

(1) The increasing dominance of technological alienation; which may be defined as that stage of technological achievement at which technology dominates man instead of man dominating it. An example of such development may be seen in the progression from man-made tools to man-made tools that use machines, to humanly-programmed machines that make tools, to machines that create other machines.

(2) The increasing loss of individuality, through alienation from the increasingly complex structure of society. As one philosopher points out:

Human institutions -- the stage, 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.

(3) The sense of personal alienation from the physical world, from other men, from oneself, and most of all, from God.

(4) The feeling that all these forms of alienation have caused a general loss of meaning in life. "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

(5) The feeling that alienation coupled with meaninglessness ends in absurdity. This does not necessarily mean that the universe is absurd, but that man, who projects his absurdity into the world, is absurd. Many products of contemporary art and literature are undoubtedly absurd, and in that regard they are a true mirror of our time. "Absurdity of absurdities, all is absurd" seems to be the motto of the contemporary world.

(6) The failure of logical positivism and other current philosophies to come to grips with reality, with concrete experience, and with the most pressing problems of man and of human existence.

The three great existentialist classics are Soren Kierkegaard's *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Martin Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit (Being and Time)*, and Jean-Paul Sartre's *L'etre et le neant (Being and Nothingness)*.

Although the European philosopher F. H. Heineman, in his book *New Paths in Philosophy* (1929) first used the term "Existenzphilosophie" (philosophy of existence), it is Soren Kierkegaard who is generally regarded as the spiritual father of existentialism.

### Soren Kierkegaard

Morton White, in *The Age of Analysis*, states:

The Dane Soren Kierkegaard is probably the most important figure in the history of existentialism, to which he contributed at least three things. First of all his interest in feelings like boredom, dread, and anxiety, which he attempted to analyze psychologically; secondly, his Christian faith and his anti-clericalism; thirdly, and most important from our point of view, his ideas on existence.