



## IN SEARCH OF THE SPIRITUAL Gabriel Marcel, Psychoanalysis and the Sacred

BY PAUL MARCUS

**Price:** £ 23.99  
**Pbk** 240pp, October 2012  
**ISBN:** 9781780490540

BIC Code: Psychoanalysis and psychoanalytical therapy (JCAF)

'Learned and moving, nourishing psyche and spirit, this book opens heart and eyes to the reality we share. A Jewish psychoanalyst meets a Catholic existentialist and, with the latter as a vehicle, renews appreciation of the human journey.'

- Michael Eigen, author of *Contact With the Depths and Faith and Transformation*

'[This book] is a most impressive and important study of the presence of the spiritual and the sacred in the writings of the twentieth century French philosopher Gabriel Marcel. [It] is an extended reflection by a practising analyst on Marcel's insights into the utter fragility and yet transcendent dignity of the human condition. Using concrete illustrations from his cancer experience and from his twenty-five years as a professional psychotherapist, Dr Marcus shows in detail how Marcel's writings on hope, grace, courage, humility, dignity, fidelity, and love enabled him to achieve some understanding and acceptance of that terminal illness and to create/find positive meaning in it. His reflections are offered in the hope that all who search for an ultimate meaning and value for their finite existence may benefit from this unique combination of psychoanalysis and Marcel's thought. This clear well-written book can offer immense help in understanding Marcel and in seeing the usefulness of his ideas in psychoanalysis. Indeed, the dialogue Dr Marcus presents here between Marcel's thought and analytic theory and practice will certainly enhance one's appreciation of both. I hope that the conversation presented in this study, the conversation between a religious Jew who is a psychoanalyst, and a Catholic convert who is a major philosopher of our time will encourage others not of the Catholic faith to take seriously a Christian writer who continues to have so much to offer to our understanding of our common human pilgrimage towards the transcendent, absolute Thou.'

- Taken from the Preface by Dr Thomas C. Anderson, Emeritus professor of philosophy, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

### Contents

- Creative experience as the birthplace of the transcendent
- On refinding God during chemotherapy
- Reflections on moments of grace
- On the quiet virtue of humility
- Summoned to courage
- Maintaining personal dignity in the face of the mass society
- On fidelity and betrayal in love relationships
- The kiss

### About the Author

Paul Marcus, PhD, is a supervising and training analyst at the National Psychological Association for Psychoanalysis. He is the author of *Being for The Other: Emmanuel Levinas, Ethical Living and Psychoanalysis; Autonomy in the Extreme Situation: Bruno Bettelheim, the Nazi Concentration Camps, and the Mass Society;* and *Ancient Religious Wisdom, Spirituality and Psychoanalysis*, among other books. Dr Marcus is married with two children and lives in Great Neck, New York.

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