

Existentialism and the Modern Predicament, by F. H. Heinemann

a. People / Organizations:

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b. Quotes:

- "[a leader] has to bring light into their darkness, order into the chaos of their experience, to discover meaning, to make [others] feel and understand what was incomprehensible to them, to distinguish the essential from the inessential, the valuable from the valueless, and to show them the direction in which they should walk and what they should do. He must have the capacity for imparting his vision of truth to others and for inducing them to choose a specific way of life" - Author (pg. 6-7)
 - "the leader is dependent upon the concrete historical conditions of his specific society...A leader does not exist in isolation as a 'great man', but depends on the field in which he operates...To a certain degree he remains free to choose his way, and in so doing he transcends the field. He is determined by the field, just as the latter is influenced by him" - Author (pg. 7)
- "as a philosopher, [Bertrand] Russell is essentially a logician, and once expressed the opinion that all philosophical problems were at bottom of a logical nature or no problems at all" - Author (pg. 21)
- "philosophy cannot be fruitfully pursued without a thorough first-hand knowledge of at least one special science, be it mathematics, physics, biology, psychology or history" - Author (pg. 28)
- "the mere fact that we are born as men does not imply that we are human. On the contrary, it lulls us into pretense. We are in constant danger of becoming inhuman, partly because our position between beasts and angels is somewhat uncertain, and partly because every sort of domination implies the temptation to inhumanity, especially in an age of technology, which invests the master with almost unlimited power. **To be human is not a fact, but a task**" - Author (pg. 39)
- "it would...be a complete misunderstanding if one interpreted existential thought as thought whose subject-matter is existence. No, it refers to the mode in which the subject is engaged in his thought" - Author (pg. 41)
 - "a true philosopher and a truly religious man are not interested in their thought only. Thought alone is here not enough. It is not enough to know philosophical doctrines or religious dogmas; one has to be, or rather, as Kierkegaard would say, to become, a philosopher and a religious man. Here one cannot be indifferent to one's thinking; one has to exist in one's thought; one has to assimilate and to appropriate one's own ideas which belong to the thinking subject and to no one else" - Author (pg. 41-42)
- "Heidegger moves on the level of common sense" - Husserl in a conversation with Heinemann (pg. 48)
 - "that [to Husserl] was the original sin which could not be forgiven" - Author (pg. 48)
- **"one becomes a philosopher through loneliness. Philosophy arises in the lonely responsible thought of the man who is philosophizing"** - Husserl in a conversation with Heinemann (pg. 52-53)
 - "to go his way in loneliness is the essence of a philosopher" - Nietzsche (pg. 53)
- "a philosopher talks to ordinary people who are unable to exchange their 'natural standpoint' for an 'unnatural' one" - Author (pg. 58)
- "what is essential in the concrete decisions of personal fate, remains hidden" - Jaspers (pg. 59)
- "the philosopher cannot do more than study ideal possibilities" - Author (pg. 60-61)
- "logic is and remains the science of the rules of correct reasoning" - Author (pg. 77)
 - **"we are faced, in all countries...with generations of young people who have lost the faculty of thinking for themselves and for whom a serious study of logic, devoted solely to the objective data of this science, is an indispensable medicine"** - Author (pg. 77-78)
 - "I have never understood why it is the ambition of nearly every German professor of philosophy to produce his own personal logic, instead of devoting his forces to the much more useful task of contributing to the development of the science of logic, as it is a matter of course for any scientist within his field. In fact, human life is too short for this pastime, just as it would be impossible for every individual to construct his own personal language" - Author (pg. 78)
- "do what you alone are able to do, and what no one else, in your place, could do" - Fichte (pg. 101)
- "the writer must be fully conscious of [his] situation and able to express it. He must accept the responsibilities arising out of it, make his choice, taking into account his obligations to others and act accordingly" - Author (pg. 130)
- "a mind is metaphysical" - Marcel (pg. 135)
- "the fact that there is being, that all the enormous varieties of creatures exist, and not 'nothing' instead, is a mystery beyond our understanding" - Author (pg. 145)
 - *cf. M. Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*
- "a Socratic does not write philosophical diaries, nor does he embrace the Catholic faith as an absolute certainty; he remains groping and searching in his skeptical attitude, talking to ordinary people, asking them unexpected questions, awakening them to the fact of their ignorance, and putting them on the right track" - Author (pg. 151)
- "one only knows that one exists, if one rediscovers oneself in others" - Goethe (pg. 146-147)
- **"there is not one philosophy called existentialism, but several philosophies with profound differences"** - Author (pg. 165)
- "it is a fundamental mistake to assume that what cannot be defined does not exist" - Author (pg. 166)
- "existence cannot be systematized" - Author (pg. 174)
- "if everyone chooses himself as the creator of his own values and rejects all objective values, this absolute freedom seems open to arbitrariness even if qualified by the desire to see others free" - Author (pg. 176)

c. General Notes:

- Chapter 1 - The Problem (pg. 1)
 - "I understood 'existence' as a new principle which aims at overcoming the onesidedness of the rationalist as well as irrationalist philosophies, and which, instead of starting with Descartes' cogito, in its double meaning as consciousness and thought, begins with the subject standing in a threefold relationship with man, the Universe and God" (pg. 1)
 - "this starting with man as a being-within-the-world seemed and still seems to me sound. It allows us to avoid the fallacy of isolation, which takes elements as isolated although they have meaning only in interrelation with other elements. Instead of cutting off consciousness and its elements from an external world, this new philosophy starts with man as a responding being" (pg. 1)
 - "this enables us to eliminate pseudo-problems arising from the faulty isolation of consciousness, such as the problem of the existence of the external world. It is not only logically impossible to prove, with Descartes, or to disprove, with Berkeley, the existence of material objects, the problem is meaningless; it simply does not arise except on faulty assumptions" (pg. 1-2)
 - "existentialism has meanwhile turned full circle" (pg. 2)
 - "Kierkegaard protested against Hegel's all-comprehensive World-Mind in which the individual disappeared like a wave in the sea. He introduced existence as a specifically religious category, meaning by it the single, finite, responsible, simple, suffering and guilty creature, who has to make a decision in face of God and who consequently is more interested in ethical questions and in salvation than in abstract speculations" (pg. 2)

- "'existence' here refers, in a religious sense, to the Self of man who grasps eternity in an instant and falls into utter despair if he loses eternity and overrates the temporal" (pg. 2)
 - "Heidegger arrived at an agnostic position, whereas Sartre and Camus are openly atheistic" (pg. 2)
 - "this reconsideration is imperative, because existentialism has become fashionable and is in danger of being dismissed before its deeper motives are understood" (pg. 3)
 - "[an] issue is dead because it has no meaning for us... A problem or theory is alive if it is felt as meaningful or significant" (pg. 4)
 - "some Logical Positivists are inclined to maintain that existentialism is dead because its problems and utterances are meaningless. Exactly this is said by Professor Ayer concerning Heidegger's and Sartre's metaphysics" (pg. 4)
 - "the contention of the Logical Positivists that all metaphysical propositions are meaningless is itself meaningless, for it is based on a faulty classification of genuine propositions into empirical and *a priori* propositions" (pg. 4-5)
 - "'alive' is here equivalent to 'deserving of interest', 'fruitful', 'leading on to new problems of methods', or 'likely to be of some help either in the elucidation of our proposition or in the practical solution of our problems'. This indeed is the most important sense of the word, and in this sense we shall attempt to find out whether there is anything alive in Existentialism" (pg. 5)
 - "the existentialists...point of departure is the fact and problem of alienation, their aim the liberation from estrangement" (pg. 9)
 - **"alienation is a fact"** (pg. 9)
 - "there exists a feeling of estrangement in modern man which has considerably increased during the last hundred years. It is connected with certain changes in human society..." (pg. 9)
 - "the facts to which the term 'alienation' refers are, objectively, different kinds of dissociation, break or rupture between human beings and their objects, whether the latter be other persons, or the natural world, or their own creations in art, science and society; and subjectively, the corresponding states of disequilibrium, disturbance, strangeness and anxiety" (pg. 9)
 - ◆ "we should, however, be clear about the fact that, whenever we talk of alienation, a specific interpretation is implied which is based on certain assumptions varying from person to person and...from thinker to thinker. But there is one point common to all of them, i.e., belief that a preceding unity and harmony has been transformed into disunity and disharmony" (pg. 9)
 - ◇ **It may be that the human, upon being thrown into the world, was never before a unity with themselves, for which they in turn carry forth into all of their relations a sense of brokenness and disjunction, riddling such with a question about their being in the first instance - which is nearly never addressed so, thus, never resolved. Meaning, the human relation is a being which is never resolved its own right - it is condemned to be frustrated; contentious; anxiety prone. The human is born lost - they are lost at birth, never knowing the reason for being at all. As such, they are afforded innumerable 'reasons' - what seem, to them, insurmountable, rebuffing such through the establishment of grandiose imaginaries (tales they tell themselves as to why they are here) - to never (dis)cover what lay beneath the, at times highly mysterious and compelling, superficiality of their social-being, of which they ever-so-readily take-up, as holding in their hands a burning gauntlet, whose affect is to throw back unto them their idealized, fantasized 'self', is more preferable than glaring upon an absence, whose affect is to point toward, moving them in the direction to be closer with, their possible emptiness, forsaking to realize themselves in their authentic personhood (i.e., their interior and genuine personal being).*
 - "alienation is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, psychological, psychopathological and sociological, for it concerns the individual as well as the group" (pg. 9)
 - ◆ "Hegel was the first of the great philosophers to treat this problem seriously" (pg. 10)
 - ◇ "Hegel starts with the assumption that reality is essentially spiritual, and he therefore refers estrangement primarily to the mind. Man as a spiritual being, or in Hegel's language, the mind produces what we call culture and civilization. His own creations, works of art, religions, philosophies, science, law and state become members of new realms of the objective or of the absolute mind. In creating these worlds man loses his soul and lives in imaginary realms. His creations, embodiments of his own mind, are in a certain sense outside him, and yet they form somehow part of his own self" (pg. 10)
 - ◇ "[Hegel] points to a specific phenomenon which one could call 'creative alienation', namely the fact that in every act of creation an element of estrangement is implied" (pg. 11)
 - ▶ **'estrangement' in the sense of 'the-putting-at-a-distance-to-be-there-for-myself-here'.*
 - ◇ "this fact of estrangement is so central in Hegel's thought that his whole system is based on it. The Mind has to return from the stage of self-alienation to itself, i.e., to an absolute knowledge of itself" (pg. 11)
 - ▶ "in a dialectical movement the Logic forms the thesis, the Philosophy of Nature the antithesis, and the Philosophy of Mind the synthesis" (pg. 11)
 - "in this circular movement the liberation from alienation, which later became a central motive in Existentialism, forms an important element" (pg. 11-12)
 - ◆ "Karl Marx was quick in grasping the central idea of alienation...[Marx] accepted Hegel's conception, but transformed it at once from an 'alienation of creativity' into an 'alienation of productivity', corresponding to his replacement of idealism by materialism. Now it not the Mind, but man who becomes alienated. In the process of alienation and in the return to himself man becomes man, and not, as in Hegel's case, mind becomes mind. Marx interpreted Hegel as if he meant that labor forms the essence of creativity, and that man is the result of his labor, albeit of his intellectual labor. He replaced this by manual labor and translated Hegel into the language of political economy. The division of labor now becomes the basis of alienation and the worker himself self-estranged, a commodity which he has to sell on the labor market. The aim is therefore the return of the worker or of the proletariat to himself from this self-estrangement; this, however, is only possible through revolution" (pg. 12)
 - "Existentialism arose because the solutions proposed by Hegel and Marx proved ineffective for overcoming the fact of alienation" (pg. 12)
 - ◆ "the fact that Existentialism arose as a reaction to Hegelianism and Marxism implies that it has something in common with them, namely the desire to overcome the alienation of man" (pg. 13)
 - Chapter 2 - Beyond Technology? (pg. 14)
 - "for the first time in history technology has acquired a central and dominant position in human life" (pg. 14)
 - "these facts have simultaneously revolutionized the life of human societies. The social and political revolutions of our time differ from all preceding revolutions, in that they arise from the change in economic conditions brought about by the development of technics and industry..." (pg. 15)
 - **"suddenly we find ourselves face to face with the machines which we have created. They are our children**; one the one hand similar to us, like the electronic brain which competes with us in calculating; on the other more foreign to us than a work of art or the products of manual labor" (pg. 15)
 - "Hegel, as we saw, stressed the fact of creative alienation which arises out of the creative work of any mind. It referred to the creations of man in art, philosophy, science, law, and politics, but also to Nature as a creature of the Divine Mind. In all these cases, Hegel held, an estrangement arises between the creative mind and its creations. Marx understood Hegel's thought very well, but translated Hegel's idealistic

- creative alienation into a materialistic productive alienation or into the alienation of labor. He wanted to overcome this alienation with the help of the proletarian revolution" (pg. 15)
- "Technological alienation is, as we shall see, of a somewhat different type. It is determined by the characteristics of technics" (pg. 15)
 - **"we should, however, never forget that tools are means to an end. If tool-making becomes the primary end, the means prevail over the end"** (pg. 17)
 - "the artist use techniques and technical skills as means to an end, whereas a technician adores them as ends in themselves" (pg. 18)
 - "words, tools and machines have the natural tendency to become independent of their creator and to appear as foreign to him" (pg. 17)
 - "it comes into prominence to-day because of the all-pervasive influence of technology. No one can evade it...A new attitude, i.e., a technological approach, takes possession of every man...The progressive mechanization of life is, however, self-stultifying. It leads to frustration..." (pg. 17)
 - "unless he regains the ability to control himself and subordinate machines to moral and spiritual ends, he will never be able to escape the destructive influence of the technological era" (pg. 28)
 - "either atrophy of our brain power; degeneration of man; decline of his intellectual and spiritual activities which become more and more mechanical; and in the end slavery in new totalitarian regimes with over-centralized control; or a spiritual revolution; an awakening of man to the fact that he, after all, is a spiritual being with inexhaustible spiritual powers; and a stern determination to defend his liberty and to subordinate the so-called progress of science and technology to the moral and spiritual ends of humanity within a democratic order. Courage, faith and heroic defiance may be the only means for mastering a dangerous development which we are unable to stop. To problem how to master technology will therefore remain with us for decades and perhaps for centuries to come" (pg. 29)
 - Chapter 3 - The Existential Christian (pg. 30)
 - "[Kierkegaard] sees his providential mission in exposing Christendom as a prodigious illusion and in calling its followers back to an existential Christian life" (pg. 31)
 - "in the present meaning of the term [Kierkegaard] was neither an existentialist nor a philosopher of existence. Nevertheless, he is the originator and the most original mind of this whole movement. He it was who introduced the term 'existence' with a new meaning into European thought. He was *an existential theologian-philosopher, an existential religious philosopher, or rather an existential Christian*" (pg. 32)
 - "he represents a reaction against, and a break with, the whole of modern philosophy from Descartes to Hegel" (pg. 32)
 - "he does not protest in the name of material existence and of the proletariat, but in the name of the individual and his soul. His attitude to the philosophy of consciousness is paradoxical. He rejects abstract consciousness and abstract thought for the sake of the concrete spiritual individual, with his 'inwardness' and 'subjectivity'" (pg. 33)
 - "he protests against Hegel's abstract thought, his stress on Universals, against his pantheism and his dissolution of all differences in the all-embracing unity of the Logos, against the idea of 'mediation' and his elimination of all risks. He rejects his speculation and speculative philosophy in general in which the philosopher does not *commit* himself or in which, as Sartre would say, he is not engaged" (pg. 33)
 - "Kierkegaard defends the Particular against the Universal. This point is noteworthy, partly because it will reappear in some of the existentialists, especially in Sartre, and partly because it is near to those intuitionists who stress the particularity of every situation in which we act..." (pg. 34)
 - "his protest is specifically religious and Christian" (pg. 34)
 - "he protests against the objective age and against objective thought which is indifferent to the thinking subject and his existence and which translates everything into results" (pg. 34)
 - "[in *The Present Age*] he protests against the levelling brought about by the phantom of public opinion, the ascendancy of the mass and of mass-man, socialism, the demon of collectivism and the collective as an artefact" (pg. 34)
 - **"levelling destroys the singularity and qualitative difference of the Self, and therefore the order of value and of status. A sort of external alienation arises; the individual disappears in the mass"** (pg. 35)
 - **this is Heidegger's 'They'*
 - "the disappearance of the Self in the mass is external alienation. Kierkegaard would go a certain way with Hegel. He would agree that alienation is a self-estrangement of the mind, nor, however, of the abstract or universal, but of the individual mind or of the Self" (pg. 35)
 - ◆ "he would further admit that man's intellectual culture represents a realm of estrangement" (pg. 35)
 - ◇ **"man has lost his self, has ceased to be man, has suffered dehumanization. Having become 'objective', he fails to be a subject. He has become an abstract phantom and has lost his concrete life. He has ceased to exist and is, in fact, non-existent"** (pg. 36)
 - ◇ "self-estrangement is to him primarily a process going on in one's own self, not an external, but an internal relation, based on one's own attitude to oneself. Kierkegaard therefore becomes the psychologist or rather the psychopathologist of self-estrangement" (pg. 36)
 - ▶ **cf. V. McCarthy, Kierkegaard as Psychologist https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/147/oa_monograph/book/40736*
 - ▶ **this is where psychoanalysis comes into the scene, where it aims to detail such 'inwardness' and the concomitant relations.*
 - ◇ "fear refers to something definite, as in 'I fear him' or 'I am afraid of the operation'. Anxiety, however, refers to something indefinite. It is the uncanny apprehension of some impending evil, of something not present, but to come, of something not within us, but of an alien power" (pg. 36)
 - ▶ "anxiety is [quickly] transformed into despair, and despair is 'the sickness unto death'" (pg. 36-37)
 - "despair, says Kierkegaard, is the misproportion in the relation of the self to itself, or every disturbance in the process of becoming a Self, a sort of self-consumption, a specific illness of man as a spiritual being, arising from his attempt to separate himself from the power which created him, or from the fact that he neglects what is eternal in him and forgets his spiritual nature" (pg. 37)
 - ◆ "whoever has no God has no Self, and who has no Self is in despair" (pg. 37)
 - ◇ "starting with despair, his problem became how again to become oneself" (pg. 37)
 - ▶ **I would take argument with the word 'again' - see comment above on pg. 9*
 - "Kierkegaard acts as a provocation to thought, calling upon his reader to question old established opinions and to rethink his whole position" (pg. 38)
 - **"Do not pretend!** Is Kierkegaard's message to our age, which is filled with pretense" (pg. 38)
 - "the mere fact that we are born as men does not imply that we are human. On the contrary, it lulls us into pretense. We are in constant danger of becoming inhuman, partly because our position between beasts and angels is somewhat uncertain, and partly because every sort of domination implies the temptation to inhumanity, especially in an age of technology, which invests the master with almost unlimited power. **To be human is not a fact, but a task"** (pg. 39)
 - "Kierkegaard concentrates on...how to become a Christian" (pg. 39)

- "[Kierkegaard] wishes to return from abstract inessential knowledge to concrete essential knowledge, from the exterior to the interior, from the objective to the subjective, from possibilities to reality" (pg. 41)
 - *see. 39-40 for 7 points on philosophy of knowledge
 - "it is very easy to see that Heidegger's and Sartre's distinction between unauthentic and authentic being, Jaspers's and Berdyaev's opposition to objectification, and Mounier's distinction between existence lost and existence regained, are either derived from, or internally connected with, Kierkegaard's discrimination between inessential and essential knowledge" (pg. 41)
 - "[to Kierkegaard] the essential truth is subjective or internal; or 'truth is subjectivity'" (pg. 40)
 - ◆ "subjective knowledge refers to existence" (pg. 41)
 - ◇ "not existence in the traditional sense of 'being there' in its opposition to essence; it does therefore by no means imply the priority of existence before essence (Sartre). It points to human existence, but not to man as a finite being, as Heidegger would have it, but to him as a synthesis of the finite and the infinite, the temporal and the eternal" (pg. 41)
 - "subjectively, something is true because the person passionately believes in it, has appropriated it with his whole existence..." (pg. 43)
- "[Kierkegaard's] longing for the concrete; his search for reality; his dissatisfaction with abstract science which move in mere possibilities without ever reaching reality; and his knowledge that choice and decision transcend the relativity of knowledge and introduce something unconditional; - all this is very much alive" (pg. 44)
 - "the pressure of group, class, party and the state, threatening the liberty of the individual, has considerably increased since Kierkegaard's days. For this reason his stress on human existence is valuable. He has shown that it is man who matters; that knowledge and philosophy have existential implications, and that philosophy, in its most essential parts, must be existential" (pg. 44)
- "but as so often happens, he was right in what he affirmed, and wrong in what he denied" (pg. 44)
 - "overrating subjective reflection he underrated objective reflection. His devaluation of objective knowledge is dead, for it is a purely personal affair. It is understandable for a religious person to say that all worldly knowledge is foolishness before God; but from the point of view of knowledge it does not make sense to reject objective reflection, for **subjective and objective reflection are strictly interdependent**. If one desires knowledge of the subject, one wants it in an objective manner" (pg. 44)
 - "there is further 'personal truth', truth in which I believe with all my heart, which I accept as the basis of my existence and for which I am prepared to die. Religious truth is of this kind; it is sui generis; it cannot be verified by sense experience; its 'justification' resides in the fact that it is able to provide a spiritual center not only for individuals, but for a whole community. Religion is the 'personal truth of a community' and cannot therefore remain purely subjective; it must acquire some degree of objectivity; and in fact every religion claims a specific objectivity. A protest against the abstract objective truth of science may have its merits, because it makes room for extra-scientific, personal and religious truth, but to go to the other by saying 'subjectivity is truth' is an overstatement. It is bound to lead, and has led, on the one hand, to the mistaken assumption that an existentialist logic is possible, and on the other, to relativism and irrationalism, i.e., to the fatal assumption that the individual has arbitrarily to decide what is true or false, right or wrong. The anti-intellectualism and irrationalism which are implied in Kierkegaard's transition to choice and decision can hardly be counted as positive assets" (pg. 45)
- "he overstressed... the morbid aspect of human life, being himself a psychopathological case, regarded by some as schizophrenic, by others as of the maniac-depressive type" (pg. 46)
 - "his is the category of the individual which he stressed and overstressed. Nevertheless, he is right in saying that the fatal levelling process of our time can only be stopped by the courage and dauntlessness of persons accepting an absolute responsibility in the face of God" (pg. 46)
- Chapter 4 - The Loneliness of the Transcendental Ego (pg. 47)
 - "why is it necessary to include Husserl in a book on Existentialism although **he was by no means an existentialist, but on the contrary rejected Heidegger and could be fittingly called an 'essentialist'?**" (pg. 47)
 - "in France, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty are profoundly influenced by him" (pg. 47)
 - "[Sartre] accepts [Husserl's] phenomenological method as the method of his ontology; he interprets it in an arbitrary manner, mixing up Husserl's and Heidegger's very different interpretations, and declares the phenomenon to be the relative-absolute, i.e., relative to someone, to whom it appears, but absolute, in so far as it appears as it is. He discusses and rejects Husserl's theory of the knowledge of other persons, and is in his own psychology dependent on Husserl, Heidegger and Freud" (pg. 47)
 - "Heidegger moves on the level of common sense" - Husserl in a conversation with Heineemann (pg. 48)
 - "generally speaking, [Husserl's] influence was not so much based on his thought as he wanted it to be interpreted, as on what others believed or wished it to be" (pg. 48)
 - "he... attacked 'psychologism' in the first volume of his Logical Studies. He understands by 'psychologism' the attempt to base logic on psychology" (pg. 49)
 - "negatively, Husserl shows that the laws of logic are not psychological laws, that logic does not form part of psychology, and that the rules of logic have nothing to do with the psychological facts of thinking. Positively, he maintains that the laws of logic concern the subject-matter or the meaning of propositions, and that these meanings belong to a sphere *sui generis*, i.e., to an ideal sphere" (pg. 49)
 - "here arises the first paradox of his teaching. On the one hand he rejects psychology as the basis of logic and stresses the autonomous ideal character of logic, on the other hand he holds that the meaning of logical propositions can only be revealed by going back to the subject, i.e., to those acts of our consciousness in which this meaning is 'constituted'" (pg. 49)
 - "he rejects the method of science as the method of philosophy; science, he says, preserves the common-sense point of view; it accepts the world as it is. 'Philosophy, however, lies in a totally different dimension. It needs a completely different starting-point and a completely new method'. He tries to rediscover a specific autonomous region for philosophy. He formulates the antithesis to Positivism, namely that philosophy should be completely independent of science and disregard its results and methods, instead of being completely dependent on it" (pg. 50)
 - "Husserl would like to escape this contradiction by transforming philosophy into an eidetic science or a science of essences, i.e., a science not founded on experience, independent of all empirical science, and nevertheless its basis" (pg. 51)
 - "all this is pure fancy; there is neither an eidetic intuition nor does it furnish a priori foundations of empirical science" (pg. 51)
 - "nevertheless, this experiment is not without interest in spite of, or because of, its failure. It demonstrates that **philosophy can be neither completely independent of science, nor can it be an exact science**" (pg. 51)
 - "Husserl's philosophy is the philosophy of the lonely transcendental Self" (pg. 53)
 - "Husserl's method is of interest to us as an expression of self-estrangement" (pg. 53)
 - "his method consists of two steps. The first is the so-called phenomenological reduction, or the transition from the 'natural standpoint' or the common-sense point of view to the phenomenological standpoint. On the natural level one believes in the reality of the world and in one's being in the world. The phenomenological reduction implies... a bracketing of this whole world and of the sciences referring to it. As a result of this reduction, as in Descartes' case, the Ego or Consciousness remains. Had he gone no further, he could have moved in the sphere of the concrete Ego, but he was not satisfied with that. The phenomenological reduction has to be supplemented by the transcendental reduction. Estrangement from the world is not enough; there must be self-estrangement, a bracketing of ourselves until we reach the transcendental Ego, the anonymous consciousness which does not belong to anybody, but which claims to contain the foundation and the 'constitutive elements' of all our experience and of all sciences. He himself believed

- that he had discovered an infinite universe instead of the finite world which he had given up (pg. 53-54)
- **"formal logic arose as formal *apophantic*, i.e., as a theory of the forms of assertion or propositions in the logical sense.** This realm of assertions, however, is by no means homogenous; on the contrary, it implies three different logical disciplines, among them, first, *the theory of the pure forms of judgement*...secondly, *logic as the science of possible forms of true propositions*...[thirdly,] *the logic of truths*" (pg. 55-56)
 - "Husserl holds that objective forms of logic cannot be understood if one does not go back to the subjective forms in which they are constituted or founded. This implies a transition to transcendental logic, in a Kantian or rather neo-Kantian sense. Husserl believes that logical forms and their objects have their ground in our mind, i.e., in specific subjective forms, in which the objects of our judgements are constituted. Kant would say that they are constituted in acts of synthesis of our mind, and in specific a priori forms of this synthesis, i.e., in space and time, in the categories and in the ideas, as the forms of synthesis of our intuition, our understanding, and our reason respectively. Husserl, however, interprets the acts of our mind, in Brentano's manner, as being 'intentional', i.e., they are directed towards something; they are acts of seeing (of), or hearing (of), something, and this something is their intentional object. He holds that all objects of our knowledge are constituted in these intentional acts" (pg. 56)
 - "he accepts a phenomenological foundation, because he believes with Kant that the objects of our knowledge are constituted in the transcendental subject. This is likewise true of the objects of logic." (pg. 56)
 - "every proposition, it is said, is in the last resort related to something individual and stands therefore in relation to a real universe..." (pg. 56)
 - "Husserl holds that every proposition, whether a truth of reason or a truth of fact, must be based on 'pre-predicative evidence'" (pg. 57)
 - "here, he is most interestingly and, in principle, right" (pg. 57)
 - "Husserl says: 'truth is evidently the correlate of the perfect rationality of the original belief, of the certainty of belief'" (pg. 57)
 - "in other words, truth is based on right belief, or on subjectivity. This is not an antithesis to, but a correlate to Kierkegaard's thesis, based on a completely different interpretation of subjectivity which stresses its rational character" (pg. 57)
 - **"[Husserl] is the last representative of a philosophy of consciousness,** i.e., of the attempt to base our whole knowledge of the world, of ourselves and of other persons on pure consciousness" (pg. 58)
 - **"the existentialists replace his consciousness by existence,** re-install the natural standpoint, and liberate the phenomenological method from its unnatural and rationalist elements" (pg. 58)
 - Chapter 5 - The Philosophy of Detachment (pg. 59)
 - "first place among the philosophers of existence is due to Karl Jaspers, the originator of the movement" (pg. 59)
 - "he reveals a deep understanding, not only for the situation of persons, but for the human condition, and discovers certain situations, connected with the finite human existence as such, which he calls 'limit-situations'. They arise because in this world which we experience as object, in distinction from the subject, there is nothing stable, nothing absolute, but everything in constant change, finite and split into opposites. The Whole, the Absolute, and the Essential cannot be found in it. Instead, we experience a shattering of our existence in situations of absolute chance, conflict, suffering, guilt and death. They either throw us into despair, or they awake us to an authentic choice of ourselves and of our destiny. They remind us that there must be something transcending our finite world" (pg. 60)
 - "he saw the problem which is still our problem, and described the present form of alienation as 'provision for the masses in planned production with the help of technical devices'. He is concerned about the fate of the person who is in danger of becoming a mere cog within the enormous machine of the modern welfare state and who loses his substance, self, and his spiritual center. He believes it to be *the* great problem of our time, whether in face of this development the independent person working out his own destiny is able to survive. **He wants to show the way from the unauthentic existence of mass-man to the authentic existence of the self.** Or rather, he wishes to remind us what it means to be a self and to preserve one's freedom in a world of pressure-groups" (pg. 60)
 - "he made the principle of existence the basis of a philosophy of existence. The term *existence* became the means of reflective thought an embedded in the ambiguities and even dialectical contradictions of an endless reflection" (pg. 61)
 - "as a philosopher he follows the principle of moving in nothing but possibilities. He wishes to remain free from all possibilities, including the absolute yes of irrational faith and the absolute no of nihilism, without ever making a final decision" (pg. 61)
 - "thus Jaspers becomes the gliding philosopher. He enjoys this floating..." (pg. 61)
 - "his Philosophy of the Comprehensive wants to understand and to embrace all standpoints without choosing any one of them. This principle is most interesting, but based on a tragic mistake, it frustrates Jaspers's self-realization. Theoretically I may stand at any point of the terrestrial or intellectual globe, but practically only at once specific spot at this moment" (pg. 64)
 - "Jaspers univocally rejects authentic being. We are unauthentic as members of mass-society, being lived by society and by the state; as members of the empirical world, dominated by impulse and natural desires; as mere Dasein (being-there); and as not being true to ourselves. He is likewise sure that one should go on from 'being-there' to 'being-oneself' (existence); that existence is only real as freedom; that in the ensuing act of choice, I recognize myself as the true self; that choosing, I am; and that this choice, though arising in a concrete historical situation, must be unconditioned by external circumstances" (pg. 64-65)
 - **"Jaspers is in search of Being,** i.e., of the Absolute, but is convinced with Kant and the Idealists of East and West that **it cannot be found within the world as experienced by us,** i.e., as an object in contradistinction from the subject. As long as we move within the subject-object-split the world is merely phenomenal, a construction of our mind" (pg. 65)
 - "as Kant taught us, we order the chaos of our sensations with the help of the synthesis of our intuition (space and time) and of our understanding (categories)" (pg. 65)
 - **"Being is neither the object that confronts us, whether we perceive it or think it, nor is it the subject"** - Jaspers (pg. 65)
 - "Jaspers believes with Kant that we are citizens of two worlds, one material and one spiritual, and that the latter represents the true reality" (pg. 66)
 - "Jaspers's existentialism is all-comprehensive without accepting anything as final" (pg. 68)
 - **"philosophy of existence...is a way of thinking** which uses and transcends all material knowledge, in order that man may again become himself" - Jaspers (pg. 68)
 - **for the word 'again', see comments above on pg. 9*
 - **"whereas Heidegger asserts that human existence is essentially finite, Jaspers replies that all authentic being, whether of God or of Man, is indefinite or infinite"** (pg. 69)
 - "[Jaspers] formulates the experience of our age and of all ages, i.e., that **'solidarity' and security of established positions, human institutions, and of all finite beings are illusory. On this earth everything is transitory and subject to dissolution.** An experience, which is prima facie merely negative, is here turned to positive account. Jaspers is quite right: if we do not want to fall into the abyss of Nothingness, we have to learn gliding or floating" (pg. 69)
 - **"Jaspers attempts to create and existential logic.** In fact, however, he describes in unending reflections his search for true being or for the Transcendent" (pg. 71)
 - "what Jaspers really aims at is the inner experience of essential Being or of Being in itself" (pg. 74)
 - **"this philosophy of existence further fails because it is unable to serve as a basis for ethics"** (pg. 78)
 - ◆ "so far it has not been proved that an ethics can be based on Jaspers's principle of existence" (pg. 79)

- "Following Kant, and T. S. Coleridge for that matter, Jaspers distinguishes reason from the understanding... The understanding is to him 'objectifying conceiving with the help of isolating comprehending', whereas the reason is unobjectifying understanding which views everything in its relation to the comprehensive whole. It remains inseparable from the thought of the understanding and bound up with it at any moment" (pg. 80)
 - "[reason] remains elusive. Only its functions become apparent. It is the driving power of our thought..." (pg. 80)
 - ◆ "it is reason in the process of infinite dialectic, the heir of Hegel's and Kierkegaard's dialectic" (pg. 81)
 - ◆ "reason does not allow us to be satisfied with one specific form of truth, but forces us to transcend any of these forms as preliminary and non-final" (pg.81)
 - ◇ "it is a high-level search for truth, a flight to truth" (pg. 81)
 - ◇ "the existentialist logic is now replaced by a *logic of reason* which may be realizable" (pg. 81)
 - "Jaspers is right. Most human truths are not definite and open to revision" (pg. 82)
 - ◆ "their truths are not absolute, they depend on certain presuppositions" (pg. 82)
- Chapter 6 - Heroic Defiance (pg. 84)
 - "Professor Ryle is right; the acts of thinking are polymorphous" (pg. 84)
 - "thinking varies according to the field in which it arises" (pg. 85)
 - "[Heidegger's] thinking is, in fact, the building and constructing of a dwelling-place, in which the philosopher can reside, or of a labyrinth, in which he dominates absolutely because he alone has in his hands Ariadne's thread which will allow him to find his way out" (pg. 86)
 - "it is an activity of the will dominated by... a will to power, albeit intellectual power, a will to construct something absolute new, in opposition to the whole preceding history of philosophy" (pg. 86)
 - **"though I recognize [Heidegger's] approach and starting-point, i.e., his wish to penetrate to a genuine doctrine of being, I cannot rid myself of the impression that his whole philosophizing is a single great buffoonery of which no one can make head or tail for the simple reason that he himself does not know what he really wants"** (pg. 88)
 - "perhaps I do not understand anything of his philosophy. But then I must ask, is that not also a bad sign that I, after a most sincere effort, have to say that I do not understand him?" (pg. 88)
 - "the terminology... is more original than the thought" - N. Berdyaev, *Dream and Reality* (pg. 89)
 - "[Heidegger] seems to be the double-faced Janus, the Jekyll and Hyde of contemporary philosophy" (pg. 90)
 - "to put it in a nutshell, the original Heidegger was historically effective because of the following points." (pg. 91)
 - "*first*, he laid stress on human existence; this implied in a specific sense the priority of existence before essence... which has since been taken over by Sartre in a misleading manner. **Sartre interpreted it ontologically, and this does not make sense because ontologically 'existence', however interpreted, presupposes 'being'**. Heidegger, however, meant it epistemologically, i.e., if one wants to know what being is then one has to start with an analysis of human existence, which contains as one of its elements the understanding of being. His thesis was that only the analysis of existence (as a sort of 'fundamental ontology') can lay open the way for understanding being (or for the 'regional ontologies')." (pg. 91)
 - "*thirdly*, 'existence' is here understood as 'potential being', a possibility of being or not being oneself. It anticipates the future, it 'projects' itself into the world. **As 'the possibility of being oneself' it is authentic existence, as 'the possibility of not being oneself' unauthentic existence. Here Heidegger gives an interesting description of self-estrangement. In unauthentic existence the self loses itself in the 'It' (Man); it behaves as a member of a crowd, like everybody or nobody, like the average man; it falls a prey to the temptations of this world and forgets its own mission. It talks superficially out of curiosity in an ambiguous manner. It handles was is 'at hand'**. Heidegger claims that 'being at hand', i.e., the material we use in our practical activities, is ontologically more fundamental than 'being there', and that the world is primarily the sphere of our activities" (pg. 91-92)
 - "*fourthly*, human existence is 'being-in-the-world'. This thesis is significant as a starting-point, for it overcomes the artificial isolation and abstraction of Descartes's 'consciousness'; but the elaboration of this thesis and the analysis of this mode of existence is as arbitrary as it is clumsy" (pg. 92)
 - "*fifthly*... Heidegger contends, 'being has been chiefly understood in the mode of the present... whereas he stresses the mode of the future. Existence is essentially temporal and historical" (pg. 92)
 - "*lastly*, the rather doubtful combination of phenomenology, existentialism and ontology must be mentioned, because it has a profound influence on the French school. It is based on a reinterpretation of phenomenology as 'a method which makes phenomena visible in the mode in which they present themselves'. Since now 'phenomenon' is understood as... something that presents itself as the being or the meaning of the object in question, it follows that phenomenology becomes identical with ontology. In its application to existence it has therefore to reveal or to interpret the fundamental ontological structures of existence" (pg. 92-93)
 - **"Heidegger is the rebel among contemporary philosophers. He is in revolt against all philosophers of the past"** (pg. 93)
 - "he rejects traditional metaphysics because it was based on logic, and rejects logic as the basis of philosophy" (pg. 94)
 - ◆ "Heidegger... rejects all valuations because they are all subjective" (pg. 94)
 - "[he is] a philosopher who formulates his doctrines in opposition to preceding thinkers. The destruction of the history of ontology is his aim. He is not a revolutionary, but a counter-revolutionary, pointing more to the past than to the future" (pg. 94)
 - "he is opposed to what he calls the metaphysics of essences. He holds that Plato, Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas and Kant belong to this school although they are in fact very different" (pg. 95)
 - ◆ "in spite of his enormous effort to the contrary, he belongs to the metaphysics of essence as well as to the history of subjectivism. He wants to have a metaphysics in which 'being' is related to its own origin, and not to its origin in the human mind... [Yet,] all this comes back again to human existence, and therefore subjectivity" (pg. 96)
 - ◇ "like and attempt to jump over one's own shadow... it is quite impossible to escape what he call subjectivity" (pg. 96)
 - "he believe that logic is based on a specific interpretation of logos, and that Aristotle's concept of *logos* is derived from a misinterpretation of the original meaning of *logos* prevailing amongst the pre-Socratics. Therefore it should be our endeavor to go back to the original meaning of *logos*. Although it is true that the word 'logic' is derived from *logos*, it does not follow this etymology is of any relevance whatever to the meaning of logic" (pg. 96)
 - ◆ **"it does not seem to make sense to go back to a more primitive concept of thought as the revelation of the truth of being"** (pg. 96)
 - ◇ "one can apply the rules of correct reasoning without having ever heard of the word *logos*" (pg. 97)
 - ◆ **"one cannot escape logic. If there is to be a metaphysics at all, it cannot be without logical foundations"** (pg. 97)
 - "his famous lecture, 'What is Metaphysics?' declares 'nothing' to form its sole subject-matter" (pg. 97)
 - ◆ "centering around the concept of nothingness, the lecture rejects logical negation as the source of 'not-being', and attempts, on this basis, the dissolution of logic" (pg. 97)
 - ◆ "its theses are:" (pg. 97)
 - ◇ "1) 'not' does not arise through an act of negation, but negation is based on the 'not', which, on its part, arises through the

- activity of nothingness" (pg. 97)
- ◊ "2) 'nothing' is the source of negation, and not the other way round" (pg. 97)
- ◊ "3) 'nothing' is neither an object nor anything that (is) at all. Nothing occurs neither by itself nor apart from what-is, as a sort of adjunct. Nothing is that which makes the revelation of what-is as such possible for our existence. Nothing not merely provides the conceptual opposite of what-is but is also an original part of essence. It is in the Being of what-is that the "nothing of nothing" occurs" - Heidegger, *Existence and Being* (pg. 97)
https://ia801401.us.archive.org/32/items/in.ernet.dli.2015.190899/2015.190899.Existence-And-Being_text.pdf
- ◊ "4) negation is only one way in which negative behavior expresses itself. Others are 'acting in opposition', 'detesting', 'refusal', 'prohibition' and 'privation'. In other words, negation is explained as a mode of negative behavior. And negative behavior again is, ontologically, based on nothingness, or rather on the 'nothing of nothing'" (pg. 98)
- ◊ "5) nothingness is experienced in modes of behavior rather than as an object. It is revealed to us, not in acts of reasoning, but in the irrational act of anxiety. 'Anxiety reveals nothingness'" (pg. 98)
- ◊ "6) this result is opposed to logic..." (pg. 98)
- ◆ "this essay has exercised a considerable influence, especially on Sartre, and is important, not in what it denies, but in what it asserts" (pg. 98)
- "he maintains that we experience nothingness in anxiety" (pg. 99)
 - ◆ "it is quite true that the object of anxiety is indefinite, whereas that of fear is definite, and that we often worry about nothing; but the conclusion that 'Nothing itself, Nothing as such was there', is completely unfounded, for the simple reason that 'Nothing itself, Nothing as such', does not exist" (pg. 99)
 - ◊ **here is a key misunderstanding - 'nothingness' is a separate matter entirely from 'non-existence'; such becoming of nothing is the confounding principle of negation (i.e., the concomitant making of nothingness through the pursuit of something else).*
- "he is opposed to the philosophy of value..." (pg. 99)
 - ◆ "in his violent reaction against the philosophy of value of this school he goes to the extreme of rejecting any theory of value" (pg. 99)
 - ◆ "he jumps to the conclusion that all search for values arises from the desire to find a substitute for the loss of Being. Value, he maintains, is a creation of human subjectivity, i.e., of an activity called 'valuing'. This evaluation merely objectifies humans wants; nevertheless this objectified value parades as possessing independent existence, and the result of this objectification is that it hides true Being and deprives it of its dignity" (pg. 100)
 - ◊ "it is completely impossible to reject valuation because it is subjective, for the simple reason that in *almost every act of thinking an act of evaluation is implied*" (pg. 101)
 - ◆ "this thinking against values would seem to have catastrophic consequence for ethics" (pg. 101)
- "Heidegger maintains that, in the last resort, nobody ever understood him" (pg. 103)
- "Heidegger destroys the basis of the preceding metaphysics without being able to lay the foundation for a new one. We he is talking about is in fact not metaphysics as science, but metaphysics as a natural disposition of man. Ontology without logos remains empty talk" (pg. 106)
- "Heidegger is the defiant philosopher who has exercised a considerable influence through the very existentialism which he now rejects and through the provocative manner in which he questions the foundations of traditional philosophy and thought" (pg. 108)
- Chapter 7 - The Philosophy of Commitment (pg. 109)
 - "[for the French] Liberty comes first. The French are born individualists and have succeeded in creating the most unstable of democracies. This political instability is, however, balanced by a philosophical stability. **French philosophers are Cartesians by tradition. Descartes is the French philosopher**" (pg. 109)
 - "Sartre maintains that in his consciousness he is at once aware of the presence of others and that he is more certain of the others than he is of himself. He finds himself in a world of intersubjectivity, and his consciousness starts therefore on a prereflective level. It is no longer a substance in a well-ordered and meaningful world, but in a world bereft of meaning and purpose it becomes a striving towards something that it can never become" (pg. 111)
 - "he incorporates...Husserl's phenomenological method, which he applies in his early writings to the study of the imagination and of the emotions, and Heidegger's metaphysics of Nothingness...In competition with [Freud] he attempts to build up an existentialist psycho-analysis" (pg. 111)
 - "Sartre occupies a specific place in the history of Existentialism. He represents the stage where self-estrangement seems to have reached its highest possible degree, that is to say, where the pressure of the group has become so great that the individual is almost forced to lived in self-estrangement as the natural state of affairs" (pg. 111)
 - "Sartre has an unrivaled uncanny appreciation of the contemporary conditions, combined with a gift for analyzing, almost brutally, its weakness and the negative and destructive forces prevalent in human society" (pg. 112)
 - "the true opposite to liberty is not necessity, but compulsion. To be free means, negatively, 'not to act under compulsion'" (pg. 113)
 - "Sartre's philosophy arises from a combination and analysis of these two experiences, i.e., of liberty in resistance, and the apparent absurdity of being and existence, both of which are primarily negative" (pg. 116)
 - "three fundamental concepts, liberty, situation and negation, must be understood if one wants to understand Sartre; but the remarkable point is that negation is dominant and that it enters the concept of liberty as well as that of situation" (pg. 117)
 - "non-being [is] a perpetual presence in us as well as outside of us, that is to say, that the Nothing haunts Being" (pg. 117)
 - "an individual who is faced with the permanent threat of annihilation discovers that non-being is a permanent possibility connected with being, and that the Nothing haunts Being" (pg. 117)
 - ◆ **I think what's even more important to note about this is the varying degrees to which we recognize our own possibilities. Death stands large and brutish, continuously calling out our own Being. However, there are more subtler possibilities which have a non-being about them, as they relate to our being, which often go unheard. I think it is worth illustrating some of these smaller and more silent ways in which we (re)cover our being-here.*
 - "[to Sartre] nothingness receives a specific place and function within the realm of Being, so that the two propositions, everything is and Nothing is, are both valid" (pg. 120)
 - "in formulating the question, What is the origin of negation?, he follows Heidegger, and he also accepts his answer that '**nothing' is the source of negation** and not the other way round" (pg. 120)
 - "[negativities] are absence, distance, alteration, otherness, repulsion, regret and distraction" (pg. 121)
 - "Heidegger's 'Nothing', [Sartre] would say, is a transcendent and super-worldly nothing which may explain absolute negation, but it does not take account of inner-worldly negativities which form part of our daily experience, and therefore not of relative negation and relative nothingness. Without denying the transcendence of the absolute Nothing, [Sartre] attempts to bring nothingness back into this world, and to establish the transcendent Nothing in the very heart of immanence" (pg. 121)
- "Sartre expresses the experience of a disillusioned generation in which **negative experiences, frustration, loss and pain prevail**. It is a

- generation which is not broken but fragile, and which experiences this fragility as belonging essentially to its structure. Sartre discovers 'being' as being 'fragile'" (pg. 121-122)
- "but what is fragility if not the probability of non-existence for a specific being in specific circumstance? **A being is fragile if it bears in its being a definite possibility of non-being**" - Sartre
 - "all human beings are bearing this possibility within themselves; but here we are faced with a generation in which this chance, very small in peaceful time, is transformed into a high probability so that anyone may have to die at any moment" (pg. 122)
 - "Sartre concludes that man brings this fragility into the world" (pg. 122)
 - "man as a being within the world is his own nothingness, and through him nothingness comes into the world. This is Sartre's paradoxical solution. **Being and nothingness both exist, but nothingness has its roots in man**, or rather, as we shall see very soon, in 'existence' or in what he calls *'pour-soi'*, 'being for himself'" (pg. 122)
 - "he maintains that we, i.e., our consciousness, bring negation and destruction into this world" (pg. 122)
 - ◆ **one could just as well say to this that man 'constructs' (or, constitutes or makes-for-himself) 'nothingness' to appear as such for the purpose of affording himself meaning. How, otherwise, could one think of oneself as 'free' without also thinking of the 'possibility' which must surround and support 'choice' in order to conceive of oneself as someone who can freely-choose? Can one speak 'freedom' without 'possibility', and if there's no 'possibility' then what is 'choice'. If no 'choice', what then of 'freedom'? So, what do we mean by 'possibility' and 'choice'? What really is 'possible'? How can one discover and therefore know what's possible? And, from what are we able to 'choose'?*
 - "man has a specific prerogative among other beings which are merely there. **'Being there' or 'being-in-itself' is a general mode of being. It just is what it is, and therefore merely positive, and 'nothingness' cannot have its roots in it. Man alone is 'for himself'**. 'To be conscious' means here 'to be present to oneself and to the world'... For although man is essentially 'nothing', he is at the same time 'everything', the creator of the Universe and of himself..." (pg. 123)
 - "we are by no means merely 'consciousness', merely *pour-soi*. Our actual experiences, e.g., pleasure and pain, are *en-soi*; they are just what they are. But, argues Sartre, as soon as we reflect on them, as we make them the object of conscious interpretation, we are destroying their character and reducing them to nothing" (pg. 123)
 - ◆ "we strive to become again what we were before, namely *en-soi*, and to achieve a synthesis, in the true Hegelian manner, of *pour-soi* and *en-soi*. This unity of 'being-for-himself' and 'being-in-himself' can only be achieved by God, but not by man, because in man the *pour-soi* transcends and negates the *en-soi*. Man is therefore a *passion inutile*, condemned to failure" (pg. 123)
 - "he is a being in a situation which is biological, economic, political and cultural, and therefore dependent on it, and nevertheless 'choosing himself in a situation' and therewith the situation itself. **By choosing himself man becomes what he himself makes of himself, i.e., his own project, and in so doing he legislates for the whole of mankind**. This represents the positive aspect of his liberty; its negative aspect realizes itself in acts of negation" (pg. 124) **i.e., though man does not choose his initial situation (that is, his coming forth to be in the world), he does proceedingly choose how he is to face and in turn involve himself with the situation for which he precedingly found himself to be, therein creating a new situation which is more for-himself.*
 - ◆ "thus Sartre arrives at his thesis that consciousness is a degradation of being and that it is 'nothing'... Consciousness, it is claimed, has the power of 'reducing to nothing' or of 'nullifying'" (pg. 124)
 - ◆ "Sartre is right; there is always a negative attitude coupled with a positive one" (pg. 124)
 - ◇ "[Sartre] needs the ambiguity of this term, and indeed of most of his terms, in order to build up his system, which is in fact a philosophy of ambiguity" (pg. 124)
 - "human existence is here not only defined by its absurdity and ambiguity, but also by its negativity" (pg. 125)
 - "Brentano's and Husserl's thesis that consciousness does not exist in isolation, but that it is always consciousness (of) something, i.e., contains an 'intentional' element, is here misinterpreted in the sense that it is 'nothing'. On the other hand, the individual, human existence or consciousness, is taken as God or the Absolute. Therefore the paradoxical result is reached, that *Nothing is the Absolute*" (pg. 125)
 - "this consequence is fantastic. But there we are, and this is what is alive as well as dead in Sartre's philosophy" (pg. 125)
 - ◆ "Sartre's world is a world in which the affirmative is transformed into the negative, the normal into the abnormal, good faith into bad faith, and truth into falsehood. The abnormal now parades as the normal, and what is normal in our life appears as abnormal. Existence is freedom, but this freedom is nothing" (pg. 125)
 - ◇ **I disagree with this - it is not so much 'transposing' or 'transforming' the positive to-be a negative so much it is making the negative - which, as the author has previously admitted, is an inextricable part of any positive (cf. pg. 124) - to stand alongside the positive, reaching out to clasp that which is silent, surpassed, 'secondary' to draw forth to reside in the foreground and be on equal footing with its counterpart, so as to attain fuller understanding of man and his situation.*
 - ▶ "negation may predominate at certain times, but it always remains correlative to, and even dependent on, affirmation, and therefore it cannot be the primary fact of human nature" (pg. 127)
 - ◇ "this negativity... leads not only to an inversion, but to a perversion of the natural world of human relationships. The other is not the brother or friend, but the irreconcilable enemy of the individual" (pg. 125)
 - ▶ **The author, instead using the word 'enemy', could have said 'opposite', for which it is true that human opposites, as individuals in-themselves, cannot be reconciled to-be a unity (i.e., all-for-all; rather, at best, only a myself-for-all). It, in fact, is for this very reason that we can posit the notion of a 'self', whether or not such has some essentialness to it is another matter. But, for simple fact that individuals stand to a degree isolated from one another in their exclusive being - i.e., that I cannot be any other I so choose, vice-versa - there is categorically a 'self' for each Being which is, and where as such remains irreconcilable.*
 - ◇ "a war of all against all, not in the Hobbesian sense, but on a much more subtle and sophisticated level" (pg. 125-126)
 - ▶ "there is no recognition of the other as a person with inalienable rights; on the contrary, each looks at the other as an object, tries to transform him into an object, to re-ify and to alienate him. Therefore two basic types of human interrelationships are possible: sadism, which tries to make the other completely dependent on oneself, and masochism, in which one accepts the liberty of the other person as the basis of one's own liberty" (pg. 126)
 - "one could even allocate a place in the history of metaphysics to Sartre by saying he represents the *reductio ad absurdum* of nihilistic metaphysics" (pg. 127)
 - "it is quite true that liberty plays here a central role" (pg. 127)
 - "he desires freedom. Wonderful! But he wants too much. He wishes to be completely and absolutely free in all the spheres of his being, in his emotions and passions as well as in his will. He claims total and infinite liberty. Whereas in fact people are dominated by their emotions and passions, he tries to persuade us that we ourselves have chosen to be jealous and sad; that we have chosen our own being..." (pg. 127)
 - "but if we ask what he means by liberty, he answers 'a spontaneity which determined itself to be'. He mistakes natural, or rather naturalistic, spontaneity for moral liberty..." (pg. 127)
 - "Sartre is just the opposite of Jaspers, whose dominant attitude is that of detachment, non-commitment and openness for all forms of being" (pg.

- 129)
- "Sartre is the philosopher as well as the artist of commitment. The strength and weakness of his philosophy and of his art follow from this fact" (pg. 130)
 - "as a result, his philosophy is alive as an expression of the contemporary situation, but dead in so far as the writer commits himself to certain general propositions which are untenable" (pg. 130)
 - "he...commits himself too much to the Negative, Not-being and Nothingness" (pg. 132)
 - "his brilliant essay on *The Imaginary*...may illustrates this point. Following Husserl, he interprets imagination as 'imaging', i.e., as a specific type of intentional consciousness, in which an object is contemplated by way of quasi-observation. But in opposition to him, he again commits himself at once to negativity by saying that this sort of consciousness posits its objects as nothingness, namely either as absent or as having no existence at all" (pg. 132)
 - ◆ "[Sartre] maintains that reality is never beautiful, therefore beauty can only be found in the realm of the imaginary, the unreal, and of nothingness" (pg. 132)
 - ◇ "these propositions are evidently false, they contradict our experience of natural beauty" (pg. 132)
 - "uncertain of himself he overstresses his commitments. He goes too far in his negativity" (pg. 132)
 - "he is right in distinguishing logical negation and ontological not-being, and in maintaining that man brings *some* negativity into this world, but he is wrong in claiming that he is the source of *all* negativity. He is right in stressing the responsibility for others even in solitary decisions, but he is wrong in making men responsible for actions they did not do and for situations they did not bring about, and for overloading them with total responsibility. He condemns them to infinite liberty which they are unable to bear" (pg. 132-133)
 - Chapter 8 - The Mysterious Empiricist (pg. 134)
 - "Marcel is indeed one of the most original among the very few metaphysicians of our time" (pg. 134)
 - "**a mind is metaphysical**" - Marcel (pg. 135)
 - "Marcel is concerned with a transformation of empiricism which is at the same time a transformation of rationalism and of metaphysics. After centuries of rationalistic enlightenment, which tried to explain away what is mysterious in religion, in life and in the Universe, Marcel rediscovers that mysterious within our experience and even the fact that experience itself is a mystery" (pg. 136)
 - "[Marcel] is a mysterious empiricist..." (pg. 136)
 - "whereas the old rationalist metaphysics started with abstractions, e.g., Hegel with the concept of being, and attempted to reach the concrete in the course their deductions or their dialectical speculations, Marcel begins with an analysis of his own concrete experience" (pg. 136)
 - "from the beginning he attempts to give 'to existence that metaphysical priority of which idealism has deprived it'" (pg. 136-137)
 - "Marcel enter the sphere of subjectivity. His criticism is more personal than objective, and he is less concerned with the form than with the content of our knowledge. He rejects 'experience' as interpreted by the empiricists - i.e., the experience of sense-data and of daily life - not because it is blind, but because it seems to him impure and profoundly suspect, and because it sucks down the spirit without any hope of its liberation" (pg. 137)
 - "experience gains in depth, for there are different levels of awareness" (pg. 137-138)
 - ◆ "[experience] is no longer restricted to the 'positivist' sphere, to the visible or touchable; room is left for extra-sensory perception, and we are no longer allowed to say that something does not exist because we do not perceive it" (pg. 137)
 - ◆ "reflection has here not so much the function of illuminating our experience from outside, but of penetrating it from inside" (pg. 138)
 - "it is not difficult to concede that reflection manifests itself at different levels. Marcel, however, wants beside that to vitalize reflection, i.e., to transform it into a function of life, as if life, so to speak, were a reflective process" (pg. 139)
 - ◆ "the corresponding transformation of reason is no less profound. Reason is no longer abstract, formal, deductive and systematic, but concrete, material, intuitive, inductive and unsystematic. It becomes reflexion, and Marcel a reflective existentialist" (pg. 138)
 - ◆ "one has first to think, to will, to act, and to produce before one is able to reflect. Reflection can only reveal what was already there in experience, vision and imagination" (pg. 139)
 - ◇ "in so far as reflection is prospective, it is rather *research*" (pg. 139)
 - ▶ "philosophy therefore paradoxically becomes 'research' for the mysteries of existence" (pg. 139-140)
 - "the idea of incarnation dominates [Marcel's] thought. He experiences the mind as bound up with its body. He holds that the separation from the body destroys its vitality and its power of knowing reality. He conceives of the body as 'absolute mediator'..." (pg. 140)
 - "his problem...is the same which haunted all existentialists, i.e., to overcome the alienation of man" (pg. 142)
 - "[Marcel] feels very strongly that we are living in a broken world. An increasing socialization of life and growing powers of the state are invading the privacy of the person and destroying the brotherhood of men and the fertile soil in which creativeness, imagination and reflection can flourish. It is a world in which human being tend to become *fonctionnaires*, exercising a specific function in human society, reduced to statistical numbers, and are no longer free agents of their own right... 'Having' is here more important than 'being'. Everybody has employment, has possessions, and has certain functions to fulfill... 'Having' is a source of alienation. Objects which we possess, houses, books, factories, gardens, or ideas and opinions which we regard as our 'possessions', in a specific sense 'have' us. We are in danger of being imprisoned or devoured by them. People concentrating on having are in danger of becoming captive souls cut off from other persons and not responding to their 'presence'. They suffer a loss of being or an 'ontological deficiency'. They are, Marcel would say, 'absent'. They talk and talk what they will do for you, but in an hour of peril they are not there, not 'present', i.e., not at your disposal. This unavailability, invariably rooted in some sort of estrangement, leads on to denial and betrayal... This world, Marcel says, is the place of betrayal..." (pg. 142-143)
 - "all the negative terms may be brought down to a loss of participation in the life of others, in 'being'... **Possessed by 'having', men have lost being and suffer** from 'ontological deficiency'" (pg. 143-144)
 - ◆ "they are in search of being, they have an 'ontological sense' or they feel an 'ontological exigence'. **This urge is the basis of Marcel's ontology**. As an urge it is real, and points to a fact and a problem. People who have their substance and their center have a desire for being, i.e., for a fullness of life or for self-realization" (pg. 144)
 - ◇ "a problem, [Marcel] says, is something in front of me, obstructing my path, and therefore in this sense alien to me. I can analyze and tackle it in a detached manner, for it is outside myself. A mystery, however, is something within me, in which I myself am engaged, and which consequently cannot be set in front of me in its entirety. I am somehow engulfed in it. Therefore, **if I can make a transition from a problem to a mystery I have overcome the alienation**. This happens if I go on to 'being'..." (pg. 144)
 - ▶ **cf. my comments in S. Cooper, Playing and Becoming in Psychoanalysis - "it is not only that we unveil a hidden meaning but that we construct a new, absent meaning, or a new kind of meaning created in analysis" (pg. 24). This is exactly what re-engaging our own subjective product ought to do (i.e., "am I right for thinking this way?", "how else might I understand what's going on?", etc.). The goal is to question our project to (dis)cover in-itself what might be "sloppy" (or, mis-contrived) and, therefore, subject to misunderstanding. Furthermore, a positive consequence of*

such questioning is also the silent acknowledgement of our Being as something in question.

- ◇ "the fact that there is being, that all the enormous varieties of creatures exist, and not 'nothing' instead, is a mystery beyond our understanding" (pg. 145)
- "in the end, existence is identified with participation, and *esse* with *co-esse*" (pg. 146)
 - "consequently the lonely isolated individual which formed the basis and starting-point of modern philosophy is replaced by a person standing in vital relations with others, and the *I think by we are*" (pg. 146)
 - ◆ "my experience arises in communication with that of other persons" (pg. 146)
 - ◆ "one only knows that one exists, if one rediscovers oneself in others" - Goethe (pg. 146-147)
 - ◆ "the transition from the individual to a being-within-the-world (Heidegger), standing in communication with others (Jaspers), or in the I-Thou-relation (Ferdinand Ebner, Martin Buber), or to a person inserted in the collective and in the Universe (Mounier), is by no means particular to Marcel" (pg. 147)
 - "to be faithful is here [for Marcel] identical with being true to oneself, true to others and true to God. To be true to God means to have faith... Faith leads to hope, and hope is the stuff of which our souls are woven. Hope liberates us from the shackles of matter, space and time... Thus a philosophy of hope replaces a philosophy of despair and anxiety" (pg. 148)
- Chapter 9 - The Mythical Anarchist (pg. 154)
 - "[Berdyae] saw the life of man and the world torn by contradictions" (pg. 156)
 - "he is a representative of a group of mystical anarchists..." (pg. 157)
 - "from Ivan Karamazov's dictum '**I accept God, but I do not accept his world**', they derived their slogan 'non-acceptance of the world', and combined it with a demand for unconditional and uncompromising freedom of the spirit from all external conditions" (pg. 157)
 - "precisely this is Berdyae's program and the key to his metaphysical position" (pg. 157)
 - "[his] philosophy is an inverted Marxism. It rejects matter and materialism as reactionary; but it does not therefore go back to Hegel's 'mind' and its dialectical movement. Hegel was the reactionary of the Mind, Berdyae is the revolutionary of the Spirit. This Spirit remains transcendent, revealing itself in isolated flashes to the individual" (pg. 159)
 - "Berdyae is the *jumping philosopher*, or rather the master-springer who jumps to the end of all things" (pg. 160-161)
- Chapter 10 - Alienation and Beyond (pg. 165)
 - "there is not *one* philosophy called existentialism, but several philosophies with profound differences" (pg. 165)
 - "there is not set of principles common to them all... Children of one and the same age, they are faced with the same challenge to which they have to respond, and are involved in the same predicament. Though their answers are not identical, they move in parallel directions and are, even if opposed to each other, internally related. In other words, the term '**existentialism**' points to a certain state of mind, to a specific approach or attitude, to a spiritual movement which is of significance in present circumstances and to a specific mode of thought, in any case to something which is alive" (pg. 165)
 - "[existentialists] express something of that which many feel without being able to formulate it. True, it is the feeling of a minority, but of a minority that counts, because it belongs to the intellectual elite" (pg. 166)
 - ◆ "existentialism is not the philosophy of a class, and the problems which it discusses transcend the boundaries of a specific group" (pg. 166)
 - "the philosophies of existence are philosophies of liberation rather than philosophies of freedom. They attempt to liberate man from the domination of external forces, of society, of the state, and of dictatorial power. They want to set man's authentic self free from the shackles of the unauthentic self" (pg. 167)
 - "**existentialism is in all its forms a philosophy of crisis**. It expresses the crisis of man openly and directly... For this reason, the fact of estrangement in its enormous complexity and many-sidedness became central with them. To-day it pervades the relations of persons as well as of groups, of classes and races rather than of nations and religious sects" (pg. 167)
 - "Hegel's idealistic and Marx's materialistic alienation have led to institutional alienation. Human institutions - the state, the government, the civil service, the party, the factory - have become impersonal and anonymous powers of enormous strength which the individual tries in vain to master. Thence arises the growing sense of frustration, anxiety and despair, which pervades the Western hemisphere" (pg. 168)
 - "alienation ends in absurdity, because under its domination the acts of the individual and groups become uncoordinated" (pg. 168)
 - "the trouble is, that we fail to see how absurd we ourselves and some of our actions are becoming" (pg. 169)
 - "[existentialism's] first function is to bring about a revaluation of problems and to liberate us from certain traditional problems... The existentialist maintain that the philosophers of the past overlooked the most pressing problems of man and of human existence... What alone matters are problems that are lived, directly experienced, suffered and intimately connected with our being; problems in which we are engaged, which form part of ourselves, which we cannot escape" (pg. 169)
 - "all the existentialists stressed the fact of alienation" (pg. 172)
 - "the problem of estrangement is, as we saw, multidimensional" (pg. 172)
 - "there is a limit to our understanding of other persons. In their inner life they all remain, to a certain degree, foreign to us" (pg. 172)
 - "the existentialist philosophers fail because they are unable to find a basis for logic and to give a satisfactory account of science. In so far as they oppose science, reject the objectivity of scientific truth in the name of an alleged existential truth, they are not to be taken seriously" (pg. 176)
 - *I would strongly disagree with this appraisal and conclusion
 - "so far the existentialists have failed to provide a new basis for ethics and for a theory of value" (pg. 176)
 - "if everyone chooses himself as the creator of his own values and rejects all objective values, this absolute freedom seems open to arbitrariness even if qualified by the desire to see others free" (pg. 176)
 - "the problems of existentialism are alive in so far as they are, in a narrower sense, expressive of the present crisis of man and, in a broader sense, of the enduring human condition. They are alive first and foremost as metaphysical problems" (pg. 178)
 - "**what we need is not Philosophies of Existence, but Existential Philosophers**" (pg. 180)
 - Chapter 11 - Whither? (pg. 181)
 - "all of them possess traits characteristic of a leader" (pg. 181)
 - "**Sartre's influence is enormous, but devastating**" (pg. 183)
 - "existentialism becomes prevalently, though not exclusively, the philosophy of *Man against himself*" (pg. 184-185)
 - Chapter 12 - Respondeo, Ergo Sum (pg. 190)
 - See text
 - Appendices
 - Theologia Diaboli (pg. 205)
 - See text
 - Will-O'-The-Wisp? (pg. 215)
 - See text
 - From Existence to Essence (pg. 217)

- See text

d. Further Readings:

- Existentialist Philosophies, by E. Mounier <https://dn790007.ca.archive.org/0/items/existentialistph009371mbp/existentialistph009371mbp.pdf>
- History, Man, and Reason: A Study in Nineteenth-Century Thought, by M. Mandelbaum https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/1/oa_monograph/book/67900
- Principles and Persons: An Ethical Interpretation of Existentialism, by F. Olafson https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/1/oa_monograph/book/67853
- Phenomenology and Existentialism, (ed.) E. Lee & M. Mandelbaum https://muse.jhu.edu/pub/1/oa_edited_volume/book/72318
- Dream and Reality, by N. Berdyaev https://ia903108.us.archive.org/5/items/dreamandreality/Dream%20and%20Reality_text.pdf
- (Article) The Analysis of Experience, by F. H. Heinemann <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2180812>
- (Article) Paris Alive: The Republic of Silence, by J. Sartre <https://cdn.theatlantic.com/media/archives/1944/12/174-6/132330930.pdf>