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Existential Thought: Its Contributions to Psychotherapy

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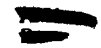
EXISTENTIAL THOUGHT: ITS CONTRIBUTIONS
TO PSYCHOTHERAPY

A Thesis
Presented to
the Graduate Faculty
Central Washington State College

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY COMMENTS

Students of literature have long been pondering and discussing problems of human existence which modern psychology is just beginning to recognize and analyze systematically. The reasons for this may be the fact that literary expression is traditionally quite man-centered. That is, the vocabulary of the poet, the philosopher, the artist, is often couched in uniquely human experiences and situations. Thus, the poet most generally does not speak of the chlorophyll content of a leaf, but rather, of the "tender compassion of its greenness." The vocabulary of the "literary" writer seems to be structured around human experiences. The value of this approach is extremely evident to those who have closely analyzed classical literature. An example of this productivity can be found in the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche, which contain the basis for much of contemporary personality and adjustment theory in psychological thought. However, since the time of Francis Bacon, empirical-scientific philosophy has pointed out many of the inherent limitations of a man-centered frame of reference. It soon became apparent to many thinkers that if man is to grow in his depthful knowledge of all dimensions of human life he must have both a method and a

philosophy for establishing what can and what can not be understood and analyzed. Scientific philosophy has postulated a method which hopefully will do just this, and scientific psychology has adopted this method and applied it to the study of the human being--it is the scientific method. The productivity of this method is undeniable--many of our social institutions have been radically revised because of insights thus gained concerning human behavior. However, it is the impression of this particular writer that a huge, over-arching and detrimental by-product has accompanied the scientific analysis of human behavior--the dehumanization of the human being. In the frenzy of the prolific productivity which American psychology is currently experiencing there has been the displacement of the rudimentary wisdom of a man-centered orientation toward human life.

It appears to me in ever more certain terms that much of contemporary psychology (because of its demand for an empirical-scientific philosophy) is making a conscious decision to disregard academically the dimensions of human existence which its methodology (excellent as it is) cannot probe. It also appears to me in ever more certain terms that there are vast social-ethical implications of this premeditated oversight. The most crucially fundamental psychological frustration of modern times--alienation--is being addressed almost exclusively by theologians,

sociologists and European psychologists. The bulk of American psychologists seem to be blissfully notating animal movement, computing statistical data and administering therapy to their neurosis ridden countrymen without an inkling of awareness that their (psychologists') unique and unparalleled knowledge is being channeled into comparatively non-functional, non-humane, non-constructive enterprises. Modern psychology can advise on most every aspect of life expect the most crucial--man's attitude toward it.

It is with these shortcomings of modern psychology in mind that I have approached the study of existential philosophy and existential psychology. It is hoped that by being aware of the shortcomings of contemporary psychology avenues for approaching the problems which are shunned may be constructed. It is because existential psychology is rooted in the fundamentally sound principles of modern psychology, but at the same time is willing to devote a great deal of energy to problems which much of modern psychology is failing to deal with--problems such as those which center around the phenomenon of choice, freedom, ethics, ontology, phenomenology, alienation, estrangement and basic identity problems --that I have decided a presentation of its basic tenets, no matter how elementary, would be a worthwhile enterprise. It is hoped that this psychology can effect a merger between what is presently dichotomized to a great extent--the

"humanistic" orientation toward the human being and the "scientific" orientation toward the human being.

The purpose of this paper, then, is to present a basic introduction to the general concepts of existential philosophy and to illustrate how these concepts are integrated into psychology and psychotherapy. The second and third chapters deal with existential philosophy, whereas the fifth and sixth chapters discuss the transference of certain of these philosophical insights into psychology.

Chapter II introduces the reader to the difficulties of understanding existential thought, especially the terminology. An attempt is made in this chapter to explain the concepts of being and existence. The chapter concludes with what the writer considers to be the five basic postulates of existential thought.

Chapter III is an examination of the historical development of existential thought in the 19th Century. The social and philosophical developments which appear to have been conducive to the evolution of existential thought are discussed, as are the influences of Hegel, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche.

Chapter IV of this paper is a short description of what is referred to as the "contemporary condition." It attempts to indicate the unique psychological climate of the 20th Century and to suggest that this climate is

understandable especially in terms of basic existential philosophy and psychology.

Chapter V surveys the existential psychology of Viktor Frankl, a Viennese psychiatrist, and attempts to indicate how he has integrated such concepts as suffering, meaning, responsibility, choice, religion, and metaphysics into his psychotherapeutic psychology.

The final content chapter is an analysis of the general concepts of the new school of psychology which is receiving great attention in Europe at the present time--existential analysis. A resume of the distinctive concepts is offered together with an examination of the implications and potentialities of this school.

To reiterate, the purpose of this paper is to introduce the reader to existential philosophy and to indicate how this philosophy has made definite contributions to the field of psychology, especially therapeutic and personality psychology.

CHAPTER II

WHAT IS EXISTENTIALISM?

The student who embarks upon the task of defining, analyzing or scrutinizing existentialism, or an intellectual movement similar to it, confronts a number of serious difficulties, none of which is easily surmounted. He may have a difficulty with himself for he may realize subjectively what the word means or implies within his particular frame of reference--his particular Being-in-the-world--as Martin Heidegger puts it; but he may not be so certain just how to transmit the meaning in the traditional vernacular of Western terminology. He may have trouble with his reader because the reader may bring with him certain concepts and attitudes which are part of his understanding of existentialism. The ability to transcend these concepts and attitudes which the reader brings with him is one of the characteristics of the authors who have been able to communicate successfully the message of the existential theme. And finally, the student may have difficulty with the word itself. Existentialism. It is indeed one of the most misunderstood, misused words in our current vocabulary. It is used in every imaginable context. The New York Times, for example, referred to it as "a broadly materialistic philosophy"; film critics often attach the word existential

to any movie which has despair or confusion as a central theme; the man in the street is likely to give "beatnik" as a synonym. It is a word which has many meanings to many people. However, this extreme diversity in the understanding of the word is not wholly without cause or reason. Existentialism is not an example of an intellectual movement which can be segmented into discrete components, each carrying a definite meaning. By its very purpose, it escapes a systematic definition. But there are common themes which pervade all existential thought, and it is these common themes which must be emphasized when one is attempting to grasp the most essential aspects of this pervasive type of thought. Probably the most important determinant in communicating a definition of this word from one person to another is the ability of each individual to try to grasp the intended connotation of the various metaphors employed and the analogies used. The reader must be willing to understand the term via "indirect knowledge" as contrasted with "direct knowledge," the latter being much more familiar to the Western mind.

Whereas in direct communication the importance lies in the objective truth which is being communicated without regard for the manner of its reception, in indirect communication the emphasis is placed upon the manner in which the thought is appropriated--received into the readers subjectivity (47:10).

In addition to the fact that a particular type of attitude is prerequisite for attaining existential meaning, it is also necessary that the reader be familiar with the philosophical and scientific movements from which existentialism evolved. One needs further to note the social setting of 19th Century Europe which gave birth to this "school." Also, one should realize that the founders of existentialism were not actively creating for the sake of creativity but were forced to create because of the inadequacy of the systems which reigned supreme during this time. It is the contention of this chapter that the dominant reality-explaining systems of the 18th and 19th century were characterized by an extreme lack of concern for the significance and worth of individual human beings. That is, they centered around ideas and constructs which explained either the origin, functional value or purpose of the individual in terms of a larger perspective--the systems almost never assumed that the individual was significant purely by merit of his own existence. Hegelian philosophy, for example, assumed that an individual was incapable of reaching a higher level of development until he subjected himself to the antithesis of individuality--the state. Darwin's theory of the evolution of the species tended to support the concept that man was the result of a

genetic-evolutionary process which operated upon the principles of selective-adaptation and environmental determinism. Theism, of course, was still preaching that man is made in the image of God and consequently has very little to say about his essential nature. Each of these philosophies has in common the fact that the uniqueness and significance of man is "explained away" by systematic analysis; they offer very little comfort to the man who is tormented over the problem of self-worth. To this view of human nature men such as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Goethe, Schelling (in his later years), Kafka, Dostoevsky, Schopenhauer and many others strongly reacted. It was indeed, this potent reaction against the prevailing "systems" of the day which developed the frame work for modern existentialism.¹

Because existentialism is more a way of looking at life, than a systematic explanation of life, an understanding of it entails an understanding of these particular men who "developed" the framework. In addition to an acquaintance with their academic work one must also be aware

¹J. Maritain, the Catholic French existential thinker, has illustrated what he refers to as the existentialism of St. Thomas Aquinas, and he would therefore disagree with the statement that these 19th Century Europeans were totally responsible for the movement of existentialism (39:1-20).

of the individual psychological perplexities of each individual; for it was the particular psychological crises that each individual experienced which influenced his way of looking at life. The religious crises which was the nucleus of Kierkegaard's creativity; the perplexing issue of values and social behavior which intrigued Nietzsche; the despondency over a meaningless universe which engulfed Dostoevsky; are all very important for an understanding of existential concepts. It was these dilemmas of human existence which fostered their greatest insights. For they, indeed, were partly the result of a fragmented and compartmentalized society, but they were also moulded by their crucial, exasperating confrontation with self . . . which allowed them to so dedicatedly affirm their self and reaffirm their self-affirmation. It was not the rationalism of Hegel that brought Kierkegaard to the conclusion that God was the most crucial aspect in his life nor was it the positivism of Comte that brought Nietzsche to the conclusion that "God is dead," and that he must be replaced by Superman. It was the acute self-awareness of their individual existence which illuminated their creativity and brought them to the realization that they were living in a society which had meandered about too long without critically analyzing the singularly most important problem on

the planet--man's existence and his relationship to the rest of the world.

It is hoped that thus far two basic impressions have been made concerning existential thought: (1) that it is basically a mode of thinking in reaction against certain systematic explanations of human existence and (2) that it is more vitally interested in man and his existence and his relationship with the rest of the planet (atheistic existentialism) and/or his relationship with God (Christian existentialism) than any other question.

I. THE MEANING OF BEING AND EXISTENCE

Before further progress can be made, it is essential to attempt definition of two words which have considerable significance in existential literature: existence and being. Following the tradition of vagueness, these words are not concretely or systematically defined--in fact, they are often used in quite contrasting contexts by various existential philosophers. As mentioned earlier in this paper, it is crucial that the reader be willing to grasp an "intuitive" understanding of the words, without going to the extreme of creating a construct understandable only to himself. In a broad, general sense, the word existence refers to the uniquely human ability to contemplate the

present, to think about and to anticipate the future, and to be in a state of becoming something more than what one is at any given moment. Being generally refers to the subjective connotations associated with existence. It is the realm of existence in which the subjectivity of life is transformed from pure sensation to "I"--it is the part of the human in which the phenomenon of existence becomes subjectively realized, and perceivable to the individual. Admittedly, this general usage is very difficult to grasp. The phenomenon to which being and existence refer are by nature very inaccessible to definition. They are concerned with subjectivity and consequently cannot be defined with the succinctness which concepts rooted in tangible, physical realities may be. However, this is not to imply that the concepts of being and existence are totally lacking in fecundity or usefulness. They are both essential to an understanding of the mode of living in the world which existential thought discusses. Perhaps by sampling some of the definitions projected in the literature one may be better equipped to handle these concepts. Concerning existence, Barrett mentions these basic ideas:

We do not first exist inside our bodies and then proceed to infer a world existing beyond ourselves; on the contrary, in the very act of existing we are beyond ourselves and within the world. . . .It is this self-transcendence that makes man what he is and distinguishes him from all the other animals whose existence does not reach backwards and forward in time and history. . . (2:149).

In this passage, Barrett emphasizes that man's existence is dependent upon a self-transcendence--that is, he is aware and cognizant of other people and other objects, but he is not aware of them only as objects. When man is self-transcendent he is aware of other people as having a subjectivity similar to his own and he is aware of objects as having meaning and value to him and to themselves. Existence implies a continual relating of the universe to the self. Existence is an ever-progressing awareness of self in a world.

Rollo May, viewing existence in a more psychologically oriented frame of reference, gives this definition:

But they [existentialists] hold that these (dynamisms) cannot be understood in any given person except in the context of the overarching fact that there is a person who happens to exist, to be, and if we do not keep this in mind all else we know about this person will lose its meaning . . . existence refers to coming into being, becoming (43:12).

May is thus attempting to indicate that existence is more than just a series of dynamisms and processes but that there is actually a person who exists, who experiences his various processes. The processes which constitute the human body are mediated by the phenomenon of existence which allows the individual to perceive them from a detached framework as well as from an engrossed framework.

Marjorie Greene, explaining what existence means to Kierkegaard, says:

But the existence to which Kierkegaard contrasts this game with essences is, nearly always, a very particular existence; that of the thinker himself who plays the game (26:4).

Edward Tiryakian, while summarizing the existential components of Kierkegaard's thought, says:

Existence implies openness, becoming, mutability; it can never be enclosed in a system. Existence is not a substance, not a static state of being. Existence is not arrived at by logic, reason or abstract thought, it is arrived at by feeling--by despair, anxiety and faith . . . Existence is subjective inwardness (67:89).

This sense of openness and becoming, which Kierkegaard emphasizes, can also be found in the very short message from Nausea, "those who exist, let themselves be encountered." That is, existence is dependent upon encounter.

The general vagueness which surrounds the word existence, as employed by existential writers is also found in the word being. Rollo May, again, gives a cogent analysis of what is implied by the word.

This is the sphere where he (man) has the potential capacity to pause before reacting and thus cast some weight on whether his action will go this way or that. And this, therefore, is the sphere where he, the human being, is never merely a collection of drives and determined forms of behavior (44:41).

In the school of Existential Analysis, the term dasein is used to refer to this distinctly human characteristic.

Dasein implies that man has a presence in the world, but that he also has an ever-present awareness of the world in which he is present--he is both within it, and detached from it--he is both subject to it and able to transcend it; this constitutes his being, or his beingness. The term being does not imply a static condition, it is similar to existence in that it implies a progressing and forward-moving state. It means to be in the process of becoming something. It is the confrontation of the future with self-awareness of the ramifications of this confrontation. May also adds:

But in the more precise sense it [being] is a relation to one's self and one's world, an experience of one's own existence (including one's own identity), which is a prerequisite for the working through of specific problems (44:48).

Of course, it should go without saying that being cannot be reduced to mere categories of social knowledge or reflection upon what one has learned. It is much more encompassing. It may even be said that being is that which allows one to contemplate the disparity between what he is and what he has learned or what he wants to be.

The confrontation of the future which characterizes being is viewed in existential thought as something vital to the understanding of both the human being and the reality in which he lives. If existence is understood as awareness and contemplation of the future, and being is

understood to be the emotional subjectivity which accompanies the existential confrontation of the future, it becomes very apparent that one's concept of reality is very dependent upon one's perception of future.

It is this openness toward the future--Zufunft--that which is coming toward--which underlies, as you may never have realized, your entire immediate notion of reality (63:260).

Jean-Paul Sartre, in Being and Nothingness, adds this apparently paradoxical assertion: "Being is. Being is in-itself. Being is what is." Although this appears to be a word game, Sartre is trying to suggest that being is its own existence--it is not analyzable into definite parts--yet each person is aware of the reality of his being. Karl Jaspers adds this note:

We are dasein, being there. Like all things we live in an environment. The comprehensive in this being alive becomes an object of inquiry in its manifestations . . . 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 (73:22).

As can be readily observed, the terms existence and being do not easily lend themselves to the mind which demands precise definition. How then do they achieve their value and by what justification do they play such a crucial role in the philosophy and metaphysics of the existential philosophers?

The study of being and existence has, to this writer, at least three basic justifications. The first is that "traditional" philosophy and psychology have failed to study man's relationship to his own existence--his Eigenwelt. Because of this failure, very little is known of the ontological basis of human uniqueness. The second reason for emphasizing the study of existence and being is that the findings from certain areas of psychotherapy suggest that it is essential for understanding certain human problems. The third reason is that only via knowledge of "self" is an individual able to participate in what Buber calls the "I-thou" relationship. In the order given I shall attempt a short elaboration of each justification.

As mentioned previously, a basic concern of existential thought is to establish a sense of meaning for the individual in a meaningless (or at least a despairing) universe. But the systematic approaches prior to Existentialism are conspicuous by their failure to deal with the problem of subjectivity and Eigenwelt. Both these problems demand a vocabulary of ontology, which is the study of being. That is, being and existence must be studied because here-to-fore it has not been approached with enough seriousness. It is especially crucial that the concepts of being and existence be further studied because several scholars have given speculative accounts of how

being and existence influence our life--especially Kierkegaard and Heidegger. However, if one would ask "Why did Kierkegaard and Heidegger create speculative accounts of how being and existence influence life?" the significance of these two concepts would be much more closely proximated. These concepts were developed because they are essential to an understanding of human uniqueness. Human uniqueness is generally understood in terms of rationality, but rationality is only one attribute unique to the human. Existence and being (as roughly defined) are also distinctly human attributes, and only by studying and learning more about these distinct attributes can we grow in our knowledge of what it means to be a human being. This type of rationale is possibly what motivated May et.al., to dedicate their book Existence, to ". . . all those in the science of man who opened new realms in our understanding of what it means to be a human being."

A second reason for the insistence upon the study of existence and being is derived from psychotherapy. Carl Rogers maintains that a therapist can optimally help a client only when he has been able to grasp the subjectivity which accompanies the client's particular existence (59:268). Rogers also maintains that for an individual to be open to the greatest depth in his potential to experience newness, he must become aware of his self as being

real. Rogers is so convinced of this that he refers to it as the "aim of therapy" (58). Viktor Frankl, who advocates the necessity of a will-to-meaning, maintains that "meaning is found through actualizing value, through self-realization" (56:306). This however, does not boil down to just another "self-psychology." For Frankl, who is also a psychotherapist, goes on further to state that self-realization comes only upon an individual's acceptance of responsibility and cognizance of his being and existence. Going beyond Stoicism, but partially immersed within it, Frankl, as well as Sartre, demands a meaningful concept of what the sensations of being and existence exemplify. That is, one must be aware of being and existence in order to deal most adequately with the psychological sensations which emanate from them. If one cannot deal adequately with his own existence and being (many psychotherapists say that most people cannot) he will never be able to actualize potential which he might otherwise achieve. That is, knowledge of being and existence contributes to a more harmonious knowledge and understanding of self.

Martin Buber's now classic I and Thou brings to attention the third reason for the study of being and existence. To perceive the "I" in each individual "Thou" we must be able to understand our own "I" and be able to relegate the impact of this knowledge to the other person

who confronts us. In other words, in order to achieve an "I-Thou" relationship we must be able to perceive the other person as an "I." However, before we can perceive him as an "I" we must know ourselves as an "I." To be successful in the relationship we must be able to subjectify ourselves and also subjectify the other individual. We must look at other people as subjects--not as objects. This is the message of Buber. However, the existential philosophers are very quick to point out that Western Civilization has no widely accepted mode for perceiving other individuals on a subject-subject basis. The traditional modes of Western thought do not stress differences, rather, they stress similarities. Hegel, Marx, Darwin, Comte, Smith, Freud, Newton, Einstein, etc., tell us of nature, of laws, of forces, of dynamisms as they relate to economics, science and psychology. They tell us nothing of how man is to perceive another man as a subject--they only tell us how to perceive him as an object. If man is ever to achieve the "I-Thou" which he strives for, he must learn what it means to be a "subject." Indeed, Rollo May has said:

Existentialism, in short, is the endeavor to understand man by cutting below the cleavage between subject and object which has bedeviled Western thought and science since the Renaissance (43:11).

So we can see that it is for three basic reasons that the study of being and existence is considered important to existential oriented thinkers.

1. It is a very useful mode for understanding Eigenwelt--man's relationship to his self.
2. It enhances knowledge of, and actualization of self.
3. It promotes the attainment of "I-Thou" relationship.

We have thus attempted to establish a framework from which it will be possible to understand what Existentialism is. It has been noted that transmitting a definition involves both willingness and flexibility on the part of the reader. It also has been noted that Existentialism is a way of viewing reality which reacts against systematic explanations of problems of existence; it is most concerned with Eigenwelt--man's relationship with his self--but it is also concerned with his Umwelt and Mitwelt, (Umwelt is man's surrounding physical world, Mitwelt is man's surrounding social world.) It finds it necessary to study "existence" and "being." We know that Existentialism is not a systematic analysis of the universe, but rather, a series of insights related to the problems of human life. Van Dusen has commented that:

When existential dogma has hardened into a consistent dogma, life will have gone out of it and existentialism will have lost its center in man (69:314).

We know that existential principles can be observed in every academic field and that individuals from various disciplines have been profoundly influenced by any number of the uniquely "existential" concepts.

II. THE GENERAL THEMES OF EXISTENTIAL THOUGHT

With these various thoughts in mind, one can plunge into the task of searching for the universal common denominators of existential thinking. In the course of the plunge, however, the reader should keep in mind at least two basic considerations concerning existential thought. The first is that existentialism as a whole is filled with inconsistencies and paradoxes, and, as a whole is lacking in uniformity and unity. This can be understood if one remembers that as often as not an existential philosophy is a reaction against another approach to the ontological question and serves a very personal function to the particular author of the philosophy. The second difficulty is that there is no single individual who can be portrayed as the leader of existentialism or existential thought. Many thinkers within the camp have contradictory opinions and extremely divergent views concerning basic issues are held by various individuals. Jean-Paul Sartre as contrasted with Jaques Maritain illustrates this point quite adequately. Both are Frenchmen, but one is an atheistic-

existentialist and the other is a Christian-existentialist; one believes that the purpose of life is to come to grips with self in the form of "good-faith," the other feels that the purpose is to come to grips with the Creator; one feels that it is nearly impossible to separate ties with the Deity while the other feels that there is no choice but to assume that God is dead; one feels that your existence determines your essence but the other feels that man's existence is regulated toward preserving certain basic essences; one was profoundly influenced by St. Thomas Aquinas, the other by Martin Heidegger, yet they were both influenced by Kierkegaard. So it is apparent that there is diversity in the existential thought even though the postulates from which the thought gravitates are very similar in nature. In spite of the difficulties, one can, as we shall see, extract certain common denominators of the mainstream of their thought.

Existence prior to essence. The first of the common denominators for existential thought is the maxim "Existence is prior to essence." This vastly over-worked phrase, as Jean-Paul Sartre suggests, is very simple to understand. It merely says that man does not have any particular nature before he is brought into existence. Historically speaking, man is generally credited with

having some sort of essence before he exists. Christian theology, especially, views man as having "essence before existence." Jean-Paul Sartre states quite well the essence before existence way of thinking in the following passage:

If one considers an article of manufacture as, for example, a book or a paperknife—one sees that it has been made by an artisan who had a conception of it; and he has paid attention, equally, to the conception of a paper-knife and to the pre-existent technique of production which is a part of that conception and it is, at bottom, a formula. Thus, the paper-knife is at the same time an article producible in a certain manner and one which, on the other hand, serves a definite purpose, for one cannot suppose that man would produce a paper-knife without knowing what it is for. Let us say, then, of the paper-knife that its essence—that is to say the sum of the formulae and the qualities which made its production and its definition possible—precedes its existence. The presence of such-and-such a paper-knife or book is thus determined before my eyes. Here then, we are viewing the world from a technical standpoint, and we can say that production precedes existence (61:536).

Sartre then goes on to suggest that if there is a God, He, indeed, would be the "artisan" who formulated the essence of human nature before our existence. Sartre then concludes:

Atheistic existentialism, of which I am representative, declares . . . that if God does not exist there is at least one being whose existence comes before its essence, a being which exists before it can be defined by any conception of it. That being is man. . . (61:537).

Sartre has thus established what may be considered a maxim of existential thought. He has illustrated that if we do live in a God-less universe, we have no alternative except to realize that man cannot possibly, by definition, have an

essence (or human nature) before he exists as a human being. The perceptive reader might be inclined to raise the question, "What about an animal? Is his existence prior to his essence? Why is man different from an animal if the answer is negative?" These questions would have a great deal of meaning because the existentialist would have to maintain that an animal's existence is not prior to his essence. The reason is simply that existentialists do not believe that animals exist. Of course they know that they have a physical and molecular structure, etc.; but this does not elevate them to the category of existence. As mentioned earlier, "Existence implies openness, becoming, mutability" and also "Existence is subjective inwardness" and finally:

It is this self-transcendence that makes man what he is and distinguishes him from all the other animals whose existence does not reach backwards and forward in time and history. . . .

Heidegger summarizes the entire question when he says:

The being that exists is man. Man alone exists. Rocks are, but they do not exist. Trees are, but they do not exist. Horses are, but they do not exist. . . (28:214).

Viewed within the context of the definition given for existence one can understand more meaningfully this apparently redundant message.

The concept that "Existence is prior to essence" is certainly not enough to label one an "Existentialist" even

though many people have attempted to do so. Indeed, the Christian Aristotelians "believed in the priority, at least for the genesis of human knowledge, of existence to essence . . ." (26:3). . . in summary, then, the concept that one's existence is prior to essence is a concept to which literally all existentialists adhere. However, adherence to this concept alone certainly is not sufficient to classify one as an existentialist.

Value questions most important. As a whole, the existential thinkers, after considering the fact that existence is prior to essence, plunge into a form of organized bewilderment as to what their moral course of action should be. This concern over moral behavior leads to the second common theme of existential thought--the belief that the most important questions in life are value questions. Each of the various thinkers has come up with his own conclusion concerning the way which values ought to be studied, with Nietzsche and Sartre generating the concepts which are most commonly associated with existentialism by the lay public. The crucial thing to bear in mind, however, is that at this point of bewilderment, existentialism turns into a philosophy of values--it becomes man-centered. This man-centeredness caused a tremendous resurgence of the questions "What meaning does my life have?", "What am I

ultimately interested in?", and a host of similarly oriented perplexities. These questions leaped into the foreground with an impetus that 18th, 19th and 20th Century philosophy had not before experienced, and as a result, the study of values became a definite part of existentialism. In addition to being a characteristic of existentialism, the analysis of personal values is also its most pragmatic and functional constituent. For without the critique of value, existentialism would have little meaning to the people who first gave it its impetus and basic content. This is easily noticeable in individuals such as Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Dostoevsky, and, as some have speculated, even Jean-Paul Sartre, because the end product of all their analyses of being and existence is a theoretical orientation toward leading the "good life."

Albert Camus, who vociferously denied being an "existentialist" and who also had severe disagreements with Sartre, does a fine job of portraying what might be typified as "an existential attitude" toward the problem of values in his, The Myth of Sisyphus. Sisyphus, one of the great sinners of Greek mythology, was condemned to spend eternity trying to roll a stone to the top of a hill--just as he would reach the top, the stone would roll back down and it would have to be pushed up again and again, for all eternity. Camus, however, does not feel that Sisyphus

necessarily need be condemned to sorrow even though he is condemned to eternal, futile, unrewarded labor. For, as a man, Sisyphus always has the power to contemplate, while walking down after the stone, the fact that it is truly he who is in command of the situation after all. He has the ability to recognize that, no matter what his endeavor in life, he would be likely to encounter the same eternal futility and worthlessness, and that no matter what his ventures in life would have been, had he not been condemned to pushing the "rock" it would still have been his duty and responsibility to put the meaning into life which is ultimately significant--for the act of doing does not create meaning or give life value. The value of life and the value in life become so only as the result of the efforts of the individual who alone generates meaning. Thus Camus says:

. . . at that subtle moment when man glances backward over his life, Sisyphus returning toward the rock, in that slight pivoting he contemplates that series of unrelated actions which becomes his fate, created by him, combined under his memory's eye and soon sealed by his death. . . .This universe henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile. Each atom of that stone, each mineral flake of that night-filled mountain, in itself forms a world. The struggle itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart. One must imagine Sisyphus happy (17:123).

From this we can see that Camus is insisting that man must be responsible for creating meaning in this meaningless

universe; Sartre agrees with this idea as, of course, did Friedrich Nietzsche. But this type of philosophy is not found only among literary-philosophers. Viktor Frankl, a practicing psychotherapist, has at the basis of his system of logotherapy the concept that man must find meaning and significance in his life if he is to maintain his distinctly human qualities--freedom, responsibility and spirituality.

Thus we have the second postulate, or common theme, of existential thought--that man's values must be analyzed and that man must learn to put meaning into his life.

Man must be studied in his totality. The third postulate of existential thought is that man must be studied in his totality if he is to be truly understood. William Barrett, probably one of America's top authorities on existentialism, refers to the emphasis on totality when he states:

Existentialism is a philosophy that confronts the human situation in its totality to ask what the basic conditions of human existence are and how man can establish his own meaning out of these without any ready-made preconceptions about the essence of man. There is no prefabricated human nature that freezes human possibilities into a preordained mold; on the contrary, man exists first and makes himself what he is out of the conditions into which he is thrown (2:143).

Because the existentialist believes that man must be confronted in his totality, he is extremely displeased with modern science as the singular medium for understanding the

human predicament. Man expresses the "truth of his existence" in art, religion and literature as well as in the sciences (2:149). Immanuel Kant, the philosopher whom, Will Durant says, every other philosopher must deal with before he can hope to achieve a respectable philosophy, was a very influential person in the demonstration of the inherent shortcomings of the scientific model of human life. In his Critique of Pure Reason, he showed that human reason is quite inadequate at understanding such concepts as God, "The human soul, and its possible immortality, the freedom of man as a spiritual person. . ." (145). In the Critique of Practical Reason, he argued that even though science could never deal with the crucial intangible principles, man must live as though he does have an immortal soul. When Kant made this statement he was suggesting that there are dimensions of human existence which pure reason cannot adequately cope with. However, these dimensions are of such importance that even though they are not directly amenable to rational scrutiny they must be consciously recognized as being essential to our individual existence. In other words:

What Kant, the man, lived by as an ethical and spiritual person, Kant, the scientific thinker, could not even bring into thought. The split between the scientific and the human world with which Descartes launched our modern epoch has here become more sharply drawn (2:146).

Soren Kierkegaard, carried the rationale even further, basically as a reaction against the "system" of Hegel, and was led to say:

When the question of truth is raised in an objective manner, reflection is directed objectively to the truth, as an object to which the knower is related. Reflection is not focused upon the relationship, however, but upon the question of whether it is the truth to which the knower is related. If only the object to which he is related is the truth, the subject is accounted to be the truth. When the question of the truth is raised subjectively, reflection is directed subjectively to the nature of the truth, the individual is in the truth, even if he should happen to thus be related to what is not true (35:210).

A further elaboration upon the distinction between Kierkegaard's and Hegel's conception of truth will follow in Chapter III. Suffice it to say at this time that the criticism leveled against the rationalistic system of Hegel generally epitomizes the existential reaction against any type of systematic explanation of human existence.

Generally speaking, there are two types of time--kairos and chronos. Chronos is what is generally considered "real time." That is, it is the amount of time which elapses during the revolution of a second hand around the face of a clock; it is the amount of time which it takes for the earth to completely orbit the sun, etc. Chronos time is a systematic measuring, by instruments, of the number of times a constantly recurring event takes place. Kairos, on the other hand, is the orientation which a

person has toward the passage of chronos time. We all know that sometimes an hour may "fly by" while other times it only "crawls by." The chronos hour is indeed inconsistent when man is the measure. Speaking in terms of generalities it may be inferred that existential thinkers are much more concerned with kairos time than would be, say, a person of science. To the existentialist there is very little meaning to chronos, except as it influences kairos. Time takes on significance only in terms of how one is regulated to it. Because of this, an appreciable understanding of man cannot be had merely by appraising the nature of chronos existence--knowledge of kairos existence is equally important. Because of these ideas concerning time, existential thinkers are dubious of the ability of a system which operates almost entirely on the concept of chronos time (scientific method) to fully understand the phenomenon of human existence. This does not mean that the value of science is disregarded, quite the contrary: science is extremely important because it allows man to satisfy better those aspects of his life which take place within a technical framework (immunization from disease, proper nutrition, adequate housing, etc.). But it must be borne in mind that this same type of chronos knowledge which is so valuable in dealing with parts of nature which do not have existence (self-awareness of the present and contemplation

of the future) is not nearly as valuable when dealing with the human being. It must be concluded that the existentialist either feels that (1) the study of being and existence is the most significant endeavor in the academic realm, or that (2) the study of existence and being is absolutely crucial for an understanding of the uniqueness of human life. All of the existential writers with whom I am familiar agree with (2); Sartre, and Heidegger are the only scholars who I feel would agree with both (1) and (2). The reservations which existential thinkers hold for the ability of science to adequately understand the uniqueness of man reaffirms their strong conviction that man must be studied in his totality. It is safe to assume, I feel, that the suspicion of science as a method for solving crucial questions concerning man's existence is as much a postulate for existential thought as is the assumption that man must be studied in his totality. It would be a simple task to list each as a postulate of existential thought, but because of their mutual dependence, and for reasons of time, I have chosen to bring them together, with an emphasis upon the shortcomings of science as the tool for understanding certain unique human conditions.

Two types of truth. Existential thinkers do not base their lack of confidence in science merely on the points

presented by Newton, Kant, and Koyre. The chief reason for doubt is based on the fourth postulate--that there is more than the one kind of truth that scientific rationalism searches for--objective truth. They feel that subjective truth is another kind of truth. It was mentioned that Kant suggested that man must live by certain concepts and postulates which he has no way of understanding scientifically. Soren Kierkegaard took this concept and expanded it. In his writings concerning religious experience he maintained that the emotional paradoxes of religious life are not susceptible to rational analysis. The truth of religion is realized inwardly and is not the result of rational analysis and cannot be changed simply by rational thought.

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 (35:214).

If I understand Kierkegaard correctly, he seems to be implying that truth is the result of man's subjective element confirming what his objective faculties have presented to him. That is, the truth of God is not in the rational proofs presented for his existence, but the truth of God for each individual person comes as a result of the subjective elements reacting to the proofs--while still being independent of the proofs themselves. It would be analagous to the situation of an individual who is suddenly confronted

with a piece of art and before he knows why or how, he comes out with "I like it." Reasons, rationale, proof can be found concerning why he came forth with "I like it." But these are, so to speak, after the fact. The subjective "force" which generated the "I like it" is the truth. Perhaps this is what Kierkegaard means when he says "Subjectivity is truth, subjectivity is reality" (35:231). Literature and art are filled with stories of people who are driven by "unexplainable feelings." Yet the crucial decisions in their lives often revolve around these feelings. Their attitudes towards right and wrong; love and hate; truth and falseness all seem to hinge upon this unexplainable subjectivity. Yet for the existing individual, the individual who confronts the future, the individual who contemplates and philosophizes about his place in the universe, the individual who experiences love and frustration, the concern is not whether or not there is a series of events which took place in the external world which were responsible for the origin of his particular subjectivity. The most significant fact is that the subjectivity is real. And it is this subjectivity which slants a person either this way or that way when he is trying to decide what is objectively true.

The notion of the subjectivity of truth is probably the most accepted postulate of existential thought. It was

suggested earlier that the concept of existence being prior to essence was probably the most widely accepted, and indeed, it may well be. However, the notion of the subjectivity of truth is one which is very widely held by people before they actually come into contact with its various justifications.

Guilt and anxiety as inherent in the human condition.

The final common denominator of existential thought, with which I shall deal, is the assumption that there is inherent in the process of existing a certain degree of estrangement, guilt and anxiety. The existentialists feel that there is no need to look into the environment to explain these conditions. They are considered to be a part of life. Because there are many different interpretations concerning the origin, etc., of these conditions I shall deal only with the interpretation which existential psychology has constructed.

Existence (42) is the most encompassing work in English that deals with the spectrum of existential psychology. Chapter II deals with the specific contributions of existential psychotherapy, one of which is the ontological explanation of guilt and anxiety. According to this explanation, guilt is something in which everyone participates because it is basically caused by an awareness that

one is not fulfilling his potentialities. Because man is constantly partaking in a dialectical relationship with his potentialities, he becomes dynamically aware, in the form of guilt, when a disparity arises. Concerning ontological guilt, May states:

Ontological guilt does not consist of I-am-guilty-because-I-violated-parental-prohibitions, but arises from the fact that I can see myself as the one who can choose or fail to choose. Every developed human being would have this ontological guilt, though its content would vary from culture to culture and would largely be given by the culture (44:55).

Ontological guilt is not to be confused with neurotic or morbid guilt. If ontological guilt is:

. . . unaccepted and repressed, it may turn into neurotic guilt. Just as neurotic anxiety is the end-product of unfaced normal ontological anxiety, so neurotic guilt is the result of unconfronted ontological guilt (44:55).

This type of guilt can be, and should be, turned into constructive insights for each individual. "It can be and should lead to humility . . . to sharpened sensitivity in relationships with fellow men, and increased creativity in the use of one's own potentialities."

Ontological anxiety is equally a part of man's existence. Anxiety is the experience of the threat of imminent non-being. This is sometimes referred to as nothingness. When one experiences the threat of non-being it is very similar to the onset of psychosis:

. . . when the patient is literally experiencing the threat of dissolution of the self . . . the threat of dissolution of self is not merely something confined to psychotics but describes the neurotic and normal nature of anxiety as well. Anxiety is the subjective state of the individual's becoming aware that his existence can become destroyed, that he can lose himself and his world, that he can become "nothing" (44:50).

Anxiety is that state when one becomes threatened at the very base of his existence, his "I." The sensation is different from that of fear, for fear implies a fear of something else. It subsides when the "something else" subsides. Anxiety is the phenomenon of subjective awareness of one's self being in a state of encountering dissolution, i.e., nothingness, non-being. It is the awareness that one's existence (in the distinctly human sense) may cease. It has been asserted by many psychologists and sociologists that today's way of life facilitates the development of a sense of meaninglessness and hopelessness; this in turn makes it more difficult to confront the future openly, and this in turn estranges man from his existence, from his self. If one is estranged from his self, from his sense of being, what then does he have? He has that for which he substituted his self. And when this substitution begins to lose its significance, and a host of other substitutes are rushed in to fill the gap, we see the pathology of our time--the substitution of external objects for a deep-rooted sense of being. Eventually the estrangement leads

to the awareness that one is indeed confronting non-being--one has lost his self. Is it any wonder that the 20th Century has been labeled the Age of Anxiety?

What has been lost is the capacity to experience and have faith in one's self as a worthy and unique being, and at the same time the capacity for faith in, and meaningful communication with, other selves, namely one's fellow-men (40:122).

If it is true that man has a great deal of trouble learning to live successfully with his self, then it may be to his advantage to pay closer attention to his self--his existence and his being. At the risk of redundancy--this is the hope of existential thought. That man will study his self in a different perspective from that which has prevailed for the past few centuries.

III. SUMMARY

This concludes the resume of what this writer considers to be the basic postulates, or themes, of existential thought. They are not new concepts as far as the philosophical scene is concerned but their combination and emphasis does seem to be unique. It has been suggested that these are the basic themes, around which, existential thought revolves.

1. The belief that man's existence is prior to his essence.
2. The belief that man must be understood in his totality. This in turn leads to the belief that one major system is incapable of understanding man.

3. The belief that the most important questions in life are value questions. "What am I?" "Where am I going?" etc.
4. The belief that there is more than one kind of truth--that subjective truth is as much a reality as is objective truth.
5. The belief that a study of man must include the ontological categories of being and existence. This leads to the belief that guilt and anxiety are a natural part of man's existence and must be understood as such.

In reaction to the title of this chapter "What is Existentialism," one would be proximating truth if he reacted thusly: Existentialism is a unified integration of the basic postulates of existential thought.

CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL ORIGINS OF EXISTENTIAL THOUGHT

As Kurt Reinhardt has said, existentialism is only a new word for an age old philosophical attitude. Because of this it would seem that an historical analysis of existential thought would be an imposing challenge, which indeed it is. In this chapter, however, only the most prominent influences which flourished during the 18th and 19th Century will be discussed. The approach to the historical origins of existential thought will be segmented into two categories: (1) the general social setting of 19th Century Europe and (2) the philosophical heritage established by Hegel, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. It is the proposition of this chapter that 19th Century Europe, in its transition to a bureaucratic-technological state imposed upon its citizenry a sense of anomie and anonymity of such impact that a process of religious alienation and personal estrangement took place. In reaction to this alienation-estrangement process certain philosophers, namely Kierkegaard and Nietzsche² came forth with philosophical

²It should be mentioned that Soren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche are not the only philosophical social theorist to address the problem of alienation in the 19th Century. Karl Marx was very concerned, as were others. This chapter, however, is primarily concerned with those

treatises on the predicament of human existence. Not only were these treatises in reaction to the social condition of the times but also to the philosophical condition, which was also fostering alienation and estrangement. Although the entire chapter is dedicated to the 19th Century philosophical and social setting a brief look at some of the historical origins of existential thought is in order at this time.

Man's concern for his relationship to his self, or his mind, can be seen in the writings of St. Augustine. In his Confessions, he expresses bewilderment at the seemingly chaotic manner in which his mind is revealed to himself via consciousness. He is greatly concerned with the fact that:

The mind gives the body an order and it is obeyed at once; the mind gives itself an order and it is resisted . . . The mind commands the mind to will, the mind is itself, but it does not do it (65:172).

This type of perplexity which confronts Augustine is also found in Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, the latter saying, "A thought comes when "it" wishes, not when "I" wish" (50:391).

Martin Luther emphasized that it is the responsibility of man to find God in the subjectivity of his soul. God cannot take on significance within the individual until one has come to grips with Him, in an emotional context. This

philosophers who established the framework of theoretical ideas which today serves as the backbone of existential thought.

sounds very much like Kierkegaard in his attack upon Christianity and also is similar to the "put-meaning-into-life" existentialists, such as Camus, Sartre and Nietzsche.

An analysis of the writings of Zen-Buddhism allows one to conclude that there can be found common themes with existential thought. Both are concerned with ontology, both are concerned with a relationship with reality which cuts below the subject-object cleavage, both would agree that Western man has estranged himself from nature by his conquest and manipulation of it, and finally, both agree that man has become partially alienated from himself (43:18).

Because of the fact that there are "existential" themes found throughout the various branches of literature, one may wonder why it is that until this past century there was no such word as "existential." That is, what is unique about the 19th and 20th Century that it should be the times during which the various themes of existential thought which pervade the historical literature should become crystallized into a way of thinking which is referred to as existentialism? To this writer, there are two basic conditions, which in their uniqueness, combined to formulate the particular philosophy of existence called existentialism. These two conditions can be classified roughly as (1) the conditions of social life in the 19th Century and (2)

the conditions of the intellectual mode of looking at reality which governed the 19th Century. I shall deal with these two subjects, in order given, on the next few pages with the hopes that by doing so, greater insight concerning the Zeitgeist of the times may be obtained. It is the thesis of this chapter that existentialism emerged during the late 1800's and early 1900's because at this time there was little place within the academic and social setting for a person to live, and appreciate, his individuality.

I. 19TH CENTURY EUROPE

An analysis of the social setting of 19th Century Europe shows that it was a period of unusual cultural, political and economic change, which had been developing for many generations and finally crystallized into a more or less coherent social organization. The advancement of technology resulted in an adaptation of man to the machine because it was essential for providing the needs of a growing, prospering society. Science and its methodology were coming into acceptance, not merely as a set of intellectual concepts, but as a way of living. The minority ruling class of the aristocracy was gradually being replaced by a larger, commercial middle class, resulting in a bourgeois society (67:76).

It has been speculated (67:76) that a society which flourishes under such conditions is typified by its ideological optimism. The notions of progress, improvement and "the better life" become incorporated into the lives of the individuals who comprise the society. More specifically, this conception of life leads to two basic assumptions which are particularly important to the understanding of life in 19th Century Europe. The first is the concept that the development of society parallels that of scientific and technological development. The second is the concept that social problems are solved or minimized as the result of rational thought and analysis. These two points of view were growing by leaps and bounds during the 19th Century in Europe.³ They were not viewed as concepts, or ways of looking at life, but rather as truths. The philosophy of individual existence which evolves from this perspective towards life is often something like this: what matters for the individual is that he adjust to the larger and more valuable society; that he take his cues for behavior from the example set by the norms and mores which are currently prevailing; that he learn to stifle those parts of his individuality which bring social disdain upon him; and that

³Again, it should be emphasized that these comments do not particularly apply to Marxian philosophy.

man is basically a social animal who is first responsible to other individuals within the society and is secondly responsible to his self. Whether this was the prevalent philosophy of life for each individual person in 19th Century Europe is impossible to determine, but the number of social psychologists and historians who suggest such is overwhelming enough to indicate to this writer that something very similar was the situation.

It has been further speculated (24:152-200), (33:116-120), (43:17), (62:13) and by all the existentialist writers, that a society which flourishes under conditions such as those just mentioned to describe 19th Century Europe, has as a detrimental by-product the alienation of man from his self. Man's relationship to himself becomes subservient to his relationship to others. He becomes "other directed." He loses a concrete sense of identity and also loses any firm conviction as to the ultimate meaning of his own existence which he might possibly otherwise have developed. This does not mean that each individual must meander about aimlessly and without cognizance of what is happening around him, but it does mean that one of the major causes for anxiety and neurosis in a society such as this is directly caused by the negation of the priority of the self. In other words, a society which elevates the masses above the individual is establishing the framework

from which it becomes very easy for the individual to lapse into an "unauthentic" form of existence. Frankl, May and Rogers, all psychotherapists, are not the least bit reluctant to support these statements.

II. THE FIRST CRITICS

Assuming then, that 19th Century Europe did find itself in a situation similar to that pictured thus far, could we not expect to find the situation being the subject of intellectual scrutiny by the people who were detached from, or at least had perspective of the situation? It seems plausible that we could find such a situation--and indeed we can. The reaction which came from the social critics of the times sets the stage for the entrance of existentialism. By criticizing certain aspects of the contemporary way of life, a dialogue was established between those who favored the priority of the individual and those who favored the priority of the masses. This dialogue was the first stage in the development of existentialism.

Maine de Biran, at the very beginning of the 19th Century, saw that the political crises which France was experiencing demanded that the individual find something other than pure social rehabilitation to bring meaning into his life. He suggested that man must develop inwardness

and must also bring into the foreground his subjective truths, as well as objective truths. Maine de Biran sounds somewhat like Jean-Paul Sartre when he says that life is comparable to being upheld in space without knowing if and when one will plunge into the abyss below. Maine de Biran realizes that fear and uncertainty are unavoidable during life, as is the awe which encompasses one when he truly realizes that he is an existing being. Because fear, uncertainty and awe are a real part of man's life, de Biran maintains that one's philosophy of existence must take them into account and give them special allowances--just as special allowances are given for the parts of life concerned with progress, optimism and joy.

Maine de Biran was a convert of Pascal, who was also vitally concerned with the paradoxes and dilemmas of human existence. Pascal, like Kant and Kierkegaard, was very concerned with the opposition between rational knowledge and faith. He also was concerned with the problem of the ontological basis of guilt and anxiety, eventually coming to the conclusion that they are an inseparable component of existence and must be dealt with as such. The problem of human insignificance was also quite real for Pascal. He thought it a paradox that man should become engrossed in his own life when in reality each individual is such a

minute, insignificant part of the universe. In his

Pensees, he comments:

When I consider the brief span of my life, swallowed up in the eternity before and behind it, the small space that I fill, or even see, engulfed in the infinite immensity of spaces which I know not, and which know not me, I am afraid, and wonder to see myself here rather than there; for there is no reason why I should be here rather than there, now rather than then. . . (54:36).

The feeling of being suspended in space (Maine de Biran) and the thought of the insignificance which one human life takes on in the immense spaces (Pascal) both suggest that certain individuals of the 19th Century were acutely aware of their own existence and "Being-in-the-world" in spite of the fact that the leading systems of the day (systems explaining reality) had almost no role whatsoever for the individual as an end. The individual was invariably looked upon as a means of carrying out a greater, more significant end. Whether the system was Hegelianism, Darwinism, Positivism or Theism, the individual was always subservient to the larger perspective. There was no man-centered philosophy, such as existentialism. But as mentioned, historical figures such as Augustine, Luther, Maine de Biran and Pascal did a very adequate job of laying the foundation for a shift of emphasis.

III. THE PHILOSOPHICAL SCENE

The relative lack of philosophical thought concerning individual subjectivity can best be understood if one realizes that until the time of Soren Kierkegaard there was a fairly established set of tenets to which "traditional" philosophy pledged allegiance. The first tenet is that "eternal truths" can be sought by reason alone. That is, it has generally been assumed since Plato that there is such a thing as a reality, which exists "out there," independent of the observer, which can be grasped and understood by the human intellect, if the human intellect is cleansed of impurities such as false premises, faulty conclusions, etc. The second tenet of traditional philosophy is that our experiences are the result of a separation of the object which is experienced and the subject which does the experiencing. The third tenet is expressed in the form of an omission--the omission of man. Traditional philosophy has difficulty in finding an appropriate place for man in its framework. In traditional philosophy the basic distinction between man and other animals is the higher degree of rationality which man is claimed to possess. Many of the other uniquely human characteristics are often omitted (67:74). This "traditional" view of philosophy played a very important role in the systematic analysis

of reality during the 19th century. It was a restraining force which resisted the innovation of analyses of the individual as an entity in and by itself. Pascal and de Biran tried to escort the individual into philosophical prominence and were partially successful. They succeeded in emphasizing the individual and revitalizing the historical literature which treated the problems of individual existence--thus fertilizing the egg which developed into existentialism.

I have thus far attempted to present a picture of the Zeitgeist which gave birth to existentialism. The setting is 19th Century Europe. The social condition is that of transition, (progression and advancement). A unique psychological by-product of the social condition is a phenomenon of partial alienation of the individual from nature and from self. The intellectual climate is that of science, technology and rationality. Traditional philosophy is engulfed in a set of tenets which has little room for individual problems of being and existence. From the extremities of this particular Zeitgeist there comes the call of Pascal and de Biran who try and impress upon the individuals who comprise the Zeitgeist the enormous implications of their mode of existence. From this setting we have to consider just three people to understand the historical origins of existentialism--G. W. F. Hegel, Soren

Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche. Hegel will be considered first because Kierkegaard made his greatest contributions in the form of negations of Hegel's system.

IV. THE SYSTEM OF HEGEL

Hegel's system is indeed very prominent in Western thought:

It is unquestionably one of the most influential systems of thought in the nineteenth century. Without Hegel, Marxism would be unthinkable . . . Hegel has had many other far reaching effects upon modern thought, including not only philosophy itself, but also social theory, history and jurisprudence (1:271).

His system of philosophy was very attractive for individuals of many different disciplines because his thought pervades all fields of knowledge. His philosophy was also very much in accordance with the dominant moods of the 19th Century--progress, optimism and rationality. Hegel experienced the acceptance of his philosophy during his own lifetime--somewhat unusual for philosophers. One year before his death he was so well accepted that it was acclaimed that never before had philosophy reached such a lofty position and never had its honors and awards been so honored and respected (20:226). Engels, who extracted much of Hegel's thought, cites his rationale for appreciating the philosophy of Hegel: "From this point of view, the history of mankind no longer appeared as a senseless jumble

of violence and bloodshed . . . but as the natural evolution of the human race" (19:38). This statement summarizes quite well one of the reasons why Hegel was so well accepted during his time.

In the following few pages, the emphasis will be placed upon Hegel's concept of mind, his notion of reality and his philosophy of history, all of which have had profound influence upon philosophical and social thought since his time. Morton White is quite correct when he suggests that one may dislike Hegel but one cannot ignore him. He went beyond both Kant and Plato with his extension of dialectical method and came up with some interesting concepts and categories which play a very fundamental role in our ordinary thinking. With this general introduction we may proceed toward a brief critique of the three most crucial aspects of Hegel's philosophy--reality, mind, and history.

Hegel basically conceived of reality as an ever-active process which constantly passes into its opposite in order that it may return to a higher and richer form of itself. Because reality is an ever-active process, it must be understood in terms of becoming (in transition from one stage to another) rather than as a static, non-changing reality. From this Hegel concluded that the highest form of thought is that which understands within the framework of becoming--for only when we realize from where something

has come and where it is going do we truly realize what it is. He readily generalized this concept of understanding to knowledge which pertains to the individual. Only by knowing where I came from, where I am going, do I have any idea of what I actually am. Realizing that an individual, or any other part of reality, can only be understood in terms of its historical genesis and its future development, it was safe for Hegel to conclude that nothing could be understood without knowledge of its relationship to other aspects of reality. Hegel believed that the only reality was the totality of things--the Absolute. Things can only be understood in terms of their relationship to the entirety of things. For an individual to become real he must realize that he is dependent upon the larger whole for any meaning or significance which he may ultimately have. For an individual to become real he must relinquish his existence as a "bare particular" and regard himself as a part of the larger whole.

If reality truly is an ever-active process of becoming something different from which it presently is, which results in the improvement of the original condition, Hegel reasoned that reality could best be understood in terms of a triadic analysis--thesis, antithesis and synthesis. All questions of reality can best be understood via this

methodology. He feels that this method does the most justice toward a truthful appraisal of reality. If, for instance, we wish to understand the concept of liberty we take the concept as it is when we first find it in life, in the unrestrained actions of the savages, who do not feel any need to restrain or limit behavior. Next, however, we note that the savage has given up his total freedom for its opposite, the dictation of law and legislation. Finally, in the third part of the sequence, we see that liberty has emerged in a purer form--liberty to think and act in ways which the savage was incapable of (68:192). Thus we saw how the thesis (original condition of liberty as lived by the savages) gave way to its antithesis (the establishment of opposites--laws) and eventually evolved into a synthesis (a higher form of liberty, where more actions are possible) which is of greater fecundity. Hegel feels that all of reality must be understood in this fashion. To truly understand any part of reality we must be able to know its original thesis, its antithesis and its probable synthesis. Nothing can be understood in its solitude--it must be understood and studied in relation to the rest of the forces and actions which brought it to be what it is and which will drive it to what it will eventually become.

Hegel's conception of the human mind also reflects his triadic analysis. He views the mind as being

compartmentalized into a three-fold hierarchy. The lowest form of mind is the individual, subjective mind. This is merely a "particular" in the midst of the vast Absolute. Of and by itself it can grasp or explain very little. The subjective mind is analogous to the savage and his liberty--it is where the concept of mind is first found--and is likewise the crudest form of mind. The antithesis of the subjective mind is referred to as the objectified mind and it is manifested in the form of social law and morality. The optimal result of the subjective mind being subjugated by the objectified mind is the emergence of the Absolute mind--the state in which mind rises above all limitations which are inherent in a social community. Mind is characterized by freedom and, therefore, reaches its ultimate only when ultimate freedom is attained. Man is continually striving for the attainment of Absolute mind. Man is constantly in the process of becoming the Absolute mind. Reality is the struggle for the actualization of the Absolute.

From this concept of the human mind one can see why the individual was relegated to a subservient position. Individual man, because in his aloneness, constitutes only a subjective mind; he therefore must be confronted with the antithesis of his subjectivity--objectivity--in the form of

law, morality and the state. Only via subservience of individual subjectivity to group objectivity can man actualize his optimal development.

Hegel's philosophy of history is similar to his philosophy of mind in that it is understood within the triadic framework. The State is the antithesis of the subjective mind, which allows the subjective mind to evolve into a more pure form of mind. Hegel feels that the constitution is the collective spirit of the nation and that the government is the embodiment of that spirit. Because the state is the result of the merging of the individual wills and minds which constitute it, it is quite natural that different states have contrasting ideologies and that the contrasts inevitably will lead to war and conflict. Hegel views this as being very rational, in fact, he teaches that war is an indispensable necessity for political progress. All historical happenings, even wars and concentration camps, must be understood ". . . as the working of reason toward the full realization of itself in perfect freedom . . . Historical change must be read as continuous struggle toward the spiritual freedom of mankind" (1:276). Hegel feels that the goal of history is the evolution of the state, or rather, the union of rational wills with the purpose of extending the freedom of mankind (18:453).

So one can see that Hegel is indeed a man of "big-theory" dimensions. His triadic analysis engulfs everything from the subjectivity of the individual mind to the tragedy of historical happenings. His entire matrix is based upon the motto "The rational alone is real." He feels that all things can be understood if analyzed within the triadic system, given enough information.

Nineteenth Century Europe, as mentioned earlier, was a most receptive host to the Hegelian system. The receptivity, however, was not unanimous. His system was criticized, just as is every system, by his contemporaries. One of the criticisms which probably had the most impact upon the long range acceptance of Hegelianism was delivered by Friedrich Schelling in the form of a series of lectures at the University of Berlin during the winter of 1841. In his earlier years Schelling was very closely aligned with Hegel, but in his later years he became very disgruntled with the ability of rationalism to deal with certain vital issues with which the philosopher must be concerned. He voiced his views during the lecture series, and although many of the listeners were dissatisfied, he seemed to have deeply influenced the Dane Soren Kierkegaard. Two years after the "Berlin lectures," Kierkegaard completed his classical rebuttal of Hegel, Concluding Unscientific Postscripts, which must be considered the declaration of

independence of existential thought. Indeed, it is not an overstatement to suggest that one cannot understand the spirit of existential thought if he is unfamiliar with the series of rebuttals which Kierkegaard makes against Hegel. The rebuttals go beyond a conflict between the individual philosophies of two scholars--they constitute the framework from which one's perception of the world, the human, the dilemmas of life, have an entirely different meaning. Because this rebuttal of Hegel by Kierkegaard has such importance for the understanding of contemporary existentialism, some of the points which Kierkegaard makes will be briefly considered in the next few pages.

V. SOREN KIERKEGAARD

Soren Kierkegaard was a very insignificant man during his time. He lived only forty-four years, the last fifteen devoted almost entirely to writing. During this time he wrote nearly a dozen books which have established him as one of the great depth psychologists of all time. Kierkegaard's writings centered almost entirely on two main themes, the first being the subjectivity of man's existence and the second being the rebuttal of two major systems which failed to emphasize the subjectivity of man--Hegelianism and contemporary Christianity. For this paper, Kierkegaard's criticisms of Hegel are of the most concern,

but his criticisms of contemporary Christianity are also very important because they contain many of his most powerful arguments concerning the subjective aspect of human existence.

Kierkegaard has as his starting point the supposition that ". . . there are many things between heaven and earth which no philosopher has explained" (26:20). Indeed, many of them probably never will be explained. This is in disagreement with the supposition of Hegel (and also certain types of positivism) that anything can be explained if enough data is known about it. No system, according to Kierkegaard, is capable of explaining the paradoxes of human existence. The "System" (as Kierkegaard refers to Hegelian Absolute Idealism) is totally incapable of explaining one very crucial thing: the individual who formulated the system. There is always someone outside the system, the person who is thinking about it, and if this person is concerned about understanding himself, the system is of very little assistance to him. Kierkegaard is also very displeased with the ability of the rational methodology of Hegel to understand perplexities of everyday life. For example, if a man is very much in conflict about how he should live--he is torn between conflicting motives and desires and does not know whether he should dedicate his life to himself, to his God, to his society--he will find

that if he subjugates his internal passion to a rational analysis he will come to a conclusion which dwells in the rational dimension and which may have little effect upon the subjective, passionate nature of his private existence. One must be forced to conclude, says Kierkegaard, that mere rational analysis must be supplemented by other types of analysis if one is to reconcile emotionally the paradoxes and conflicts which inevitably accompany human life. The belief that rational analysis does not solve subjective problems has been confirmed by contemporary psychotherapists. Rollo May mentions that ". . . it is well known to every therapist that patients can talk theoretically and academically from now till doomsday about their problems and not really be affected" (43:28). The main reason why purely rational thinking results negatively when dealing with subjective problems is that abstract thought is detached and impersonal, whereas problems of subjectivity are filled with passion and cannot be permeated by "mere reason."

Another difficulty according to Kierkegaard with a rational analysis of individual life is that rational methods are equipped to deal only with entities which operate upon systematic principles. The human being, however, does not function within a systematic context. Man's entire life is filled with situations for which there is no

rational alternative, for the situation is not rational. The story of Abraham, which Kierkegaard makes reference to frequently, illustrates this point quite well:

The main vehicle for his reflections is the Biblical story of God calling upon Abraham to sacrifice his own son Isaac. God's order places Abraham in a state of anguish: Abraham loves his son above all men, the son is his only hope of perpetuating the race of the chosen people. Abraham faces a paradox, and reason does not help: Why has God asked him to kill Isaac, after God had promised and given Isaac in order to fulfill God's purpose?

Abraham finds, moreover, that God's order has placed him in an unbearable position. In fulfilling the sacrifice, Abraham will be condemned by all men, for what could be more immoral than a father to kill his son? That God should order Abraham to commit a heinous crime is a paradox incomprehensible to reason. Abraham must choose between what seems ethically right and what seems religiously right--an absurd decision to make, one for which objective thought or Hegelian logic is no help whatsoever. Objective thought is helpless before the absurdity of a paradox. Reason cannot handle the irrational, it can only dismiss the problem. But how can Abraham dismiss this paradox (6:84)?

Clark Moustakas roughly parallels the sensation of paradox with that of loneliness (48:1-20). He speaks of the love he has for his daughter and the emotional ties which exist between them--and one can see that there is love between them. Then suddenly the girl is rushed to her death-bed--heart failure. Death is very possible and the rationality of the possibility can be established. But to the father, rationality is nothingness. To the father the point of concern is not a rational one, it is a subjective

one, that which we call love. Rational analysis of the situation brings no consolation to the subjective experience of the situation. It is only when passion leaves the mind that rationale can be entertained.

Kierkegaard's distrust for rationalism's ability to understand the subjectivity of each particular individual has been adequately explored to suggest the foundation for his arguments. From his attack upon Hegelianism he concludes--just as did de Biran, Pascal and Augustine--that total knowledge of one's particular existence is to a certain extent dependent upon feeling. The feeling that one has towards his life is very much influenced by the natural human conditions--despair, anxiety and faith.

The aspect of Kierkegaard which has been stressed thus far is his negation of the ability of rational methods to deal with subjective phenomenon. This is basically a methodology disagreement with Hegel. However, he has some disagreements with the content of Hegel's system which also merit attention.

His basic disagreement with Hegel concerns what is ultimately significant in the universe. Hegel feels that the Absolute is the most significant. Kierkegaard feels that the individual, as he confronts himself and God, is the most significant. Hegel says that the "bare particular" takes on significance only in relation to the rest of

the universe, of which it is a part. Kierkegaard says that the individual is the medium by which all things take on understandability and meaning.

Hegel would suggest that the individual cannot be the most significant because the individual mind must pass into its opposite in order that it be more fully actualized. The opposite of the individual is the state. It is through the state that the individual strives toward the Absolute. Not so, says Kierkegaard. By submitting oneself to "crowd" behavior, the individual loses all sight of his individuality. To live in the crowd is to live a lie. Kierkegaard would flatly reject the basic idea of Hegel--that man evolves to a higher position as a result of subjecting himself to the opposite of his individuality. He feels that this subjugation leads only to loss of identity and a loss of emotional ties with God. He continues with the suggestion that one of the prevailing dilemmas of the times is that man has submitted to crowd behavior and consequently does not have sufficient and strong commitments to what he believes--he especially levies this claim against modern Christianity and Hegelian philosophy. Man cannot simply pay verbal, intellectual homage to his beliefs--he must emotionally live them. It is only by emotionally living what one believes, while realizing that one is an individual, that the evils of the "crowd" may be overcome.

Perhaps the contrasts between Hegel and Kierkegaard can best be facilitated by comparing their conception of the individual self. Hegel's view of the nature of the self is stated in this passage from his Logic:

By the term "I" I mean myself, a single and altogether determinate person. And yet I really utter nothing peculiar to myself, for every one else is an "I" or "Ego," and when I call myself "I," though I undubitably mean the single person myself, I express a thorough universal. "I," therefore, is mere being-for-self, in which everything peculiar or marked is renounced and buried out of sight; it is as it were the ultimate and unanalyzable point of consciousness. We may say [that] "I" and thought are the same, or, more definitely, [that] "I" is thought as a thinker (27:48).

This passage leaves little doubt that Hegel is referring to the self as thought. The existing person is identified with thought. To Kierkegaard, this type of logic is absurd, for there must be someone existing to do the thinking; and the existence of the person doing the thinking is as much as, even more a part of, a person's self than is his thought. Hegel is following the Cartesian "I think, therefore I am" tradition, whereas Kierkegaard, much more realistically, reverses the order and follows "I am, therefore I think" point of view. When Kierkegaard says "The existing subject . . . is engaged in existing, which is indeed the case with every human being" (1:8) he is suggesting that the human is primarily engaged in existence, as contrasted with thought.

An individual's awareness of his private subjectivity and his feelings is certainly different from his thoughts about them.

In conclusion, it can be said that Kierkegaard's basic arguments against Hegel center around the contrasting points of view that they hold concerning the individual's place in the universe. Kierkegaard is fighting for a stronger emphasis upon individuality and subjectivity while Hegel is making a plea for greater emphasis upon the Absolute and rationality.

From this "dialogue" between Kierkegaard and Hegel one can quite easily see the nucleus of the basic existential themes mentioned in Chapter II beginning to take form. While reacting against Hegel, Kierkegaard advanced these basic ideas which are generally associated with contemporary existential thinking:

1. That man's existence, his Being-in-the-world, is more important than any particular characteristic which he may have while existing.
2. That a systematic analysis (such as that of science or rationalism) is an inadequate instrument, employed by itself, for understanding the problems of subjective life--existence.
3. That the most important questions in life are questions of value concerning "I"--Kierkegaard always stressed the "I" in relation to God, but this is not generally done today.
4. That guilt, anxiety and despair are inherent in the human condition and must be dealt with accordingly.

5. That the conviction of a subjective truth is more real than the conviction derived by rational truth.

This has been the influence of Soren Kierkegaard. A few brief comments concerning Friedrich Nietzsche and the historical background for an understanding of contemporary existentialism will be largely complete.

VI. FRIEDERICH NIETZSCHE

Friedrich Nietzsche is similar to Soren Kierkegaard in many respects, not only in academic style, philosophical purpose and individual life-style, but also in the respect that they are both very difficult to analyze as far as their scholarly achievements are concerned. Nietzsche was eleven years old when Kierkegaard died and never once during the course of his life read the works of the Dane whom he came to resemble in so many ways. By profession he was a professor of philology and ancient classics at Basel. He was a very precocious genius, publishing slightly over a dozen books between his early thirties and late forties. His life ended after eleven years of confinement for a progressive insanity.

Nietzsche can be most adequately described as a staunch individualist with a strong ethical-religious-humanistic concern for all of mankind. He was obsessed with the absurdity of human existence yet vigorously tried

to create a philosophy which would transcend the ethical-social nihilism which he felt was imminent. "The truth once seen, man is aware everywhere of the ghastly absurdity of existence . . . nausea invades him" (52:51). This statement reminds one of Jean-Paul Sartre and indeed, it does reflect the influence of Nietzsche upon Sartre. His concern with the absurdity of existence did not curtail his insights, quite the contrary, they heightened them. Rollo May, who stresses the role Nietzsche played in the development of existentialism suggests that he and Kierkegaard were two of the most accurate predictors of the unique psychological condition of the twentieth century:

Both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche are often cited together as the thinkers who discerned most profoundly and predicted most accurately the psychological and spiritual state of Western man in the twentieth century (43:28).

Perhaps because of his concern for absurdity, Nietzsche was prone to "over-experience." He lived everything to its fullest and characterized himself as a Dionysiac philosopher.

His insight into human nature allowed him penetrating observations concerning the times which the most authoritative sociologists and philosophers were unable to perceive. Blackham interprets Nietzsche's tremendous concern for the present as one of his distinguishing existential characteristics on page 69.

He is an existentialist in his taking of the problems of his philosophy from the conflicts of the age instead of from the disputes of the schools. To make himself profoundly representative of his time and to surmount its problems in himself in public was his aim in philosophy. . . (14:36).

Nietzsche very much disliked conventional methodology and showed extreme disrespect both for it and the contemporary authorities, referring to the latter as "learned cattle." His jumbled, chaotic personality seemed to lend itself very well to his particular type of investigation. His greatest contributions to philosophical thought (he is also distinguished for his contributions to psychological thought) were in the form of deep insights into human motivation and original questioning of traditionally accepted values and perspectives. Karl Jaspers, one of the contemporary authorities on existential thought, summarizes the influence of Nietzsche (and Kierkegaard) with this statement:

The contemporary philosophical situation is determined by the fact that two philosophers, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, who did not count in their times and for a long time, remained without influence in the history of philosophy, have continually grown in significance. Philosophers after Hegel have increasingly returned to face them, and they stand today as the authentically great thinkers of their age. Both their influence and opposition to them prove it (32:23).

The remainder of this chapter will attempt to briefly summarize what it was about Nietzsche that generated both "influence and opposition" in relation to his philosophical

ideas and the relationship of these ideas to the growth of existential thought.

Insights into the psychological nature of man.

Nietzsche's writings continually reflect his conviction that the overt, conscious behavior which an individual manifests is to a very large degree influenced by what might be referred to as the unconscious or subconscious. He did not passively accept this conviction, rather he systematically analyzed the ramifications and multi-phased implications of this phenomenon. His writings clearly discuss what Sigmund Freud termed sublimation, repression, transference and catharsis. Freud, an extremely conservative man when it came to complimenting a student of a discipline other than psychoanalysis, asserted that Nietzsche knew himself better than any man who ever lived. As a result of his insights into the psychological nature of man he was able to understand the degree to which symbols could be utilized to manipulate human behavior and attitudes, thus antedating social psychology by several decades. Evidence of his concern for the strength of non-conscious factors as determinants of philosophical thought and practice can readily be seen in Beyond Good and Evil:

. . . the greater part of conscious thinking of a philosopher is secretly influenced by his instincts, and forced into definite channels. And behind all logic and its seeming sovereignty of movement, there

are valuations, or to speak more plainly, physiological demands, for the maintenance of a definite mode of life. . . (50:388).

This type of insight was not systematically demonstrated in the academic setting until the writings of Freud. His insights, however, are not limited to use in psychoanalysis, they also underlie existential analysis (See Chapter VI.) and they also serve as a strong foundation for Adlerian Individual psychology. Nietzsche, of course, was aware that he was speaking of ideas beyond the boundaries of his contemporaries: "All psychology hitherto has run aground on moral prejudices and timidities, it has not dared to launch out into the depths" (50:395).

Rollo May interprets Nietzsche's goal as demonstrating the implications of an analysis of the totality of human being--human existence.

Like the depth psychologists to follow him, Nietzsche sought to bring into the scope of existence the unconscious, irrational sources of man's power and greatness as well as his morbidity and self-destructiveness (43:29).

It must continually be kept in mind that Nietzsche was writing in the turmoilish climate of the late nineteenth century--his ideas were born from the same environment as were those of Freud--indicating that both, psychoanalysis and existential thought, were reactions to the unhealthy symptoms of the times. The fact that Nietzsche and Freud were addressing themselves to a fairly similar Zeitgeist

may account for their similarity in certain areas; however, it is rarely mentioned that Nietzsche was the chronologically prior innovator of the insights.

It does not detract from the genius of Freud to point out that probably almost all of the specific ideas which later appeared in psychoanalysis could be found in Nietzsche in greater breadth. . . (43:33).

It thus appears that there can be very little doubt as to the legitimacy of Nietzsche's insights into the deeper aspects of human existence. These insights have seriously influenced the development of existential thought for it brought to the foreground the irrational aspects of human behavior; it demonstrated the limited potential of purely rational speculation; it suggested that the man behind the tower of Hegelian rationalism was a human who also had non-conscious motivations and had aspirations other than those explicitly stated; it crumpled "the rational alone is real" and also emphasized what Kierkegaard referred to as the paradoxical nature of human existence. His constructs concerning human nature permeate many realms other than existential thought but they did make a definite impression in this area.

Ethical-religious convictions. Of all the historical critics of Christianity, Nietzsche was possibly one of the most vociferous and effective. He maintained that Christianity was non-humanistic, did not strive for the improvement

of man or his social condition and did not give man the reverence and respect which he was entitled. As far as Nietzsche is concerned ethics (ethical standards) are the device which the stronger group of a society uses to force the weaker groups into a continual subservience. He thus demands that each generation should continually evaluate its values. Christianity does not do this at all, and mankind is suffering as a result. Pelikan in summarizing Nietzsche's concept of Christian philosophy says "The holiness of Christ does not challenge man to improve themselves, it demands that they repent" (55:140). In addition to his attack upon the socially undesirable aspects of Christianity he also revitalized the ancient argument of the necessity of the dual nature of a transcendent God. That is, if we are to credit God with all the beautiful things of nature we must logically credit Him with the non-beautiful; He must bear the burden of man's shortcomings if He is to enjoy the pleasure of man's devotion.

Being a man of sincere aspirations, Nietzsche was very much disturbed by the insincere nature of Christian followers. In this respect he is a mirror-image of Kierkegaard. As Aiken states, "What Nietzsche really opposed . . . is the do-good ethics of service and the false humility and charity which are enshrined as the

Christian virtues" (1:381). In one of his most direct statements against Christianity, Nietzsche says:

The Christian faith from the beginning is sacrifice: the sacrifice of all freedom, all pride, all self-confidence of spirit; it is at the same time subjection, self-derision, and self-mutilation (53a:494).

Although his attack upon Christianity is indeed quite devastating, Nietzsche was not a blind, non-constructive critic. For each phase of Christian belief that he assaulted he offered an alternative; he did not desert either Christianity or mankind with merely the rubble of his destructive onslaught--this is what distinguishes him as one of the great nineteenth century philosophers. His goal was to go beyond nihilism, and his media for reaching this goal was the actualized individual. Unleash the potential of man which contemporary Christianity and traditional unevaluated values have suppressed, and man will be able to go beyond the stagnant, even regressing, community in which he dwells.

Nietzsche's influence on existential thought is very closely allied with his ethical-religious convictions. By denying an absolute morality, by killing the transcendent God, by leveling the Christian ethical hierarchy, by demonstrating the irrationality of a good-evil dichotomy; Nietzsche left the individual with no alternative except to go to himself as the source of values in an otherwise

valueless universe. Man's values, ethics and religion for the first time became totally man-centered. By thrusting this gigantic task upon 19th Century Europe, Nietzsche paved the way for alternatives and reconstructions of all varieties, many of them developing into what is now referred to as existential thought or existentialism.

Basic disagreements with Hegelian rationalism. As mentioned earlier, Nietzsche liked to characterize himself as a Dionysiac philosopher. His writings are vivacious and full of energy and liveliness. He believed that Western philosophy had too long employed conservative rational methods. Philosophy was unable to "animate and enthuse" the reader, unable to give one a fervent conviction, unable to appeal to the emotional basis of life. The fact that Nietzsche feels philosophy should carry private, emotional connotations is apparent in his writings. In Beyond Good and Evil, he says "My opinion is my opinion: another person has not easily a right to it" (14:37). In an attempt to go beyond the concepts of Hegel he emphatically asserts:

. . . let us beware of the tentacles of such contradictory notions as 'pure reason,' 'absolute knowledge,' 'absolute intelligence,' . . . All seeing is essentially perspective, and so is all knowing . . . to eliminate the will, to suspend the emotions altogether, provided this could be done--surely this would be to castrate the intellect, would it not (51:255)?

Nietzsche also differed from Hegel by his belief in the concept of indirect communication (see Chapter II, page 7 and 1:10 in Bibliography). He realized that rational methods cannot probe all dimensions of human existence, and do justice to them. He maintained that both language and purely directive communication were sterile methods for understanding a human problem. "Language, it seems, was invented only for what is average, medium, communicable." Again using Jaspers we find that he also sees Nietzsche's flare for indirect communication:

In fact both Nietzsche and Kierkegaard were aware that the comprehension of their thought was not possible to the man who only thinks. It is important who it is that understands. They turn to the individual who must bring with them and bring forth from themselves what can only be said indirectly (32:28 emphasis mine).

With this emphasis upon indirect knowledge Nietzsche appears to be in diametrical opposition to Hegel, or to any radical rationalist. He has an entirely different concept of epistemology than that of scientific-rationalism.

Finally, Nietzsche is motivated by the gnawing uncertainty and frustration that only an unstable outcast can experience. His work is characterized by frenzied ambition mingled with messianic aspirations. He is a man who knows that rationality does not solve existential problems; he is a man who knows that society has as part of its matrix nonsensical and self-defeating ethics; he

knows that life is absurd and he too, as is Pascal, appalled at the "immensity of spaces of which I know not."

Nietzsche suffered from the same insoluble paradox as did Pascal, Kant, Kierkegaard and Sartre: the realization that one exists in a vast, incomprehensible universe, which unmercifully smothers everything with uniform consistency; but in the midst of this unmerciful smothering one finds himself crying out "I will not be smothered;" I will not bow out of the drama without emphatically asserting my unique existence to this meaningless void; and if the void does not hear my plea, at least I shall have lived my existence rather than have it osmotically sapped into the meaningless void.

Nietzsche would agree with Hegel that the subjective self is the basic stuff of human existence, but he would not follow this thesis with the antithesis of subjectivity (objectivity); rather, he would suggest that the subjectivity in its rawness be asserted to the fullest with the intention of serving self and other selves.

Stress upon individual self-determination. Despite all the apparent contrasts, Hegel and Nietzsche share certain common aspirations. Both desire to see man evolve to a status where he may actualize the greatest possible degree of freedom and self-expression, while still

contributing to the welfare of the entire group. At the heart of Nietzsche's thinking, however, is the assumption that each individual must first shrug the limitations of the masses, the "herd," so that he can initially be free to exercise his individual talents. The herd is restricting, lazy and a travesty upon human fecundity:

. . . men are inclined to laziness. . . .They hide behind customs and opinions. At bottom, every human being knows that he is in this world just once, as something unique . . . he knows it, but hides it like a bad conscience--why? From fear of his neighbor who insists on convention and veils himself with it. But what is it that compels the individual human being to fear his neighbor, to think and act herd-fashion, and not be glad of himself? A sense of shame, perhaps, in a few rare cases. In the vast majority it is the desire for comfort, inertia . . . and what they fear most is the troubles with which any unconditional honesty and nudity would burden them (53:101 emphasis mine).

This statement from Nietzsche's earliest work was one which he maintained throughout his entire career. For he believed "The noble soul has reverence for itself." But self respect cannot be achieved until one is free from the herd.

Because of his distrust of the masses, Nietzsche did not share the political optimism of either Hegel or Marx. He did not believe in the natural evolution of the state. He believed in the progress of the state--but certainly not the natural evolution of it. Progress must be worked through and before the work can begin the society itself

must thoroughly evaluate the values upon which it functions; before any progress is to be made the transvaluation of values must occur. Nietzsche further disagrees with Hegel insofar as he is extremely hesitant to believe that the prominent problems of human existence are political-economic problems. As mentioned earlier, the most pressing problems in life are "existential" problems. Man's basic nature demands that he actualize his potential, he is basically striving for power and self-determination, and he has reached "absolute power" when he has reached self-determination--when he has cast off the shackles of the herd and achieved personal autonomy while still having altruistic tendencies. This striving Nietzsche called the will-to-power. "It is possible to trace all the instincts of an animal to the will to power" (5:852). But the will-to-power is not a will of destructive power, rather "The fundamental drive . . . is to live out one's potentia" (43:31). The will-to-power is thus the center of Nietzsche's concept of human nature. This will-to-power, when optimally channeled, is capable of producing a super man--Superman.

Many different interpretations have been given as to what really stands behind the concept of Superman. Aiken feels that Superman "more closely resembles the creative artist or the religious prophet than the empire builder" (1:379). In addition, this super-man also "recognizes his

own capacity for self-transcendence, and who demands for himself and all other superior men the right to self-transcendence and self-fulfillment" (1:385). Aiken is not alone in his characterization of Superman. Pelikan is of the impression that Nietzsche felt that creative involvement in aesthetic experience can amount to the highest meaning in life. The Superman is free from the restrictions of the herd and the path he trods is of his own choosing. But more important, the path which Superman walks is one which is cleansed of the traditionally restricting values; one which is designed for the betterment of mankind; one which has promise of elevating man to the position he deserves; it is, in short, a man-centered path created by man, for man.

CHAPTER IV

THE CONTEMPORARY CONDITION

This chapter is intended to serve as a transition taking the reader from a discussion of the postulates and historical origins of existential thought to the areas of life where insights fostered by existential postulates may be applied. This chapter takes a one-sided look at some of the dilemmas which face contemporary man. It is not a thorough look nor does it emphasize many of the positive aspects of modern life which counter balance the shortcomings, however, it is concerned with (1) the fact that a technological society such as ours neglects the individuality of the individuals who comprise the society and (2) that the individuals who comprise the society are becoming aware of the fact that a process of alienation and estrangement is occurring as a result of this neglect of their individuality.

I. A BRIEF LOOK AT CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL LIFE

All of us today are subjected to specific influences which work against what psychotherapy considers so important to psychological health--concentration upon inward subjectivity and awareness of individuality. These specific influences are the natural by-product of a

bureaucratic, technologically advanced society. This is not to suggest that living in an advanced society such as ours necessarily leads to individual unhappiness. It is suggested, however, that as a result of living in such a society each individual is deprived of certain social gratifications which are conducive to individual happiness. Being deprived of these "gratifications," however, does not create immediate psychological problems. Because of man's seemingly infinite flexibility it becomes comparatively easy for him to adapt to the "aloneness" of his daily life. Anyone who has moved to a strange city for a period of time is aware that adaptation is fairly easy. However, when the adaptation is made on a life-long basis, certain values and modes of existence achieve priority over others. The fact that our society is so structured that the individual person does adapt to the situation often generates within the individual the philosophy that it is right (proper) that he adjust. That is, his self, his emotional subjectivity, becomes subservient to the demands of his social environment. When an individual experiences emotional anguish as a result of continually subjugating his personal desire for individuality and expression, without consciously realizing that he is operating under a philosophy which relegates his individuality to a subservient position, the term self-estrangement or alienation is used to refer to his condition.

It has been said by many theologians, philosophers, psychologists, sociologists, psychotherapists and psychiatrists that alienation and self-estrangement constitute one of the greatest psychological problems of the 20th Century. How then do these phenomena come about? (It is the opinion of this writer what a very simple principle can be employed to explain the phenomena: man is born into a very complex society which has very little practical time allotted for individuality; man has a strong desire for individuality, however, the more he emphasizes his individuality the more problems he will encounter in his social roles, the more he emphasizes his anonymity the less will be his problems in his social roles, the result is that man must make a choice between the two, but for the most part his choice is never a real one because he never seriously considers his self as deserving priority.) We thus have a society of individual humans consolidated into social roles which stress anonymity rather than individuality; we-centered activity rather than I-centered activity; other rather than inner; have rather than know; own rather than experience; being loved rather than loving; I-it rather than I-thou; I-have, rather than I-am.

A brief look at a typical life span may be instructive. A child is born and the first six years of his life are dedicated to him and to his immediate family. Then, he

enters school. He experiences seriously enforced regimentation for the first time. After twelve years of school he has supposedly completed the basic learning which will prepare him for an infinite variety of occupations most of which have one thing in common: extreme specialization and a very minute participation in the much larger task of which the individual has very little conception ". . . the result is apt to be an experience of anonymity and a lack of connectedness, because under such circumstances it is rarely possible for the task to be meaningful to the performer of the task" (37:274). Because of the comparative meaninglessness of his life work, contemporary man is forced to go beyond his occupation for meaningful activity. Activities are abundant and diverse--everything from aviation clubs to zoology lectures, but very often these fail to be adequate substitutes because man, having relinquished much of his autonomy and individuality already, is uncertain as to how to relate to these activities to his personal existence in a meaningful way. "In essence, all contemporary influences combine to convey the impression to the individual that he is a member of a group first and an individual second" (37:275).

What has been presented thus far has only been a generalized abstraction of modern society. The issue now becomes: How can the elements of truth within the

abstraction be verified?" It is suggested that additional perspective concerning the social condition in which we live can be brought about by analyzing the various branches of academic thought which deal with the social condition as it relates to individual subjectivity. If this is possible, one would not have to rely solely upon the foregoing conceptualization of the contemporary social condition to entertain the hypothesis that the social condition has inherent within it the obstacles to psychological health which have been suggested. The following section will deal with a few particular examples from literature, sociology, politics, theology, psychology and psychotherapy which have reflected the point of view that the contemporary social condition is hostile towards the development of individual psychological health.

II. REFLECTIONS UPON THE CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL CONDITION AND THE MODE OF HUMAN EXISTENCE WHICH FOLLOWS FROM THIS CONDITION

Literature. In 1950, W. H. Auden entitled his latest poem with the phrase which he believed most accurately characterizes our period, "The Age of Anxiety." Rollo May believes that the four characters in the poem have in common certain characteristics of our time: loneliness, the

feeling of not being of value as persons and the experience of not being able to be loved or to give love (40:121).

The French author, Albert Camus, refers to the 20th Century as the century of fear, in contrast with the 17th Century as the age of mathematics, the 18th Century as the age of physical science, and the 19th Century as the age of biology.

Franz Kafka, who has at the heart of his writings man as being completely isolated, engulfed with guilt and consumed with an awareness of personal existence, has found widespread acceptance during the past twenty years. "The fact that increasing numbers of people are finding that Kafka speaks significantly to them must indicate that he is expressing some profound aspects of the prevailing experience of many members of society" (40:122).

In his latest work, Jean-Paul Sartre portrays the life of Jean Genet. The life of Genet is a strange one, but the strangeness is largely due to the incompatibility of the structured society with its mores, norms and expectations and the subjectivity of the individual. Sartre maintains that the individual must give meaning and significance to his individual existence, and if the society in which one lives will not allow one to do this with integrity, then the individual will do it under a

cover of deceit--the result is that both society and the individual are the losers.

To the child who steals and the child who masturbates, to exist is to be seen by adults, and since these activities take place in solitude, they do not exist . . . If he steals, if he dreams of saintliness, it is not in defiance of peasant ethics, but because of it. He [Genet] has recourse to this double compensatory activity because he is unable to liquidate a system of values that denies him his place in the sun (60:16).

Thus Sartre places the responsibility upon the larger society for the proper molding of the individual and, paradoxically by merit of this, places upon the individual the responsibility of molding a society which is suited for the individual. Genet typifies the individual who could not overcome the faulty molding of the irresponsible society.

Here we have the key to Genet. This is what must be understood first; Genet is a child who has been convinced that he is, in his very depths Another than Self. His life henceforth will be only the history of his attempts to perceive this Other than himself and to look it in the face. . . (60:35).

Very briefly we have glanced at some of the noted literary figures of modern times. They have in common a disdain for the social structure which negates the individuality of its members and a disdain for the type of subjective life which develops in a society with this type of orientation.

Sociological studies. The Lynd's studies of Middletown during the 1920's and the follow-up studies during the 1930's reveal a marked change in the psychological structure of the individual: the transformation of covert anxiety behavioral patterns (compulsive working) to overt anxiety. "One thing everybody in Middletown has in common," the Lynd's observe, "is the insecurity in the face of a complicated world" (40:124). The insecurity is not to be attributed solely to the economic crises of the time; the Lynds feel that the insecurity of Middletown is greatly influenced by the confusion of role which the individual experiences. The overt anxiety which accompanies the individual existence of Middletown may be interpreted as one expression of the pervasive social changes taking place during our time.

Political observations. Paul Tillich describes the situation in Europe in the 1930's out of which German fascism developed:

First of all a feeling of fear, or more exactly, of indefinite anxiety was prevailing. Not only the economic and political, but also the cultural and religious, security seemed to be lost. There was nothing on which one could build; everything was without foundation. A catastrophic breakdown was expected every moment. Consequently, a longing for security was growing in everybody. A freedom that leads to fear and anxiety has lost its value; better authority with security than freedom with fear (40:125).

The anxiety and fear which Tillich refers to seems to resemble that which the Lynd's speak of as taking place in Middletown during the same decade.

The Second World War did much to enhance the sense of absurdity of existence as well as raise the general "anxiety level" of the individual. However, with the innovation of the atom bomb, and worse, the acute awareness of the problems of existence has become more manifest. Karl Jaspers feels that the threat which the atom bomb poses for individual existence is equalled only by one other problem--totalitarianism.

The atom bomb, as the problem of mankind's very existence, is equalled by only one other problem: the threat of totalitarian rule . . . with its terroristic structure that obliterates all liberty of human dignity. By one, we lost life; by the other, a life that is worth living. Both extreme possibilities bring us today to an awareness of what we want, how we would wish to live, what we must be prepared for (31:4).

This statement is testimony from a world-famous philosopher, and also a psychologist of high esteem, that the "bomb" is a crucial factor in 20th Century life. In light of Jasper's comment, the recent innovation of the term "atomic neurosis" into common usage becomes quite understandable.

Philosophy and religion. Theologians have, during the past few decades, become aware of the threat of meaninglessness which faces contemporary man. In addition to

the philosophical problems which Sartre, Camus and Nietzsche make of the problem of meaninglessness, theologians are realizing that there are "spiritual" problems associated with a sense of meaningless existence. Paul Tillich and R. Niebuhr are both very concerned with the problems of anxiety and non-being. Tillich uses non-being to represent the phenomenon of man's confrontation of the fact that his existence will eventually cease--that he will no longer be. The sense of futility which often accompanies non-being manifests itself in spiritual crises where the individual loses both his feeling of emotional commonality with his fellow man, and his sense of relatedness with a transcendental God. He loses his religious dimension. Hence, meaninglessness, non-being, has today become an issue in religion and theological thought on a scale never before proximated in written history.

Psychology. The significance of the data compiled to support the hypothesis that this century is one of unique psychological distress largely depends upon one's orientation to the data. One may legitimately argue that if the data had been gathered four or five centuries previously, it would basically have been the same. However, according to this writer, such a point of view overlooks certain crucial issues, one being the emphasis in contemporary

literature on alienation, absurdity, and self estrangement and another being the compilation of evidence in clinical psychology and psychotherapy which indicates the definite trend of overt behavioral manifestations, symptomatic of psychological distress--especially those types associated with anomie and meaninglessness.

Psychology now has such various divisions as Existential Psychology, Philosophical Psychology and Humanistic Psychology all of which are represented by extensively trained, empirically-minded individuals, most all of whom are supporting the hypothesis that today's social matrix is harmful to "authentic existence" unless the individual makes a conscious effort to reconcile the incompatible elements which are inherent in his environment.

I think perhaps that a general resume of the findings in the field of existential psychology can be roughly understood by reflecting upon a very short statement made by Abraham Maslow:

The Americans have learned that political democracy and economic prosperity don't in themselves solve any of the basic problems. There is no place else to turn but inward, to the self, as the locus of values (46:10).

Carl Jung adds another comment (The Undiscovered Self, page 26) which exemplifies the contemporary condition:

Under these circumstances [today's] it is small wonder that individual judgment grows increasingly

uncertain of itself and that responsibility is collectivised as much as possible, i.e., is shuffled off by the individual and delegated to a corporate body.

Jung goes on to stress that modern man lacks a metaphysical foundation from which his individual life can assume meaning and significance. Victor Frankl is probably the strongest living advocate of this concept.

These quotes from Maslow and Jung have very roughly described the findings of the various areas of psychology which deal with individual existence on a systematic, comprehensive basis--that modern man has found that what is being stressed most in contemporary life does not carry any ultimate significance to the individual and that man has shuffled his responsibility and individuality to the larger and more powerful "other."

Psychotherapy. Many of the findings of modern psychotherapy have contributed to the speculation about the psychological strife of modern times. The unique nature of individual psychological discord during the past thirty years has been pronounced enough to necessitate a basic change in the field of psychotherapy. A change has been made to deal with existential problems, problems of existence which center around man's relationship with his knowledge of his subjective life. As a result of the pioneering efforts of Ludwig Binswanger, Existential Analysis has

become the most prominent movement in European psychotherapy. For the first time since Freud, there is now a psychotherapeutic movement more prominent than psychoanalysis. Indeed, the 4th International Congress of Psychotherapy held in Barcelona in 1958, had as its main concern "Psychotherapy and Existential Analysis."

Existential Analysis (which will be the topic of Chapter VI) has as its foundation the existentialism of Martin Heidegger, which has at its heart the concept that man lives in a continual struggle with his environment, and that a reconciliation of this struggle demands a thorough scrutiny of self and others, being and time, guilt and death, sorrow and despair, and temporality and finiteness. The fact that so crucial a movement as Existential Analysis has as its very foundation the analysis of man's relationship to his self (Eigenwelt) indicates the unstable condition of this relationship in contemporary times.⁴

III. SUMMARY COMMENTS

In the past few pages we have looked at some samplings from academic areas which seem to support the notion that

⁴Rather than reiterate points which have been made better elsewhere I request the concerned reader to survey the literature mentioned in the bibliography of Existential Psychology, Rollo May, editor.

man is aware of some sort of estrangement process that he is undergoing. In the area of literature we noted the writings of Auden, Camus, Sartre and Kafka, all of whom were concerned with modern times and the individual's ability to adapt to the times. The sociological studies of Middletown showed that overt anxiety and insecurity came into being conspicuously during the 1930's. The political scene suggests that man is in turmoil over the consequences of the bomb and that lack of individual security culminated in the creation of the Third Reich. Theology and religion are becoming aware of the widespread feelings of meaninglessness and non-being and are beginning to speak directly to these issues because of their importance and prevalence. Psychology is attempting to understand the phenomenon of existence in the 20th Century via Existential Psychology, Humanistic Psychology and Philosophical Psychology and by continuous new insights into the more traditional streams of thought. Psychotherapy has unconditionally confirmed any doubt that may remain. The leading psychotherapists of the day are stressing emphatically that man finds his life non-meaningful and devoid of intrinsic worth.

It is with this orientation toward the detrimental by-products of a technologically advanced, metaphysically meaningless social matrix that our attention is turned

toward the unique schools of psychotherapy--logotherapy and existential analysis. Both are established in sound psychological theory and supplemented by insights fostered by existential thinkers. The purpose of each school is to create a new image of man's psychological nature as well as to provide method and theory for psychotherapy.

CHAPTER V

VIKTOR FRANKL'S PSYCHOLOGY AND ITS EXISTENTIAL ORIENTATION

Viktor Frankl is a Viennese psychiatrist who has been receiving considerable attention during the past ten years because of his unique philosophy of human existence and the form of psychotherapy which emerges from this philosophy--logotherapy. Frankl explains that the term is derived from the Greek word Logos, which denotes "meaning." Thus, very generally speaking, logo-therapy implies meaning-therapy. Logotherapy has at its foundation the belief that one of man's strongest motivational drives is the drive to find meaning in one's own life. He is not, however, referring to an abstract, over-all meaning for life, such as life after death or the improvement of the human condition, but rather he is referring to individual meaning for each individual existent. He refers to this as man's will to meaning. The will to meaning is in contrast with both Freud's pleasure principle and Adler's will to power. According to Frankl, pleasure is not the purpose of human strivings, but rather a by-product of the fulfillment of such strivings; he also says that will to power is not an end, but a means to an end. Thus, both the Freudian pleasure principle and the Adlerian power principle mistake action

which is guided by a more fundamental human characteristic --the desire to find meaning and meaningful activity in life. Frankl maintains that man needs the "pulling force" of meaning to make his existence worthwhile--tolerable. In addition to suggesting that man basically strives to find meaning in life, Frankl also suggests that finding a truly meaningful activity in life may "have a life-prolonging, or even life-saving effect." Goethe worked for seven years on the completion of the second part of Faust, under biological conditions which would normally not allow such activity and died two months after the work was finished--this type of occurrence epitomizes Frankl's belief that meaning in life tends to make life more endurable--livable. However, Frankl's best support for his assumption that a sense of meaning increases life duration comes from his first hand experiences in the camps of Auschwitz and Dachau. For a vivid account of his concentration camp experiences, and further elaboration upon the will to meaning, this writer seriously recommends number 24 in this bibliography.

Frankl's theory maintains that man must cultivate a sense of meaning in his life which is not dependent upon simply those activities in which the individual is involved. That is, one's family, one's possessions, one's achievements, one's personal feats of valor, must not be the sole criteria for an individual's sense of meaning. He must

have both a sense of spiritual (in a humanistic sense)⁵ existence and a sense of personal responsibility for his own psychological condition. Man's responsibility for his existence comes by merit of his ability to experience a certain degree of self-detachment, allowing him to take a stand toward his own particular mode of existing in the world (23:34). Frankl takes very seriously the notion that a fact concerning the world within which we live, in and of itself, does not have any particular significance to an individual's mode of existence in the world; that is, it is man's interpretation of an event which gives the event its degree of impact. Thus, the inherent contradictions and perplexities of everyday life, (social, physical and psychological) are not the basic determinants of psychological health. Rather it is one's attitudes toward these facts that determines psychological health. Indeed, it could well be said that one's attitude is his psychological health. As will be discussed later, it is primarily one's individual approach to existence and to the turmoils of existence which formulate a particular being-in-the-world, whether it be rigid, flexible, loving or suspecting.

⁵Frankl employs the term "spiritual" in a very general context. He says "It must be kept in mind, however, that within the frame of reference of logotherapy, "spiritual" does not have a primarily religious connotation but refers to the specifically human dimension" (24:159-60).

Because of his emphasis upon freedom, responsibility and meaning (an emphasis shared by all existential psychologists and psychotherapists), he feels that the concept of determinism is actually conducive to neurosis, especially when applied to problems of individual subjectivity such as anxiety, anguish, despair, etc. He deplors the use of deterministic principles as the sole media for analyzing human subjectivity because in the use of these principles one is likely to overlook the degree of responsibility which each individual potentially possesses with regards to mastery over his own subjective orientation toward the predicaments of human existence.

Being a psychotherapist, Frankl is very much aware of the phenomena of personal anomie and alienation, briefly mentioned in the previous chapter; indeed, he lends his own verification to these conditions when he says:

Ever more frequently psychoanalysts report that they are confronted with a new type of neurosis characterized by loss of interest and by a lack of initiative. They complain that in such cases conventional psychoanalysis is not effective (24:722).

I. BASIC CONCEPTS OF FRANKL'S LOGOTHERAPY

Existential frustration. From within his own framework, the phenomenon of estrangement and meaninglessness can be understood via the concept of "existential frustration." Existential frustration occurs when man's will to

meaning has been thwarted. This type of frustration can be experienced in two general dimensions. One type of existential frustration is experienced when man is searching for something meaningful but cannot find it. This is reminiscent of the search which Camus and Sartre speak of: the vain, fruitless, never ending search for something in life which is not absurd or ultimately meaningless. This type of existential frustration has been extremely facilitated by the "God is dead" concept, because by losing God, man has lost an orientation towards life which always has meaning inherent in it. That is, God has traditionally been a reality which served as an integrator of individual aspirations and ultimately significant aspirations. The second type of existential frustration is experienced when man commits himself to a type of existence which appears to be meaningful but ultimately becomes devoid of meaning beyond the act itself. This is probably the greatest source of existential frustration. Man becomes involved in activity which is very time consuming, intellectually and psychologically challenging, and socially advantageous but still does not bring the individual to the conviction that he is involved in something which is truly meaningful. However, because of the degree to which he is immersed within the activity (role) he finds it extremely difficult to "buck the system"; consequently he stays within it and carries

with him the continual experience of a frustrated existence --existential frustration. Because of the individual turmoil which results from engaging in activity which the person feels⁶ is ultimately meaningless, the schools of logotherapy and existential analysis both have in common the supposition that for man to most optimally enjoy life he must be engaged in activity which has meaning beyond the act itself and has meaning and significance after the act is over (48:12). Thus it can be postulated that the two types of experiences which are symbolized by the term "existential frustration" can be categorized under the heading "positive" and "negative." The positive is the first type mentioned, the Sartrian frustration of not being able to find meaning while searching for it. That is existential frustration is actually caused by the inability to find meaning. The second type of experience is the more prevalent and may be categorized as negative. It is not directly caused by any particular behavior but rather by a mode of existence in general, which neglects certain aspects of human existence and consequently has as a by-product the experience of meaninglessness. The negative

⁶When it is said that a person feels an activity is ultimately meaningless, it does not imply that he consciously concludes "this activity is ultimately meaningless." Rather, it implies that the activity itself does not generate within the individual a sense of having done something meaningful or worthwhile.

type of existential frustration is the easier to lapse into and the more difficult from which to escape. Martin Heidegger devotes a great deal of thought to this phenomenon and indeed has his own systematic philosophy for avoiding this frightful lapse. Heidegger refers to the anonymous mass of others with which each of us must daily struggle as the One, and he believes that each of us, in order to protect self-hood must devise ways to avoid the clutch of the One. If successful, this would constitute a preventive for the negative type of existential frustration experience.

Existential vacuum. The existential vacuum is a widespread phenomenon of the 20th Century. It is characterized by a lack of awareness of a meaning worth living for, an experience of inner emptiness and a void within self (24:167). The existential vacuum should be carefully distinguished from existential frustration. The latter is the immediate experience of meaninglessness, either positive or negative. The existential vacuum is the type of existence which a person experiences who has constantly experienced existential frustration. Because of the lack of meaning which the individual experiences in the vacuum, boredom is extremely manifest, as are the pathologies which usually accompany an existence engulfed in boredom. Frankl mentions that it is quite common to see the will-to-

power and the will-to-money overtake an individual when he is in the condition referred to as the existential vacuum. Boredom is such a crucial issue in contemporary life that, Frankl states, "In actual fact, boredom is now causing and certainly bringing to the psychiatrist, more problems to solve than is distress" (24:169). Not a few cases of suicide can be attributed to the boredom manifested by the vacuum, nor can the widespread phenomena of alcoholism and juvenile delinquency be understood unless we recognize the existential vacuum underlying them.

Noogenic neurosis. Frankl refers to those conflicts which center around contrasting values as noogenic conflicts, or noogenic neuroses. Traditional concepts of neurosis are concerned with conflicts between various drives and/or instincts and drives. Frankl, because of his orientation toward man's religious dimension in addition to instinctual and dynamic dimensions, demands that the concept of neurosis not be limited to conflicts of drives and instincts although they certainly are instrumental in the creation of particular neuroses. Thus for Frankl, (it might be added that many Europeans have their own particular adaptation of noogenic neurosis, especially Boss and Binswanger) one of the first steps in a therapeutic situation is to try to determine as accurately as possible

whether a psychological difficulty is basically the result of an inadequate adaptation to natural drives and instincts or if it is a problem which is the result of conflicting spiritual values, or if the neurosis is the result of an intermingling of the two. The concept of noogenic neurosis also suggests that "A man's concern, even his despair, over the worthwhileness of life is a spiritual distress but by no means a mental disease." Because of this view, Frankl feels that the road to health is best achieved by struggling through the various spiritual problems of life with the realization that they must be dealt with realistically, rather than to bury "existential despair under a heap of tranquilizing drugs" (24:163).

Orientation toward other therapies. Frankl is quite willing to emphasize the contrasts between logotherapy and traditional psychologistic therapy. Referring to traditional therapy he says:

 Their basic mistake is to treat a person as if he were an object. A person is a spiritual entity, a "subjective spirit," which does not lend itself to any form of objectivication or materialization. In referring to a person as an object we tend to overlook his fundamental property (22:8).

He also suggests that modern psychology has no concept of man's inherent ethical obligation toward his fellow man except via the pleasure principle, tension-reduction, homeostasis, heterostasis, or some type of adaptation--

balance concept. Modern psychology seems to be valueless. The people who study and apply psychology are not, but psychology itself does seem to be valueless.

Again emphasizing his noogenic concern, Frankl states:

. . . logotherapy is directed toward a spiritual aim, when in the form of existential analysis, it makes man reflect upon himself as a spiritual subject; when it points out his subjective spirituality, in short his existence (22:11).

Bearing this noogenic and spiritual concern in mind we can understand a further contrast between logotherapy and traditional psychologistic psychology:

. . . to mention but a single example, a psychologistic therapy might see in the metaphysical aspiration of the individual, only a neurosis. . . (22:12).

Psychologistic therapy, Frankl maintains, would suggest a repression of the metaphysical aspiration, creating metaphysical irresponsibility. The therapy would end up treating what might be symptoms of a natural religious phenomena.

In spite of the extensively developed nature of Frankl's logotherapy and the reservations which he might have toward traditional psychology, he is very quick to note:

We have never said however, that existential analysis might replace existing psychotherapeutic methods. We maintained that it provides only a very necessary supplement to these methods (22:14).

II. FRANKL'S PSYCHOLOGY OF EXISTENCE AND ITS EXISTENTIAL ORIENTATION

The will to meaning and its related concepts (existential frustration, existential vacuum and noogenic neurosis) provide a strong basis for a psychology of individual existence. Allowing for the patience and tolerance of the reader I should like to submit what I feel to be the basic components of Frankl's psychology of existence, and the relatedness of these components to other existentially oriented concepts. The components are broken into five divisions, the first of which is the concept of tension.

Tension. A certain amount of stress and tension is necessary for mental health. This is necessary both to counteract the pathology of boredom and to provide initiative for the search for meaning. Frankl summarizes this point when he says:

Thus it can be seen that mental health is based upon a certain degree of tension, the tension between what one has already achieved and what one still ought to accomplish, or the gap between what one is and what one ought to become. Such a tension is inherent in the human being and therefore is indispensable to mental well-being (24:166).

This statement is very intimately related to basic existential thought. Soren Kierkegaard especially emphasized that man exists in a disparity relationship, always striving to become a little more than what he is and always being

aware that he is striving to achieve, thus being consciously aware of the tension that such a striving involves. Blaise Pascal was forever concerned with the state of tension that man dwells in when he seriously tries to comprehend the perplexing mysteries of human finitude, versus subjective involvement, and human significance in an impartial, law-governed world. Friedrich Nietzsche's Superman was one who could transcend the restricting powers of institution and emerge an authentic existent. The process however was one of tension and anxiety, for the individual would always have to give up a certain element of himself in order to fulfill or actualize another. Homeostasis is an extremely limited concept to the existentially oriented thinker when used as a model for human health. Existence demands disparity, and awareness of disparity demands tension. To avoid tension, to run from it, is to run from a basic condition of life; it is to flee from a condition of self.

Abraham Maslow feels that "serious concern with this discrepancy could revolutionize psychology. . ." (46). European existentialism deals "radically with that human predicament presented by the gap between human aspirations and human limitations," to use Maslow's words.

The ontological basis of guilt in existential psychotherapy is rooted in the concept of tension. Ontological guilt arises because man has the ability to see himself as

a person who must choose one way or another; seeing himself in this perspective, man realizes that he can avoid his responsibility if he so chooses, thus setting the stage for the possibility of tension. To choose or not to choose, to be responsible or not to be responsible. Anxiety likewise has an element of tension. "If there were not some possibility opening up, some potentiality crying out to be born, we could not experience anxiety" (44:52).

Daseinanalysis, Binswanger's particular form of existential analysis, has as a model of health the condition of being able to choose the mode of being in the world that one desires to choose, thus implying that tension (the basis of choice) is inherent in healthy existence (49:140).

Karl Jaspers also seriously regards the idea of tension, especially concerning his particular model of authentic existence. For Jaspers, the goal of life is to achieve authentic existence via deeper and wider self-consciousness (3:467). William Barret, commenting on the philosophy of Jaspers, notes that it is from "this encounter of reason with nonreason that authentic existence springs. And authentic existence continues only as the perpetual tension between reason and nonreason" (3:467).

Suffering. Suffering is also considered to be of value if it is accepted in the proper spirit by the individual. Not all suffering, of course, should be endured, but neither should one attempt to avoid all suffering. The continual desire to escape suffering, while existing within a context which demands disparity, therefore suffering, results in more pathology and neurosis than does the original suffering.

At first glance this may appear to be a re-statement of ancient philosophical thinking, especially Epicureanism and Stoicism. However, it has elements within it which go beyond both of these schools. Epicureanism maintained that suffering of a particular type should be endured, usually in the form of avoidance of momentary pleasure, only because in the long run it proved to involve less suffering than other types of life approaches (56:50). Stoical thought appears to approximate Frankl's thinking more than Epicurean thinking; however, the Stoic endures suffering because he assumes that by attempting to escape suffering or by aspiring towards greater heights he inevitably tumbles to greater depths. Stoical suffering is endured with emotional apatheia--"a heroic act of will by which we cast out all desires. . ." (29:62). The Stoical concept of apatheia, as elaborated by Hospers, brings to mind Guatama the Buddha who taught that "since all life involves

suffering, the cause of which is craving for transitory things, the way of happiness is to rid ourselves of such cravings" (34:29). Frankl seems to go beyond each of these three concepts when he suggests that suffering itself can be perceived as a potential meaning giver. He suggests that suffering need not be endured merely because it involves a lesser degree of suffering than another particular orientation, although this is also a legitimate reason. Rather, he is more concerned with the fact that "man's main concern is not to gain pleasure or to avoid pain, but rather to see meaning in life" (24:179). However, meaning which is entrenched in suffering is very often of a greater dimension than meaning which does not entail suffering. Frankl repeatedly makes reference to experiences during his time in concentration camps which suggest that meaning found in suffering is possibly the greatest form of meaning. He attributes the fact that he is alive today to his burning desire to reconstruct a scientific manuscript while he was suffering from typhus in the German concentration camp.

Responsibility. Responsibility is the "very essence of human existence," according to Frankl. Man is responsible for answering the question "What is my meaning in life?" and is therefore responsible for the meaning which he gives to his life.

Frankl's emphasis upon responsibility is thoroughly immersed in his belief in human freedom. This, of course, is the trademark of existential thought and is reflected in the psychology of several other existentialists, especially Jean-Paul Sartre's *Existential Psychoanalysis*. Sartre is so convinced of man's power of choice that he maintains that neither the Oedipus complex of Freud nor the Inferiority complex of Adler are to be legitimately referred to as ultimate data; Sartre feels that both of these are reducible to man's original choice, the choice of his being in the world, his attitude toward the world (58). Sartre himself says, "The goal of existential psychoanalysis is to rediscover through these empirical, concrete projects the original mode of which each man has chosen his being" (62:115). In another article Sartre comments that "What is at the very heart of existentialism is the absolute character of free commitment. . . ." Thus it is very easy to see that Frankl's emphasis upon responsibility and, consequently, the emphasis upon freedom has common elements with the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre.

When Frankl says that man is responsible for answering the question "What is my meaning in life?" he is aligning himself very closely with Karl Jaspers. Within Jasper's frame of reference, this question is the first which must be asked if individual consciousness is to be expanded to

the possibility of authentic existence. Indeed, when Jaspers writes of the philosophy of history he refers to the stage in history when man first asked himself the question "What is my meaning?" as the Axial Period in history. He characterizes the Axial Period thusly:

What is new about this age, in all three areas of the world, is that becomes conscious of his Being as a whole, of himself and his limitations. He experiences the terror of the world and his own powerlessness. . . . Spiritual conflicts arose, accompanied by the attempts to convince others through the communication of thoughts, reasons and experiences (30:566).

We can thus see that for both Frankl and Jaspers the question has momentous implications. It is an extremely "live" hypothesis, with "real" implications, to use James' jargon.

Means to meaning. Frankl believes that meaning in life can be found in three ways: (1) in doing a deed, (2) in experiencing a value and (3) in suffering. The first is almost self-evident for each person can verify it by reflecting upon his own existence. By doing something, by becoming involved in a task, by creating, we often experience a sense of accomplishment and worthwhileness--a sense of meaning. Indeed, the most important thing in our life is often that "something" which gives a sense of meaning and worthwhileness; whether it be working with boy scouts or analyzing Sisyphus.

The second way to find meaning--experiencing a value --can also be referred to as love.

Love is the only way to grasp another human being in the innermost core of his personality. . .By the spiritual act of love he is enabled to see the essential traits and features in the beloved person; and even more, he sees that which is potential in him" (24:177).

Frankl's emphasis upon love as a realm for experiencing meaning is similar to what Rollo May considers the third principle of psychotherapy; "need and possibility of going out from their centeredness to participate in other beings" (41:78 Emphasis added).

Again, making reference to Ludwig Binswanger, we find that he also has a very emphatic role for the concept of love. He is perhaps more oriented towards love than either May or Frankl. Binswanger is of the impression that the merging of two individual selves "is the most triumphant security and certainty of existence that there is" (60). It has inherent in it the verification of personal value. Existence is fundamentally actualized by we-ness (the merging of two individual beings). If it were not for the fact that existence is characterized by we-ness, there would be no such thing as love or yearning. "I give myself to you and receive myself back as a gift of the We" (60). Thus we can see that for Binswanger, the concept of love, we-ness, is a fundamental necessity for existence. For

Frankl, love has a lesser status, though to be sure a very significant one, that of enhancing life-meaning, or one's meaning in life.

The third way to find meaning is through suffering. Meaning comes only as a result of an attitude toward the suffering. Suffering of any type brings an individual into acute awareness of his private existence; this awareness of self, if channeled into a purposeful attitude, can bring about an extreme sense of meaning to the person. The literary epitome of such a purposeful channeling of suffering is Dickens' Sydney Carton, when on the steps of the guillotine reflects:

It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to, than I have ever known.

The purposeful attitude taken toward the suffering of World War II is what allowed the French Resistance to flourish against the German occupation, says Camus in his "Letter to a German Friend" (16). Likewise, Crane Brinton mentions that it was the Stoical attitude of tolerance which allowed the suffering during the times of the Roman Empire to be meaningful for the peasants who had the unbearable, yet indispensable, chore of tilling the soil (15:117-30). Frankl is not suggesting that suffering is meaningful per se; he is suggesting that during the experience of suffering, if one can visualize his suffering as

purposeful and worthwhile he will have actualized his will to meaning and the suffering will allow the individual to be more aware of the goodness of his suffering, hence life will be more fulfilled.

The tragic triad. Frankl supplements his suggestion that there are three ways most suited for finding meaning with the suggestion that there are three aspects of human life which each individual must emotionally reconcile as being inevitable. The first is that we must fail somewhat in our lives; the second is that we must suffer in our lives; the third is that our lives will soon be over--we will die. An awareness of this tragic triad is very important to the individual because he must become aware of these aspects of human finitude if he is to lead a realistic life. He must be aware that he will experience failure if he is to cope with the guilt feelings which are inherent in human existence. He must realize that guilt has a certain ontological basis and that he must not lower his concept of self when he experiences guilt natural to his existence (23:31), (44:51-55). The notion that we must suffer in our lives has been adequately explored to suggest to the reader what Frankl intends to convey with this concept. As a resume, let it suffice that Frankl is reminding us of a very old philosophical concept--that life has

inherent within its matrix the suffering of its participants. If the participants do not realistically reconcile this fact and emotionally adapt to it they shall be the losers, for they shall be engaged in endless flight and futile energy expenditure. The notion that we must die is more difficult to communicate, especially to those who are not conversant with existential literature. Death is the natural termination of existence. Life, just as any phenomenological experience, has significance only in the respect that it is occurring now, soon to be terminated. Any experience of the present is an experience not only because it is occurring now, but because it is in the process of terminating itself; that is why a now takes on significance--it is transitory. If now were to last eternally it of course would cease to be now but would also cease to be significant--it would lose its value. To the existentialist thinker this analogy can apply to human life. If man does not realize that life is in the process of being terminated how does he fully extract the dynamics of the now. If man does not perceive his life as drawing to a halt, but rather perceives it to be some sort of everlasting process, he basically eternalizes it, taking away its inherent aweness. Man must realize the imminence of death, for then the transitory of the present can be viewed as the present, one which is filled with meaning and possibility for

experience. Herman Feifel reflects common existential thought, and I feel, proximates Frankl's thinking when he says:

In a certain sense, the willingness to die appears as a necessary condition of life. We are not altogether free in any deed as long as we are commanded by an inescapable will to live. . . .Life is not genuinely our own until we can renounce it (22:71).

Finally, in relation to death, Frankl mentions that the concept of future time should not be assessed in terms of one's potential for future action. That is, an aging person should not fear the future, for he has the past as a reality of unfolded potentials, he has accomplishments. Reconciliation of personal finiteness should result in a willingness to confront the future and a sense of value for what was done in the past (72:902).

This concludes the brief encounter with the psychology of Viktor Frankl. The intention has been to show how the orientation of existential thought has been integrated into the psychology and psychotherapy of one of Europe's most distinguished scholars. Viktor Frankl, as I have attempted to show, is certainly not the only European psychologist to have systematically integrated some of the existential contributions toward understanding human uniqueness and the human predicament. Medard Boss, Eugene Minkowski, and Ludwig Binswanger are some of the more

prominent names, all having written accounts of their particular approaches to the human mystery.

CHAPTER VI

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GENERAL CONCEPTS OF EXISTENTIAL ANALYSIS

This chapter will attempt to achieve three purposes: (1) to introduce the reader to the school of psychotherapy referred to as existential analysis, (2) to elucidate the most characteristic concepts of existential analysis, and (3) to indicate the interacting nature of existential thought and existential analysis.

While the school of existential analysis is not as systematically structured as is a school such as Freudian psychoanalysis, it does have systematically structured concepts which have comparatively universal acceptance. But because it is primarily a phenomenological-empirical-philosophical school, there is considerable room for individual interpretation and methodology. It does not have a rigid body of postulates to which it clings and it does not have a systematic concept of "the nature of things" from which it gravitates, as do other traditional schools of psychology. As far as I can determine, existential analysis is a methodological-philosophical approach to understanding human uniqueness--also, it attempts to understand the evolution of particular uniqueness. It looks at every person as a unique phenomenon; it stresses the private and

phenomenological dimensions of individual existence rather than the universal common denominators which pervade human existence; it attempts to discover the way reality is perceived by the particular individual with whom the therapist is concerned; it attempts to understand a human being not as a combination of dynamisms (though he may well be), or as a product of environment, reinforcement schedules or Divine Providence, but rather as a person who is grounded in the process of existence and is inimitably unique as far as individual existence and perception of the world is concerned.

In this particular chapter the term existential analysis will be used interchangeably with the term Dasein-analysis. The latter is the particular form of existential analysis which Ludwig Binswanger has systematically refined and therapeutically applied. Consequently, this chapter is actually an analysis of Daseinanalysis--Binswanger's existential analysis. Dr. Binswanger has been very prominent in Europe for the past four decades. Many of his writings have recently been translated into English. Binswanger received his M.D. Degree in 1907, after which he studied under Carl Gustave Jung and Eugene Blueier. He is known to the American audience chiefly for his work Sigmund Freud: Reminiscences of a Friendship, in which he relates his lifetime friendship with the father of psychoanalysis.

Binswanger briefly summarizes Daseinanalysis as:

. . . an anthropological type of scientific investigation--that is, one which is aimed at the essence of being human. Its name as well as its philosophical foundation are derived from Heidegger's Analysis of Being. . . (12:191).

In this definition, the reader is asked to keep in mind that the term "anthropological" is used in the "more strictly etymological sense, that is, . . . the study of the essential meaning and characteristics of being human." Thus far we can gather that Daseinanalysis purports to be a scientific investigation of the essence of human being and uses the philosophy of Martin Heidegger and much of the psychology of Sigmund Freud as its frame of reference, for understanding the phenomenon of human uniqueness. This raises two questions immediately, the first "What are the methods of scientific investigation employed in the study of human essences?"; the second "To what extent must one understand the philosophy of Martin Heidegger to understand Daseinanalysis?" The first question is discussed in this chapter under the section entitled The Existential Method for Obtaining Data on p.141. The second question must be approached with reservation: an understanding of some of the basic tenets of Heidegger does facilitate an understanding of Daseinanalysis, but it is not prerequisite for such an understanding. One is introduced to Heidegger via Binswanger when studying Daseinanalysis. The basic

concepts which distinguish existential analysis from other philosophical schools of psychology such as Freudian psychoanalysis or Adlerian psychology are Heideggerian, and, therefore, one inevitably must meet the philosophy of Heidegger if he is to understand Daseinanalysis. If the reader is willing to encounter Heidegger first, his understanding will be greatly facilitated and his depth of perception will be far greater.

Henri Ellenberger encounters Daseinanalysis thusly:

What Binswanger termed Daseinanalysis (Existential Analysis) represents a synthesis of psychoanalysis, phenomenology and existentialist concepts modified by original new insights. It is a reconstruction of the inner world of experience of psychiatric patients with the help of a conceptual framework inspired by Heidegger's studies on the structure of human existence (21:120).

We therefore can see that traditional schools (psychoanalysis, phenomenology) are the basis of Daseinanalysis, but that they are supplemented heavily by existential concepts. Jacob Needleman, who has written the most extensive introduction to Binswanger's Daseinanalysis, in the book Being in the World, maintains that Daseinanalysis ". . . is an effort to complement and correct the view of man and human experience implicit in Freudian psychoanalysis" (49:vii). The "view of man" which Binswanger seeks to correct is implicit in many systems other than psychoanalysis, however, and may be generally referred to as the homo natura

concept of man--that is, the assumption that man is nothing more than a part of nature--that man is a natural commodity, and can be perceived and understood as such. Binswanger's dislike for categorizing man in a fashion such as does psychoanalysis, behaviorism and positivism is discussed in the first section of this chapter.

Pursuing the relationship between psychoanalysis and Daseinanalysis, Needleman emphasizes that the latter is not a counter depth-psychology to the former. Binswanger realizes that without "techniques and theorizing as is found in psychoanalysis. . ." existential analysis is quite clinically impotent. But he is also quick to maintain that without Daseinanalysis, psychoanalysis is very much in danger of distorting the patient's world (55:59). At this point one might ask: "Why is it that psychoanalysis is in danger of distorting the world of the patient?" To this question Binswanger replies:

The new understanding of man, which we owe to Heidegger's analysis of existence, has its basis in the new conception that man is no longer understood in terms of some theory--be it mechanistic, a biologic or psychological one--but in terms of a purely phenomenological elucidation of the total structure or total articulation of existence as BEING-IN-THE-WORLD (13:144).

Which is to say that Daseinanalysis does not make the mistake of understanding a human being via some particular theory which can only limit understanding; rather, it

employs a phenomenological approach to understand a human being and concentrates upon each human as a unique being who is in-the-world and is living within the context of a particular world-design which has been structured by his uniqueness and his inimitable orientation to reality. That is, Daseinanalysis, both as a philosophical-psychology and as a method of therapy, places greater emphasis upon the internally structured perception of the world (world-design) which each individual has for his own than upon the external world which is common to, and impartial to, the human beings who live within it. It is more concerned with the phenomenological impact that is made upon a person's experience when confronting the "reality world" than it is with the "reality world" per se. For this reason Daseinanalysis is an individual-centered method for understanding human uniqueness and employs methods which attempt to explain the historical evolution of each person's uniqueness.

With these ideas in mind we shall attempt to determine the basic concepts of Daseinanalysis. If it has not been made clear at this point, it should be reiterated that Daseinanalysis is not a revolutionary psychology based upon new tenets and psychological concepts--it is basically an improvisation of Freudian psychoanalysis, utilizing phenomenological concepts and methods and employing basic concepts

of Martin Heidegger's Analysis of Being while still using traditional psychotherapeutic methods (case studies, free-association, dream analysis, etc.).

I. THE UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE
EXISTENTIAL ANALYSIS SCHOOL
OF THOUGHT

Orientation towards man's religious nature. In 1927, in a correspondence to Sigmund Freud, Binswanger related that he was "forced to recognize in man something like a basic religious category"--a category which is more than merely a ramification of some particular psychological phenomenon! As it has developed, this religious category seems to reach to the religious element in Buber's I-Thou (49:2). This concept, when employed in psychiatry constitutes a distinct contrast with Freudian psychoanalysis. It attributes to man a dimension which natural scientific methodology can neither probe nor comprehend. Binswanger, of course, was not the first psychologist to become aware of this realm of human existence; Carl Jung was very impressed with this dimension of human life. Binswanger, however, has much more systematically and extensively developed the implications for natural science which this religious category presents. He has very convincingly

demonstrated that man can never be fully understood via a medium such as natural science because of the inherent limitations in its approach (9:206). Binswanger, being a stern advocate of empirical investigation, demands that psychiatry involve itself with all the possible dimensions of human existence. Man does have instinct, Binswanger acknowledges, but he also has spirit (as conceived in the widest sense of the term). Man even has spirit in realms where he is extensively analyzed as instinct. Thus if we content ourselves merely with an investigation of the instinctual characteristics of human-ness we are deceiving ourselves. The physical nature of man intermingles undeniably with the unique psychological condition, spirit.

This emphasis upon the spirit dimension, or religious category, of man is what Frankl is referring to when he says ". . . logotherapy is directed towards a spiritual aim, when in the form of existential analysis, it makes man reflect upon himself as a spiritual subject" (25:10). Needleman supplements this with "Daseinanalysis attempts to reinstate spirit in the science of psychiatry. . ." (49:4).

We can thus say of Daseinanalysis that it maintains that an understanding of man necessitates a very serious consideration of the spirit dimension, or religious category, of human existence; however, it does not maintain

that an understanding of man can be reached solely by considering spirit. Instinct, as well as all physical phenomenon must be explored.

Concern with the ontological basis of human existence.

In an attempt to understand man in his entirety, Binswanger has proposed a psychology and a psychiatry which include the ontological problems of human existence. May, in discussing the contributions of existential psychotherapy relates: "The distinctive character of existential analysis is, thus, that it is concerned with ontology, the science of being. . ." (44:37). Ontology is a very difficult term with which to deal. One is never certain as to how it is being applied or in what context it is to be understood. Because of this, the ontological concern of the existentialist, is sometimes very difficult to communicate. From my limited acquaintance, I infer that an "ontological orientation" refers to a concern for the characteristics which are unique to human life and the inherent perplexities which accompany human existence. Viewing ontology from this perspective, it appears that Daseinanalysis seeks to investigate the dimensions of human existence which, by their very nature, create psychological (or existential) problems.

The ontological concern of the existential psychotherapists is greatly indebted to the insights of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche; for they were the first to realize that man is a being which has particular problems. That is, the fundamental fact is that man is the point of concern and the point of departure when analyzing psychological problems. Psychological problems, or problems of existence, are not to be visualized as distortions of a more basic pattern, but should be perceived as phenomena which are occurring within the framework of an individual's existence. By being ontologically rooted, existential analysis always perceives a phenomenon as occurring to someone.

In an attempt to clarify what is meant by "an ontological concern" it may be beneficial to reiterate some ideas mentioned in the previous chapter. The reader will remember that Frankl considers a certain degree of tension to be a natural and healthy condition within the human being. He believes this not because of a mechanistic model of human adaptation which may be analogous to a servo-mechanism or homeostasis--though to be sure, these concepts may be employed to explain the phenomenon of tension in human existence. Frankl believes that tension is inherent in life because man basically has the ability to perceive the disparity relationship in which he exists. He has the

ability to realize that he is not everything that he should be; that he is not actualizing his potential for constructive behavior; he realizes that there are aspects of his life which he neglects. These accumulated realizations inevitably bring each individual to a certain state of tension. However, in the psychology of Frankl and Binswanger it is interesting to note the ontological character of the epistemological approach to the concept of tension--it is totally man-centered. It does not make reference to principles of mechanistic adaptation in its explanation of human tension. It explains the phenomenon within a framework of uniquely human qualities: (1) self-perception, (2) self-awareness of disparity, (3) personal desire for improvisation and modification and (4) the experience of tension as a by-product of the fore-going ontological phenomena.

Because of its insistence that the whole-ness of man cannot be fathomed unless the approach for understanding man deals with the ontological basis of human living, existential analysis extends its boundaries one notch further beyond the realm of traditional psychological investigation.

Conception of man not limited by theoretical constructs. The past few centuries have given birth to the wonders of science. Man continually finds himself in the process of appalling himself with new data and new conquests. Man has indeed found his most productive helper--science and the scientific method. Science has become such a powerful "force" that some have legitimately inquired as to whether man or science is truly the master. Nietzsche warned us of the possibility that man would be remade in the image of the machine. Whether or not science is sapping man of his humanity is not the point of this paper. The point is that with the rise of science there has also risen the concept of homo natura--man as nature. The elements of human life which can be analyzed and explained by scientific methodology have been so extensively and "exhaustedly" scrutinized that there has emerged the concept that man is totally understandable in terms of natural-scientific concepts. In other words, the conceptualization of man has largely been adjusted to agree with the natural-scientific concept of world. The utilization of this concept (natural-scientific) has led to many productive accomplishments; it has vastly increased man's knowledge of himself as a part of nature; it has generated insights which have led to man's greater ability to actualize and to satisfy his drives and needs; it has led to greater mastery over the

hardships of a biological-physical environment; it has increased both life-span and life-comfort. There can be no doubt that natural-science is one of man's greatest helpers. However, the concept of man as homo natura, is not nearly so productive when taken out of the realm of natural conquest and applied in the realm of individual existence. Perceiving man as homo natura is perfectly legitimate when removing a cancerous lung or when mending a fractured bone; however it becomes a disastrous concept when used to perceive the worth of the individual who is claiming to be homo natura. If man is nature, and nothing more, the stench of burning wood would last with equal duration with the stench of the crematoriums of Dachau and Auschwitz. When the Third Reich systematically designed the solution to the Jewish problem they were dealing with man, as homo natura, as part of nature. Man was then construed to be much less than he truly is. Man is indeed homo natura, but is not only such. According to Daseinanalysis, a psychology or psychiatry or philosophy which credits man only with the natural aspect of his existence is a limited construct.

The homo natura concept of man is what Daseinanalysis is reacting against. The concept of man as expounded by Pavlov, Watson, and Freud is definitely that of homo natura. Binswanger is convinced that "the doctrine of homo natura oversimplifies and constricts full-human reality."

This oversimplification is the price which science must pay for its productiveness (49:3).

In one of his most famous papers, "Freud's Conception of Man in the Light of Anthropology," Binswanger gives his views on the dangers of viewing man only in terms of his physical needs.

But if physical needs are given authority over the whole of man's being, then the image of man becomes one-sidedly distorted and ontologically falsified. For then the only thing that will be seen, experienced, felt, suffered, and missed as real and actual becomes that which man is qua body. . . . Everything else becomes, of necessity, a mere "superstructure"--a "fabrication" (Nietzsche), a refinement (sublimation), an illusion (Freud), or an adversary (Klages) (7:160).

Binswanger is emphasizing that a homo natura concept of man tends to extend itself into areas of an ontological nature. Thus certain ontological problems such as tension are perceived within a natural-scientific model, which distorts the nature of it as an ontological phenomenon; for tension as a human experience can never be fully understood if analyzed and discussed with a technical vocabulary--it demands a vocabulary of ontology, of human uniqueness. Thus it is apparent the difficulties which a homo natura psychology would encounter in its attempt to fully appreciate a psychological frustration or to empathize with the person who is experiencing the frustration.

In addition to this particular restricting characteristic of the "man-as-nature-psychologies" they also (especially Freudian) place their emphasis upon the constant (continual, persistent) aspect of human existence but pay little attention to those aspects which are continually in change and process. Binswanger maintains that an enlightened anthropology (adequate science of man) must entertain both aspects of man--that aspect which is fairly constant and persistent (the various drives) and that aspect of the human psychological condition which is ever-changing and creating new worlds, perceptions, aspirations, motivations and modes of being-in-the-world. Concerning the adequacy of homo-natura psychology Binswanger suggests:

In every psychology that makes man, as such, into an object--particularly those psychologies founded by natural scientists such as Freud, Blueler, von Monakow, Pavlov--we find a rift, a gap through which it is clear that what is being scientifically studied is not the whole man, not human-being as a whole. Everywhere we find something that overflows and bursts the bounds of such a psychology. (This "something," which is not given even a passing glance by natural-scientific psychology, is precisely what, in the eyes of anthropology, is most essential.) (7:169).

Thus we can easily see that Binswanger views neither a homo natura concept of man, nor a purely natural-scientific stand man. Moreover, Daseinanalysis is firm in its conviction that man cannot be understood by any system which

has one central idea at its foundation, such as "the idea of the will to power, libido, or any idea involving man as, in general a creature of nature. . ." (9:213). The basic argument of existential analysis is this: if one has a particular model for understanding nature, (natural-scientific) and employs this model for understanding human life, the only aspects of human life which will be accessible to study are those which occur in such a fashion that they can be related to the natural-scientific model. Consequently, a study of man's totality, which is the third postulate of existential thought, is impossible if only one method is utilized. Summarizing his concern for the study of man in his totality Binswanger has stated that the whole man, conscious and unconscious, body and soul, are the concern of existential analysis (13:147).

Utilization of past and future time in analysis of patient's present world. Existential analysis is certainly not the only school which places a strong emphasis upon the concept of future time in the understanding of individual human behavior. Adler, in his The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology, emphasized the importance of future time. Jean Paul Sartre's existential psychoanalysis does similarly. Sartre's psychoanalysis is probably closer to Daseinanalysis, however, because of its intention "to

apprehend a person in his uniqueness, to understand what makes him different from everyone else" (66:39). According to existential analysis, an individual can be understood only if one understands his unique meaning-matrix, that is his particular way of giving meaning to facts in reality. The existential analyst attempts to approach the patient without any ready made conceptions about the world in which the patient lives. The reason for this is very simple--in Daseinanalysis, "world" is not understood as an external reality but rather:

World is the structure of meaningful relationships in which a person exists and in the design of which he participates. Thus world includes the past events which condition my existence and all the vast variety of deterministic influences which operate upon me. But it is these as I relate to them. . . .For to be aware of one's world means at the same time to be designing it (44:61).

The main concern of the existential analyst is to discover the characteristics of the particular world in which an individual lives; to find out what things in this world are most crucial; to find out what things in this world prevent growth and freedom of movement into other modes of adaptation to the "reality world"; and to help the patient develop flexibility in his world design. Daseinanalysis is interested in finding out what elements of the physical environment are reinforcing to an individual but it also desires to understand how an individual's concept of world

developed so that a particular occurrence carries its particular reinforcing properties to the individual. Thus we can never understand the actions of an obsessive-compulsive unless we understand the meaning which his particular actions have for him--we have to know of his meaning-matrix. To understand an individual's meaning-matrix we must observe how he acts in the present, but we must also know to what he attributes particular meaning while he is existing in his particular present. It is obvious that the past must be considered. It is by studying the past that we acquire insights concerning the present. But we never understand the present simply by looking into the past--we can only get insights as to how particular facts in the present have developed their unique meaning to the individual. It is the aspiration of the existential analyst that by extensive analysis of the patient's past life, and by analysis of the characteristics of his particular adaptation to the "external reality" of the physical world (his world design) and by analysis of his degree of flexibility in his modes of being-in-the-world, that an understanding of the phenomenological impact of sensory impressions may be developed. It is when this understanding occurs both within the therapist and the client that the stage has been set for possible remedial orientation toward the world on the part of the patient. It is assumed that

a person's world design (his structuring of the significant events within his particular world) is the key to his mode of being-in-the-world. It is in the analysis and understanding of an individual's world design that the therapist can develop an inkling of the phenomenological impact of "brute facts" upon an individual existent. It is also by analysis of world design that the therapist is able to be in a position where he can attempt to re-structure the world design of an individual so that he may exist in-the-world with a greater degree of choice and will not be rigidly fixated upon a particular mode of being which infringes upon potential for free choice, responsibility, aesthetic experience, human dialogue, we-centered activity, and successful awareness of and interaction with--self.

As an example of methodological approach of Binswanger, the case of Lola Voss is instructive. In the case of Lola Voss, Binswanger employs knowledge of the history of the client to try and grasp how her particular world-design (meaning-matrix) evolved. Because it is impossible to go into clinical detail of the case, the example is projected as a reference to which the reader may refer for greater clarity and insight. The intent at this time is to indicate that Daseinanalysis concentrates chiefly upon an analysis of the present existence of the patient while employing historical data to enhance insights

into the particular evolution of the patients present being-in-the-world (existence). As an illustration of this approach consider the following:

For example, Binswanger describes a case in which a young girl at the age of five suffered an attack of anxiety and fainting when her heel separated from her shoe after being stuck in her ice skate. His analysis of the case revealed that "What serves as a clue to the world-design of our little patient is the category of continuity. . . . Everything that makes the world significant is submitted to the rule of that one category" (55:70).

Roughly then, this person, seen Daseinanalytically, would be "suffering" from a world-design that demands continuity. Her actions and reactions of the present are largely influenced by the degree of continuity which is present in the environment, or more precisely, are largely influenced by the degree to which the meaning-matrix can attribute continuity to the stimuli emanating from the environment.

Existential analysis thus attempts to analyze the meaning and phenomenological impact of an individual's orientation toward reality. It also attempts to analyze and offer modifications of particular types of behavior which an individual employs to adapt to his present-reality.

Differentiation between animal being and human existence. As was very briefly mentioned in Chapter II of this paper, the existentialists tend to view the existence of a human with a much different connotation than the life

of an animal. By definition, existence implies an ever-progressing confrontation with the present and the future while being mediated by the self-conscious self. The animal does not have the ability to have an "I-you-we-self." Indeed, the animal has neither self nor world--he only has environment and reaction to environment.

Every human dwells within an external reality which is common to us all. It is, so to speak, the reality of which the materialist or the realist so confidently speak. However, in addition to this "reality" there is also a private world which each individual has as his own. The integration of these two worlds constitutes the reality in which each of us dwell. Existential analysts do not exclusively elaborate upon the nature of the individually constituted private world which each individual knows and experiences, he also tries to determine how accurately this individually constituted world agrees with the reality world and what is the particular genesis of the unique structuring of this world by the individual. Traditional psychiatry, however, does not give enough attention to the individual-private world of the patient but rather concentrates upon the reality-world of the realist.

We psychiatrists have paid far too much attention to the deviations of our patients from life in the world which is common to all, instead of focusing upon the patients' own or private world, as was first systematically done by Freud (12:197).

We now have the first distinction between animal being and human existence. Man, by merit of his unique structure is not confined to dwell totally within the realm of the external reality of the physical world. Man has his own privately constructed world which mediates the external world and even gives meaning to the raw facts of external reality. Man therefore is both part of nature and a creator-of-nature.

A lower animal is much more restricted, than is man, to his environment. This restriction to the environment limits the degree to which his world can conflict with the reality-world. This restriction to environment can be referred to as a blueprint of existence. Characterizing the differentiation between lower animal blueprint and human potentiality, Binswanger suggests "the animal is tied to its 'blueprint.' It cannot go beyond it, whereas human existence contains numerous possibilities of modes of being but is precisely rooted in this multifold potentiality of being" (12:197 emphasis mine). This statement leads this writer to conclude that the "definition" of man is his potentiality for different types of being-in-the-world; his ability to go beyond the immediate situation and not be forced to exist within it. Man's uniqueness is his "priority" over the natural world. This is why a person must be viewed as having the ability to transcend. This is

what is meant by the Daseinanalytic statement: being-in-the-world is transcendence. Lower animal being-in-the-world is not characterized by transcendence. Human being-in-the-world is the process of continual transcendence. Man is viewed as an ever-transcending, consciously experiencing reality modifying, being.

As Goldstein has found, some of the unique characteristics of human existence can be lost as a result of brain injury (Der Aufbau des Organismus, 1934). If one were to hypothesize an instance where a human being lost all of his humanly unique potentiality, as a result of brain injury, what then would be his status? This indeed is a legitimate question; it would be consistent, however, to conclude that, Daseinanalytically speaking, this individual has lost his human existence and is dwelling in the realm of lower animal being. For man is characterized by his "possibility of transcending this being of his, namely of climbing above it. . ." (12:198).

Existential method for obtaining data. Existential analysis, and existential psychotherapy in general, are characterized by certain unique methods for gathering data concerning a client. Some existential analysts claim that they are extremely empirical, even more so than purely descriptive psychologists; while others do not claim any

such rigorous empiricism. Most seek for a compromise. Binswanger maintains that we can no longer evade the fact that there are two types of empirical scientific knowledge (12:193). The first he refers to as discursive-inductive knowledge and the second phenomenological-empirical knowledge. The former is characterized by describing, explaining, and controlling natural events whereas the latter is characterized by a "methodical, critical exploitation or interpretation of phenomenal contents."

Binswanger maintains that existential analysis employs the phenomenological-empirical scientific knowledge when engaged in psychotherapeutic activity. Supporting his own position, Binswanger indicates that:

Existential analysis does not propose an ontological thesis about an essential condition determining existence, but makes ontic statements--that is, statements of factual findings about actually appearing forms and configurations of existence. In this sense, existential analysis is an empirical science, with its own method and particular ideal of exactness, namely with the method and the ideal of exactness of the phenomenological empirical sciences (12:192).

By applying this rigorous phenomenological methodology to the study of the human being Binswanger hopes to bridge the gap which separates the subjectivity of individual existence from the objectivity of natural science.

Of course, many scholars are of the conviction that natural scientific methods should not be concerned with individual subjectivity, but should stay as much as

possible in the realm of objectivity. In psychotherapy, however, this attitude simply cannot prevail--according to the existentialist. To deal adequately with an individual we must use both empirical observations, systematically notated and theoretically founded, and a philosophical framework for understanding and empathizing with the individual and the particular world in which he lives. As Joseph Lyons has suggested, no matter what problem one may choose to study he can approach it from two different perspectives (38:141). The first is to view the problem strictly as a problem "belonging within some realm or discipline," a purely problematic condition which demands nothing more than an intellectual exercise so that insights may be gained in the direction of its solution. The second approach is to view the problem as having in some way, a bearing upon "our condition as human," that is, taking into account the individual subjective repercussions of the particular problem. If a distinction is to be made between existential and scientific approach to the solving of a problem, this would be it; the scientific approach consistently chooses the first approach--the existential consistently chooses the latter approach.

Rollo May, in an article entitled "Dangers in the Relation of Existentialism to Psychotherapy" (45:5) warns of the danger of over-emphasizing the human element in a

problem and minimizing the objective, rigorous approach. I feel this is a fair indication that existential psychotherapists are aware of their somewhat "anti-scientific" tendencies, and are trying not to let them dominate the approach to understanding human behavior.

As a summary it would be appropriate to mention the general contrasts between the existential and the scientific approaches to knowledge as presented by E. K. Ledermann. The scientific approach is characterized by the fact that: (1) the scientist keeps himself detached from the object of knowledge; (2) the scientist avoids moral valuation; (3) the scientist asks for statements of proof of results via controlled experiments and statistical methods. The existential approach is characterized by: (1) concern with the individual human being from a subjective point of view; (2) concern for the individual's search for meaningful values; (3) acceptance of the concepts of freedom and free-will; (4) the realization that the world of experience includes the irrational and a striving for faith; (5) the attempt of the therapist to deal with his patient on a subject-subject level, rather than the celebrated and traditionally heralded subject-object level of the natural scientist.

Existential analysis is aware of and emphasizes its philosophical foundations. All systems are, of course, based upon philosophical assumptions. It is the responsibility of one who utilizes the system to be at least somewhat conversant with the philosophical foundation of the system so that one may have a greater insight into its limitations. This basic observation is one which receives considerable attention from the student of existential analysis, and consequently has far-reaching implications for the psychotherapy which emerges. Too many psychotherapists, assert the existential analysts, are not aware of the inherent shortcomings in the system to which they are most attached; they fail to see beyond the system and tend to view the system as a self-sufficient integration of the basic facts of existence. Binswanger justifies the integration of philosophy as a legitimate necessity thusly:

I want to emphasize only that philosophy is not here in any way being introduced into psychiatry or psychotherapy, but rather that the philosophic bases of these sciences are being laid bare (13:145).

By understanding the philosophic bases of one's favorite system, it is hoped that a more realistic utilization of the discipline will come about. Ulrich Sonneman is more emphatic in suggesting the necessity of entertaining the philosophic bases of psychological questions. He says:

. . . we find that all decisive questions that come up in the theory and practice of psychotherapy

are in the last analysis philosophical questions. Evading the philosophical issues in practice is bound to mean prejudicing them without even knowing that one does so in many cases, evading these issues, which the patients experience of his own situation at once hides and discloses, means in practice, less sincerity toward him than you wish to inhere in your treatments. In theory it means that the very insistence on being empirical, on being according to the prescription of an empiricist ideology leads farthest away from that radical empiricalness, that unreservedly open readiness for experience, observation and thought on which all science hinges (64:261 Emphasis mine).

Adrian Van Kaam is also very insistent upon scrutinizing the philosophical foundations of one's basic assumptions.

In an article, "Assumptions in Psychology," he says:

The psychologist of every school always makes an ultimate and absolute judgment about what is called the nature of man about the way in which man can be understood. These assumptions of psychologists are not arrived at by psychological research. On the contrary, the assumptions are the point of departure for the kind of research that he will perform and for the evaluation of the results of his research (70:23).

If there is a man who must be named who has most radically influenced the thinking of the existential analysis school of thought in relation to philosophical concern, he would be Immanuel Kant. His concept of the categories of understanding and the constitutive function of understanding form the philosophical backbone for the analysis of human being. This is largely "because Heidegger's argument in Sein und Zeit can be taken as an elaborate extension of this same concept of constitutive 'function' "

(49:16). If we remember an earlier part of this chapter, Binswanger stated: "Its name as well as its philosophical foundation are derived from Heidegger's Analysis of Being. . . ." Thus, it is Kant, as modified by Martin Heidegger, who is the philosophical stalwart behind existential analysis.

Binswanger also maintains that to understand man in his totality, there must be some sort of philosophical integration of the various dimensions which characterize man--he feels that existential analysis does this. "Heidegger's analytic of existence, by inquiring into the being of the whole man, can provide not scientific, but philosophical understanding of this wholeness" (9:211). In summarizing the philosophical attitude of the existential analyst, one might use Binswanger's statement:

In practice, whenever the psychiatrist himself tries to look beyond the limitations of his science and seeks to know the ontological grounds of his understanding and treatment of those placed in his care, it is Heidegger's analytic of existence that can broaden his horizon. For it offers the possibility of understanding man as both a creature of nature, and a socially determined or historical being. . . (9:212).

II. SUMMARY COMMENTS ONE: THE CONCEPTS

Thus far I have attempted to indicate the very most general postulates of existential analysis. The introduction is so unexcusably elementary that I seriously question

the validity of the enterprise. However, beginnings must be made, and this, rudimentary, superficial and brief as it may be, serves as a beginning to the novice of existential analysis. It should go without saying that the reader should make use of the Bibliography at the end of this paper for an extension of basic ideas of existential analytic thought.

It has been mentioned in the course of the chapter that existential analysis has a unique orientation towards man's nature in the respect that it places special emphasis upon what it terms a "religious category," or spirit dimension. These concepts are understood in the most general, humanistic perspective rather than from a particular theological frame of reference. The emphasis upon man's religious nature also attempts to place man in a perspective which does not solely interpret him as instinct or process. Existential analysis is attempting to integrate man's unique psychological dimension with his instinctive nature with hopes of creating a more encompassing framework for understanding the entirety of human existence.

The concern for the ontological basis of human life is also a trademark of existential analysis. By concentrating upon this particular realm it is assumed that the construction of a psychological and psychotherapeutic theory of human behavior, which is man-centered and couched

within an ontological vocabulary, can be achieved. Although still in its embryonic stages, it offers possibilities of having many useful insights.

It has been the ambition of the psychologist and psychiatrists who practice the principles of existential analysis that their theory of human behavior not be limited by the constructs which have characterized traditional psychology, especially psychoanalytic and behaviorism. They rebel against the homo natura concept of human life. Existential analysis maintains that man structures his world to a large extent by his particular orientation toward the world.

Existential analysis is also very concerned with the time phenomenon and does not adhere to as rigid a concept of time as do most psychologies. As mentioned in Chapter II, *kairos* time is given much more significance than is *chronos* time; in fact, it is assumed that an individual's entire orientation toward life is greatly influenced by his experience of the passage of time and the subjective experiences in which he participates during this time.

In an attempt to be concerned with distinctly human attributes existential analysis has made the attempt to clarify some of the basic differences between animal being and human existence. The chief difference is that the animal is blueprinted to his environment and has very little

possibility for transcending his environment, whereas the human is characterized by his potential for structuring a particular orientation towards his environment which allows any number of alternatives as far as existence within it is concerned.

In the compilation of data the existential analyst employs both traditional methods and newly innovated methods. He operates mostly according to the phenomenological-empirical method rather than discursive-inductive method. By doing this he is able to structure a vocabulary which deals with the subjective problems of human existence in a technical fashion but is also able to keep from de-humanizing the over-all perspective of the human being.

Finally, existential analysis is characterized by an emphasis upon its philosophical heritage, which is largely rooted in Martin Heidegger and Immanuel Kant. They stress that contemporary psychology should become more aware of its philosophical framework.

III. SUMMARY COMMENTS TWO: THE IMPLICATIONS

It has been suggested during the course of this chapter that existential analysis is both a philosophical-psychology in the tradition of psychoanalysis, individual psychology and analytical psychology and a school of psychotherapy, with the latter being the practical application

of the concepts which constitute the bulk of existential-analytic thought. In its basic form, as practiced by Ludwig Binswanger, it resembles Freudian psychoanalysis both in psychotherapeutic approach and theory, with the exception being that it improvises and expands some of the basic concepts of psychoanalysis--especially those concerning man's basic nature and the ability of a particular method to fully understand the complexity of human existence. It utilizes many of the concepts and methods of the phenomenological psychologists and is also greatly indebted to the philosophy of Martin Heidegger for its insights into the ontological nature of existence; it is also greatly influenced by the Kantian concepts of the categories of understanding and the constitutive function of the understanding.

Existential analysis, as a school of psychological thought, came into being because of the inability of conventional schools of psychotherapy to adequately deal with unique psychological problems, particularly those associated with alienation, meaninglessness, anomie, and other related identity problems. These, to be sure, are not the only psychological disturbances which existential analysis has proved fruitful in reconciling. Binswanger asserts that his Daseinanalysis does not suffer from such a restricted theory as those which have at their basis the

belief that man can be studied and understood as homo natura (part of nature). He also maintains that his psychology (as well as Frankl's) makes a serious attempt to deal with value, meaning, human finitude and the religious dimension of human existence, thus doing greater justice to the spectrum of existential problems which loom prominent in the life of every individual.

The degree to which existential analysis is a successful psychology and/or psychotherapy is very difficult to ascertain. It has proved to be successful in certain clinical situations, but this is a characteristic of most therapies; it has demonstrated the ability to salvage personalities which psychoanalysis could make no progress with, but this also is not an unusual occurrence; it has projected a psycho-philosophical matrix which is unquestionably more inclusive of the variables of human existence than any psychology to date, but this increase in perspective is not necessarily pragmatically applicable. Essentially then, we must wait for the evidence to be compiled before it can be stated with any degree of certainty that existential analysis is successful. The methodology which it employs is still in its formulation stage and consequently offers exciting possibilities in any number of possible directions.

As a school it is still in its first generation, thus lending suspicion that its reservoir of potentialities is just beginning to be tapped.

There are however, certain contributions which existential psychology has made which are undeniably constructive to a greater understanding of human life. Many of these contributions are not original in the history of ideas, but nevertheless, their revitalization constitutes a contribution to the field. The first of these contributions is a demand for an enlightened anthropology of human existence (Refer to Chapter VI, page 121.), particularly in the area of ontology. In its emphasis of ontology it has suggested the two-dimensional nature of guilt and anxiety--neurotic and existential, the former being the chief point of concern of traditional psychology. Its emphasis upon the phenomenological aspect of human life has reminded contemporary psychology that the external-physical world is not the only frame of reference for an analysis of an individual's adaptation to reality. The subjective, personal world of each individual is a very legitimate area of inquiry when attempting to analyze or reconstruct the personality of an individual. And this subjective world can certainly not be probed by a world-design (structured by the scientist) when its model is based upon the external-physical world. Existential analysis has attempted to

remind the empirical psychologist that a human being is not restricted to his environment in the same way which an animal is restricted. Man is characterized by his potentiality for transcendence and by his ability to choose an orientation toward his environment, one of which might be a passive adaptation to its forces and pressures. Existential analysis has attempted to remind theoretical psychologists that the phenomenon of human existence cannot be encompassed within the matrix of a single philosophical structure--especially the natural-scientific structure. Existential psychology is trying to make obvious the contradiction of the system builder who constructs a system to explain his reality then forces the perplexities of his reality to be analyzed solely in terms of his system. Existential analysis is attempting to empirically study the subjective dimensions of human existence while employing a humanistic (ontologically centered) vocabulary; it is struggling to be empirical without dehumanizing. All of these aspirations seem to constitute a definite contribution to a fuller understanding of what we refer to as "the human condition."

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper has been to present a basic introduction to the general concepts of existential philosophy and to illustrate how these concepts are integrated into psychology and psychotherapy. The task has been a very challenging one, even though it has been to a great extent a superficial coverage of the problem.

It was suggested in Chapter II, "What is Existentialism?" that there are a great many problems associated with the understanding of this particular "school." Many of these problems are generated by the degree of subjectivity which is found in the terminology; other problems are caused by the fact that existentialism "is not an example of an intellectual movement which can be segmented into discrete components, each carrying a definite meaning." However, it is suggested that there are common themes which pervade existential thought and it is these themes which are of particular importance when one is attempting to understand existential thought.

The terms being and existence are of particular importance to the scholars of existentialism. It is felt that by concentrating upon the phenomena with which these concepts are concerned the philosophy of existentialism

will be firmly anchored in man, per se; rather than in a model, or design, which has been constructed to explain the behavior of man.

The attempt to avoid a particular concept of man's essence is reflected in the first postulate of existential thought: existence is prior to essence. That is, man is not characterized by a particular nature (as Hobbes, Freud, Augustine, and others, would suggest) but rather, he first exists in-the-world, and by merit of his potential for self-direction, has an unlimited possibility of "natures" which he may assume. A maxim of existential thought is "Man is what he makes himself." There are modifications of this concept throughout the various existential camps. Binswanger maintains that man's past greatly conditions his reaction to the future and even his powers of self-direction. Maritain is of the conviction that man has a tendency toward certain basic essences thus creating something similar to a "human nature." Sartre is the extremist, suggesting that we are what we make ourselves; and concepts such as conditioning and unconscious motivation are only rationalizations when they are assumed to have the power to control man's behavior.

The second postulate of existential thought is based on the premise that man must be understood in his totality if true knowledge of him is to be gained. This indicates

the great reservations which "existentialists" have concerning the ability of a particular system to explain adequately the human being. The distrust of science as the tool for knowing man is a universal among the existential thinkers. Binswanger especially reflects this in his critique of the limitations of the scientific method as a medium for understanding the psychological dimensions of human life. As William Barret puts it "Existentialism is a philosophy that confronts the human situation in its totality and asks what the basic conditions of human existence are. . ." (2:143).

The man-centered nature of existential thought is also reflected in the third postulate: the belief that human value questions are the most important problems. It is with this orientation toward life that existential thought may make its greatest contributions to the welfare of mankind. As mentioned in the introductory chapter, much of modern psychology seems to be actively engaged in useful study, but for the most part neglects questions concerning human values. As Frankl has suggested, modern psychology is basically valueless. The existential thinkers are making a plea for modern science and philosophy to attempt an understanding of what is most "value-able" to the human situation in both its individual and collective manifestations.

Emphasis upon the subjective components of truth constitutes the fourth postulate of existential thought. Rather than view truth only as that which has a corresponding entity in the physical world, existential thought also realizes that a subjective conviction has as much right to be referred to as truth as does a statement of fact which seems to have a corresponding reality in the external world. This viewpoint, of course, has particular relevance for psychotherapy.

The final postulate of existential thought is: guilt and anxiety are inherent in the human condition. This concept is extremely crucial to the psychiatrists discussed in this paper, especially Frankl and Binswanger. This view of man suggests that there is a certain amount of guilt and anxiety in "normal" human interaction. The trick is to distinguish real guilt from neurotic guilt and to be able to reconcile the tensions which accompany the former and to overcome the anxiety and frustration which accompany the latter. The evidence that guilt and anxiety are ontologically rooted further convinces the existential philosophers and psychologists that the categories of being and existence must be further studied and emphasized as a legitimate area of inquiry in the attempt to understand fully human behavior.

In view of the relatively unstructured nature of existential thought and considering the diversity of usage

of certain concepts, and realizing there is not an individual who is considered to be either the founder or the spokesman for the movement, it is suggested that existential thought represents any orientation toward life which systematically stresses the basic postulates mentioned thus far.

Viewed from an historical perspective, existential thought seems to be indebted to certain unique conditions which developed during the latter part of the 19th Century. It was indicated in this paper that 19th Century Europe experienced many psychological growing pains in its transition into a technological society. The advancement of technology resulted in the adaptation of man to the machine. It appears that the transition into a bureaucratic-technological society resulted in a social structure which up-rooted the individual's sense of relatedness to his self and his fellow man--this in turn fostered a general syndrome of anomie, alienation and estrangement.

The philosophical scene of the 19th Century was dominated by rationalism, systematic explanations of the universe and the "universe as machine" concept. Probably the most influential advocate of philosophical rationalism was G. W. F. Hegel. His "the rational alone is real," rang through the European halls of learning with such intensity that the man who has proved to be the most successful critic

of Hegel--Soren Kierkegaard--received little more than public ridicule for the criticisms he made which ultimately proved fatal to Hegelian Absolute Idealism.

Kierkegaard established much of the foundation for contemporary existential thought when he philosophically elaborated upon the subjective nature of human experience; the absurdity and paradox which each individual encounters for which rational analysis proves futile; the priority of the individual over the "crowd;" the psychological frustration which accompanies the resolution of value questions; the shortcomings of pure rational analysis in dealing with crucial value questions; and finally, when he pointed out the inherent shortcomings of "the system" as a method for explaining the totality of human existence. The Kierkegaardian revolt, especially as expressed in Concluding Unscientific Postscript, has been referred to as the declaration of independence for existential thought.

Friedrich Nietzsche also proved to be a powerful impetus in the development of existential thought. As a result of his penetrating analysis of the psychological basis of human motivation (both conscious and unconscious) he made apparent the non-rational elements of human behavior. Nietzsche demanded a totally new approach to individual existence. He asserted that man must re-evaluate his values if he is to progress and to avoid destroying

himself; he asserted that man must channel the energies of his will-to-power into self-actualizing and socially advantageous efforts; he asserted that "God is dead" and consequently man is responsible for constructing modes of living which are designed for the betterment of mankind; he asserted that each person must be willing to break loose from the shackles of the "herd" if he is to grow as he is capable of growing; he asserted that man is the measure.

From the philosophical thought of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche the tradition of existential thought was borne. Not a single contemporary proponent of existential thought has escaped the influence of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, and to be sure, many people who would not consider themselves "existentialists" have been profoundly influenced in their thinking by these two men. Together they have brought the individual into philosophical prominence, and at the same time have contributed insights into individual human existence which allow a much greater understanding of the human being.

It is, of course, apparent that Kierkegaard and Nietzsche did not usher in the prominence of the individual purely by merit of their own philosophical skills and insights. It is believed that the social structure of the 19th and 20th Century, because of its non-individual orientation, deprived the individual of certain psychological

gratifications which in turn seemed to bring the individual into an acute awareness of the psychological abuse which his self was experiencing. This self-awareness of self-subservience brought many individuals to the realization that the "anonymous other" of society was not doing justice to each person's individuality. The collective realization that individuality is being squelched has brought many people to a position where they are willing to accept an individual-centered philosophy of existence, such as existentialism. The awareness of the abuse which the subjective self is experiencing in contemporary times is conspicuous in the ubiquity of contemporary novels, essays and critiques which deal with the problem of alienation, estrangement and meaninglessness. Auden, Camus, Sartre and Kafka are but a few of the more noted figures who concern themselves with the psychological mysteries of existence in today's world. Theology and philosophy are also becoming increasingly aware of the sense of meaninglessness which encompasses much of modern man. The science of psychology is showing its concern over the presence of what appears to be a truly unique psychological condition by revitalizing its interest in philosophical psychology and also by the innovation of the new branch of humanistic psychology; both of these are dealt with extensively by existential psychology. Various psychotherapists throughout the Western world are stating

that they encounter mounting numbers of patients who express a feeling of futility in life--they lack a metaphysical foundation for existence. Logotherapy and existential analysis are two schools of psychotherapy which have been created to offer greater assistance in the resolution of personal and collective identity problems.

So it is felt that "the contemporary condition" is indeed instrumental in the rise of existential thought. The negation of the worth of the individual, as an end, has resulted in man's search (and creation) of a man-centered philosophy which attempts to do justice to the integrity and value of each human being.

Viktor Frankl is a psychiatrist who recognizes the unusual psychological condition of the 20th Century. He has constructed some basic ideas concerning human nature, most of which center around the concept of man's will-to-meaning. Many of his ideas indicate his close alliance with existential thought. He is extremely concerned with man's relationship with his self and how this can best be actualized. He realizes that many problems of life are rooted in human uniqueness, and for this reason he emphasizes the ontological basis of psychological health. His approach to the individual is to a large extent dominated by the concepts of meaning, tension, freedom, responsibility, spiritual behavior, and strict realism concerning death. Frankl feels

that as a result of emphasizing these particular dimensions of human life he is able to establish a framework which is more suited for understanding both the individual and the particular problems which the individual may experience. He, of course, is not willing to discard approaches and theories which have traditionally proved successful in therapy; he does, however, feel that too much emphasis is placed on aspects of these theories which are not particularly appropriate to the neurosis which most characterizes our time. As he has said "In actual fact, boredom is now causing and certainly bringing to the psychiatrist, more problems to solve than is distress." He also has mentioned that:

Ever more frequently psychoanalysts report that they are confronted with a new type of neurosis characterized by a loss of interest and a lack of initiative. They complain that in such cases conventional psychoanalysis is not effective.

It thus appears that Frankl is convinced that a combination of social and psychological forces is sufficiently intermingled into our everyday life so as to create a basically new psychoneurotic disorder--it is often referred to as anomie, alienation or estrangement.

The form of psychotherapy which has made greatest use of existential philosophy is the existential analysis school of thought of Ludwig Binswanger. In an attempt to integrate scientific precision with philosophical theory,

Binswanger has developed what may be the most promising school of psychotherapy in the 20th Century. It is already receiving great acceptance in Europe and some have speculated that it now enjoys greater support than psychoanalysis. Although it is basically an "effort to complement and correct the view of man and human experience implicit in Freudian psychoanalysis"--it also employs phenomenological methodology and original new existential insights. Its purpose is to produce an "enlightened anthropology" of human existence, which is to say that it is concerned with understanding man in his totality--physically and psychologically.

Binswanger has attempted to develop a psychology of existence which is not restricted by a particular theory. He is a reactionary against the homo natura concept of man which characterizes most of psychology today. This attempt to avoid categorizing human existence is very much in accordance with the first postulate of existential thought: existence is prior to essence. As most observant students have noticed, however, some contemporary psychologies, especially learning theory, also maintain that man's existence is prior to his essence.

The second postulate of existential thought--that man should be studied in his totality--is also reflected in Binswanger's existential analysis. His emphasis upon what

he refers to as a "basic religious category" indicates his interest in a phase of human life to which psychology generally pays little attention. This concern for the religious element of human life also brings to focus the importance of value questions in each individual's life. Binswanger is of the impression that the individual, by merit of his potential for free choice and because of his powers of transcendence, is to a great extent responsible for the value orientation he has toward life. This value orientation is very instrumental in determining the psychological health of the individual. By thus concentrating upon the value questions in life Binswanger demonstrates his entrenchment in existential thought, especially the third postulate, which maintains that value questions are the most important questions.

Existential analysis, by stressing the extent to which an individual structures his own perception of the world, has become aware that the concept of subjective truth, as expounded by Kierkegaard (See Chapter II, pages 33-36), is very crucial to the understanding of an individual's adaptation to the world. This subjective structuring of the "world" is of such importance to the existential analysis school of thought that "world" is understood as:

. . . the structure of meaningful relationships in which a person exists and in the design of which he participates. Thus world includes the past events which condition my existence and all the vast variety of deterministic influences which operate upon me. But it is these as I relate to them. . . . For to be aware of one's world means at the same time to be designing it (44:61 Emphasis added).

The concern for human subjectivity which characterizes existential psychology necessitates its concern for the ontological basis of human experience. Interpreting ontology as the study of uniquely human characteristics (responsibility, introspection, love, choice, religion, etc.), the existential psychologist feels that an "ontological concern" allows greater flexibility in the understanding of human behavior, hence greater justice to the individual. The agreement between existential philosophy and existential psychology concerning the study of ontology is exemplified by the fact that both give credence to what this writer considers the fifth postulate of existential thought: the belief that a study of man must include the ontological categories of being and existence and the belief that certain types of guilt and anxiety are a natural part of man's existence and must be understood as such.

To what extent existential psychology will prove to be a significant contributor to the greater understanding of the psychological dimension of human life is something which will have to be determined at a future date; it is

hoped that this paper will have made obvious some of the possibilities which this school of thought offers to our knowledge of our self, other selves, and the interacting relationship of the two.

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