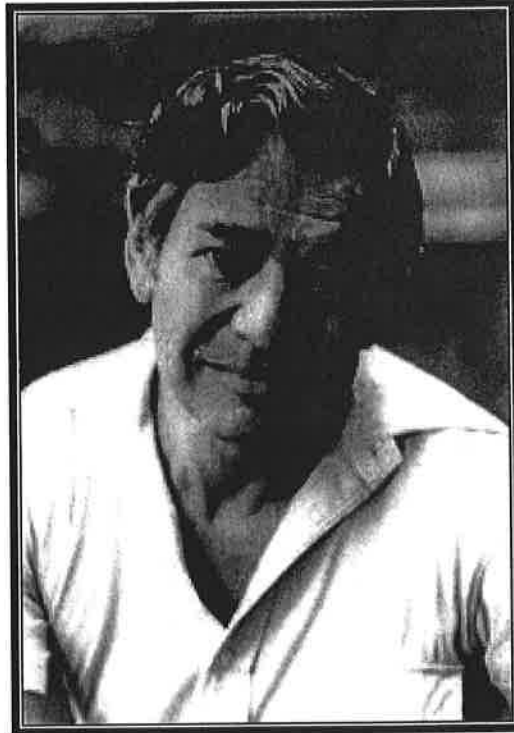


Jan. 21, 2016

Forgotten Thinkers: Walter Kaufmann

Wesley Cecil PhD.



Born 1921 in Germany. Moved to the United States in 1939 and studied at Williams College. He fought on the European front during World War II as an intelligence officer, received his PhD. at Harvard after the war and taught Philosophy at Princeton until his untimely death in 1980.

Let people who do not know what to do with themselves in this life, but fritter away their time reading magazines and watching television, hope for eternal life.....The life I want is a life I could not endure in eternity. It is a life of love and intensity, suffering and creation, that makes life worth while and death welcome. There is no other life I should prefer. Neither should I like not to die." *FOAH*

What remains if you give up the great religions? Many people think: only Communism, Nazism, and immorality. But the morality of Socrates, Spinoza, and Hume compares favorably with Augustine's, Luther's, and Calvin's. And the evil deeds of Communism and Nazism are not due to their lack of belief but to their false beliefs, even as the evil deeds of the Crusaders, Inquisitors, and witch hunters, and Luther's exhortation to burn synagogues and Calvin's decision to burn Servetus, were due to their false beliefs. Christianity, like Islam, has caused more wars than it has prevented; and the Middle Ages, when Europe was Christian, were not a period of peace and good will among men.

CR&P

Man's world is manifold, and his attitudes are manifold. What is manifold is often frightening because it is not neat and simple. Men prefer to forget how many possibilities are open to them. They like to be told that there are two worlds and two ways. This is comforting because it is so tidy. Almost always one way turns out to be common and the other is celebrated as superior. Those who tell of two ways and praise one are recognised as prophets or great teachers. They save men from confusion and hard choices. They offer a single choice that is easy to make because those who do not take the path that is commended to them live a wretched life. To walk on this path may be difficult, but the choice is easy, and to hear the celebration of the path is pleasant. Wisdom offers simple schemes, but truth is not so simple. *I & Thou*

Some Key Works:

Nietzsche: Philosopher, Psychologist, Anti-Christ

From Shakespeare to Existentialism

Critique of Religion and Philosophy

Discovering the Mind, a trilogy consisting of

- *Goethe, Kant, and Hegel*
- *Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Buber*
- *Freud Versus Adler and Jung*

The Faith of a Heretic

Four Virtues: Humbition – humble ambition: to recognize the contingency of the world, the limits of oneself and yet to strive for excellence and achievement anyway.

Love: Defined by Kaufmann as the feeling of wanting the best for someone in the same way that we wish for it for ourselves. To identify directly with their pleasures, pains, and desires.

Courage: To know fear, doubt, and possibility of failure and to proceed anyway.

Honesty: To desire and strive for the truth.

Next Lecture: February 18th Abū Ḥāmid Muḥammad ibn Muḥammad al-Ghazālī and Abū l-Walīd Muḥammad Ibn 'Aḥmad Ibn Ruṣd (al-Ghazali and Averroes)

All Lectures Available on Youtube.

Check for dates, upcoming lectures and extra material:

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