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Romy Miron

Transcendence and Dissatisfaction in Jaspers' Idea of the Self

Abstract

This paper deals with the idea of the search for self, mainly in the thinking of Karl Jaspers. The discussion will focus on the very nature of this search and the power that motivates it. For this purpose, it will employ a phenomenological viewpoint that will follow Jaspers' course from its first point of departure, in which the self appeared. As an object of observation, up to the point where the self acquired the status of the subject, i.e., appeared as a personal and existential issue. The positively achieved insights about the self and the frustrations involved in this search will be clarified systematically. The author argues that Jaspers' search was inspired by a constant experience of dissatisfaction, which directed the self to transcend every present understanding of the self and to look for an improved one. Lastly, the search for the self will appear as leading to another search, i.e. that for Being and transcendence.

A. Preface

The famous instruction of the Oracle at Delphi: 'Know thyself' presupposes, at least seemingly, two things: the existence of the self and the possibility of knowing it. Whether these two are correct or not, they have persistently challenged philosophers ever since. Applying to Karl Jaspers' thinking, this paper will put to the test the possibility of coming to terms with both the existence of the self – what one might name the reality of the self or the self as a substance¹ – and the knowing of the self. These two viewpoints about the self are considered here as mutually related. The self that is regarded as a substance and the self that is treated as an object of knowledge, are one and the same. Yet, the self as an object of knowledge is different from other objects of knowledge, due to its being that by which object can be known and present.² Furthermore, the self is a being that knows itself as knower, or can achieve 'self-knowledge':

¹ For an historical account of the philosophical question whether selves are substances? See: Sydney Shoemaker: *Self-Knowledge and Self-identity*. Ithaca and London 1963, 41-80.

² This understanding is scrutinized in: Seebohm's commentary of Husserl's *Phenomenology*, to whom the discussion will relate later. See: Thomas Seebohm: *The Other in Field of*

The present discussion will focus especially on one's knowledge of oneself, which is differentiated from general knowledge of the person that does not refer in particular to any individual. However, the fact that the search for 'self-knowledge' is tied with the search for the existence of the self indicates that such self-knowledge has an objective dimension and hence might be of value not only for the person who achieves it but also for other selves or even for the understanding of the human self as such.³ In fact, this discussion will strive to achieve an understanding of self-knowledge as such, except that this understanding cannot stand by itself but must refer to an individual. In any event, while one's self-knowledge can change and develop throughout one's life, the general understanding of it must show the persistence of the self as the existence or the reality of one and the same thing at different times.⁴ Finally, the self is but the joining of the individual features of self-knowledge together with the constant or objective dimension of one's existence.

The central thesis to be scrutinized below is Jaspers' conviction that there exists in human being something constant which can be called self and to which one can attribute the individual ability of achieving self-knowledge. Yet the fact that Jaspers persistently stressed the particular way in which one's self takes place, seemed problematic to many of his commentators because no epistemological account concerning the way one can achieve self-knowledge exists in his writings; an account which is needed especially whenever the issue under discussion is a particular one. Using the above terminology, one can deduce from the existing literature the following explanation: Jaspers thought he could avoid the epistemological problem, since he did not deal with the self as a knower but as a self-knower. Since the knowledge of the self, or of the self as an object, is different from any other kind of knowledge, the whole discourse remains exclusively rooted in particularity, and hence cannot be observed by an epistemological viewpoint.⁵

Consciousness. Essay in the memory of Aron Gurwitsch. Lester K. Born (Ed.). Washington D.C., 1984. 292 ff.

³ To the problem of reality in Jaspers' thinking, see: Miron: 'Towards Reality: The development of the philosophical attitude to reality in Karl Jaspers' thought. In: Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology' (forthcoming).

⁴ For the objective aspect of the self from the perspective of problem of identity, see: Thomas Red: 'Essay on the intellectual Power of man. London 1941. 205 ff.; Butler: 'Of Personal Identity. In: The works of Bishop Butler. J.H. Bernhard (ed.). London 1900. 281 (quoted from Shoemaker 8, note 7)

⁵ The particular language characteristic to Jaspers has often appeared as an explanation for his marginality in the philosophical discourse and even for the failure to understand his ideas. On Jaspers' marginality. See: Charles W. Morris: 'Jaspers in English: A Failure in Communication. In: Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 37 (1977). 537-548.; Fritz-Joachim von Rueden: 'Beyond Existentialism. London 1961. 204.; Fritz Heinemann: 'Existenzphiloso-

Nevertheless, this paper will suggest a different view of Jaspers' idea of the self. In my opinion, Jaspers did not simply stay away from epistemological reasoning, but in the first place was concerned with creating an appropriate context in which the self could be safe, especially from damaging and narrow perspectives of it. Accordingly, we find in the vast corpus of his writings a continuous effort to enlarge the sphere in which the self takes place, as well as a growing awareness of that process itself. In each of the different contexts, different meanings were bestowed upon the existence of the self and upon its self-knowledge. The dynamic of enlarging the sphere within which the self is elucidated will be regarded also through the perspective of the classical problem of transcendence, i.e.: the possibility of breaking out of immanence and constituting a conscious relation to what lies beyond it. Though the attempt to transcend immanence frequently evoked epistemological problems, these did not stand at the core of Jaspers' metaphysical search because already before he was satisfied with the context within which the self could be elucidated, his thinking reached a crisis that finally led to putting aside, though not relinquishing, the effort to achieve an encompassing understanding of the self. From this perspective one can contend that Jaspers' search for the self remained unaccomplished, or even failed. Nonetheless, that cannot diminish the value of the search after the self that is suggested in his writings, which consists of the specific ethos of seeking perfection and the relatively rare integrity that admitted its own deficiencies and finally its impasse.

The present discussion will focus, then, on the very nature of the search for the self and the power that motivates it. For this purpose, it will follow Jaspers' course from its radical point of departure, in which the self appeared as an object of observation, up to the point where the self acquired the status of a subject, i.e. appeared as a personal and existential issue. The positively achieved insights about the self and the involved frustrations will be clarified systematically. I shall argue that Jaspers' search – whose stages marked by using different terms to denote the self, i.e. psyche, subjectivity, Existenz – was inspired by a constant experience of dissatisfaction. This experience was expressed in Jaspers' thinking as revealing a profound truth about one's self-understanding as an inexhaustible, and thus never ending, search. The dynamic of dissatisfaction, which actually covers Jaspers' thinking as a whole, reveals a resemblance to Hegel's way of philosophizing in *Phenomenology of spirit*. Like Hegel, Jaspers experienced dissatisfaction as evidence of the inadequacy of the conception out of which it was

phic – Ibsendig oder tot? Stuttgart, 1951. 65, 71. On Jaspers' particular way of reasoning, see: Kurt Hoffmann: 'The Basic Concept of Jaspers' Philosophy. In: Paul Arthur Schlapp (Ed.): 'The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers. New York 1957. 95-113, 95 ff.

evoked, but at the same time he found in it a clue to an improved conception that could lead to such. That is to say, that every stage in the development of their ideas was negated by the following stage, within which it was preserved in a different form. These dialectics of approval and negation will be regarded also via the perspective of the concepts of immanence and transcendence. This occurs in two ways: the negated understanding of the self is either what is identified with the immanent aspect of its being (one's body and consciousness), whereby according to the approved understanding, the being of the self cannot be embodied in any physical aspect and therefore is regarded as transcendent to one's immanent being. Alternatively, the negated understanding is that which was identified as belonging to the former stage in the development of Jaspers' idea of the self, hence this understanding is left behind in virtue of the later and truer one. Here immanent is the current understanding of the self, whereas transcendent is the understanding that has already been negated or the understanding which has not yet come into view in the process of explanation. While in the first way the concepts of immanence and transcendence referred to aspects of the being of the self, in the second they refer to the process in which the idea of self reveals itself and becomes known to its observer. One way or another, what is called above dissatisfaction will be revealed as a consistent element that did not let Jaspers rest upon the concept of self achieved at each stage and that motivated him again and again to look for a better viewpoint that would uncover the subject being in its fullness and uniqueness as a being that consistently seeks out better self-understanding. The discussion will seek, then, to illuminate the inspirational function of the experience of dissatisfaction in generating deep modifications in Jaspers' understanding of the self.⁶

B. *The self of the mentally ill person*

Jaspers' first attempt to consolidate a viewpoint that could facilitate accessibility to the self appeared in his first book *General Psychopathology* (1913). In the following words, he indicated his interest in what he then called „Psyche“:⁷

⁶ Such understanding of Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* is well implemented in Laurer's interpretation. Yet in his interpretation, the dissatisfaction appears mainly as an epistemological mechanism, by which an improved knowledge about the reality of objects can be achieved. Quenaine: A Reading in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit*. New York 1976, 4. For a different and more harmonizing interpretation to Hegel's, see: Jon Stewart: The unity of Hegel's „Phenomenology of Spirit“, a systematical interpretation. Evanston, Illinois 2000, 1-3.

⁷ This approach first appeared in Jaspers' early articles (1910-1913). The book *General Psychopathology* that appeared in nine editions and two versions: the first (1913) was narrow

„We want to feel, understand, and think what really happens in human beings' psyche. The general desire [Dwang] for reality, means in psychopathology the desire for real psychic life which we then want to recognize in contexts only partly accessible to sensibly discernible as objects are in natural sciences [...] without the ability and the desire to observe the psychic and to set it before our eyes in its fullness it is impossible to occupy oneself with psychopathology.“⁸ (AP1, 12)⁹

Reading these words, one cannot miss Jaspers' conviction that such a thing as „psyche“ really exists. Likewise, his usage of neutral terms as „Reality“, „Human being“, „Psychic life“, clearly expressed the priority he bestowed upon the humanness of the mentally ill person despite his abnormal symptoms. This approach fits Jaspers' description of the work of the psychiatrist as one who experiences personal interaction with his patient and directs his attention to the „human being in his singularity and completeness“ (AP1, 1). Accordingly, Jaspers criticized the scientific approach of the psychopathologist who regards such (henceforth AP1) and the enlarged version that appeared as the fourth (1942) after his main philosophical works were published (henceforth AP4). The basic insights concerning the self, which appeared in the first edition, found their explicit continuation and exploration within the enlarged version. Yes, in addition to the original sections, new ones, which were permeated by his mature philosophical ideas, were added to the enlarged version.

⁸ Accordingly, Jaspers demanded a close examination of the concrete situation by which the sick person is surrounded (for instance, his personal abilities, social support etc.). Jaspers was clearly influenced at the present point by Dilthey's idea of Understanding. See: Dilthey: *Der Aufbau der geschichtlichen Welt in den Geisteswissenschaften*. Leipzig 1927; Dilthey: *The Understanding of the Other Person and their expressions of life*. In: *Descriptive psychology and historical understanding*. R.M. Zaner and K.L. Heiger (Trans.). The Hague 1977 (1927). 127-147; Chris Walker: Karl Jaspers and Edmund Husserl III. Jaspers as a Kantian Phenomenologist. In: *Philosophy, Psychiatry and Psychology* 2/1 (1995). 65-82; Chris Walker: Karl Jaspers and Edmund Husserl IV. *Phenomenology as Empathic Understanding*. In: *Philosophy, Psychiatry and Psychology* 2/3 (1995) 247-266; Fritz K. Ringer: *The Decline of The German Mandarins: The German Academic Community 1890-1933*. Cambridge & Massachusets 1969. 351 f.; Herbert Schnädelbach: *Philosophy in Germany 1831-1933*. Cambridge 1984, 54 f.

⁹ The following works of Jaspers are referred to during the paper (abbreviations):
 – Die Phänomenologische Forschungsrichtung in der Psychopathologie. In: *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Neurologie und Psychiatrie* 9 (1912), 391-408 (Phen).
 – *Allgemeine Psychopathologie*. Ein Leitfaden für Studierende, Ärzte und Psychologen. Berlin 1913. (AP1); Berlin-Heidelberg 1942 (1965) (AP4).
 – *Die Geistige Situation der Zeit*. Berlin-Leipzig 1931 (GSZ).
 – *Philosophie* (1-3). Heidelberg 1994 (1932). „Philosophische Weltorientierung“ (Ph1); „Existenzherleitung“ (Ph2); „Metaphysik“ (Ph3).
 – *Philosophie und Welt*. Reden und Aufsätze. München 1958 (PuW).
 – *Psychologie der Weltanschauungen*. Heidelberg 1985 (1919) (PW).
 – *Redenschraft und Ausblick*. Reden und Aufsätze. Tübingen 1958 (RuA).
 – *Vermut und Widervermut in Unserer Zeit*. Drei Gastvorlesungen. München 1950. (VuW)
 – *Von der Wahrheit*. München 1991 (1947) (VdW).

symptoms as a mirror of the reasons for the disease and therefore concentrated on „identifying and recognizing, characterizing and analyzing not the single person but the General“ (AP1, 1).

Yet, the awareness that natural sciences are limited in approaching the mentally ill person does not mean that Jaspers dismissed the scientific approach as such.¹⁰ Nevertheless, for him the guide to the understanding of mental diseases should be the fact that the physical symptoms and the mental or emotional ones, appear together, and there is no way to separate between the two; especially not by using the scientific method of psychopathology which, according to him, could not address the mysterious continuity between the physical and the mental (AP1, 9). By defining the craft of the psychiatrist as „expertise“ (*Kennerschaft*) and „vocation“ (*Beruf*) (AP1, 1), Jaspers intended to add to psychopathology a personal and unique dimension that might be capable of meeting the individual „singularity“ (*Einzelheit*) of the mentally ill person (Phen. 408).¹¹ Unlike the physical symptoms, this aspect cannot be exhausted by any intelligible and general concept (AP1, 1 f.).¹² Furthermore, Jaspers admitted no unitary concept of illness (AP1, 3; AP4, 651 f.), so even from the physical aspect one cannot get a complete grip on the mentally ill person.¹³

One cannot separate between Jaspers' understanding of the self in this context and his criticism of the scientific approach, which at that time was deeply influenced by positivism.¹⁴ Yet, the critical observation itself did not serve him

¹⁰ Jaspers himself paid attention to the physical aspects of the disease, which he termed as ‚objektive psychopathologie‘, see: AP1, 94-106.

¹¹ Jaspers used the German term ‚Beruf‘ (vocation) to denote the profession of the psychiatrist. This point reveals the influence of Max Weber's ideas upon Jaspers' – an influence he always admitted. See: Weber: *Wissenschaft als Beruf* (1919). In: *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre*. Tübingen 1922. 524-555; Weber: *The Protestant Ethic and The Spirit of Capitalism*. New York 1958. 79-92.

¹² Jaspers distinguished between the ‚limitations‘ (*Beschränkungen*) within which the scientific approach operates and the ‚boundary‘ (*Grenze*) that depicts the irreducibility of the human being's individuality which one cannot overcome by any systematic approach. Jaspers' use of the idea of boundary in this context was elaborated later in his philosophical writings in which he presented two concepts of border: ‚contextual borders‘ (*gewaltige Grenzen*) and ‚principle borders‘ (*prinzipielle Grenzen*) (Ph1, 49). This distinction is parallel to Kant's concepts, which differed between ‚Grenze‘ and ‚Schränke‘. See: Kant: *Prolegomena to any future Metaphysics* (Beyrl Logan, ed.). London & New York 1966. 111. On the influence of Kant on Jaspers, see: Chms Walker: *Karl Jaspers as a Kantian Psychopathologist II. The concept of Form and Content in Jaspers' Psychopathology*. In: *History of Psychiatry* 4 (1993). 321-348. Chms Walker: *Karl Jaspers as a Kantian Psychopathologist III. The Concept of Form in Georg Simmel's Social Theory: a Comparison with Jaspers*. In: *History of Psychiatry* 5 (1994). 37-70; Walker: *Karl Jaspers and Edmund Husserl III*.

¹³ See especially the chapter ‚concepts of health and illness‘ (AP4, 651-661).

¹⁴ Jaspers entitled the positivistic approach in psychiatry as ‚epidemic‘ and the understanding of mental illness as brain disease he named ‚brain mythology‘ (AP1, 8). It seems that

as a base for achieving a positive understanding of the self. It appears that the absence of any affirmative contentions about the self, at the present stage of his thinking, was more deliberate than accidental. It is very likely that Jaspers refrained from posing anything of content about the self, for he was afraid that content as such would fall into generalizations that would fail to address the particularity of the subject being. To be more precise, Jaspers did not contend that subjectivity could not have any content that could give expression to it, as Sartre intended in his idea of a self ‚without speech‘ (*sans paroles*).¹⁵ Otherwise, he could not even have been able to point to the very uniqueness and particularity of the subject being. It transpires, then, that Jaspers not only rejected the bare attempt of achieving content about the self; he especially criticized the impersonally characteristic of the attempt to know objects of any kind, which he saw as lacking the crucial involvement without which subjectivity is dismissed. Therefore, being faithful to his primordial understanding of subjectivity, Jaspers himself avoided from saying anything positive about it, except for pointing again and again to its uniqueness and particularity – features which actually say nothing of content about the self.

In my opinion, the understanding according to which one's self is beyond any possible observation and rational access is merely the presupposition of the transcendence of the self, which refers to its very existing being. Though the term of transcendence did not appear in Jaspers' writing from this stage, he nevertheless employed a unique meaning of it. On the one hand, transcendence signifies here the specific meaning that Jaspers attributed to the self as an idea. It is reflected first and foremost in the association of the psyche with one's unique and idiosyncratic personality, which extends beyond the individual's physical features.¹⁶ This distinction can be elicited from Jaspers' statement that as the investigation of the physiological symptoms is progressing, the mental elements that are linked to it evade examination. Additionally, the inquiring into the mental symptoms finally reaches a certain point when one can no longer find any

his main criticism was directed at Griesinger and his followers, see: Wilhelm Griesinger: *Pathologie und Therapie der Psychischen Krankheiten*. Braunschweig 1786. See also Jaspers' criticism of psychoanalysis which is actually complementary to that of the scientific approach. VaW: 9-29; GSZ: 137 f.; *Rud. 260-271*; Kurt Koller: *Jaspers as Psychopathologist*. In: Paul Arthur Schilpp (Ed.): *The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers*, New York 1957. 437-466.

¹⁵ Sartre explored this concept of the self both in *The Transcendence of the Ego and in Being and Nothingness*. On Sartre's concept of the self, see: Hugh J. Silverman: *Sartre's Words on the Self*. In: Hugh J. Silverman, Frederick A. Elison (Eds.): *Jean-Paul Sartre: A contemporary approach to his Philosophy*. Pittsburgh 1980. 85-104; Thomas W. Busch. *The power of consciousness and the force of circumstances*. Indiana 1990. 1-17.

¹⁶ There is a resemblance between Jaspers' understanding of the self of the mentally ill person and the idea of the hidden self in K. G. Jung's writings. See: Jung: *Persönlichkeit und Übertragung*. Grundwerke 3. Zürich und Dusseldorf 1966.

accompanying physical aspect (AP1. 5).¹⁷ In other words, the transcendence of the Self appears as equal to the independence of the mental aspects of the mental illness from the physical ones, or as reflecting the inaccessibility of the mental aspects of it to the scientific approach. On the other hand, the discussed idea of transcendence refers to the very ontological entry of the self as a concrete being. Ostensibly, the ontological aspect of transcendence is in conflict with that of accessibility, i.e., how one can argue for the existence of self and at the same time for its inaccessibility? At the present stage of the explanation, it was still impossible to see how one can extricate himself from this contradiction. Yet it is clear that in Jaspers' reflection on the self, the inaccessibility of the self was associated with its transcendence, claiming that for the being of the self is transcendent (mainly to empirical observation), the inaccessibility revealed as the very definition of the self as an entity.

In any event, the ontological meaning of transcendence excludes the possibility of associating it with one's consciousness or self-consciousness – terms which were not mentioned in these writings at all. To be precise, consciousness as realm of rationality and especially of representation cannot bear witness to the self, for it is transcendent of any kind of content. Therefore Jaspers' distinction between one's subjectivity or psyche and one's physicality to which it is transcendent, did not agree with Husserl's split between the 'empirical I' and the 'transcendental I'.¹⁸ Seemingly, the meaning of 'transcendental', i.e., going beyond, could have fitted Jaspers' idea of the self in this context which was conceived as beyond one's physical and empiric manifestations. Yet, for Husserl the 'I' is transcendental because it reaches beyond itself and insofar as it is involved in cognition of contents.¹⁹ In other words, whereas Husserl linked between the self and the immanent consciousness as such – i.e. its intentional ability that opens for the 'I' the world of consciousness and thus constitutes it as transcendental – Jaspers strived to save the self from any encounter with contents produced by consciousness. To be precise, it is especially the function of generaliz-

¹⁷ This idea is acknowledged as a landmark in the process of integrating the phenomenological method into the field of psychiatry and psychopathology, see: Herbert Spiegelberg: *Phenomenology in Psychology and Psychiatry*, Evanston 1972, xxxiv–xxxv.

¹⁸ According to Husserl, both concepts of ego are constituted in consciousness (*Ideas Pertaining to a Pure Phenomenology and to a Phenomenological Philosophy*, Roycewicz and A. Schwert (Trans.) 1989, 109, 119 f.). For the discussion of these concepts, see for example: David Carr: *The Paradox of Subjectivity*, New York & Oxford 1999, 67–97.

¹⁹ Marbach's interpretation of Husserl's idea of 'transcendental I' stressed the function of it as an agent of contents and truth, see: Edward Marbach: *Das Problem des Ich in der Phänomenologie Husserls*, The Hague 1974, 44 ff. This view appeared also in a reading suggested by Sokolowski. For an ontological interpretation of Husserl's *Phenomenology* and particularly his understanding of subjectivity, see: Laner: *Phenomenology – its Genesis and its Prospect*, New York 1955, 81 ff.

ing characteristic to consciousness that motivated him to strive for separating the understanding of the self of the mentally ill person from firm contents, which due to his training were usually based on observation of abnormal physical symptoms. In Jaspers, then, that the dominance of Jaspers' criticism of the scientific approach, which was committed to achieving generalizations about mental diseases, in consolidating his stance regarding the mentally ill person that blocked his view not only from other features of consciousness than that of generalizing, but also from the very possibility of saying anything of content about the self.

Finally, from Jaspers' mostly implicit notes about the mentally ill person one can elicit two aspects of his/her being: a limited or partial one and an infinite one. The first is reflected in the narrow view of the science of Psychopathology that focuses mainly on symptoms whose source is physical, whereas the second is mainly an intuition according to which one's subjective being is an elusive and infinite entity which cannot be reached by the fixed tools suggested by science. Only the second can relate to the idea of the self. Paradoxically, the limited side of the being of the mentally ill person can find many words to express itself which are originated in the objective language of science, while the infinite one remains vague and speechless due to the common difficulty to express uniqueness by general words. One way or another, these sides were for Jaspers two sides of the same coin, for the limitation of what can be stated about the mentally ill person arises from the awareness of infinity of the person's being, and vice versa, it is exactly this awareness that cannot but allow us to restrict ourselves to the limited aspect of the single phenomenon which we observe. So the negative side of Jaspers' criticism of the science of Psychopathology meets its affirmative side, which he directed towards the mentally ill person as human being.

What is interesting about Jaspers' view in this context is that the unsatisfying part of his concept was not connected with the vagueness that characterized his concept of the psyche – for he conceived this feature as essential to it. Instead, the experience of dissatisfaction concerns the scientific approach, due to its focus on the physiological dimensions of mental illness; these appeared to him as concealing the emotional ones, in which a clue might be found to the self of the mentally ill person, i.e. the real key to the understanding of his illness. The fact that the experience of dissatisfaction referred to the scientific method and not to the self is understandable, for the formation of the self as transcendent blocked it from any experience, including that of dissatisfaction. It is precisely the void that was left from the closing of the self from any touch that could leave for Jaspers the space free for digging into the deficiency of the scientific method. One can add that the conditionality characteristic to science, which subjects it to alterations according to new findings or contemporary theories and methods, even

deepens the dissatisfaction from it, because of its incapability of meeting Jaspers' very idea of the self as independent of any immanent factors.²⁰ Lastly, the meaning of the transcendence of the self referred at the present stage to all that falls outside the limitations of the scientific understanding of the psychopathology.

Nevertheless, already in the unsatisfying part, one can find an indication of the next step, which Jaspers took in order to achieve a more explicit understanding of the self, i.e. the psychological perspective into the self, which from the outset assumed the individual differences between human beings. Jaspers the psychiatrist spoke of the need to employ in psychiatry a psychological approach. He stated that the fact that in certain cases psychopathology – which is basically addressed to normal people – cannot be implemented practically by psychiatrists, should serve as a goal for Psychopathology to explore its own psychology to complete the unique elements that are irrelevant to normal people (Ap1. 3 f.).²¹ Consequently, the distinction between normal phenomena and abnormal ones will always be at most presumable and thus remain vague. The gathering of the individual differences between mentally ill people and the lack of a unitary concept of illness compels us to carry out an „unlimited search“ for methods and new viewpoints (Ap1. 460) together with an empathic attitude that can be alert to the uniqueness in which the mental illness occurs to a single concrete personality.²² All these means will hopefully meet the same early urge to find a door to the infinite being of the person afflicted with a mental illness (Ap1. 2).

The indication of the next steps to be taken is even more far-reaching. Already in the first edition of *General Psychopathology*, long before he manifested his interest in philosophy, Jaspers referred to the need of philosophy, and what he denoted then as „thoughts of a realm of spirit“ (Ap1. 12), that might be of use for testing and criticizing the presuppositions of Psychopathology as well as for the exploration and designing of its methodological instruments themselves (Ap1. 6 f.). Despite the vagueness characteristic to the above statements of Jas-

²⁰ Jaspers' position can be viewed also via the historical context of the so called „methods controversy“. See: Walker: Karl Jaspers and Edmund Husserl IV.

²¹ Jaspers pointed out intentions that took this challenge, see: Ap1. 4, note no. 1.

²² Among the required qualifications, required from the psychiatrist, Jaspers counted the following: „empathy“ (Einfühlen), „participation“ (Mitteilhaben), „inner understanding“ (Finnverständnis) (Phen. 391). About empathy see: Herbert Spiegelberg: *Phenomenology in Psychology and Psychiatry*, Evanston 1972, 186; Walker: Karl Jaspers and Edmund Husserl III; Wiggins, O. P., M.A., Schwartz, M., Spitzer: *Phenomenological/Descriptive Psychiatry: The Methods of Edmund Husserl and Karl Jaspers*. In: Spitzer, Manfred, Uehlin, Friedrich, Schwartz, Michael, A., (Eds.): *Phenomenology, Language & Schizophrenia*. New York-Berlin 1992, 46-69, 56 f.

pers, they clearly indicated his striving for new perspective, wider and different from the scientific one, out of which it will be possible to view the human being as an infinite entity. Finally, both the emphasis on the singularity of the mentally ill person and the wish to anchor the curing of this illness in an a priori understanding of human beings as such, independent of any contemporary conventions of research and healing, led Jaspers outside the realm of psychopathology.

True, Jaspers' early insight as a psychiatrist, according to which there was a subjective existence that referred to human beings as such that cannot be exhausted by rational, lasted throughout all his writings. Nevertheless, after he quit the scientific discourse, he could no longer be satisfied with the absence of real knowledge about the self. Furthermore, while as a scientist and psychiatrist the problem which was at stake for Jaspers was how to achieve knowledge about the self? – knowledge that can be used for investigation and practical needs – from that point on the problem turned out to be how one can be able to achieve self-knowledge or self-understanding. In other words, the idea of the self is about to shift from the status of an object to that of a subject. Since the relations between immanence and transcendence changed entirely as a result of that shift, Jaspers' thinking needed to provide an account also about the aspect of self-consciousness. Nonetheless, his criticism of the scientific approach later revealed as including the very main motive characteristic to his philosophical concept of the self: exactly as the science of psychopathology cannot offer a complete understanding of the mentally ill person and hence of his illness, so philosophy is also restricted to our conceptual abilities and therefore cannot uncover the wholeness of one's particular being.

C. *The self of the normal person*

Jaspers' idea of the self reached its second stage of development in *Psychology of Worldviews* (henceforth: *Psychology*) as he achieved a psychological perspective. Though normality was regarded before as a suitable perspective for viewing the pathological phenomenon (Ap1. 3), within the present stage a conscious path to the self was established, called „Psychology of Worldviews“. Additionally, the term of subjectivity replaced that of psyche and the former insistence upon the inaccessibility of the self was substituted in *Psychology* by a more systematic viewpoint, which was directed to the explication of the particular being of the self.

The term of „Worldview“ (Weltanschauung), historically means in western culture the sum of knowledge, norms and values that one can be granted by his

culture, as well as by being a universal agent.²³ Yet, Jaspers tied this term to the subjective individual, without referring to the general and cultural dimensions, which are fundamentally reflected in it. He contended that knowledge (*Wissen*) of the world or even information about oneself, of which worldviews typically consist, do not signify what is important about them but rather the content regarding the different faces of subjectivity itself. This subjectivity appeared in this context as an experiencing being that can arrange its experiences via rational objectifications (Pw. 1). Jaspers focused especially on the explication of the experiences and analyzed the meaning bestowed upon it by the subject.

²⁴We do not look for the frequent neither the average [...] we seek the particular patterns even if these are entirely rare. Our field [...] is what we perceive in the historical and internal experience [...] even when it is once in a life time." (Pw. 14)²⁴

The prominent emphasis on the particularity of worldviews indicates that Jaspers conceived one's personal worldview as an ontological representation of one's self. The objectifications out of which the personal worldview is established did not occupy his interest, but specifically their function as "means for self-understanding" (Pw. iix) or as an instrument for self-reflection (Pw. 5). Not only he did not separate between the subjective experience and its objectification, he did not even deduce out of it epistemological consequences. That is to say, he was looking for what was meaningful in the experience of the subjectivity or what one might consider as meaningful in his own experience.

What remained from Jaspers' early idea of the self in the psychopathological context is then clear: the self is a particular being that cannot be reached by universal concepts and therefore cannot be generalized. In other words, the same urge "to feel [...] what really happens in human beings' psyche" (AP1. 12) of mentally ill people, achieved its continuation and an even more complete realization in *Psychology* by observing the particular dimensions of personal worldviews. Exactly as in the discussion of mental illness, Jaspers focused his interest on the person who experiences illness more than on his/her disease, so in *Psychology* his attention was aimed at the self reflected in his worldview more than at the worldview itself.

Nevertheless, the persistence of the interest in the subjective being was not a barrier to the introduction of changes into Jaspers' understanding of the self.

²³ The term "Welanschauung" first appeared in the context of Kant's writings, see: H.G. Meier: *Welanschauung. Studien zur Geschichte eines Begriffs*. Münster 1970; Paul Watzlawick: *Die erfundene Wirklichkeit*. München/Zürich 1981.

²⁴ It is important to note that Jaspers dealt also with the typical and the general in the worldviews as such (Pw. 4 f.), but this direction was relatively marginal compared with the discussion of their particular features.

One of the most remarkable modifications in Jaspers' understanding of the self refers to the component of transcendence, which was previously ascribed to it, but at the present stage it almost disappeared or at least went through a profound decline. This change might be regarded not only as a likely effect of the fact that the discussion of the subjective being ceased to be a deviation from the context in which it appeared, but especially as a consequence of abandoning the feature of inaccessibility concerning the self. Consequently, in *Psychology* not only did the self become central in Jaspers' discussion; via the perspective of one's worldview the self appeared as more perceptible. To be more precise, the self appeared as an immanent constituent that externalizes itself on one's own worldview. Hence, the former unbridgeable gap between the understanding of the self as a concrete being and its inaccessible transcendence was replaced with its opposite: an accordance between the self as a concrete being and its accessibility to an immanent understanding via the objectifications of one's personal experience.

Furthermore, there is a clear connection between the decline of self's transcendence and the appearance of a totally new characteristic of the self, i.e. consciousness. Consciousness as an immanent element can be seen as a completion that decline itself. In *Psychology* the self is merely the way one organizes his experience and consolidates out of it a self-understanding. Unlike the inability to have a real clue about the self-knowledge of the mentally ill person, in *Psychology* subjectivity was depicted as the activity of conferring meaning upon its own experience; activity which is mirrored in the very act of objectification itself. In other words, whereas as a psychiatrist Jaspers mainly referred to his own interest in the self, in *Psychology* in addition to that he analyzed the interest of human beings in self-understanding and by that conferred upon it a general view, i.e. such which before he unreservedly refused.

Finally, in *Psychology*, real achievements concerning the understanding of the self came about and the early dissatisfaction with the scientific framework was left behind. These cannot be elaborated here, however the most important contribution of *Psychology* is the exposition of the self as an explicable being that replaced the former enigmatic one. Concerning the analysis that linked the feature of inaccessibility with the experience of dissatisfaction, one can regard the stage of *Psychology* as offering a reasonable solution to it. Hence it should not be surprising that in the present context one does not find an explicit expression of dissatisfaction. Consequently, the being of self was treated as immanent, its transcendence was substituted with its transcendentalism and thus contents about the self could be accumulated. Nevertheless, as will become clear later on, perceptible frustrations still remained and therefore progress was necessary.

D. *The worldly self*

Despite the word 'world' inherent in the term, 'Worldview' no being external to the self was taken into account in Jaspers' discussion of it in *Psychology*, but only the internal process of the individual's bestowing meaning upon his/her own experience. The isolation of the self from its external environment reflected the tendency towards solipsism in Jaspers' early thinking. To be sure, Jaspers did not conceive of the human consciousness as the only source for certitude, and certainly not as detached from the world. Differently from Leibniz' solipsism which relied on metaphysical infrastructure or from that of Descartes, which was basically methodical, in Jaspers' case the solipsism reflected his very early desire to focus on the subjective being in its singularity and particularity on the one hand and his lacking useful tools to illuminate the self in its full context on the other hand. This interpretation of Jaspers' solipsism that points to its moderate shape in the context of his early writings, will later serve as an explanation for Jaspers' overcoming it in his philosophical writings to which the discussion shall now turn.

In *Philosophical World Orientation* Jaspers posed the 'world' (*Welt*) and the 'Formal-Consciousness' (*Bewußtsein-lichkeit*) as two perspectives out of which the self – termed in this context, 'Existenz' – would be elucidated. These terms served first and foremost as a basis for the establishing of Jaspers' concept of Being (*Sein*), which gradually achieved the centrality that was formerly granted to subjectivity. However, the employing of the idea of world and that of Formal-Consciousness as general viewpoints in the same context in which the subjective being was also discussed indicated a change in Jaspers' understanding of the self. Unlike the superiority, which was conferred to one's own self-understanding in *Psychology*, in this context Jaspers stated: „In no way of making existence conscious, I exist at the foundation [*am Grunde*] [of myself].“ (Ph1. 12) That is to say that the self is not revealed solely within one's self-consciousness, and hence the self-relatedness of one's self cannot exhaust his/her very being. This is exactly the reason why Jaspers integrated two perspectives external to the self, i.e. that of the world and that of Formal-Consciousness into his philosophical elucidation of the self as Existenz. As will become clear below, this perspective, then adopted by Jaspers the philosopher, undermined the solipsistic tendency characteristic to his early writings and thus served as a cornerstone in consolidating the understanding of the self as a worldly being.

Existenz, according to Jaspers, is anchored in the world's existence (*Dasein*) by its 'situation-being' (*Situationsein*), which consists of the freedom to fulfill one's possibilities and the inescapable necessity stemming from reality's factual-

ity (Ph1. 1).²⁵ The idea of 'Situation-being' reduces the meaning of the world to the personal perspective of Existenz and uncovers a profound truth about the way Existenz experiences the world, i.e. a person by no means experiences the entirety of the world, but only some of its dimensions in which s/he is directly involved. The prominent importance of the new perspective is that not only there is still room for the uniqueness of the self as a particular being, stemming from one's personal freedom to take up specific possibilities, but by the light of the situations in which Existenz is involved, the idea of self is granted by a totally new feature, i.e. a conscious context. Such a context is recognized as crucial for the illumination of Existenz, so much that „Situation became the starting point and the target [*Ziel*], because nothing else is real and present“ (Ph1. 69). The establishing of the idea of Existenz retains, then, at the same time the particularity of the subjective meaning, but in addition to that, the awareness of situation that it is surrounded by a world. Consequently, the idea of Existenz marks the shift to the understanding of the self as a worldly being.

This is exactly the point in which solipsism, even as a slight inclination, became impossible or at least hard to maintain. This change not only modified Jaspers' immanent understanding of the self, for according to Jaspers „I can not grasp my situation without proceeding to conceive the world“ (Ph1. 69). Moreover, this change pointed to new horizons, which are transcendent both to Existenz itself and to the situation-being by which it is encircled. Jaspers states that Existenz' awareness of itself as experiencing the world only within particular situations, cannot satisfy one's urge to have an idea about the 'world' as a reality which is independent of the subjective consciousness relating to it.²⁶ Thus the philosophical explication of the self cannot be exhausted by following Existenz' experience of the situations in which it is involved. Such explication is compelled to contain within itself the „world's thinking“ and the „world's reality“ (Ph1. 69), i.e. a general understanding of the world's reality which is not subordinated to one's personal view of it. Finally, two concepts of the world are in-

²⁵ The first version of the idea of 'situation' appeared in GSZ. 23. Jaspers continued to explore this term within the context of his famous concept of 'Ultimate Situations' (*Grenzsituationen*). See especially its late version that appeared in Ph2. 201 f. (the earlier appeared in Ph. 229 f.). See also: William D. Blanton: 'Heidegger's Debt to Jaspers' Concept of 'Limit-Situation'. In: Olson, Alan, M. (ed.): Heidegger & Jaspers. Philadelphia 1994, 153-165.

²⁶ Most of Jaspers' commentators ignored the independence of his interest in the reality and objectivity of the world, and interpreted this interest as integral part of his idea of Existenz. See: Thomas Riber: 'Das Dasein in der „Philosophie“ von Karl Jaspers. Eine Untersuchung im Hinblick auf die Einheit und die Realität der Welt im existenziellen Denken'. Bern 1955. 30 f. 69 f. 133 f.; Alan M. Olson: 'Transcendence and Hermeneutics. An Interpretation of the Philosophy of Karl Jaspers'. Boston/London 1979, 10-12; Werner Schneider: 'Karl Jaspers in der Kritik'. Bonn 1965, 167. For a different view see: Miron: 'Towards Reality'.

cluded within the philosophical understanding of the self: the 'world' as 'existence that finds itself as [...] non-I [*Weltich*]' and the 'world' as the 'other' accessible for investigation, which is revealed as a single thing and universally applicable (Ph1. 63). Whereas the former is narrow and solely determined by the limits of one's situation-being, the latter is much wider, and its full meaning exceeds the borders of the being of the self. As a result of this, not only does the self cease to stand as a single object in Jaspers' discussion. Moreover, the idea of the self appears from now on as pointing to the world as a transcendent horizon to which the self relates as an immanent being. Thus, the understanding of the transcendence of the self also changed. Henceforth transcendence did not denote anymore the uniqueness and particularity of the self that exceeds one's empirical being or the observer's position towards the self, but the ontological reality of the world by which the self is surrounded.

Jaspers' attempt to widen his perspective on the self can be seen also from his discussion of the question whether the Formal-Consciousness can be used for explicating Existenz. Actually, what was at stake was whether in addition to Existenz' particular dimensions there exists additional faces of it that can be accessible to the objective viewpoint of Formal-Consciousness as well. Basically Jaspers' answer to this question was negative, contending that 'Existenz was not an object but being that relate to its possibilities, [and therefore] it doesn't exist for Formal-Consciousness as such' (Ph1. 14).²⁷ It is exactly the potentiality of Existenz, namely the possibilities belonging to Existenz, which were still not fulfilled, that were recognized as inaccessible to Formal-Consciousness. This understanding was anchored in Jaspers' distinction between the ability to become known (*Erkennbarkeit*), which is referable to objects, and the ability to be elucidated (*Ethelbarkeit*), pertaining to Existenz (Ph1. 17 f.).²⁸ Knowing and elucidating appear then as two different functions of consciousness: whereas the first reaches out to its objects, the second lets them uncover themselves without trying to adjust them to any ready-made pattern.²⁹ In any event, 'Existenz finds

²⁷ The limitations of 'Formal Consciousness' from the elucidation of Existenz were discussed by few of Jaspers' commentators, see: Elisabeth Young-Brunli, Freedom and Karl Jaspers' Philosophy, New Haven, London, 1981, 5-9; Heintmann: Existenzphilosophie, 61-83; Olson: Transcendence and Hermeneutics, 1979, 49 ff. Jaspers changed his attitude to Formal Consciousness in the context, which was aimed at the explication of Being (*Ungreifendes*). Then, Formal Consciousness was not identified as dealing solely with objects, see: VWV, 225 ff.

²⁸ For a wider perspective on this distinction, see: Miron: From Opposition to Reciprocity

– Karl Jaspers on Science, Philosophy and What Lies Between Them. In: International Philosophical Quarterly 44/2 (2004), 147-163.

²⁹ Jaspers' deliberate usage of the relatively rare verb 'elucidate' (*Ethellen*) and not the verb 'explain' (*Ethelnen/Ethelnen*) or 'illuminate' (*Ethelben*) intended to demonstrate the uniqueness of Existenz, see: Gabriel Marcel: Grundfragen und Grenzsetzungen (1932/1933). In: Hans Saner (Ed.): Karl Jaspers in der Diskussion. München 1973, 160.

itself [...] in the world, without coming to be recognizable [*erkennbar*] as mundane [*Weltlich*]' (Ph1. 17).

It is clear that Jaspers' present understanding of Formal-Consciousness, which partly continued the one that appeared previously, made it impossible for him to bestow upon it a positive function in his philosophy of Existenz. Yet, this fact does not testify to the being of Existenz outside immanence or to Jaspers' withdrawal to his early concept of the self as a totally particular being, which acknowledges no externality as relevant to one's self-understanding. The discussion of the drawbacks of Formal-Consciousness is nothing but an additional means of concentrating on Existenz' uniqueness and particularity.³⁰ Therefore, one can see the understanding of Existenz as inaccessible to Formal-Consciousness as a continuation of Jaspers' early criticism of the positivism in science. To the extent that one is taking into account the philosophical stage of Jaspers' elucidation of the self, it is possible to understand the very confrontation with Formal-Consciousness's viewpoint as an indication of Jaspers' reservation from extreme idealistic and romantic approaches in philosophy that did not acknowledge the possible applicability of Formal-Consciousness to philosophizing. Hence, though the perspective of Formal-Consciousness cannot be the only tool of the philosopher who seeks the self, unlike those approaches, Jaspers acknowledged the possible contribution of the objective viewpoint to his philosophizing, at least as a negative teaching way.

The challenge of the philosophy of Existenz, in which the self conceived as a worldly being, is then twofold: it aimed to find a way to anchor self in world's reality; namely, that its self-understanding would not be detached from the world as the context of possibilities for its self-fulfilling. No less than that, the philosophy of Existenz was directed to maintain the singular uniqueness of the self compared with other objects that appear in the same world in which it finds its being. The relations between these two are well depicted by Jaspers' contention according to which 'possible Existenz separates itself from the world in order that afterwards it genuinely enters into the world' (Ph2. 4). That is to say that the idea of the self as a worldly being does not contradict its conception as a

³⁰ The gap between the being of Existenz and what can be indicated by the objective viewpoint of Formal-Consciousness, is well reflected in the different interpretations to Jaspers' concept of Existenz, i.e. as a relative and irrational being (Oto Friedrich Bollnow: Existenzethologie und philosophische Anthropologie. In: Bulletin für Deutsche Philosophie 12/2 (1938-1939), 136-139, 157; Bollnow: Existenzphilosophie, Stuttgart 1960 (1942), II f.; Joseph Lenz: Der moderne deutsche und französische Existenzialismus. Trier 1951, 32 f.) as an idealistic being (Leo Gabriel: Existenzphilosophie von Kierkegaard bis Sartre. Wien 1951, 20; Stegmüller: Hauptströmungen der Gegenwartphilosophie, Stuttgart 1960, 233 f.) and as opposed to any scientific understanding (Jürgen von Kempis: Philosophie als Anruf. In: Brechtungen. Kritischer Versuch zur Philosophie der Gegenwart. Hamburg 1964, 235 f.).

particular being, but rather agrees with it. Furthermore, objective thinking appears as possibly useful for analyzing concrete situations in order to deduce from them latent possibilities for its self-fulfillment. To be precise, Jaspers did not argue that fulfilling one's own possibilities could be deduced from objective or logical understanding of world's reality. Though the world's possibilities can become known to Existenz also by objective consciousness, it is the only one to regard one as belonging to itself. Hence the whole meaning bestowed upon the reality of the world is necessarily subjective. „What I am offered as being in this strain of thought, in reply to my question what am I, is a schematization of my objective existence (*Dasein*). I find myself in the schema, but each time I make the experience that it does not fit entirely. *None of these objectizations will achieve an absolute identity with myself. I go beyond such schemata: in them I would be bound to lose myself.*“ (Ph2, 32)³¹

Jaspers' understanding of the immanent dimension of the self – be it the Formal-Consciousness or the objective reality by which it is surrounded – achieves its full meaning at the present point. On the one hand, Existenz is conceived as an outcome of self-constitution, but at the same time it is understood as a being that finds itself already in the world. Existential freedom is located exactly between these two: although forced by conditions indifferent to its wishes and needs, Existenz has the ability consciously to transcend concrete situations and to avoid identification with anything external to it. Thus Existenz incessantly seeks after new possibilities in the world that appears to it as concealing within it a possibility for a more complete self-fulfillment. Indeed, Existenz may abandon a concrete option in favor of a speculative one that at a certain point seems better than the one formerly chosen. This does not mean that Existenz is motivated by a caprice or irrational mood, but expresses the dynamic of Existenz' experience of life and world, i.e. a constant movement between actuality and possibility is therefore characteristic to Existenz as long as it strives to live in the world as such (Ph2, 21). However, since Existenz is located in the same world towards which Formal-Consciousness is directed it must employ the objective viewpoint while seeking out self-understanding.

The need to employ the Formal-Consciousness in the explication of the self as a worldy being excludes the possibility of seeing this kind of awareness as the present cause of dissatisfaction. Moreover, though the very relating to Formal-Consciousness appeared firstly within the elucidation of Existenz, the dialectic that was introduced by this to Jaspers' understanding of the self ended up bringing to the extreme the same original emphasis on its particularity and uniqueness. Allegedly, the philosophical stage can rightly be seen as fulfilling Jaspers'

³¹ *Emphasis in original.*

original insights about the self and even as overcoming what formerly appeared a source for dissatisfaction. Yet, Jaspers' concluding words to the path he took while elucidation of Existenz, leave no doubt that this is not the case.

„To me as Existenz absolute independence is indeed my true unconditionally in temporal existence, but it also drives me to despair. I am aware that as hardly self-biased I would have to sink into the void. For my self-realization I depend on a fulfillment that comes to me. I am not myself if I happen to default; I relate to myself as if selfhood were bestowed upon me. *She [Existenz] verifies its possibility, only with the knowledge that it resists upon transcendence.*“ (Ph3, 4)

These words point to the roots of the crisis that occurred in Jaspers' philosophy of Existenz, and at the same time indicate the direction in which its solution was to be found. The understanding of the self as independent of any externality, i.e. Jaspers' early conception of the self, turned out to a source of despair. Yet, what seems to me even more significant than the present awareness of the problematic character of the understanding of the self as an independent being – a point that concerns the content of Jaspers' idea of the self – is the very unequivocal awareness of the experience of dissatisfaction itself.

In other words, what had been implicit up to this stage, and was revealed only by the suggested critical interpretation, is proclaimed now by Jaspers himself. Uncovering the awareness of the philosopher of his own experience within philosophizing – an awareness that is basically not a matter of content – sheds light retrospectively on the different position from which the former phases of understanding the self were consolidated.³² Consequently, the experience of dissatisfaction, which formerly appeared as a transcendental force for achieving each time a better understanding of the self, transpires now as emerging from the very personal being of the philosopher who appears as seeking out not only an improved understanding of the idea of the self but as influential on him personally. The movement reached its culmination where the self ceased to function as an object of search but is revealed as the subject who conducts the search. This development should not be seen as accidental but as predictable from the whole spirit of Jaspers' search for the self, as it expressed a constant approach towards a more accurate understanding of it, until the gap between the self as a subject and the self as an object seemed to be abolished.

At the present point, it may be useful to recall Hegel's concept of necessity as an 'experience of consciousness' and as 'inner movement' of the contents of

³² For a different interpretation of the discussed experience of dissatisfaction, see Hans Kunnz: *Critique of Jaspers' Concept of Transcendence*. In: Paul Arthur Schilpp (Ed.): *The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers*. New York 1957, 499–522, 507–509.

consciousness which cannot rest until its culmination.³³ However, the goal of the whole move was there from the very beginning, a goal which as a matter of fact served at the same time as a promise that what is logically acknowledged as necessary will come into being. Yet, concerning Jaspers' search for the self, a reservation from the Hegelian association must be taken. Unlike Hegel, who brought his philosophical voyage, and hence the very experience of dissatisfaction, to its end at the stage of ‚absolute Knowing, Jaspers did not yield any promises of this kind. For no ontological account of the being of transcendence – the being that the ability to constitute a conscious attitude was revealed as conditioning one's self-knowledge – was given in any context of Jaspers' writings, thus the experience of dissatisfaction that accompanied his search for the self was not even supposed to vanish. It is not surprising, then, that Jaspers could not find any way out of the present experience of dissatisfaction but turned to new target independent of it, i.e. explicating being and transcendence. In any event, all that was achieved at the current stage, concerning the understanding of the self, is the insight that „where I am really myself I am not myself only“ (Ph3, 220) but resting upon the being of transcendence (Ph3, 4). This insight does not mark the end of the discussed search, but a new starting point, or better a more accurate one, i.e. „Existenz is either in relation to transcendence or not at all“ (Ph3, 6). Consequently Jaspers' concept of the self reveals the individual as a person who is not „worrying“ solely about himself/herself but is relating to the Being that exists beyond himself/herself, i.e. to transcendence.

The new beginning of the elucidation of the self, which was achieved, not only could pave a new way for a different understanding of it, but also changed retrospectively the understanding of the very aiming at the self as „a way to transcendence“ and of „Their elucidation [as] philosophical metaphysics“ (Ph3, 3). It is clear that the uncovering of the metaphysical anchor of the being of the self, which led to the understanding of the philosophy of Existenz as metaphysics (Ph1, 27), was facilitated not only thanks to the maturity of Jaspers' understanding of the self, but also embodied its maturity. Finally, Jaspers' shift from the elucidation of the self to that of being and transcendence reflected the change in the self's mode of being: from „being as Existenz“ to „being as Existenz in the face of transcendence“.

³³ Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: *Phenomenology of Spirit*, Miller A.V. (Trans.), Oxford 1977, 56–57. The same idea of necessity underlies also Hegel's *Science of Logic* (see: *Wissenschaft der Logik*, Lasson G. (ed.), Vol.1 1963, 35). See also: Walter Kaufmann: Hegel, New York 1965, 371; Lauer: *A reading in Hegel's Phenomenology of Spirit*, 31 f.

E. Summary

The fact that Jaspers' early interest in the subject being occupied his mind also in his philosophical writings determined the framework of the present discussions. The analysis of Jaspers' pre-philosophical writings uncovered a solipsistic understanding of the self, in which no place or legitimacy for any aspect of externality or objectivity pertaining to the subject being. Although in these writings Jaspers did not reject the very existence of externality to self, this was not recognized as a significant element in the understanding of process by which a person establishes his own identity. A change with far-reaching consequences occurred in Jaspers' philosophical writings, in which the reality external to the subject appeared as a meaningful factor, and therefore was acknowledged as crucial to the explanation of the self which from then onwards was termed Existenz. The broader philosophical processes that made this development possible, of which this article has alluded only to the highlights, enabled Jaspers to anchor the self in a context which is external to it. This not only revealed a whole realm transcendent to the self, but also the illumination of this sphere acknowledged as crucial to its understanding.

The developmental perspective that was implemented in the interpretation of Jaspers' concept of the self transpired as fruitful for the concept of self, as well as for understanding the complete mind from which his creation came into being – firstly as a psychiatrist and finally as a philosopher. The reason for employing this methodical approach was not only due to the fact that Jaspers changed the starting points from which he accessed the idea of the self during his writings, but also since the insights that emerged from these viewpoints were remarkably different and even contradictory. As the matter of a fact, the relevance of the discussion of his pre-philosophic writings to the understanding of the philosophical ones, or rather the unity that binds them, became clear only after elucidating the latter. In other words, one cannot reach the depth of the tensions that characterize Jaspers' philosophy of Existenz without the awareness of the solipsistic background that predicated it and the increasing awareness of the experience of dissatisfaction that motivated it. Hence, only now can one understand what Jaspers really meant by his statement in the opening of „The hundredth symposium of the German society for natural Sciences and Physicians“, long after he ceased to practice psychiatry and to conduct research in this field: „The Practice of the Physician is a concrete philosophy.“³⁴

³⁴ Quoted from: Heinrich Schipperges: *Medizin als konkrete Philosophie*. In: Jeanne Hersch, Jan Mülle Lohman, Reinier Wiehl (Hg.): *Karl Jaspers – Philosoph, Arzt, politischer Denker*. München, Zürich, 1986, 88–111, 88.