as rightness emerge from the realm of mystery with statements about the overt. Error, however, tends to deny its background of mystery, and to oppress rather than free the Dasein. Ultimately, however, only a recognition of mystery brings an insight into the nature of truth; and a grasp of the truth of what-is (das Seiende) will not completely satisfy Dasein's search. Inevitably, he will press

on to ask what is behind the overtness of what-is, to ask the basic question: What is the being of what-is? What is the totality behind the revealed what-is? Only when the question of the nature of Being is answered will one truly grasp the ultimate nature of truth:

The letting-be of what-is is accomplished in the sphere of overt relationship. But the letting-be of what-is-as-such in totality is only accomplished in conformity with the essence of it when the latter (i.e. what-is-as-such in totality) is assumed (übernommen) in its original essence...⁷ Then the question concerning the essential nature of truth is being asked more profoundly and originally. Then the reason why the essence of truth is bound up with the truth of essence stands revealed. Gazing out of error into the mystery is a questioning in the sense of the only question that exists: What is that which is as such in totality? This question meditates the essentially confusing and, because of its multifarious aspects, still unmastered question regarding the Being of what-is (das Sein des Seienden). [EB, pp. 346-7]

Thus, we find ourselves with the phrase with which all of Heidegger's thought has been directly or indirectly concerned: das Sein des Seienden. What is the Being of what-is? This is Heidegger's basic question.

At this point it may be well to pause and survey both what has been covered and what will be treated in the remainder of this exposition of Heidegger's thought. The exposition thus far has largely been an exploration of the structure of the Dasein, treating both the authentic and inauthentic modes of In-sein and the structure of Sorge as it expresses itself in various forms. And it has been noted that Heidegger seeks in the second portion of Sein und Zeit to

present Zeitlichkeit as a key to the understanding of Being, and to superimpose this Zeitlichkeit as a central illuminating factor on the major aspects under consideration in the first portion. Finally, the consideration of the nature of freedom and the nature of truth have brought us to Heidegger's central question regarding the nature of the Being of what-is. The remainder of this exposition will attempt to present Heidegger's conception of Nothingness, will explore his conception of Being as such, man as the guardian of Being, and poetry as the revelation of Being, and finally will let Heidegger himself assert that Being is the real problem of our day and the spiritual destiny of the West.

Nothingness. The present consideration of Heidegger's conception of nothingness will be divided into three major areas: 1) Nothingness as the backdrop for the finite what-is in totality; 2) Nothingness as the foundation of negation; and 3) Heidegger's misgivings regarding possible misinterpretations of his conception of nothingness.

1) Nothingness as the background of what-is in totality. Heidegger asserts that the experience of coming face to face with what-is in totality is found in real boredom and in real love; on the other hand, the experience of coming face to face with nothingness is found in Angst (dread) and even produces dread. What-is is always seen against a background of nothingness--which reveals the finitude of what-is, and

indeed the finitude of all of Being.

Real boredom occurs when one stops being concerned with anything in particular or with oneself and suddenly gets a disinterested but unmistakable sense of the "whole." While one always has a consciousness, however vague, of being within the unity of a "Ganz," only in real boredom does one come face to face with it in itself:

Real boredom is still far off when this book or that play, this activity or that stretch of idleness merely bores us. Real boredom comes when "one is bored." This profound boredom, drifting hither and thither in the abysses of existence like a mute fog, draws all things, all men and oneself along with them, together in a queer kind of indifference. This boredom reveals what-is in totality. [EB, p. 364]

This boredom is almost like a state of aesthetic contemplation from an infinite distance of what-is in totality. The opposite type of encounter with what-is in totality is the total personal involvement of the joy of love:

There is another possibility of such revelation, and this is in the joy we feel in the presence of the being--not merely the person--of someone we love.

Because of these moods in which, as we say, we "are" this or that (i.e. bored, happy, etc.) we find ourselves (befinden uns) in the midst of what-is-in-totality, wholly pervaded by it. The affective state in which we find ourselves not only discloses, according to the mood we are in, what-is in totality, but this disclosure is at the same time far from being a mere chance occurrence and is the ground-phenomenon of our Da-sein. [Same]

Thus, one may say that boredom and joy express two ground-reactions to a contemplation of what-is-in-totality. Now one must turn to the reaction to the contemplation of the

everpresent backdrop to what-is-in-totality--nothingness. This reaction is Angst.

Angst. Unfortunately, Heidegger's conception of dread has not remained the same since Sein und Zeit. In Sein und Zeit, Heidegger asserts, "Das Wovor der Angst ist das In-der-Welt-sein als solches." [SZ, p. 186] Later, in "Was ist Metaphysik?" (1943), Heidegger states that the nothingness in the wake of "the withdrawal of what-is-in-totality, which then crowds round us in dread--this is what oppresses us." [EB, p. 366. The essay occupies pp. 353-392]

This shift in the conception of dread is part of the shift of emphasis involved in what one might call Heidegger's "second phase." The shift is towards a decreasing emphasis on Dasein, and an increasing concern with Being in its manifestations in poetry and nature. The shift in respect to dread is to make it more a reaction to nothingness than to being thrown into the world and being thrown into time. One might call the change a shift from Being and Time to a consideration of the interaction of Being and nothingness--not nothingness as Sartre would define it, but a more metaphysical nothingness that can inspire a metaphysical dread. In Sein und Zeit, nothingness is an integral part of the world and Being, but in the later essay, it becomes the field into which Being and Being-in-the-world is projected. It becomes the background of what-is in totality

and of the existence of Dasein. As Heidegger says in this later essay, nothingness "is that which makes the revelation of what-is as such possible for human existence." [EB, p.370] This statement is highly significant and Professor Michael Wyschogrod asserts that this statement in itself shows that

the purpose of the whole metaphysical discussion of Nothing has been to create the possibility for a dissolution of Being into a field which permits Dasein to project itself into Nothing by means of transcendence. Whereas, as has been shown, Heidegger in Sein und Zeit used Care and ecstatic timeliness as the elements that dissolved Dasein into a field of possibilities and thereby permitted Being-in-the-world as an essential determination of Dasein, in this new approach it is in terms of something outside Dasein that Dasein's openness must be understood; and this role is assigned to Nothing. [Wyschogrod, p. 73]

Thus, we see that the pervasiveness of Zeitlichkeit, while certainly not abandoned as Heidegger's thought evolves, is replaced by nothingness as the essential field into which Dasein projects itself.

Indeed, the very projection of Dasein into nothingness becomes the basis of Heidegger's version of transcendence. "This projection into Nothing on the basis of hidden dread is the overcoming of what-is-in-totality: Transcendence." [EB, p. 374]

Being and Nothingness are coëvil, because one cannot be defined without the other. Nothingness ceases to have its historical meaning as merely "the conceptual opposite of what truly and authentically 'is,' i.e. as the negation of it" and "ceases to be the vague opposite of what-is: it now

reveals itself as integral to the Being of what-is." [EB, pp. 376-7] Thus Heidegger asserts that Hegel was right in thinking that Being and Nothingness hang together:

"Pure Being and pure Nothing are thus one and the same." This proposition of Hegel's is correct. Being and Nothing hang together, but not because the two things--from the point of view of the Hegelian concept of thought--are one in their indefiniteness and immediateness, but because Being itself is finite in essence and is only revealed in the Transcendence of Da-sein as projected into Nothing....

Only because Nothing is revealed in the very basis of our Da-sein is it possible for the utter strangeness of what-is to dawn on us. Only when the strangeness of what-is forces itself upon us does it awaken and invite our wonder. Only because of wonder, that is to say, the revelation of Nothing, does the "Why?" spring to our lips....

Man's Da-sein can only relate to what-is by projecting into Nothing. Going beyond what-is is the essence of Da-sein. [EB, pp. 377-9]

Thus, for Heidegger, the Being of what-is (das Seiende), nothingness, and transcendence are all interrelated; and all point to the fact that Being is essentially finite against a background of nothingness.

2) Nothingness as the foundation of negation. As is apparent above, nothingness is much more than mere negation. Heidegger is concerned to prove that negation is only an expression of nothingness, and that nothingness could not possibly be merely a derivative of negation:

How indeed could negation produce the Not out of itself, seeing that it can only negate when something is there to be negated.... But the Not can only manifest itself when its source--the nihilation of Nothing and hence Nothing itself--is drawn out of concealment. The Not does not come into being through negation, but

negation is based on the Not, which derives from the nihilation of Nothing.... [EB, p. 372]

Indeed, Heidegger remarks, negation is one of the fainter aspects of true nihilation:

negation cannot be cited either as the sole or even the chief mode of nihilation, with which, because of the nihilation of Nothing, Da-sein is saturated. More abysmal than the mere propriety of rational negation is the harshness of opposition and the violence of loathing. More responsible the pain of refusal and the mercilessness of an interdict. More oppressive the bitterness of renunciation. [EB, p. 373]

These possible modes of nihilating behavior which are endured by the Dasein are more than mere negation, although they can also express themselves through negation; they are a breaking through of nothingness into predominance over Being:

The permeation of Da-sein by nihilating modes of behaviour points to the perpetual, ever-dissimulated manifestness of Nothing, which only dread reveals in all its originality. Here, of course, we have the reason why original dread is generally repressed in Da-sein. Dread is there, but sleeping. [Same]

This century is certainly not deficient in painful examples of what Heidegger above calls the "permeation of Da-sein by nihilating modes of behaviour," and certainly these modes evidence more than mere negation; they spring from a nothingness in the innermost core of the Being of man.

"Dread is there, but sleeping." This is a key sentence in Heidegger's interpretation of inauthentic modes of being. In the inauthentic dailiness and publicity of das Man there is always an undercurrent of repressed anxiety,

a fear of authentic being; as Kierkegaard put it, "in the midst of the self-importance ... there is revealed a sense of despair over being human." [CUP, p. 317]

Dread is a basic component of the human being; it is always present and can never be altogether escaped. Why? Ultimately, because nothingness, too, is built in the very nature of the Dasein, and dread is the reaction (in the form of mood) to this nothingness. Dread, one might say, is as inseparable as the Da- is from the Da-sein; indeed, precisely because the Sein suffers the actualization and finitization of appearing overtly in the world, dread is there; for dread is the reaction to the nothingness which serves as a backdrop to all finitude. Without nothingness finitude would have no meaning. In one sense, then, dread is a reaction to finitude as such. Dread is therefore both dread before nothingness and before the realization of being-in-the-world; being-in-the-world is shot through with nothingness but there would be no nothingness without Being.

3) Heidegger fears misinterpretation of his "nothingness." In a postscript to his essay on nothingness and dread ["Was ist Metaphysik?"], Heidegger anticipates three misinterpretations of his conception of nothingness: (a) Since his essay on metaphysics deals only with nothingness, people may wrongly assume that everything is nothingness and that his thought is a philosophy of nothingness, a form of nihilism.

(b) Since his essay raises an isolated and morbid mood (dread) to the status of a key-mood, his thought will be considered a philosophy of dread, a philosophy which describes the psychic state of nervous people and cowards and eschews the stout-hearted attitude of the courageous thereby ultimately paralyzing the will to act. (c) Since the essay assails logic, people will wrongly assume that Heidegger's new type of thinking is a philosophy of pure feeling, a philosophy that imperils "exact" thinking and certainty of action, denies that reason contains the criteria for all calculation and classification, and ultimately delivers all judgments regarding truth up to a chance mood. [EB, pp. 383-4]

Heidegger endeavors to reply to each of these charges, and to show his philosophy makes an advance over this categorical type of thinking by advancing a philosophy that treats more genuinely of Being because it incorporates nothingness (a philosophy of Being and nothingness); that treats of a more genuine courage because this courage incorporates dread and the recognition of nothingness (a philosophy of courage and dread); and that, finally, treats of a more genuine type of thinking because it adds considerations of the mystery of Being as well as the importance of subjectivity to the present mystery-denying tendency to scientific objectivity and the depersonalization of reason (a philosophy of both finite and temporal becoming as well as mysterious Being).

Heidegger's thought represents a reassertion of a realm that is other than merely what-is (das Seiende); it represents a recognition of the mystery of Being. Heidegger contends that science denies the mystery of Being and asserts that das Seiende constitutes the whole of Being:

No matter where and however deeply science investigates what-is it will never find Being. All it encounters always, is what-is, because its explanatory purpose makes it insist at the outset on what-is. But Being is not an existing quality of what-is, nor, unlike what-is, can Being be conceived and established objectively. This, the purely "Other" than everything that "is," is that-which-is-not (das Nicht-Seiende). Yet this [so-called] "Nothing" functions as Being.
[EB, p. 384]

Earlier, in the essay, Heidegger had opposed das Seiende to this thing the scientist calls "Nothing":

[Science asserts:that:]

That to which the world-relationship refers is what-is--and nothing else.

That by which every attitude is moulded is what-is--and nothing more.

That with which scientific exposition effects its "irruption" is what-is--and beyond that, nothing.

[EB, p. 358]

Thus, science rejects this so-called "Nothing" as null and void; but this very Nothing is precisely the area of Heidegger's philosophizing. "Science ... has to assert its soberness solely with what-is.... Science wishes to know nothing of Nothing." [EB, p. 359]

This definition of Nothing and nothingness puts them in a new relationship to Being, for both Being and nothingness are Nothing for the scientist. In this sense, Heidegger is

content to admit that his central concern is Nothing. But the scientific restriction to what-is is far more dangerous to human life than concern with this "Nothing," for it represents an abandonment of Being, a descent into Sein-losigkeit:

Instead of giving way to such precipitate and empty ingenuity and abandoning Nothing in all its mysterious multiplicity of meanings, we should rather equip ourselves and make ready for one thing only: to experience in Nothing the vastness of that which gives every being the warrant to be. That is Being itself. Without Being, whose unfathomable and unmanifest essence is vouchsafed us by Nothing in essential dread, everything that "is" would remain in Beinglessness (Sein-losigkeit). But this too, in its turn, is not nugatory Nothing, ~~being~~, summing that it is of the truth of Being that: Being may be without what-is, but never what-is without Being. [EB, p. 385]

The tragic error of science and our science-minded age is that we assert that there can be a what-is without Being. Thus, Heidegger's answer to the assertion that his thought is a philosophy of nihilism, a philosophy of nothingness, is that the tragic need is for a philosophy of something that can transcend the ontic level of das Seiende--and this is the central aim of his philosophy.

Regarding the matters of courage and dread, Heidegger would assert that dread is the condition of the wisdom without which valor is meaningless. Moreover, dread is not to be thought of as a mere physical state; indeed the classifying of dread with physical states is precisely an illustration of the lack of vision of science. Rather dread, in

its true form, involves a courageous act of facing nothingness and through it achieving the most mysterious of all possibilities, the experience of Being. Heidegger considers that dread and awe are very close, for this very reason.

For hard by essential dread, in the terror of the abyss, there dwells awe (Scheu). Awe clears and enfolds that region of human being within which man endures, as at home, in the enduring." [EB, p. 386]

As for the final charge of an opposition to logic, Heidegger prefers to think of himself as the advocate of a different type of thinking, the kind that transcends logic--the kind of thinking which makes man a "shepherd" or guardian of Being.

Man as the guardian of Being. Man is the being whose thinking should search for Being. Thus, in later Heidegger, the authentic man seeks the truth of Being and sacrifices himself for Being; man is the guardian of Being. This concept seems to move beyond Heidegger's earlier existentialism into something like a mystical relationship with Being. Instead of remaining on the level of what-is (das Seiende), the "essential man" goes beyond this to the essence without which das Seiende has no warrant for being. Logic and "calculation" may be adequate to das Seiende, but essential thinking--thought about Being--goes beyond it:

That which, however, is always and everywhere closed at the outset to the demands of calculation and, despite that, is always closer to man in its enigmatic unknowable-

ness than anything that "is" than anything he may arrange and plan, this can sometimes put the essential man in touch with a thinking whose truth no "logic" can grasp. The thinking whose thoughts not only do not calculate but are absolutely determined by what is "other" than what-is, might be called essential thinking. Instead of counting on what-is with what-is, it expends itself in Being for the truth of Being. [EB, p. 389]

This is the kind of thinking which satisfies the demands of Being. All this orientation to Being begins to sound very much like religious devotion: It demands surrender and sacrifice and reverence for Being:

man surrenders his historical being to the simple, sole necessity whose constraints do not so much necessitate as create the need (Not) which is consummated in the freedom of sacrifice. The need is: to preserve the truth of Being no matter what may happen to man and everything that "is." Freed from all constraint, because born of the abyss of freedom, this sacrifice is the expense of our human being for the preservation of the truth of Being in respect of what-is. In sacrifice there is expressed that hidden thanking which alone does homage to the grace wherewith Being has endowed the nature of man, in order that he may take over in his relationship to Being the guardianship of Being. [Same]

Man has an obligation to sacrifice himself in order to thank Being for having given him a nature endowed with Being; man must assume the guardianship of Being. The religious cast of this type of thought is inescapable.

Being has a voice, the Word of which is the source of the human word. This voice is echoed in sacrificial thanking:

Original thanking is the echo of Being's favour wherein it clears a space for itself and causes the unique occurrence: that what-is is. This echo is man's

answer to the Word of the soundless voice of Being. The speechless answer of his thanking through sacrifice is the source of the human word, which is the prime cause of language as the enunciation of the Word in words. [Same]

Thus, even language originated in an echo of Being, a naming of the gods. As will be seen in the section dealing with poetry, poetry was the first form of language. Language is basically a sacred trust to man; language is the enunciation of the Word in words.

Sacrifice, then, becomes the cardinal virtue in the guardianship of Being. Without sacrificial thanking, indeed, man "could never attain the thinking ... which originally thinks the thought of Being." [EB, p. 390] And the fact that man can thank is a favor granted by Being: "How else could humanity attain to original thanking unless Being's favour preserved for man, through his open relationship to this favour, the splendid poverty in which the freedom of sacrifice hides its own treasure?" [Same] The goal of the essential man is the sacrifice to Being:

Sacrifice is a valediction to everything that "is" on the road to the preservation of the favour of Being. Sacrifice can be made ready and can be served by doing and working in the midst of what-is, but never consummated there. Its consummation comes from the inwardness out of which historical man by his actions--essential thinking is also an act--dedicates the Da-sein he has won for himself to the preservation of the dignity of Being. [Same]

Then Heidegger makes an identification of sacrifice with inwardness which is reminiscent of Kierkegaard's connection

of suffering, inwardness, and the leap of faith:

This inwardness is the calm that allows nothing to assail man's hidden readiness for the valedictory nature of all sacrifice. Sacrifice is rooted in the nature of the event through which Being claims man for the truth of Being. [Same]

Like Kierkegaard's subjectivity, this subjectivity is truth and is anti-logical because it transcends all logic:

Therefore it is that sacrifice brooks no calculation, for calculation always miscalculates sacrifice in terms of the expedient and the inexpedient, no matter whether the aims are set high or low. Such calculation distorts the nature of sacrifice. The search for a purpose dulls the clarity of the awe, the spirit of sacrifice ready prepared for dread, which takes upon itself kinship with the imperishable. [Same]

One may well conclude that Heidegger seems to be asserting an irrationalism which is not emphasized in Sein und Zeit. Man's essential task in Sein und Zeit is extending himself into the future in order to realize his authentic Existenz, his unique potentialities. But here, at the end of the postscript to the essay, "Was ist Metaphysik?", the "maturing conception" (as Löwith calls it) makes man a shepherd of Being. The self and the realization of the self are hardly mentioned. Heidegger claims that Being has always been his concern and that his thought has evolved--but not contradicted itself. This may be so, but the difference in emphasis between Sein und Zeit and the postscript is inescapable. The horizon in which the human being is conceived is no longer so much care and ecstatic timeliness, as Being and nothingness--joined in the conception of the other-than-

das Seiende, which those who see nothing but das Seiende are pleased to call "Nothing." Yet this Nothing is to the authentic man the "veil of Being":

One of the essential theatres of speechlessness is dread in the sense of the terror into which the abyss of Nothing plunges us. Nothing, conceived as the pure "Other" than what-is, is the veil of Being. In Being all that comes to pass in what-is is perfected from everlasting. [EB, p. 392]

This even reveals a sort of determinism--but a determinism which can never be grasped by logic and calculation, and is so distant and hidden that it can hardly be called determinism in the sense in which it is commonly conceived.

The guardianship of Being, then, stands in contrast to the emphasis on self-realization in Sein und Zeit; the guardianship of Being seems to develop towards self-denial, mysticism, and essentialist thinking. Yet unlike other thinking, it seeks no logical hold in the ontic realm:

The thought of Being seeks no hold in what-is. Essential thinking looks to the slow signs of the incalculable and sees in this the unforeseeable coming of the ineluctable. Such thinking is mindful of the truth of Being and thus helps the Being of truth to make a place for itself in man's history. This help effects no results because it has no need of effect. Essential thinking helps as the simple inwardness of existence, insofar as this inwardness, although unable to exercise such thinking or only having theoretical knowledge of it, kindles its own kind. [EB, p. 391]

The essential man is not primarily a self-realizer, but rather a servant of Being:

Obedient to the voice of Being, thought seeks the Word through which the truth of Being may be expressed. Only when the language of historical man is born of the Word does it ring true. But if it does ring true, then

the testimony of the soundless voice of hidden springs lures it ever on. Thought of Being guards the Word and fulfils its function in such guardianship, namely care for the use of language. [Same]

Guardianship of Being is inseparable from "care for the use of language." True language is not a mere tool for communication among men, but a revelation of Being. (This tends to explain Heidegger's fondness for etymological explorations.) The poet names and thus reveals the unseen, the holy. Thus, in a way, the poet precedes the thinker in nearness to Being, for the thinker cannot utter Being when "holy names are lacking":

Out of long-guarded speechlessness and the careful clarification of the field thus cleared, comes the utterance of the thinker. Of like origin is the naming [function] of the poet. But since like is only like insofar as difference allows, and since poetry and thinking are most purely alike in their care of the word, the two things are at the same time at opposite poles in their essence. The thinker utters Being. The poet names what is holy.

We may know something about the relations between philosophy and poetry, but we know nothing of the dialogue between poet and thinker, who "dwell near to one another on mountains farthest apart"[quotation from Hölderlin's ode, "Patmos"]. [EB, pp. 391-2]

Thus, although at opposite poles "in their essence," the poet and thinker "dwell near to one another" in their love, recognition, and guardianship of the word and the Word.

Poetry and Being. Heidegger is concerned with the question, "What is the essence of poetry?" In his famous essay on this subject, he selects five seminal passages of poetry from the works of Hölderlin and seeks to arrive

through an understanding of them at an understanding of the nature of poetry. Why did Heidegger choose Hölderlin? The reason is "solely because Hölderlin's poetry was borne on by the poetic vocation to write expressly of the essence of poetry." [EB, pp. 294-5]

The five passages whose significance Heidegger seeks to explore in order to understand the nature of poetry are as follows:

- (1) Writing poetry: "That most innocent of all occupations."⁶
- (2) "Therefore has language, most dangerous of possessions, been given to man ... so that he may affirm what he is...." [Hölderlin, IV, 246]
- (3) "Much has man learnt.
Many of the heavenly ones has he named,
Since we have been a conversation
And have been able to hear from one another."
[Hölderlin, IV, 343]
- (4) "But that which remains, is established by the poets."
[Hölderlin, IV, 63]
- (5) "Full of merit, and yet poetically, dwells
Man on this earth." [Hölderlin, VI, 25]

(1) and (2): Poetry is not overtly serious, "is like a dream, and not reality; a playing with words, and not the seriousness of action." [EB, p. 296] Yet language is a dangerous possession because "it is only by virtue of language at

⁶Hölderlins Werke, ed. Norbert von Hellingrath (Berlin, 1914), III, 377. The above translations all taken from EB, p. 293, preface the essay, "Hölderlin and the Essence of Poetry," pp. 291-315.

all that man is exposed to something manifest, which, as what is existent, afflicts and enflames man in his existence, and as such is non-existent, deceives and disappoints. It is language which first creates the manifest conditions for menace and confusion to existence, and thus the possibility of the loss of existence, that is to say--danger." [EB,p.298] Language is a dangerous and disturbing phenomenon because it reveals. In language what is manifest is suddenly expressed in words. "Only where there is language, is there world, i.e. the perpetually altering circuit of decision and production, of action and responsibility, but also of commotion and arbitrariness, of decay and confusion." [EB, p. 300] Language creates the possibility of history; it is the condition of man's existing historically.

(3) But how does language become actual? Language is not a stock of words and syntactical rules; these are only the threshold of language. Language is a conversation, a single conversation between Being and man extending through time. Since language really became actual as conversation, the gods have acquired names and a world has appeared. But the presence of gods preceded the actualization of language. More accurately, we come into being and are this "conversation":

it is precisely in the naming of the gods, and in the transmutation of the world into word, that the real conversation, which we ourselves are, consists. [EB,p.303]

Since language is a dialogue, it requires both man and Being. Without man, indeed, there would be no language and no naming of the Gods. This is a form of mutual response and participation which has been noted in Jaspers, Marcel, and Rilke.⁷

But the gods can acquire a name only by addressing and, as it were, claiming us. The word which names the gods is always a response to such a claim. This response always springs from the responsibility of a destiny. It is in the process by which the gods bring our existence to language, that we enter the sphere of the decision as to whether we are to yield ourselves to the gods or withhold ourselves from them. [Same]

(4) The poets, then, are the establishers of the word; the word which names the permanent, Being. "Poetry is the act of establishing by the word and in the word. But if the word establishes the permanent, of what value is it, since the permanent has always been, to establish what is already present? Even the permanent must be fixed so that it will not be carried away, the simple must be wrested from confusion, proportion must be set before what lacks proportion. That which supports and dominates the existent in its entirety, must become manifest. "Being must be opened out, so that the existent may appear." [EB, p. 304] Thus, the function of the poet becomes that of naming and establishing the gods and everything that is:

The poet names the gods and names all things in that which they are. This naming does not consist merely in something already known being supplied with a name; it is rather that when the poet speaks the essential word, the existent is by this naming

nominated as what it is. So it becomes known as existent. Poetry is the establishing of being by means of the word. [Same]

The poet, then, puts human existence firmly on its foundation--Being--and gives it a genuine relationship to this foundation:

But when the gods are named originally and the essence of things receives a name, so that things for the first time shine out, human existence is brought into a firm relation and given a basis. The speech of the poet is establishment not only in the sense of the free act of giving, but at the same time in the sense of the firm basing of human existence on its foundation. [EB, p. 305]

(5) What man works at and pursues is through his own efforts earned and deserved. Yet, all this does not touch the essence of man's sojourn on earth, does not reach the foundation of his existence. This foundation is aptly described as "poetic"; ~~man's~~ manner of dwelling on earth is essentially "poetic":

To "dwell poetically" means: to stand in the presence of the gods and to be involved in the proximity of the essence of things. Existence is "poetical" in its fundamental aspect--which means at the same time: in so far as it is established (founded), it is not a recompense, but a gift. [EB, p. 306]

The poet, like the thinker, dwells near the essence of life, Being. At his best, man, too, "dwells poetically"--near Being, and deals with something immediate, yet intangible. But Being is near yet difficult to grasp because it eludes all calculation; as Hölderlin says in the opening lines of the ode, "Patmos," God is near yet hard to grasp:

Nah ist
 Und schwer zu fassen der Gott.
 Wo aber Gefahr ist, wächst
 Das Rettende auch.

In the danger of this search for Being ~~the~~ man achieves authentic existence. Poetry is dangerous, for it reveals and establishes. To reveal is more and more dangerous as one approaches nearer to Being, yet "Wo aber Gefahr ist, wächst/ Das Rettende auch." The poet ~~stands~~ stands between the people and the gods, and his whole being is shivered with divine lightnings. The excessive brightness can blind (and this may have symbolic significance for such great blind poets as Homer and Milton), and the poet must transmit it in diminished form. Yet this vantage-point between man and gods gives the poet the perspective he needs to see "who man is":

He [the poet] is one who has been cast out--out into that Between, between gods and men. But only and for the first time in this Between is it decided, who man is and where he is settling his existence. [EB, p. 312]

The present time, says Heidegger, is an especially needy time, a dürftiger Zeit. It is a time when "holy names are lacking" because old gods have fled and the new ones have not yet appeared. The poet must step in and both establish and anticipate a new historical time:

This [the] essence of poetry belongs to a determined time. But not in such a way that it merely conforms to this time, as to one which is already in existence. It is that Hölderlin, in the act of establishing the essence of poetry, first determines a new time. It is the time

of the gods that have fled and of the god that is coming. It is the time of need, because it lies under a double lack and a double Not: the No-more of the gods that have fled and the Not-yet of the god that is coming.[EB,p. 313]

This pronouncement may seem a considerable distance from Sein und Zeit and from the general conception of Existentialism; nevertheless it is an integral part of Heidegger's thought and not so far as one might initially suppose from Existentialism. It is part of Heidegger's explanation of Nietzsche's idea that "God is dead," And Existentialists uniformly assert that the "old gods" have lost their power, that the people that have extinguished them are still walking in darkness and dailiness, that a new time must be founded on the lines they propound--a new relationship of man to himself and to Being.

Unfortunately there is little uniformity regarding the nature of this Being to which man in the new time must become oriented. Jaspers and Kierkegaard assert that Being is infinite and that man must relate himself to the infinite. Heidegger asserts that Being is finite, and man must relate himself to this finite Being. Heidegger's concept of Being as finite creates a completely different type of metaphysical structure, a completely different type of ontology.

The finite nature of Being. There is no finite-in-finite antithesis in Heidegger. What infinitely surpasses the realm of das Seiende is Being; but this Being is finite rather than infinite. Because Being is not identified with

infinity, one inevitably begins to wonder what Heidegger means by Being, and why Being is not infinite.

Heidegger believes that because Being is in the horizon of nothingness, is defined by nothingness, and is meaningless without nothingness, it is necessarily finite. Yet this finitude is a sort of ontological finitude rather than what is ordinarily considered as finitude. One well may ask how this ontological, finite Being contrasts with the ontic, finite realm of das Seiende.

Heidegger uses three names for what is over das Seiende: Nothing, the "Other-than-das Seiende," and Being. The "Other-than-das Seiende" includes both Being and nothingness. The nature of nothingness has already been treated; we now turn to the nature of Being as such.

What-is (das Seiende) is substance; Being is other than substance, but not infinite. Being is not-substance, permanent, always-present, unchanging. It is antithetical to Becoming, Appearance, Thought, and Ought; but it is not infinite. These four aspects of Being are treated in the last section of Heidegger's Einführung in die Metaphysik (1953), entitled, "limitation of Being":

The determination of Being was brought to view through the exposition of the four divisions:

- [1] Being is, in balance to becoming, permanence.
- [2] Being is, in balance to appearance, the permanent model, the unchanging.
- [3] Being is, in balance to thought, the fundamental, that which is actually there.
- [4] Being is, in balance to ought, that which is presented as what ought to be and is or is not already realized.

Permanence, unchangingness, there-ness, being-present--all say, at bottom the same thing: constant presence, on as ousia.⁷

Being is constant and unchanging "presence." With this concept of Being, Heidegger comes as close to the more traditional concepts of infinity as he ever does.⁸ What are aspects of infinity in traditional metaphysics are in Heidegger attributes of finite Being, of "constant presence."

One may conclude by relating the nature of Being as constant presence to the poet's vocation of naming and establishing this presence, to the fact that Being is "near yet hard to grasp," and to "dwelling poetically." The constant presence is so near that it is within us; the poet gives the presence a name; the authentic man dwells poetically by participating in the realization and actualization of Being (which is a function of the poet in naming) and by dwelling in nearness to, and guardianship of, Being:

"Full of merit, and yet poetically, dwells
Man on this earth."

⁷Quoted in Marjorie Grene, Martin Heidegger (London, 1957), p. 114. Originally in Einführung in die Metaphysik (Tübingen, 1953), p. 157.

⁸Another objection Heidegger would have to the concept of infinity is that it is embedded in a metaphysics of substance rather than of modes of Being; thus infinity is the label for non-substance, but at the same time is static and burdened with the accumulation of a history of being conceived as the opposite of static substance. Such a term would imply all the assumptions of a substance-metaphysics. Heidegger is not only opposed to the materialism of America and Russia, but to materialistic--based on substance--metaphysics which he claims has dominated Western thought since Plato. His concept of Being is, therefore, emphatically other than infinity.

Das Sein als das geistige Schicksal des Abendlandes.

Appropriately, this consideration of the thought of Heidegger concludes with a question, the question which is central to Heidegger from his earliest publication to the present day, the question which goes to the heart of the human situation today:

Ist das Sein ein blosses Wort und seine Bedeutung ein Dunst oder birgt das mit dem Wort "Sein" Gemeinte das geistige Schicksal des Abendlandes?[Einführung, p. 29]

Is Being a mere word and its meaning a haze, or does what is meant by the word "Being" hold the spiritual destiny of the West? The West will take a decisive turn in history when it is willing to ask the question, "Wie steht es um das Sein?"--how is it with Being? It is this question which will reveal the spiritual poverty and error of our whole so-called "culture." Our art, too often, is an apologetic display of "cultural" products as bits of décor and ornamentation which demonstrate that we are not barbarians. But they only witness our inner emptiness, our tragic preoccupation with externalities, with material values. The works of the mind have degenerated into trimmings for the ruthlessly practical, the metaphysically alienated, the spiritually empty world of das Man.

Bitterly Heidegger surveys the present situation in Europe:

This Europe, wretchedly blinded, forever on the brink of self-slaughter, lies today in the great pin-cers between Russia on the one hand and America on the

other. Russia and America are, from a metaphysical point of view, the same: the same desolate frenzy of technology unleashed, and of the rootless organization of the Average Man. [Einführung, p. 28]

American democracy and Russian totalitarianism are both characterized by an obsession with externalities and with technological exploitation of nature. In a frenzied pre-occupation with phantoms of the world of das Seiende, the world of appearance, modern man refuses to ask the crucial and ultimate questions:

When the furthestmost corner of the globe has been technologically conquered and opened to economic exploitation, when any event whatsoever in any place whatsoever at any time whatsoever has become accessible with any speed whatsoever, when we can "experience" simultaneously an attempt on the life of a king in France and a symphony concert in Tokyo, when time is no longer anything but speed, momentariness and simultaneity, and time as history has vanished from all the life of all the nations, when the boxer passes as the great man of a people, when the millions numbered at mass meetings are a triumph--the, yes, then, the question still grips us like a ghost through all these phantoms: what for?--where to?--and what then? [Same]

Modern man possesses the ultimate weapons, but refuses to ask the ultimate questions, the questions that would reveal that despite all his bustle and self-importance and pursuit of things, he has lost sight of Being. Heidegger believes that "These are questions which we put at this point, not parenthetically, or for the good of our souls, or for the sake of a world-view" but are far more important; for man's return to a vital relationship to Being holds the "spiritual destiny of the West." [Same]

Ultimately, Heidegger's transformation of our present way of thinking is so radical that he can only show us where to begin, can only direct us to the crucial ontological question: how is it with Being? But to ask this question in itself is to begin to think in a new way, to embark on a new adventure in history, to set out on a frontier that still remains as the physical frontiers are vanishing:

To ask: how is it with Being?--that means nothing less than to re-call the beginning of our historical-spiritual existence, in order to transform it into the new beginning. Such a thing is possible. It is indeed the decisive form of history, because it originates in the most basic event. But a beginning is not repeated by screwing oneself back to it as something that once was, and is now familiar, and has simply to be imitated. No, the beginning must be begun again more radically and with all that a true beginning brings with it--all that is strange and dark and unassured. [Einführung, p. 29]⁹

To begin again, to start with a fresh awareness of Being--this is the spiritual destiny and hope of man. Such a start means a transition to human being in the light of Being.

⁹This and the preceding translations from the Einführung in die Metaphysik are taken from Grene, pp. 92-7.

SARTRE

"Was it a dream, that enormous presence? It was there, poised over the park, tumbling from the trees, all soft, gluing up everything, a thick gelatinous mass. And was I in it, I, and the entire park? I was afraid, but above all I was furious, it seemed so stupid, so inappropriate. I despised that ignoble jelly. It was everywhere! It reached to the sky, it spread out in all directions, it filled everything with its sprawling mass, and I could see layer upon layer of it, extending much farther than the limits of the park and the houses and Bouville. I was no longer in Bouville, nor anywhere, I was floating. I was not surprised; I was very well aware that it was the World, the naked World which had suddenly shown itself, and I was choking with rage against this huge absurd being.... I cried out: 'What a filthy mess, what a mess!' and I shook myself to throw off the sticky slime but it clung to me and there was so much of it, tons and tons of existence, endless tons: I was suffocating under the weight of a tremendous ennui."¹

Sitting in the park, Roquentin encounters with nauseating immediacy what Heidegger would call "being-in-the-world"; he experiences the facticity and "thinginess" of the world. His world is pressing in on him like a gluey, gelatinous mass, a filthy mess which only clings the harder when he tries to "throw off the sticky slime."

What is this kind of writing? Is it the work of a child whose imagination has gone wild--or who is recalling a nightmare of gluey, slimy filthiness? No, it is the work of a French teacher of philosophy, consciously translating

¹Jean-Paul Sartre, "The Root of the Chestnut Tree," Partisan Review, XIII (Winter, 1946), 32-3.

a philosophical idea into literary form.

One might call this paragraph "variations on viscosity," for the abundance of adjectives related to viscosity is patent: soft, gluey, thick, gelatinous, jelly-like, sprawling, sticky, slimy, and "under the weight of a tremendous ennui." Viscosity, for Sartre, is a basic physical quality that reveals being, for it is the "viscous" which translates man's involvement in the world into physical terms. In the final pages of his L'Être et le Néant, Sartre submits an analysis of viscosity as a quality of man's being. Man attempts to appropriate his world only to find that he, himself, is being appropriated:

at the very moment when I believe that I possess it [le visqueux], behold by a curious reversal, it possesses me.... I open my hands, I want to let go of the viscous and it sticks to me, it draws me, it sucks at me. Its mode of being is neither the reassuring inertia of the solid nor a dynamism like that in water which is exhausted in fleeing from me. It is a soft, yielding action, a moist and feminine sucking, it lives obscurely under my fingers, and I sense it like a dizziness.... There is a possibility that the In-itself might absorb the For-itself into its contingency, into its indifferent exteriority, into its foundationless existence.²

This is essentially a translation of Heidegger's presentation of man's plight--his being thrown into the

²Being and Nothingness, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York, 1956), pp. 608-9. Hereinafter abbreviated "BN." Also, L'Être et le Néant (Paris, 1948), p. 700. Hereinafter abbreviated "EN." Miss Barnes' rendering of "le visqueux" is "the slimy." I have changed this rendering to "viscous" to be consistent with my use of "viscous" in the text introducing the quotation.

world, his having always to be in-situation, his involvement with fallenness through no desire of his own, his inability to escape being appropriated by inauthentic modes of existing. In Sartre's hands, the inauthentic mode is transformed from a mode of merely being "other-directed" to an almost metaphysical attraction for becoming an inert thing. Fearing freedom, the inauthentic man longs for the inertness characteristic of a thing.

Freedom is a fundamental dynamic of authenticity in Sartre, and this is translated on the physical level into terms of physical mobility: the inauthentic man, the bourgeois, seeks the security of being solid, opaque, inert--something which is acted upon but does not originate action, a thing without freedom. The authentic man, on the other hand, tries to achieve a union of his potentialities--which Sartre calls "nothingness" because they do not exist except as a "lack" which could come into being--and the body and the "other person"--which are always already there and without which nothingness could not possibly have any meaning or any possibility of coming into being. This union of consciousness with the physical body and world--with what is always already there--is the union of nothingness and Being. Since consciousness is personal, it is the relationship between what is for something and what is already in something. Sartre calls these two modes in a person "For-itself" and

"In-itself" (être pour-soi and être en-soi); the union of both of these is the "In-itself-For-itself" (en-soi-pour-soi).

Both Heidegger and Sartre assert that they are not describing a fixed human nature, but phenomenologically describing the human situation, the situation in which a human being finds himself "placed" merely by virtue of being as a human being. Yet, if one were to try to single out a dominating concern in each of the two thinkers, that concern would be with Being as such in Heidegger, and with consciousness in Sartre. If a second major concern were sought, it would be Zeitlichkeit in Heidegger and freedom in Sartre. Thus, one finds a distinct difference of emphasis between the two thinkers; one is concerned primarily with Being and Time, while the other is concerned primarily with consciousness and freedom.

Returning to the case of Roquentin's experience in the park, the key to the meaning of this experience is Sartre's conception of viscosity and his association of viscosity with consciousness. Consciousness, in this case, may also be compared with Heidegger's description of the state of mind in true boredom [see p. 140], for Roquentin's state is an "ennui" in which he suddenly sees a totality. In boredom, consciousness is released from the openness of perceiving the potentialities of the self and sees things as a whole. This is the reason that Roquentin is floating;

the fixity involved in holding a point of view is now loosened. Roquentin has "seen through" the fixed categories, classes, and social labels, to the pure thinginess of things in all their immediacy. They do not have the solidity of the fixed categories of the bourgeoisie; they have become only the gluey thinginess which surrounds him and constitutes his world.

Consciousness, for Sartre, may move in two directions: toward slavery in thinghood or toward freedom in self-determination. Its natural state is a flickering mobility in contrast to the physical solidity of things and one's body. Miss Iris Murdoch, in her valuable book on Sartre, has stated this contrast well:

Sartre pictures consciousness by means of ... the contrast between the flickering, unstable, semi-transparent moment-to-moment "being" of the consciousness, the shifting way in which it conceives objects and itself--and the solid, opaque, inert "in-themselvessness" of things which simply are what they are.³

We may be aware of ourselves not as transparent to our own reflective gaze, but as transfixed, solidified, judged--by the look from the "other person." The authentically existing person's consciousness is characterized by open self-awareness; the inauthentic person's consciousness sees his self as solidified by the look of the "other person," and tends toward a more solid, opaque, and thing-like condition.

³Sartre: Romantic Rationalist (New Haven, 1953), p. 42.

It is therefore appropriate to picture the consciousness as a gluey or paste-like substance which depending on the temperature may become more or less solidified; it may tend toward the freedom of mobility or the slavery of solidity. In the image of viscosity, Sartre can tie together the refusal to think, the refusal to be free, and solidification of the self in the gaze of others. Miss Murdoch notes,

"Glueyness" (le visqueux) is for Sartre the image of consciousness; and fascinates us for that reason. It is in terms of solidification, or closing of the texture that Sartre pictures insincerity or bad faith (mauvaise foi); the more or less conscious refusal to reflect, the immersion in the unreflectively coloured awareness of the world, the persistence in an emotional judgment, or the willingness to inhabit cosily some other person's estimate of oneself. [Same]

Thus, for Sartre, consciousness and freedom are as inter-related as Heidegger's Being and time, for in both cases the latter is a decisive factor in the former. Consciousness may become more mobile, more liquid, more free; or it may become more opaque, inert, more like a solid. Yet consciousness of my unrealized potentialities, of myself as "projet," as "non-being" now but "being-to-be-realized" (which non-being Sartre calls le néant, "nothingness") may also be thought of as volatile like gas. Gas has no form; it is like nothing; it disperses itself and loses itself over the world. Thus, man's spiritus (pneuma, breath, air, spirit) is nothing without its form--the form in which it must express itself. In terms of consciousness, this means that

consciousness can never be divorced from the body in which it finds itself any more than the body can be free of the world in which it finds itself. To attempt to be pour-soi without en-soi, then, is as futile as the attempt to solidify into en-soi and deny the pour-soi. Man is necessarily in between--gluey, viscous. Man is in the world, "in-situation," but he must project himself into nothingness, not lapse into the state of a thing.

Indeed, the most distinctive aspect of man is this not-yet, this non-being which could be, this nothingness without which man as a free being, as a human being, could hardly be conceived. What man is, in the present, is not all of man. Man is best defined in terms of possibility, in terms of what he can become. He is more than he is, for he is also what he is not yet. As Sartre puts it, "Man is not what he is, and is what he is not."

Roquentin asserts, "It seemed so stupid, so inappropriate.... I was very well aware that it was the World, the naked World which had suddenly shown itself." The word "naked" implies that previously it was clothed. What was it clothed in? It was clothed in order, the order and logic of systems. Roquentin, in a moment of profound importance, discovers that underneath the protective clothing of logic, life is really absurd. This is not the question of whether there is ultimately order on a cosmic scale so much as wheth-

er life as it is existed by a human being is logical. It is the assertion that the situation in which the individual finds himself is absurd and illogical. This absurdity of life is not, for the authentic man, necessarily bad, but a condition which must be recognized. Logic presents a closed system; absurdity makes one aware--through dread--of the openness and plenitude of solutions and possibilities which have not even come into existence. This plenitude of possibilities is the positive way of stating nothingness. A closed system makes freedom merely a choice among existing possibilities; nothingness gives one a creative freedom to forge unanticipatable possibilities. Nothingness, freedom, absurdity, and dread, then, all are interrelated.

The horror with which the Anglo-American reader may greet this assertion that life is absurd is merely an indication of the tenacity with which we cling to a belief in logic. To the French Existentialist, this merely states a self-evident fact: that life is basically not logical, that the important aspects of it escape and transcend all logic. Either life is right, logical, harmonious--or it is absurd. To the French Existentialist, the assertion that life is absurd is much more tenable even from the point of view of reason than the denial of reality implicit in the assertion that life is logical. Nothingness, for instance, is illogical; as Arland Ussher notes, the very fact that nothingness

transcends the logical negative is a measure of the inadequacy of any logic-based concept of life:

Sartre draws up a list of "negativities" which include absence, alteration, otherness, repulsion, regret, distraction, etc. All these perceptions inspire a feeling akin to dread. [See Heidegger's treatment of nothingness as the foundation for hate, destruction, and so forth, esp. p. 144.] My friend's absence from the café haunts it like a ghost. This distinguishes positive negation (so to call it) from mere logical negation. All of which seems to me [Ussher] to be true; and the difficulty of stating it without (apparent) absurdity, a measure of the failure of mere "abstract" thought. When French Existentialists speak of the "Absurd," they mean the insufficiency of the logical explanation. Nations which have believed less in logic are less likely to be perturbed. [Ussher, p. 105, footnote]

Thus, the Existentialists do not use the word "absurd" in a necessarily pejorative sense, but contrast it to "logical." Remember, too, that Kierkegaard asserted that many of the basic Christian beliefs were absurd, that the Incarnation was absurd--meaning merely that logic broke down, failed, in trying to explain them. No "rational" explanation could be adequate or they would lose their super-rational character.

For the Existentialist, then, to say that life is absurd is to give it freedom. To imprison it with an inadequate "logical" explanation is only to put it in a closed system, to destroy its openness to creative possibilities. Paradoxically, then, the Existentialist asserts that if life is absurd there is hope--hope for becoming what one is not, and not remaining what one is.

In following out the implications of Roquentin's experience in the park, we have encountered many of the basic concepts in Sartre's philosophical thought: 1) We noted that viscosity symbolizes man's involvement in the world. 2) In viscosity was discovered the appropriation against one's will which is a part of life. The "fear of appropriation" is basic in Sartre; the appropriation may be either by the en-soi or, as will be seen, by the "other person." All the Existentialists jealously guard the self against appropriation by the lower self and by the world.⁴ 3) We noted that viscosity is analogous to consciousness, and we noted that Sartre's basic concern is with consciousness; we noted too the relationship of viscosity and consciousness as illustrated by Sartre in the final pages of Being and Nothingness. 4) Enlarging upon the analogy of viscosity to consciousness, we found that Sartre asserts that consciousness may tend in one of two direction-complexes: a) to be more opaque, solid, and inert--toward the en-soi--that is, toward being other-directed through conceiving of oneself as object of the gaze of another; or b) to become more fluid, flickering, translucent, mobile--toward the pour-soi--that is, toward being inner-directed, conceiving of oneself in terms of freedom and potentiality.

⁴The unhappy love affairs of Kierkegaard and Rilke may be seen as a product of "fear of appropriation," that love had to be sacrificed to the realization of the self.

5) Sartre tries to achieve a unity of these two tendencies which does not seek to deny or cancel one through the other but to realize each through the aid of the other. The unity to be sought for is a combination which Sartre calls the "en-soi-pour-soi." Sartre combines these two factors in his famous definition of man: "Man is not what he is (en-soi, merely), and is what he is not (pour-soi, or what he can become)." Man is defined in terms of what he is and what he lacks, or is not; man is defined, in other words, in terms of Being and nothingness. 6) Thus, one comes to speak of consciousness in terms of nothingness and the projection of the self into nothingness. This is Sartre's version of transcendence. Consciousness transcends the here in knowing and the now in willing; in knowing one's potential and in willing one is projecting oneself into a lack, what is lacking now. This lack is "not-being" or non-being; it is a nothingness. Thus, the existence of nothingness is the very condition of transcendence, and transcendence is a projection of the present being into this nothingness. The realization of this "lack" is not like the selection of a possibility in a closed system; rather this "lack" is nothingness, pure non-existence prior to its realization, or more accurately, is creation, by the free individual. 7) These facts led us to a definition of freedom as the creative realization of potentiality. Sartre's definition of freedom goes far beyond this, in fact,

but this aspect shows the close relationship of freedom to nothingness, as well as to consciousness, the pour-soi, transcendence, and creative realization of potentialities.

8) The pour-soi, then, is the instrument of existential freedom and transcendence. (The en-soi represents the inert facticity of involvement in the world.) 9) It was also noted that the use of the word "absurd" in Existentialism is taken more calmly in countries that have believed less in logic. Absurdity refers to the failure, indeed the intrinsic inadequacy of logical explanation of life. 10) Finally, the relationship of the dread before the absurdity of life to the possibility of freedom, was noted, and thereby the relationship of absurdity, dread, and nothingness. And so consciousness, the pour-soi, freedom, transcendence, absurdity, dread, and nothingness--all are interrelated, all are related in a complex concept of the way in which the self projects itself into the future: consciousness being the condition of it; pour-soi being the personal instrument of it; freedom being the possibility of it; nothingness representing the present non-being of it; and transcendence the act of achieving it.

The self as a projective structure. With all these considerations, then, there emerges a concept of the self as a forward-projecting being, which clearly reveals a debt to Heidegger's concept of the "geworfene Entwurf." Yet

Sartre has given this concept a different emphasis. Heidegger's consideration did not emphasize consciousness but assumed it. His concern was with being-in-the-world, the structure of care, the personal structure of time, the way in which the individual reacted to his possibilities and to death. Sartre, on the other hand, makes consciousness central. The reality is not so much a mysterious Seinsverständnis (understanding of Being) as merely individual consciousness, translucent and pre-reflective. Thus, before Sartre begins his consideration of the questions of Being and nothingness, he adds a compact introduction which asks essentially, "How is it with consciousness?" This introduction summarizes and presumes some of his previous writing on, and generally deals with, consciousness. Although this introduction is titled "Pursuit of Being," the territory through which Being is pursued and the true subject of the essay is consciousness. For Sartre, Being and nothingness are no longer mysterious, but matter-of-fact aspects of existence with which consciousness must deal. Thus, although Sartre's analysis of being-in-the-world seems similar to Heidegger's, the "world" itself seems altogether different. Part of this difference is the threat in the gaze of the "other person"; this aspect will be considered subsequently.

Freedom. Freedom has been discussed above as an attribute of the pour-soi, as future-oriented in its temporal structure, and therefore related to the realization of what is presently non-being, "lacking," nothingness, potentiality. Certain other implications of freedom may be considered.

Freedom is intentional. This means that it involves decision, and, of course, action. It also means that action is projective, that it points into the future. If a person throws away a lighted cigarette which happens to set off a fuse, which in turn produces an explosion, he has not acted. On the other hand, the worker who sets off the charge as part of his work has acted. [EN, p. 508; BN, p. 433] He has acted intentionally, and therefore exercised his freedom. If he had had no freedom, no action would have taken place. As Sartre puts it, "the fundamental condition of action is the freedom of the acting being." [EN, p. 511; BN, p. 436]

Man is "condemned to be free." Because man has the property of intention, the ability to look forward, he is forced to be free: "We are not free to cease being free."

By the sole fact that I am conscious of the causes which inspire my action, these causes are already transcendent objects for my consciousness; they are outside. In vain shall I seek to catch hold of them; I escape them by my very existence. I am condemned to exist forever beyond my essence, beyond the causes and motives of my act. I am condemned to be free. This means that no limits to my freedom can be found except freedom itself

or, if you prefer, that we are not free to cease being free. To the extent that the for-itself wishes to hide its own nothingness from itself and incorporate the in-itself as its true mode of being, it is trying also to hide its freedom from itself. [EN, p. 515; BN, pp. 439-40]

Freedom is based on the conception of man as nothingness. Freedom is only possible because the pour-soi is negative, that is, that the pour-soi is always other than what is. It is, itself, the Existenz that precedes the essence; for essence is of what is, and pour-soi is the nothingness of all that is presently not, most especially the future. Hegel said this in his famous saying, "Wesen ist was gewesen ist," essence is what is and has been; existence is contained most authentically in the exercise of freedom in the free act, the introduction of what was negative. But this "introducing" consumes itself in the act and is gone, for it has no essence: it is existence; it is freedom; it is consciousness; it is nothingness:

if negation comes into the world through human-reality, the latter must be a being who can realize a nihilating rupture with the world and with himself; ...the permanent possibility of this rupture is the same as freedom. ...this permanent possibility of nihilating what I am in the form of "having-been" implies for man a particular type of existence.... For the for-itself, to be is to nihilate the in-itself which it is. Under these conditions freedom can be nothing other than this nihilation. It is through this that the for-itself escapes its being as its essence; it is through this that the for-itself is always something other than what can be said of it. [EN, pp. 514-5; BN, p. 439]

Because man contains this for-itself which is always negating the present state of man, man brings nothingness in-

to the world. As Sartre puts it, "human reality is its own nothingness." [Same]

Freedom is situational. The fact that the pour-soi is more than future, is temporality (that is, it could not conceive of itself without a past and present), means that even the pour-soi itself is, in a sense, situational. The pour-soi, after all, expresses itself in situation, but the situation itself is much more than merely pour-soi, for pour-soi is consumed in existing the situation. The fact that there is a situation also implies that other pour-sois are also in the situation and the situation becomes the "world." One is, it is true, thrown into the world; one does not choose his situation, nor is the situation a subjective projection, but a "given," a resisting "given" on which the individual may act. (Like Heidegger, Sartre sees the resistance of the objective world as proof of the fact that it is not a projection of the human subject, but objectively present and real.) Freedom does not lie in any ability to select which thrownness one will be the object of, but in viewing the techniques of the situation into which one is always already thrown as things which can be freely appropriated or rejected. One then becomes master of the situation. One appropriates the techniques of one's world into a meaningful configuration through a free act of choice. Thus, while one is thrown into the world, one also

founds one's own world, and chooses oneself in the world; this is what it means to be free:

it is by choosing itself and by historicizing itself in the world that the for-itself historicizes the world itself.... Henceforth, precisely because the techniques appear as objects, the for-itself can choose to appropriate them.... This historicization, which is the effect of the for-itself's free choice, in no way restricts its freedom; quite the contrary, it is in this world and no other that its freedom comes into play; it is in connection with its existence in this world that it puts itself into question. For to be free is not to choose the historic world in which one arises--which would have no meaning--but to choose oneself in the world whatever this may be. [EN, p. 604; BN, p. 521. Under-score in final sentence is my own.]

Freedom, then, is a choosing of oneself. It is not an objectively defined quality of a situation, but a structure of the individual consciousness, an ontological structure of existence and a prerequisite of meaningful and creative action. Freedom is not an abstraction in a political or economic system; freedom is the supreme quality of the authentically existing self.

Freedom involves "appropriation." The free appropriation of experience is a basic aspect of Sartre's thought. While one is always in a situation, one appropriates from it what one chooses and thus one constitutes a situation. Because of freedom, one can appropriate; because of contingency there is choice; as Sartre puts it, freedom (by rising above the situation through consciousness) "adds nothingness to things":

The project of my freedom adds nothing to things: it causes there to be things.... It is because freedom is condemned to be free-i.e., can not choose itself as freedom--that there are things; that is, a plenitude of contingency at the heart of which it is itself contingency. It is by the assumption of this contingency and by surpassing it that there can be at once a choice and an organization of things in situation; and it is the contingency of freedom and the contingency of the in-itself which are expressed in situation by the unpredictability and the adversity of the environment. Thus I am absolutely free and absolutely responsible for my situation. But I am never free except in situation. [EN, p. 591; BN, p. 509]

One can never be free except in a situation, but one must also be above and outside the situation in order to be truly free in Sartre's sense of the word.

Psychologically, appropriation is a basic motivation of human action. Thus, Sartre asserts that the "final discoveries" of his ontology become the "first principles of psychoanalysis." [EN, p. 664; BN, 575] He spends the final portions of Being and Nothingness elaborating on the ways in which ontology forms the foundation for an adequate psychoanalysis of the phenomenon of possession. Indeed, Sartre views appropriation or possession as the basic mode of human existence:

to the extent that I appear to myself as creating objects by the sole relation of appropriation, these objects are myself. The pen and the pipe, the clothing, the desk, the house--are myself. The totality of my possessions reflects the totality of my being. I am what I have. It is I myself which I touch in this cup, in this trinket. This mountain which I climb is myself to the extent that I conquer it; and when I am at its summit, which I have "achieved" at the cost of this same effort, when I attain this magnificent view of the valley and the surrounding peaks, then I am the

view; the panorama is myself dilated to the horizon, for it exists only through me, only for me. [EN, pp. 680-1; BN, pp. 590-1]

Thus, existence itself is a form of creative appropriation. The central aspect--the creative aspect--of appropriation is that it reveals itself only through movement and transition. It is defined in terms of the transition it effects:

Creation can be conceived and maintained only as a continued transition from one term to the other. As the object rises up in my world, it must simultaneously be wholly me and wholly independent of me. This is what we believe that we are realizing in possession. The possessed object as possessed is a continuous creation. [EN, p. 681; BN, p. 591]

Thus, creative possession is the way in which the pour-soi appropriates the objects in its world, transforming them, as Heidegger would say, from Vorhandene to Zuhandene. But appropriation is more basic than that, for in Sartre everything seems to be engaged in appropriation: The pour-soi seeks to appropriate the body to its purposes as well as the external environment; the en-soi tries to absorb the pour-soi; the en-soi-pour-soi has to face the threat of appropriation by the "other person." The "techniques" try to absorb the pour-soi, try to absorb those who use them, while the existing individual struggles to master them for his own purposes. Possession is a foundation of desire and the threat of appropriation is the basis on which the individual existing human being must face all other individuals and their appropriating gazes.

Appropriation, however, can never be complete, and the story of man's life is one of frustration. Love, for instance, is a passion for possession, yet the mark of possession is not clear on the thing possessed. If appropriation is complete then the object is enslaved and the response either denied or meaningless because what is really desired is the impossible possession of the freedom of the other, which, possessed, is no longer free. The loved one cannot be loved as both subject and object, for the freedom of the other is the foundation of my being. If the other becomes object, I shatter my own freedom, for it is always through the other that my freedom is determined. [EN, p. 433] It is impossible to possess a freedom as freedom, then. [EN, p. 434] Love is innately paradoxical and ultimately must end in frustration.

The Look of the "Other Person." Appropriation is a basic motive of the self, but the self soon learns that there are other selves with the same sort of motivation. As one looks around himself in an endeavor to appropriate the surrounding environment, one encounters the glance of the "other person," l'autre. Suddenly one realizes that he is being watched; he realizes that he is no longer subject, but object. One is being made a part of the environment of someone else, and is therefore no longer the center of the universe but only a mere planet. Yet the very existence

of the other functions to give me an outside, to give me an objective identity.

This situation creates a particular type of fear, the fear of appropriation--or, to put it another way, fear of the loss of freedom. Thus, the basic emotion in many relationships between individual consciousnesses is fear, and the basic mode is conflict. Sartre states that "The essence of the relations between consciousnesses is not Mitsein, but conflict." [EN, p. 484] This conflict may not materialize into action, but it remains conflict, the flight from the eye of the other. Sometimes the best way is to try to appropriate the other, making an attack as the best sort of defense. On the first level this turns into a duel between être-regardant and être-regardé. On other levels, it may take other forms depending on whether the self wishes to appropriate the other--through love, desire, sadism, or hate--or to become an object for the other--in masochism--or whether the state of the self is unconsciousness of the significance of the other person--indifference.

A combination of the concept of appropriation and the significance of the look, for Sartre, tends to explain the nature of: (1) love, 2) desire, 3) sadism, 4) masochism, 5) hate, and 6) indifference. Sartre's explanation of the underlying reasons for these different states constitutes one of ^{the} most brilliant and original parts of his analysis.

1) Love is the effort to possess the freedom of the other, which, being possessed, is no longer a freedom, thus rendering the object sought unseekable. One cannot possess a freedom as a freedom.

2) Desire is always sexual desire. "Desire is an attempt to undress the body of its movements as of its clothes and to make it exist as pure flesh; it is an attempt at incarnation of the body of the Other." [EN, p. 459] This "incarnation" of the body of the Other is accomplished through the caress, which Sartre describes as a "shaping" through which I make the flesh of the other be "born." [Same] But what desire wants is not merely the possession of the body; rather it also wants the transcendence of the other person. As Sartre notes, this is the desire for true possession, possession of what in traditional terminology is called body and soul:

It is certain that I want to possess the Other's body, but I want to possess it in so far as it is itself a "possessed"; that is, in so far as the Other's consciousness is identified with his body. Such is the impossible ideal of desire: to possess the Other's transcendence as pure transcendence and at the same time as body, to reduce the Other to his simple facticity because he is then in the midst of my world but to bring it about that this facticity is a perpetual appresentation of his nihilating transcendence. [EN, pp. 363-4; BN, p. 394]

Desire, then, can never be satisfied; it remains a paradox and an impossibility.

3) Sadism is also an expression of the desire to possess the freedom of the other--through the infliction of

pain. It is at the same time a desire to use one's own body only as an instrument:

in sadism the emphasis is put on the instrumental appropriation of the incarnated-Other. The "moment" of sadism in sexuality is the one in which the incarnated for-itself surpasses its own incarnation in order to appropriate the incarnation of the Other. Thus sadism is a refusal to be incarnated and a flight from all facticity and at the same time an effort to get hold of the Other's facticity. [EN, p. 469; BN, p. 399]

4) Masochism is the inverse of sadism. The desire of the masochist is to become purely an object for the Other. The shame of being an object of the gaze of another is not fled but sought. The masochist loves to feel this shame. But even the masochist is doomed to frustration and failure; and, as Sartre observes, the repeated experience of this failure to annihilate one's subjectivity by having it absorbed into the Other is always "accompanied by the exhausting and delicious consciousness of failure so that finally it is the failure itself which the subject ultimately seeks as his principal goal." [EN, p. 447; BN, p. 379]

"Even the masochist who pays a woman to whip him is treating her as an instrument and by this very fact posits himself in transcendence in relation to her." [Same] Thus, the desire to become incarnated solely as an object, masochism, is doomed to fail, as is its opposite, sadism, the desire to resist this type of incarnation and ruin the freedom of the Other. The masochist's desire to enslave his freedom and the sadist's desire to enslave the freedom of the Other are

both doomed to ultimate dissatisfaction and failure.

5) Hate is the attempt of the self to avoid being an object for another by wishing the extinction or destruction of the Other. Hate is a negative sort of recognition of the power of the freedom of the Other. Yet, of course, the existence of the Other is a necessary aspect of one's own freedom, so that the extinction of the Other is only an indirect extinction of the very thing one is trying to protect. Thus, the effort of hate to extinguish the Other and the opposite effort to preserve and possess the freedom of the Other in love are both equally futile. The Other must exist, yet existing as a freedom, he must inevitably exist as a threat and as a thing to try to appropriate.

6) Indifference is "blindness" to the gaze of the Other; it is the state in which one is unconscious--of the gaze of the Other. In this state one could not possibly feel, say, the shame of the masochist. This is the state of "bad faith," the lack of the realization that there are other subjectivities. Thus, what Heidegger calls das Man reappears in Sartre:

In this state of blindness I concurrently ignore the Other's absolute subjectivity as the foundation of my being-in-itself and my being-for-others, in particular of my "body for others." In a sense I am reassured [this is Heidegger's Beruhigung in the state of Verfallen], I am self-confident; that is, I am in no way conscious of the fact that the Other's look can fix my possibilities and my body. I am in a state the very opposite of what we call shyness or timidity. I am at ease; I am not embarrassed by myself, for I am not outside; I do not feel

myself alienated. This state of blindness can be maintained for a long time, as long as my fundamental bad faith desires; it can be extended--with relapses--over several years, over a whole life; there are men who die without--save for brief and terrifying flashes of illumination--ever having suspected what the Other is. [EN, p. 449; BN, p. 381]

Sartre singles out the feelings which he sees as important to the authentically existing person and presents their negation in the "indifferent" man: I do not feel embarrassed by myself; I am not alienated; I am not outside; I am in no way conscious, conscious that the Other's look can fix me, much as a pin can fix an insect on a board to leave it to struggle in vain for freedom. The authentic man (and the Existentialist in philosophy or literature) feels this loss-of-freedom-on-account-of-being-with-others and being-in-the-world; he feels that man has become fully and thoroughly problematical to himself; he feels an alienation from himself and from those around him--from the systems and values under which he struggles to gain some meaning and self-realization. This complex feeling of alienation and the accompanying contempt for the masses of those who are the "indifferent," who do not feel this alienation, are basic characteristics of Existentialism.

Sartre succeeds brilliantly, too, in presenting the victim of alienation from society and from himself--the lonely individual. To say that Existentialism is essentially self-centered would be an understatement, but the self is a lonely

self, a lost creature in an alien and adverse world. The individual discovers only threat from his body, the world of objects, and from other people. For all his individualism, the individual does not seem, in Sartre, to have much innerness. His motivation hardly rises above appropriation, and the ultimate questions so central to Heidegger are meaningless to him. The pattern of relationships to nature and to other people has no positive aspect in Sartre; there is only the negativity of the threat to the self. Small wonder the individual is lonely; on the outside he can find only threats and on the inside of himself he is a translucent void, a nothingness.

Conclusions: Sartre was a student of Heidegger but his master rightly does not recognize his philosophy in the writings of Sartre. Sartre's contribution was to translate and unfortunately transform some of the most pregnant aspects of Heidegger's analysis of existence into something not too distant from an existential psychology. In Sartre, too, the dominating, even unifying, concern with consciousness and freedom replaces the concern with Being as such, that is, Being as a mysterious ontological ground of all beings and all things. Nothingness is translated from Heidegger, but the emphasis is not metaphysical but a very realistic idea of a "lack": Pierre is not here; man is what he is not. Disclosure, which is a mysterious revelation of

Being through existence and the Seinsverständnis of man, becomes in Sartre merely the process of consciousness.

Heidegger's philosophy evolves into poetry and mysticism, and even the idea that ultimately all is determined in Being. Sartre could never take this direction because his view is realistic (an historical tendency of the French) and eschews mystery; Sartre moves into psychoanalysis and psychoanalytical-philosophical plays and novels. Sartre views poetry as merely a sort of playing and reveling in sensations for their own sake (this inadequate view of poetry is a revealing fact); Heidegger regards the function of the poet as akin to that of the thinker in revealing the nature of Being, for both dwell reverently near the essence of Being. Heidegger is oracular, inconsistent, occasionally obtuse; Sartre is not oracular but rather uses rational persuasion on the basis of clear, tight, and systematic exposition. In dialectical skill, indeed, the French have at last found a rival to Hegel.

Both Heidegger and Sartre, then, have made original contributions to the theory of Existentialism; indeed, their emphases tend to balance each other, for where one wanders off into an exploration of the revelation of Being, the other presents a concept of man as pure pre-reflective consciousness empty of all content. One has metaphysical depths, the other has dialectical clarity and realism.

Unfortunately, a philosophy of an empty consciousness endowed with freedom and a body to implement that freedom is more an expression of the modern predicament than an analysis of it. Possessiveness, threat, conflict, fear, and loneliness as the basic aspects of human interrelationships only express the modern problem but do not provide any basis for hope that things will ever be otherwise. Sartre merely reduces international power politics to the level of personal interrelationships, and in these power interrelationships man is hardly a noble creature, the noblest of God's creation, but an animal endowed with higher consciousness. Sartre's world of freedomism, threat, fear, and possessiveness is ^agrey, empty world devoid of any spiritual content--a world far different from that envisioned by Kierkegaard, Marcel, Jaspers, or Heidegger. Finally, Sartre presents a picture of man as naked and fearful, yet daring heroically to act to fulfill a self which is, inside, only a translucent void, an emptiness.

THEMES AND VARIATIONS IN EXISTENTIAL THOUGHT

One of the most central concerns of existential philosophers is the self. Their analysis is largely that of the self in his world. In seeking to understand the nature of the self, the analysis is not of what the self is but rather how the self is, and how he relates himself to his world, his freedom, and his potentialities. Because of the emphasis on how one exists, Existentialists consider that they are contributing to the theory of "being" on the human level. In dealing with being--human being in the world--the fundamental dynamics of human life seem to become central elements under scrutiny. One might call their investigations "existential dynamics of human life" as meaningfully as existential "philosophies" or "ontologies," for they explore the dynamics of human life--as experienced by an individual existing human being. This approach is the Existentialist's contribution to the quest for a genuine reality. It is also his definition of man. Man is not a static substance-that-thinks, but a dynamic, existing human being. Man is best defined in terms of the dynamics of his existence--the dynamics of the existing self.

Thus, the most valuable approach to the themes and variations of existential thought is a presentation of the general concept of the self, proceeding from the simple and

primary aspects of self-awareness to the more complicated relationships to time, other selves, and so forth. With such an approach, the dynamics of the existence of the self may, perhaps, be presented more coherently and comprehensibly.

The Self. In analyzing the self, the first consideration is consciousness. Next is consciousness of consciousness. Next is the more specific consciousness of being a self in a body. Next is the consciousness of being-in-a-body-in-a-situation. And then comes the consciousness of other consciousness, the consciousness of other beings. The self, then, is consciousness in a body and in a situation and with others.

The Becoming Self. The self soon becomes conscious of the fact that he is a temporal creature, that he exists in the dimension of time. He becomes conscious that he is not a static thing, but a constantly becoming creature. With this consciousness of becoming comes the consciousness of the fact that what one is about to become is contingent, that there are a number of possibilities; one then becomes conscious of a certain power to be, an ability to change or influence one's future. One becomes conscious that to a certain extent life is what one makes it, that one "founds" a world. But with this power comes the consciousness that the power is not absolute, that the will cannot merely by

willing bring something into being. There is a coefficient of adversity, a resisting force which makes one know that one is not a power in a powerless universe, but a power among powers. The resisting force is often somewhat passive, that is, it is constituted by the existing pattern in which the individual finds himself and the tendency--which one might call the inertia of motion and of rest--of the pattern to remain fixed and unchanged.

The consciousness of the pattern into which one naturally falls and the consciousness of the power to surpass and transcend it create the basic situation in which man finds himself: the situation of the possibility of choosing to remain in the pattern or the decision to transcend it. Thus, man is always confronted with the possibility of choosing between a higher or a lower self, choosing to be a passive object moved by the powers which create the pattern, or an acting, self-directed subject who chooses freely whether he will remain meaningfully in a pattern or meaningfully transcend it. All the Existentialists here studied assert that man is the creature who chooses what he will be; all assert the need for decision. Because decision is always directed to the future, man is future-oriented. In existential terms, man is a projective structure; man is a creature who extends himself into the future. This is what Heidegger calls the Entwurf aspect of man's manner of existing.

The Chosen Self. Thus, man is not merely a conscious self and a becoming self; man is a chosen self, for he has chosen to be what he is. Another way of saying this is to say that man is free. But the self who chooses himself authentically is the self who affirms himself "in spite of." In spite of others, in spite of the inauthenticity of the world, in spite of the nothingness within himself, the authentic self affirms his value, his freedom, his power. As Tillich has put it, the authentic man has the "courage to be."¹ The world of Verfallen--that is, the world of "decline"--confronts the self with a threat to his powers. Likewise, the necessary contingency of life, of fate and death, constitutes a threat to the power to be. Thus, the existing self must choose to be, must affirm himself in spite of the threats of non-being in the forms of fate, death, meaninglessness, emptiness, guilt, and condemnation. The self must choose to be and make a "leap" from anxiety to affirmation. This leap is, in a sense, irrational and a leap into nothingness, but in another sense it is an existential necessity, a mark of courage and good judgment in the larger sense.

The Appropriating Self. Sartre has described a basic function of the self in his world as "appropriation." The self tends to appropriate experience, to make it his own.

¹See Courage to Be (New Haven, 1952).

He attempts to make life his own by controlling it. The self must maintain his self-centeredness by making his world be in relationship to himself. Unfortunately, the self soon learns that there are other selves in his world operating on the same principle. This leads to a fear of appropriation by other selves. And the fear of appropriation is not limited to other selves, but for the existing self is a fear of the loss of control in general, that is, a fear of appropriation by his world and by the facticity of his own body.

Awareness, Facticity, Situationality, and Freedom.

One may say, then, that four basic aspects of man's mode of being-in-the-world are consciousness, facticity, situationality, and freedom. 1) Consciousness is the first attribute of the existing being. 2) Facticity is the inescapable fact of being fastened in one's own body. 3) Situationality is the equally inescapable fact of always being in a situation and never being able to escape it and always having to find one's realization through it. 4) Freedom refers to the power to act on life as a free agent. One is not only conscious; one is intentional (which points into the future). One has, in other words, the power of intentional action.

Consequences of Awareness, Facticity, Situationality, and Freedom. 1) The existence of consciousness means that one is, by the very fact of being conscious of a situation, somehow above it, transcending it. One transcends the here

in the act of knowing and the now in the act of willing. Consciousness, like electricity, eludes definition. In a sense, it is not a thing or substance at all, but a translucence. It projects the self into the future and through it the self points toward the future. Since it is so much concerned with what is not-yet, what will be, its nature is essentially to negate the present for the future. It is, in a sense, nothing at all--a nothingness. It is the way, to put it otherwise, in which nothingness is presented to the existing self. Thus, consciousness implies the existence of both nothingness and transcendence. Consciousness has, in a sense, created nothingness and transcendence.

2) Facticity. The existence of facticity creates the need for incarnation. Facticity fastens the consciousness to a specific body in which it must reside and find its expression. Facticity creates a force which acts as a coefficient of adversity or resistance against the consciousness. It is, indeed, a force trying to appropriate consciousness and thus to make it adjust to being fully determined by pure facticity. The consequence of facticity, then, is the need for the pure awareness of self to realize that its realization must come through incarnation in the body. The body is the instrument and means of expression of consciousness.

3) Situationality. Situationality creates a similar need in reference to time and space; the consciousness which is incarnated in a body must also find expression in a given time and space, a time and space not generally chosen by it, any more than it chose its body. Similarly, too, situationality exerts a force tending to make the individual conform to an already existing pattern, to become a part of a mass, a movement, and age, and thereby relieving him of the need to form his own pattern of self-realization. Situationality creates the ground, in other words, for what Existentialists call "inauthenticity."

4) Freedom. Freedom, on the other hand, creates the possibility of "authenticity," for it creates the demand on the existing being to rise above both facticity and situationality through a realization that, as a temporal being, he can become other than he is, and that in a thousand daily choices, a man chooses for or against himself. Freedom makes man realize the importance of decision and the fact that he must, in order to make life meaningful, appropriate experience to himself. (Kierkegaard pictured the appropriation process in reference to truth. Truth in its most profound sense is actually the appropriation of an objective uncertainty held with passionate inwardness to the self.) Freedom is free, however; this means it can be lost. The self can be appropriated. Thus, freedom creates both the

power to be and the fear of appropriation. In Sartre, it creates another kind of fear, too: the fear of freedom. Thus, the inauthentically existing being fears freedom; the authentically existing being fears appropriation.

After this brief introductory relating of some of the basic existential concepts to the self, this chapter will attempt to abstract some of the basic themes from the thought of the five philosophers characterized in the first half of this dissertation.

Temporality: Man as a Projective Structure. The fact that man operates in the dimension of time is a concern of all the Existentialists, but perhaps Heidegger enlarges on this aspect to the greatest degree in his concept of Zeitlichkeit, and of Dasein as a temporal structure comprised of three "ecstasies" of time: past, present, and future. Time, in Heidegger, becomes an existential reality, a basic structure of the self. In the identification of Verfallen with compromise with present existence, Faktizität with the power of one's past, and Existenz with the authentic realization of one's potentialities as one projects himself into the future, extending himself out (Vorlaufen) in thought toward death (Sein zum Tode), Heidegger presents man as primarily, or at least most meaningfully, a temporal structure. And further, man is distinctly future-oriented and his best

potentialities are realized when he emphasizes his Existenz. Man is defined by Heidegger as both "thrown" upon the world and the being who "projects" himself into the future by his own decision. Man is, then, a "thrown project," a geworfene Entwurf.

Another consequence of the emphasis on temporality is the tendency of all Existentialists characterized to think of man not as a static structure, such as a physical substance, but somehow as something like pure "becoming." Man is his many modes of existing. The definition of man which has meaning is not the one which scientifically tells what man is and of what he is composed, but rather the one which describes the mode of his being, the way he can become, the situation in which he finds himself of the earth and at the same time "a little lower than the angels." In short, the fact that man is conceived as a temporal structure is related to the consistent definition of man by the Existentialists in terms of modes of being.

Disclosure. As man exists, the nature of his being is "disclosed" (erschlossen, as Heidegger would say) to him. Two important ways being is disclosed are through the understanding and through anxiety. Understanding mysteriously lets man know what he is and what he can become; it discloses to him his situation and his facticity and at the same time his potentialities and his freedom. Anxiety is also an instrument

of disclosure, for it makes man conscious of the threats to his existence in death, meaninglessness, and guilt. Since none of these can be avoided, neither can anxiety. Unlike fear, anxiety (Angst) has no object and cannot be done away with. Anxiety is therefore an underlying constituent mood of all life. Anxiety characterizes the frenzied and meaningless activities of the inauthentic man (das Man); the authentic man also knows anxiety, but does not turn from the nothingness which anxiety reveals, but dares to face it and to accept it into his world.

Thus, disclosure is an important aspect of man's mode of being. Disclosure is the process by which man in existing has the nature of his own being revealed to him.

Finitude. The sense of finitude is, according to Tillich, "the most fundamental and never missing concept in existentialist thought."² Logically, the agonized sense of finitude would have no meaning unless it were conceived of as finitude in contrast to something else. The existing subject is conscious of being more than finitude and yet being surrendered to it; this is the reason that the sense of finitude is that of agonized finitude. Facticity, situationality, temporality--all disclose man's finitude to him. And death, of course, is an ultimate expression of finitude,

²"The Nature and the Significance of Existentialist Thought," Journal of Philosophy, LII (November 8, 1956), 742.

a phenomenon before which Heidegger shudders, and which, he asserts, casts a shadow of death-anxiety over the whole lives of all who exist. Anxiety at death, then, is a part of all existence; it is an ontological structure. The inauthentic man suppresses it; the authentic man extends himself in thought out towards death--but no man is without anxiety over death, says Heidegger. (Sartre makes his anxiety a shudder before the look of the other person and a fear of freedom, and he rejects Heidegger's special emphasis on the importance of death.)

Guilt. Guilt, too, is related to finitude, and is also a major aspect of the analyses of man by Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Heidegger, and Sartre. It is defined somewhat differently in each of them, however. Guilt, in Kierkegaard, is associated with man's fallenness; man is essentially guilty on account of original sin. In Jaspers, guilt stems from failure to realize one's Existenz; or if one does strive to realize it, the very fact of living actively creates a debt (Schuld) to other people because of taking up or rather away from their living room. By the very fact of living actively one takes life away from other people. Therefore, no-one can live without guilt. In Sartre, guilt is connected with "bad faith." No-one can live without some bad faith and no-one can escape his facticity. Again, man is intrinsically guilty.

Nothingness and Anxiety. Continuing a consideration of finitude and guilt, one discovers that finitude is also intimately related to nothingness and with the anxiety which comes with nothingness. Nothingness (or non-being) makes finitude what it is. It is the nothingness in death that creates the anxiety and the sense of man's essential finitude. Likewise, the nothingness in moral self-affirmation is what, according to Tillich, is responsible for guilt:

In every act of moral self-affirmation man contributes to the fulfillment of his destiny, to the actualization of what he potentially is.... But however the norm is formulated man has the power of acting against it, of contradicting his essential being, of losing his destiny. And under the conditions of man's estrangement from himself this is an actuality. Even in what he considers his best deed non-being is present and prevents it from being perfect. A profound ambiguity between good and evil permeates everything he does, because it permeates his personal being as such. Non-being is mixed with being in his moral self-affirmation. The awareness of this ambiguity is the feeling of guilt. [Courage to Be, p. 52]

Non-being is in the best act, keeping it from perfection. This sense of imperfection and ambiguity is called guilt. And non-being is the root and reason for this imperfection. Thus, the concepts of finitude, nothingness, guilt, and anxiety are all interrelated: It is the nothingness in finitude which induces the form of anxiety called guilt.

Anxiety, then, in nearly all existential thought, is produced by non-being, or nothingness. It is the reaction of the self to nothingness, or to put it more positively, the nothingness in one's finitude, the non-being in one's being.

The nothingness which threatens being and produces anxiety has been valuably divided into three levels of man's being--the ontic, the spiritual, and the moral--by Tillich:

I suggest that we distinguish three types of anxiety according to the three directions in which non-being threatens being. Non-being threatens man's ontic self-affirmation, relatively in terms of fate, absolutely in terms of death. It threatens man's spiritual self-affirmation, relatively in terms of emptiness, absolutely in terms of meaninglessness. It threatens man's moral self-affirmation relatively in terms of guilt, absolutely in terms of condemnation. The awareness of this three-fold threat is anxiety appearing in three forms, that of fate and death (briefly, the anxiety of death), that of emptiness and loss of meaning (briefly, the anxiety of meaninglessness), that of guilt and condemnation (briefly, the anxiety of condemnation). In all three forms anxiety is existential in the sense that it belongs to existence as such and not to an abnormal state of mind as in neurotic (and psychotic) anxiety. [Same, p. 41]

Anxiety is a basic aspect of the thought of all the Existentialists, and in this brief analysis Tillich has integrated some of the most dominant and fundamental concerns of existential thinkers: death (especially central in Heidegger), meaninglessness (central in Sartre, but perhaps less a cause for anxiety as such than in other Existentialists), and guilt (especially prominent in Kierkegaard).

This triumvirate of death, meaninglessness, and guilt, constitutes three of the dominant aspects of the situation in which modern man finds himself. Tillich asserts, however, that one or the other of these anxieties seems to predominate according to the historical period. Our period, he says, is one of an encounter with spiritual non-being in the two

forms of the anguished sense of spiritual emptiness and meaninglessness.

Modern man is confronted, then, as never before with the threat of meaninglessness. This is the threat with which he must come to terms if he is to achieve any self-realization at all. Another way of saying the same thing is to say that modern man must come to terms with a disintegrating reality, a reality losing its spiritual content--meaning. This is the reason that modern man has become problematical to himself and the reason that his world, for all his increasing "knowledge" of it, has not become more but rather less stable. Meaning has somehow come loose from our world and gotten lost. God is dead.

Immediacy. An outgrowth of this anxiety at meaninglessness is an increased importance placed on immediacy. In a larger sense, Existentialism itself is a philosophy of immediacy--indeed, the philosophy of immediacy. In the face of a disintegrating reality, Existentialists turned in quest for a dependable reality to concrete experience. They asked, "What constitutes the experiential (existential) reality of an individual, existing human being?" They sought to start again without dependence on abstract, eternal verities or essence philosophies. They started with themselves; thus, subjectivity is the starting point of all existential philosophy. In such an approach, immediacy took high and "eternal

verities" low priority.

But the immediacy of the Existentialists is not to be confused with the shallow immediacy of the impressionist or positivist. Rather it must be remembered that immediacy is part of the larger structure of existential reality, a reality in which the moment is not all-important, but rather the self is always future-oriented, conscious of his possibilities, of the need for action and decision, of the need to choose between authentic and inauthentic existence. It is, therefore, perhaps advisable to substitute the phrase "experiential reality" for "immediacy." Existentialists placed a great importance on experiential reality, but to say they place a great importance on immediacy might imply that they lived solely and completely in the mere sensations of the present. Nothing could be less accurate than this assumption, for the Existentialist exists primarily in the future, and reflection is of great importance to all of the existential philosophers characterized in this dissertation. The Existentialists started with the self, but not the self of mere sensations, but the self of subjectivity. This concept of the self so far transcends immediacy that the interest in immediacy in the narrow sense becomes a secondary or even tertiary consideration. The reality of mere immediacy, they would say, can be illusory; we are searching for a reality on which an existing human being can depend.

Isolation, Alienation, and Loneliness: Individualism.

There is a double edge to a consideration of individuality in Existentialism. Kierkegaard and all subsequent Existentialists pointed to the loss of individualism with dismay. Yet the very victims of this loss were losing their spiritual lives and losing meaning-as-such with a fair degree of equanimity. Their anxiety was suppressed, their isolation denied, and their alienation unrecognized until the multiple changes in the structure of society would allow them to be concealed no longer.

The double edge is that the Existentialists themselves were the anxiety-stricken and isolated, the lonely and alienated. The fact is, that the inherent individualism of Existentialism doomed its adherents to the isolation of solipsism. Kierkegaard wanted his grave marked merely "That Individual," and the other Existentialists, especially Heidegger and Sartre, have been conscious of being the exceptions, the outsiders.

Why is this? Existentialism starts from the self; it is a self-centered philosophy, even if the term "self-centered" is not taken in any pejorative sense. Also, by making a distinction between the authentically existing individual and the great mass of inauthentically existing people, the Existentialist cuts himself off from humanity, just as the thinking person has always been cut off from the rest of humanity. The inherent solipsism of much of Existentialism

is perhaps its crowning defect, for this fact tends to vitiate its significance as a philosophy having social value. It is ethical in its emphasis on integrity and decision, but it is unable to deal with (indeed, is unconcerned with) ethics on the super-personal level. This is the reason that Existentialism in immature and half-comprehending hands can become from the social point of view pernicious and decadent.

Sartre's system of threat is also an isolating factor. The self is isolated, threatened and fearful. He is constitutionally and by nature engaged in trying to appropriate experience, his body, and other people. The self, therefore, is by nature of his function cut off and even at odds with all other people. This is the final consummation of a self-centered philosophy, a self in an alien and adverse world, a world peopled by other selves also bent on appropriating and controlling. In Sartre, the individual is, in the final analysis, empty and alone.

Fortunately for existential philosophy, Sartre's point of view--realistic as it may be, and consistent as it may be with the other assumptions of existential philosophy--is not shared by other Existentialists who have here been characterized. The other thinkers have perceived this weakness in Existentialism and have, with varying success, incorporated elements not inherent in Existentialism into their thought in an effort to repair the solipsism inherent in an

approach whose starting point is the self. Kierkegaard put in the crucial phrase, "before God," and thus created an external absolute outside the self which gave perspective to the self. Marcel explored the "I-Thou" relationship and posited inter-human relationships as ontologically grounded in love. Tillich's "ultimate concern" and self-affirming courage tend to balance the anxiety and loneliness in Existentialism. Jaspers sets forth his doctrine of "philosophical faith" based on encompassing Being which puts the individual in a perspective which encompasses him, and Jaspers wishes to base interhuman relationships on "loving communication." For Heidegger, man is gradually dwarfed by the importance of Being, and interhuman relationships are based on a rather vague and mystical conception of Mitsein. Yet, with all these additions, Existentialism remains severely weakened by reason of its being inherently a self-centered philosophy. On the other hand, this very fact is perhaps a source of its greatness and its strength in comparison with other more academic philosophies.

Authenticity: the Transition to Authentic Existence.
Existentialism may be considered the philosophy of authenticity, for its program is invariably the transition from inauthentic existing to existing as an authentic human being with power to be and to become what one has the possibility to become. This transition invariably involves the act of

self-affirmation in the face of adversity; thus, courage, the courage to make a decision for authentic existence, is a basic existential virtue. Courage indicates another aspect of authentic existence--struggle. One needs not only to have the courage to make the "leap" from anxiety at nothingness to self-affirmation in spite of nothingness, one must also struggle constantly with the fact that one is "thrown" and with one's facticity. The self is in a constant struggle with facticity and situationality. Thus, the transition to authenticity brings out other existential dynamics: courage, the need for decision, struggle, self-affirmation, thrownness, facticity, situationality, nothingness, and the "leap" from anxiety into affirmation.

Condemnation: the Gegendenker Complex. Heidegger has gained a reputation as a Gegendenker. Superficially, it seems that he is against (gegen) everything. He is against all the traditional metaphysics, the technological domination of man, and in a sense, even against all western civilization since the pre-Socratics. He has, consequently, been rewarded with nearly everybody of any authority except Hitler being against him. Unlike Jaspers, he did not flee the Nazis, and his association with them did not tend to bring him any widespread popularity after the war.

Indeed, all the Existentialists have been distinguished by their tendency to reaction and condemnation. They are

often more aware of what they are against than the exact nature of what they are for. They are opposed, for instance, to both idealism and realism; they are generally against both totalitarianism and capitalistic democracy; they are against forms of positivism and against naturalism; they are opposed to excessive abstraction, essentialistic philosophy, and intellectualizing.

This "anti-" character makes it a popular procedure with those seeking to explain the nature of Existentialism to begin by telling what it is not. Ulrich Sonnemann, in his Existence and Therapy, follows this pattern:

Attempting a rough and preliminary characterization of this dominant and common trend, we may say that it decidedly steers away from positivism, functionalism, instrumentalism, pragmatism, and operationalism and toward a rediscovery of spontaneous man in his world; in this process, such older metaphysical beliefs as "rationalism" and "empiricism," "complementary errors" to the phenomenological glance, are analyzed and rejected. Also rejected are the newer metaphysics in disguise which, ever since the middle of the nineteenth century, have prevented man's understanding of himself in his world from keeping pace with his growing power of and interest in, object-manipulation, impeding the inner growth of what, somewhat inadequately is called the "social" sciences.³

Thus, Existentialism attempts to distinguish itself from the other currents of philosophical (and other) thought, and to determine its own identity. For this reason there ~~is~~ an abundance of other oppositions which can be mentioned. Although Existentialism places a heavy stress on action, it

³(New York, 1954), p. 99.

opposes mere vitalism, and although there is much that is irrational in Existentialism, Existentialists oppose an irrationalist metaphysics. They are opposed to logic and logical explanations of life--for life is absurd--but they do not wish to think of their philosophy as a form of irrationalism. They are opposed to forms of biological and other determinism and assert that man is a free agent. They oppose abstraction and the intellectualization of reality. They are quick, in other words, to reject any "system" which will explain man or world-history. They oppose any system which is based on logic as not adequate to explain man. They reject any effort to make a part of man or an analysis of a part of man--for instance the biological part--to apply to the whole man or to seem to explain the whole man. They are opposed to evolution and the concept of progress, asserting that the events of history and the development of man are created by man and cannot possibly be logically anticipated, that man's development does not show continuity but radical discontinuity at every important juncture.

The opposition to the depersonalization and the de-spiritualization of man has been discussed earlier. Man is not a mere thing steered by inner instincts and drives nor the external forces of race, moment, and milieu, but is a free and self-determining agent. He is a human being. Existentialism protests the inroads made on the personality of

man by technological advances and the consequent changes in social structures. In short, Existentialism has in various ways and at various times bitterly objected to the dehumanization of man.

The opposition to so many aspects of modern culture makes Existentialism seem essentially negative, and its critics are quick to discount it as a passing form of nihilism brought on by the despair of the wars. Its emphasis on non-being and nothingness only increases the ease with which Existentialism can be attacked and characterized as a form of anarchism and decadence. Thus, Existentialists may even seem reactionary, for they appear constantly to be negating the present and to point to the superiority of man "before the (industrial or essentialist) revolution." Or they may harp on the inferiority of the present in comparison with the brave new future kind of man they advocate. In any case, the Jeremiah complex seems to be a dominant strain in Existential philosophy.

A word must be said in defense and explanation, however. One must bear in mind that the Existentialist is making a sincere effort to rid himself of all "bad faith" and to arrive at a genuine and dependable reality. The fact that he starts from the self and the immediate experiences of the self entails an initial rejection of all abstract systems. One should be careful to weigh the value

not of their rejections only, however, but of what they themselves propose. One cannot fairly appraise the contribution of Existentialists merely by what they are against, but rather ^{by} what they are for and the basic validity of their own analysis of existence. The condemnation of systems is a prominent aspect of Existentialism, but it is only the negative part of a much larger structure which must be understood and appreciated before a valid judgment may be made as to the adequacy of this way of thought.

Absurdity. Life is not adequately described by logic; indeed, logic can never explain or speak to experiential reality. Life does not function according to some set of logical rules in the sky, but absurdly takes what form man gives to it. The concern with absurdity began with Kierkegaard and figured importantly in later existential thought. Absurdity, one must remember, is not viewed with our horror in countries which worship logic and reason less. Absurdity is not to be taken in a necessarily pejorative sense, but as an objective statement that life does not function according to an outside teleological scheme, but just goes where man chooses to push it. Kierkegaard, for instance, asserted that the Incarnation was "absurd." This did not mean that he did not believe in it; he did, in fact. This meant that man's reason is intrinsically incapable of accounting for it, that it was contrary to all logical explanation.

Absurdity, indeed, is the condition of man's freedom. To assert that the world is logical is to circumscribe it; to assert that it is absurd is to make it open to all the infinite possibilities which man can create himself. Instead of being locked in a logical Garden of Eden, man is open to nothingness and the world; as Milton has put it, "The world was all before them, where to choose/Their place of rest." [Paradise Lost, XII:646-7] To the authentically existing individual, the world is all before him, to appropriate and to found as he will.

Extremes and ultimate situations. Existentialism is marked by a passionate and agonized search for reality. In seeking to analyze man's situation, Existentialists search for constants, which they dignify with the name of ontological structures of existence. These structures are not what a man can choose, but what all men face--they are part of his mode of being. All men must die, must suffer, must be always already in situation, must bear guilt, must struggle, and so forth. These aspects of existence are constants in the equations of man's existence and therefore are a basic part of the nature of man's being-in-the-world. One may put this still another way and say they are the expression of man's finitude, the fundamental quality of man's being. Man founders on the reefs of this finitude; thus (according to Jaspers), foundering is a basic aspect of man's existence.

Man is essentially a foundering being, a being with immortal longings in him who is surrendered to finitude.

Transcendence. Transcendence is fundamental to all existential philosophy. One might even call it the basic aim of all existential thought. Historically, Existentialism has revitalized and given new meaning to the concept of transcendence.

If finitude is a key problem for man, transcendence of this finitude is a corresponding aim. Although transcendence takes on different forms in the different existential thinkers, it is equally basic in each of them. In Kierkegaard, transcendence of the finite is a gift of God, like grace, and takes the form of the final leap of faith in which only the active extension by God of grace enables the existing individual to transcend himself. In Jaspers, the act of foundering is the gate of transcendence. "Transcendence through shipwreck" is a phrase generally used to designate this process. In Heidegger, the Dasein projects himself into the not-yet, into non-being, that is, into nothingness. In this interaction of the existing Dasein with his possibilities in non-being, the Dasein escapes his finitude into a process of bringing being out of nothingness. Thus, he is more than his finitude in a given situation and a given body; he is a Dasein projecting into nothingness. This constitutes transcendence in Heidegger. In Sartre, consciousness

itself is in essence a form of transcendence of the body, for it is itself a nothingness. By the mere act of knowing one transcends the here, and by willing one projects himself into the future and thus transcends the now. Thus, in whatever philosopher the concept of transcendence appears, it is of central importance.

Communication problems. Kierkegaard noted not only the inadequacy of systems to express existential reality, but the inadequacy of language itself. Reality, for Kierkegaard, was inner and subjective; it could not be communicated to another person. He regarded life as a secret, a secret one could not tell if he wanted to. A word, one must admit, is even at its precisest an abstraction; in forming an experience into words, the uniqueness is lost, for the words name what has already been experienced by others and been given a word. Likewise, the abstraction involved in language removes the immediacy of the experience. The existing individual must face the fact that the uniqueness and immediacy of his experience is forever locked within him and cannot be communicated.

This sense of incommunicability of experience creates another isolating factor in the existence of the individual. And the existential emphasis on subjectivity and meaninglessness heightens the consciousness of this barrier--the communication barrier. Communication has always been a problem,

but here it may be seen in the context of existential subjectivity.

A barrier to an existential thinker like Jaspers, for instance, is something to be transcended. One founders on the reefs of incommunicability, but not absolutely. One must transcend this reef. For this purpose, Jaspers introduces one of the most important aspects of his philosophy: "loving communication." This type of communication is the way one transcends subjective isolation and the communication barrier to make oneself understood in love that conquers the weakness of words. This brings us to one of the most important "problems" in Existentialism, a problem that several of its leading thinkers have wrestled with--intersubjectivity.

Intersubjectivity. Existentialism bases its entire structure on the self and its orientation to reality. Heidegger constructed a rather half-hearted and sketchy concept of Mitsein, but it was little more than a sense of togetherness given a name. Sartre asserted that Mitsein was not ontologically real, that conflict, not Mitsein, was the true basis for human interrelationships. [EN, p. 484] This is a crucial and basic aspect of Sartre's thought and his psychological theory, and it further isolates and alienates the self from all other selves. Any edifice of intersubjectivity that might be erected on it would be rather negative if such an edifice were possible at all.

Sartre's "realistic" (if it may be so called) point of view is not shared by Heidegger, Jaspers, Kierkegaard, Marcel, or, for that matter, Tillich, Buber, or Maritain. Marcel creates his valuable concept of the "I-Thou" relationship which distinguishes between third person, which is used in reference to an object, and the second person, which is used in reference to a subject. The factor of "response" is crucial in this relationship, for one uses "Thou" when one can expect a response--even if it be only meaningful silence. Using the third-person does not ask for a response; the third-person is used in scientific investigation, and in reference to objects or people with whom one is not in a personal (that is, a "response") relationship in which both give and take.

Marcel's "I-Thou" relationship and treatment of intersubjectivity are related to his doctrine of "incarnation," where one seeks to achieve the intimacy of the "Thou" even with objects. To a certain extent, one seeks to extend the relationship one has with one's own body to one's world and even to the people in it. This is true incarnation.

Thus, Marcel attempts to overcome the isolation of subjectivity by establishing the "I-Thou" relationship, Heidegger proposes Mitsein, and Jaspers submits his idea of "loving communication." Whether these ideas represent something not inherently in the methodology of Existentialism

or not, the fact that intersubjectivity is keenly felt as a problem in man's mode of being-in-the-world shows its importance to existential thinkers.

Reintroduction of Mystery. Just as Existentialists revitalized the concept of transcendence and gave it a true existential justification when the old transcendence was losing meaning, so also the Existentialists have reintroduced--with their idea of a reality that transcends words, with a nothingness that is always coming into being, with a concept of man as always more than the mere "given," with the idea of Being as constantly undergoing revelation in truth (as per Heidegger)--a renewed sense of the role of mystery in life. A mystery is distinct from a mere problem, for a mystery can never be pierced by man's reason. (Thus a "murder mystery" is not a true mystery but merely a problem to be solved.) Truth emerges into the light from darkness, and that darkness can never altogether be known, for that darkness may be nothingness. The light of logic can never plumb the depths of reality and the native stuff of life will always escape rational explanation (will be "absurd"). Although the element of mystery is most prominent in Heidegger and Marcel, it is also a basic assumption in Kierkegaard, Jaspers, and even Sartre. The great existential thinkers, then, have again made us conscious of the ultimate mystery of man's being.

And Being as such is shrouded in mystery and is an ultimately rather mysterious concept--the "emptiest" of concepts, Heidegger has said. After all, the very elusiveness of Being was what turned the ontologists to a study of the nature of the being of man. And the investigation of the being of man has involved dealing with the mysterious workings, the "dynamics," of man's mode of existing. Small wonder, then, that Marcel called a series of lectures he gave in England "The Mystery of Being."

Concluding this consideration of the themes and variations in existential thought, one may note that these last themes--transcendence, intersubjectivity, incommunicability, mystery--are hardly what one would associate with a shallow definition of Existentialism, for they do not sniff of scandal, morbidity, or the graveyard. Nor do they reflect the attitude of youthful and defiant freedomism associated with Sartre. Yet they are intimately and inseparably built into the basic structure of existential thought. They stress the need to withhold judgment and delay defining Existentialism until an adequate understanding of existential thinkers other than Sartre has been gained. Existentialism is, after all, more than (and hardly identical with) the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre.

Understanding Existentialism. Existentialism has many sides and many facets and may be understood--indeed, must be understood--on a number of different levels and in a number of different ways before a coherent configuration even begins to emerge.

Existentialism must be understood as a response to a spiritual anxiety. It must be understood as an effort at self-affirmation in the face of non-being, especially in such existentially real forms as fate, death, spiritual emptiness, meaninglessness, guilt, and moral condemnation. It must be seen as an effort to return to a valuation of life based on experiential realities, to an inner honesty and spiritual genuineness, to a self with dignity, value, and self-determination. In spite of overwhelming loss of reality and freedom, the self is seeking to affirm itself and its ability genuinely to be as a self.

Existentialism must also be understood as an effort at Existenzerhellung--the "lighting up" of Existenz, that is, of man's real possibilities to be himself. It must be seen as an effort to analyze the very dynamics of human life--not abstract "human life" as a concept, but life as an experiential reality which we all must face.

Existentialism must be understood as a protest--which is another way of saying an expression of anxiety--against the status quo. It was not just a protest against Descartes

or Hegel, or against the philosophical forms of essentialism; it was a protest against the unconscious essentialism at every level of human endeavor, against becoming a subject for scientific observation, an object to be used by technology, against stripping man of his personality, his uniqueness, his individuality, against, in short, a depersonalized man. Existentialists look around them and keenly perceive that spiritual values are losing their basis and their power, that man is no longer a spiritual being, but a thinking, functioning thing; man has been despiritualized, dehumanized, and is alienated from himself as a human being.

In the abstract and intellectualized conception of man in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries they perceive the deadly enemy of authentic existence for a human being. The abstract morality, the abstract goodness, the abstract problem, the distancing of everything from the man of flesh and blood--all create the illusion that one is not dealing with human beings but with inanimate objects. World-history reduces man to ant-size; determinism makes man the helpless pawn of forces outside himself--both reduce man to an object and see him essentially from the outside. Abstraction and systematization destroy the immediacy of life and make it static and lifeless; life, as Kierkegaard asserted, is not logical, but paradoxical and illogical. Philosophy must be made to be personal, practical, and meaningful for particular cases.

Existentialism must be understood as more than an expression of anxiety at spiritual emptiness, and as more than merely an historical protest against the dehumanization of man. Existentialism is a way of philosophizing and a way of thinking about life, a way that conceives of man as a becoming being, as a being who is defined not in terms of qualities (as a substance would be) but in terms of modes of being and the extent to which authentic existence is realized. While Kierkegaard, Heidegger, Jaspers, Marcel, and Sartre all have their distinctive emphases, the tendency to use the same way of thinking about man, the same preference for defining man in terms of what he can be and in terms of his inner relationship with himself is found in all cases. Existentialism will never be adequately defined precisely because it can only be understood as a way, a way of thinking about being. And a "way" is difficult to put into words.

Existentialism must be understood as a quest; but it is more than just any quest, for it is the essence of the modern quest for a more genuine reality, an experiential reality--an existential reality for existing beings. In arriving at this reality it rejected the accepted and traditional reality whose signs of decay were becoming only too obvious with the advances of technology and the ensuing radical shifts in social, economic, and political organization

and structure. It rejected a derived reality, or a reality based on abstract and intellectualized systems of fixed values passed from one generation to another. To the Existentialist, a reality based on eternal verities was no longer acceptable, and "essences" were meaningless abstractions. Meaning itself must be reconstructed^{and}/based on experience. Meaning must have existential reality.

Existentialism, then, is not merely a philosophical protest, or a fad, or a passing historical expression of spiritual anxiety about the advance of technology and the retreat of man's spirit, nor is it just analysis--analysis of man's predicament--nor a descent into irrationalism brought on by despair and alienation. Rather it is an example of a spirited protest against all forms of pretence; it is a way of thinking and a way of going from inauthentic to authentic existence, an effort to sort essential from inessential knowledge, an effort to be as concerned about the "how" man is as about the "what" man is; it is a rejection of abstract play for actual, concrete existence, a fruitful effort to revitalize man's relationship to transcendence, to give man back his freedom and self-determination of his life, to reconceive truth as a subjective reality rather than an abstract and meaningless concept, to restore conscience and individualism to man, to let man see his infinite possibilities, to let him see that he is more than he is.

Finally, Existentialism represents a reassertion of human value and dignity, and can be seen as the odyssey of the self seeking the self. This search goes to the very roots of the nature of the being of man. It is a quest for a dependable and real analysis of the nature of man, an analysis which takes account of the battle which man must wage with nothingness, meaninglessness and spiritual emptiness. Thus, it is a quest for both a dependable reality and a real and genuine self. The voyage is made perilous by a disintegrating reality, but the story is one in which the basic dynamics of the human situation are laid open and tested. This odyssey, in short, is the spiritual quest of modern man.

THE UNIVERSITY OF REDLANDS

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THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE DISSERTATION ENTITLED

A STUDY OF EXISTENTIALISM IN CERTAIN POEMS

BY CHARLES BAUDELAIRE, R.M. RILKE, AND

T.S. ELIOT

BY

RICHARD EDWARD PALMER

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PART II

I. RAINER MARIA RILKE

- A. First Duino Elegy
- B. Fourth Duino Elegy
- C. Fifth Duino Elegy

II. CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

- A. "Le Cygne"
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III. THOMAS STEARNS ELIOT

- A. The Waste Land
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THE DUINO ELEGIES

Introduction. The Duino Elegies are among the great poems with deep philosophical content in the German language. The Elegies present a poetic picture of the nature of man. And they present a picture of his predicament--a predicament due partly to man's nature and partly to the nature of his situation.

Existentialism, too, presents a picture of the nature of man and of his predicament--but in conceptual rather than poetical terms. Since Heidegger's Sein und Zeit (1927) and the Duino Elegies (1912-22) came to completion in the same decade, it is hardly surprising that these two documents which attempt to deal with the condition of man should resemble each other in basic and profound ways. One is a philosophical and the other a poetical presentation of the condition of man, or to put it in another way, the nature of man; but the striking and significant fact is that both express a common point of view--an existential point of view.

This dissertation has presented in some detail the conceptualization of the nature and condition of man as it is embodied in the thought of several existential philosophers. Now it will turn to three of the Duino Elegies and explore the poetic images and meanings to determine whether the point of view and conception of man expressed there is related to that of the existential thinkers, and if so, to

what extent Rilke may be said to express points of view characteristic of existential thinkers.

Method of Analysis. The Duino Elegies are subject to considerably varying interpretation, and have been called "one of the most difficult texts in all German literature."¹ For this reason, any analysis of Existentialism in the Elegies must first make clear the elementary and basic aspects of the meaning of the poem--line-by-line. Therefore, this dissertation will consistently present a Textdeutung² prior to any comparisons with elements in existential thought.

The analysis, then, will follow a pattern involving three general stages: First, a line or group of lines will be quoted and a first-level meaning presented. Second, the implications and presuppositions of this meaning will be explored and developed. Third, the essential aspects of the above will be summarized and contrasted and paralleled with existential conceptions. When this has been done for a number of successive groups of lines, a summarizing statement may be inserted. Occasionally the meaning of a strophe or

¹Heinrich Kreutz, Rilkes Duineser Elegien (Munich, 1950), p. ix.

²In the Textdeutung I am especially indebted to Kreutz, above, and to Else Buddeberg, Die Duineser Elegien R. M. Rilkes (Karlsruhe, 1948). Also of great help was the older and more dated little book by Werner Wolf, Rainer Maria Rilkes Duineser Elegien: Eine Textdeutung (Heidelberg, 1937). Hereinafter, "Kreutz," "Buddeberg," and "Wolf" will refer to these three books respectively.

two may be so unitary as to suggest the reservation of comment on existential implications until after the meaning of the whole unit has been set forth. But in the abbreviated or larger form the basic general pattern remains the same.

THE FIRST ELEGY

1 Wer, wenn ich schrie, hörte mich denn aus der Engel
 2 Ordnungen? und gesetzt selbst, es nähme
 3 einer mich plötzlich ans Herz: ich verginge von seinem
 4 stärkeren Dasein....

These famous opening lines present the basic stance of the poet in the Elegies: that of addressing the angel. The essential locus, then, is on the highest edge of the human, the boundary line between the human and the angelic. The poet is seeking to pierce with his voice, his sight, his understanding, the invisibility of the angelic realms--the realms and mysteries of Being.¹

But the opening lines show much more than the essential locus of the action and the basic stance of the poet. A fundamental mood of the Elegies is presented--anguish.² This anguish is two-fold: an anguish at the inaccessibility of the angel and at man's existential situation. Ultimately, the anguish is at man's finitude, his essential limitedness. The anguish expresses itself in the desire to cry out, to express something that is within. The genesis of the action would be inner, then, and the true arena the heart of the poet.

¹Lawrence A. Abler, "The Idea of God in the Works of Rainer Maria Rilke," unpubl. diss. (Occidental College, 1958), p. 186, calls the angel "a symbol for the realm of Being." A valuable treatment of the development of the concept of the angel is in Eva Cassirer-Solmitz, "Die Duineser Elegien," ch. III in her Rainer Maria Rilke (Heidelberg, 1957). Also see R. Guardini, Zu Rainer Maria Rilke's Deutung des Daseins (Bern, 1946).

²See Fritz Klatt, Sieg über die Angst (Berlin, 1940).

These opening lines, then, reflect the essential dilemma of man, his longing for completion yet his anguished consciousness of finitude. Yet there is a note of affirmation of the very finitude that generates the anxiety, for the poet will not allow himself to be absorbed into the stronger being of the angel. Man is looking for help from the angel, but not complete absorption by the angel.

How are these aspects of the meaning of the opening lines related to Existentialism? Basically, one may say that they reflect the two basic concerns of all existential thought: anxiety at man's situation and the desire for transcendence. Man longs for transcendence, but fears the loss of the self. Significantly, the first lines posit the fact that absorption of the self into this sort of "absolute" is not to be sought. This means that man is regarded as something intrinsically valuable and worth preserving. Man is worth keeping separate from the angelic orders; man has a separate identity--perhaps even a mission, but this will come later.

In Existentialism, too, this same value on man is implicit in its self-centeredness and fear of the appropriation of the self. The fear of appropriation by the angel in Rilke is just as much an affirmation of the value of the self as the fear of appropriation by the "other person" which is so conspicuous in the thought of Sartre.

Implicit in the first four lines is the problem of communication. There is the suggestion that man cannot communicate with the angels. In existential terms, the communication with Being is either impaired or intrinsically impossible.

Summarizing, one may note in the first four lines, 1) the anguish of man in his situation, 2) the basic innerness of this anguish of man reaching out for the angel, 3) difficulties of adequate communication with the angel, 4) an assumption of the value of man implicit in the fear of being absorbed by the angel and therefore the assumption of a distinct and separate role for man, and 5) a basic locus on the edge of man's being, a stance looking into the realm of the angels which is an expression of man's desire for transcendence. These correspond to basic aspects of existential thought: 1) anguish, 2) innerness, 3) communication problems, 4) fear of appropriation, and 5) desire for transcendence.

Denn das Schöne ist nichts
5 als des Schrecklichen Anfang, den wir noch grade ertragen
6 und wir bewundern es so, weil es gelassen verschmäht,
7 uns zu zerstören. Ein jeder Engel ist schrecklich.

As early as the fourth line of the Elegy, one encounters "das Schöne." What has beauty to do with the problems of the first four lines? Is not the introduction of beauty at this point somewhat extraneous? The clue to the answer to these questions lies in the use of the connective;

"denn," indicates a relationship with what has gone before. It indicates that the beautiful is to be related to the angel.

The element common to beauty and to the angel is holiness. The "holy" is an expression of Being, and is therefore to be conceived as the "holy" which Rudolf Otto has famously characterized as "fascinosum et tremendum."³ These two aspects are united into one word by Rilke--das Schreckliche, "the terrible." The angel is terrible and beauty is the beginning of the terrible; the same destructive danger lurks in both. And what we admire in beauty, as a matter of fact, is this destructive element--the terrible. Rilke asserts that we adore beauty precisely because it deigns to destroy us. The terrible is the underlying dynamic of beauty--and the angel.

In existential terms the terrible represents the mystery of Being. Just as man cannot see God and live, so also man can bear only so much reality, so much understanding of Being. As with a blazing torch, which provides the benefits of light, one may come only so close and no closer. Thus, "das Schreckliche" is the blinding light of the angel toned down to possible human consumption as beauty, as a mere "fearful beginning." It is Being--in a form.

³The Idea of the Holy, trans. John W. Harvey (London, 1923), pp. 12-41. [First publ. in German as Das Heilige, 1917]

8 Und so verhalt ich mich denn und verschlucke den Lockruf
 9 dunkelen Schluchzens. Ach, wen vermögen
 10 wir denn zu brauchen? Engel nicht, Menschen nicht,
 11 und die findigen Tiere merken es schon,
 12 dass wir nicht sehr verlässlich zu Haus sind
 13 in der gedeuteten Welt.

The poet must dwell in nearness to Being without calling out, must extend his hand, but, as in the last lines of the Seventh Elegy, not in expectation or pleading. The poet must restrain himself, must stifle his anguish. The mood of anguish and of wanting to call for help which characterized the opening lines of the poem is now represented, but as something which must be stifled.

Clearly, the poet longs for some sort of aid. But for what does he need help? Angels, men, and animals cannot help him with the problem; but what, precisely, is the problem? Only thirteen lines have been presented and the problem unfolds as the Elegies progress and only becomes fully apparent in all its complexity with a consideration of the meaning of all of the Elegies, yet some of the problem is hinted at in even these few opening lines. Part of the problem is man's situation, his desire for transcending his sense of finitude. And part of the problem is the very fact that in his loneliness he has no-one on whom to lean; men and animals cannot help, and man cannot establish contact with the angels.

An aspect of the problem is, then, poignantly embodied in the question, "Ach, wen vermögen wir denn zu brauchen?" of lines 9 and 10. The word "brauchen" carries the connotation

of being "required," thus making the question one of a need to be in contact, to stand in a certain relationship. Man has lost contact with other men and with animals. What is the reason for this loss of contact? Rilke asserts that man is not at home in this "gedeutete Welt." He has lost contact with other men and with animals, and he can make no contact with the angels. His essential realm has become the grey world of meanings, of interpretation. But this interpreted world is somehow sterile and inadequate, and the less sophisticated perception of the animals does not miss man's pervasive sense of anguished lostness in his interpreted world.

Existential thinkers, too, have had this anguished wish to escape from a world of systems and abstractions--the interpreted world. Too, the first thirteen lines of the poem express the spiritual sense of Dürftigkeit of modern man--the state of needing help. Existentialists in the same situation are also quick to point to the lack of any direct contact with genuine reality, and to assert that precisely the misinterpretation which ^{is} inevitably the product of the sort of abstraction which characterizes modern life is the basis for a multiplicity of forms of inauthenticity.

Es bleibt uns vielleicht
 14 irgend ein Baum an dem Abhang, dass wir ihn täglich
 15 widersähen; es bleibt uns die Strasse von gestern
 16 und das verzogen Treusein einer Gewohnheit,
 17 der es bei uns gefiel, und so bleib sie und ging nicht.

What is there left for modern man, to help him and to reassure him? There remains the seeing daily of the same street and the same tree on the slope. The repetition of these experiences is the element that is reassuring, comforting somehow, for it assures us of the reality of this world around us, the tree and the street. Repetition is also shown on the personal level in the clinging loyalty of habits. Poetically, habit becomes so very strong that it seems to have an independent life of its own, having the power to control man. Thus, for some reason pleased with us, it settles down to stay; it "moves in." Perhaps habit has perceived the spaciousness of the vacuum left by man's absence of communication with angel and animal. In any event, a vivid sense of the spiritual poverty of man is suggested in the presentation of a man to whom habit, only habit--clinging and loyal--remains.

Heidegger parallels Rilke's presentation of the power of habit with his idea of the pull of the pattern, the magnetic power of the world around the existing being. Heidegger's model of the public man, the epitome of inauthenticity, that is, "das Man," is dominated by habit. In his state of Verfallen (decline), habit, as in Rilke, is a consolation (Beruhigung) and tends to appease man and allow him to move into further decline. Man is oriented to the past; he relies on it, repeats it, is reassured by it.

Existentially, habit, repetition, the power of the pattern--all are aspects of man's situation, his being-in-the-world. They represent something from which man seems unable ever to completely escape. They represent the in-authentic type of engagement of man with his world. Sartre makes man's relationship to his world (situationality) and his body (facticity) even more repulsively real than Rilke in the final portions of L'Être et le Néant, where he shows man as stuck in a situation and a body much in the way that a hand is stuck in a sticky, viscous substance from which it can never be disengaged and torn free. True, le visqueux (this viscous substance) may be characterized by a greater or lesser degree of viscosity, but it cannot be sloughed off.

In Rilke's presentation, man has become the co-exister with habit, and habit has the power to settle down and stay, that is to dominate. This implies a personal surrender to a certain pattern. In Sartre, the tendency to wish to surrender to a pattern is identified with the desire to become a lifeless thing, an in-itself(en-soi), which is acted upon and guided by the pattern and other outside forces rather than projecting himself into the future. One may say, then, that Heidegger and Sartre provide a conceptual structure, even an ontological structure, of a man in a world having to face the fact and power of the pattern and the tendency

to surrender to passivity and repetition. Rilke, on the other hand, presents an actual poetical image of an anguished man, lost and alone, consoled by repetition and habit for the breakdown of an adequate contact with the being of the things around him. Man, lost in his self-created "gedeutete Welt," is somewhat consoled and reassured by the apparent reality of a street that is the same as it was yesterday and a tree on the slope--still there.

Existentially, perhaps the most significant aspect of the whole first strophe is its richness in ontological content. The strophe not only presents the anguish of modern man, but also makes clear that man's mode of existing is basically different from that of animal or angel. Rilke has contributed significantly to a definition of man by use of his device of contrasts. Through these contrasts between the mode of being-in-the-world of animals and that of man and the mode of being of angels and that of man, a certain structural relationship seems to emerge.

Significantly, man's mode of being has attributes which belong to him alone and not to either of the other realms of Being. The way in which each of these three modes of Being participate in time reveals much about the unique way in which man's manner of existing in time stands in contrast to that of angels and animals. Heidegger suggests, as

a basic idea in his Sein und Zeit, that man exists as much in time as in space, and more uniquely in time than in space. Man and animals exist and take up space; but the way in which man stands in relationship to time is different from animals--and angels. Animals live with no consciousness of death because they do not project themselves into the past or the future, but rather live in "openness" to Being; angels have outgrown man's Zeitlichkeit and live in a realm which is infinite and eternal. Man, however, experiences time as an acute reality. Both the past and the future trouble him, control him, fill him with anguish. Indeed, because of his consciousness of the realm of the angels (and of animals), man's finitude becomes an anguished finitude--aware both of the absolute freedom of eternity and the blissful innocence of the animal.

The realization, then, that one must choke back the anguished call to the angel reveals the poet's perception that the loss of the very thing that causes much of the anguish--that is, finitude--would also be a loss of the element which constitutes the basic uniqueness of man, his Zeitlichkeit. Man may long for the state of the angel or the state of the animal but must restrain himself in order not to lose his identity, for finitude--especially in the form of Zeitlichkeit--is the distinguishing mark and destiny of man.

Man, then, is the creature who, conscious of the other realms of being, reaches out in longing and anguish. Just as from the point of view of the structure of man's manner of existing man is the creature who exists in a unique way in time, so also from the point of view of the underlying mood of man's manner of existing, man is the creature who--unlike angel or animal--exists in anguish and longing. This anguish and longing are an indirect consequence of the way in which man's consciousness grasps the angelic and the animal; they are, in a way, the price of consciousness of time.

The existential significance of the criticism of the "interpreted" world in which man lives can hardly be overestimated. Man's anguish is not only because of his consciousness of his own incapacity in the realm of angel or animal, but also because he cannot even communicate with those realms. Man has surrounded himself with a fog of his own interpretations. This is the reason that even within our own realm of being, "wir nicht sehr verlässlich zu Haus sind." This world of interpretations and meanings is not the realm of the angel or the animal; it belongs distinctly to man.

This "gedeutete Welt" is not only a world of interpretation (even the etymological meaning suggests an insertion between) but also of misinterpretation. In other

words, it is a world of the genuine and the false, the enslaved and free, the possible and the impossible, the past and the future. It is a world set against the double backdrop of death in the future and pattern in the past--and the power of primeval urges surging up in the blood, if one may anticipate a little. The world is the world of man and is the province of neither angel nor animal. Its dynamics are not those of the angel--perhaps they even escape the understanding of the angel, who may have forgotten his visible past. And they are not the dynamics of the animal, who lives in innocence and openness to Being. Rather they are the dynamics of a life into whose basic fabric is knitted the tension of an underlying anguish.

Existentially, this interpreted world is a central factor in inauthenticity. The world of meanings and interpretations is the world that gives man his freedom--and inherent in the nature of any meaningful freedom is the possibility of being enslaved. The world of interpretation, then, is the world of freedom and slavery, or right and wrong interpretation, of authenticity and inauthenticity.

One might call these necessary antitheses "polarities." Authenticity has no meaning without inauthenticity, freedom no meaning without the possibility of slavery, right no meaning without wrong. So also the world of interpretation requires the possibility of misinterpretation. The under-

lying factor in the negative polarities here presented is non-being. In its most primary form, the antithesis is that of Being and non-being; Being has no meaning without non-being.

What does this mean to man's interpreted world? It means that without the possibility of non-being in the form of death, meaning would lose much of its power. We strive for meaning because of death; death gives meaning urgency. Death gives meaning power. For man, time is not Zeit, but Zeitlichkeit--something personal that comes to an end: death. Death, then, is the key to the life of man. The reassurance that man finds in repetition is the deception that time is not really passing. This anguished consciousness of death (which is a consequence of the fact of man's time-consciousness as he extends himself into the future in interpretation towards death) is sensed by the animals and makes them suspicious. They have no consciousness of death, nor do angels.

In existential terms, the very act of interpretation is a form of transcendence, for as Sartre notes, we transcend the here in knowing and the now in willing. By interpretation man extends himself in time into both the past and the future. The future is contingent. It holds a variety of possibilities. Some of the possibilities are better than others. The possibilities of making a choice

which is better involve the question of authenticity and inauthenticity, of spiritual sufficiency and spiritual Dürftigkeit. Indeed, the whole problem of freedom and what to do with it unfolds. Finally, there is a problem which contains a paradox: man lives in an interpreted world, yet he is losing contact with angels and beasts; he is, in other words losing his ability to communicate. Paradoxically, then, the arch-interpreter finds himself unable to communicate--or, in Rilke's terms, even to commune.

Man is needy and alone, without help from animals, angels, or other men. All that remains for him is the tree on the slope, yesterday's street, the clinging loyalty of habit, and another important thing--the Night:

O und die Nacht, die Nacht, wenn der Wind voller Weltraum
 19 uns am Angesicht zehrt--wem bliebe sie nicht, die ersehnte,
 20 sanft enttäuschende, welche dem einzelnen Herzen
 21 mühsam bevorsteht.

For man, the arch-interpreter, there does remain the uninterpretable. The street by day is contrasted with the obscurity of the night. Out of the oblivion of night, out of the dark, far reaches of world-space comes the wind--the very breath of night. In the night the aloneness of man, the loneliness, the infinite longing become apparent. Yet this solitude which is so longed-for and held with such difficulty is subtly disillusioning. The uninterpretable, the meaning beyond meaning seems to disintegrate into mere meaninglessness; and

the infinity of night becomes only nothingness and emptiness.

But is it any easier for the lover, who has the constant companionship of his beloved, to dispel this aloneness, longing, and infinite nothingness?

Ist sie den Liebenden leichter?

22 Ach, sie verdecken sich nur miteinander ihr Los.

23 Weisst du's noch nicht? Wirf aus den Armen die Leere

24 zu den Räumen hinzu, die wir atmen; vielleicht dass die Vögel

25 die erweiterte Luft fühlen mit innigerm Flug.

No, it is not easier for lovers, for the presence of the other only accentuates the realization in each that he is alone, and together they only find their own emptiness again. Each must face his own nothingness--his own fate, Verlassenheit, and death. No-one can face it for him; he is alone.⁴

The adjuration to fling the emptiness from one's arms comes directly after the reference to the lovers. The lovers were conceived of as in each other's arms, and the command to fling the emptiness from one's arms inevitably connects with a rejection of even the most promising prospect of aid from another human being. Thus, Rilke has elaborated on his statement in lines 10 and 11 that neither angels, animals, nor men can help us. Angels would absorb and destroy; animals shy away in suspicion at our "gedeutete Welt"; and other humans, even the most close in love, cannot help us.

⁴For an article on loneliness in Rilke, see Andrew O. Jászai, "Rilkes Duineser Elegien und die Einsamkeit," University of California Publications in Modern Philology, Vol. 36, no. 7, pp. 185-192. Unfortunately the article is short and exploratory, and little mention is made of the First, Fourth, and Fifth Elegies.

Existentially, the second strophe (lines 18-25) adds the dimension of nothingness to the ontological structure of man's being-in-the world. This becomes clear when the progression of the thought is traced. The first portion of the strophe describes the individual in the infinite reaches of night, the second portion his loneliness and longing as unabated even by the greatest intimacy of contact with another human being, and third, there is the frank admission of emptiness as a part of one's being, as something one wishes to take in one's hand and fling away. The progression is from aloneness in the night, to aloneness in the arms of one's beloved, to flinging the emptiness from one's arms; that is, the progression is from Einzelheit, to Einsamkeit, to Leere. All three of these stages receive definition through their essential relationship to the existential concepts of non-being and of finitude. Finitude is fundamentally related to non-being, because it is the consequence of the existence of non-being in our lives.

First, the infinite reaches of night-space stand in oppressive contrast to the finitude and limitation of man. This is the very nature of the consciousness one has in standing solitary in night-space and the reason for the longing and loneliness. The night represents both infinity and nothingness, or perhaps the infinity of nothingness. The night is deceiving because nothingness basically has no content.

It gnaws at us like the night wind at our cheek and takes away our flesh just as nothingness eats away at our lives--and yet we sigh and long for its subtle deception.

The second factor is hardly separable from the first. The first was solitariness in world-space; the second is the aloneness of man even in love. Thus, loneliness is added to solitariness. Yet the second factor heightens the first because the individuality and separation and aloneness of man are given further definition in the second stage. For instance, a person may sense his aloneness in the great world of night-spaces--and welcome it; but Rilke shows man as anguished and lonely. There is an inseparable union between aloneness and anguish. Lovers only conceal from each other (and preserve) this loneliness.

Indeed, from an existential point of view, this loneliness can hardly be overcome. In an important sense, man's life is essentially solipsist; each man is always alone before fate, contingency, and death. One cannot face these even for those he most loves, nor can anyone else relieve someone of his own dying. As Jaspers observes, each man must die his own death. In a profound and basic way (in an ontological way) man must always be alone; loneliness is a basic part of man's existence, a dynamic of life which limits and delimits him.

Fate, contingency, death, meaninglessness, and spiritual

emptiness are basically forms of non-being. In loneliness, one comes closer to non-being--and paradoxically, to Being. Fate, meaninglessness, emptiness--these are names for forms of threat to being, forms of non-being that man must constantly face. In existential terms, man is always face to face with nothingness--all alone. Even in the arms of one's lover one cannot escape nothingness.

Indeed, this nothingness was found in the first strophe as the ontological basis for the anguish which generated the question, "Ach, wen vermögen wir denn zu verbrauchen?" as well as in the second strophe where it is the basis for the loneliness of the individual even in the arms of his beloved.

In the third stage, then, of the thought, it is this very nothingness--which is a part of the individual and cannot be flung away, just as being can never be separated from non-being--that the poet longs to fling back into the other realm of nothingness, night-space. In terms of poetic imagery, the existential concept of anguish has in the Elegy become that indescribable sense of incompleteness which lovers in each other's arms conceal from each other, and the concept of nothingness has become poetically the emptiness which one would fling from his arms. These two examples show the way that Rilke transforms an existential-ontological concept into poetic image.

As Rilke begins the next strophe, the original question of who man can find to help him is inverted to "Whom can man help?":

26 Ja, die Frühlinge brauchten dich wohl. Es muteten manche
27 Sterne dir zu, dass du sie spürtest. Es hob
28 sich eine Woge heran im Vergangenen, oder
29 da du vorüberkamst am geöffneten Fenster,
30 gab eine Geige sich hin. Das alles war Auftrag.

Now the question is given a different turn by the assertion that things need us: Spring spreads out her brilliance to attract us, stars wait expectantly to be perceived, memories rise up asking to be recalled, music prostrates itself to be enjoyed. Music is perhaps the most effective and exact image, for music is produced specifically to be heard. It is for the ears of man and is not seen, but seems to exist in the ear itself. Since it is invisible and since it does appear to exist only in the ear, it needs man in order to be at all. Without the ear of man, music could not be. Music needs us.

Succinctly and with emphasis, Rilke sums up what he is trying to suggest in his reference to the efforts of things to communicate with man: "Das alles war Auftrag." All this is a decree and command of nature, a mission for man. Man is somehow related to things, and things seem to need him. The Ninth Elegy develops this theme further and asserts that the things of the earth, too, long for invisibility. They rely on man for transformation; this is the reason they ask in countless ways to be perceived--so they can be transformed:

"Erde! unsichtbar! / Was, wenn Verwandlung nicht, is dein drängender Auftrag?" [IX, 70-1]

The significance of the "Auftrag" question should not be underestimated. Earlier in the Elegy, man's basic need for help was presented, as well as the fact that animals, angels, and other human beings cannot or will not give this help. In delineating this need for help in lines 1-25, the basic situation of modern man was presented--the situation of existing in a particular realm of being which involves anguish, loneliness, finitude, and an interpreted world. But lines 26-30 mark a decisive and significant turn from the anguished question of who can help man, to the equally significant question of man's essential role and meaning on this earth. These lines assert that man can help things, that just as he cries out to the angel for transformation so also things beckon to him to fulfill his mission. These lines assert that man must necessarily help things, that they are relying on him. Thus, the "Auftrag" question suggests Rilke's interpretation of man's mission; it suggests Rilke's interpretation of the very meaning and proper mode of man's existence. Compared to the question of the situation of man, this question is even more significant, for it suggests the very meaning of man's existence. Man has a mission. Everything in nature seems to beckon to him to fulfill this mission.

31 Aber bewältigtest du's? Warst du nicht immer
 32 noch von Erwartung zerstreut, als kündigte alles
 33 eine Geliebte dir an? (Wo willst du sie bergen
 34 da doch die grossen fremden Gedanken bei dir
 35 aus und ein gehn und öfters bleiben bei Nicht.)

Does man respond to this effort on the part of things to communicate with him? Here again the problem of man as impervious and separated from nature appears; man remains unfortunately in the world of his own creation--his abstract world of meanings, his "interpreted world." Even when man allows his glance to come to rest on something in nature, he is not free of his world of preconceptions, of interpretations. He brings expectations to nature, and thinks that some omen may be seen in nature portending future turns in his love life.

The phrase, "als kündigte alles eine Geliebte dir an," (lines 32-3) is a telling description of the weaknesses of man's interpretive view of nature. It reveals, as a matter of fact, a romantic view of nature--the view that nature, all nature, speaks of his beloved. This attitude, for instance is embodied in Keat's famous lines, "A theme! A theme! / Great Nature give a theme! / Let me begin my dream!" Indeed, the phrase itself was taken by Rilke from Goethe. Rilke states in a letter, "im Archiv las ich einen herrlichen Brief Bettinens und fand jenes Blatt, auf das Goethe in so wundervoll plötzlicher Strömung 'Alles kündet Dich an' geschrieben hat (14.9.11)" [Kreutz, p. 26 from Br. 07/14, Nr.61.] In this view, nature is a source of inspiration, a starter

for thought about the beloved. To do something for nature, however, does not typically occur to the romantic mind.

Within the parentheses, the poet asks the question, "How can you possibly explain to the beloved--now that you have her--how the longing and loneliness are not gone, but still are present in strange thoughts that come and go and stay through the night?" This is a recurrence of the same underlying thought as that which generated the anguished observation of line 22: "Ach sie verdecken sich nur miteinander Los." However, in the space between these two expressions of the same experience, the poet has inserted his thoughts on man's mission. Therefore, the strange thoughts can be ascribed to one of three possible sources: the infinity-nothingness-loneliness complex, the primeval surgings of the blood, or the call for man to fulfill his mission.

36 Sehnt es dich aber, so singe die Liebenden; lange
 37 noch nicht unsterblich genug ist ihr berühmtes Gefühl.
 38 Jene, du neidest sie fast, Verlassenen, die du
 39 so viel liebender fandst als die Gestillten. Beginn
 40 immer von neuem die nie zu erreichende Preisung;
 41 denk; es erhält sich der Held, selbst der Untergang war ihm
 42 nur ein Vorwand, zu sein: seine letzte Geburt.
 43 Aber die Liebenden nimmt die erschöpfte Natur
 44 in sich zurück, als wären nicht zweimal die Kräfte,
 45 dieses zu leisten.....

"Those--thou almost enviest them--the forsaken, whom thou foundst so much more lovable than those whose love was satisfied." Rilke would sing the lovers, but most especially those whose love never experienced satisfaction. For Rilke,

consummation is the top of the hill; the rest is downhill. Love drives to consummation in a fierce crescendo; it struggles against obstacles; it expends tremendous effort. The consummation brings peace and rest as part of its reward.

But the forsaken do not find the end of the crescendo--at least not in the peace of actual consummation. The forsaken, rather, experience the constant intensification of feeling. Nature's powerful creative force is allowed to drive and drive but never reach fulfillment. Rilke's admiration for living, loving, and feeling with the greatest possible intensity is shown in his obvious preference for the unrequited lover.

Rilke contrasts the hero--also the subject for songs of praise (see the Sixth Elegy)--with the forsaken lover. The point of comparison is obviously the issue of consummation. Rilke asserts that although the hero would seem also to have been wronged by fate, his situation is not completely comparable to the forsaken lover. Both have been wronged by fate, but the hero achieves an ultimate consummation while the forsaken is completely denied it. And there is the implication that after the lover is forsaken, there is an intensification in the face of the impossibility of consummation, which cannot be experienced by the hero, for the hero has always before him the possibility of ultimate consummation in the rebirth resulting from noble action.

(Whether this is true as a fact or in literary theory is beside the point; this is Rilke's distinction between the hero and the forsaken lover.) The implied intensification in the case of forsaken lovers is made specific in lines 43-5, where the creative energy released by them is so strong that they are taken by Nature back to herself.

Rilke makes his point more personal and concrete by asking the question,

Hast du der Gaspara Stampa
46 denn genügend gedacht, dass irgend ein Mädchen,
47 dem der Geliebte entging, am gesteigerten Beispiel
48 dieser Liebenden fühlt: dass ich würde wie sie?

The forsaken lovers long to be like Gaspara Stampa, the "Sappho" of that passionate and sensuous time to live, the Italian Renaissance.⁵ They long, like her, to redirect the drive they feel so strongly into the creation of form, to transform what is essentially a creative drive on the biological level to artistic creativity.

This is, indeed, a form of transcendence of the physical, where the object which originally inspired the feeling of love is no longer necessary--is transcended and made artistically fruitful:

⁵Kreutz furnishes the following illuminating footnote: "Gaspara Stampa, Dichterin aus edler Familie, geb. 1523 zu Padua, gest. 1554 zu Venedig, von gelehrter Bildung. Ihre unglückliche Liebe zu dem Grafen Collaltino di Collalto, der sie nach kurzer Zeit verliess, fand in ihren Sonetten leidenschaftlichen Ausdruck. Gaspara [sic] Stampa, Sonette. Übertragen von Leo Graf Lankorónski. Frankfurt/M. 1930." Kreutz, p. 28, fn.

49 Sollen nicht endlich uns diese ältesten Schmerzen
 50 fruchtbarer werden? Ist es nicht Zeit, dass wir liebend
 51 uns vom Geliebten befreien und es bebend bestehn:
 52 wie der Pfeil die Sehne besteht, um gesammelt im Absprung
 53 mehr zu sein als er selbst. Denn Bleiben ist nirgends.

The bow-string and arrow is the central image of the above passage. The arrow achieves its essential nature, its reason-for-being only in motion--"Denn Bleiben ist nirgends." To be shot from a bow is a shattering sort of experience; yet in order to realize one's reason-for-being one must endure this experience, just as the arrow endures the snap of the string in order to achieve its meaning and become more than arrow qua arrow.

The snap of the string that sends the arrow into flight is the same snap that the foresaken lover feels when deserted by the beloved. The crescendoing feeling changes complexion but not intensity; rather the intensity rises as the lover is freed from the beloved in the shattering experience of the snap of the string.

Existentially, the arrow-snap image is the perfect image of transcendence. What Heidegger calls the "Entwurfstruktur" of the Dasein is called the arrow. The projective nature of man has been presented in existential conceptualization as a "projective structure," and Rilke feels into the essence of man's nature intuitively and presents it poetically in the image of the bow-string and arrow, and the snap that sends the arrow into flight corresponds to transcendence.

Rilke, however, adds an element which is not present in the existential concept--the driving force which motivates the transcendence: the river-god of the blood. The fact that Rilke is consciously referring to transcendence is clear from lines 50-1, where the beloved is to be gotten free of, and from lines 52-3, where the very purpose of the "Absprung" is "um ... mehr zu sein als er selbst." The Existentialists assert that man is more than himself, that man must try constantly to transcend himself in existing, must project himself into his highest possibilities, must realize his Existenz. To do this involves the shipwreck, the shattering, of the snap of the bow-string that liberates one from the physical object. This is the shipwreck of which Jaspers speaks which is the gate to transcendence.

In reviewing the whole third strophe (lines 26-53), several other remarks may be made relative to existential thought. The contrast of the hero with the lover is significant not only from the point of view of their distinct relationships to consummation, but also because the lover is more existentially real. The lover experiences the existential reality of the river-god of the blood. The lover is closer to nature, to mother Earth, and is a symbol of an intenser, more primitive, more genuine and ultimately an unassailable reality. The experiences of love and forsakenness are undeniable existential experiences; on the other hand,

the hero's experiences are praisable, but are of a less intense degree of immediacy. A hero is close to heaven, but a lover is close to the earth.

As in the first strophe, a "field theory of man," in which man is a pole around which the world clusters in certain relationships, is implied. In this case, man's founded world--the world of meanings--is interfering with the proper relationship with things. Man should commune with things, but he walks in a distant world of meanings, impervious as the absent-minded professor to the world around him, and gives things meaning only as they relate to his own preconceptions.

In man's relationship with things, this represents a serious breakdown of contact. Heidegger, just as he defines time in relationship to its meaning to man, defines the objects of man's world in terms of their relationship to man. Heidegger regrets the breakdown of the close relationship of man to the things he uses, the intimacy with the "Zuhandene." He asserts that man should not see the world as objects--objectively--but rather be as close to things as a carpenter is to his hammer. The "tool" relationship is one of intimacy, one of close and affectionate relationship to the essence of the thing which is viewed as a tool. This view of things in the world is rather like an intimatized pragmatism.

Rilke, too, wishes man to commune with the essence--the being--of concrete things, and asserts that man should

cultivate an intimate and affectionate relationship with things. But he transcends Heideggerian pragmatism. The things in nature are not tools, although they depend on man in a strange way to attain their meaning and transformation. Rather they are realities with valences in their own right. Things are mysterious and, in their own way, have power, personality, and desire for transformation--they have being. More recently, Heidegger (perhaps under the influence of Rilke) has come nearer to giving nature a significance independent of man, and both Heidegger and Rilke assert that man must commune with the being of things and that modern man is increasingly failing to come into nearness to Being--failing to live in the neighborhood of Being.

Existentially, man is most man when he is fulfilling his function--transcendence. Animals do not transcend themselves because they do not stand in man's unique relationship to time; angels cannot transcend themselves in any human sense. Rilke and the Existentialists, then, take the functional definition of man and say man is most man when he is transcending and transforming. But Rilke does not use the mundane word "function," but "Auftrag," which implies a mission, a command to be carried out, a decree for man. Nevertheless, whether one speaks in poetical terms of man's "mission," or in philosophical terms of man's "meaning," or in objective terms of man's "function," the fact remains that in existential

thought and in Rilke's poetry man's mission, meaning, and function is transformation. And this transformation is a form of transcendence.

Finally, the problem of intensity and fulfillment is common to Existentialism and to Rilke. Rilke is asking the famous existential question about the "Sinn des Daseins." He is asking: "Should we not strive more for heightened intensity than for fulfillment?" As desirable as fulfillment may be, do not "diese ältesten Schmerzen" of unfulfilled love also bear the fruit of transcendence? Should we not "rejoice in tribulation" and try to overstep what we are? Fulfillment marks the end of striving, but the experience of desertion is the snap of the bowstring which frees us from the object of the striving and shocks us into transcendence. Above all, man must abjure the snare of easy and effortless fulfillment, for the price is a loss of intensity of feeling. Man should, like Faust, defy fulfillment if he is to realize intensity.

The significance of intensity is that it represents heightened consciousness. The state of inauthenticity so stringently criticized by the Existentialists and by Rilke is always connected with an essential loss of consciousness. Das Man in Heidegger's portrait is the creature who unconsciously falls into the pattern to lead a life of unthinking adherence to the pattern, a life of drifting and floating

along on the stream of history. In Rilke, a similar criticism is made of the mechanical smile of the jugglers, and the mechanical skill which has replaced struggle and error (an example of easy and effortless fulfillment--skill) and brought with the ease of movement a loss of feeling. One can say, then, of Heidegger's das Man and Rilke's jugglers that they are awake, but not very conscious. They cannot feel any more, but live on and continue to perform their mechanical tasks.

Thus, the significance of intensity is that it represents one pole of the conscious-unconscious polarity which in Existentialism is associated with the larger polarity of authenticity-inauthenticity. The reason that so many forsaken lovers might say of Gaspara Stampa, "Oh that I were as she!" is, then, not only because she had the genius to make love-creativity into art-creativity, but also because she represents--coming from the Italian Renaissance--great intensity of feeling; and intensity of feeling, in itself, has a positive value in contrast to a lack of intensity.

Thus, Rilke establishes the value of singing the praise of the intensity of the forsaken lover. In the next strophe the poet opens himself to commune with the young dead. He hears their voices calling to him:

54 Stimmen, Stimmen. Höre, mein Herz, wie sonst nur
 55 Heilige hörten: dass sie der riesige Ruf
 56 aufhob vom Boden; sie aber knieten,
 57 Unmögliche, weiter und achtetens nicht:
 58 So waren sie hörend.

The poet bids his heart listen, just as the kneeling holy ones listened for the tremendous Call, to listen so intently that if the call literally lifted him from the earth, his attention would be so fixed on the listening that he, like the holy ones, would not notice his having moved.

Not that the poet could endure the voice of God. Rather the contrary, if one is to believe the opening lines of the Elegy. The poet, however, is listening for something different yet still from the beyond; he is listening for the uninterrupted tidings from the young dead, tidings in the silence:

Nicht, dass du Gottes erträgest
59 die Stimme, bei weitem. Aber das Wehende höre,
60 die ununterbrochene Nachricht, die aus Stille sich bildet.
61 Es rauschet jetzt von jenen jungen Toten zu dir.

The poet presents a picture of where the voices come from and takes the reader into the silent, cool tombs in the churches in Rome or Naples:

62 Wo immer du eintratst, redete nicht in Kirchen
63 zu Rom und Neapel ruhig ihr Schicksal dich an?
64 Oder es trug eine Inschrift sich erhaben dir auf,
65 wie neulich die Tafel in Santa Maria Formosa.⁶

The inscription is elevated in two ways, physically and in the tone of its content. What does the message on the tomb

⁶"Santa Maria Formosa, Kierche in Venedig. Die Inschrift, die Rilke meint, befindet sich links vom Portal und lautet: 'Vixi aliis dum vita fuit/post funera tandem/Non perii, at gelido/in marmore vivo mihi;/Helmanus Gulielmus eram/me Flandria luget;/Hadria suspirat;/pauperiesque vocat./ Obiit XVI Kal. Octob. MDXCIII.'" Kreutz, p. 32.

require of the poet? It requires nothing in the way of changing his way of existing, but merely requests that the poet with his art should remove the appearance of unjustness which the early death seems to give.

66 Was sie mir wollen? Leise soll ich des Unrechts
 67 Anschein abtun, der ihrer Geister
 68 reine Bewegung manchmal ein wenig behindert.

The coming of death in one's flower seems a gruesome and unjust stroke of destiny. This erroneous impression somewhat hinders the pure, free movement of these young dead. This impression they commission the poet to correct. Rilke fulfills this commission not only in the Elegies but in the Sonnets to Orpheus ("Geschrieben als ein Grabmal für Wera Ouckama Knoop," a young dancer). Even in the next strophe the poet begins to fulfill this high commission, for he pictures the realm of the young dead. So well has Rilke communed with that realm beyond that he seems able to go ^{to} / the other side of life and know their very musings: Strange it is no more to inhabit the earth, to practice no more the patterns scarcely learned, not to see the meaning of mortal future in the language of things, and to put aside one's name like a broken plaything...."

69 Freilich ist es seltsam, die Erde nicht mehr zu bewohnen,
 70 kaum erlernte Gebräuche nicht mehr zu üben,
 71 Rosen, und andern eignes versprechenden Dingen
 72 nicht die Bedeutung menschlicher Zukunft zu geben;
 73 das, was man war in unendlich ängstlichen Händen
 74 nicht mehr zu sein, und selbst den eigenen Namen
 75 wegzulassen wie ein zerbrochenes Spielzeug.

76 Seltsam, die Wünsche nicht weiterzuwünschen. Seltsam,
 77 alles was sich bezog, so lose im Raume
 78 flattern zu sehen. Und das Totsein ist mühsam
 79 und voller Nachholn, dass man allmählich ein wenig
 80 Ewigkeit spürt.

The poet is fulfilling his mission to portray the passing of the young dead by showing them not sobbing in anguish and regret at the loss of earthly life, but musing, detached, over the whole business of life. In this musing man receives something of a negative definition--a definition in terms of the things that man puts aside in becoming one of the realm of the dead. The "uses of this life" are one by one brought before the poet in a certain crescendo. First, not to inhabit the earth; next, not to practice the customs of the earth; next, the leaving off of thinking about a future; not to be what one has with such anxiety sought to be; to put aside one's name; to wish no more; to have all that was formerly woven together in relationships now floating in space. And to have to begin again on another level to make the long transition into eternity--this is the arduous task. Like man, it would seem, those pilgrims in the realm on the other side of life face some difficulties. Perhaps we human living beings make the error of distinguishing too sharply between life and death, for angels, they say, often scarcely notice which side of life they are on:

Aber Lebendige machen

81 alle den Fehler, dass sie zu stark unterscheiden.
 82 Engel (sagt man) wüssten oft nicht, ob sie unter

83 Lebenden gehn oder Toten. Die ewige Strömung
 84 reisst durch beide Bereiche alle Alter
 85 immer mit sich und übertönt sie in beiden.

The angels, then, are of neither realm, the realm of the living nor the realm of the dead. And they often scarcely feel a difference. After all, the deafening eternal roar of what encompasses both realms sounds above both of them through the ages.

The dead have put away mortality and mortal trappings, and in their pilgrimage into eternity they can hardly find us of any help; but we need them:

86 Schliesslich brauchen sie uns nicht mehr, die Früheentrückten,
 87 man entwöhnt sich des Irdischen sanft, wie man den Brüsten
 88 milde der Mutter entwächst. Aber wir, die so grosse
 89 Geheimnisse brauchen, denen aus Trauer so oft
 90 seliger Fortschritt entspringt--: könnten wir sein ohne sie?

We need their mighty secrets, the mighty secrets of the young dead, the ones who know the secret of living life intensely. The secret they hold is the ability to experience life in all the glory of its intensity; this ability we need. There is, then, an implied criticism of the lack of intensity of modern man in the very fact of turning to the young dead.

The secrets the young dead hold also involve the fact that they know what is on the other side of life. They have passed into the beyond and transcended (or outgrown) the mortal; they retain the essential, what is left to be retained. The question, "Could we be without them?" seems to point to both their knowledge of these essentialities which survive

mortal death and their knowledge of the secret of intensity.

The Elegy ends on a note of affirmation, even though in the form of a rhetorical question. The final image, drawn from mythology, provides a highly poetical closing which is actually an illustration of what had been noted in lines 89-90: "...out of grief is often generated happy progress. To this thought Rilke attaches the mythological picture of the death of Linos. Just as progress is generated out of grief, so in the anguished void left as Linos steps into the realm beyond is music first vibrated into being--music, which ravishes, consoles, and helps:

91 Ist die Sage umsonst, dass einst in der Klage um Linos
92 wagende erste Musik dürre Erstarrung durchdrang;
93 dass erst im erschrockenen Raum, dem ein beinah gött-
 licher Jüngling .
94 plötzlich für immer enttrat, das Leere in jene
95 Schwingung geriet, die uns jetzt hinreisst und tröstet
 und hilft.

Thus, the sadness generates healing music.

The last strophe suggests an answer to the question of line 9: "Ach, wen vermögen wir denn zu brauchen?" The young dead do not need us, but they can help us. Indeed, we have great need of their mighty secrets. And grief helps, for it generates spiritual progress and the music of consolation. Thus, animals, angels and men cannot help, but the young dead can help us and grief helps. That grief is indirectly creative one might well illustrate by pointing to the "creative anguish of a modern poet" which generated the

music of the Elegies which ravishes, consoles, and helps.

Existentially, the significance of the last two strophes lies in the relationship of the living to the young dead in the realm beyond, in the value on intensity, and in the question, "Could we be without them?" There is in this query the implication of the necessary existence of another realm in the very mode of being of man. Man cannot be, without this other realm. In a sense, this realm represents transcendence. [See Buddeberg, pp. 3-20, 187-202.] Man cannot live, suggests Rilke, without a relationship to transcendence. Rilke admires the forsaken lovers and the young dead for eminently existential reasons: The young dead and forsaken lovers are those in vital contact with life, with mother Earth, those to whom immediacy has undiminished reality. Their modes of being represent the highest degree of consciousness.

Summary. Reviewing the whole Elegy, let us examine first the ontological structure which Rilke presents in the work and then the essentially existential concerns as they relate themselves to this structure.

The effort to define man's ontological structure is approached in several ways. In the first place, man is between angels and beasts--that is between the infinite and the purely finite, between two modes of being for one of which

time is meaningless because death does not exist, and for the other of which time consists essentially of the present moment. Then, focussing on the one realm of being--man's--Rilke asks pertinent questions about the dilemma in which man finds himself and in doing so suggests the essential dynamics of man's mode of being. These one might call the "existential" dynamics of man's being.

These very dynamics which Rilke presents poetically were formulated as concepts by the existential philosophers of Rilke's own country and in the decade following the publication of the Elegies. In putting these into a system of sorts, Heidegger and the other Existentialists suggest the framework of interrelationships between the various concerns presented unsystematically and poetically by Rilke.

According to existential thought, certain factors characterize man's being-in-the-world. In a sense, the triad of concepts, Sein, Zeitlichkeit, and Nichts, are the foundation on which the other concepts are built into a structure of interrelationships. The existence of non-being (Nichts) in man's life is unique to him. Non-being implies the possibility of death (non-being of the body), condemnation (non-being of the moral part of man), and meaninglessness (non-being in the realm of the spirit). The absolute non-being of death may become the relative non-being of contingency and fate; the non-being of condemnation may be mediated to guilt;

the non-being of meaninglessness may be mediated to mere spiritual emptiness--but the existence of the threat of non-being is a very real dynamic of man's life.

The reaction of the human being to the threat of non-being is anxiety, even when it is suppressed anxiety. Another way of saying that man is subject to non-being is to say he is finite, for finitude implies that man must die, man must suffer under the contingency of fate, man must struggle to create and preserve meaning. The nature of man's consciousness and the fact of finitude induce in man a special way of existing in time and of regarding time: Zeitlichkeit. Now Zeitlichkeit implies that man is conscious that his life will eventually end. This consciousness and the anxiety produced by it induce man to extend himself into the past in search of what may be preserved and to extend himself into the future to discover what his potentialities are. Man, then, exists in the past, present, and future--all at the same time. As the Existentialists put it, man "stands out from Being" in three ecstasies of time: past, present, future.

The sense of finitude equally induces a desire for transcendence of this finitude. Man is doomed to be the creature who constantly strives to transcend finitude and, indeed, must strive to do so--that is his very mode of being--and yet the creature who is intrinsically unable to transcend it absolutely. Finitude always makes itself felt not only in the

more abstract forms of threat, but in the very clinging of facticity and habit--the "viscosity" of the world surrounding man, that sticks to him and from which he can never disengage himself. This^{is}/the magnetic power of the inauthenticity of dailiness (Alltäglichkeit) which draws man into the deadening state of decline (Verfallen) in which man performs his mechanical tasks but does not make of himself anything more than what he is made by the powers outside of himself. As Sartre puts it, man longs for the passive state of being a thing, which is acted upon and determined by outside forces, instead of grasping his ability to live creatively within the limits of his finitude.

These opening paragraphs have presented the complex of concerns and the definition of man associated with the Existentialists. Below, are presented the complex of concerns in the First Elegy and the conception of man which they suggest. Let us see, if possible, how they parallel the existential concerns and whether they may be integrated into the existential-ontological structure and definition of man.

1) Anguish. The opening lines are pervaded by a sense of anguish. This anguish proceeds from the predicament in which man finds himself on account of his different mode of existence from animals and angels, his faulty communication with things, his essential lostness, his longing for completion,

and his vivid sense of isolation and emptiness. All of these different aspects of man's anguish are also reflected in existential thought.

2) Dürftigkeit, "need." This complex of isolation, emptiness, incommunicability, finitude, and so forth, above, bring into vivid relief the sense of Dürftigkeit which gives a certain amount of definition to the nature of the anguish.

3) A special mode of being. In the Elegy there is an inescapable sense that man has a special, unique mode of being. It differs from that of angels and animals and further has dynamics which furnish much of the basis for the sense of anguish and Dürftigkeit felt by man. Although the existential philosophers are much more specific in making time and nothingness the mainsprings of this mode of existing, Rilke's presentation implies them, as has been shown. The index of time radically distinguishes man's mode of being from that of angel or animal. Also, the index of nothingness makes equally clear that man's mode of existence relates itself to non-being in a way that angel or animal could not. The whole of the Elegy seems to focus on this point and to try to show in a variety of ways that man has a special mode of being, a mission to fulfill.

4) Man as a self. Equally, one may say that the focus of the Elegy is on man himself, as a self--as a self in

a world, as a self in anguish, as a self wanting to cry out for help, as a self communing with things, as a self isolated from animals, angels, things, and alone in the night, as a self longing for completion, as a self longing for transcendence. But always the focus is on man as a self. And the arena is in most cases only ostensibly exterior, but really interior--within the self. This innerness is more than the innerness of feeling; it is existential subjectivity, the subjectivity of Kierkegaard, of Heidegger, of Marcel. As Sartre says in his famous definition of Existentialism, "subjectivity is the starting point." The self as subjectivity is not the self of feeling only, but the whole innerness of the individual--wissen, wollen, sollen, and fühlen. And, in a twist which would please any Existentialist, Rilke overcomes the subject-object dichotomy, for in the Elegy man is both object and subject.

The value of man. In Existentialism, man is ontologically unique. His mode of being is distinct from other modes of being and he is at the very center of reality; for the Umwelt is Zuhanden or Vorhanden as it relates to man. ^{that} Rilke implies/a similar centrality belongs to man, that man is worth preserving from absorption into the all (of Being as represented by the angel). The fact of the value of man may also be seen in the fact that man has a mission, a high purpose to fulfill.

Communication difficulties. In Existentialism, the inherent solipsism which results from the emphasis on the self creates difficulties in communication. Complicating the issue still further is man's tendency to give abstractions an excessive amount of reality. Kierkegaard criticized intellectualizing and abstraction, and rejected Hegel's absolute idealism. Since that time, experiential reality has consistently been the theme of existential thinkers and systems have consistently been rejected. Rilke, too, in his poetic terms criticizes the tendency to live in a world of abstractions--the "gedeutete Welt," the interpreted world. A fabric of interpretation blocks the communication from a rose, and transforms its message into some portent of a turn in romance. This interpreting function creates the world of "illusion" in which man finds himself. Soon man discovers that he is without help, alone in a world of illusion.

Isolation. Rilke, like the Existentialists, asserts that man is intrinsically alone because his nature is different from that of animal or angel. The interpreted world only makes impossible the communion with the few sources which could somewhat relieve this loneliness. Man can receive help from certain sources, but he cannot eliminate altogether his loneliness, just as he can receive help to face death but cannot eliminate the fact that he must die.

Appropriation. Fear of appropriation of the self by the world and by other human beings is basic in Existentialism, especially in Sartre's shudder before the appropriating glance of the "other person." The basis of this fear of appropriation is the concern for the preservation of the integrity and self-determining nature of the self. In Rilke, man is, as has been noted, considered worth preserving in separation from the angel. The poet must stifle even the call for help directed at the angel for fear of being appropriated and absorbed by the stronger being of the angel. In the Elegy and in Existentialism, the effort is both positive and negative: the positive suggestion of intensifying the existence of the self, and the negative fear of appropriation and further loss of the self.

Borderline man. In Rilke, man is shown as--at his best--existing on the border of the finite and infinite. Man is looking into the angelic realms, or into the infinite reaches of the night, or into the realm of the young dead. The influence of these non-finite realms should permeate man's existence. In the existential concern with transcendence there is the recognition that man's existence at its best is a constant interaction of finite and infinite. This, especially in Kierkegaard and Jaspers, is a prominent part of existential thinking. Even in Heidegger and Sartre, who deny the infinite, the concept of the infinite is replaced by "timeless

presence," that is, "Being." But whether the super-finite realm is called finite Being or infinity does not alter the importance of transcendence of finitude through interaction with a realm which is distinct from human finitude.

Faktizität. Facticity is given a special meaning in existential thought. It refers to inescapability, the inescapability of the self from its body and from its world. Further, it refers to the consequent power of the body and the world to exert pressure on the individual. Rilke presents this problem in poetical form in the description of the clinging loyalty of habit which is so real and determinative that it seems to have a life of its own, seems to decide for itself that "here is a being with whom I should like to settle down." The consolation of repetition, too, is a shallow consolation, corresponding to Heidegger's concept of the feeling of Beruhigung (appeasement) which deceives the inauthentically existing person into thinking that all is well. Repetition is a standard aspect of the jugglers and other inauthentically existing people Rilke presents. Only here in the First Elegy does the positive value--the consolation--of repetition receive attention. And even here, it only accentuates the spiritual poverty of man to whom only repetition and habit remain. Repetition is translated into existential terms by the term "Alltäglichkeit," for this dailiness implies the adherence without resistance to a pattern,

a pattern established and strengthened through repetition. Rilke's assertion that little but habit remains to modern man would only strengthen Heidegger's assertion of the state of decline (Verfallen) of modern man, the fundamental inauthenticity of his present manner of existing.

Rilke's criticism is not, however, without implications of positive values and of implied courses of action and modes of being which would lead to a more authentic manner of being. The three basic suggestions would seem to be communion, intensity, and transcendence. Significantly, these are three basic suggestions of existential thinkers as well.

Communion. Rilke seems to discredit interpretation as such (although he sets himself up as an interpreter) and essentially recommends communion rather than communication. Even though Rilke's medium is communication through words, his communication is praise and as such it tends to be a one-way matter. Thus, this praise is better understood as a form of expression rather than communication among men. This distinction is a difficult one, for art is a form of communion. To clarify this distinction, one may observe that communion, too, is a type of communication--but a special type. This special type of communication is to be contrasted with the type of communication in which man daily indulges in this "interpreted" world. This special type is communication

raised to the level of communion. Yet this communication is not the silent, super-verbal, loving communication between man and man envisioned by Jaspers and Marcel, but a silent, super-verbal loving communication with things, and with the realms beyond. In Existentialism, Heidegger comes closest to this concept when he says that man is getting far away from Being. He says that man should try to come to live in nearness to Being; man should become the "shepherd of Being." Just as, in Rilke, things seem to beckon to, strangely concern, and even depend on, man, so also in Heidegger Being seems to beckon to, strangely concern, and even depend on the guardianship of man. The interaction between man and Being in Heidegger and between man and the being of things in Rilke does not undergo the distortion inevitably involved in verbalization. Even Rilke's praise is a form of verbalization which comes primarily after communion.

Intensity. Rilke's admiration for the young dead is to a large degree due to the fact that they represent intensity, heightened consciousness, undiminished by the erosion of time. This intensity and consciousness represents an unmediated, naive, direct contact with a genuine experiential reality--a reality about which there is no doubt and in which there is no marring aspect of illusion or misinterpretation. This is one reason we so need their mighty secrets.

We need the secret of living confidently, fully, joyously, in direct contact with what it means to be alive.

Existentialists, too, seek a genuine reality based on experience--an "existential" reality. They, too, would prefer the existential intensity of the lover to the heroic type of intensity. They, too, would say that the moment of intensity is a moment of subjective power, of greater freedom for self-realization. The inauthentic life is the life deadened by repetition, by communication that has degenerated to chatter, by unconsciousness even in the waking state. The authentic life inevitably involves intensity and heightened consciousness. Thus, in both Rilke and in Existentialism, intensity has a positive value.

Transcendence. The image of the bow-string and arrow and the image of the generation of music are both primarily transcendence images. They show, as Heidegger would say, that man is essentially a projective structure. And they express poetically Jaspers' concept of transcendence through shipwreck. In both of the images, the situation might be called a "boundary situation" and a shipwreck situation, for both involve shattering and transcendence: the shock of the snap of the bow-string shoots the arrow into flight, and the shock of Lihos stepping into the realm beyond wrenches the silence and generates music. Both, then, are poetic symbols of transcendence. In conceptual language, Heidegger says

that man is "geworfener Entwurf"; in poetical language, Rilke shows man as an arrow that achieves its raison-d'être in motion. Jaspers asserts that man transcends through Scheitern (shattering, shipwreck); Rilke captures the essential relationship of shipwreck to transcendence in an image of the shattering shock of the bow-string and the arrow as it leaps forward into flight.

Thus, both positively and negatively, Rilke and the Existentialists are making not only similar analyses of the condition of modern man, but similar positive recommendations about the direction towards authenticity. They agree about man's anguish and Dürftigkeit, that man exists in a special mode of being, that man is conceived basically and primarily as a self, that man has communication problems, that part of man's problem is his existence in a fog of his own abstractions and systems, that man is spiritually isolated and alone, that man is in danger of being appropriated, that man is on the borderline of the finite and the infinite, that man is in the power of habit and facticity, and that ultimately man is in a state of decline. On the positive side, their three-point recommendation is basically the same--to return to a communion relationship with things and thereby a nearness to Being, to strive for a greater intensity and consciousness and a more genuine reality, and finally, to experience transcendence through the snap of the bow-string--that is, through shipwreck.

THE FOURTH ELEGY

- 1 O Bäume Lebens, o wann winterlich?
- 2 Wir sind nicht einig, Sind nicht wie die Zug-
- 3 Vögel verständigt. Überholt und spät,
- 4 so drängen wir uns plötzlich Winden auf
- 5 und fallen ein auf teilnahmslosen Teich.

The first line is not to be taken as praise, as meaning "Oh wondrous life so ever green," but in relationship to the lines that follow. This gives quite the opposite meaning, essentially "Why is our existence not intimately related with what is around us?" The fact that die Bäume Lebens do not become "winterlich" is meant as a criticism. The trees of life do not relate themselves to nature, to the seasons, and this leads to trouble.

As early as line 2, the significant word "wir" appears. The trees of life are to be construed as "unsere," and more specifically, our existence. Our existence is not at one with our world and its changing seasons.

Immediately after stating this opening thought, the poet proceeds to develop it in much the same way as the First Elegy presented an opening wish to cry out to the angels and then developed the contrast between man's mode of existence and that of angel and animal. In the first strophe of the Fourth Elegy, man's existence is compared with that of birds, plants, and a kingly animal.

Man's manner of existence is, in lines 2-5, compared to that of migratory birds. The migratory birds live in

deep Daseinseinverständnis with the wind. Their manner of In-der-Welt-sein is in distinct contrast to that of man, who if seen as a bird is "überholt und spät," abruptly throwing himself into the wind, failing and falling into ponds which to birds who know them seem to co-operate; but to man, who communes neither with wind nor pond, they are merely "unsympathetic ponds." Our being-in-the-world is not naive like migratory birds; we decide for ourselves without consulting nature; we equivocate, doubt; we are not prepared in deed or thought for what comes, and we fall into a lifeless mire. When we do decide to act, our abruptness ruins everything; we let the right moment pass, then frantically--überholt und spät--try to catch up. Breathlessly we overexert ourselves to catch up with those who threw themselves into the wind at the right moment and seemed to be effortlessly borne away.

Like the evergreen tree, we stand apart in our cycle of being from the rest of nature, which feels the joyful ascendancy of spring and which fades, gold-vermillion, in the fall. Rather, man is conscious of blooming and fading at the same time:

6 Blühn und verdorren ist uns zugleich bewusst.

We are conscious of the unfolding of life and the passing of life. Somehow, doubts and weaknesses seem to mar what for flowers and birds is the unfolding of life, the joyful

contact with the living waters of existence. And the naive nobility and power of the lion seem to make more clear the painful contrast between his existence and that of man:

7 Und irgendwo gehn Löwen noch und wissen,
8 solange sie herrlich sind, von keiner Ohnmacht

The lion, the migratory bird, the flower that blooms and fades, all are at home in this world; only man is homeless. Man is not at one with nature, and he is not "unverlässlich zu Haus" even in the world in which he chooses to live, the interpreted world.

The dynamics of life are polarities; but man can never seem to achieve one pole without the taste of the other. As Keats has said in his famous "Ode on Melancholy":

Ay, in the very temple of delight
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine...

We do one thing but always feel the tug of the opposite:

9 Uns aber, wo wir Eines meinen, ganz,
10 ist schon des ander Aufwand fühlbar. Feindschaft
11 ist uns das Nächste. Treten Liebende
12 nicht immerfort an Ränder, ein im andern,
13 die sich versprochen Weite, Jagd und Heimat.

Even lovers who in each other see the promise of spaciousness, the glorious excitement of pursuit, and the familiarity of being at home, find the bitter experience of the opposites. Instead of spaciousness and scope, they find themselves circumscribed, walled in. Instead of finding the joy of the chase, they find themselves held down, possessed. Instead

of finding themselves at last at home (being at home neither with nature nor the interpreted world), they discover that they only remain strange to each other, concealing their loneliness from each other, hiding the thoughts that come and go and often stay the night. To their sorrow, they experience what Rilke described in the First Elegy: "Ach, sie verdecken sich miteinander ihr Los." [line 22]

And the lovers discover the strangeness of the inner jungle of feeling, stirrings from a primeval past, the fearful river-god of the blood. They find anything but the familiarity of home. This dark jungle of feeling eludes the light of understanding, which serves only to light up the exterior of feeling and leave its interior dark and mysterious. Just as light is such only because of darkness, so also love generates and even requires hostility: "Feindschaft/ ist uns das Nächste." We do not know the true nature of feeling but only some external contours projected against their opposites and made painful that we might see them:

14 Da wird für eines Augenblickes Zeichnung
 15 ein Grund von Gegenteil bereitet, mühsam,
 16 dass wir sie sähen; denn man ist sehr deutlich
 17 mit uns. Wir kennen den Kontur
 18 des Fühlens nicht: nur was ihn formt von aussen.

Thus, Rilke seems to present what would constitute a sort of existential dialectic of feeling. Even further, there is a suggestion that this dialectic is part of man's

basic manner of existence, that is, that it is an ontological structure. Polarity, Rilke asserts, is an underlying ontological structure of life; for this reason, man's search for chase, and home, and scope, often generate their opposites--limits, possessiveness, strangeness, loneliness, and mystery.

The underlying significance of the first eighteen lines is found in the terse statement in line 2: "Wir sind nicht einig." This thought is spun out in the other lines in ways that develop the sad contrast between man as an inhabitant of this world and the other inhabitants--bird, lion, flower--in ways that show man in the pathos of his maladjustment to this world. Man is presented torn by inner disunity, by alienation and by contradictions; man is presented in all his brokenness and despair. Man is a bird who cannot fly but falls pathetically into unconcerned ponds. Man is the being who even when he has his mind wholly devoted to one thing, feels the tug of the other. Man is the being whose blooming is marred by a simultaneous consciousness of fading away--a consciousness of finitude, of the fact that he as a man must die. Hostility is never far away. Even the liberation of love is not free of enslavement, nor its intimacy free of strangeness, concealment, and loneliness.

Thus, in the first eighteen lines, Rilke establishes a picture of man which is marked by an unmediated pessimism. Life is fragmentary, disunified, alien, replete with painful

contradictions and difficulties. Man is puzzled, broken, in despair. In Heidegger's terms, this would be called the spiritual Dürftigkeit of modern man. But the reason for this state of needfulness is distinctly Rilke's own. It is, as Buddeberg puts it, "der Mangel an Hingabefähigkeit an das eigne Gefühl." [Buddeberg, p. 55] The reason for man's plight, his desperate "Gespaltensein," that is, his desperate dividedness, is his failure to be direct, his incapacity to give himself wholeheartedly and unreservedly to his heart. Man is not directly in contact with the wind like the birds; he does not commune with what is around him. He does not bloom naively like the flower, but with consciousness of fading. Thus, the native hue of his resolution is, as Hamlet might say, "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought."

This painful desperation and dividedness expresses itself in the form of a poetic image: that of the poet before the curtain of his heart:

19 Wer sass nicht bang vor seines Herzens Vorhang?

Here the dividedness takes the form of a division between the observing consciousness of the poet before the stage of his heart--separated by a curtain. Consciousness is distanced from the heart, and the poet sits distractedly before the rising curtain:

20 Der schlug sich auf: die Szenerie war Abschied.
 21 Leicht zu verstehen. Der bekannte Garten,
 22 und schwankte leise: dann erst kam der Tänzer.

The scene was set for parting. This was obvious, and there was the familiar garden. The wings swung slightly, showing perhaps the movement of someone behind them about to enter. Then came the dancer, who, according to Professor Kreutz, ordinarily represents to Rilke the "gültiger, gelungener Ausdruck des Seelischen im Leiblichen zu sein, die geschlossene, runde Einheit von beiden: Daseins- und Lebensfülle." [Kreutz, p. 63] But the dancer that appears is, rather, a painful spectacle, overweight, the half-filled mask creating no illusion whatsoever. In anguish the poet shrieks, "Not he !"

23 Nicht der. Genug! Und wenn er auch so leicht tut,
 24 er ist verkleidet und er wird ein Bürger
 25 und geht durch seine Küche in die Wohnung.

However lightly the dancer may move and however much he would like to represent the complete, genuine, fulfilled existence, he remains poorly disguised. Brutally the poet unmasks the dancer as a coarse Bürger who in entering his own house goes through the kitchen.

With the same shrill denunciation of the world of illusion as the Existentialists, the poet grimly asserts he would prefer puppets, whose strings that give them lightness can be seen, to Bürger pretending a lightness that is not theirs:

26 Ich will nicht diese halbgefüllten Masken,
 27 lieber die Puppe. Die ist voll. Ich will
 28 den Balg aushalten und den Draht und ihr
 29 Gesicht aus Aussehn.

These bitter words underscore the poet's fierce distaste for

pretence of any kind. Rather than the pretence of the Bürger, the poet will see the puppet--without any illusions. He wants to see the husk, the wire, the hard and lifeless immobility of the face. Rather than the insufficiency of the human, he prefers the lifeless, mechanical completeness of the puppet. In the last lines of the strophe, the poet impatiently calls for a drama on the stage of his innermost being (his heart), a drama without pretense or illusion. Even if the grim emptiness drives all others from the audience--man cannot bear too much reality--the poet determines to stay, and to stay even if the stage turns out to be full of emptiness. He gestures that he is ready, that the show must go on:

Hier. Ich bin davor.
 30 Wenn auch die Lampen ausgehn, wenn mir auch
 31 gesagt wird: Nichts mehr--, wenn auch von der Bühne
 32 das Leere herkommt mit dem grauen Luftzug,
 33 wenn auch von meinen stillen Vorfahrn keiner
 34 mehr mit mir dasitzt, keine Frau, sogar
 35 der Knabe nicht mehr mit dem braunen Schielaug:
 36 Ich bleibe dennoch. Es gibt immer Zuschaun.

The show may be over, and he may be told that there is nothing more to be seen, but stubbornly the poet will remain. There is always something to be seen even when the stage is empty.

In a 15-line aside addressed to his father, Rilke reflects on the consequences of his attitude (an attitude partially expressed in the previous strophe) and his mission as a poet, and he attempts to justify himself:

37 Hab ich nicht recht? Du, der um mich so bitter
 38 das Leben schmeckte, meines kostend, Vater
 39 den ersten trüben aufguss meines Müssens,
 40 da ich heranwuchs, immer wieder kostend
 41 und, mit dem Nachgeschmack so fremder Zukunft
 42 beschäftigt, prüftest mein beschlagnes Aufschau,--
 43 der du, mein Vater, seit du tot bist, oft
 44 in meiner Hoffnung, innen in mir, Angst hast,
 45 und Gleichmut, wie ihn Tote haben, Reiche
 46 von Gleichmut, aufgibst für mein bisschen Schicksal,
 47 hab ich nicht recht?

And then he turns to others who have loved him:

Und ihr, hab ich nicht recht,
 48 die ihr mich liebtet für den kleinen Anfang
 49 Liebe zu euch, von dem ich immer abkam,
 50 weil mir der Raum in eurem Angesicht,
 51 da ich ihn liebte, überging in Weltraum,
 52 in dem ihr nicht mehr wart.....

These lines give some indication of the extent to which Rilke regarded sacrifice as necessary to art, and also indicate his view of art as his "Schicksal." The poet sacrifices himself to his art, and at the same time brings puzzlement and pain to those who love him. Yet the poet must "übergehen in Weltraum," leaving behind the preciousness of the direct contact with those he loves and who love him.

After this brief aside to his father and those who have loved him, the poet, seated before the stage of his heart, continues to wait, the puppets crumpled lifelessly on its floor. Yet the poet, if his gaze is strong enough, will cause another force as if to counterbalance his gaze, to appear above the husks and raise them up:

wenn mir zumut ist,
 53 zu warten vor den Puppenbühne, nein,
 54 so völlig hinzuschauen, dass, um mein Schauen

55 am Ende aufzuwiegen, dort als Spieler
 56 ein Engel hinmuss, der die Bälge hochreisst.

Now the play fulfills the conditions the poet has insisted upon. Now, finally, the play can begin:

57 Engel und Puppe: dann ist endlich Schauspiel.
 58 Dann kommt zusammen, was wir immerfort
 59 entzwein, indem wir da sind. Dann entsteht
 60 aus unsern Jahreszeiten erst der Umkreis
 61 des ganzen Wandels.

Lines 59-61 are translated by Harry Behn as, "At last, out of the cycle of spinning years, the whole design takes form."⁷

One might translate the passage more literally as, "Then is generated from our round of seasons at last the cycle or circle that comprehends all changes." At last a pattern emerges:

Über uns hinüber
 62 spielt dann der Engel. Sieh, die Sterbenden,
 63 sollten sie nicht vermuten, wie voll Vorwand
 64 das alles ist, was wir hier leisten. Alles
 65 ist nicht es selbst.

The image of the angel over man is subject to a double interpretation: First, that the puppets on the stage of the heart of man are raised up by the flying over of the angel; second, the sentence can be interpreted as meaning that we are the puppets over which the angel hovers, that the flesh and spirit--that are constantly separated in daily life--are joined and now there can be a play.

⁷The Duino Elegies, trans. Harry Behn (Mt. Vernon, N. Y., 1957), unpaginated.

If only we knew how full of pretense is all that we do here! Even the dying do not realize it. This is one of the most telling and memorable lines in Rilke, "...sollten sie nicht vermuten, wie voll Vorwand/ das alles ist, was wir hier leisten." Masterfully Rilke sums up the problem in a terse pronouncement: "Alles/ist nicht es selbst." In five short words Rilke presents the experience of the pretense, disillusionment, pessimism, and despair of man displaced in the modern world. The line seems to balance and echo the initial four-word pronouncement: "Wir sind nicht einig." Thus, in nine words much of the thought of the Fourth Elegy can be summarized by the two statements: "Alles ist nicht es selbst." and "Wir sind nicht einig." One presents man's disharmony with nature, with what is around him, his desperate dividedness and inability to be at one with himself. The other presents the problem of illusion and pretense.

"Alles ist nicht es selbst" also suggests a problem related to illusion: meaninglessness. If all is not itself, then the meaning of life is seriously impaired. If seeming replaces being--that is, the world of seeming replaces the world of reality--then a serious problem is posed in the area of meaning. Soon the world of seeming is a world without meaning; and if one lives in this world, one lives in a world of meaningless meanings--in a world of meaninglessness. Thus, "Alles ist nicht es selbst" reflects a pessimism in

the face of meaninglessness.

Just as Rilke set man's lostness in bold relief at the beginning of the Elegy by means of contrast with the lion, the bird, and the flower, so also Rilke sets man's world of illusion in contrast with the naive world of the child. The contrast becomes that between man, who lives in a world of illusion, pretense, and interpretation, and the child, who lives in the purity of the present. Man is turned around and always taking leave, and at his back is only a future in which he will also only be taking leave of the past. For the child, the future is not an oppressive reality, and the figures on the dial of the clock are much more than the past; the clock points vividly to the present:

O Stunden in der Kindheit,
66 da hinter den Figuren mehr als nur
67 Vergangnes war und vor uns nicht die Zukunft.

The child grows to maturity without realizing that those who are already there have only this maturity. But the child presses on, half for the sake of these lonely ones.

68 Wir wuchsen freilich und wir drängten manchmal,
69 bald gross zu werden, denen halb zulieb,
70 die andres nicht mehr hatten, als das Grossein.

But the real basis for the contrast between the maturity of illusions, pretence and interpretations and the vivid present-tense existence of the child is summed up in the last five lines of the strophe:

71 Und waren doch, in unserem Alleingehn,

72 mit Dauerndem vergnügt und standen da
 73 im Zwischenraume zwischen Welt und Spielzeug,
 74 an einer Stelle, die seit Anbeginn
 75 gegründet war für einen reinen Vorgang.

In solitude, the child may find a moment in which duration ceases, a moment in a realm not of world nor of plaything, at a spot which from the beginning of time has been established for the occurrence of the pure event.

This pure event is the difference between man and child. (The adjective "rein" is, in Rilke, a positive term, and the adjective "leer" a negative one.) Lovers are in their mode of existence marked by intensity; children by purity. For the child, the present can be pure; for the adult, the present is alloyed with future and past. The pure event can occur for the child but not for the adult.

Like the bird, the lion, and the flower, the child is in direct contact with nature, in direct contact with reality, without the need for interpretation. Like an animal, a child exists in purity and openness to Being. (This, perhaps, is a basic reason for Rilke's admiration for children and animals--and his acute embarrassment in their presence. This embarrassment was, I believe, not unalloyed with fear--fear of appropriation by child or animal.) This purity is hardly graspable by an adult, escapes all description, is impossible to measure.

The occurrence of death in this state of purity is even more impenetrable to the understanding, "ist unbeschreiblich."

This is the thought that dominates the last strophe. First, who can show a child--he who, between world and plaything is on the very "Stelle...für einen reinen Vorgang"--where he stands? (Here one may translate two ways: "Who can portray a child who is standing in a place we cannot understand..." or "Who can show a child where to stand who is already on the place established as the ground for the pure event...") And who can place him in his proper constellation and give the measure of distance into his hands?

76 Wer zeigt ein Kind, so wie es steht?⁸ Wer stellt
77 es ins Gestirn und giebt das Mass des Abstands
78 ihm in die Hand?

And if this is so impossible, how much more impossible is it to portray the death of a child!

Wer macht den Kindertod
79 aus grauem Brot, das hart Wird,--oder lässt
80 ihn drin im runden Mund, so wie den Groÿs
81 von einem schönen Apfel?....

Compared to the indescribability of the death of a child, murder is easy to understand:

Mörder sind
82 leicht einzusehen. Aber dies: den Tod,
83 den ganzen Tod, noch vor dem Leben so
84 sanft zu enthalten und nicht böß zu sein,
85 ist unbeschreiblich.

But this, to face the end in all its completeness and not

⁸Regarding the significance of the unconscious purity of the being of a child, see Eberhard Kretschmar, "Das Sein als menschliches Leben," Chapter 3 of his Rilke als Dichter des Seins (Dresden, 1934), especially Part 1, entitled "Unbewusstes Menschsein," pp. 42-46. The final strophe of the Fourth Elegy receives comment on p. 44.

to become bitter, this is indescribable. (Here again the translation may be: "But this: Death the whole of Death, to hold it so gently before Life has been--and not for the child to be bitter (at Death) is incomprehensible." Or, "...to witness the death of a child and not to become bitter--is indescribable.") The extinction of the purity of a child is indescribable. In this sense, Rilke's attempt to describe it, then, is a logical impossibility in his own terms.

Existentialism in the Fourth Elegy. The Fourth Elegy is a ruthless delineation of the Dürftigkeit of modern man. Its criticisms are as pointed as those of the Existentialists and their content is essentially the same: man's mode of being-in-the-world is inauthentic; he is displaced and homeless in his world; inside he is a chaos of disunity and despair, of futility, contradiction, irony, and dividedness; he moves in a man-created world of pretense and illusion; man is estranged from Being. Their program of recommendations for the repair of the situation has the same essential note: 1) admission of error and of need; 2) a determination to rid oneself of mauvaise foi; and 3) openness to, and communion with, Being. All three represent a search for a genuine reality, and 1 and 2 express the will-to-honesty.

These points have been brought out in connection with the examination of the meaning of the Elegy. They may now be discussed in connection with the relationship between

the concepts in Existentialism and the corresponding images in the poetry.

The first concepts fall under the heading of the statement, "Wir sind nicht einig."

1) Not in harmony. The first strophe presents a vivid image of man as not in harmony with nature. Man's mode of being-in-the-world is not in harmony with the world. A series of contrasts--with the migratory birds, the flower, the lion--makes painfully obvious the fact that man's mode of being-in-the-world is far inferior to that of the other living things to which man is compared.

This image is paralleled in Existentialism in Heidegger's assertion that man is not in harmony with Being. Indeed, Rilke is saying the same thing in poetic language: man is estranged from the ground of his existence--Being. Plants, animals, and birds live naively, in direct contact with Being. Man, however, interprets, decides. Man is separated from the kind of nearness to Being possessed by animals, separated by a wall of interpretation and illusion. Migratory birds live in deep Daseinseinverständnis with the winds; man makes the wind and the pond an object, an instrument to be thought about and used for the sake of going somewhere--just as the rose is used for fortune-telling purposes. Thus, man no longer communes with the wind, but even as he flies is thinking of something else. Birds "exist" their flying joyfully

and commune with the nature of the wind; man has lost contact with the nature of the wind, that is, the being of the wind. Man lives in an interpreted world. His mode of in-der-Welt-sein does not represent a communing with Being, but rather the making of the world around him into lifeless objects, the mere raw material for the process of abstraction involved in thought.

2) Displaced and homeless. The fact that man is not in harmony with his world relates itself further to the fact that man is at home neither in the world of nature nor in the "interpreted world." Man feels displaced and homeless. He feels lost in an alien world, a world in which the other beings are adapted to nature and "well-adjusted", while man's relationship to the world is the picture of maladjustment.

Both Rilke and the Existentialists submit this interpretation of modern man, and stress his inferior or "inauthentic" manner of being-in-the-world. Both note the breakdown of intimate contact with things as a factor in the deterioration of this being-in-the-world. Both assert that the major factor in man's predicament is that he no longer stands in nearness to Being.

3) Inner disunity and despair. The lack of harmony with one's world is inevitably paralleled and reflected in a lack of unity in one's inner world. Rilke's analysis does

not stop with an assertion that man's relationship with his world is deficient, but relentlessly exposes an inner world of disunity, despair, pretence, and illusion. A primary factor in this inner disunity and despair, Rilke suggests, is the operation of an existential dialectic. This dialectic means that even when we try to concentrate wholly on one thing, we feel the faint tug of its opposite. Even as we seek scope, running space, familiarity, we find limits, hobbles, strangeness, and concealment. It is a dialectic of irony, of achieving the opposite of what was anticipated, a dialectic of contradiction and futility. The opposite of inner unity is splitness, dividedness; this is the essential inner condition of modern man. He can never be wholly one thing, can never feel wholly one way, can never do wholly as he anticipates; always there is that inner splitness which frustrates man's desire for unity.

In Existentialism, one finds a similar analysis of the splitness of man. Man exists dialectically, and the process of transcendence is often described in dialectical terms, in terms of "transcendence through shipwreck." In Sartre, one finds abundant polarities, the most basic being between the en-soi and the pour-soi. Man is essentially divided between en-soi and pour-soi and can never altogether escape this splitness, can never wholly become one or the other. In Kierkegaard, Jaspers, Marcel and Tillich, man is

split between the finite and infinite and can never be completely finite or completely free of finitude. This, too, is essentially a dialectic of contradiction and futility, if one wishes to see it in those terms--that is, if one will not accept the dimension of finitude and joyfully "exist"--exist, especially, in nearness to Being.

Thus, one may say that the dialectic of inner splitness and dividedness which Rilke submits, is paralleled in Existential thought by a similar assertion of man's essential splitness, a splitness which is ontological and therefore not to be overcome.

Dürftigkeit. The despair resulting from the perception of this insurmountable splitness is prominent in existential thought as well as in this Fourth Elegy. In existential thought, the recognition of this Dürftigkeit is a prerequisite to aiming toward authentic existence. This Dürftigkeit, however, also involves the recognition of the world of illusion and pretense in which man is living.

Pretense and illusion. Rilke's antipathy to pretense and illusion is seen in the rejection of the dancer and the remark that the dying ought to suspect how full of pretense is all that we do here. The rejection of the dancer (and the contempt for the bourgeois) is paralleled in Existentialism in Sartre's rejection of "mauvaise foi." "Bad faith" represents the bourgeois world of illusions and, on

the more subjective level, pretenses, which have infiltrated our existence and which block the possibilities of realization of the self. Kierkegaard's feeling for this world of pretense is also very close to Rilke's thought; in his contempt for the Bürger's living in a world of abstractions (the "nineteenth century," the worker, the husband, etc). Kierkegaard's conception of the world of abstraction and systems corresponds to Rilke's "gedeutete Welt."

The common determination of both Rilke and the Existentialists is to be rid of all pretense and illusion. Both seek a genuine reality, a reality on which an existing being can depend--a reality free from pretense ("bad faith") and illusion (Uneigentlichkeit). Illusion is related to the problem of meaninglessness, for illusion is supposedly deficient (by definition) of meaning. The quest for a reality free from illusion, then, is a quest for meaning.

The Mystery of Being. As has been noted in the characterization of Existentialism, existential thinkers attempted to reintroduce "mystery" into existence (in opposition to the "objective" view of life and nature which asserts that everything is understandable with the light of reason). In Kierkegaard, subjectivity contains a reintroduction of the mysterious, and religious truth is mysterious, even absurd--impenetrable by human reason. In Jaspers, the infinite is ungraspable and every attempt to characterize

Being reduces it to finite terms and thereby distorts it. In Heidegger, Being is a "constant presence" which is mysteriously revealed by truth. (Truth, then, is a revelation of Being.) Nothingness is its necessary and equally incomprehensible complement. In Sartre, life is impenetrable to reason because it is ultimately not reasonable at all, but absurd.

Rilke, like the Existentialists, tries to reintroduce the element of mystery in existence. The being of animals is mysterious, the singing currents of the blood are chanting primeval melodies, and the communion with nature is mysterious. Man looks within himself and finds a jungle of mysterious feelings; he looks outside himself and finds that things seem strangely to concern him, to beckon him to the mysterious process of transforming the visible into the invisible. Ultimately, one may say that Rilke sees existence against the backdrop of the mysteriousness of Being. Being is a constant presence whose depths can never be plumbed.

Nothingness, too, is mysterious--impenetrable to reason. As has been noted earlier, spiritual emptiness is a form of non-being or nothingness which threatens Being. In spiritual emptiness, non-being threatens Being; in meaninglessness, non-being threatens the very life of the human being; in death, non-being vanquishes the life of the human

being. There is no rational explanation of death nor of meaninglessness; it is the intervention of nothingness. Our lives are shot through with relative forms of nothingness; in death nothingness becomes absolute.

The threat of nothingness in Rilke takes the form of emptiness, contradiction, and death. The stage of one's heart is not free from emptiness, and Being is always accompanied by its dialectical opposite. The desire to realize Being through love is painfully shot through with the restrictions and limitations and threats to the expansiveness of Being which accompany the actual realization of love. These threats to Being are indirect forms of non-being, of inauthentic in-der-Welt-sein. Nothingness is a polarity of Being in the dialectic of existence, the process of being-in-the-world. The ultimate mystery and inexplicability of nothingness is made vividly clear in the final strophe of the Elegy, which deals with the death of a child. Here the inexplicability of nothingness is accentuated by its being shown acting on the purest and highest form of human being, that of a child.*

This intervention of nothingness is the very basis of the tragic--the breaking through of a moment of chaos into a world of order and regularity. Yet in the workings of the polarity of the genuinely tragic, the system is ultimately questioned and ultimately affirmed. But in the Fourth

Elegy (taken as a self-contained entity) there is not affirmation, but an ever rising negation. The final death is not brought about by necessity, nor is it an atoning death (as in tragedy), but is only the negative side of the tragic, the breaking through of chaos into man's world. It is meaninglessness untempered by meaning.

In the progress of the Fourth Elegy, the negation first indicates man's external disharmony and maladjustment. It then exposes man's internal splitness and the inescapable dialectic. Next, it lashes out against illusion and pretence. Finally, it makes a momentary affirmation of the pure mode of being of the child only to cap it with ultimate negation by showing the death of the child. The Elegy as a whole assumes the form of a crescendo of the ultimate Fragwürdigkeit of human existence. It marks the nadir of pessimism of the whole cycle, for in the Fifth Elegy the genuineness of a momentary smile breaks through and the final note, the "second ending," is a subjunctive positing of another realm. But the Fourth Elegy is a crescendo of pessimism, broken by a glimpse of the positive value of the mode of being of the child only to be reintroduced as the being of the child is extinguished by nothingness (or, if you wish, an irrational, meaningless force). Man is frustrated, lost, inwardly divided, victimized by meaninglessness in the form of illusion. The inroads of nothingness on the existence

of man are presented in various relative forms and finally in the absolute form of death.

But criticism, however negative, cannot fail to imply a value-structure. One cannot criticize meaninglessness without positing the value of meaning; one cannot criticize death without valuing life; one cannot criticize pretence and illusion without valuing genuineness and honesty; one cannot criticize estrangement from Being without implying the value of nearness to Being. Thus, there seem to emerge from the pessimism of the Elegy values of meaning, life, genuineness and honesty, nearness and communion with Being. In the admiration for the openness of animals to Being is a further positive element, as well as the depiction of the mode of being of the child who does not see the ominousness of the dial figures of the clock. Thus, for all the pessimism and criticism of man's mode of being (Elegy Four is dominated by pessimism and Elegy Five by social criticism), Rilke's Fourth Elegy is not without a positive program. This program involves the admission of sins and of the need for a genuine reality; it involves a determination to rid oneself of pretence and illusion; it involves developing the openness to Being and the nearness to Being of the flower, the bird, the lion, the child--like them, man should establish contact with, and commune with Being.

This is the way out of man's homelessness, lostness, desperate dividedness, his artificial world of illusion and pretence. In a sense, Rilke has not only presented the existential predicament of modern man, but has suggested directions in which man may move to face this predicament properly.

The Existentialism in the Fourth Elegy is clear. The shrill denunciation of modern man which the Existentialists have presented in conceptual form is here painstakingly and elaborately delineated in poetical form. The inner confusion, the outer maladjustment, and the inauthentic world of pretence and illusion--these are the recurrent themes in existential philosophers, and these are the themes masterfully presented in the Fourth Elegy.

In the next lines, the acrobats are set in motion like a mechanical toy, and a picture is presented of skillful artists moving with amazing ease--as if the air had been oiled where they are performing--on a rug worn with use:

...die dringend von früh an
 3 wringt ein wem, wem zu Liebe
 4 niemals zufriedener Wille? Sondern er wringt sie,
 5 biegt sie, schlingt sie und schwingt sie,
 6 wirft sie und fängt sie zurück; wie aus geölter,
 7 glatterer Luft kommen sie nieder
 8 auf dem verzehrten, von ihrem ewigen
 9 Aufsprung dünneren Teppich, diesem verlorenen
 10 Teppich im Weltall.
 11 Aufgelegt wie ein Pflaster, als hätte der Vorstadt-
 12 Himmel der Erde dort wehe getan.

As if the air had been oiled, they seem to defy the force of gravity and return to the tattered carpet only to be thrown into the air again. Indeed, they seem to be driven by a power over and above that in their muscles, a power of a "niemals zufriedener Wille." This gives them their remarkable skill and ease, their "Können."

Yet this Können is not to be admired, but disparaged, for it is a "leeres Zuviel," an "empty too-much." This disparagement is mildly suggested in the initial reference to the Fahrenden and their Flüchtigkeit, but is reinforced by the observation that they seem to be the mechanical pawns of a never-satisfied will. It is explicit in the description of the carpet as "thin" and "verloren ... im Weltall." (lines 9-10) The fact that the carpet has no place in the universe is even further emphasized in the assertion that

it was laid down like a plaster or a pavingstone which was covering a wound in the earth. The carpet is so little a part of the earth and so offensive to it that the carpet seems not to rest comfortably on the earth but on a wound in it. Significantly, the acrobats do not return to the earth but to a tattered rug. Professor Heinrich Kreutz, in his valuable book on the interpretation of the Elegies, puts this interpretation of the basic Bodenlosigkeit most forcefully:

Der Boden, auf den die Fahrenden dann nieder-
kommen, vom Griff des Willens scheinbar entlassen,
ist nicht Heimat, Grund, Geborgenheit, sondern neue
Trostlosigkeit, die Bodenlosigkeit ihres Daseins.
Der "Teppich" ... liegt da in seiner verbrauchten
Schäbigkeit nicht wie auf der Erde, sondern wie auf
einer Wunde der Erde. So unheil, so bodenlos, so
"verloren im Weltall" ist das Dasein der Fahrenden.

[Kreutz, p. 76]

Und kaum dort,
13 aufrecht, da und gezeigt: des Dastehns
14 grosser Anfangsbuchstab..., schon auch, die stärksten
15 Männer, rollt sie wieder, zum Scherz, der immer
16 kommende Griff, wie August der Starke bei Tisch
17 einen zinnernen Teller.

They are scarcely ever allowed to remain upright, but rather are rolled and twirled as Augustus the Strong is said to have twirled a tin platter.

18 Ach und um diese
19 Mitte, die Rose des Zuschauns:
20 blüht und entblättert.

This is the way the world runs down; around this center the rose of the performance of the acrobats blooms and blows. Just as around the center of a rose, the encircling petals

lie, so are these performers ringed about by spectators. The spectators come and go, and so "blüht und entblättert" the "Rose des Zuschauers." Yet this apparent fruitfulness is essentially sterile and artificial, as will be noted.

In the reference to "diesen/Stampfer, den Stempel" the symbolic level of the previous lines is incorporated with what appears to be a pointing to the first acrobat:*

Um diesen
21 Stampfer, den Stempel, den von dem eignen
22 blühenden Staub getroffen, zur Scheinfrucht
23 wieder der Unlust befruchteten, ihrer
24 niemals bewussten,--glänzend mit dünnster
25 Oberfläche leicht scheinlächelnden Unlust.

The pistil (first acrobat), fertilized by the dust-pollen of its own blooming, bears fruit again and again. But the fruit is not the product of desire or pleasure (Lust) but rather of a mechanical, unconcerned, listless, functioning process. For this reason it is not genuine fruit, but "Scheinfrucht... der Unlust"--born again and again without even being conscious of the process. This whole falseness, sterility, and lack of feeling is summed up in the smile of the acrobat--that fixed and feelingless "ballerina smile," one might call it, whose thinness hardly covers the disinclination, the "dünnster/Oberfläche leicht scheinlächelnden Unlust" (lines

*Werner Wolf, Rainer Maria Rilkes Duineser Elegien (Heidelberg: Carl Winter's Universitätsbuchhandlung, 1937), p. 27, asserts that the word "Mitte" refers to the group of acrobats and "den Stampfer" refers to the first acrobat, reading from left to right in the painting.

24-5), of its owner.

In existential terms, the first twenty-five lines represent what may be called the inauthenticity of easy and effortless fulfillment. In the First Elegy, the unfulfilled were preferred to those whose loves were consummated. Here a consummation is present, but the accomplishment is made stale by its being performed over and over again. In both cases the actual consummation per se does not seem to possess the value that the striving for it represents; in neither case is consummation a gate to greater authenticity, but rather a falling away from it.

In the Fifth Elegy, the Können of the acrobats suggests a contrast with the Können of the Bürger in the Fourth Elegy. The Bürger-dancer became ludicrous in trying to cover up his coarseness and to aspire to a fineness he did not truly understand. Perhaps he also represents for Rilke the man who aspires to the infinite instead of perfecting his finitude and realizing that "Hiersein ist herrlich." In contrast to the inadequacy of the Bürger is the over-adequacy of the acrobats, their "empty too-muchness." The art of the acrobats has become skill without art, a skill which has become false and mechanical. The true artist is replaced by a merely facile, empty, false technician.

The existential significance of this picture is in the fact that the acrobats--being "nur ein wenig Flüchtiger"

noch als wir selbst"--represent an exaggerated form of the same shortcomings as we have, only perhaps a "little more than we." Here are beings in a world of appearance who are highly accomplished--too highly accomplished. Here is the ease of technology so often criticized by the Existentialists, now translated into poetic terms, but also into terms that point to the essential separation from the earth, the subjection to another force (a "niemals zufriedene Wille"), the uselessness, the sterile fruit, the pretence, the lack of and loss of feeling, the disinclination and basic inhumanity which has been a legacy of technology.

Rilke presents the ultimate in Können, and shows at the same time its spiritual emptiness and inauthenticity--the emptiness and inauthenticity of modern man. Heidegger echoes this criticism of the slavery of modern man and his spiritual poverty even among all his technological advances, in his Einführung in die Metaphysik:

When the furthestmost corner of the globe has been technologically conquered and opened to economic exploitation, when any event whatsoever in any place whatsoever at any time whatsoever has become accessible with any speed whatsoever, when we can "experience" simultaneously an attempt on the life of a king in France and a symphony concert in Tokyo, when time is no longer anything but speed, momentariness and simultaneity, and time as history has vanished from all the life of all the nations, when the boxer passes as a great man of a people, when the millions numbered at mass meetings are a triumph--then, yes, then, the question still grips us like a ghost through all these phantoms: what for?--where to?--and what then?

[Einführung, p. 28, quoted in Grene, p. 95]

descent, his physical form, and his inner life: "Son of a rogue and a nun, filled with muscles and with simplicity."

The next four lines are highly difficult to interpret:

36 Oh ihr,
37 die ein Leid, das noch klein war,
38 einst als Spielzeug bekam, in einer seiner
39 langen Genesungen....

Professor Kreutz contends that these lines are an aside, a backward glance on the part of the poet, toward his childhood. In his childhood,

als "Belohnung" etwa für eine gut überstandene Krankheit oder für ein Schmerzaushalten beim Arzt hat die Mutter das Kind René Rilke in den Kleinen Vorstadtzirkus geführt, und die Fahrenden wurden zum Spielzeug, über dem man die Schmerzen, das kleine Leid vergass. [Kreutz, p. 80]

This, Kreutz contends, also is an expression of disdain for the acrobats, for it reduces them to the mere playthings for a convalescent child. ["Dass die Artisten als Kinderspielzeug benutzt werden, ist freilich eine neue Entwertung ihres Daseins." Same.]

Professor Wolf, on the other hand, paraphrases the lines to mean that the poet turns to address the never-satisfied will which now swings them and slings them and observes that in his childhood this will, this destiny, was a plaything in a long convalescence. His paraphrase of the four lines reads as follows:

O ihr, ruft der Dichter aus, die ein Wille, ein Schicksal, ein Leid, das noch klein war, in einer seiner langen Genesungen als Spielzeug erhielt; doch dann wuchs es und liess euch nicht los, noch immer mit seinem ewig kommenden Griff euch rollend!

[Wolf, p. 28]

Both of the above interpretations make the initial "O ihr" a sort of aside, a turning away from the acrobats themselves to reflect on the action or to plunge into memory. Else Buddeberg, however, interprets these lines as addressed to the acrobats themselves. They are, she asserts, an answer to the question which opened the Elegy: "Wer aber sind sie, die Fahrennden...." The answer is that these Fahrennden are those, "die ein Leid, das noch klein war, einst als Spielzeug bekam...." This interpretation involves an intricate reading of the pronouns for antecedents and a close examination of the syntax in its justification. Yet this interpretation makes the four lines crucial to the meaning of the whole Elegy. It is therefore advisable to quote her analysis here:

Wer bekam hier etwas und was bekam er? Das Subjekt des Satzes wird gesucht: es ist "ein Leid". Wer aber ist der Träger dieses Leides? Offenbar die Fahrennden, die im Anruf des "O ihr" angeredet wurden. In dem darauffolgenden "die" sind sie gleichzeitig Objekt des Satzes. (Wären sie das grammatikalische Subjekt des Satzes, so müsste es nachher heissen: bekamen). Als Träger des Leides bekamen sie also sich selbst--nun als Artisten--zum Geschenk. Subjekt und Objekt sind eines geworden. Das heisst: Als Leidenden wurde ihnen das Tun ihrer Kunst, die sie zu Artisten machte, geschenkt. Dem Sinn nach fällt nunmehr auch das Prädikat mit dem Subjekt und Objekt zusammen: Das Leid, das einst Menschen beherrschte, löste in denen, die es litten, ein Tun aus. In diesem Tun wurden sie zu Artisten, den Fahrennden heute, die

ihr Leid mit ihrer Kunst beschwichtigen. Auch vor der Schaubude des Jahrmarktes steht der Mensch im tiefsten Ernst seiner Existenz. Die erhaltene Antwort zeigt es an, wenn auch ihre tiefere Bedeutung noch nicht klar geworden ist.

[Buddeberg, pp.74-5]

In this interpretation, pain, which once wholly governed man, confers something on the sufferer to alleviate the pain: art. This art, or skill, becomes a plaything and thus reduces the consciousness of pain. This interpretation makes the four lines a pronouncement on the relationship of art and pain.

Im Spiel wird der Mensch mehr oder weniger frei von dem, was ihn quält; Spiel kann zur Kunst werden. Der Ursprung der Artistik wird in ferne Zeiten zurückverlegt; "einst", heisst es. Die Unsicherheit des Lebens der Fahrenden verbindet sich mit der Unbestimmtheit ihrer Herkunft und der Unerkennbarkeit eines Zieles zu dem dichten Bild der Geworfenheit in die Fragwürdigkeit menschlichen Schicksals. So vage die ganze Antwort auch bleiben mag, eines ist in ihr deutlich: Das Leid erscheint abgelöst von seinem Träger; der Leidende steht dem Leid gegenüber und tut etwas mit ihm. Dieses Tun ist ein Spiel; es ist mehr als Spiel, es will zur Kunst werden. Sie mag primitiv sein, aber sie strebt danach zu leisten, was Kunst immer wieder leistet: eine Überwindung des Leides, ein Hineinverwandeln des Leides in Gestalt.

[Same, p. 75]

The occupation of the acrobats is the basic process of art--that of using art to transform inner pain into outer form. Yet it implies an indirect criticism of the acrobat as separated from the earth. This interpretation of the artist is hardly consistent with the idea that the artist is close to nature, communes with things, and communes with Being before plying his magical art of transformation. The

problem is that there is something missing from the art of the acrobat. This missing element becomes clear in the last strophe and is hinted at earlier. The things that are missing from this art are: effort, intensity, and love. The true artist has these; the inauthentic artist lacks them. These three cardinal elements are missing from the art of the acrobats.

After this four-line intermezzo (lines 36-39), the poet resumes his characterization of the acrobats. Three of them have been described: the man, the old drummer and the young man who looks like the son of a rogue and a nun. Three others remain: a boy and a girl, and their mother. The poet turns to the boy:

40 Du, der mit dem Aufschlag,
 41 wie nur Früchte ihn kennen, unreif,
 42 täglich hundertmal abfällt vom Baum der gemeinsam
 43 erbauten Bewegung (der, rascher als Wasser, in wenig
 44 Minuten Lenz, Sommer und Herbst hat)--
 45 abfällt und anprallt ans Grab:

A hundred times daily the boy plunges, green and heavy like unripe fruit, toward the grave. Death for the unripe is always near. With the swiftness, mobility, and detachment of water he seems to pass through spring (rising), autumn (hovering), and winter (falling), in minutes. And it is this very unripeness which makes the risks of the heights a real experience instead of a mechanical routine. It is this very unripeness that makes him human, that is the purity carried over from youth, that is what shines in the

timid, half-ventured glance at his mother, and that bursts through the smile coming from within. This unripeness is humanness, purity, spontaneity, genuineness. The smile of this unripe boy is in the face of death and in the zest of a feat that is still an effort, not a mechanical routine. When the feat has become effortless, the spontaneity of the smile will vanish with it.

In a half-pause (there is no time in the rush of the routine for a whole pause) a tenderness momentarily breaks through:

46 manchmal, in halber Pause, will dir ein liebes
47 Antlitz entstehn hinüber zu deiner selten
48 zärtlichen Mutter; doch an deinen Körper verliert sich,
49 der es flächig verbraucht, das schüchtern
50 kaum versuchte Gesicht...

But he is interrupted by the clasp of a hand, the time to leap:

Und wieder
51 klatscht der Mann in die Hand zu dem Ansprung,
und eh dir
52 jemals ein Schmerz deutlicher wird in der Nähe
des immer
53 trabenden Herzens, kommt das Brennen der Fusssohlen
54 ihm, seinem Ursprung, zuvor mit ein paar dir
55 rasch in die Augen gejagten leiblichen Tränen.
56 Und dennoch, blindlings,
57 das Lächeln.....

Anticipation, pounding heart, soles tingling, the rush of tears, and then--blindly--the smile! Overcome, the poet turns and lyrically addresses the angel:

This address to the angel marks a significant point in the progress of the whole cycle of the ten Elegies. For the first time in the whole cycle, the angel is addressed with exuberance and joy. Here, at the midpoint of the cycle, the manifold negations and pessimism are briefly interrupted to suggest a healing herb. Admittedly, it is a "kleinblütiges Heilkraut," but significantly it does heal. Much that is negative about the acrobats is presented, but this smile is something positive, a healing agent. It is noteworthy that this smile does not come from the seasoned acrobat but from the heart of a child, from the purity of one to whom the feats had not yet become a mechanical routine. This is not

the "Scheinfrucht...glänzend mit dünnster Oberfläche leicht scheinlächelnden Unlust," but a spontaneous ("blindlings" implies spontaneity) expression of joy breaking through "leiblichen Tränen" and coming from the heart. Significantly, it is a healing herb because it comes from the heart.

Rilke employs a triple contrast in using the smile. One contrast is between the transience of the smile and the permanence of the inscription, another contrast is between the true and the inauthentic smile, and the larger contrast is between the joy of the smile and the manifest joylessness of the manner of existing which is limned in the Fourth and Fifth Elegies. This larger contrast is well stated by Else Buddeberg:

Wir hatten soeben in der vierten Elegie den Abgrund der völligen Verneinung durchschritten und uns schon einen langen Weg mit den Fahrenden in der Freudlosigkeit und Vergeblichkeit ihres Weges bewegt. Jetzt aber ist Heilung in Aussicht gestellt; das kleinblütige Heilkraut verspricht sie, sooft auch noch Rückschläge eintreten werden.

[Buddeberg, pp. 78-9]

Another way of stating this contrast is by noting that the Heil in the Heilkraut (the smile) stands over against all the great Unheiligkeit of what precedes it.

A technical and artistic problem presents itself to the poet in the need to find a strophe which can appropriately and adequately follow the mountain-top lyrical burst of enthusiasm with which the poet addresses the angel. A bitter denunciation could follow, but Rilke presents an

but there is no further description of the acrobats, nor any direct reference to them. For this reason it is logical that, for the sake of clarity, the existential criticism in the first 72 lines should be discussed before the remainder of the work is dealt with.

Existentialism and "les Saltimbanques." The Fifth Elegy again demonstrates Rilke's startling ability to focus in a poetic image the deficiencies of modern man's mode of being-in-the-world. In developing this image in the first 72 lines of the poem, Rilke presents in poetic form the same concerns about man's being-in-the-world which are presented conceptually in the trenchant criticisms of the leading existential philosophers. The deadening of routine, the emptiness of Können, the externality and emptiness and falseness of all we perform, the surrender in skill to a never-satisfied Will, our thrownness, our Bodenlosigkeit, the rush and activism that stifles spontaneity in mechanical routine--all these are common concerns of Existentialists and are expressed in the Fifth Elegy.

The Surrender to "Können." The essential theme of the first 72 lines may be regarded as the surrender to Können and the consequences of this surrender. The word "Können" does not have an adequate English equivalent, so the German word must be used in the interest of accuracy. The English word "skill" comes close; the word "facility,"

in a sense, or the "capacity to do something," also approach Können but are not adequate equivalents. Können is the ability to do, and implies that there is little difficulty in the doing. The acrobats possess this Können, this skill. They have had the skill from almost the dawn of their life's day, "von früh an." They are master technicians. Indeed, they seem to make their Können the very center of their lives, their livelihood, their manner of being. They are the very incarnation of Können

Rilke's concern is with the consequences of this Können for the acrobats as human beings. With the perfection of their skill, comes the end of striving--and, as Existentialists would say, the beginning of an inauthenticity of easy and effortless fulfillment. Just as in the First Elegy the poet found the foresaken and unfulfilled "so viel liebender...als die Gestillten," so here the poet finds fulfillment to be a roadblock to the attainment of one's self as a human being with a heart. The skill soon becomes a matter of routine, becomes joyless and mechanical.

Existentialists, constantly seeking a genuine and dependable reality and a mode of being-in-the-world which is "authentic," also are quick to note the deadening effect of routine and the inauthenticity of falling into a pattern and repeating it over and over again. Existentialists can see no end to striving, for man will always be estranged

from Being, will always be finite but with a certain degree of freedom. The acrobats, too, represent inauthenticity in other ways, as will be seen, and possess the publicity, the externality, the thrownness, and so forth of the mass man. The mass man, the slave of routine and the slave of his own limited skill at one task--these are seen by Existentialists as the models of inauthenticity, as examples of a manner of being-in-the-world which discourages rather than promotes the realization of one's human potentialities, one's authentic Existenz. It is this inauthentic manner of existing that permits man to be considered as an object, as a machine, as a cog in a more important wheel, rather than as a human being, the center of a world, the possessor of potentialities. Thus, the Dasein of the acrobat represents an incomplete, imperfect, inferior manner of being-in-the-world; it represents, in short, inauthenticity. This inauthenticity will be discussed under the heads of four major consequences of the surrender to Können: 1) Thrownness and determinedness; 2) Publicity and emptiness; 3) Bodenlosigkeit and abstraction; and 4) Unconsciousness and activism.

1) Thrownness and determinedness. Rilke presents the acrobats as the pawns of a "niemals zufriedener Wille" which "wringt sie,/biegt sie, schlingt sie und schwingt sie, /wirft sie und fängt sie zurück...." This force affects even "die stärksten/Männer, rollt sie wieder, zu Scherz,

der immer/kommende Griff, wie August der Starke bei Tisch/ einen zinnerenen Teller." Tools of a never-satisfied will, they give their impersonal performance. They seem to move more easily--as if the air had been oiled--than humanly natural (again the Unheiligkeit), but the underlying reason is that they are not fundamentally under their own power any more; they have surrendered to Können.

Existentially, this manner of being represents a surrender to man's essential "Geworfenheit," his thrownness. Man allows himself to be thrown by a never-satisfied will, rather than be a self-determining, self-propelled, human being. To be a human being requires effort; it involves bucking the stream, resisting the power of the pattern in deference to one's own potentialities, one's own self-realization. Part of the effortlessness and magical ease of the acrobats derives from the fact that they are not resisting the pattern for the sake of their own self-realization but on the contrary are moving with the flow of the stream, cooperating with this Geworfenheit, sacrificing themselves for the mere entertainment of others, submitting and moving with the "niemals zufriedener Wille." Instead of being inner-directed, they are other-directed; they are passive objects rather than active subjects. In Sartre's terminology, they have surrendered to the en-soi and denied the pour-soi; they have surrendered to the

longing to become a thing--something determined and moved completely from the outside. To lose one's essential self-mastery and control for the state of being "thrown" and externally determined--this is the first consequence of the surrender to Können.

Publicity and emptiness. The acrobats have given up their own wills. They have also given up their own happiness to the eternal, mechanical, joyless performance of feats for the entertainment of others. They have lost their inwardness of heart and depth of being; they are given up to "Oberfläche," "Offentlichkeit," "Scheinfrucht,"--superficiality, publicity (the state of being always in public), artificiality, falseness, and ultimately emptiness. In place of true joy, they have only the Freudlosigkeit of their Können. The young girl is by the deeper, more ravishing joys of life mutely eluded (von reizendsten Freuden/stumm Übersprungne.") The old man, his Können gone, is withered and wrinkled, ready for the grave. The acrobats' smile is a "Scheinlächeln," their performance "Scheinfrucht"--artificial, external, false. Their goal is external; to be observed and inspected like market-fruit, and applauded. They have no inwardness (except that from which the boy's smile originates, the purity and spontaneity of youth); inwardly they are empty. All they have is their publicity, their skill. Thus, the loss of inwardness and heart, the

condemnation to a life without the depth of genuine sorrow or true joy (rather a life dominated by Freudlosigkeit), the shallow existence in the realm of externality, artificiality, and falseness-these are consequences of the surrender to Können.

Heidegger, in his Sein und Zeit, presents the incarnation of inauthenticity in the figure of das Man. Das Man is the subject in such phrases as "man sagt," which we translate into English as "one says." This "one" is nobody in particular and everybody in general. Heidegger's das Man leads a life of shallow publicity, of conformity to the public pattern. He not only performs all the externalities, but is all the externalities, for he has no inner-directedness. He is the completely other-directed man, the man without identity or individuality, the man one would not notice in a crowd. He is man without a face, or rather his face reflects nothing from the inside, for there is nothing individual to reflect. He may be unlike the acrobat in that das Man has nothing which would attract attention to himself, but in most ways he is the counterpart of the acrobat. Like the acrobat, he is other-directed; like the acrobat, his life lacks the depth of either genuine joy or sorrow; like the acrobat, his life is public, external, artificial; like the acrobat, routine has deadened his inner being and instead of inwardness and heart there is

only emptiness, Freudlosigkeit, and futility.

Groundlessness and Abstraction. Rilke shows the Bodenlosigkeit of the acrobats in the stress he lays on the carpet, which he refers to as "diesem verlorenen/Teppich im Weltall." And the carpet is not laid on the ground, but appears to be laid like a patch on a wound in the earth. The very occupation of the acrobats is to defy gravity, to stay in motion and away from the earth. And their art, therefore, is not an expression of the message of things (as would be the mission of the artist in Rilke's view) but is an indirect expression of anguish and pain, a channeling of this pain into art, the functioning of which temporarily acts like play and distracts them from the pain. Their Können, then, is anguish-generated, and an expression of pain, not aesthetic pleasure. Their art represents a loss of contact with the earth, which to Rilke is a ground of man's being. This loss of contact with the earth is also a loss of contact with ultimate reality, with Being. It represents the failure of the inauthentic man in his mode of existence to live in nearness to Being.

In Existentialism, the criticism of modern man's mode of existence is that he no longer dwells in nearness to Being, but rather moves into an abstract world, a world not based on experiential reality. It is precisely the dissatisfaction with this abstract and groundless world

that spurs the Existentialist to search for the dynamics of man's being-in-the-world, to search for a genuine and dependable reality--a reality with experiential validity. Thus, the dissatisfaction with a groundless and abstract manner of being-in-the-world which obsesses the Existentialist is precisely the same dissatisfaction which motivates Rilke to present his highly critical depiction of the mode of being of the acrobats. And, of course, the mode of being of the acrobats is a symbol and extreme case of the manner of being-in-the-world of modern "mass man," the man deadened by routine, surrendered to the pattern, artificial and empty, abstracted and divorced from the earth, rushing and activistic, but ultimately without genuine consciousness.

4) Unconsciousness and Activism. Rilke shows the boy as having no time for tenderness, rushing, rising and falling with the slickness and rapidity of water. He passes through spring, autumn, winter--all in a few minutes. He comes near to death a hundred times daily. (Indeed, death is the dynamic that attracts the audience, for the risk is important.) Yet, ultimately, the art of the acrobats is a form of play designed to transform pain into form; that is, their art is a form of activism generated by pain. But it is the very activism which acts as a narcotic on the consciousness, deadening it; the rush and speed of the

routine leave scarcely even a half-pause for the boy to glance at his seldom tender mother. The bustle and rush leaves no time for consciousness in a larger sense, no time for the expression of innerness. Eventually the routine will deaden even the slight innerness the boy now has (due to his youth) and shape him in the pattern of his older fellow acrobats until he is like the old man, only capable of drumming, ready for the grave.

Even the genuine smile is the result of the newness, the risk, the effort--all these contributing to heightened consciousness. But as the newness wears off, as the risk is replaced by sureness and the effort by ease, the heightened consciousness is replaced by boredom, but the routine and mechanical performance, by reduced consciousness. Repetition of the feats, year in and year out, deadens and deteriorates the quality of the consciousness. The existential intensity of heightened consciousness is no longer a part of their being-in-the-world. On the contrary, they perform the mechanical feats and depend on the public applause, but fundamentally their manner of being has no innerness, no intensity, no heart. Its contact with the earth is defective; it does not commune with the outside, with things, with other beings. It is marked, in short, not by the heightened consciousness which characterizes authenticity, but by the deteriorization of consciousness,

A new and apparently unrelated theme now seems to enter the symphony of the Elegy: death or fate, in the form of the seamstress, Madame Lamort. Yet, on closer examination, this theme relates itself to what has gone before. The busy and industrious Madame Lamort is seen with her hands on the restless material paths of our individual lives, and she twists and winds them and clips them off for ribbons to decorate the articles she is sewing. The "schlingt und windet" of line 90, too, inevitably calls back the "schlingt sie und schwingt sie" of line 5, and thereby suggests that the "niemals zufriedener Wille" to which the acrobats have surrendered themselves and which "wringt sie,/ biegt sie, schlingt sie und schwingt sie,/ wirft sie und fängt sie zurück" is this busy Madame Lamort. And the "künstliche Früchte--, alle/ unwahr gefärbt" of lines 91-92 recall the false and artificial blooming of the

"Rose des Zuschauns," the "Scheinfrucht...der Unlust." And death has already been implied in line 45, where the young man a hundred times a day "abfällt und anprallt ans Grab...."

Professor Kreutz contends that the Dasein of the acrobats has so lost meaning that death is their only goal, and their lives are controlled by "die Macht, die hinter dem 'leeren Zuviel' des routinierten Könnens steht," [p. 87] the power that swings and slings and throws them, the power behind the empty too-muchness. Thus, Kreutz asserts,

Er [der Tod] ist das einzige Ziel diese flächigen Daseins, gleichsam seine Entelechie. Er treibt es zu seiner ruhelosen Geschäftigkeit von einer Nummer zur andern. Doch es ist nicht der grausige Tod, sondern Madame Lamort, die voll Charme diesem flüchtigen, gekonnten Dasein immer neue Reize zu geben weiss.

[Kreutz, p. 87]

Death is their "Entelechie," that is, the fulfillment of their purpose, the achievement of their essence. Death is the end and meaning of their existence. Poetically they become the artful fruit, all artificially colored, of the cheap winter hats of fate.

The existential conception of death as a form of nothingness or non-being sheds light on the significance that this strophe has for the whole Elegy. As has been noted earlier, nothingness can be relative (as contingency) or absolute (as death). On the spiritual plane it can be seen in the relative form of spiritual emptiness and in the absolute form of meaninglessness. It is death in the larger

sense of nothingness which underlies and permeates the Elegy. It is seen in the emptiness and meaninglessness of the mode of being of the acrobats and finally in the form of Madame Lamort. Rilke does not speak in the conceptual terms of nothingness and its relative and absolute forms, but perceives intuitively and poetically the relationship between death and the mode of existence of the acrobats. Instead of speaking in the philosophical terms of the relative forms of nothingness, he uses poetical terms--softens the characterization of death, makes her a seamstress who busily swings and slings the paths of our lives around like ribbons in her putting together of the hats and ribbon-bedecked dresses of Fate. Thus it is forms of non-being (which in existential thought are always prominent in inauthenticity) which the Elegy shows making inroads on the Dasein of the acrobats. And the Dasein of the acrobats is our own Dasein, writ large.

Although line 94 clearly marks the first ending of the Elegy, Rilke does not choose to close here, but adds what might be called a "vision," or an "epilogue in Heaven." This coda (like the other closing strophe) also sums up and incloses all of the Elegy, but from another point of view. It presents a contrast to the essential mode of existing of the acrobats. Thus, the tour of "places" which began with the "Ort des Unvergnügens" and jumped to the "Ort des

95 Engel!: Es Wäre ein Platz, den wir nicht wissen,
und dorten,
96 auf unsäglichem Teppich, zeigten die Liebenden,
die's hier
97 bis zum Können nie bringen, ihre kühnen
98 hohen Figuren des Herzschwungs,
99 ihre Türme aus Luste, ihre
100 längst; wo Boden nie war, nur an einander
101 lehrenden Leitern, bebend,--und könntens,
102 vor den Zuschauern rings, unzähligen lautlosen Toten:
103 Würfen die dann ihre letzten, immer ersparten,
104 immer verborgenen, die wir nicht kennen, ewig
105 gültigen Münzen des Glücks vor das endlich
106 wahrhaft lächelnde Paar auf gestilltem
107 Teppich?

Like the first ending, this strophe seems to sum up the whole Elegy, and even to reply to it. The three "places" in the existence of the acrobats are now contrasted with a fourth place, "den wir nicht wissen."

This fourth place is almost a parody (in reverse) on the acrobats, for the essential elements of the description of the acrobats are retained, but transformed--by love. The carpet is still there, the subject is still Können, and the audience is still there to toss coins of approval. But the Können is that of "die Liebenden, die's hier/ bis zum Können nie bringen...." Thus, the contrast is between the "Können" of acrobats which is "Getriebensein," mechanical repetition, superficiality, and "leere Zuviel" and the "Können" of the "Liebenden," which is free, ever towering upward, and genuine. The "Können" of the acrobats represses

tenderness and is primarily generated by pain; the Können of the lovers creates "hohen Figuren des Herzschrungs" and their performance is for themselves not dull and painful but exciting and full of towers of pleasure, "Türme aus Lust," where their ladders, leaning only on each other tremble with excitement. And the sterile blooming and "scheinlächelnde Unlust" of the "Rose des Zuschauers" of lines 18-25 is contrasted with this exciting, fertile, pleasurable performance. The spectators of the nameless public in lines 18-25 who ring about the performance like the petals of the Rose have now become the "unzähligen lautlosen Toten." These cannot be impressed by superficiality because they have put off all the superficialities of life in death, but even this difficult audience--if the performers really could transmute this pleasure into the form of their performance--would be completely overcome, would fling their last, ever saved-up, ever carefully hidden, eternally genuine coins of Joy onto the carpet of this "wahrhaft lächelnde Paar."

Love is eternal; love transmuted into form is eternally genuine; love never is over-sated. One seems to hear behind the lines, "Whether there be prophecy, it shall fail" Prophecy, knowledge, empty skill--these will fail; love endures forever. Love goes to the very center of Being. Love is experientially real and genuine. The intensity of

love is nearness to Being.

Among the most significant aspects of the Elegy is the prominence given to death in the first ending and the prominence given to love in the second ending. In existential terms, the first ending shows nearness to non-Being and the second, nearness to Being; or, in other words, there is the contrast between inauthenticity and authenticity. In Rilke's terms it is the contrast between empty "Können" and echtes "Können," that is, "das Können der Fahrenden" and "das Können der Liebenden." But in any case, this contrast between love and death, authenticity and inauthenticity, Being and non-Being, or "das Können der Liebenden" and "das Können der Fahrenden," adds a new dimension to the Elegy.

By the addition of this contrast the meaning of the smile of the boy is further illuminated, the relationship to Being is made clearer, the function of form is related to love, time, and intensity, and the natures of authenticity and inauthenticity are put in bolder relief through the contrast with each other.

There are three smiles in the Elegy: the artificial smile of the dancer (lines 22-25), the spontaneous smile of the boy, and the smile of the "wahrhaft lächelnde Paar auf gestilltem/ Teppich." The false smile is that of the dancer to whom the performance is no longer expression but routine.

The smile does not show feeling, but is painted on, so to speak, for the benefit of others. For the false smiler, the performance of the routine no longer represents the overcoming of difficulty but the mere monotonous and effortless repetition of a function. The smile of the boy, however, does come from within. And the routine has not become completely mastered; it still poses difficulties and requires effort. The smile, then, is the true result of effort overcome and this effort is aimed at the production of form. This is the smile that comes, then, with creation of form, with the accomplishment of form. It is, in this respect, similar to the third smile, which is the product, too, of transmuting love into form. This is the ultimate and genuine smile. The smile of the boy was genuine (and human) and worthy of preservation by the angel, for it radiated the pleasure of the creation of form, but the form itself was in the realm of Madame Lamort and not in the realm of the undying. It was ultimately generated by anguish and pain rather than pleasure and love.

Most essential, perhaps, to the understanding of the Elegy is the relationship which form seems to have with time and intensity, as well as with the related concepts of death (related to time through finitude) and of love (related to intensity, consciousness, and contact with Being). The "Können" in both the authentic and inauthentic modes

is a "Können" to produce form. Form, in a sense, is a way of overcoming time. In the inauthentic mode, however, it does not overcome time, but becomes a falsely colored decoration (superficially artistic as it may be) for the cheap winter hats of Fate. Why is this? It is because the form lacks two things: intensity and love.

Intensity and love, too, tend to overcome time. In existential terms they tend to transcendence of time. The Können of the acrobats does not create a form that has transcendence, that can transcend--death. This is another reason why it is inauthentic Können; it does not relate itself to the infinite, or, in Heidegger's terms, to Being. Love and intensity, on the other hand, do dwell in nearness to Being. Love's intensity is a form of heightened consciousness (in contrast to the deadened consciousness of the acrobats) and represents a deepened being (not Oberfläche), a greater closeness to the ground of all being, das Sein.

Thus, intensity and love as transmuted into form represent not only that satisfaction which can be the ground of the true smile, nor only the closeness to Being that distinguishes authenticity, but also the requisites for transcendence of time through form--not the inauthentic form of the acrobats which is in the realm of death, but the authentic form which comes with effort, intensity, and love.

The short coda of the vision, then, sheds light not only over the content of the whole Elegy, but over Rilke's conceptions of inauthenticity, authenticity, death, time, love, intensity, consciousness, and form. The description of inauthenticity is, as has been demonstrated, thoroughly existential in emphasis and content. The description of authenticity is existential primarily in its emphasis on intensity and closeness to Being.

BAUDELAIRE

Introduction. Baudelaire may be considered one of the first "modern" poets. In an era of Darwinists, positivists, industrial planners, communists, universal religionists, and prophets of science, Baudelaire expressed his opposition to scientific progress, materialism, natural goodness, and social meliorism. His poetry, taken as a whole, is an expression of the spiritual and emotional frustration of modern man. There is a desperate search for reality in his poetry, and equally a sense of desolation, void, and spiritual emptiness. While Baudelaire was not a moralizer, his poems time and again serve as an indictment of a corrupt society, a society which in Baudelaire's view was as sterile, futile, and damned as Delphine and Hippolyte in his famous poem, "Femmes Damnées."

Because of this spiritual exasperation, this sense of the inauthenticity of the growing optimistic materialism of his day, because of his sense of a yawning abyss (nothingness) precisely when the very existence of evil was being denied, and finally because he was basically and profoundly an outsider in an alien world, Baudelaire has much in common with those who made similar protests in the twentieth century. When Baudelaire refers to "la vaporisation et ... la

centralisation du Moi. Tout est là...."¹ he is anticipating the existential concern with the loss of the self, and the desire of the Existentialists to make the self a "centered" self.² To Baudelaire, there seemed to be all around him--and within himself--evidences of the progressive "vaporisation" of the self. When Baudelaire speaks of spleen and ennui he is expressing his anguished consciousness of a spiritual emptiness which is echoed in T. S. Eliot's The Waste Land. And when Baudelaire presents the image of the swan beside a dry gutter bathing its wings in the dust, he is presenting more than a homage to Victor Hugo; he is presenting the spiritual plight of modern man.

The presence of certain elements in Baudelaire which resemble elements in Existentialism is a matter of unconscious anticipation, an evidence of Baudelaire's remarkable sensitivity to the same inadequacies in society which were to be more exhaustively criticized by the Existentialists. In a sense, Baudelaire bears the same historical relation-

¹Journaux intimes, Edition critique établie par Jacques Crepet et George Blin (Paris, 1949), p. 51.

²This concern in Existentialism reaches an admirable formulation in the part of Tillich's theology in which he defines faith as "a centered act of the whole personality." [See esp. Dynamics of Faith (New York, 1958).] This is the goal toward which the insights of the Existentialists have pointed--a self which is not divided and fragmented, but a unified fullness of consciousness, a centeredness which unites the whole personality.

ship to later literature as Kierkegaard does to later existential thought. The two men were similar in ~~their~~ condemnation of a corrupt society; both wrote diaries of seduction in which the actual seduction became secondary to erotic titillation; both carried the same passionate predilection for self-torture; both concealed a strange kind of religious orthodoxy; both were isolated and alone in alien and unappreciative societies; and, finally, both possessed that self-consciousness, that inhibiting and self-defeating lucidity which is at once the basis for their suffering and the source of the particular insight and genius of each.³

Baudelaire was, on the other hand, in many ways profoundly un-modern. Indeed, Sartre asserts that he was merely reactionary, that he accepted his values without question:

Or, pour celui qui examine d'un peu près la vie et les oeuvres du poète, ce qui frappe c'est qu'il a reçu d'autrui ses notions morales et qu'il ne les a jamais remises en question.⁴

³This lucidity is dealt with in Sartre's book on Baudelaire. [Immediately below] One might add that this lucidity, which consisted in a certain self-consciousness that always rose above the self and was watching the self, is the same sort of partitioning of the ego which was taken by romantic authors from the philosophy of Fichte and made into the concept of "romantic irony," in which the author rises above himself in the act of creating and makes jests about himself, even comments on his own depicted demise. In Existentialism, this idea serves as the basis for Sartre's reflective and pre-reflective cogitos. One might also observe that this "lucidity" is present in great satire and satirists, such as Byron, Sterne, Swift, Cervantes, and Rabelais.

⁴Baudelaire (Paris, 1947), p. 50.

Sartre's criticism, however, that Baudelaire chose to be miserable because he refused to renounce the moral values he had learned in his youth and to found a system of values of his own, is made from the vantage point of a time in which such a course would be appropriate. At bottom, Sartre regrets again and again that Baudelaire is not an Existentialist, a man who accepts his own freedom, creates his own values, founds his own world. The result of M. Sartre's disappointment that Baudelaire was in so many ways "inauthentic" is a book-length portrait that is penetrating and brilliantly sarcastic, but actually a caricature of the poet--a picture that is more like a character from one of Sartre's novels than the historical Baudelaire.

While it is true that Baudelaire is in many ways not a revolutionary but reactionary, it is significant that his acute and critical mind did not accept the morality of his time, nor uncritically accept the style and ideas of his literary contemporaries. Even Baudelaire's dandyism (which Sartre interprets as an effort to be different in a conventional and socially acceptable way rather than any revolutionary tendency) may be interpreted as an effort to resist the new middle class which issued from the Revolution, to protest against the rise of the masses and all that it signified. Baudelaire's conception of man was not bold and new, but represented a rejection of the prevailing romantic

idea of natural goodness and human perfectibility in favor of a conception of man as not naturally perfectible, as essentially a fallen creature, subject to the power of evil and passion. It was, in short, close to the classical conception of man and bears similarities to the views of Racine and Pascal.

Stylistically, too, his mastery of the alexandrine and his rejection of the vagueness of Musset align him with classicism. Paradoxically, however, Baudelaire's anti-romanticism and his spiritual return to the seventeenth century do not merely look backwards--they are anticipatory. They anticipate the reaction against romanticism in the twentieth century and the rise to popularity of the English metaphysical poets. Finally, one may remark that T. S. Eliot's famous "objective correlative" is essentially a translation and adaptation of Baudelaire's famous doctrine of "correspondences," a conception which was the foundation of French symbolism.

For the purposes of this dissertation, however, Baudelaire's importance lies in the fact that in a period of objectivity, abstraction, scientific optimism, and humanitarian programmes, his central theme was self-loss. He anticipated the sense of the loss of spiritual unity, the breakdown of fundamental relationships, the loss of reality, the boredom and emotional frustration, and finally

the basic emptiness and sterility, which have come to characterize modern man--and which have come to concern such poets as Rilke and Eliot, and such thinkers as Heidegger and Jaspers. In a time preoccupied with externalities, Baudelaire perceived that the real problem was one of sin and regeneration, that the real task is sincerity, on the level of personal experience. Les Fleurs du Mal is from beginning to end dominated by these concerns, by a vivid sense of sin and self-loss and by a terrible sincerity.

"LE CYGNE"

- 1 Andromaque, je pense à vous! Ce petit fleuve,
- 2 Pauvre et triste miroir où jadis resplendit
- 3 L'immense majesté de vos douleurs de veuve,
- 4 Ce Simois menteur qui par vos pleurs grandit,
- 5 A fécondé soudain ma mémoire fertile
- 6 Comme je traversais le nouveau Carrousel.

The first six lines show rather clearly that the poem is to be a creation of mémoire involontaire in much the same way as Proust's À la Recherche du Temps Perdu (especially in the vividness of the famous "petite Madeleine" episode). This technique is similar to that in "La Chevelure," where the odor of the thick, black hair of Jeanne Duval calls up vivid pictures.

This mémoire involontaire is actually intimately connected with Baudelaire's so-called "symbolism," for the operation of this mémoire furnishes the poet with an image that is an "objective correlative" of his inner state of soul--Andromaque. As he strolls across the new Carrousel, the changed surroundings make him feel like an exile, an outsider. Suddenly there flashes into his mind the image of noble Andromaque, Hector's widow, weeping beside a painted river that has no real substance. This image embodies and sums up his state of mind.

Andromaque, too, is using memoire involontaire, for she uses the painted river to call up memories of herself and Hector, no doubt, standing beside the true, the Trojan

Simois. This second level of the action of memory is later paralleled by the swan recalling the waters of his native lake. Still another level is added when the negress carries in her memory "Les cocotiers absents de la superbe Afrique." Thus, in all four of the major exile images of the poem, memory is an important factor, for all four are limned in the act of recalling. In each case, the eye is also fixed on some aspect of the present and that aspect is superimposed on a better past that is lost, that "ne se retrouve/ Jamais, jamais !" [lines 45-6]

For the poet, the bitter present is a Paris that has changed--alas, faster than a human heart--and this is seen against the past of a marketplace with piles of shafts and rough hewn cornices ("tas de chapiteaux ébauchés et de fûts"), of grass and huge stone blocks stained green in puddles of water ("les herbes, les gros blocs verdis par l'eau des flaques"). The cornices showed the personal touch of human hands, the grass, the water, showed the naturalness of the presence of nature, its water, its grass. But the old Paris is no more:

7 Le vieux Paris n'est plus (la forme d'une ville
8 Change plus vite, hélas! que le coeur d'un mortel);
9 Je ne vois qu'en esprit tout ce camp de baraques,
10 Ces tas de chapiteaux ébauchés et de fûts,
11 Les herbes, les gros blocs verdis par l'eau des flaques,
12 Et, brillant aux carreaux, le bric-à-brac confus.

This was the Paris before the "palais neufs, échafaudages,

blocs," new palaces, scaffolding, blocks of stone.

But even in old Paris, Baudelaire perceives the image of an exile, the swan. He recalls when a menagerie was there in the marketplace and a swan got loose:

- 13 Là s'étalait jadis une ménagerie;
- 14 Là je vis, un matin, à l'heure où sous les cieux
- 15 Froids et clairs le Travail s'éveille, où la voirie
- 16 Pousse un sombre ouragan dans l'air silencieux,
- 17 Un cygne qui s'était évadé de sa cage,
- 18 Et, de ses pieds palmés frottant le pavé sec,
- 19 Sur le sol raboteux traînait son blanc plumage.
- 20 Près d'un ruisseau sans eau la bête ouvrant le bec
- 21 Baignait nerveusement ses ailes dans la poudre,
- 22 Et disait, le coeur plein de son beau lac natal:
- 23 "Eau, quand donc pleuvras-tu? quand tonneras-tu, foudre?"
- 24 Je vois ce malheureux, mythe étrange et fatal,
- 25 Vers le ciel quelquefois, comme l'homme d'Ovide,
- 26 Vers le ciel ironique et cruellement bleu,
- 27 Sur son cou convulsif tendant sa tête avide,
- 28 Comme s'il adressait des reproches à Dieu!

One morning, about the time the sombre hubbub of street-cleaners generally breaks the silence, Baudelaire (evidently up early) came upon a swan padding down the dry pavement with "ses pieds palmés" striking the pavement and his white plumage dragging pathetically over the uneven (raboteux) ground. Beside a dry gutter the bird opened his beak, bathed his wings nervously in the dust, and cried--his heart full of his native lake--"Rain, when wilt thou fall? Thunder, when wilt thou roll?" That unhappy creature, his avid head distended on a convulsive neck and pathetically impeaching "le ciel ironique et cruellement bleu," seemed al-

most to be reproaching God for the absence of the living waters of his native lake.

Andromaque is a symbol of the unchanging sense of exile which remains in the human heart in spite of the changes that may take place in the various forms of exile. The essential outlines and character of the exile as such are present in Andromaque--the anguish, the pathetic use of a false present, "Ce Simois menteur," to call up memories of that which is lost forever. Her majesty and restraint mark her as a symbol of the classical exile.

The swan, on the other hand, points distinctly to the modern exile. There is little majesty and restraint in the swan, as the webbed feet pad the dry pavement, as the once-splendid plumage drags the ground, as the cruel oppressor is mirrored in the ironic and cruelly blue sky, and as the bird bathes nervously in the dust, stretching "son cou convulsif" in reproach. The unrest of the modern exile is felt in the words associated with the swan--"nerveusement," "convulsif," "malheureux." Significantly, the swan is escaped from his cage--only to discover himself still displaced, still in an alien world. One can, if one wishes, interpret the cage from which the poet escaped as the cage of aristocratic patronage, while the "ruisseau sans eau," the dry gutter, may be taken as the symbol of what spiritual nourishment this modern civilization (symbolized by the

changed Paris) offers those who walk its streets.

As the poet continues his stroll, the new Paris that is going up "pour moi devient allégorie." The old Paris is no more, just as the lake is no more for the swan, Hector and the Trojan Simois are no more for the "veuve d'Hector," and the coco-palms of splendid Africa are no more for the Negress.

29 Paris change! mais rien dans ma mélancholie
 30 N'a bougé! palais neufs, échafaudages, blocs,
 31 Vieux faubourgs, tout pour moi devient allégorie,
 32 Et mes chers souvenirs sont plus lourds que des rocs.

Professor Martin Turnell considers that lines 29-30, "Paris change! mais rien dans ma mélancholie/ N'a bougé!" is taking up the same thought as lines 7-8, "la forme d'une ville/ Change plus vite, hélas! que le coeur d'un mortel." The crucial point is whether the reference to the human heart in lines 7-8 is to be taken as meaning that the human heart changes quickly or slowly. Initially, the meaning would seem to be that the human heart changes quickly, alas, but the form of a city seems to change even more quickly--that is, before one realizes it. On the other hand, Turnell asserts that "'Le coeur d'un mortel' ... stands for something permanent, for something that belongs to the human condition; 'la forme d'une ville' stands for the impermanent, the transitory."⁵ The human heart changes but slowly; but, alas, a

⁵Baudelaire: A Study of his Poetry (Norfolk, Conn., 1954), p. 182.

city does not change so slowly. With the slowly changing heart interpretation, one can parallel the change from the more majestic classical symbol of exile to the nervous modern symbol with the change of Paris from the majestic or at least genuine "Vieux faubourgs," to the slabs of stone, the new "palaces," the artificial and tacked-on scaffolding, of the new Paris.

With this interpretation, one may see a triple contrast: the unchanging core--as represented by the human heart--compared to the external changes in form--the form of a city; the restrained, archetypal exile--as represented by the classical Andromaque beside the false Simois--compared to the modern form of exile--as represented by the swan "près d'un ruisseau sans eau"; and finally the contrast between old Paris and this new Paris in which the scaffolding and slabs of stone in the midst of the old quarters of the city only reveal too clearly the confusion, irony, and cruel indifference of the modern city--the same irony and cruelty of "le ciel ironique et cruellement bleu" to which the swan turns his avid head on his convulsive neck.

Further, because of the contrast of the changing city and the unchanging heart of lines 7-8, the poet can assert that Paris is changing, but nothing in his melancholy has stirred, that his memories are heavier and more permanent than rocks. The fact that Baudelaire chooses rocks to sym-

bolize his memories carries the connotation of their figurative and physical heaviness as well as their permanence-- a good example of "correspondence." Turnell does not note the connotation of the heaviness of the rocks, but does observe that the rocks are "another symbol of sterility and frustration." [Same]

In the succeeding lines, Baudelaire makes explicit the "allégorie" of the relationship of old and new Paris to Andromaque and the swan. The poet pauses before the Louvre:

33 Aussi devant ce Louvre une image m'opprime:
34 Je pense à mon grand cygne, avec ses gestes fous
35 Comme les exilés, ridicule et sublime,
36 Et rongé d'un désir sans trêve! et puis à vous,

37 Andromaque, des bras d'un grand époux tombée,
38 Vil bétail, sous la main du superbe Pyrrhus,
39 Auprès d'un tombeau vide en extase courbée;
40 Veuve d'Hector, hélas! et femme d'Hélénus!

The poet thinks this time of the swan first, with its frayed nerves and crazy motions, fallen from sublimity to ridiculousness, "rongé d'un désir sans trêve" for the cool waters of his native lake which do not flow in this dry gutter. Then he thinks of exiles in general, creatures made ridiculous like the swan yet retaining a certain essential nobility that cannot be lost, creatures gnawed by a truceless desire for what has been lost. The pathos of the situation, then, lies in this fall from a once noble and sublime state to the humiliation and ridiculousness of exile. And this pathos seems to burgeon as the poet turns to

Andromaque, fallen from the blissful embraces of noble Hector to be the slave, the chattel, the beast of amusement for a proud conqueror. All this is behind the superb and wistful line, "Veuve d'Hector, hélas! et femme d'Hélénus!"

Then the poet turns to the last full-dress portrait of an exile: the Negress, trudging the streets of Paris, her mind's eye fixed on the native splendor and appropriateness of the coco palms of her native Africa.

41 Je pense à la négresse, amaigrie et phthisique,
42 Piétinant dans la boue, et cherchant, l'oeil hagard
43 Les cocotiers absents de la superbe Afrique
44 Derrière la muraille immense du brouillard;

The Negress was tall, noble, healthy, in her natural habitat. But transported and transplanted to Paris, she is wasted away (amaigrie) and diseased ("phthisique," consumptive), no longer noble but rather pathetic as she trudges the muddy street. She is a tropical plant that does not thrive in the sterile and frustrating environment of the city of Paris. She is also the only image in the poem of a human being on the streets of Paris--except the meager-looking orphans drying up like picked flowers. The Negress and the orphans anticipate the withered old men and women presented in some of the other poems in this, the "Tableaux Parisiens" section of Les Fleurs du Mal. Earlier in the poem, the coldness and superficiality, the heartless indifference, of the modern city were symbolized. The images of

the Negress and the orphans show the effect of the city on human beings.

In the modern city, with its building programs in progress, in the process of erecting "new" palaces, in the constant concern with externalities, in the hardness and indifference of the new blocks of stone, one senses a "lack" of something. Because of this "lack" the human beings who live in this deficient world become withered and die. Physically, both the Negress and the orphans are withered and meager. In the case of the swan and Andromaque, the absence of water, the sense of dryness and thirst describe this lack. One senses the dryness of the modern city (contrasted with the grassiness and water of the old Paris) in the picture of new Paris. Indeed, one senses a lack of water, of life-giving water, in all four of these major images--Andromaque, the swan, changed Paris, and the Negress. In all four cases, the water is the life-giving waters of spiritual nourishment.

The poem concludes with several other images of exiles, for the poet now seems to think of "whoever has lost that which is never found":

45 A quiconque a perdu ce qui ne se retrouve
 46 Jamais, jamais! à ceux qui s'abreuvent de pleurs
 47 Et tettent la Douleur comme une bonne louve!
 48 Aux maigres orphelins séchant comme des fleurs!
 49 Ainsi dans la forêt où mon esprit s'exile
 50 Un vieux Souvenir sonne à plein souffle du cor!
 51 Je pense aux matelots oubliés dans une île,
 52 Aux captifs, aux vaincus! ...à bien d'autres encor!

In the case of these final images, one senses the vivid feeling of separation and denial built up in the earlier images of Andromaque, the swan, and the Negress now applied to the "orphelins séchant comme des fleurs," the sailors forgotten on an island, the captives who long for home, the snuffed out hopes of the vanquished, and "à bien d'autres encor !"

The dynamics of the conclusion of the poem deserve some comment, as the final line does not end on a restful cadence, but rather one feels a mounting intensity as the images pile up more and more quickly and reach their peak of feeling in the "autres" of the final phrase of the poem. Even the final word, "encor," acts as a repetition of "autres" at the same intensity. Thus, the poem seems to crescendo from the sound of a solitary hunting horn in the forest of memory to a whole chorus of horns in the intensity of the final line:

Aux captifs, aux vaincus! ...à bien d'autres encor !

Existentialism in "Le Cygne." This discussion of Existentialism in the poem will fall into two major sections: A general discussion of the image of inauthentic man in an inauthentic world, and a more specific discussion of the personal fallenness of modern man as presented in the poem and as it relates to existential views on this subject.

Inauthentic Man, Inauthentic World. "Le Cygne" presents a vivid picture of the inner Dürftigkeit of the swan, but more than this it suggests a certain lack in the world itself. Not only is the being-in-the-world of the swan inauthentic; the world itself is inauthentic.

The swan is a symbol for man, and his significance as a symbol is not as a swan, per se, but as a swan in a particular stance and in a particular situation. The significance of the swan, in other words, lies in his manner of being-in-the-world. It lies in his being an exile, in his fallen grandeur, in his pathetic nervous bathing of his plumage in the dryness that has replaced his "beau lac natal," in his convulsive neck, in his avid head limned against "le ciel ironique et cruellement bleu." It is significant, too, that his escape from a cage (paralleling man's escape from certain restrictions) turns out to be no true escape; and it is significant that, with his heart full of the memory of his native lake, the swan senses the ironic and cruel discrepancy between the plenitude of water of his native lake and the present lack of water--and addresses the cruel heavens with his "'Eau, quand donc pleuvras-tu? quand tonneras-tu, foudre?'"

The Dürftigkeit of the modern world as a home for human beings is evident in the inanimacy and dryness of the rocks of which man constructs his modern cities. The swan escapes from surroundings which were primarily animate

and natural to an inanimate and unnatural world of stone streets and stone buildings. The deserted time of day also tends to strengthen the impression of the lifelessness of the street and buildings. The swan is, then, an animate creature strayed into an inanimate world which cannot supply or even understand his needs. Indeed, water is unwelcome in this world. The stone is not the damp stone which is found among the grass or damp soil, but a dry stone, baldly facing the sun, surrounded only by other stones. Even the occasional rain is quickly ushered away by the gutters, unused by the sterile rocks.

Animacy is a basic concern of Sartre, who considers the polarity between the animate and inanimate to be the basic polarity of man's consciousness. Either man strives for higher and intenser consciousness (animacy) or he strives for the state of a lifeless thing, a solid object which is manipulated and controlled from the outside. The authentic man, who senses his lostness and lack and who is trying to transcend it, is constantly surrounded by a world of men who feel no lostness and no lack, who only wish to remain in or approach the state of a thing. In other words, the animate being in an inanimate world (a world of inanimate human beings) is the essential "situation" of the authentic man. The swan, then, is an apt symbol of the spiritual aloneness, lostness, anxiety, restlessness, longing, and

inner Dürftigkeit of modern man in an alien world.

New Paris essentially represents an externalization of the inner inanimacy and spiritual dryness of the majority of the men living in this modern world. If men were inwardly vital, their creations would reflect it; but modern man is inwardly inauthentic and sterile, and this sterility is represented by the dryness and stoniness of the confused and unbroken expanse of stone, this interminable waste land of pavement and blocks of buildings that are new Paris.

This stone waste land may also be taken to symbolize the modern tendency toward abstraction--a favorite theme for existential criticism. Abstraction always involves distancing and separation from the concrete referents, and therefore a consequent loss of existential reality, of vitality, of life. (This distancing and separation is also present in exile as such.) When these abstractions have abstracted the essence and excluded the particularities which belong to life they have also excluded the vitality belonging to life and become empty generalizations. They may be co-ordinated into a high-flown system, but the system will not correspond to life. In much the same way, stones are "distanced" from animacy, are indeed empty of life and (like many modern systems) are co-ordinate, juxtaposed, and plastered together to comprise the modern city. And just as man finds that abstractions are ultimately distant, impersonal, lifeless, and empty, so also

is the modern city. The modern city is abstract, turns out to lack something, to be unfit for human life in its native fullness and abundance.

Professor Joseph D. Bennett succinctly presents the idea of the swan in this waste land of stone and correctly grasps the significance of the inanimacy and abstraction of his world. He identifies this swan's need for life-giving rain with a similar need in T. S. Eliot's The Waste Land:

We realize that the swan is the emblem of man alone among the abstractions and inanimate objects to which his fellows have given their devotion. Preoccupied with the arrangement of their physical cosmos, they are dead in life, inanimates caught in a rigorous chain of cause and effect which determines them to erect their graceless polythitic structures. Represented as a swan, the man who seeks life finds no water in their desert. Life must come in the form of rain and thunder, bringing with it the wisdom of the fruitful expense of the self. Baudelaire's swan presents the same theme developed by T. S. Eliot's Death by Water motif and presented in "What the Thunder Said."⁶

But in Baudelaire the rain does not come, nor the thunder sound. There is no positive message of "give, sympathize, and control." There is no wisdom of the fruitful expense of the self. There is only the pathetic symbol, the poignancy of a swan lost in a stone world, bathing in dust, suing the cruel heavens for rain.

Characteristics of the Fallenness of Modern Man. The following characteristics will be discussed in connection with the fallenness of modern man: 1) the humiliation and

⁶Baudelaire: A Criticism (Princeton, 1946), pp. 103-4.

bestialization of the human being, 2) isolation and aloneness, 3) anxiety, 4) sterility and falseness, and 5) the sense of separation and loss.

1) The humiliation and bestialization of man. The humiliation and bestialization of man is most vividly felt in the lines,

37 Andromaque, des bras d'un grand époux tombée,
38 Vil bétail, sous la main du superbe Pyrrhus....

Andromaque has fallen to the state of being little better than a domesticated animal, a spectacle for public gaze, an animal in a cage. The swan, too, is humiliated to the state of being a caged animal, deprived of its birthright of a compatible habitat.

Existentialists have been among the modern protesters against the bestialization of man, the reduction of man to a certain horsepower, his humiliation to the role of being only a part of a large machine. This, they assert, has brought a gradual reduction of the respect and value placed on human life and individual human beings. Man has become little better than a beast. An animal is a thing of value if it can do work, become food, or if it is exotic enough to amuse others. Its value is external and pragmatic; it operates in a world of physical rather than spiritual values, and its life revolves around largely physical matters. On the other hand, Existentialists assert that man is unique and himself the source of values. He is not determined by

by pleasure values or a valuation on this or that aspect of life; he gives the valuations. While Baudelaire would never be so bold and positive as to make man self-determining in the existential sense (to the everlasting chagrin of Sartre), he and the Existentialists would both join in the negative protest against man becoming a beast, a "slave of a slave," as Baudelaire puts it in "Le Voyage." (The meaning of the "slave" to which man is a slave is animal pleasure; thus, the protest against the reduction of man to being a "slave of a slave" is a protest against reducing man to his instincts, that is, to animality.) Baudelaire and the Existentialists, then, join in protesting the bestialization of modern man.

2) Aloneness and isolation. The swan is the only animate thing in an inanimate waste land of stone pavement and buildings. Purposely Baudelaire depicted the street as empty and deserted in order to show the aloneness of the swan. This aloneness has been described earlier as the isolation of the authentically restless man in an inauthentic and sterile world. This, then, is existential aloneness, and it has the accompanying characteristics of existential loneliness--the restlessness, the anxiety, the mental image of a better state, the falseness and spiritual barrenness of the surrounding world.

3) Anxiety. Anxiety, nervousness, restlessness-- these characterize the swan. They do not characterize Andromaque; she is not nervous in the modern sense, nor victimized by the spiritual anxiety and Dürftigkeit of the swan. Here, again, the frayed nerves and the anxiety mark the swan as a symbol of modern man. The picture is essentially an anticipation of the same characterization in the criticisms of existential thinkers.

4) Sterility and falseness. The world of stone that is new Paris symbolizes sterility and falseness. The inanimacy of the stone represents the inner inanimacy of the human beings who are erecting them. The stone city shows the modern depersonalization of man so protested against by Existentialists, and it shows the lack of innerness and inner genuineness and vitality which invariably accompany this depersonalization. The life-giving rain that falls here falls on sterile rocks and is not absorbed, but quickly slides away over the surface of the rocks leaving them as dry as before. Thus, the stone buildings suggest the sterility and falseness, the impersonalness and frustration, the inner emptiness and inanimacy of both modern man and the world he has created out of himself.

5) Separation and loss. In the major images of the poet one cannot escape a vivid sense of separation and loss. The important question is: What has been lost? Professor

Bennett rightly calls what has been lost a "birthright" that is bartered away in the emptiness and materialism of the modern city:

The ecstasy of heroic gesture--ecstasy even beside the tomb--the refreshing beauty of the living bird, and the fleshly rhythm of untamed continents are sold in the city.... The victim asks for bread and the city hands him a stone. Now the swan and the negress chew on stone and are crazed by the juice of stone, as stricken mariners are crazed by drinking salt water. The negress has bartered and lost forever the suppleness of her savage body; the swan wallows in filth; Andromache, widow of Hector, is the slave and concubine of a proud conqueror. [Bennett, p. 105]

And even the fourth major image has suffered a loss, for Paris has lost its humanness to become stony and impersonal.

Essentially, then, the loss is a spiritual loss.

Heroism, beauty, nobility, humanness--these are the things on which the human spirit is nourished, they are the living waters of the spirit. In all four cases, the loss is a loss of nourishment, especially the refreshment of water. With the loss of nourishment, comes the physical loss of animation (animus, spirit), the loss of life. This is illustrated by the inanimacy of the stone of the city, the nervousness, avidness, and convulsiveness of the swan, and in the meagerness and consumptive unhealthiness of the Negress. The loss of inner vitality is shown as a loss of physical vitality.

In existential terms the loss of vitality is described as the loss of the potential self. This loss of self is entirely distinct from the loss of the body, in the sense that

it can occur prior to it. The sense of separation, too, is essentially a separation from the self, conceived as the potential self. Although the separation is made physical in the poem and symbolized by the native lake of the swan, the coco-palms of the Negress, and the true Simois and tomb of Hector in the mind of Andromaque, the separation is still ultimately from the potential self, for it is in these settings that the self could be realized. Exiled and separated from these settings, one can only suffer a lack of nourishment and a loss of self.

In Heidegger's thought, this concept of nearness and separation is in terms of nearness to Being. He who dwells in nearness to Being realizes himself, but he who does not is in inauthenticity and Verfallen (decline). Inauthenticity is consequently both a loss of self and an estrangement from Being. Inauthentic modern man is estranged from Being and characterized by an inner Dürftigkeit. Thus, the loss of self involved in exile and the separation from home may be considered analogous to the existential loss of self and the idea of separation from Being.

Summary. In conclusion, one may say that the poem anticipates aspects of Existentialism in the following respects: That the swan is an existential symbol of the aloneness, anxiety, and spiritual Dürftigkeit of man in the modern world; that man is conceived as essentially fallen from a

better state, and that man now dwells in separation from himself as a true and authentic expression of his potential nobility; that the image of new Paris superimposed on the image of old Paris suggests that man creates his world, whether authentic or inauthentic; that the preoccupation with the rearrangement of man's physical cosmos reflects a concern with externalities, and the graceless polyolithic world man has created shows that the reorganization of his inner cosmos is truly what deserves attention and concern; that the stone world emphasizes the inanimacy and spiritual dryness and deadness of the modern world which surrounds man; that modern man is nervous, anxious, degenerating--is, in short, in a state of decline; and that, finally and above all, modern man is exiled from something, is separated from something, has lost something, that now he is as pathetic and ridiculous as a strayed swan in a stone world eyeing the heavens for signs of life-giving rain, as spiritually withered and consumptive as the Negress is physically as she trudges the muddy streets of Paris, and as artificial, indifferent, and sterile as the slabs of stone making up the new Paris.

Man, then, is lost and separated from something and anxiously feels this lack. To say that what is lost is nourishment, the spiritual nourishment of life-giving water, is to say that what is being lost is the self. For nourish-

ment has no meaning without the self, is in reality a translation of that something which enables the self to become what it can potentially be. The theme of loss and separation in the poem, then, is ultimately existential loss and separation, and the symbol of the swan in a world of stone is ultimately an existential symbol.

LE GOÛT DU NÉANT

Morne esprit, autrefois amoureux de la lutte,
 L'Espoir, dont l'éperon attisait ton ardeur
 Ne veut plus t'enfourcher! Couche-toi sans pudeur,
 Vieux cheval dont le pied à chaque obstacle butte.

Résigne-toi, mon coeur; dors ton sommeil de brute.

Esprit vaincu, fourbu! Pour toi, vieux maraudeur,
 L'amour n'a plus de goût, non plus que la dispute;
 Adieu donc, chants du cuivre et soupirs de la flûte!
 Plaisirs, ne tentez plus un coeur sombre et boudeur!

Le Printemps adorable a perdu son odeur!

Et le Temps m'engloutit minute par minute,
 Comme la neige immense un corps pris de roideur;
 Je contemple d'en haut le globe en sa rondeur,
 Et je n'y cherche plus l'abri d'une cahute!

Avalanche, veux-tu m'emporter dans ta chute?

TASTE FOR NOTHINGNESS

Gloomy spirit, formerly enamoured of struggle,
 Hope, whose spur used to stir your ardor,
 No longer wants to sit astride you! Lie down without shame,
 Old horse whose foot stumbles on every obstacle.

Heart, be resigned; sleep the sleep of the brute.

Conquered, foundered spirit! For you old marauder,
 No longer does love have savor, no more than disputation;
 Adieu then, songs of brass and sighs of the flute!
 Pleasures, tempt no longer a somber sullen heart!

The lovable springtime has lost its odor!

And Time swallows me minute by minute,
 As the immense snow swallows a body frozen stiff;
 I contemplate from above the globe in its roundness,
 And look no longer for the shelter of a hovel!

Avalanche, will you sweep me away in your downfall?

[Trans. in Bennett, p. 138]

LE GOÛT DU NÉANT

"Le Néant" is an important word in Existentialism, and a poem by Baudelaire entitled "Le Goût du Néant" must necessarily appear to be an obvious example of an anticipation of Existentialism. In a sense it is, for in existential thought a conscious encounter with nothingness is a basic and prerequisite experience of the authentically existing being. One might almost call the encounter with nothingness a "sine qua non" of Existentialism.

But in an important sense, the poem is a clear example of pre-existential decadence and points in the opposite direction from modern Existentialism. The difference is that the poem points essentially toward nothingness, while modern Existentialism points essentially from nothingness to transcendence, or perhaps through nothingness to transcendence. In this poem, as in "Le Cygne" and "Le Voyage," the absence of transcendence or of any program or effort toward transcendence is a crucial difference from the emphasis on transcendence in Existentialism. Baudelaire's vivid sense of the sterility, inauthenticity, and nothingness around him mark him as a precursor of Existentialism, but the absence of transcendence differentiates his thought sharply from that of later Existentialists.

In Norberto Bobbio's delightful little book, The Philosophy of Decadentism: A Study in Existentialism [cited

in chapter I], Existentialism is considered as a last dismal gasp of decadence, a philosophy which takes nothingness as its center, a philosophy which finds its literary expression in the novels and plays of Sartre. Indeed, in an appendix to his book, Bobbio deals devastatingly with Sartre as the perfect and illustrative example of the decadent intellectual. Sartre, he asserts, is the perfect illustration of the weaknesses of Existentialism. If man is a fallen creature, full of weaknesses, sin, and despair, the attitude of a decadent philosophy, Bobbio says, is not to oppose this weakness and despair, but to revel in it, to study it, to become fascinated with sin, nothingness, despair. Sartre is the very incarnation of the decadent intellectual because he is fascinated with nothingness, revels in it, and then spins out his decadent, nihilistic philosophy. Unfortunately, Bobbio's brilliant criticisms of Existentialism often miss the point, because of his major concern with the social, ethical, and political implications and inadequacies of Existentialism, and because of his overemphasis upon and misunderstanding of the role of nothingness.

Signor Bobbio's conception of Existentialism as a philosophy of decadentism has been mentioned here because "Le Goût du Néant" may be considered as an illustration of Bobbio's version of Existentialism--but not the version of Existentialism presented by this dissertation.

"Le Goût du Néant" is a poem about ennui, the most "immonde" animal in the infamous menagerie of our vices, as the "Au Lecteur" puts it. It represents a longing not for transcendence of nothingness, but for the unconsciousness and extinction in nothingness. The poem points not in the direction of the authentic realization of the self in higher consciousness and actualization of potentialities, but in the direction of inauthenticity, the desire for annihilation, death. This is the opposite of a fearful, anxious, intense being-toward-death; this is the passive acceptance of, and longing for, extinction.

There is a distinction between despair and ennui. Hope and despair are related in that both involve a vision of what has been lost. Hope bestrides us, as the poem pictures it, spurs us on with a vision of peace, salvation, realization. Despair is excruciating; it, too, taunts and torments us with a vision of what has been lost, makes us miserable. But absolute ennui has no vision and no hope, for "L'Espoir, dont l'éperon attisait ton ardeur,/ Ne veut plus t'enfourcher !" Hope will not mount us, will not spur us on, and the unstraddled horse stumbles on every obstacle.

Ennui, on the other hand, is the state in which nothingness has become absolute. There is no dread; there is only weariness, the weariness of desirelessness. In this negative Nirvana, the victim can say, "I do not desire good

nor evil, pleasure nor pain, life nor death." With infinite lassitude, the victim observes, "How absurd! I am lost!" Life has become pointless, leaden, blank, and tasteless. One feels the weariness of an old, worn-out horse who stumbles on every obstacle, falls, and finally just remains on the ground: "Couche-toi sans pudeur," says the poet, "Lie down without shame,/ Old horse who stumbles on every rut." The poet feels the weariness and torpor of the brute animal who knows nothing of sin and salvation, good and evil; the animal knows only the infinite weariness of creeping age and sleeps the calm sleep of blissful ignorance. It is precisely this sleep that the poet longs for, that marks the line:

Résigne-toi, mon coeur; dors ton sommeil de brute.

The first quatrain describes the weariness and loss of ardor and finally the longing for the sleep of the animal which dominates the poet. The single line above sums up the feeling. The second quatrain begins,

Esprit vaincu, fourbu! Pour toi, vieux maraudeur,
L'amour n'a plus de goût...

and then presents the pleasures that have lost their savor: Love, disputation, music, amusement, and spring. All have gone stale and tasteless.

The significant thing is that the emotion which accompanies the relinquishing of these pleasures is not anguish and despair, for behind the whole poem there is a disillusion-

ment with "volupté" as such. In the architecture of Les Fleurs du Mal this poem is in the cycle of "Spleen" and appropriately expresses a disappointment at the inadequacy of the experiences in the earlier cycles of platonic and physical love and in the experience of beauty. Thus, the regret which the poet is expressing is not regret at the loss of volupté, but infinite regret and disappointment in volupté as such. This is the reason that he longs for the sleep of the brute, that his heart is sombre and sullen:

Plaisirs, ne tentez plus un coeur sombre et boudeur !
Le Printemps adorable a perdu son odeur !

The third quatrain, coming after the "Couche-toi," "Résigne-toi," and "Adieu donc" of the earlier lines, seems to be neither looking into the past, nor commanding, nor bidding good-bye, but rather seems to describe the present, as minute by minute time, like falling snow, imperceptibly engulfs the poet's stiffening body. In the lassitude of ennui, time is no longer something to be exhausted, vanquished, transcended, but something which itself exhausts, stiffens, and ultimately conquers man. In the detachment of ennui (which is not entirely unrelated to scientific detachment, aesthetic detachment, and ethical objectivity, all of which are sharply criticized by the Existentialists) the poet contemplates the roundness of the globe (for lack of something better) and does not try to resist the stiffening

that the coldness of the snow has been inducing, but seeking the shelter of a hut:

Je contemple d'en haut le globe en sa rondeur
Et je n'y cherche plus l'abri d'une cahute.

Objectively and detachedly, he watches the roundness of the globe from on high; he does not seek to preserve his self by taking shelter. What for, after all?

The tragedy of an avalanche in these circumstances, and for such a one as this, is no real tragedy, for the loss of the self is no true loss. The individual values nothing, desires nothing, will not regret the loss of his life. The melodrama of the final question is diminished to a disinterested whisper, a sigh:

Avalanche, veux-tu m'emporter dans ta chute?

The poem as a whole, then, hardly represents the existential attitude towards nothingness. Rather, it represents the opposite, the very indifference which renders nothingness ineffectual in spurring the individual to the realization of Being. The object of the poem is not the realization of potentialities, but the realization of non-being. Nothingness is embraced rather than faced with fear and trembling for the fate of the self. It represents a going beyond existential despair into ennui and nothingness; it is past despair.

Existentialism, one must remember, is as much a philosophy of hope as despair. Even hope represents a consciousness of the inadequacy of the present and the possibilities of the future. Hope has a vision of the future and a recognition of the inadequacy of the present; in this sense, Existentialism is eminently a philosophy of hope rather than despair. In every major existential thinker, one finds this pointing away from the inadequacy of the present into the future, and Marcel even goes so far as explicitly to call his thought a "philosophy of hope."

"Le Goût du Néant" contains existential disenchantment and limns the state of unconsciousness and ennui--of spiritual non-being--so much dreaded by Existentialists. The poem is a valuable presentation of the extent to which non-being in the form of meaninglessness and spiritual emptiness and lassitude can invade and vanquish the human spirit. But this non-being is presented calmly and without dread--in fact, as something sought after as all other interest fades. There is no swan scanning the heavens for signs of rain, nor any voyager in search of something "du nouveau." There is only a disillusioned acceptance of weariness and ennui. This is the nadir of pessimism from which Existentialism had to shy away in order to have a place to stand at all.

Sartre would explain this poem as the ultimate consequence of the fact that Baudelaire refused to found a world of his own, to evolve his values from himself. Baudelaire accepted a seventeenth century Jansenist universe rather than Sartre's radical atheism; now the only possible conclusion within the confines of his own theological presuppositions is the desire for annihilation.

Norberto Bobbio would explain the poem as a type of anticipation of nihilistic and decadentistic Existentialism. He would say that volupté has in decadence become a negative value and the logical outcome is this poem. He would say that Baudelaire is anticipating Sartre. Indeed, one senses that inversion of reaction to one's world when Baudelaire says in his diary that the sky and the sea do not so much please as revolt him, that is familiar to readers of Sartre:

It is a great delight to drown one's sight in the immensity of the sky and the sea! Nevertheless, these thoughts, whether they proceed from me or rush from things themselves, soon become too intense. Energy in volupté creates an uneasiness and positive suffering.... And now the profundity of the sky dismays me. The insensibility of the sea, the immutability of the spectacle, revolt me.... [Quoted in Bennett, p. 137]

This revulsion with the immutability and insensibility of sky and sea anticipates similar reactions to nature in Sartre, most notably, perhaps, in La Nausée. This inversion of sensibility in which natural pleasure becomes revolting and the revolting pleasurable is characteristic, Bobbio would say, of decadence. The poem is the logical consequence of the

decadent sensibility. Likewise, Existentialism is also a form of decadence, Bobbio claims, since it revels in nothingness in the same way as the poem. In short, there is considerable Existentialism in the poem--if Bobbio's definitions of decadence and Existentialism are accepted.

But, as has been stated before, precisely because Existentialism is not a decadentistic philosophy and precisely because this poem is an expression of decadence, one must speak of Existentialism in the poem with greatest care that Existentialism as a philosophy be not misrepresented. While there is embodied in the poem a vivid picture of the inauthenticity induced by an overdependence on pleasure values (and a disillusionment in pleasure), and while there is a representation of the sterility and nothingness of the victim, there is no opposition to nothingness, no hope or recognition of a better state, no suggestion of transcendence. There is only unbridled pessimism and longing for extinction. The poem, in short, represents a moving from despair in the wrong direction--toward nothingness--while Existentialism represents precisely the opposite, a moving from despair in the direction of hope. "Le Cygne" is in despair but looks in the direction from which rain might come. "Le Voyage" represents a continuing search for authenticity from beginning to end. "Le Goût du Néant" represents no hope and no movement toward authenticity. It does not dread the sterility,

the spiritual deadness of the modern world as do the other two poems by Baudelaire treated in this dissertation; rather, it seeks a state of deadness, of unconsciousness, of ennui. Thus, while the poem presents an encounter with nothingness, the reaction to nothingness is exactly the opposite of that recommended in existential thought.

"LE VOYAGE"

"Le Voyage" is the concluding poem in Les Fleurs du Mal and is, as Martin Turnell observes, "an allegory of man's life from the cradle to the grave." [Turnell, p. 88] It begins with "l'enfant, amoureux de cartes et d'estampes" and ends with the disillusioned and exhausted voyagers ready for death--hoping that at least death will reveal something that is not permeated with ennui, something "du nouveau":

137 O Mort, vieux capitaine, il est temps! levons l'ancre!
138 Ce pays nous ennuie, o Mort! Appareillons!

The poem will be significant to this dissertation as a symbolic picture of the futility and emptiness of life in the modern world.

The basic contrast in the poem is between aspirations and reality, between hopes and disillusionment, anguish, and condemnation. It presents the difference between the infiniteness of the imagination and the disappointing finiteness of reality, the world of imagined places and the "Eldorado banal" that is encountered in actual experience:

1 Pour l'enfant, amoureux de cartes et d'estampes,
2 L'univers est égal à son vaste appétit.
3 Ah! que le monde est grand à la clarté des lampes!
4 Aux yeux du souvenir que le monde est petit!

The first four lines, then, present the fundamental contrast and situation of the poem. The world of stamps is

the world of imagination, of abstraction, of anticipation. It is the world towards which transcendence points, the world which Sartre would call the world of the pour-soi--the self that projects itself into the future, into possibilities. But this world of aspiration and imagination stands in painful contrast to a remembered actual reality.

The third and fourth lines seem to capture the beginning of the poem--the greatness of the world in the clarity of lamplight--and the very end of the poem in all its disillusionment as one remembers the actual experience--the littleness of the world in the eye of memory. The significance of line four, then, is not in the inevitable attrition of memory with time, but in the fact that the world is small indeed when one recalls the disappointment of the actual experience. (And part of the disappointment which accompanies the experience is its failure to measure up to one's hopes.) But let us begin the voyage.

5 Un matin nous partons, le cerveau plein de flamme,
6 Le coeur gros de rancune et de désirs amers,
7 Et nous allons, suivant le rythme de la lame,
8 Berçant notre infini sur le fini des mers:

Following the rhythm of the sea, they are buoyed up and slip down. Their brains are hot with anticipation and high hopes, and their faces bear the marks of past bitterness and disappointment from which they think they are escaping on this voyage. Who are these people whose hopes are so dashed by reality,

and what are the sources of this immense bitterness?

9 Les uns, joyeux de fuir une patrie infâme;
 10 D'autres, l'horreur de leurs berceaux, et quelques-uns,
 11 Astrologues noyés dans les yeux d'une femme,
 12 La Circé tyrannique aux dangereux parfums.

13 Pour n'être pas changés en bêtes, ils s'enivrent
 14 D'espace et de lumière et de cieux embrasés;
 15 La glace qui les mord, les soleils qui les cuivrent,
 16 Effacent lentement la marque des baisers.

There seem to be three classes of people who are embarking--some flee an infamous "patrie," some the horror of their birthplaces, and some the eyes (Sartre would make much of these eyes) of a tyrannical lover. They flee country, home, or love. They have found these disillusioning; these, they have found, are trying to transform them into something lower than they are--into animals. The actual kisses bruised, tyrannized, and ultimately disappointed them.

Significantly, "not to be changed into beasts," they seek the ungraspable--space, light, skies--and just as the night bites the cheeks of the poet in Rilke's First Elegy, so here the ice bites and the sun burns them. They go to extremes to prove they are not animals; they exasperate their senses with exposure to light and sun. They abuse themselves with them. This is the model of Baudelaire's masochism--and the reason for it. The mark of the kisses is the evidence of the disappointment which the poet found in reality, and, not to be changed into a beast, he resorts to the excruciating bite of ice and burn of sun.

Existentially, the key to this problem lies in the meaning of line 8:

Berçant notre infini sur le fini des mers....

Basically the encounter is between the infinite in human beings and the finitude in the world of reality. This encounter is essentially a surrender of infinity to finitude, a sort of shipwreck against the nature of actualization. This disappointment and fear of further surrender is shown on three levels of reality--the abstract (la patrie), the local (leurs berceaux), and the intimately personal (les yeux d'une femme). But the reality of abstractions, of the daily world, and of personal sensations, is illusory and, though it will appropriate and tyrannize, ^{it is} incommensurate with one's hopes, not "égal à son vaste appétit."

The desire to flee is a desire to preserve the self; it is an expression of a fear of appropriation of the self by outside forces. This ^{is} explicitly stated in the reference to lovers who flee a tyrannical Circe. Thus, the significance of the Circe image is not so much disillusionment with animality and bestiality in love as it has to be expressed in actuality, as rather it is the fear of domination, of the power of this "Circé tyrannique." From the intimacy and immediacy of this domination they flee and become astrologers, star-gazers, bathers in space and light.

The fact must be recognized, however, that the voyage does not represent transcendence of the situation, but flight from it. The course of action embodied in flight, nevertheless, is more authentic from an existential point of view, than continuance in the situation, unconscious of its bestiality, banality, inauthenticity. A consciousness of the inadequacy of country, home, and love is at least the prerequisite of any effort towards authenticity and transcendence. The nearest that Baudelaire comes to transcendence is his recognition that those who leave do well:

17 Mais les vrais voyageurs sont ceux-là seuls qui partent
18 Pour partir; coeurs légers, semblables aux ballons,
19 De leur fatalité jamais ils ne s'écarterent,
20 Et, sans savoir pourquoi, disent toujours: Allons!

21 Ceux-là dont les désirs ont la forme des nues,
22 Et qui rêvent, ainsi qu'un conscrit le canon,
23 De vastes voluptés, changeantes, inconnues,
24 Et dont l'esprit humain n'a jamais su le nom!

The true voyagers are those who leave to be leaving, who do not call up some imagined El Dorado to poison every experience of reality. But they are not unconscious of the inauthenticity of what they are leaving; rather they accept nothingness into themselves: "De leur fatalité jamais ils ne s'écarterent..."; they never turn aside from their fatality and the possibility that they may pop. Professor Turnell correctly observes that this line shows that "in the last resort it is not the horrors of contemporary civilization, but an inner spiritual malady which drives them on." [Turnell,

p. 84] Turnell also considers that lines 17-24 describe another class of travelers on the boat. [Same] This interpretation is a little shaky, for the text itself does not make clear whether these "vrais voyageurs" are to be imagined as actually on this nineteenth century Narrenschiff, or whether they are an allusion to a type of traveler who is not on this sterile voyage, a type of traveler whom the poet wishes to contrast to these disillusioned embarkers.

Unfortunately, we are not like the airy balloon; we are like the heavy, mechanical, lifeless ball, or the top that is spun around by an outside force:

25 Nous imitons, horreur ! la toupie et la boule
 26 Dans leur valse et leurs bonds; même dans nos sommeils
 27 La Curiosité nous tourmente et nous roule,
 28 Comme un Ange cruel qui fouette des soleils.

Even in sleep, we are tormented and rolled around, the tools of a never-satisfied will--like the will in Rilke's Fifth Elegy. In Rilke, "La Curiosité" becomes "Madame Lamort"; both roll and control the lives of men, spinning them around like tops, as Augustus the Strong twirled a tin platter.

The same inauthenticity and aimlessness which characterized the existence of the acrobats in the Fifth Elegy is found expressed here, where "le but" of Destiny moves about and man can find no aim, nothing solid on which to place his hopes:

29 Singulière fortune où le but se déplace,
 30 Et, n'étant nulle part, peut être n'importe où!

31 Où l'Homme, dont jamais l'espérance n'est lasse,
 32 Pour trouver le repos court toujours comme un fou!

Next, Baudelaire translates this thought of man ever running (paradoxically) to find rest into the terms of the voyage: Our soul is a three-masted vessel seeking the utopian island of Icarie:

33 Notre âme est un trois-mâts cherchant son Icarie;
 34 Une voix retentit sur le pont: "Ouvre l'oeil!"
 35 Une voix de la hune, ardente et folle, crie: -
 36 "Amour...gloire...bonheur!" Enfer! c'est un écueil!

"Keep your eyes peeled!" shouts a voice from the bridge, and in the "hune" at the top of the mast comes back, "I see love and glory and happiness--Hell, it's only a shoal!" And every tiny island is sighted as the promised land, the El Dorado promised by Destiny:

37 Chaque flot signalé par l'homme de vigie
 38 Est un Eldorado promis par le Destin;
 39 L'Imagination qui dresse son orgie
 40 Ne trouve qu'un récif aux clartés du matin.

By the light of day, the promised El Dorado turns out to be only a reef. The optical illusions which play upon the hopes of the voyagers as they watch on the deck through the night are dispersed by the clear light of day, and only a reef remains, an obstacle to steer clear of if one is to avoid shipwreck and annihilation. The word "clartés" recalls the "clarté des lampes" of line 3. What was infinite to the child in the "clarté des lampes"--the artificial light of lamps--turns out in the "clartés du matin" to be a disappointment. The real light of morning reveals no promised El Dorado.

With this spectacle of the repeated hopes dashed in disappointment, the poet meditates on these poor seekers of chimerical countries:

41 O le pauvre amoureux des pays chimériques !
 42 Faut-il le mettre aux fers, le jeter à la mer,
 43 Ce matelot ivrogne, inventeur d'Amériques
 44 Dont le mirage rend le gouffre plus amer?

45 Tel le vieux vagabond, piétinant dans la boue
 46 Rêve, le nez en l'air, de brillants paradis;
 47 Son oeil ensorcelé découvre une Capoue
 48 Partout où la chandelle illumine un taudis.

Again in line 44 the essential message of the poem is presented as the poet asserts that "le mirage rend le gouffre plus amer...." And then the picture of modern man is vividly symbolized in the old vagabond, tramping along in the mire, his nose in the air, dreaming of brilliant and gleaming paradises, his deceiving eyes telling him that the light of a poor and miserable hut is the delightful city of Capua in Italy. (This picture is reminiscent of the image of Don Quixote, who in imagination changed the humblest surroundings into glorious medieval castles. Baudelaire may be picturing the romantic who creates a reality which does not correspond to actuality. Kierkegaard ridiculed Hegel as the man who built a beautiful castle of logic, but went to live in a hovel outside its gates in his actual life.)

The mirage renders the abyss more bitter, because the mirage asserts that there is no abyss. This is one of Baudelaire's basic concerns. With the concept of natural

goodness, it was difficult to account for evil in man. Little compatibility could be found between contemporary meliorism and the view of man as imperfect and fallen in his basic nature. The illusion of goodness, truth, and light only serves to make the reality of the gulf, the evil, the weakness of man, when discovered, all the more bitter.

Existentially, the mirage symbolizes abstraction, the closed and optimistic little world of a system which accounts (seemingly) for man. But as Kierkegaard and the later Existentialists maintain, a system is not a world that an existing man can live in. As early as Baudelaire, then, the weaknesses of bourgeois idealism could be seen by a perceptive and critical mind. The belief that improving man's physical surroundings will bring about spiritual progress was seen by Baudelaire as a mirage. The El Dorado of scientific progress, of utilitarianism, of humanitarianism, of communism, and of the hundreds of other panaceas of Baudelaire's day did not deceive him, just as they did not deceive Kierkegaard who detected behind the self-importance of his age "a sense of despair over being human":

Everything must attach itself so as to be a part of some movement; men are determined to lose themselves in the totality of things, in world-history, fascinated and deceived by magic witchery; no one wants to be an individual human being. [CUP, p. 317]

This world of illusion is not unrelated to Rilke's "gedeutete Welt," that is, the fog of interpretation and misinterpretation

with which man surrounds himself. Baudelaire's mirage represents essentially the Existentialists' idea of the fallacy of abstractions and idealistic systems. It veils reality and deceives man, but it has no correspondence to reality, and when man discovers the abyss of nothingness--or in Baudelaire's terminology "evil"--opening before him, it is all the more terrible and bitter and disillusioning.

After this brief meditation on the spectacle of the seekers of chimerical countries, the stay-at-home poet turns to address the travelers as they pull into port, returning from the voyage. Eagerly, yet sarcastically, he asks them to describe the sights they have seen:

49 Étonnants voyageurs! quelles nobles histoires
50 Nous lisons dans vos yeux profonds comme les mers
51 Montrez-nous les écrins de vos riches mémoires,
52 Ces bijoux merveilleux, faits d'astres et d'éthers.

53 Nous voulons voyager sans vapeur et sans voile!
54 Faites, pour égayer l'ennui de nos prisons,
55 Passer sur nos esprits tendus comme une toile,
56 Vos souvenirs avec leurs cadres d'horizons.

57 Dites, qu'avez-vous vu?

There is a pause. Then, one is given the full damaging report in stanza after stanza of disillusioning experience. Generally, they were as bored as at home, and the reality abroad was as exasperating as that at home:

"Nous avons vu des astres
58 Et des flots; nous avons vu des sables aussi;
59 Et malgré bien des chocs et d'imprévus désastres,
60 Nous nous sommes souvent ennuyés, comme ici.

Even the first four lines carry the disappointment, the boredom, which the travelers found. They saw many, many stars, many waves, much sand--all things that the stay-at-home could experience on the shore. One seems to gain a sense of their weariness, a picture of their scanning the horizon and constantly being greeted with stars and waves. The stars, the sand, the waves--these are the monotonous, the obvious things; and one is hardly surprised when they remark that, as at home, they were mostly bored. And even the lines themselves show this weariness as lines 58 and 60 peter out with an "aussi" and a "comme ici."

But then the travelers turn to the more colorful part of the journey--only to say (lines 65-7) that the real never approached the ideal:

61 La gloire du soleil sur la mer violette,
 62 La gloire des cités dans le soleil couchant,
 63 Allumaient dans nos coeurs une ardeur inquiète
 64 De plonger dans un ciel au reflet alléchant.

65 Les plus riches cités, les plus grands paysages,
 66 Jamais ne contenaient l'attrait mystérieux
 67 De ceux que le hasard fait avec les nuages,
 68 Et toujours le désir nous rendait soucieux!

The clouds on the horizon always took shapes more attractive and mysterious (as food for the imagination) than the finest landscapes and the richest cities they saw.

And man's desire only made him more avid, more insatiable. The pleasant satisfaction of the desire for pleasure only increases desire, only fertilizes, as Baudelaire

puts it, the old tree of desire and makes it more hardy,
more immediate than the tree of death, the cypress:

69 --La jouissance ajoute au désir de la force.
70 Désir, vieil arbre à qui le plaisir sert d'engrais,
71 Cependant que grossit et durcit ton écorce,
72 Tes branches veulent voir le soleil de plus pres!

73 Grandiras-tu toujours, grand arbre plus vivace
74 Que le cyprès? -- Pourtant nous avons, avec soin,
75 Cueilli quelques croquis pour votre album vorace,
76 Frères qui trouvez beau tout ce qui vient de loin!

However, they have brought back some colored slides for the
greedy albums of those who find lovely all that comes from
afar. And they proceed to bring out their exotic pictures.

77 Nous avons salué des idoles à trompe;
78 Des trônes constellés de bijoux lumineux;
79 Des palais ouvragés dont la féérique pompe
80 Serait pour vos banquiers un rêve ruineux;

81 Des costumes qui sont pour les yeux une ivresse
82 Des femmes dont les dents et les ongles sont teints,
83 Et des jongleurs savants que le serpent caresse."

They have seen idols, and jewel-studded thrones, and pal-
aces of such fairy-like splendor as to be the ruination of
a bourgeois banker. They have seen intoxicating costumes,
women with dyed teeth and fingernails, and snake-charmers
performing dangerous feats. But then the narrator breaks
off, as if just before the peak of a crescendo. Anxiously
the poet bids him go on:

84 Et puis, et puis encore?

Then the voyager launches into twenty lines without a period,
telling in all its sordid humanness the story of what was
behind the idols, palaces, and thrones:

"O cerveaux enfantins !

- 85 Pour ne pas oublier la chose capitale,
 86 Nous avons vu partout, et sans l'avoir cherché,
 87 Du haut jusques en bas de l'échelle fatale,
 88 Le spectacle ennuyeux de l'immortel péché:
- 89 La femme, esclave vile, orgueilleuse et stupide,
 90 Sans rire s'adorant et s'aimant sans dégoût;
 91 L'homme, tyran goulu, paillard, dur et cupide,
 92 Esclave de l'esclave et ruisseau dans l'égout;
- 93 Le bourreau qui jouit, le martyr qui sanglote;
 94 La fête qu'assaisonne et parfume le sang;
 95 Le poison du pouvoir énervant le despote,
 96 Et le peuple amoureux du fouet abrutissant;
- 97 Plusieurs religions semblables à la nôtre,
 98 Toutes escaladant le ciel; la Sainteté
 99 Comme en un lit de plume un délicat se vautre,
 100 Dans les clous et le crin cherchant la volupté;
- 101 L'Humanité bavarde, ivre de son génie,
 102 Et, folle maintenant comme elle était jadis,
 103 Criant à Dieu, dans sa furibonde agonie:
 104 'O mon semblable, ô mon maître, je te maudis !"
- 105 Et les moins sots, hardis amants de la Démence,
 106 Fuyant le grand troupeau parqué par le Destin
 107 Et se réfugiant dans l'opium immense!
 108 --Tel est du globe entier l'éternel bulletin."

"Oh infantile minds ! (Oh minds fixed on externalities !) Not to forget the most important thing...." The most important thing is the nature and condition of man, and his manner of existing in the world. This picture is not a pleasant, unusual, exotic one, for "from the bottom to the top of the fatal ladder of life we saw everywhere without seeking it, the wearisome spectacle of sin, immortal sin." The important thing is that modern man is in sin, hopelessly in sin.

The description elaborates on man's being in sin as it paints a dismal picture of human baseness, pride, cruelty, greed, and so forth. Woman is everywhere a vile slave, stupid and proud in her self-adoration, without laughter at its ridiculousness nor disgust at her state. Man is a tyrant who is greedy, vulgar, hard, and grasping; he is the slave of a slave, the main gutter in a sewer. Existentially, this situation represents a surrender of the self to outside forces: the woman to her body without laughter or disgust, the man to his instincts of greed and coarseness. It represents a spiritual refusal to rise above nature, man's nature. Man's nature, if he surrenders to it, is not naturally good, but depraved. This view stands in marked contrast to the romantic conception of the natural goodness of man; indeed, it looks back to Pascal--and forward to Heidegger. Heidegger's description of the state of Verfallen (decline) has much in common with the surrender to the power of outside forces depicted here.

This brings up the question: Is the existential view of man nearer that of the romantics (in many ways their ancestors) or the classicists; that is, is their view of man that of natural goodness, or that of natural depravity which must be overcome through a superhuman effort of the will? Initially, Existentialism would seem nearer to the classical conception, since it is keenly sensitive to the gulf, the

presence of what amounts to a will to non-being within the self, and the need to rise above the natural. Yet, in the concept of Seinsverständnis (the intuitive natural sense of the nature of man's being and the expanse of man's potentialities), in its tendency to revolt against the moral pattern rather than to accept it, it is romantic.

What is the solution to this question? Undeniably, Baudelaire contains both of these elements--classical and romantic. His view, in its condemnation of a social order but unquestioning acceptance of the theological order brings him close to his classical ancestors in the seventeenth century. The eighteenth century rationalists questioned the theological order, and the romanticists question the validity of the order of the eighteenth century rationalists. The romantic conception in early German romanticism remained idealistic, but switched its emphasis from the reliability of law to the uniqueness of man. The romantic emphasis on the centrality of man is precisely the theme of the Existentialists. Romanticists and Existentialists assert that man is the center of the universe; they assert that "subjectivity is the starting point," as Sartre has put it. But with the rise of scientific optimism and the conception of biological determinism and the consequent faith in physical progress, the elements which the early romantics had opposed in rationalism began to reassert themselves with increasing

force, and the battle between rationalism and romanticism raged on--and rages on to this day. Existentialism is a twentieth century form of certain elements in romanticism, as William Barret has ably pointed out in his Irrational Man [cited in chapter I], yet it is much more than this, for it has affinities with classicism and arose in reaction to a different form of rationalism.

With Baudelaire, one has the problem of fitting what is in many ways best described as a seventeenth century point of view (affinities with Descartes, Pascal, Racine) into the battle described above. There is no romantic idealism in Baudelaire, nor any rationalistic meliorism. But there is the romantic emphasis on man and the classical conception of man as essentially fallen. And there is a perception of the nature of man that looks back to the analyses of the seventeenth-century classical dramatists and forward to the twentieth century preoccupation with the psychological aspects of man. Finally, and most importantly, in an age in which the personal, spiritual condition of the self was being lost sight of in a world of social programs and industrial progress, Baudelaire perceived the spiritual emptiness and sterility of his age, its basic failure to come to grips with greed and pride and lust on the personal level. In this, he is neither specifically classical nor romantic, but existential.

The travelers saw, too, the hangman rejoicing in his legal murder, the pathos of the suffering martyr, the spectacle of a festival of human existence perfumed with blood, the despot poisoned with power, and the victims cherishing the whip that abused them. They saw several religions with their special saints moving out of the madding crowd to seek their morbid pleasure on horsehair and nails. In short, they saw a babbling humanity drunk with its own self-importance, as ridiculous now as in the former times at which they laugh in scorn, always imagining God in their own ridiculous image and furiously blaspheming.

The less foolish (a group in which Baudelaire himself would seem to fit), those bold lovers of dementia, flee this great herd and take refuge in the immensity of an opium world. Such, the voyager concludes, is the unchanging and eternal report of the entire globe. Baudelaire makes no proposals of reform; he only presents a picture of the "moins sots" (less foolish) fleeing into a world of opium. This is as far as Baudelairian decadence and its vision can go. It asserts the value of perceiving inanity and offers a program which is not positive but negative: flight.

There is a pause as the full weight of the report is felt. Then the poet begins his meditation on voyaging with the unforgettable quatrain which begins, "Bitter is

the knowledge one gains from voyaging...":

109 Amer savoir, celui qu'on tire du voyage!
 110 Le monde, monotone et petit, aujourd'hui,
 111 Hier, demain, toujours, nous fait voir notre image:
 112 Une oasis d'horreur dans un désert d'ennui!

In actuality, this world is monotonous and small; and yesterday, tomorrow, always, it shows us our image--an oasis of horror in the vast wastes of a desert of ennui.

Here, in these four lines, one finds meaninglessness in full dress. Ennui is the existential equivalent of spiritual emptiness and meaninglessness. This is the gulf; this is nothingness. Such pessimism is hardly matched in poetry until the waste land poetry of the twenties. Man's fallenness, his aloneness, his spiritual emptiness, all are expressed in "notre image": an oasis of horror in a desert of ennui. If there were ever a waste land image in poetry this is it. Bitter, indeed, is the knowledge gained from voyaging.

The twist of meaning involved in the use of the word "oasis" may be observed. Oasis is traditionally a place one reaches after a long trek over the sands of a desert. After trudging over the desert of life and pulling into an oasis tired and thirsty, man finds an oasis "d'horreur." The larger voyage described in the poem and the voyage implied in the oasis image both turn out to reveal man's image, yesterday, tomorrow, and always, as "Une oasis d'horreur dans un désert d'ennui!"

Departing or remaining, one does not escape himself.
One does not escape boredom and meaninglessness. And one
does not escape time:

113 Faut-il partir? rester? Si tu peux rester, reste;
114 Pars, s'il le faut. L'un court, et l'autre se tapit
115 Pour tromper l'ennemi vigilant et funeste,
116 Le Temps! Il est, hélas! des coureurs sans répit,

117 Comme le Juif errant et comme les apôtres,
118 A qui rien ne suffit, ni wagon ni vaisseau,
119 Pour fuir ce rétiaire infâme; il en est d'autres
120 Qui savent le tuer sans quitter leur berceau.

If one can stand to remain, then remain. If one must depart,
then do so. In one case, one runs and in the other one hides,
but both are equally futile ways of eluding time--as futile
as the apostles trying to hide or the wandering Jew to flee.
Yet some--those who neither hide nor flee--can vanquish him
without ever leaving their birthplaces.

When time at last rests his foot on our backs, we
can embark on that final voyage "sur la mer des Ténèbres."

121 Lorsque enfin il mettra le pied sur notre échine,
122 Nous pourrons espérer et crier: En avant!
123 De même qu'autrefois nous partions pour la Chine
124 Les yeux fixés au large et les cheveux au vent,

125 Nous nous embarquerons sur la mer des Ténèbres
126 Avec le coeur joyeux d'un jeune passager.

Indeed, the poet seems to hear the entreaty of the Sirens
to eat the enchanted lotus blossom:

127 Entendez-vous ces voix, charmantes et funèbres,
128 Qui chantent: "Par ici! vous qui voulez manger"

129 Le Lotus parfumé! c'est ici qu'on vendange
130 Les fruits miraculeux dont votre coeur a faim;

131 Venez vous enivrer de la douceur étrange
 132 De cette après-midi qui n'a jamais de fin!"

The familiar accents reveal a spectre and Pylades stretches out his arms:

133 A l'accent familier nous devinons le spectre;
 134 Nos Pylades là-bas tendent leurs bras vers nous.
 135 "Pour rafraîchir ton coeur nage vers ton Électre!"
 136 Dit celle dont jadis nous baisions les genoux.

"Jump from the boat and swim to thy adored Electra!" the voice entreats, the voice of her whom we had adored and enjoyed in other days.

But the voice, as one would expect in Baudelaire, is not a voice that is genuinely offering fulfillment, but the voice of a Siren, tempting but never satisfying. This apparent oasis is in reality an "oasis d'horreur"--no true oasis at all.

The world is small and monotonous. Man is greedy, lustful, cruel, tyrannical; spiritually, he is hopelessly in sin. His image is an oasis of horror in a desert of ennui. He hides from time, he runs from time--fruitlessly. His life is basically empty and meaningless. There is nothing left but death, the final voyage into death. Let us begin that voyage, then, says the poet, and put an end to the bitter and disillusioning round of voyages that only reveal the inhumanness of man. He turns to Captain Death and tells him to weigh anchor:

137 O Mort, vieux capitaine, il est temps! levons l'ancre!
 138 Ce pays nous ennuie, ô Mort! Appareillons!
 139 Si le ciel et la mer sont noirs comme de l'encre,
 140 Nos coeurs que tu connais sont remplis de rayons!

141 Verse-nous ton poison pour qu'il nous réconforte!
 142 Nous voulons, tant ce feu nous brûle le cerveau,
 143 Plonger au fond du gouffre, Enfer ou Ciel, qu'importe?
 144 Au fond de l'Inconnu pour trouver du nouveau!

If the sky and the sea are black as ink, there are still rays of light filling our hearts. Death, pour out your venom that perhaps it may refresh us--we, who sought in vain for refreshment in an oasis of horror, in a desert of ennui. The fire in our brains burns so fiercely that we care not whether the gulf of death holds hell or heaven. What does it matter? On, on into the unknown! Perhaps at last there we will find something new!

The "nouveau" should not be interpreted as merely the final degeneration into an empty search for novelty at any price, although this is one level of its meaning. A more significant interpretation emerges when one considers that the "nouveau" is symbolic of the opposite of the monotonous, the greedy cruelty and repetitious avariciousness of man. Perhaps after death things will be different. Then the monotony will be broken. The sense in which "nouveau" implies "different" is the more significant sense, and the sense with which the rest of the poem best harmonizes. Certainly there is an existential pessimism in the "qu'importe?" attitude, but it is the outcome of an underlying anguish

("ce feu nous brûle le cerveau") and an exasperated sensibility--exasperated at the condition and behavior of man. Yet the "nouveau" is the "nouveau" of the voyager, the hope that the monotony of his consistent disillusionment at human degradation in every land he has visited may at last be broken by the arrival at a country where the picture is different--new.

Existentialism in "Le Voyage": Affinities and Anticipations. Existentialism in the poem is largely a matter of certain affinities with and anticipations of later characteristic concerns of existential thinkers.

Baudelaire also has affinities with the other two poets studied in this dissertation, both of whom were influenced by him. T. S. Eliot not only shows certain affinities with Baudelaire indirectly in the major concerns of his poetry and directly in specific quotations from such poems as "Au Lecteur" and "Le Cygne" in The Waste Land, but has made his appreciation explicit in his two essays on Baudelaire.⁷ Rilke acknowledged as early as 1900 his admiration for Baudelaire and more than a decade later declined, because of his high regard for the poet, to attempt to translate Les Fleurs du Mal into German. Internally, perhaps

⁷"Baudelaire in our Time," in Essays Ancient and Modern (London, 1936), pp. 63-75. Also "Baudelaire," in Selected Essays: 1917-1932 (New York, 1932), pp. 335-345.

the most obvious and striking affinity between Baudelaire and Rilke is the use of anguish as one of the major bases for poetical creation. In his valuable and definitive book, Baudelaire et R. M. Rilke: Étude d'influence et d'affinities spirituelles, M. L. de Sugar notes this distinctive use of anguish in the two poets:

Baudelaire a été le premier poète moderne à se servir de l'angoisse comme matière poétique. Rilke a repris ce thème dans les Cahiers de Malte, puis a continué à le développer jusque dans ses Élégies.⁸

Indeed, this anguish alone would be nearly enough to justify the assertion of an anticipation of the existential anguish of the twentieth century. Nevertheless, one should bear in mind that the study of Existentialism in Baudelaire is, and must remain, a matter of affinities and anticipations--and perhaps beginnings.

In the poem, images of mirage (line 44) and illusion appear in different forms. Indeed, a basic movement of the poem is the movement (voyage) toward aspirations and hopes which the travelers discover are only empty delusions that leave one "ennuyés, comme ici." Reality does not measure up to the abstract world of the cards and stamps in the artificial light of the lamp, nor the real islands to the imagined ones in the clouds, nor the real cities to the hopes

⁸(Paris, 1954), p. 169.

of an El Dorado, nor the real hut to the imagined Capua, nor the woman actually possessed to the dreamed of Circe or Electra. Baudelaire presents a world of illusion and reality which anticipates the concern in both Eliot and Rilke with illusion and reality.

Behind the criticism of man for possessing these illusions is an opposition to externalities, to the externalization and simplification of the conception of the nature of man. Abstractions (such as "Amour...gloire...bonheur" in line 36) turn out to be empty, not anything that one can encounter in real life. And their promises, like the promises of Circe and the Sirens, are essentially empty delusions. The systems and organization of reality imposed by "patrie" (line 9), "berceaux" (line 10), and "les yeux d'une femme" (line 11), are all unsatisfactory--are, indeed, forms of human tyranny.

In Existentialism, for instance in Kierkegaard, one finds the same fierce, sarcastic, ironical tone used with reference to abstract essences, systems, and values--to abstraction in general. Both Baudelaire and Kierkegaard would agree that the humanitarians and practitioners of conventional religion are deceiving themselves in thinking they are authentic, for in reality there is something seriously missing from their conceptions. The high-sounding abstract schemes and systems involved in idealism, materialism, and

melioristic social conceptions ultimately prove to be deceptions if, in all the bustle, man as an existing human being is lost.

The voyage of the poem is essentially an odyssey of the self seeking the self, seeking the authentic self, and a place in which authentic beings are existing and setting and example. The travelers find no such place. Lines 5-24 deal with the reasons for the voyage, and there emerges from the lines the fact that an underlying dissatisfaction and anguish, actually an existential anguish, drives them on. It is an anguish at a surrender of the self, at the loss of the self, the loss of control to outside forces--home, country, woman. The flight itself signifies an anguished desire to preserve the self.

Existentially, the significant aspect of the situation is the centrality of the self. The basic theme of the poem may be interpreted as the corruption of the self. In a significant passage quoted earlier from Baudelaire's Journaux Intimes, the poet summarizes his concern: "la vaporisation et ... la centralisation du Moi. Tout est la." The self is being vaporized, corrupted. Baudelaire in this poem, and repeatedly through Les Fleurs du Mal makes the condition of the self the central poetic problem. The very architecture of Les Fleurs shows the poet's search for a dependable reality, a respectable self. Spleen, ideal, love, wine--all

orbit around a central concern with the condition of the self. Indeed, this concern with the self is closely related to the very genesis of "symbolisme," which takes as its task the representation "de l'âme humaine." In his indispensable book on symbolism in Baudelaire, Lloyd James Austin also notes this fact in connection with the meaning of Baudelaire's symbolism:

en réalité, ni Satan ni Prométhée n'ont un rôle essentiel dans la création poétique de Baudelaire. Certes, dans la "symbolique" baudelairienne, la part du Diable est la part du lion. Mais il y a autre chose dans les Fleurs du Mal qu'une symbolique orthodoxe manquée et une symbolique infernale plus réussie: il y a un symbolisme humain, l'expression lyrique d'une âme humaine. C'est ici que les correspondances, liées à la doctrine baudelairienne de l'imagination, trouvent leur application la plus féconde. "Les correspondances poétiques, comme le rappelle Jean Prévost, ont toujours l'homme pour centre." L'unité vers laquelle la poésie de Baudelaire nous ramène n'est ni l'unité divine, ni l'unité satanique, mais l'unité de l'âme humaine.⁹

Symbolism is in essence the finding of an objective correlative for a state or aspect of the human being. In "Le Voyage," the guiding state of the self and its most distinguishing aspect is disillusionment. And the significant images are those which imply an illusion, as has been noted earlier. There is no mediation of the disillusionment; the pessimistic tone hardly varies. The end of this odyssey of the self seeking the self is only disappointment and the question mark of death.

⁹L'Univers Poétique de Baudelaire: Symbolisme et Symbolique (Paris, 1956), pp. 134-5.

The world of illusion and the vaporization of the self have been discussed. The reaction to illusion may vary in intensity, as may be seen in a comparison of Baudelaire to Rilke or T. S. Eliot. Of the three, Baudelaire's disillusionment is the most bitter, perhaps because it is the most unredeemable, the most untranscendable. Of the three, perhaps only Baudelaire may personally be described as "an embittered man," although all three perceive the problem of illusion in the existence of modern man. Contempt and bitterness mark the whole course of "Le Voyage." It is the bitterness of disappointment.

Indeed, disillusionment runs through the pattern of the images in the poem and has been noted as its basic movement. The world of the poem is one of aspirations that are not realized, a search for a utopia which ends in despair, a disappointment in home, country, and love, that ends in flight.

Ultimately this disillusionment implies a view of man. For Baudelaire, man is a fallen creature, hopelessly in sin, naturally bad. One may properly speak of the thrall of sin, for man is referred to as a "Esclave de l'esclave et ruisseau dans l'égout"--the slave of a slave and a gutter in a sewer. He is evil, depraved, greedy, vicious, base.

Existentially, this thralldom may be considered the equivalent of Verfallen. When Baudelaire states in line 25,

"Nous imitons, horreur! la toupie et la boule," he is expressing a basic existential experience--that of being stuck in the sticky, gluey, viscosity of inauthenticity and decline. This is the downward sucking force of man's world and his body. It is the natural course, but one must resist nature in order to be authentic. The bitterness and condemnation in the poem and elsewhere in Baudelaire are the result of the discovery that man is in fact not resisting his basic (fallen) nature.

Spiritual emptiness and sterility are a major theme of the poem. The man whose moral and spiritual consciousnesses are alive finds himself isolated and alone in an alien world. Over and over again, the "uses of this world" are found to be meaningless. All that remains is ennui.

The undercurrent of meaninglessness must be understood as a form of spiritual emptiness--a form of non-being invading being. The complete domination of meaninglessness would be absolute spiritual non-being, non-existence. Baudelaire's ennui is essentially existential emptiness and meaninglessness. Since emptiness and meaninglessness are grounded in non-being, ennui is also a form of anxiety in Baudelaire. Ennui is, then, as much an evidence of spiritual and emotional frustration as it is of spiritual lassitude. And when ennui is conceived of as lassitude (as in "Au Lecteur"), it is, significantly, seen as an evil to be

avoided, a last consequence of, and evidence of, spiritual sterility.

Thus, the emptiness-meaninglessness-nothingness complex repeats itself again and again in the poem in references which connote boredom, sterility, weariness, futility, desolation. This presentation of sterility and futility is peculiarly modern in spirit. It is the expression of the spiritual anxiety and frustration of modern man. The poem, then, is more than an indictment and condemnation of a corrupt society; it is an indictment of the inner emptiness of modern man as an individual existing human being.

The Existentialism in the poem may be described in three words: shipwreck without transcendence. A picture of self-loss is presented, but no positive program is suggested for regaining the self. The closest that one comes to authenticity is the realization of inauthenticity. The balloons that the poet admires are admired because they do not turn aside from their fatality, but live in constant danger of bursting. They may be considered a poetic image of Heidegger's conception of being-towards-death. They cannot flee nor hide from their fatality. They live face to face with death. In existential terms, this constitutes the recognition and acceptance of nothingness in the form of death. Unfortunately, no existential affirmation accompanies the recognition of nothingness.

Flight as such is in the poem a physical evidence of the recognition of inauthenticity. Those who flee recognize their emptiness and are seeking something better. They do not find it, but only human baseness:

--Tel est du globe entier l'éternel bulletin.

Thus, one may say that a truly existential picture of self-loss, inauthenticity, and shipwreck is presented in "Le Voyage." The shipwreck is basically that of modern man upon the reality of nothingness as it reveals itself in finitude. But there is no transcendence of the shipwreck. Only half the existential picture of man is present--the bitter half. But one must also observe that this is a requisite shipwreck, for there is, existentially, no true transcendence without shipwreck. Baudelaire presented the suffering involved in standing face to face with nothingness, and recognized--significantly--the basic value and necessity of suffering and shipwreck for human beings. For, in all his bitterness and anxiety, he could write in his famous "Bénédiction":

--"Soyez béni, mon Dieu, qui donnez la souffrance
Comme un divin remède à nos impuretés...."

Yet the nature of his system neither furnishes, nor permits, transcendence.

THE WASTE LAND

The Waste Land is an expression of the anxiety and restlessness of modern man, his sense of a need for spiritual regeneration, his vivid feeling of the inadequacy of his world and his inauthentic manner of being in that world. In a sense, the poem unites Baudelaire's picture of man as a swan looking for life-giving rain in a world of stone presented by "Le Cygne" with the restless dissatisfaction with mere pleasure and the inauthenticity of the world presented by "Le Voyage." Just as these two poems by Baudelaire were shown to contain elements of Existentialism, so also The Waste Land may be seen to reflect some basically existential points of view.

The basic theme of The Waste Land is death-in-life. This is translated into a variety of images. The Existentialists have concerned themselves with the problems of death and have noted that while death is the absolute form of physical non-being, there are other forms of non-being which are relative, such as the non-being involved in spiritual emptiness. The same anxiety that one feels toward death is felt towards the relative non-being of spiritual emptiness. The theme of death-in-life in The Waste Land represents the non-being of spiritual emptiness.

The anxiety at this death-in-life, this spiritual emptiness, is what impels the protagonist to ask the fortune-teller where this road is leading. As Professor Williamson

correctly notes,

Reduced to its simplest terms, The Waste Land is a statement of the experience that drives a character to the fortune-teller, the fortune that is told, and the unfolding of that fortune.¹

The basic structural element is, then, the quest of this one who seeks to know his fortune. This quest, as will be shown, is basically the existential quest of the self for the true self, and the anxiety which drives and motivates this quest is essentially existential anxiety.

Indeed, existential concerns are seen throughout the poem: in the fact that the potential self is always in mind; that the self is the center of concern (this is indicated by the fact that sin and expiation permeate the poem, both of which have no meaning except for the self as an existing being); that the major quest is the quest of the self for an authentic self; that man is seen as essentially fallen and imperfect; that abstraction is seen as an evil; that man is seen as shipwrecked on non-being, foundering against nothingness; that a vivid picture of contemporary Alltäglichkeit, Verfallen, and Uneigentlichkeit are presented in several different incarnations of what Heidegger would call das Man; that man's dilemma is essentially interpreted as inner, subjective, a spiritual thirst in a desert of inauthenticity;

¹G. Williamson, "The Structure of The Waste Land," Modern Philology, XLVII (February 1950) p. 197.

and finally, that the world of illusion, abstraction, materialism, must be put aside if one is to find the Grail one is seeking.

In many ways, The Waste Land is a conscious implementation of Eliot's famous essay, "Tradition and the Individual Talent." In the face of the loss of reality and the loss of meaning which were invading modern life, the search for reality turned to myth and tradition, the products of the collective consciousness of generation after generation of man. Eliot is not content to talk of sin and regeneration in present terms, but returns to Shakespeare and Dante, and traces regeneration themes not only in Renaissance, Medieval, and Ancient Greek and Ancient Mediterranean forms, but in the final phases attempts to go to the very dawn of Aryan civilization to the three staves of give, sympathize, and control.

This return to collect the best of what is known of human efforts at realization, authenticity, regeneration, is Eliot's attempt to recover meaning for lives from which meaning has passed. Karl Jaspers, too, in his book on the origin and scope of history, attacks the scientific view of history as mere factual past events, and suggests that the goal of history is really Selbstverständnis, that true history is Geschichtsphilosophie--the understanding of which will lead to the perception of the expressions of Existenz in finite time. [See Philosophie, pp. 636-7.] Eliot's use of myth and

tradition, then, is significant as a part of a search for spiritual nourishment, that is, meaning. Both Eliot and Jaspers look on history as a great canvas on which are found pointers evolved from man's higher consciousness (his Existenz) which will point the way out of the present waste land.

Yet the very presentation of these pointers is in itself a condemnation of the status quo, for a hope for something better betrays a dissatisfaction with what one has. Consequently, The Waste Land is an essentially negative work, an expression of dissatisfaction, a presentation of emotional and spiritual anxiety. But as one will remember from Baudelaire's "Le Gôût du Néant," ennui and indifference are far more dangerous signs than anxiety and despair, for despair implies a clear and realistic view of the state of man and dismay at the disparity between this view and the vision of man as he could be. Ennui implies no such vision, nor does the failure to perceive the gravity of the lack of spiritual abundance imply any vision. Where there is no vision and no grasp, there is little hope. Small wonder even Jesus preferred the breast-beating sinner to the complacent Publican--vision is the key.

The title of the first section is "The Burial of the Dead." Who is dead? The Hanged God, whom Madame Sosostris does not find, is dead, and the Waste Land is the product of his death. He is also the source of its renewal, for any

change of state of the Waste Land is contingent upon his revival (and, of course, on the attitude of the people). Perhaps one could suggest a literary analogue in the concept in Hölderlin and Rilke that we live in a time of Dürftigkeit because the old gods have died and the new have not yet been born. We live in a time of the absence of the gods. Williamson relates the theme of the dying god in this part of the poem to transcendence (a central theme in Existentialism):

The Fisher King's role is to represent man's fate as it originates in sex but cannot transcend it; without this transcendence, which is figured in the Hanged God, he is doomed to death. The Fisher King is differentiated from the Phoenician Sailor by his awareness of the means of transcendence. [Williamson, p. 196]

Thus, in the first part of the poem, the death theme is presented on the level of the god--the dying god--and on the level of man--"Fear death by water." What is the key to transcendence? The key is in the three staves("I have heard the key," line 412)--and all three staves imply the rejection of the present self in favor of something outside: give yourself, sympathize (of) yourself, control (yourself).

Existentialists, such as Heidegger, posit a similar necessity and similar transcendence or lack of transcendence. The rejection of the present self in favor of the Existenz-self which is implied in the view of man as a primarily projective structure at his most authentic moments may not be spelled out in explicit ecclesiastical terms of sympathy,

etc., but the nature of its transcendence is still essentially like that described in Eliot: transcendence of self, the self of the present, the self of lust (and German Lust) without love. As in Existentialism, the transcendence is vividly presented in terms of a boundary situation--death.

But death is not to be taken in solely the literal sense, for it is also death-in-life, the death of non-being as it invades a human being even while still alive--physically. Thus, the regeneration which will represent a transcendence of death is not necessarily a physical regeneration (a "resurrection of the body" after death) but may be a spiritual regeneration which will represent a transcendence of death-in-life.

As in Existentialism, this spiritual transcendence is associated with a transcendence of the external and abstract and a return to the inner, the vital spiritual life which is free of externalities. A new subjectivity is needed, say the Existentialists. Eliot would agree, but would not approach subjectivity with the open arms and radical affirmation of the Existentialists. Eliot would set sharp limits on subjectivity, for the self is still to be conceived in an ecclesiastical, political, and social order. There is always a context for Eliot's transcendence.

Because there is always a context for Eliot's transcendence, the question arises as to whether the meaninglessness

which is found in The Waste Land is the cosmic meaninglessness of the Existentialists. Obviously it is not. But the encounter with meaninglessness in the form of spiritual emptiness is nevertheless an existential encounter with meaninglessness on one level. For Existentialists, subjectivity is the starting point of all thought, and the self is the center of a subjective universe which constitutes reality; reality is the self in a world of space and time, although subjective space and time. For Eliot, even in The Waste Land, however important the self may become, it is never all-important. Thus, meaninglessness in the self is for an Existentialist almost cosmic meaninglessness; for Eliot spiritual meaninglessness is a Waste Land, but a Waste Land to be traversed, a circumscribed Waste Land. It is not a cosmic meaninglessness, but a valley of the shadow of death.

Despite this difference in orientation, the encounter remains the same with Eliot as with the Existentialists: an encounter with meaninglessness in the form of spiritual emptiness. (Existentialists commonly call this meaninglessness a form of non-being or nothingness on the spiritual level.) Indeed, the poem can be seen as a veritable repository of modern experience--the fear in a handful of dust, the restlessness, the seeking, the fateful hesitancy, the yielding to lust without love, and so on. Because these experiences are those presented by the Existentialists, the

poem becomes a medium of expression of the same concerns which give definition to Existentialism: the encounter with meaninglessness, the reaction of anxiety, the perception of surrounding inauthenticity, the sense of the need for regeneration.

Certain lines in the poem are particularly illustrative of the experiences or of the perceptions of inauthenticity which are associated with Existentialism. In the interest of clarity a few of these will be examined.

- 1 April is the cruellest month, breeding
- 2 Lilacs out of the dead land, mixing
- 3 Memory and desire, stirring
- 4 Dull roots with spring rain.
- 5 Winter kept us warm, covering
- 6 Earth in forgetful snow, feeding
- 7 A little life with dried tubers.

Why is April the "cruellest month"? Because it is the month of awakening, the thing that the dead-in-life fear. The purity of living in the memory of the previous summers is sullied with desire, which brings one out of the past and into the present and future. In a sense, desire tends to annihilate the past, then. Life-giving spring rain only accentuates the senility of "dull roots" and "dead land," can only herald the discovery of the unhidable sterility of this Waste Land when all other land is responding to the rain. April, then, is a cruel month compared to the winter months which can excuse hibernation and apparent

death-in-life. The snow forms a protective blanket, a wall of illusion, which covers up the barrenness of the land. Winter was kind; "Winter kept us warm." Winter fed "a little life with dried tubers." But this nourishment is just enough to maintain physical life, not the kind of nourishment which causes spring flowers to burst into bloom. This is what the Waste Land wants--an eternal winter, a lasting death-in-life, just "A little life with dried tubers."

... he took me out on a sled,
 14 And I was frightened. He said, Marie,
 15 Marie, hold on tight. And down we went.
 16 In the mountains, there you feel free.
 17 I read, much of the night, and go south in the winter.

Marie was frightened. If she had been alone, she would not have gone down at all, but he shoved off, "And down we went." Those were the days, the days of memory "when we were children, staying at the archduke's." Now she reads through the night and goes south in the winter.

In Existentialism, the authentic man fears death and exists in a state of being-towards-death; the inauthentic man, das Man, fears life--and death. Das Man lives in a state that is neither life in any abundance, nor physical death; it is death-in-life. The underlying fact of the above quotations is fear--fear in a "handful of dust," that is, man. This fear has no precise object which can be removed; it is a generalized emotion, an anxiety that prefers to remain in death-in-life rather than be regenerated, or

have its incapacity for regeneration revealed--for there is a reason for the incapacity.

The generalized fear which pervades the opening section, indeed the whole poem, is in essence existential anxiety. In the inauthentic form it is the fear of the dead-in-life about life itself. In another form, the fear of spiritual deadness, of death, is the spur of anxiety. In either case, the two quotations express that pervasive and generalized anxiety without specific object, which is characteristically existential anxiety. On the level of land and vegetation, it is the cruelty of April. On the human level it is the disturbing memories, a feared herald of the desire for regeneration, that is cruel and feared, that causes anxiety. This anxiety is summed up in the line which indicates that since the anxiety will not let Marie sleep, she plunges into the vicarious world of reading and concentrates on her physical comfort by going south in the cold season.

"I read, much of the night, and go south in the winter." Unlike Amy, in The Family Reunion, who will not go south in the winter but exists on her determination that Wishwood will be kept ready for the coming of Harry, Marie is content to be moved by the weather. She fears life in the form of a decision to act and go down on the sled, and she is moved by the weather. She is indecisive, anxious, conformist.

But there is no water. The tree is dead and gives no shade. The rock is dry. Relentlessly the sun beats on the rock, only to induce more sterility, only to dry up even "the roots that clutch." Eliot's point is that desire without love is sterile. He illustrates this in "The Fire Sermon" with the seduction of the typist, "so rudely forced." The application of this phrase (originally referring to proud Philomela of Ovid's Metamorphoses) to modern sex life is an example of Eliot's ironic contrast of the past to the present. The modern typist is not "rudely forced," for what had she to lose? And the poet goes to considerable pains to describe the surroundings of the untidy, littered, narrow apartment and the bored, tired typist. The considerable description of the room corresponds to the abundant description of the room which opened the section, "A Game of Chess." But whatever the setting and whatever the irony, the essential message is still the same: lust without love is sterile.

Love in its true form is creative, fertile, spiritual. It transcends the present and transcends the physical; it only expresses itself in the physical. But lust without love is like body without soul. The sun represents the force of warmth and vitality that brings spring, but if the land be stony and barren, if the land be without living water, then no vegetation issues forth in the spring. The sun then becomes a malignant force beating on the stone

unprotected by the tree above (the tree has died for lack of water). The dead tree gives no shelter; the sun beats down on the dry stone; there is no sound of water. Just as the fear of life was presented on the vegetable level in the opening of the poem and then presented on the human level, so also the lack of nourishment, the relentless sun beating down on the shelterless stone, is presented on the vegetable level (the level of the land that is become a "Waste Land") and then on the human level in "A Game of Chess" and "The Fire Sermon" which follow. On the human level the vegetable sterility becomes physical and spiritual sterility; the lack of water becomes the lack of the living waters of the spirit; the relentless sun beating down on the dry rock becomes the burning of lust on the spiritless sterile human being. The Waste Land, in large, is the realm of the human spirit-- which has become sterile and knows only the relentless burning of mere lust.

Just as a "waste land" is a perfect existential symbol of the inner nature of modern man, so also is the chess game an existential symbol of the inhuman abstraction of the modern mind. Eliot is careful to relate the chess game to the sex life, and the relationship would exist even without the reference to Middleton's Women beware Women. There are two main scenes, in Part II, and these scenes serve to say the same thing--that sex has lost meaning. In the

richness of "fruited vines," of glittering jewels reflected in mirrors, of exotic perfumes, or in the poor pub, the story is still the same: love is gone. Sex has become a mechanical game, like a game of chess.

As Grover Smith points out, the essential differences between the picture of the sex life in "A Game of Chess" (both rich and poor) and that of "The Fire Sermon" is between the married and unmarried state. The fire in "The Fire Sermon" is presumably both the burning which is referred to in the closing lines of the section and the burning of lust. But sex in the married state is essentially the same, even if it is "A Game of Chess," that is, something to stave off boredom, an escape. The protagonist, in marriage linked with this rich Belladonna, finds himself joined to a neurotic, shrewish woman of fashion, who is afflicted with boredom, exasperated and somehow possessed of the feeling of frustration. Even in her world of luxury where she feels frustrated and cheated of the genuine, "strange synthetic perfumes, Unguent, powdered, or liquid--troubled, confused and drowned the sense in odours. . . ." Somehow she feels that she, like Philomela, has been "rudely forced"--and indeed she has been, for sex without love is little better than rape. The fact remains that she is cheated, frustrated, neurotic; she irritates her husband by expecting him to chatter, too; she feels the same exasperation that drove deserted Dido

into the streets:

131 "What shall I do now? What shall I do?"
132 "I shall rush out as I am, and walk the street
133 "With my hair down, so. What shall we do to-morrow?
134 "What shall we ever do?"

He replies wearily, or muses to himself:

135 The hot water at ten.
136 And if it rains, a closed car at four.

And then in significant lines that suggest that marriage is only a cover-up for a seduction, a rude forcing and violation, rape--the chess game:

137 And we shall play a game of chess,
138 Pressing lidless eyes and waiting for a knock
upon the door.

The lostness, aloneness, alienation, and meaninglessness of all that surrounds them is expressed in the lines,

115 I think we are in rats' alley
116 Where the dead men lost their bones.

Life has become, even among perfume and gold, like existing in a rubbish-strewn alley, among broken images, among lifeless bones. The experiences of alienation, of spiritual emptiness, of aloneness, lostness, meaninglessness--these are characteristic existential experiences and at the same time are the burden of the mood of the protagonist in his relationship with Belladonna, the "lady of situations."

The chess game, as mentioned earlier, is an essentially existential symbol because it represents the inhuman abstraction of modern man, the breakdown of meaningful human relationships, and the reduction of what should be the expression

In "The Fire Sermon," the picture only becomes more depressing, as we are given a further delineation of lostness, confusion, and sterility of this waste land that one calls "modern man." The shallowness, the artificiality, the confusion of the handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, and cigarette butts, are all set in ironic contrast to the atmosphere of one of the most beautiful refrains in English poetry:

174 ...The nymphs are departed.
175 Sweet Thames, run softly, till I end my song.
176 The river bears no empty bottles, sandwich papers
177 Silk handkerchiefs, cardboard boxes, cigarette ends
178 Or other testimony of summer nights. The nymphs
are departed.

Professor H. H. Waggoner correctly characterizes these lines as "a reflection of the state of mind of modern dehumanized man."³

The scene where the "young man carbuncular...A small house agent's clerk" seduces "the typist home at tea-time" has been discussed above. One might perhaps add a note on how repeatedly the mechanicalness and boredom of the whole scene is stressed. She is "bored and tired" and in the scene she is all but a lifeless corpse: his caresses are "unreproved" and "undesired"; she offers "no defence" and

3. T. S. Eliot and 'The Hollow Men,' American Literature XV (May 1943) 101-26.

"no response"; he makes a welcome of indifference; he bestows a kiss that only reveals the essential meaninglessness and separation that exists between them, a kiss that in itself tells the story that he has no more regard for her as a person than she for him. As he gropes his way away, she turns and glances in the glass and the reference to "her departed lover" is full of the irony of how inapplicable the word "lover" seems in reference to this young man. And, as mechanically as she performed the sex act, she smooths her hair "with automatic hand" and turns on--of course--a machine: the gramophone. Everything is mechanical; feeling is gone. Even physical pleasure is not treated with reverence and the anticipation of it stretched out, but rather made empty by rude forcing.

If the attitude of the typist is boredom, what is that of the "young man carbuncular"? Allen Tate correctly identifies the depiction as Eliot's ironic presentation of the practical young man who has reduced sex to a matter of business, physical conquest, secular science:

The seduction scene is the picture of modern and dominating man. The arrogance and the pride of conquest of the "small house agent's clerk" are the badge of science, bumptious practicality, overweening secular faith. The very success of his conquest witnesses its aimless character; it succeeds as a wheel succeeds in turning: he can only conquer again.⁴

⁴Allen Tate, On the Limits of Poetry: Selected Essays, 1928-1948 (New York: The Swallow Press and William Morrow and Co., 1948), p. 346.

Love has been reduced to sex by the practical and scientific points of view which dominate modern life. John Crow Ransom observes in his God without Thunder, "Love is the aesthetic of sex; lust is the science." Love has been violated by science. There is only lust left.

The meaninglessness of the act is perceived by the typist in her boredom; the young man is blind to his own inauthenticity. He will only continue in his own waste land, with one empty conquest after another. Existentially, the young man is the model of the modern inauthentic, mechanized, scientific, practical man to whom nothing inner has reality, who lives solely in an external world of illusion. Physical pleasure, the pride of apparent subjection and conquest--these are the dynamics of his life. But he is content with mere external conquest, for

241 His vanity requires no response,
242 And makes a welcome of indifference.

He may achieve external mastery and conquest; but he will not master himself, for he has a blind spot. He is blind, or to put it otherwise, he lacks vision. Should April bring a vision of himself as spiritually regenerated, should April come to this waste land with more than the meager nourishment of a winter, should April wake him up from his sleep of death-in-life--then April would seem to him, too, to be the "cruellest month." April would then remove the snow-blanket of the illusion of mastery and conquest, and expose the sterility

and inadequacy of this death-in-life, this externalized, dehumanized existence.

Part IV presents the final chapter of one level of the story of the spiritual waste land. Paradoxically, it is "death by water," an excess of water, death by drowning. The image who acts out this part of the drama is Phlebas the Phoenician. The external and practical world (described above in connection with the young man carbuncular) is gone; forgotten is the daily world of gulls, sea swell, and the practical world of "profit and loss." Just as the first section pulls the audience into the frame of reference with the quotation from Baudelaire, so also part IV closes with an admonition directed at the audience: "Consider Phlebas, who was once handsome and tall as you."

The end of Part IV marks the end of one order of experience, the order of the lost and without vision. But the protagonist, Tiresias, remains. He is the one who has risen above the waste land, who has recognized it as a waste land, and further has experienced the wasteland. It is through the eyes and consciousness of Tiresias that the waste land is experienced and presented. Eliot's note makes this clear:

Tiresias, although a mere spectator and not indeed a "character," is yet the most important personage in the poem, uniting all the rest. Just as the one-eyed merchant, seller of currents, melts into the Phoenician Sailor, and the latter is not wholly distinct from Ferdinand Prince of Naples, so all the women are one

woman, and the two sexes meet in Tiresias. What Tiresias sees, in fact, is the substance of the poem.
(note to line 218)

Thus, Part V, which concludes the poem, presents the fate of Tiresias. And, as Tiresias unites aspects of all the rest of the characters in The Waste Land, Part V turns into a grand finale in which the themes of the other parts reappear and are set in the cruel contrast between the state of death-in-life and the possibility of regeneration through the three staves. The three-fold test serves to show more vividly the pathetic sterility and inauthenticity of the Waste Land. The Hanged Man reappears at Gethsemene, Golgotha, and the road to Emmaeus; the dry rock, waiting agonized for life-giving water is vividly presented; the cities of Europe are seen falling to pieces, unreal; tautness and frustration reappear in the image of a woman drawing out strands of her hair and playing to baby-faced bats to the accompaniment of upside-down towers tolling maternal lamentation; then Tiresias as the Knight of Faith of the Grail legend approaches the Chapel Perilous. But, alas, he has failed the test; the chapel is empty and "only the wind's home," the wind rattling "Dry bones can harm no one." Dry bones can help no one either. The three-fold failure is, like Peter's three-fold denial, fatefully and ominously followed by the crowing of the cock. The lightning flashes, there is a damp gust of wind, "Then spoke the thunder," revealing the tragic three

There is a pause and a change of scene. The final picture is of the protagonist down on the shore with the arid plain (the Waste Land) behind him. In line 426, he asks, "Shall I at least set my lands in order?" recalling Isaiah 38:1: "Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die and not live." The calm of this question is interrupted by the swift tempo of "London Bridge is falling down falling down falling down," and to the rubble of the bridge is added the ruined tower of the Prince of Aquitaine, as the protagonist shores against his ruins the possibility of purgation of the inauthenticity which weights him down: "Then he hid him in the fire which refines them. . .when shall I be as the swallow--O swallow swallow." The poem ends in a frenzy of feigned madness, the three-fold staff, and a benediction:

431 These fragments I have shored against my ruins
432 Why then Ile fit you. Hieronymo's mad againe.
433 Datta. Dayadhvam. Damyata.
Shantih shantih shantih

The London Bridge image may be seen as an existential image in two respects. It symbolizes the disintegration of an inauthentic order, and recalls the falling to pieces of the great cities of Western civilization of lines 373-7. And it also symbolizes the disintegration of the individual personality, and the bridge as a pile of rubble (a heap of

broken images?) anticipates the pile of rubble of the fallen tower of the Prince of Aquitaine which occurs only three lines after the London Bridge image. Secondly, the association with that other part of the song, "take the key and lock him up, lock him up, lock him up," is also significant for the poem and as an existential symbol. In the poem, the protagonist is caught and locked up by "my fair lady," as they call her in the song: Belladonna, the lady of situations. Existentially speaking, he is caught in the downward spiral (the wheel in Eliot is a symbol of the temporal order) of Verfallen (recalling the whirlpool in Part IV). He becomes a prisoner of his own failures and mistakes, and ultimately is doomed to death for having yielded to this Belladonna. The image also expresses the watchfulness that the wayfaring Existentialist must have in order to resist the automatic yielding to the pattern or to the lusts of the present, in order that his potential self may be realized. "Take the key and lock him up" can be associated with lines 414-15:

We think of the key, each in his prison
Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison

Man is imprisoned by his lack of sympathy, his Coriolanus-like pride. This, too, reinforces the feeling of imprisonment--that is, of powerlessness and helplessness. This helplessness is present too in the question about setting one's house in order, Hieronimo's "Why then Ile fit you,"

and in "Le Prince d'Aquitaine à la tour abolie" (the ruined tower may be associated with the tower of oneself and the tower of one's life, now rubble).

The three staves, which represent Eliot's positive suggestions with reference to regeneration go beyond the scope of existential thought. Indeed, they pose a keen set of questions not only for the protagonist but for existential thought. As in Existentialism, the emphasis is on the self and the sin and regeneration of the self; but unlike the Existentialists, Eliot views self-centeredness as something to be transcended and even condemned. There is an almost unvarying agreement between Eliot and the Existentialists in the analysis of the negative elements and failures of modern man, but Eliot supplies a positive program for the remedy of the predicament of modern man which is not to be found in Existentialism. The negative presentation of the tragic picture of self-loss in modern man posits the positive value of the realization of the self, and there is agreement on this point; but Eliot goes to the dawn of Aryan civilization for his three-fold program, while the Existentialists tend to feel too strongly bound to their own system. Indeed, in an ontology based on the self, the difficulty of overcoming the confines of the self becomes a major problem in Existentialism despite the efforts in this direction in Jasper's concept of the basic need for "loving communication,"

in Heidegger's Mitsein, in Marcel's concept of the "I-Thou" relationship, and in Tillich's systematized Christianity.

But this is only to admit that Existentialism, as valuable as it may be in the diagnosis of the shortcomings of modern man and modern society, is not without its own weaknesses and inadequacies. It goes far in diagnosing modern man's lack of innerness, but its own program on the positive side is tentative and skeletal and suffers from solipsism. The Waste Land, too is long on the negative and short on the positive prospects of modern man, but in the distilled wisdom of "give, sympathize, control" there is presented a three-fold positive standard which goes far beyond Existentialism--a standard indeed, by which both the protagonist and the Existentialist may be judged.

Conclusion. The presentation of the being-in-the-world of modern man in The Waste Land is essentially the same as the analysis of existential thinkers. The work is a profound and moving expression of basic existential concerns and is a validation of the existential analysis of the deficiencies of modern man.

Both Eliot and the leading Existentialists present a vivid picture of the anxiety, restlessness, and frustration of modern man. ("I can connect/Nothing with nothing," lines 301-2). Both note man's lostness and alienation (Man is in a waste land. . . "I think we are in rats' alley/ Where the

dead men lost their bones." (lines 115-6). Both emphasize modern man's spiritual emptiness, his inner Dürftigkeit, his agonized longing for living waters (" . . .for you know only/A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,/And the dead tree gives no shelter. . . ." lines 21-3; "Here is no water but only rock/Rock and no water and the sandy road/The road winding above among the mountains/Which are mountains of rock without water/If there were water we should stop and drink. . . ." lines 331-5). Both stress the death-in-life theme ("Winter kept us warm. . .feeding a little life with dried tubers." lines 5-7). Both see man's life in terms of a quest, an odyssey of the self seeking the self. (The significance of fertility is in the fact that it indicates abundant life in the self. Fertility indicates self-realization. The meaning of the quest for fertility is that it is the quest of the self seeking the true, the potential, the abundant self.) Both Eliot and the leading Existentialists present a vivid picture of modern inauthenticity; both recognize that the real problem is inner; both see modern man as inauthentic, or in theological terminology, "in sin"; both stress the importance of transcendence and of regeneration. Both present a profound encounter with meaninglessness and with a loss of reality ("I can connect/Nothing with nothing." lines 301-2.) Both Jaspers and Eliot use history and myth in the same way, and have the same respect

for tradition. Both Eliot and the leading Existentialists see man as imperfect, "fallen," foundering. Both present a vivid picture of modern man as inhuman, sterile, weary, bored, confused; and both see the modern world as abstract, mechanical, inhuman, external, a world of illusion. (The chess game as an image shows the abstractness, mechanicalness, inhumanness of modern man and the modern world. Man is engaged in the game of sex, but it is just a game, an escape from boredom. The chess game may also be seen as a symbol of man as a pawn, wooden and without feeling or comprehension, moving in a drama he does not comprehend, asserting himself for himself not at all. The mechanical sex act, automatic hand, and mechanical gramophone in the seduction of the typist also show the weariness, boredom, inhumanness, externality, and mechanicalness of modern love, even extra-marital love.) Finally, in the image of the bumptious "small house agent's clerk," the "young man carbuncular," as he enters, unceremoniously assaults, and leaves, Eliot presents an ironic condemnation of contemporary secular values. Allen Tate has characterized him well:

The arrogance and the pride of conquest of the "small house agent's clerk" are the badge of science, bumptious practicality, overweening secular faith. [Tate, p. 346.]

Ironically, his success, his brilliant conquest, is an empty victory, even a meaningless one. The greater irony is in

the young man's tragic blindness to his own situation. Inner-ness is out of the question for the rigid objectivity of this young man who moves in an external world of practical values, a world of "profit and loss," of "observable fact" (a favorite scientific phrase). Love will never come to him; how could it? The nearest he will come will be lust and physical conquest. This is his waste land, the waste land of spiritual impoverishment and sterility. Existentially, the young man is the model of modern inauthenticity. He will be the young man who, unaccountably, will be by the true and deeper joys of life mutely eluded.

Eliot's Waste Land people and Waste-Land world, then, are, in all essential respects, expressions of Existentialism's "inauthentic man" and the inauthentic world he has created.

THE HOLLOW MEN

"Perhaps all the wisdom, and all truth, and all sincerity, are just compressed into that inappreciable moment of time in which we step over the threshold of the invisible."
Marlowe in "Heart of Darkness."

"Mistah Kurtz--he dead." Marlowe was there when Kurtz said his last words. And as this remarkable white god of the Congo stepped "over the threshold of the invisible," he looked into the beyond and back over his life and gasped, "The horror! The horror!" Marlowe, too, seemed to share that experience with Kurtz, and returning to Brussels from this vision into the heart of darkness, the city seemed irritating and unreal, full of pretence:

"I found myself back in the sepulchral city resenting the sight of people hurrying through the streets to filch a little money from each other, to devour their infamous cookery, to gulp the unwholesome beer, to dream their insignificant and silly dreams. They trespassed upon my thoughts. They were intruders whose knowledge of life was to me an irritating pretense...." 5

"The Hollow Men" carries the epigraph, "Mistah Kurtz--he dead!" the announcement by a black servant that the remarkable "Dr. Livingstone" of Joseph Conrad's "Heart of Darkness" has expired. Like Kurtz, the hollow men are standing at the gate of that "twilight kingdom" of death,

⁵Joseph Conrad. "Heart of Darkness," The Portable Conrad, ed. M. D. Zabel (New York, 1947), p. 593.

and like him they have a vision of the pretence and meaninglessness of life.

The Waste Land is dramatic in structure and describes a quest for self-realization; "The Hollow Men" is essentially static. The poem assumes the form of an interior monologue, and if there is some slight psychological progression, there is nevertheless no action whatsoever in most of the poem. Indeed, its remarkable motionlessness is part of its effect.

The poem is significant in terms of Existentialism because it presents an existential encounter with meaninglessness. And meaninglessness is always coupled with a loss of reality. (The question of which comes first is problematical, or at least must vary from situation to situation.) With meaninglessness and loss of reality comes the problem of those who do not feel the loss of reality, that is, the problem of illusion and the world of illusion.

In The Waste Land, the reality-illusion-meaninglessness problem is presented in less pessimistic terms and related to the religious problem of the loss of belief and the consequent loss of confidence and ultimate failure. This loss of belief is responsible for the frustration, futility, and failure, the sterility and dryness of The Waste Land. But "The Hollow Men" presents the frustration, futility, and failure, without indicating causes behind them.

"The Hollow Men" is largely and essentially descriptive, while The Waste Land is dramatic. Both poems present a depressing picture of spiritual emptiness, and the images, as Frank Wilson points out, show borrowing from the earlier work--the images of "rat's feet," a tumid river, dead land, and so on.⁶

Thus, the underlying message and dynamic of the poem is the loss of self, loss of meaning, and loss of reality which produce that particular and inescapable feeling of being spiritually empty and condemned that Eliot sums up in his image of the hollow man, the stuffed effigy. The device of interior monologue tends to bring the implied condemnation of The Waste Land down to a personal level in the shorter poem, and the unwillingness to endure the judging eyes in "death's dream kingdom" reinforces the feeling of personal condemnation.

The loss of self in the first section is traced in the image of an effigy that is without insides, without innerness. Consciousness has turned to ashes; the headpiece is filled with straw:

We are the hollow men
We are the stuffed men
Leaning together
Headpiece filled with straw. Alas!

⁶Frank Wilson, Six Essays on the Development of T. S. Eliot (London: The Fortune Press, n.d.), p. 32.

Our dried voices, when
 We whisper together
 Are quiet and meaningless
 As wind in dry grass
 Or rats' feet over broken glass
 In our dry cellar

Shape without form, shade without colour
 Paralysed force, gesture without motion;

The word "meaningless" is the key to the whole first part. Meaning has gone, and one is left with shape but no form, a black and white world of shadings, but no color; force seems paralysed, and empty gesture replaces genuine motion. The voices are dry (sterile and lifeless), quiet, and meaningless. Further, the loss of true form and true motion renders their actions futile, their passing untragic. They are not noble men brought low, for nobility has gone from modern man. The hollow man is only pathetic; he is only a physical object, a commodity, a thing about to be destroyed. His violence is empty and meaningless, simulated but not real:

Those who have crossed
 With direct eyes, to death's other Kingdom
 Remember us--if at all--not as lost
 Violent souls, but only
 As the hollow men
 The stuffed men.

Modern man has "shape without form, shade without colour,
 ...gesture without motion."

Uneasiness and escape are the dominant feelings in the second section. The uneasiness of the man condemned who cannot meet the eyes of those he has wronged and of those

who in the twilight kingdom see him, know him, and judge him. Fortunately the eyes in death's dream kingdom are not those of human beings who haunt our nightmares, but take the comely and relieving form of sunlight, tree, and singing wind:

Eyes I dare not meet in dreams
 In death's dream kingdom
 These do not appear:
 There the eyes are
 Sunlight on a broken column
 There, is a tree swinging
 And voices are
 In the wind's singing
 More distant and more solemn
 Than a fading star.

The desire for escape takes the form of yearning for a disguise that will make him legitimately supposed to be hollow and stuffed:

Let me be no nearer
 In death's dream kingdom
 Let me also wear
 Such deliberate disguises
 Rat's coat, crowskin, crossed staves
 In a field
 Behaving as the wind behaves
 No nearer--

Not that final meeting
 In the twilight kingdom

The third section presents the sterility and longing theme. The land is a land of cactus and sand, and stone images to which the condemned man periodically directs his supplication:

This is the dead land
 This is cactus land
 Here the stone images

Are raised, here they receive
 The supplication of a dead man's hand
 Under the twinkle of a fading star.

Desire rises up only to be frustrated on broken stone:

Is it like this
 In death's other kingdom
 Waking alone
 At the hour when we are
 Trembling with tenderness
 Lips that would kiss
 Form prayers to broken stone.

The fourth section is dominated by desertedness and loss and aloneness. Waiting on the bank to cross the river on the barge of Charon, they meet with no eyes to behold them, to judge them, or to save them. (Grover Smith asserts that the eyes are associated with the eyes of Beatrice in the Purgatorio XXX-XXXI and that their possible presence on the other side of the river might portend salvation. See Smith, p. 106.) They are deserted and their kingdoms lost:

The eyes are not here
 There are no eyes here
 In this valley of dying stars
 In this hollow valley
 This broken jaw of our lost kingdoms

In this last of meeting places
 We grope together
 And avoid speech
 Gathered on this beach of the tumid river

Sightless, unless
 The eyes reappear
 As the perpetual star
 Multifoliate rose
 Of death's twilight kingdom
 The hope only
 Of empty men.

The only hope is the perpetual star, the multifoliate rose,
the Holy Virgin.

Abruptly, the fifth section jars the previous inertness into the frenzy of apparent motion. But the motion is the motion of the yielding to the flesh, the circularity of a frenetic five-o'clock dance around the cactus. This is Eliot's recurring image of the whole of human existence, the existential downward spiral of Verfallen.

Here we go round the prickly pear
Prickly pear prickly pear
Here we go round the prickly pear
At five o'clock in the morning.

And above the melancholy, hum-drum hullabaloo of
this dismal chorus comes the sober observation:

Between the idea
And the reality
Between the motion
And the act
Falls the Shadow

Intention always falls short of its realization. There is a realm of essences, of potencies, of ideas; but the shadow of human finiteness and the difficulties in any actualization fall between.

For Thine is the Kingdom

Between the conception
And the creation
Between the emotion
And the response
Falls the Shadow

Life is very long

Between the desire
And the spasm
Between the potency
And the existence
Between the essence
And the Descent
Falls the Shadow

For Thine is the Kingdom

For Thine is
Life is
For Thine is the

This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but a whimper.

In all three of the stanzas dealing with the fall of the shadow the opening comparison stresses the differences between intention and fact. This is Eliot's rationalization of the hollow state, his excuse--and perhaps the factor that will raise him from the condemnation on the other side of the fateful river to ultimate redemption, peace, beatitude. His other plea is that "Life is very long"; and there is perhaps an ironic excuse even in the "For Thine is the Kingdom," for the word kingdom recalls its repeated use in the poem in reference to death's kingdom. This kingdom, too, is "Thine."

This is the way the world goes round, and this is the way the world ends--not with a bang but a whimper. There is none of the violence of a tragic and explosive

"bang!" but only the hollow whimper and then silence--
 What else could come from those who will be remembered "not
 as lost/ Violent souls, but only/ As the hollow men/ The
 stuffed men."

Existentially, one cannot but feel the anguish of modern man from the opening declaration, "We are the hollow men/ We are the stuffed men...Our dried voices...are quiet and meaningless...." to the frenzy, yet weariness and despair, of the final "This is the way the world ends/ Not with a bang but a whimper." This is the existential anguish which comes from the perception of inauthenticity and meaninglessness inside, the agony that is focussed in the image of hollow man, the stuffed man, the man with headpiece stuffed with straw. This is the experience of the loss of reality and the loss of meaning, as well as the ultimate loss of self. Form, color, and motion--these are gone, and empty substitutes are all that remain, ghosts and pretences of former realities.

Illusion, self-loss, anxiety--these are three basic aspects of Existentialism and they are three of the basic aspects of the poem. True motion is gone; only the illusion of motion remains. There is the illusion of motion in the dance around the prickly pear, but the motion is actually circular, futile, static--that is, confined to one place.

There is no progression in the dance, only endless circularity.

Finitude and the problems of actualization are perennial concerns of philosophy, and they are of central importance in Existentialism, for man's limits in time and his always having to be in a situation and in history are a basic aspect of the analyses of Heidegger, Jaspers, and Sartre. They would immediately identify the "Shadow" as the problem of becoming finite, of actualization. Toward an understanding of this "Shadow," this area of the problems of actualization and finitude, Existentialism submits some of its most important explorations and analyses.

Some of the characteristic experiences in Existentialism--finitude, anxiety, meaninglessness, emptiness, illusion, and self-loss--find vivid expression in "The Hollow Men." The poem may be regarded, then, as a presentation of a point of view and an experience which may legitimately be called "existential."

THE FAMILY REUNION

In a world of fugitives
 The person taking the opposite direction
 Will appear to run away.
 [II, 2, p. 281]⁷

The Family Reunion is a story of the working out of a curse, a story of sin and expiation, a story of the discovery of self-loss and of a quest for a true self. In the scene in which Agatha reveals her true relationship to Harry, she makes this explicit:

What we have written is not a story of detection,
 Of crime and punishment, but of sin and expiation.
 [II, 2, p. 275]

And in Agatha's speech which concludes the play, the theme of "the pilgrimage/ Of expiation" which Harry is embarking upon, his future of going round and round the wheel of purgatorial suffering, is clearly stated:

This way the pilgrimage
 Of expiation
 Round and round the circle
 Completing the charm
 So the knot be unknotted
 The cross be uncrossed
 The crooked be made straight
 And the curse be ended
 By intercession
 By pilgrimage
 By those who depart

⁷ The texts of all quotations from the play are from T. S. Eliot: The Family Reunion (New York, 1952). The Roman numeral will refer to the Part and the arabic number to the Scene; the page is that in the edition just cited. T. S. Eliot, The Complete Poems and Plays 1909-1950 (New York, 1952)

In several directions
 For their own redemption
 And that of the departed--
 May they rest in peace.

[II, 3, p. 293]

Within the framework of this larger theme of sin and expiation, one may say that more specifically, The Family Reunion is the story of the coming of the consciousness of the need for expiation and then the story of embarking on a pilgrimage to remove the sin. This coming of a consciousness of sin, then, is the central theme of the play. This consciousness is emphasized in the crucial scene between Agatha and Harry, both when Agatha remarks, "It is possible/ You are the consciousness of your unhappy family,/ Its bird sent flying through the purgatorial flame," and when Harry replies:

Look, I do not know why,
 I feel happy for a moment, as if I
 had come home.

It is quite irrational, but now
 I feel quite happy, as if happiness
 Did not consist in getting what one wanted
 Or in getting rid of what can't be got rid of
 But in a different vision. This is like an end.

AGATHA: And a beginning. [II, 2, p. 275]

This is the crucial moment in the play. It is an end of the confusion, the darkened understanding, the running away. It is the beginning of assertion, of insight, of pilgrimage. It is the "moment of clarity" which makes all the difference in Harry's quest for himself. He has discovered that happiness is not "in getting rid of what can't be got rid of/ But

in a different vision."

"A different vision"--this is the key to the play. And it is also the key to the ways in which Existentialism is reflected in the play, for this vision is fundamentally an existential vision cloaked in terminology associated with religion. Is Harry's purgation and expiation going to be under the aegis of any church? There is little explicit evidence to suggest that Harry is setting out for the nearest Anglican Church. Indeed, the sin may be conceived of as karma as easily as sin in the Christian sense. Are there not basic similarities between the vision of authenticity in The Waste Land and Harry's instinctive perception of the difference between his mission of self-purgation and the Alltäglichkeit of his family?

Just as in The Waste Land, one finds in The Family Reunion the basic theme of a self in quest of a self, one finds anxiety at spiritual sterility and deadness, a consequent disintegration of reality and a search for a more genuine reality, the inadequacy of abstraction, the fear of appropriation by others, the need to break the pattern of dailiness (Alltäglichkeit), and finally the recognition of the prime importance of man's inner condition--all basic attitudes of the existential point of view. In an important sense, The Family Reunion is of a piece with The Waste Land. The quest for the self in the earlier work is not a

narrowly Christian regeneration, but a concept of regeneration found in other traditions as well, back to the beginning of Aryan civilization. So also in The Family Reunion Christ is not central--indeed, is not mentioned--nor is the Atoning Death suggested as the quick and easy solution to Harry's problems. Rather, Harry has a load of karma which can only gradually be worked off, a karma from a previous incarnation (his father) and perhaps from his whole unhappy family. (This suggests the Old Testament idea that the sins of the father shall be visited upon the sons even to the third and fourth generations.) Thus, one may say that the concepts of sin and expiation in The Family Reunion may be thought of in Dantean terms, but must also be viewed in the larger sense of spiritual regeneration in non-Christian terms as well.

Inauthenticity, as it is presented in the play, is one of the basic underlying aspects of the relationship of the work to the existential point of view. As in Existentialism, lack of vision distinguishes the inauthentic from the authentic mode of being-in-the-world, and the inauthentically existing being lives in a world of illusion, shielded by externalities and dailiness from a reality he could not bear. This creates the dichotomy of authenticity and inauthenticity, with Harry, Mary, and Agatha ranged in one

category and the "family"--Amy, Ivy, Violet, Gerald, Charles, John, and Arthur--in the other. It is a basic pattern of the irony of the play, that the standards and values of the one orientation to life should be unintelligible and repellent to the other. Thus, precisely when it seems to the family that Harry is deserting them, he has accepted the responsibility for the family.⁸ To the family, Harry's departure is a falling from purposeful living at Wishwood into directionless wandering; to Harry, the family are living aimless lives, "without purpose, and without principle."

This analysis will examine both the authentic and the inauthentic orientations to being-in-the-world and seek to discover in what ways these orientations are analogous to existential authenticity and inauthenticity.

Inauthenticity: lack of consciousness. A lack of vision, insight, or consciousness is a characteristic of Eliot's inauthentic orientation, as evidenced by Harry's remark after arriving home and looking around himself:

HARRY: You are all people
To whom nothing has happened, at most a
continual impact
Of external events. You have gone through
life in sleep,
Never woken to the nightmare. I tell you,
life would be unendurable
If you were wide awake.

[T 1 p. 234]

[I, 1, p. 234]

⁸This is noted in the article by Roy W. Battenhouse, "Eliot's The Family Reunion as Christian Prophecy," Christendom X (Summer, 1945) 309.

Even the family doctor is presented as essentially so concerned with physical preservation of the body that he is blind to anything but externalities. The caricature of Warburton is also a caricature of much of not only medical science, but science in general. Science operates on the periphery of reality, with the physical part, the biological substratum, of the human being. It has no grasp of the reality of anything else. This attitude, when taken over by the general populace, results in a similar blindness, a similar tendency towards a preoccupation with "observable fact."

One may find an apparent contradiction in the criticism of both excessive concreteness and excessive abstraction (that is, the abstractness of language and the abstractness of the news, weather report, international catastrophes), but both the concrete and the abstract remain within the arena of the external, the observable fact. The abstractness of the international news is a matter of distance from the event, but the event is still external. And the family's concern with weather indicates that there is nothing more important to interest them, and that their concern is with the temperature and precipitation of the world in which they are living externally, rather than the temperature (coldness) and lack of precipitation (rain) in their internal worlds.

Pattern and fear of appropriation. There is a certain pattern which one falls into and which can imprison one without ever revealing its oppressive nature. But to the authentically existing self, it means a tyrannical domination to be feared. After Harry tells Amy he is going to leave, Agatha and Amy are left alone, and Amy unconsciously reveals the domineering nature of her personality in the bitter recollection of all she has invested in Harry and his future:

Thirty-five years designing his life,
Eight years watching, without him, at Wishwood,
Years of bitterness and disappointment.

[II, 3, p. 283]

But precisely because she is "designing his life," Harry must escape in order to avoid being appropriated by Amy and Wishwood.

External determination by circumstance. In the final scene of the play, the family are making their plans for the funeral and wondering what time the trains run after the ceremony; they conclude: "ALL: But we must adjust ourselves to the moment: we must do the right thing." [II,3,p.292] In other words, they must conform to the pattern. This is in contrast to Downing's observation about Harry earlier in the same scene,

We most of us seem to live according to
circumstance,
But with people like him, there's something
inside them

That accounts for what happens to them.
 You get a feeling of it.
 So I seem to know beforehand, when something's
 going to happen,
 And it seems quite natural, being his Lordship.
 [II, 3, p. 289]

Harry is, and paradoxically is not, the victim of circumstance, for he is not externally determined by unforeseen events, but is a self-determining individual who--because he projects himself into the future--is in some ways as predictable as the inauthentically existing members of his family.

Automatism and lack of inner direction. Indeed, the inner-directedness of Harry is in contrast to his own observation of the aimlessness and blindness (being in a fog) and endless circularity--the other-directedness--of his family.

HARRY: The sudden solitude in a crowded desert
 In a thick smoke, many creatures moving
 Without direction, for no direction
 Leads anywhere but round and round in that
 vapour--
 Without purpose, and without principle of
 conduct
 In flickering intervals of light and darkness;
 [I, 1, p. 235]

The "crowded desert" is the world of inauthentically existing human beings existing in a waste land, going round and round in the wheel of physical existence, never finding the still point on the wheel, the "moment of clarity" which is the key to Harry's regeneration. When Harry comes to Wishwood he is bound to this wheel but there is hope because he

is not blind to his own inauthenticity; the existence in waking sleep, the lack of true consciousness of which he accuses the others, is in him only a "partial anaesthesia" and a partial observation of his own lostness:

The partial anaesthesia of suffering without
feeling
And partial observation of one's own automatism
While the slow stain sinks deeper through the
skin
Tainting the flesh and discolouring the bone--
This is what matters, but it is unspeakable,
Untranslatable....

[Same]

Harry's first reaction to coming out of this blindness and realizing that he was caught in the wheel, imprisoned and unable to move, was marriage. This proved futile and only imprisoned him in another world outside of Wishwood and made him feel guilty for leaving Wishwood. His next move was of even greater violence, but brought him only the most momentary rest on the turning wheel, for it did not move toward the still point at the center of the wheel but merely reversed the direction:

One thinks to escape
By violence, but one is still alone
In an over-crowded desert, jostled by ghosts.
It was only reversing the senseless direction
For a momentary rest on the burning wheel
That cloudless night in the mid-Atlantic
When I pushed her over.

[Same]

Harry is now returning to Wishwood to begin to build a real future upon a real past. This course will bring him the

"moment of clarity" (the still point at the center of the wheel) which will mark the beginning of his regeneration, the beginning of his pilgrimage of expiation.

In telling what he is attempting to escape from, Harry furnishes further description of the nature of the inauthentic orientation to life. "Crowded desert" is a reference to the sterility and the popularity of inauthenticity. "Thick smoke" asserts their essential blindness. "Without direction...Without purpose, and without principle of conduct" shows the lack of self-assertion, of direction. "Partial anaesthesia" refers to the impaired consciousness of those who are fallen. "Slow stain...Tainting the flesh and discolouring the bone..." is the sense of guilt which is present in Harry and absent in most of his family. Inauthenticity, then, is popular, sterile, blind, without direction, unconscious, and unguilty.

Anxiety and pretence. If there is no consciousness of guilt, there is still a certain suppressed anxiety:

CHORUS: We all of us make the pretension
 To be the uncommon exception
 To the universal bondage.
 We like to appear in the newspapers
 So long as we are in the right column.
 We know about the railway accident
 We know about the sudden thrombosis
 And the slowly hardening artery.
 We like to be thought well of by others
 So that we may think well of ourselves.
 And any explanation will satisfy:
 We only ask to be reassured
 About the noises in the cellar
 And the window that should not have been open.
 [I, 1, pp. 242-3]

But there are still "noises in the cellar" and there is still the anxiety that something has gone wrong, that all is not as it should be. "We only ask to be reassured" illustrates the grasping at straws to preserve the illusion that inside all is well, for others think well of us--as long as we conform to the pattern, their pattern. But still there is the uneasiness and dread, the suppressed realization that this world is not ultimately real. The pretence only barely succeeds in hiding the loss of reality:

Why do we all behave as if the door might
suddenly open, the curtains
be drawn,
The cellar make some dreadful disclosure, the
roof disappear,
And we should cease to be sure of what is real
or unreal?
Hold tight, hold tight, we must insist that
the world is what we have always
taken it to be.
[I, 1, p. 243]

Pretence, illusion, anxiety, loss of reality--these, too, belong to the world of inauthenticity.

This is the psychology of Hemingway's "Clean Well-Lighted Place," that out of the oblivion of nothingness and loss of belief ("Hail nada, full of nada, nada is with nada"), one finally carves a clean, well-lighted place that is some consolation in a world of meaninglessness. But it is not so conscious and extreme. It sums itself up in the frank admission by the chorus in the final scene:

We understand the ordinary business of living,
We know how to work the machine....

....

We know various spells and enchantments,
And minor forms of sorcery,
Divination and chiromancy,
Specifics against insomnia
Lumbago, and the loss of money
But the circle of our understanding
Is a very restricted area.
Except for a limited number
Of strictly practical purposes
We do not know what we are doing....

....

What is happening outside of the circle?
And what is the meaning of happening?
What ambush lies beyond the heather
And behind the Standing Stones?
Beyond the Heaviside Layer
And behind the smiling moon?
And what is being done to us?
And what are we, and what are we doing?
To each and all of these questions
There is no conceivable answer.
We have suffered far more than a personal loss--
We have lost our way in the dark.

[II, 3, p. 290-1]

When Eliot asks what is beyond the Heaviside Layer, he is not wanting more astronomical data; he is looking for the cure for a decaying civilization, for the crowds of fog-bound people milling in circles in the desert are representative of our civilization, caught in the wheel, and lost in the dark. We know "an awful lot about a lot of things," but not enough about important things. We can work the machines in our clean and well-lighted civilization, but the circle of our understanding is very restricted. Somehow we know, too, that something has gone wrong, that we are in decline (Verfallen), but our tools and machines do not seem to reveal

or to solve the problem. In a profound sense, we are the inauthentic men, the hollow men without innerness, the men who have lost their way in the dark.

The inauthentic orientation to being-in-the-world, then, is characterized by pretence, illusion, externality, abstractness, a certain unconsciousness and blindness to "the nightmare" of reality, yet an uneasiness, a suppressed dread and anxiety of something. It is characterized by a desire to conform to the pattern, to do "the right thing," yet by a lack of any real sense of guilt. It is the popular way, the way of the great majority, the way that displays the lack of direction and aimlessness of a milling crowd, the automatism of a clouded consciousness.

The inauthenticity of the family in The Family Reunion is essentially existential inauthenticity. There is the same picture of the public man without individuality and without innerness, the same suppressed anxiety, the same lack of vision and lack of inner-directedness, the same dismal conformity, the same absence of guilt, the same concern with a world of practicalities and externalities, the same Alltäglichkeit, the same pretence and illusion.

The Pattern of Authenticity. The authentic orientation to being-in-the-world is, in the play, generally the inverse of the inauthentic presented above. The quotations

above are often an ironic endorsement of the authentic orientation. The authentic orientation is one which recognizes the centrality of the inner state and therefore the centrality of the issue of sin and expiation. Sin and the sense of guilt and sin are individual matters; they are states of the self. Externalities like social conventions, mere murder, and so forth, must take second place. They are mere external events, and the person to whom inner things are the central reality can pass them off with a remark about the "unimportance of events." What is important is the self-realization of the individual, the authentic man who can face "the nightmare" of reality, who can achieve in a moment of clarity the freedom of surveying his lost fellow human beings from the still point on the turning world. The authentic man is liberated from practicalities and externalities to work out his salvation, to brush aside the world of illusion and pretense and build a real future upon a real past. He does not conform to the pattern but creates or discovers a pattern revealed by his superior vision of reality. He is humble, conscious of his guilt, and devoted to a pilgrimage of expiation.

To the above aspects of the authentic orientation may be added the following:

Freedom. The opposite of conformity is freedom. The dawn of the feeling for freedom in Harry is associated

with a hollow tree in what they called "the wilderness," to which Harry and Mary could secretly make their way to fight the Indians, Arthur and John. Returning from school for vacation they discovered that Amy, symbolically, had cleared the wilderness "to please the children." (The phrase "to please the children" is an example of Eliot's irony.) In his conversation with Mary, Harry wistfully recalls this early disappointment at the clearing of the wilderness:

It's absurd that one's only memory of freedom
Should be a hollow tree in a wood by the river.
[I, 2, p. 248]

Freedom was the breaking of the pattern that Amy was designing; freedom was escaping from Amy. The authentic man is the man who is not "conformed to the ways of this world" (as St. Paul says) but who rises above them, who is transformed by the renewing of the spirit, by moments of innerness and clarity. The early breaking of the pattern and going into the wilderness to a hollow tree, symbolically anticipates Harry's later eight-year journey into the wilderness. But Amy does not give up, never ceases her careful "designing his life." She "clears the wilderness" again while he is gone, and he returns again--but with the wilderness went the freedom; freedom is gone. The wilderness is no longer at Wishwood but is the world outside of Wishwood where Harry can find the privacy to work out his own salvation.

Superfluity. Sartre asserts the basic absurdity of the world and the superfluity of man in his concept that man is "de trop," that is, "too much." Man does not belong; he must found his world for himself. Eliot's presentation of the inauthentic world as purposeless, directionless, is a less extreme version of Sartre's idea of absurdity. Man, as a spiritual being, is de trop in the inauthentic world. Mary, in her scene with Harry, clearly expresses this experience:

...when I was a child I took everything
 for granted,
 Including the stupidity of older people--
 They lived in another world, which did not
 touch me.
 Just now, I find them very difficult to bear.
 They are always assured that you ought to be
 happy
 At the very moment when you are wholly conscious
 Of being a misfit, of being superfluous.
 [Same]

Precisely when others would imagine her happy--when she is conforming to the pattern--she is oppressively conscious of being de trop, superfluous.

Anxiety. Anxiety is felt even by the authentic man. It is the spur to continue the quest for the potential self. For Harry, anxiety takes the form of the Furies, the Eumenides. Toward the end of Harry's scene with Mary, he becomes conscious of the presence of the Eumenides:

HARRY: Stop!
 What is that? do you feel it?
 MARY: What, Harry?

HARRY: That apprehension deeper than all sense,
Deeper than the sense of smell, but like a
smell
In that it is indescribable, a sweet and
bitter smell
From another world.

[I, 2, p. 252]

Yet this is not suppressed, as in the inauthentic man, but admitted. Harry turns to the curtains and shouts, "Come out!"

Innerness. The inauthentic man is other-directed; the authentic man is inner-directed. This is the reason that Downing (as quoted above) could anticipate what his master would do, could anticipate that he would not much longer be needed. This is the reason, too, that happiness did not consist in getting rid of what could not be got rid of, but in a moment of insight, in a regaining of direction, in what Harry calls "a different vision." This is the reason that the story is not one of external detection, that is, of crime and punishment, but of an inner change of vision and direction; it is an inner story of sin and expiation.

Harry's search was first a search for meaning, for his suffering seemed to be a meaningless suffering. His return to Wishwood may be seen as an effort to find the meaning of the Furies. When Harry discovers that Agatha is, in a sense, his mother, the meaning begins to emerge:

Everything is true in a different sense,
A sense that would have seemed meaningless
before.

[II, 2, p. 275]

The blue bird of meaning was right in his own back yard, and Harry returned to Wishwood to find it; his quest was circular and what he sought was to be discovered at home. Winchell's slip, that he thought it was Harry's and not Amy's birthday, (p. 263) is symbolic, for this is the beginning of the spiritual regeneration of Harry. And the title of the play has a double meaning, for the true "reunion" is that between Harry and Agatha.

"Everything is true in a different sense," says Harry in a moment of insight. This brings up the problem of how to communicate this sense to others. The communication problem is further complicated by the very abstractness of words. Harry has a vision that the others do not have and he somehow runs up against the communication barrier; he cannot communicate,

I talk in general terms
 Because the particular has no language....
[I, 1, p. 235]
 O, there must be another way of talking
 That would get us somewhere....
[II, 1, p. 269]
 Do you think that I believe what I said
just now?....
 I was talking in abstractions: and you
answered in abstractions.
[II, 1, p. 268]

Professor C. L. Barber, in his valuable article on the play, asserts that the struggle with communication is also Eliot's struggle to communicate something that he cannot seem to put into words: "with the hero's constant insistence that what

he knows and feels is inexpressible, one cannot avoid feeling that the protagonist is voicing the frustration of his creator."⁹

Thus, one may posit as an aspect of the orientation of the authentic man, that he discovers constantly the inability to communicate what he feels, to make those with the inauthentic vision understand his actions and his experience. Indeed, Harry does not find it easy to communicate even with the more authentic characters, Mary and Agatha, but at least both seem to bring him brief moments of clarity. He says to Mary:

...You bring me news
Of a door that opens at the end of a corridor,
Sunlight and singing; when I had felt sure
That every corridor only led to another,
Or to a blank wall; that I kept moving
Only so as not to stay still. Singing and light.
[I, 2, p. 252]

Also this moment of clarity gives Harry a sense of direction. Thus, the active seeking to find his way out of the confines of the wheel contrasts with the apathy of the inauthentic members of the family. And his sense of purpose is in contrast to the blindness and purposelessness of their several existences. His discovery of some vague sort of meaning contrasts with their lack of perception and meaninglessness. These contrasts are apparent in Harry's

⁹"Strange Gods at T. S. Eliot's The Family Reunion," The Southern Review VI (No. 2, 1940) 339.

explanation to Amy before his departure: The mode of the inauthentic is actually a form of running away; Harry's life is no longer evasive, but aggressive and questing:

And now I know
That my business is not to run away, but
to pursue,
Not to avoid being found, but to seek.

• • • •

AMY: So you will run away.

AGATHA: In a world of fugitives
The person taking the opposite direction
Will appear to run away.

[II, 2, pp. 280-1]

The inauthentic are a world of fugitives, using ineffectual stop-gaps to shield themselves from a reality they cannot face.

The authentic orientation to being-in-the-world, then, is one which makes innerness central, and involves a moment of clarity--a still point at the center of the turning wheel of existence--which gives an insight or vision of the way out of the waste land of spiritual anxiety and emptiness towards the realization of the self. It involves, then, not a running away from the horror of reality, but an active quest of self-realization. It places a positive value on freedom and the breaking of the restrictions of pre-established patterns. It involves anxiety, for which the proper reaction is not suppression but rather active acceptance of anxiety (in the form of the Eumenides). The superior consciousness and superior vision of the nature of one's being-in-the-world create the situation of not

being able to communicate this vision to those who do not recognize its reality.

Eliot's authenticity is essentially existential authenticity in its emphasis on subjectivity and innerness, its moment of vision (which is essentially a vision of the potentialities of the self and the inauthenticity of the present self and its world), the importance of anxiety, the questing attitude towards the authentic self, the emphasis on freedom and on breaking the established patterns of tradition. The Eumenides recall Heidegger's voice of conscience described in the second part of Sein und Zeit, for they are the instruments for the achievement of the authentic self.

Conclusion. The essential pattern of inauthenticity and the essential pattern of authenticity in The Family Reunion are fundamentally the same as the patterns of inauthenticity and authenticity in Existential philosophy.

CONCLUSION

This dissertation has examined three of the Duino Elegies by Rilke, three poems from Baudelaire's Les Fleurs du Mal, and three works by T. S. Eliot.

The Duino Elegies. The First Elegy contained an image of man as isolated from angels, animals, and other men, as wishing to call to the angel in his anguish, as victimized by habit but wishing to transcend it and hear the mighty secrets of the young dead. In these negative aspects--isolation, anguish, habit--the concerns and points of view which characterized the Elegy also characterize Existentialism. Similarly the positive values on intensity, nearness to Being, and transcendence, are existential virtues.

The Fourth Elegy contrasted man's maladjustment and disunity to the more adequate adjustment of birds, plants, and the stately lion. It presented the "interpreted world" of the First Elegy in an even more pessimistic form--the world of disguise, pretense, and illusion--and finally showed the ultimate invasion of Being by non-being in the death of a child. The image of man as victimized by an inner splitness and disunity, as displaced and homeless, as prone to pretence and illusion but as having within him the purity of the ground for the pure event, is the same image presented by the analyses by the Existentialists.

The positive values on honesty meaningfulness, and nearness to Being, are among the central values of Existentialism.

The Fifth Elegy presented, in the image of the acrobats, the Können of modern man, his basic inauthenticity despite his mechanical skills. The consequences of the surrender to technology so often criticized by Existentialists are here poetically presented as the outcome of a surrender to Können: the groundlessness and abstraction, the thrownness and determinedness, the publicity and emptiness, and ultimately the consciousness and activism, of the existence of modern man.

Thus, because Rilke begins with the self, with the integrity and value of the individual existing human being and asks concrete questions about his manner of being in the world--because, in other words, he approaches man as the Existentialists do--he submits a picture of man which is ontologically the same as that submitted by the Existentialists. Thus, this dissertation tends to substantiate Heidegger's statement, "In the Duino Elegies Rilke has put into poetical language what I have tried to say in my writings."¹

¹Quoted by J. F. Angelloz, R. M. Rilke: L'Évolution Spirituelle du Poète (Paris, 1936), p. 322.

Les Fleurs du Mal. In "Le Cygne" this dissertation found in the image of the swan in the dry stone city a vivid symbol of the anxiety, restlessness, and inner Dürftigkeit of modern man. It was the symbol of the inauthentic man in an inauthentic world. This symbol ruthlessly presented a picture of the humiliation and bestialization of the human being, his vivid sense of isolation, alienation, sterility, falseness, and ultimately separation from, and loss of, the potential self. The despair at this loss was unmitigated by any program or hope for anything better.

"Le Goût du Néant" was, despite its title, not found to reflect existential values to any appreciable degree. The encounter with nothingness so characteristic of the experience of the Existentialists was greeted with the opposite of the existential reaction: surrender and abandonment of all self-direction. Baudelaire's sense of lassitude and ennui reaches its nadir in this poem. Existentially, when nothingness is greeted with surrender, then the encounter with nothingness loses its meaning and value in terms of spurring the self to realization of authentic being. The poem, then, is actually anti-existential and tends to subvert the values and dynamics of life on which the Existentialist most depends.

"Le Voyage" was, like Existentialism, basically the odyssey of the self seeking the authentic self in a world of

mirage and illusion, of externalities, of meaningless human endeavors, of man's deplorable baseness. The vivid characterization of the inauthenticity of modern man was essentially the same as that presented by the Existentialists--the same sense of spiritual emptiness and despair, the same restless anxiety, the same savage resentment of illusion and bad faith. Ultimately, however, the positive suggestion of the existential possibility of transcendence remains unfirmed, and the poetic picture in Baudelaire remains one of shipwreck without transcendence.

T. S. Eliot. In The Waste Land an existential picture of man was presented: man as restless, frustrated, anxious, inauthentic, as inhuman, mechanical, external, sterile, weary, bored, confused, as dead-in-life. The basic spiritual emptiness of modern man was presented. Man was measured against the wisdom of "give, sympathize, and control," and found wanting. Man was shown as a questing being, seeking authenticity, but ultimately failing to find the grail. Eliot's world of illusion, spiritual sterility, and anxiety, was found to be essentially the existential world of inauthenticity.

"The Hollow Men," like Baudelaire's "Le Goût du Néant," appears to be more existential than it actually is. Man's encounter with meaninglessness is presented, but purgation and perhaps the virgin Mother are the only hope presented.

The poem remains essentially little more positive than Baudelaire in its vivid and distinctly modern sense of man's hollowness and inadequacy, his tiresome five-o'clock dance around the prickly pear, his ultimate frustration and inauthenticity.

The Family Reunion is basically constructed on a polarity: the contrast between the authentic and inauthentic orientations to existence. The basic patterns of both orientations were seen to be analogous to those in the corresponding orientations in existential thought. In this play, perhaps more than in any of the other poems examined is presented a full-dress portrait of the Existentialists' authentic orientation in vivid and ironic contrast to the inauthentic orientation to existence.

Conclusion. This study found that the poems by Baudelaire anticipated the negative but not the positive aspects of Existentialism; they presented the Existentialist's shipwreck with/^{out}the Existentialist's transcendence. The three works by Eliot reflected an essentially existential vision of both authentic and inauthentic existence. In Rilke, more than the other two poets, the basic values of the Existentialists find their fullest and most positive statement. Indeed, Rilke and Eliot both tend to go even beyond the comparatively empty (in content) conceptualization of the exis-

tential state of authenticity: Rilke submits his idea of communion with things as the mission of man, and Eliot submits three staves by which man's existence may be measured. Yet these additions do not so much cancel as supplement and complete the basically existential vision seen in the works examined in this dissertation.

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