Abstract: In this paper I am going to discuss what is intersubjectivity according to Jaspers and Marcel. Our method will be analytical, philosophical, and experiential. In this paper I am going to find out the relationship between humans and society which Jaspers and Marcel have highlighted. However, this paper will also be related to modern philosophers. The paper will deal completely with existentialism. Existentialism like classical philosophy is a philosophy of being. But unlike classical philosophy it is not an attempt to rationalize Being. Being can be experienced in a personal venture to which philosophy is the call. Man is given a world whose pretensions must be broken, a world to be both accepted and refused. In this world man encounters situations and the weight of responsibility falls upon his personal decision. He confronts his empirical self and his historical existence in the actual world and becomes human by what he makes his own and what he repudiates and what he projects—although he hides in the different forms of inauthenticity. The objective and human world poses questions, and existential philosophy insists that a positive answer is false because the truth seems to reside in the ambiguity which is at the heart of man and of the world. In Jaspers and Marcel it is the ambiguity of the world which consists despair and evokes faith without any objective certainty that would remove the risk. In Jaspers philosophy we come across two modes or existence which he labels as existence an Existenz. One is at the mundane superficial level a mere existence when one responds to concrete situations and boundary situations of suffering, struggle, guilt and death by way of evasion. One becomes truly Existenz when one encounters these situations with courage and perseverance. The problem or communication is perennial in the philosophy or Jaspers because it is rooted in his own past life and stems from his personal experience. Jaspers shares the view of Heidegger and Sartre that the existences are self-evident facts.

Keywords: Existenz, Intersubjectivity, Being, Communication, Boundary situations.

The philosophy of existentialism like classical philosophy is a philosophy of being. But unlike classical philosophy it is not an attempt to rationalize Being. Being can be experienced in a personal venture to which philosophy is the call. Man is given a world whose pretensions must be broken, a world to be both accepted and refused. In this world man encounters situations and the weight of responsibility falls upon his personal decision. He confronts his empirical self and his historical existence in the actual world and becomes human by what he makes his own and what he repudiates and what he projects—although he hides in the different forms of inauthenticity. Intersubjectivity topic is of so much importance that it has been discussed by almost all existentialist thinkers in their philosophical writings.

Starting from Husserl, as he untiringly emphasized that “only a solidly grounded intersubjective framework could provide a reliable basis for the universal validation of propositions”. Thus it can be said that on the first level Husserl holds that intersubjective character of experience can’t be taken for granted.

Further in “Being and Time” Heidegger observes that the analysis of immediate life-context such as the work-world of the artisan reveals that others are first encountered in conjunction with work; more precisely, that simultaneously with the equipment handled in work others are encountered for whom the work is destined.

The divergence between Husserl’s and Heidegger’s account is not restricted to the dimension of everyday work situations; it persists when fellow beings are considered more for their own sake, that is, when co-being is explicitly studied.

In the book “Being and Nothingness” written by Jean Paul Sartre, his ideas regarding intersubjectivity comes forth in the shape that “conflict is the original meaning of being-for-others”.

Sartre’s attachment to epistemological dichotomies is also manifest in his treatment of coexistence as a relation of reciprocal negation and mutual exclusion. This relation, to be sure, is not simply synonymous with an external segregation of substances.

Sartre’s theory of coexistence was modified in subsequent writings, although the reliance on individual subjectivity and also on the active-passive and inside-outside dichotomies was never abandoned. As developed in critique of Dialectical Reason, his later position exhibits both significant innovations and a pervasive continuity of views.

Merleau-Ponty’s treatment of intersubjectivity in his book “Phenomenology of
Perception” appears both less comprehensive and more subtle and probing than Sartre’s account. In refusing to treat social aggregates as deliberate human designs, Merleau-Ponty takes a position against interpersonal manipulation and managerial planning.

Derrida observed that the notion of otherness as formulated by Levinas tends to have as a corollary with the assumption of a completely non-negative and therefore positive infinity-an assumption beset by the same quandaries. Derrida’s point here is not simply to delight in logical puzzles but rather to penetrate these puzzles and discover their detrimental effects on interpersonal encounter. In his comments on difference, Derrida refers to Heideggerian teachings and especially, to the notion of ontic-ontological difference expressing the oblique linkage between Being and Ontic phenomena.

In Jaspers philosophy we come across two modes or existence which he labels as existence an Existenz. One is at the mundane superficial level a mere existence when one responds to concrete situations and boundary situations of suffering, struggle, guilt and death by way of evasion. One becomes truly Existenz when one encounters these situations with courage and-perseverance. The problem or communication is perennial in the philosophy or Jaspers because it is rooted in his own past life and stems from his personal experience. Jaspers shares the view of Heidegger and Sartre that the others’ existence is a self-evident fact.

The idea of communication has a central place in the philosophy of Jaspers. In this respect where Kierkegaard’s philosophizing leaves off, Jaspers begins. For Jaspers, the “philosophical faith” as the boundless openness to communication (or the total-will-to-communicate) is “the decision to follow a human road”.

The objective and human world poses questions, and existential philosophy insists that a positive answer is false because the truth seems to reside in the ambiguity which is at the heart of man and of the world. In Jaspers and Marcel it is the ambiguity of the world which insists despair and evokes faith without any objective certainly that would remove the risk.

According to jaspers communication cannot be carried out with the multitude. It is possible with a few like-minded individuals who have concern for each other and who share a common interest.

There are different forms of communication for example there is a communicative bound between teacher and pupil, doctor and patient, buyer and seller, superior and subordinate. There is a healthy relation between husband and wife, father and son, two intimate friends etc.

Jaspers however lays stress on the point that this interaction should, not be taken for granted. It is only when one eagerly yearns for company, suffers the pangs of loneliness and solicits the presence of others that communication thrives.

Jaspers maintains that it is not fair to demand perfection or the other. One cannot curve the other according to one’s standard. One must be tolerant and amiable in one’s relations with the other. However the fact remains that a constant struggle goes on in communication.

In Marcel’s life work there are three paths. The way of music painting a realms where communion is fully achieved, the way of metaphysical meditation and phenomenological analysis and the way of dramatic presentation acting in concrete characters and situations.

Modern philosophy from Descartes carried out by nineteenth century idealists had made problematic the unity of mind and body. Common to all forms of modern idealism is the indubitable reality of thought, consciousness or mind. Sensation, according to this view, is the raw material that is arranged into clear thought patterns that interpret the world.

Marcel felt that at the root of all idealist thought was the basic error of dissociating mind and body and thus divorcing the mind from the world to which the self belongs.

At the outset Marcel declared that it is sensation that is indubitable not thought as was wrongly supposed by Descartes. Thus it is one’s body that is indubitably existent. One’s body is centre of one’s universe. One’s awareness and affirmation of one’s body precedes all one’s awareness and affirmation of existence it is here that Marcel breaks with the subject object mode of affirming existence. Existence is not an object of thought or consciousness of the thinking self. It is beyond verification or demonstration by rational argument. Existence like sensation and body is indubitable.

It may be pointed out that Marcel broke away from idealism through his notion of ‘participation’ participation is the communication between beings. Marcel, during the First World War worked for the French Red Cross dealing with the “missing” and their relatives anxious for knowledge of them. Gradually the “missing” ceased to be mere names, ranks and serial numbers and became real beings to which he responded with interest and concern.

The relation between persons as opposed to that between things is termed as intersubjectivity our relation to each other is external but in love we transcend the distinction between
external and internal. Such love is the fulfillment or inter-subjectivity.

The other person, who offers himself to one and is ready by all means to help, is a presence. This is availability or disposability on his part.

Closely linked to it is the concept or fidelity. This implies one’s faithfulness to the other, but it should not be taken in any static sense. Personal relations are an opportunity for mutual creation and destruction we participate in each other and make each other.

References


