

How would you respond to an existentialist who says "You Epicureans have chosen pleasure as your meaning but it's not universal" do Epicureans hold that pleasure is the universal Good?

Post by "Pacatus" of June 13, 2023 at 4:07 PM

What the existentialists get right (in my view):

1. Existence precedes essence. That is, there is no "view from nowhere" (no "god's-eye view") from which anyone (e.g., Plato) can confidently declare some universal ideals.

Better called "perspectivism" perhaps, the Spanish philosopher Jose Ortega-y-Gasset made this painstakingly clear in his (painstaking) lectures that made up his book *What is Philosophy*. His aphorism expressing this is "*Yo soy yo, y mi circunstancia*" - "I am I, and my circumstance (situation/existential reality)."

2. The universe does not disclose meaning, only evidence, facts and patterns. It was the expectation of finding such disclosed meaning, in the face of empirical/existential reality, that Camus labelled "*the absurd*." (Though Camus later denied he was an existentialist.)

We are the ones responsible for deciding "meaning" - and that always within the limits of our existential perspectives.

Well, that's it for me and the existentialists ... 🙄