The National Philosophy Test

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We have been treated (if that’s the word) to the National Citizenship Test, the National Safe Driving Test, the National Medical Test, the National Income Tax Test, and the National Trivia Test (which, I take it, was a combination of the others). This collective lust for multiple choosing must have its logical upshot: the National Testing Test. But, before we get there, we must first celebrate our way through a National Philosophy Test.

Yes, it’s inevitable. The groves of sapience have had philosophy to themselves far too long. We’ll let the giant TV networks break the academic philosophy trust, and introduce some competition.

Even CBS will admit that philosophy is too complicated a subject to be comprehended in an hour of multiple-choice and true/false questions. So, we’ll have to break the subject down into several convenient pigeonholes, each to have an hour’s TV time:

1. Pre-Socratic Naturalism, or Ain’t That a Purty Sunset?
2. Platonism, or What is Ashtrayness?
3. Aristotelianism, or What’s an Ashtray?
4. Cartesianism, or What’s the Cube Root of Soul Force?
5. Kantianism, or Life With Gemütlichkeit
6. Hegelianism, or It’s a Bird—It’s a Plane—It’s Überweltgeist!
7. Logical Positivism, or Cheer up: The Worst is Yet to Come!
8. Existentialism, or So What?

That follows is a modest sneak preview of a typical National Philosophy Test. Acting in true academic tradition, we’ll take the last category first: Existentialism. The following list contains nine quotations. Five are authentic existentialist pronouncements by five prominent existentialist philosophers. Four of the quotations are purposely contrived nonsense. Your job is to distinguish between the authentic and the bogus. Score yourself as follows:

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8. Existentialism, or So What?
1 right: you're lucky.
2 right: you're well-read.
3 right: maybe you peeked at the answers?
4 or more right: you need medical attention!

You will find the answers on page 61 of this issue.

1

Only in it is the self for the self in reciprocal creation. In historical decision the self has, through binding itself to communication, suspended its selfhood as isolated being-I, in order to grasp selfhood in communication.

2

A freedom which wills itself freedom is in fact a being-which-is-not-what-it-is and which-is-what-it-is-not, and which chooses as the ideal of being, being-what-it-is not and not-being-what-it-is.

3

Descartes’s doubting freed him for restricted pursuit; had he chosen to assume the truth of the apparent, would his conclusions have been different? More important, what would have been the methodological differences in his being, in his communication, in his freedom? History, of course, emerged from before him as Kant’s Ding an sich became the context within which Blaupunkt (q.v.) expounded his brilliant thesis of Existenz, and forever settled the problem of substance/form.

4

How can one help seeing, after all, that a fidelity to another of which I myself was the principle, the root, and the center would, by the clandestine substitution that it conceals, once more establish a lie at the heart of the existence which it informs?

5

Existenzheilung distinctively modifies absoluteness (Unbedingtheit). Objectively, nothing new can exist as substance, just as nothing substantial can, according to our existential reality, remain permanently tied to causal laws, but must, soon or late, submit to individual consciousness.

6

Empirical psychoanalysis seeks the construction of a synthetic libido-ontology. Only through such reconstitution can the symbiology as a factor of psychic evolution be ascertained with any certainty.

7

So: the contemporary can, despite that, be the noncontemporary; the real contemporary is so not in virtue of immediate contemporary, therefore likewise the noncontemporary (in the immediate sense) can be the contemporary through the other consideration by which the contemporaneity becomes the real contempo-

WORD WAYS

rarily. But then the later m

8

Existence, in

9

The proposition

What is the reverse-alpha

So far as we

Can you top it?

Some words

Can you top it?

Have you ever

So far as we

Can you top it?
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which-is-not-what-it-is and of being, being-what-it-is-

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the later may be the real contemporary.

Existence, in and of itself, transfers the individual Being from other-determina-
tion to inner, nay, self-determination by the metaphysical psyche-union path I

The proposition “man exists” means: man is that being whose Being is distin-
guished by the open-standing standing-in in the unconcealedness of Being, from
Being, in Being ... All consciousness presupposes ecstatically understood exist-
ence as the essentia of man—essentia meaning that as which man is present insofar
as he is man. But consciousness does not itself create the openness of beings, nor
is it consciousness that makes it possible for man to stand open for beings, Whither
and whence and in what free dimension could the intentionality of consciousness
move if instancy were not the essence of man in the first instance?

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BACKWARD VOWELS
What is the shortest English word in which the 5 vowels (A, E, I, O, U) occur in
reverse-alphabetical order?

So far as we have been able to determine, that word is SUOIDEA, the name of
the superfamily of pigs and peccaries. Now, if we could only prefix a Y to that
word!

** * *

AN ACCENT ON ACCENTS
Some words are properly written with accents, grave or acute.

So far as we have been able to determine, the world champion for using accents
is the French word HETEROGENEIT$, adorned with no less than five of them.
Can you top it?

** * *

THE MEDICAL TYPE
Have you ever wondered about the longest word that can be typed using only those
keys on the top row of a standard typewriter keyboard?

It seems that there are two longest such words, both of them 12-letter medical
terms: PITUITOTROPE (a person with a constitution strongly influenced by his
pituitary gland) and UROPYURETER (an infected ureter).

Can you top these champions?

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