SITUATING SARTRE'S CONCEPTIONS OF BEING AND FREEDOM:
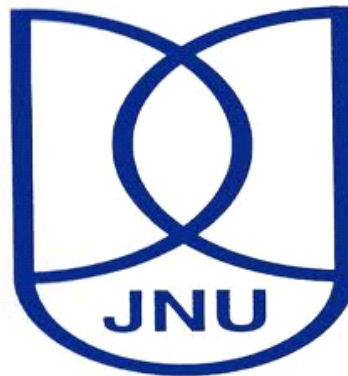
A CRITICAL STUDY

Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University

In partial fulfilment of the requirements

for the award of the degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

SANKHANG BASUMATARY

Under the Supervisions of

Prof. Bhagat Oinam

Dr. Ajay Verma

CENTRE FOR PHILOSOPHY
SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI-110067
INDIA, 2015

Date: 27-07-15

DECLARATION

I, Sankhang Basumatary declare that the dissertation titled *Situating Sartre's Conceptions of Being and Freedom: A Critical Study* submitted by me for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy is my own work. The dissertation has not been submitted so far in part or in full, for any other degree in this or any other university.

Sankhang Basumatary

SANKHANG BASUMATARY
Centre for Philosophy
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067

i

Centre for Philosophy

School of Social Sciences

Jawaharlal Nehru University

New Delhi-110067, India

Dated: 27th July, 2015

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled *Situating Sartre's Conceptions of Being and Freedom: A Critical Study* submitted by Sankhang Basumatary in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy from the Jawaharlal Nehru University is an original work to the best of my knowledge and has been submitted either in part or in full in this or any other university.

We recommend this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

(PROF. BHAGAT OINAM)
(SUPERVISOR)

SUPERVISOR
Centre for Philosophy
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067

(DR. AJAY VERMA)
(SUPERVISOR)

SUPERVISOR
Centre for Philosophy
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi-110067

(DR. MANIDIPA SEN)
(CHAIRPERSON)

Chairperson
Centre for Philosophy
School of Social Sciences
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110067, INDIA

ii

I dedicate myself for personal excellence….

Date: 27th July, 2015   (Sankhang Basumatary)
JNU, New Delhi.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Sartre's conceptions of Being and Freedom are analyzed in his well known work *Being and Nothingness* and *Existentialism is a Humanism*. Basically, this study will attempt to firstly look at the nature of 'being.' Philosophers have interpreted the notion of 'Being' from various perspectives. Sartre's philosophical system also begins mainly with his doctrine of 'being.' He describes his concept of 'being' by taking ideas from Heidegger's metaphysics. In his work *An Introduction to Metaphysics,* Heidegger has put forward his thesis that 'Being' is always in a process of becoming.[1] This view of Being turns out to be break from the philosophical tradition hitherto. As point of fact, Heidegger developed his metaphysical theory from pre-Socratic philosophers, in particular, Parmenides and Heraclitus. These two Greek philosophers had given controversial views and remarks on the concepts of Being and non-being. The basic conceptions of the metaphysics of the above-mentioned thinkers will be discussed and contrasted in this study.

Sartre's work *Being and nothingness* is essentially an ontological study of 'being.' For him, 'being' consists of two kinds: *being-in-itself* and *being-for-itself*. In this work, Sartre strives to answer the enigmatic questions and issues surrounding human consciousness, for which he gives the technical name *being-for-itself*. He investigated into the nature of conscious being (for-itself) by studying the works of thinkers and reflecting upon them in relation to his personal experiences in the world. Thereby he developed and formulated his conceptions on consciousness, act of consciousness or intentionality, facticity, freedom, bad-faith, authenticity, etc. His views and doctrines of human reality gained wide acceptance when his works were published after World War-II. His existential outlook furnished as such seemed to make sense of the war-ravaged world and gave a new meaning to human existence in post-war time. This popular effect and influence of Sartrean worldview lends importance and significance to study and understand the works of Sartre on the nature of human being.

---

[1] Sartre, J.P. *An Introduction to Metaphysics*. p.101

Sartre's work *The Transcendence of the Ego* was influenced by the renowned German phenomenologist, Husserl who expounded his phenomenological ideas in his works *Logical Investigations* (1900) and *The Idea of Phenomenology* (1990). As Husserl defines it, phenomenology is a descriptive analysis of subjective processes. According to him, philosophy as a rigorous science is identified with phenomenology. For him, the goal of philosophy is to describe the experiences or phenomena of consciousness without any bias or prejudice, ignoring all metaphysical and scientific theories in order to accurately describe and analyze the data gathered by human senses and the mind. Husserl's philosophical conceptions are the outcome of his reaction against naturalism and historicism. In his judgment, naturalism is an absurdity, for it conceived the physical things as real and also that the naturalistic standpoint cannot exemplify the foundation of science. Also, it cannot provide any answer to the epistemological questions concerning experience. During this stage Husserl intended to clarify certain fundamental notions of phenomenology such as intentionality, intuition, essence, meaning and so on.

In his work *The Idea of Phenomenology,* Husserl stresses the function of such science is to unravel the foundations of logic and epistemology on the basis of phenomena given to consciousness. Such a descriptive study of consciousness is not an empirical study. Husserl distinguishes 'pure description' of phenomenological from 'empirical description' of natural sciences. In its pure description phenomenology tries to present the very essences of phenomena. Husserl's phenomenological reduction is an attitude to exclude everything from the considerations of transcendent and scientific or logical inference. A phenomenologist would only consider those entities that are directly presented in consciousness. Prior to this reduction one has to suspend judgments about the object in question. This is what Husserl technically called *epoche* or bracketing.

Sartre's intellectual activity on consciousness developed from Husserl's ideas of intentionality, as seen clearly from his writing *The Transcendence of the Ego*. So, Sartre having subscribed to the phenomenological school enunciated by the German thinker Edmund Husserl (1859-1938), began to build his own philosophy of consciousness. From the writings produced in the wake of his philosophical conceptions, it becomes clear that, among other ideas, Sartre fully employed Husserl's principle of intentionality in making

advances in his theorization on consciousness. He effectively brought to light his insights concerning the pre-reflective and the reflective types of consciousness, and more interestingly, the positional and non-positional sides of consciousness.

His works were published in literary style, even as his aspiration was to be an accomplished writer. Indeed his success in this regard could be gauged from the popularity of his readership and subsequently by the Nobel prize in literature awarded to him (1964). In 1938, a French publisher Gallimard published Sartre's novel *Nausea.* That marked the beginning of a lifelong collaboration with Gallimard, out of which most of Sartre's works were brought into print. And later in 1945, he published Sartre's famous book *Being and Nothingness,* where Sartre discussed and deliberated on individual freedom from an existential perspective. In his treatment of human reality in *Being and Nothingness,* Sartre reasoned and advocated individual freedom as having its own legitimate foundation and a vital and indispensable role in securing the basis of a genuine or meaningful human existence.

As is commonly acknowledged, existentialism is not a systematic school. In the history of traditional western philosophy, the concept of 'existentialism' was first introduced by Søren Kierkegaard.[2] His deeply insightful views and pseudonymous writings on the peculiar and unique nature of human existence carried great appeal and profoundly influenced the philosophical ethos or culture of Europe in the 20th century. Many thinkers turned to this dimension and picked up where Kierkegaard had left. The chief exponents of this philosophy are Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Karl Jasper and Gabriel Marcel. Even in the 21st century, literature on existentialism continues to draw wide readership and engenders intense discourses in academic circles. The reason for this is not hard to see: existentialism is a philosophical approach directed at finding answers or solutions to the issues and problems of human existence. As long as man finds himself as a rational being, as he indeed is, in the present earthly setting of his existence, existential enigmas and questions stand before him to be resolved. And irrespective of time, geography and culture, there are found to be universal and perennial issues and

---

[2] McDonald, William, "Søren Kierkegaard", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.*

questions which are peculiarly concomitant to humankind and its existence, individually and socially.

As mentioned before, existentialism cannot be regarded as a system or school of thought in the sense of inner consistency as in the case of a worldview or a philosophical perspective, for the reason that existential thinkers developed their individual frameworks or outlooks which are often mutually divergent and virtually irreconcilable. Even so, the questions and issues of human existence and life that existentialists address are without surprise more or less common. It is another story that the answers or explanations that they offer up are often fundamentally different and mutually at variance. Be that as it may, existential thinkers commonly give emphasis on *individual* existence. They uniformly emphasize on individual uniqueness and primacy of existence. It is anybody's guess, so to say, the term *existentialism* comes into currency in identifying with this mode of philosophical cogitations.

Existentialism expounds that existence is individual and individually requires meaning and significance of human life. According to existentialism, existence of the individual is the most fundamental reality and foundational presupposition. Regarding the traditional controversy around the paradox between existence and essence, the existentialists think that existence has primacy or precedence over essence. Existence of beings precedes or comes first; essence is acquired or developed later. Essence is a universal; existence is the particular, i.e. the existence of individual person(s). Throughout his works *Being and Nothingness* and *Existentialism is a Humanism,* Sartre consistently underscores his tenet that the whole world may surround and be connected with the existence of the conscious being (the individual) *only if* the being-for-itself (the individual person) really exists in the first place.[3] By connecting and interacting with the world, the being-for-itself or human reality acquires essence (universal qualities) for itself. Jean-Paul Sartre, therefore, formulates a principal tenet of his existential doctrine as "existence precedes essence." All existentialist thinkers concur that the existence of an individual exhibits its uniqueness when one performs an action in a situation. They of course differ among themselves as to the modes and characteristics human reality

---

[3] Sartre, J.P. *Existentialism is a Humanism*. p.23

manifests its existence. Nonetheless, all existentialists agree that freedom (the power to choose one's acts) is an original or intrinsic nature of human reality (human consciousness).

In his work *Existentialism is a Humanism,* Sartre addresses the nature of human existence, and explores its meaning by recognizing and describing the human condition as man finds himself in. In this philosophical undertaking, Sartre comes upon the issue of human freedom or the power to choose his course of action as free-agent. He looks into the limits and scope of human freedom. As it turns out, freedom gains an absolute kind of status for its importance Sartre accords with regard to the very essence of being human. Furthermore, Sartre will be seen to examine the ethical implications or aspects of human freedom. There he will find the relation of freedom with responsibility and authenticity (of being truly human). Human responsibility and freedom are found to play a critical role concerning an individual's set of values and goals for his life.

The methodology of this research work will primarily involve the phenomenological method. It shall discuss the factual dimension of experiences which commonly occur in human life from the existential perspective. Secondly, an ontological study of 'being' will require literary reviews of available sources and materials in order to adequately gather the views of the thinkers in question. The research will mainly analyze Sartre's own description of 'being' by first pointing out the limits or shortfalls as perceived to be found in the accounts given by Parmenides, Heraclitus and Heidegger. After this, he shall move onto Sartre's own detailed analysis of the problem of the concept of 'being' in a critical way. Furthermore, the study will try to assess Sartre's application of Husserl's notion of intentionality in his theory of consciousness. It will try to ascertain the principles of an epistemological system developed by Sartre from Husserlian phenomenology. Later on, this dissertation will fully engage with Sartre's existential outlook as to what it is to be human and what freedom means to human existence and life. Here ethical issues will be discussed in the light of Sartrean doctrine of social and individual values.

The dissertation that follows is furnished in three chapters excluding introduction and conclusion. The first chapter, "Ontological Review of Being" is divided into three sections. The first section attempts to examine pre-Socratic philosophers' discourses on Being and non-being in ontological perspective. The research in the first section will primarily deal with the ontological views of Parmenides and Heraclitus. The classical Greek philosophers Parmenides and Heraclitus have given conflicting arguments under two concepts, 'Being' and 'non-being'[4]. In his poem *On Nature,* Parmenides presents controversy between Being and non-being. On the other hand, the philosophical thoughts of Heraclitus could be gathered from his writings which survived in parts. The collection of those bits and pieces of his writings comes to be known as 'Fragments.' This becomes the only authentic source of his ontological views, not to mention his prolific thinking in different fields of human endeavors. Heraclitus' perspective and interpretation of reality will be contrasted against Parmenides' conception of Being.

In the second section, Heidegger's notion of Being will be traced back to the pre-Socratic thinkers, in particular, to Parmenides' and Heraclitus' perceptions of Being and non-being. Martin Heidegger, the German metaphysician, in his first book *Being and Time* sketched and presented a different picture of Being and beings (entities). Heidegger was primarily interested in the question of the meaning of Being.[5] He is recognized as one of the greatest philosophers from Germany in the twentieth century. Before publishing his second book *An Introduction to Metaphysics,* he used to deliver class room lectures, which were later collected and published as *An Introduction to Metaphysics.* From these works, the present study will attempt to articulate the distinctive features of Heideggerean metaphysics.

The third section of first chapter will initially focus on Sartre's assimilation of Martin Heidegger's notion of Being in his own theorization of 'being.' It will proceed further to aim at comprehending Sartre's metaphysics of 'being,' 'non-being' and 'becoming.' Having done this, it is hoped that Sartre's conception of 'being' will be adequately clear and distinct.

---

[4] Here I uses 'non-being' which as the same sense of 'not-being.'
[5] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*. p. 4

The purpose of the first chapter is to draw up a satisfactory historical perspective of the ideational development in metaphysics or the theory of 'being' from pre-Socratic days till the time of modern western thinkers, in particular, Sartre. In doing so, one will be able to trace the connections of ideas and concepts in metaphysics across the philosophers of different times. Thus, it is envisaged that Sartre's concept of 'being' will be justifiably situated in a historical perspective of western philosophical tradition. It is hoped that the metaphysical concepts thus discussed and acquainted in this chapter will serve as a supportive theoretical framework for understanding and dealing with the subject matter of the ontology of consciousness that will be taken up in the following 2nd and 3rd chapters.

In the second chapter, titled "Epistemological Method of Intentionality," firstly Husserl's ideas of intentionality will be looked into, in order to gain the necessary basis for studying Sartre's theory of consciousness in its various aspects presented freely in phenomenological terminology. Sartre has extensively explored philosophical views and psychological perspectives on consciousness, and as a result, deliberated far and deep into the nature of human consciousness. In this philosophical enterprise, he resorted to coining his own technical and esoteric phrases and terms. His writings are mostly rendered in or sprinkled with those difficult words, which often prove reading and apprehension challenging. In this chapter, such Sartrean key-terms as 'for-itself,' 'in-itself,' 'pre-reflective,' 'reflective,' 'positional' or 'thetic,' 'non-positional,' or 'non-thetic,' 'ekstasis,' 'magical,' 'states' and 'qualities' will be examined in the contexts in which Sartre has employed them. In addition, Sartre's personal conceptions of 'ego', 'transcendence' and 'projection' and their applications in his theory will be covered.

In the last chapter, titled "Existential Study of Freedom," the study will dwell on Sartre's existential doctrines by referring to his works *Existentialism is a Humanism* and *Being and Nothingness*. It will involve an inquiry into Sartre's perception of existence, both in the individual and collective sense. As it is found to be, Sartre's great interest on individual freedom is highlighted in his work *Being and Nothingness.* It will make an interesting study to find out the reasons or considerations behind his emphasis on freedom. Furthermore, the development of his existential views of human freedom will

be examined vis-à-vis his intellectual predecessor Martin Heidegger in particular in this study. It is envisaged that this exercise will help connect and situate Sartre's concept of freedom in the context of modern existentialist perspectives.

Finally, the desired outcome of this research would be in terms of identifying and understanding the problems that people encounter as they go about in their day-to-day life. In common observation, the understanding of man-in-the-world is generally found to be so poor. This is reflected in the many ways people carry on their life. One aspect to cite is that commonly man has become individualistic or self-centre in so much that he reflects in his acts of living a lack of social awareness and duties. Basically, it is seen that it has been always a challenging problem for human beings to make a satisfactory sense of their existence in the circumstances they find themselves. It is a felt need that one first needs to understand his own being in the world. Secondly, the presence and influence of other beings raise the need for one to understand others as well. Thirdly, one finds that there are individual needs and social expectations to be met. One faces the challenge to choose his course of action from myriad options or possibilities potentially present in the world. Then there is also the ethical issue of individual freedom in regards its merit and liability. Practically, these realities are very complex, making life or existence of man very perplexing. Hence, it will not be wrong to recognize these common human problems and questions in relation to their existence in the world, as universal and unique need of man to be addressed in order to try and obtain a clear and satisfactory perspective as far as possible. With these pertinent issues and considerations in mind, the present study is undertaken with the aim to gain a better knowledge and understanding insofar as modern philosophy has gathered pertaining to the existential questions.

CHAPTER 1

Ontological Review of Being

I. Being and Non-Being in Classical Greek Philosophy

The classical Greek philosophy attempts to find out the nature and universal explanation of "Being" which could be involved with social necessity of time. The function of philosophy is to critically evaluate our beliefs, to clarify the concepts, and at once it also involves expounding existing ideas, creating new imaginative ideas, and critically assessing the soundness of the arguments put forward in support of views claimed to be true. It explores and redefines the well- established norms during the times of Greek orthodox systems, and critically analyses the foundation of human endeavors, such as science, politics, religion or ethics. In this regard, philosophers most often find themselves debating on fundamental issues of existence: what is ultimate reality in our life-experience? How do we know that reality? What constitutes good life? What is the meaning of life? These questions are involved and raised in the process of evaluating the social reality and in understanding the world in order to lead a good life by proving or establishing what are good and bad, real and unreal, in the world for human being.

To discuss this reality the classical Greek thinkers have tried to express human nature through the term "Being." In general, it is impossible for one to give a clear picture of "Being." The complexity of the problem of the meaning of Being opens up in the way of elucidating the question (what is Being?) in its various dimensions. Being is that because of which anything possible is *possible,* anything that can exist, *exists*. In other word, Being is the ground of possibility and existence. Certainly therefore, Being is not the world. Instead, Being is the reason for the world. Being is the ground of the world.

The analytical review submitted below will be limited to some definitions and some descriptions of the relationship between Being and non-being from historically and

traditional approach to ontology. The researcher will thereafter examine the same in the light of conflict generation and conflict resolution. The research shall also look for a new issue on a critical examination of the question of Being and non-being in the light of historical and practical relevance and will also involve its implications in the social domain. It is desirably hoped that the paper will make important contributions towards understanding the ground of conflicts in the world, and will thereby equip us better to bring about the desired state of affairs. This study, I shall try to highlight or present the relevance of the nature of Being and non-being and their related aspects, with a view to make this particular area of philosophy, to wit, ontology, an engaging and fruitful pursuit of knowledge.

Parmenides' Views on Being and Non-being

Pre-Socratic philosophers like Parmenides and Heraclitus raised the problem of Being and non-being. The issue of Being and non-being are dealt and expounded by Parmenides ontologically. This Greek philosopher held the view that Being is the ground and source of all that apparently exist. Whereas non-being, according to him (Parmenides), is something continually engaged in a specified activity in an individual mind. Although for Parmenides, Being also could be understood as

> Thus, in one sense, Being is something absent from mortal common sense, just as the goddess is absent from Parmenides as kouros seeking, but not holding, the light of day. In another sense, Being is something immediately present to the mind in the here and now, just as the goddess is immediately present to Parmenides as kouros basking in the light of day.[6]

So, Being is something absent from our practical sense but absent permeated by a present in our individuals mind.

Historically, the concepts of Being and non-being and the issue of distinguishing their essence and difference developed in the times of Parmenides. Parmenides shows the antithesis between Being and non-being. He gives the metaphysical assertion that Being

---

[6] J. Henn, Martin. *Parmenides of Elea: A Verse Translation with Interpretative Essays and Commentary to the Text.* p.33

is and non-being *is not*. For him, Being is absolutely real and permanent, and is that which alone exists (is-ness). Parmenides calls in his poem *On Nature,* the method of inquiry on the nature of being as "the way of truth," or the way of reason. The same may be equates with axiomatic- deductive method.

On the contrary, non-being is wholly unreal and illusory which does not have an existence of its own (is not). In his poem *On Nature* Parmenides calls his treatment or study of the nature of non-being as "the way of opinion or senses." Indeed, non-being would be conceptualized as nothing. It is identified with Becoming.[7] For him, non-being is in total contradiction with Being. In other word, non-being (what is not?) is the antithesis of Being (what is?). According to Parmenides, anything Becoming is unstable, imperfect. It is not at all constant or unchanging. Non-being is always in a process of becoming. Thus, non-being (entity) is identifiable with Becoming. It is identifiable with the world of changing things. On the other hand, in contrast to non-being, his (Parmenides) understanding of Being can be posited in these expressions: there is in it no change; it is absolutely "unbecome" and "imperishable" i.e. permanent; Being has neither beginning nor end; it has neither arising nor passing away. He holds that the same "contains neither a starting point (B 8.27), nor a determinate end (B 8.27)."[8] So, Being cannot be said as "it was" (past); "it is" (present) or "it will be" (future). There is no past, present and future within Being. It is eternal and timeless, which is undivided and indivisible. In the positive sense, it can be said of Being that its sole character is simply its being. Its only quality is "is-ness" or existence.[9] Therefore, he makes clear an obvious layout, that non-being is nothing, illusory and false; whilst in contrast, Being is what is, and anything that exists must come out of it–but if it does not come out of Being, then it is a non-being, nothing and what is not.

For Parmenides, non-being is appearance or illusion. The world of senses is illusory–mere appearances. Yet the outer appearances or pluralities are to be touched or felt by human sense organs. Therefore, "manyness" or plurality is unreal and non-being

---

[7] Stace, W.T. *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy.* p.44
[8] J. Henn, Martin. *Parmenides of Elea: A Verse Translation with Interpretative Essays and Commentary to the Text.* p.33
[9] Stace, W.T. *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy.* p.44-5

which is perceived by the senses.[10] However, Being is real and one (unity). This one and real Being is not boundless but a huge indivisible sphere. He (Parmenides) affirms that the nature of Being can be comprehended through thought or reason (intuitive logic), which he calls "the way of truth."

It was Parmenides who first developed the idea of Being and thought in the history of Greek philosophy. According to him, Being and thought are basically the principle of idealism. Being is a general idea. It is a concept and also a thought, but not a thing. Being or reality is a thought. In this regard, he means in the same sense what Being and thought are.

> Parmenides holds that Being and thought are the same (B3); i.e., that which *is* is thoroughly intelligible. Perfection is commensurate with thinkability, imperfection with sensibility. He explicitly recognizes a perfect cosmic sphericity (cf. B8-49). He anticipates this drive toward the universal and the intelligible by calling us to use our minds, not our senses, to contemplate the perfection of the cosmos by reminding us of things that cannot be grasped except in thought. The perfect sphericity is one of many access routes to Being. So, the term he uses technically to express the cosmic permanence of Being, i.e. the instantaneous fact of eternal presence everywhere at once in the now.[11]

On the other hand, Parmenides holds that thought considers a word, statement which is an utterance or description of Being. Thought articulates personal expression or one's own opinion. He uses the utterance (expression) and thought in the same sense. Here Parmenides analyses Being and thought in linguistic term. He holds Being as an abstraction which is absolutely real. Being is a truth which can be perceived only through reason, and this view constitutes the fundamental position of idealism.[12]

Parmenides resolves the problem the arises from the difference between Being and thought, in the following statements: there is no thought without Being; thought

---

[10] Ibid., p.44

[11] J. Henn, Martin. *Parmenides of Elea: A Verse Translation with Interpretative Essays and Commentary to the   Text.* p.10

[12] Stace, W.T. *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy*. p.45

arises from Being; if there is no Being, then there will be no thought.[13] Thus Being makes thought possible; and thought necessitates the being of Being. With regard to non-being which Parmenides terms as what is not or non-existence, he consequently rules it out of thinking, for the reason that a thing which does not exist *can not* be an object of thinking or content of thought. Hence a non-being, in contrast to Being, is neither an abstraction nor a thought.

Heraclitus' understanding of Being and non-being:

Heraclitus holds that Being and non-being are both real and identical. He considers that entities do exist in any given moment of time, and yet the same are ever in a process of change. According to him, everything is in a perpetual state or process of change which he identifies as state of flux or Becoming. Thus, for him, Becoming or flux alone is permanently existent. Becoming takes the place of Being and non-being.[14]

Heraclitus asserts that change is the order of world. In his view, the world was not created, nor would be destroyed. "This world, which is the same for all, no one of gods or men has made. But it always was and will be; an ever-living fire, with measures of it kindling, and measures going out."[15] Heraclitus introduces fire as the most fundamental element or essential substance which gives rise to other elements and thus to all entities. That involves, according to him, two processes in opposition to each other. He calls that "strife" or "the upward-downward path." The direction of becoming is determined by the course the "strife" takes. In other word, what becomes depends on which one of the oppositional processes dominates the other.

As mention above from fire comes air, water and earth. Heraclitus claims that when fire dies or goes out air is "born". When air "dies" then water is "born" or formed. Likewise, water is transformed into earth. This process of becoming follows the principle of "strife", as given above. Two processes, namely, death (destruction) and birth

---

[13] Henn, J. Martin. *Parmenides of Elea: A Verse Translation with Interpretative Essays and Commentary to the Text.* p.53
[14] Ibid., p.75
[15] Graham, Daniel W. "Heraclitus" *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*

(creation) are in operation simultaneously and instantaneously in the transformation of one element into another.

By this principle, he also explains how an object or entity can maintain a stable existence. By his first premise "everything flows", a given object is expected to change from moment to moment, so that it should not remain the same thing the next moment. But if the two opposing processes (present in the "upward-downward path") are of equal proportion, equilibrium is arrived at, and the entity or object in question appears to be in a stable state of existence, which Heraclitus terms as "justice", where "strife" is in a state of harmony.

Moreover, Heraclitus avers that things or entities (realities) may appear to be stable, but actually they are constantly changing. To prove this, Heraclitus wrote, "one cannot step twice into the same river."[16] The river which we have stepped into is already gone. Now water has replaced the past; and as a result, the past river is no longer there. In order to signify the nature of universal flux, Heraclitus takes the example of fire, as the ultimate "world stuff." The fire of Heraclitus is not the ultimate indwelling substratum. It is that which is constantly being transformed into other things. He thought that everything changes its qualities or properties. Therefore, according to him, everything is a union of opposite qualities. He sometimes expounds the universal opposite qualities as—

> Sea is the purest and most polluted water: for fish drinkable and healthy, for men undrinkable and harmful. (B61) As the same thing in us are living and dead, waking and sleeping, young and old. For these things having changed around are those, and those in turn having changed around are these. (B88) Contrary qualities are found in us "as the same thing." But they are the same by virtue of one thing changing around to another. We are asleep and we wake up; we are awake and we go to sleep. Thus sleep and waking are both found in us, but not at the same time or in the same respect. Indeed, if sleeping and waking were identical, there would be no change as required by the second sentence. Contraries are the same by virtue of constituting a system of connections: alive-

---

[16] Henn, Martin J. *Parmenides of Elea: A Verse Translation with Interpretative Essays and Commentary to the Text.*, p.74

dead, waking-sleeping, young-old. Subjects do not possess incompatible properties at the same time, but at different times.[17]

All things come into being by conflict of opposites and the sum of things flows like a stream.

Heraclitus introduces "Logos" (which may mean word, principle, account, plan, formula, proportion, measure, and reckoning) in order to explain the world order (the world as appears) and the way things happen within. He says all things come to pass in accordance with this *Logos*. By this, he conveys that everything that is or that becomes have been pre-determined according to *Logos*. Though he claims that *Logos* is common to all or is present everywhere, which "has been there all along" (i.e. *Logos* is universal), he laments that nobody perceives it or understands the same when it is presented or set forth.[18] Everything that exists is governed by *Logos*. Further, he maintains that though mortals cannot comprehend *Logos*, they must live or act in accordance as *Logos* would require of them. Heraclitus further submits that if and when man truly apprehends *Logos*, that will change his *phusis*. In Greek, *phusis* means "genuine nature or structure of a thing."[19] Therefore, his claim would imply that *Logos* is the only means by which man's nature would become authentic or genuine.

Thus, for Heraclitus, "only Becoming is (exist), whereas Being, permanence, identity, are nothing but illusion. All things sublunary are perpetually changing, passing over into new forms and new shapes. Nothing stands, nothing holds fast, nothing remains what it is."[20] In this connection, Becoming or flux only exists whereas Being and non-being do not exist. They are not stable always and is in a process one after another. But this view of Heraclitus has contradicted Parmenides' standpoint, stating that reality must be permanent. The latter denied the very possibility of change or becoming. For him, the concept of change is rendered as illusory, whilst Being alone stands permanently existent.

---

[17] Graham, Daniel W. "Heraclitus" *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*
[18] Kahn, H. *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus: A Edition of the Fragments with Translation and commentary*. p.98
[19] Ibid. p.99
[20] Stace, W.T. *A Critical History of Greek Philosophy*, pp.73-4

The differences between the thoughts of Parmenides and Heraclitus give rise to the problem of Being and non-being.

II. Heidegger on Being

The nature of Being has been the central subject or perennial topic of philosophical contemplation from pre-Socratic Greek philosophers down to the modern philosophers, such as Hegel, Heidegger, Sartre et al. At the turn of the 20th century, Martin Heidegger also took up the study of Being, phenomenologically and existentially. Heidegger was a German philosopher who goes back to pre-Socratic Greek philosophies in his works *Being and Time* and *An Introduction to Metaphysics.* He develops his understanding of Being through his study of the traditional schools of thought belonging to the classical Greek philosophers. Departing from Parmenides and Heraclitus, Heidegger enunciates the difference between "Being" and "being." For him, "Being" could be understood as the source of existence, fullness of existence, whilst "being" represents entity.[21] Heidegger is a philosopher of one-point-programme, and that programme is study of Being. For instance, water, trees, man, animals, thought, God etc. are entities. These entities are a revelation and a show or manifestation of Being. Entities are beings. In this connection, Being is the source of existence of beings or entities. He also identifies Being as the proper and very subject of metaphysical investigations. Heidegger's concept of metaphysics as fundamental ontology is an interrelation among Being, nothing, *Dasein* and entity. The concept of metaphysics which Heidegger expresses is in the following ways: firstly, he deals with metaphysics as the elucidation of question of the meaning of Being; secondly, it is an inquiry concerning 'nothing'. But while doing these two things, he enquires into *Dasein* and entities to complete the sphere of enquiries.[22]

Heidegger wants to change the history of metaphysics, which has hitherto engaged with beings or entities, leaving behind Being with Parmenides. He declares the need for metaphysics to return to the Parmenidean path. With traditional western

---

[21] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*. p. 4
[22] Ibid, p.31

metaphysics, Heidegger questions, "Where do we find such a notion of Being?" Heidegger did not find his kind of understanding of Being in Plato, Aristotle and their successors. Therefore, Heidegger goes farther back to pre-Socratic philosophers like Parmenides, Heraclitus, where he finds the impression that "Being essentially unfolds as *phusis*". The term *phusis* would mean, 'emerging, manifesting and arising.' When Heidegger uses the word Being, it is in the sense of emerging, manifesting and arising.[23] He identifies the pre-Socratic Greek understanding of *phusis* as "the emerging sway" with his own understanding of Being.[24] So, according to Heidegger, *phusis* is the form of "unconcealment" of Being. The manifest or comprehensible dimension of Being as such is the whole realm of *phusis*. Heidegger's intention is to explicate the original pre-Socratic evaluation of the concept or idea of *phusis*.[25] On the other hand, he speaks about the process of Being. We can take an example- clay. We have a statue, cutlery, pot, toy, etc. which are produced from clay. These different things produced from clay are entities. In this example, clay is metaphorically depictured as Being. In the similar way, Being manifests itself, indirectly as it where, as entities. Entities are some kinds of things or beings; but compared to them (entities), Being is not the things in themselves. Virtually, Being is therefore absent in the entities which have come into existence through the process of Being. This is not an "absence" nor a "negation"; rather, it is absence permeated by a presence.[26]

The traditional form of definition cannot convey anything with regard to the nature of Being, for the reason that Being cannot be brought under a 'genus.' Being cannot be derived from higher concepts by definitions, nor can it be presented through lower ones. On the contrary, Being is not a concept having universal characteristics, because the universality of Being transcends any universality of genus. In fact, the so-called genus is only an entity. And as stated before, Being is not an entity. That means "to be" (*Sein*), the meaning of which is enquired about, can never be a thing or being. For the question is not directed to any particular thing. The question of the meaning of Being, which is ontological in nature cannot be answered satisfactorily in an ontical procedure. It

---

[23] Ibid. pp. 25-6
[24] Heidegger, M. *Introduction to Metaphysics*. p.15
[25] Ibid., p.180
[26] David Cerbone, R. *Understanding Phenomenology*. p.45

is a fact that Being is that which determines entities, that on the basis of which entities are already understood. At the same time, Being is always the Being of an entity. From the above assertions, we can draw two conclusions: firstly, Being is related to beings; secondly, Being cannot ever be a being. The Being of entities are not itself an entity. This explanation of Being is based on the "orientation" of Being, that it is always identifiable with the processes of the coming into being of entities.

In his book *An Introduction to Metaphysics,* Heidegger also deals with the limitations or "restrictions" of Being. His "restriction of Being" is in relation to becoming, appearance, thought and ought.[27] Firstly, from the perspective of limitation of becoming, Being is understood as *phusis* itself, "by virtue of which beings first become and remain observable.[28] Secondly, the perspective of limitation of appearance, Being is understood as the 'appearing' (source). Thirdly, the perspective of the limitation of thinking, Being is understood as the "already there." Fourthly, the perspective of the limitation of ought, Being is understood as "the given."

Moreover, these four limitations are not accidental, but they are as the inner necessity and direct product of the Being-process. They arise in connection with the development of our understanding of Being. These limitations dominate our knowledge, our thinking and our action, i.e. these limitations dominate our entire relation to Being.[29]

*Being and Becoming***:** According to Heidegger, anything becoming is incomplete, imperfect, not yet full. The becomings are the entities. In contrast to this, there is Being which is complete, perfect, full.[30] Here Heidegger proposes that Heraclitus' "doctrine of becoming" (*panta rhei*) compliments with Parmenides' concept of Being. He attempts to reconcile these two philosophers, one saying that Being is permanent, and the other saying that becoming or flux alone is unchanging—these two positions seemingly contradictory to each other—by looking at Being as the principle of becoming or *phusis* as elucidated already. This gives the unequivocal picture that one quality or attribute of

---

[27] Heidegger, M. *Introduction to Metaphysics*. p.98
[28] Ibid. p.15
[29] Ibid. p. 99
[30] Ibid. p. 101

Heidegger's Being is its permanence or changelessness. The entities become something else to attain their perfection, completion, fullness through the limitations of ends or goals etc. But because they are entities, they will never be able to attain the status of Being, just as Heidegger has shown the difference between Being and becoming.

*Being and Appearance***:** For Heidegger, Being is the appearing. Entities are the appearance. Appearing is the real, appearing is the fullness. The appearances (entities) are the changing, and the unstable. They are apparent, they are vanishing or ephemeral. It is changing moment by moment or day by day.[31] The three points emerge here—a) the essence of the appearance is the appearing. There can be no appearance without the appearing.[32] b) The appearing is not subsequent to appearance. And, c) Being is the appearing, and in the appearance, Being is withdrawn.

*Being and Thought***:** Heidegger holds that thinking is a limitation of Being. Yet, thinking is different from other limitations because we need to think on the limitation of Being—in other words, thinking on thinking itself. This is the limitation, i.e. thinking on the limitation of Being. Thinking is a means, and so also, thinking is an end. Heidegger holds thinking is the work of a thinker. To think means "to aim at," "to remember," "to intend."[33] For him, such a logic was develop to answer some questions regarding entities. These entities are studied in "ontology." Heidegger quotes Parmenides and Heraclitus to show that the original meaning of "logos" was not logic.[34] But the original meaning of "logos" was the gathering, i.e. Being gathers entities to itself to manifest them.[35] Heidegger combines ontology, theology and logic to coin the word "onto-theology." Onto-theology is the wrong way of thinking on Being. Against onto-theology, he points out that "apprehension" is the right way of thinking on Being. "Apprehension" has two different sides: a) Apprehension by Being. And, b) Apprehension encapsulates Being. Apprehension is the process by means of which man enters into the domain of Being.

---

[31] Ibid. p. 105
[32] Ibid. p.105
[33] Ibid. p.125
[34] Ibid. p.127
[35] Ibid. p.132

Apprehension enables man to come face to face with Being.[36] There are three points that emerge here—i) Apprehension is a decision of Being i.e. apprehension shows that man is not rooted in Being.[37] ii) Apprehension is to recapture oneself from confusion. iii) Apprehension is to realize that 'logos' is the foundation of language.

Being and Ought: According to Heidegger, over against ought, Being is the datum.[38] He points out that Kant developed the notion of ought, whilst Hegel discussed a moral ought, and Marx's is an economic ought. Whereas, in Nietzsche, the ought becomes "revaluation" (representation) of value. In this regard, due to the predominance of beings, the ought is endangered and challenged in its role as standard for social morality. The ought must confidently and forcefully state an imperative or a belief-claim about personal lacks. (For example, peace must be restored first for harmonious coexistence or I should grow into a mature person.) It must assert itself and also ground itself in itself. Whatever announces as an ought-claim in itself must prove to be valid in doing so on its own merit. Something like an ought can issue or emanate, only from something that raises such a claim on its own, something that in itself has a value, and itself is a value. Thus values as such now develop as the ground of the ought. But values stand opposed to the Being of beings, in the sense of factual entities, as they (values) themselves are not yet present or existent. So, in a proper way, one says that they are valid. Values make available for use or supply the measure or judgment for all domains of beings—that is, of what is present at hand. History is nothing but a series of realization of ought or what-should-be. The present is the actualization of values.[39]

Heidegger's new mode of thinking begins with an attack on the Cartesian image of man, or the modern man of reason, and all such anthropocentric tendencies that failed to reach the essence of man. The essence of man, creating the occurrence of Being, and it is to this participatory engagement in Being that the term *Dasein* refers. Heidegger employs term "existence" in a technical sense, drawing heavily from its etymological meaning. The term 'existence' refers to *Dasein*'s capacities for transcendence. *Dasein*

---

[36] Ibid., p.148
[37] Ibid., p.149
[38] Ibid., p.210
[39] Ibid., p. 212

alone has a world and is capable of uncovering entities. For Heidegger, *Dasein* has been thrown into the world. Though choosing and acting are integral to its existence, *Dasein* is derived of freedom to choose itself. *Dasein* has no option for not choosing to be the ground of presence. *Dasein* finds itself in such a way that it is always and necessarily related to something, i.e. an entity and also to Being.

The word *Dasein* is derived from German word "Da" and "Sein." "Da" means "there" and "Sein" means "Being" which means there-Being.[40] *Dasein* is there where Being reveals itself most appropriately. *Dasein* is inherently to or essentially related to Being. Basically, it is concerned with the investigation of human existence. According to Heidegger, *Dasein* is the domain for the revelation of Being (*Sein*). Heidegger does not agree that *Dasein* is identical with man and he says man is *Dasein* in so far as Being approaches man to itself i.e. man is *Dasein* only in relation to Being, i.e. *Dasein* is that in which the essence of man is rooted. *Dasein* is a mode of Being or way of Being. Man's orientation towards Being makes man a *Dasein*. *Dasein* has a double relation a relation to man and a relation to Being. Man's having an orientation to Being makes man *Dasein.*

For Heidegger, *Dasein* has two characteristics. No philosopher in the past made a distinction between the characteristics applicable to man and things. Heidegger was the first philosopher to make that distinction. They are "existence" and "mineness." The characteristics applicable to men are called "existentials." The characteristics applicable to things called "existentiells."

Existence etymologically originates from the Latin word "Ex-Sister" which means "to stands out" or "out standing" i.e. *Dasein* stands out from everything else.[41] This standing out is expressed by way of questioning itself, observing itself, reflecting itself, examining itself, analyzing itself. This is how a man becomes *Dasein*. Man only has this kind of power. Animals or things do not have this power. *Dasein* stands out from the realm of entities by the unique capacity it possesses it is the domain for the manifestation of Being. It means that the presenting of being takes through *Dasein*, which alone exists.

---

[40] David R. Cerbone, *Understanding Phenomenlogy.* p.42
[41] Heidegger, M. *Being and Time*. p.7

The second existential is called "mineness". According to Heidegger, "mineness" refers to "decision". When I take my own decisions, they are owned decisions. When I take decision based on others' recommendations, they are "un-owned" decisions and through them. I become inauthentic. Heidegger holds that *Dasein* comes into existence by "thrownness" i.e. I am given an existence without any consent. By thrown means that human existence is contingent, i.e. there is no necessarily for it to come into existence, i.e. it has no built in purpose or meaning.

Ordinarily, *Dasein* has an average every day existence. Average existence is the kind of existence where nothing extra-ordinary happens.[42] I forget myself, i.e. I forget the source of my existence and when I forget myself and source of my existence, I become an "inauthentics", man, i.e. I am no more a *Dasein*, I go away from Being, I become an "inauthentics", man, i.e. "Dasman." I mean what Heidegger wants to highlight that *Dasein* is authentic man and "Dasman" as a man is inauthentic.

III. Sartre on Being, Non-Being and Becoming

Sartre was a 20th century's French philosopher who consistently follows Heidegger's notion of Being. His conceptions of being, non-being and becoming are rooted in the heart of ontology as dealt in modern western contemporary philosophy (basically the modern western philosophy on otology reviews and re-examines being, existence and entities.) Akin to Parmenides' view, Sartre also holds being *is*; non-being *is not*. In this regard, Sartre shows that being is undifferentiated, pure self-identity. But in Sartre's treatment of the subject, there is no relation between being and reason; neither does he see being as necessity, in contrast to Parmenides' understanding of Being. At this juncture of departure from Parmenides, Sartre turns to Heidegger's notions of Being. Subsequently, he expresses being as: Being is. Being is in-itself. Being is what it is.[43] As we gather from above, Sartre also describes being ontologically. He presents being in terms of the expression of the nature of human reality.

---

[42] David Cerbone, R. *Understanding Phenomenlogy.* p.57
[43] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness* p.80

The pre-Socratic Greek philosophers were the first to contemplate on Being, during the times of classical Greek philosophy. German philosopher Heidegger follows their (Parmenides, Heraclitus et al) ideas in 20th century. And, for his concepts of being, Sartre also draws from Heidegger's understanding of Being. Sartre's ontological study on being arrives upon the nature of human reality. Heidegger calls *Dasein* or "there-being" as human reality. Similar to Heidegger's view, Sartre also does not say that human reality(authentic) is synonymous with all human beings, or the rest of being; he distinguishes true human nature in terms of the nature of questioning about himself, and about others or about the world in general. He contrasts his position with that of idealism which rejects any idea of a noumenal world behind the phenomenon, and explains his own idea of the "transphenomenality of being". His (Sartre) probe of being starts from reducing existence to its series of appearances. These appearances, as phenomena, require a being that is in itself no longer an appearance. Since all phenomena are appearances perceived by human consciousness, the pursuit of the being of appearances leads Sartre to study the being of consciousness. Sartre's notion of being is radically dual in nature, not in the sense of their existence or appearance, but with regard to their nature of conscious being and non-conscious being. He then proceeds to present his distinction between unconscious being (being-in-itself) and conscious being (being-for-itself)."[44]

Sartre, in his major work *Being and Nothingness* which explores the realities of being-in-itself and being-for-itself, employs his terminology from Hegel's.[45] Sartre also expounds the metaphysical distinction between being-in-itself and being-for-itself. Sartre presents being-in-itself as existing without justification, independent of for-itself. The basic distinction discovered is that of between material objects (being-in-itself) and conscious being (being-for-itself). Material objects are complete, self-sufficient, full and inert; they need not sustain themselves to remain what they are; they simply are what they are.[46] He affirms that there is a world of objects which exists independently of consciousness. The inert objects like books, tables, trees etc. are non-conscious beings

---

[44] Sartre, *Being and Nothingness.* p. 23.

[45] Hurbert, *A Companion to phenomenology and existentialism.* p. 236.

[46] Schroeder, *Continental philosophy.* p .174.

and have their independent existence. They neither have consciousness nor are dependent on consciousness for their existence. The term "being-in-itself" can be applied to all which are the objects without consciousness. Being-in-itself is complete in itself. They are through and through whatever it is that they are, which have essences, and which are solid. At this point, "being-for-itself" differs from being-in-itself. Being-for-itself lacks completeness—completeness of existence which belongs to being-in-itself.

According to Sartre, being-in-itself has no "within" which is opposed to a "without", and which is analogous to a judgment, a law, a consciousness of its own. The in-itself has nothing secret; it is a monolith. Sartre tries to convey here that we can understand that in-itself is *what it is*. The researcher here thinks that it is accurate to say that being-in-itself is non-conscious being, and that being-for-itself is a conscious being. This means that being-in-itself can neither be derived from the possible, nor reduced to the necessary, contrary to the deductions of Parmenides' axioms for Being. Again, Sartre posits that an existing phenomenon can never be derived from another being. This is what Sartre calls the contingency of being-in-itself.[47] Sartre in his work *Being and Nothingness* defines being-in-itself (*en-sui*) as:

> Being-in-itself is non-conscious being. It is the being of the phenomenon and overflows the knowledge which we have of it. It is plenitude, and strictly speaking, we can say of it only that it is.[48]

Sartre distinguishes being-in-itself as unconscious being and being-for-itself as self-conscious being. We have seen that in-itself doesn't lack anything, it is complete in itself. He enunciates that lack finds its foundation in consciousness, which is peculiarly human kind of reality. Through the classification of the for-itself and in-itself, Sartre builds his ontological foundation of philosophy.

Plainly, being-for-itself is *not* in-itself, even as their categories are based on the distinction of conscious being and non-conscious being. Also, in the case of being-in-itself, this meant it was not metaphysically caused by anything, it did not depend causally

---

[47] Ibid., p. 28.

[48] Ibid., p. 80.

on anything else, as mentioned before. Thus, to say that being-for-itself is not in-itself means to Sartre that the former *is* caused, it *does* depend on something else, on the *in-itself.* Sartre describes the for-itself as "arising" out of the in-itself, it "surges up" in the world. Sartre describes being-for-itself as embodied consciousness, which is the source of nothingness or non-being.

Corresponding with Heidegger's line of thinking, Sartre also holds the difference as well as interrelation between being and non-being. He refuses Cartesian concepts of mind-body dualism and also Kantian analysis of the difference between noumena and phenomena**.** So then, Sartre's concept of being follows Heidegger's understanding of Being. For Sartre, "being" is the cause of existence, whereas "non-being" represents as: when one has an immediate awareness of something, then one's awareness of lack (non-being) directly comes upon that object. In such an experience, there can be a perception of absence—and this is what Sartre tries to analyse in his description of "non-being"**.** "Non-being" is a specific form of human conduct, that is, the attitude of questioning or inquiry that can reveal the nature of experiences. It is in this act of questioning, one can witness the origin of real non-being—and not mere abstraction—within being. So, being negates non-being, which reflects an essential value of human life-experience, even as we can understand and explain the same (the action of negation). Thus, negation is a conscious act or intentional course of action performed or undertaken by a being toward the non-being in question.[49] In this connection, an individual can change one's own state or structure to quench one's own requirement through an appropriate action. In this light, non-being is revelation of being: it is absent practically, but an absence permeated by a presence (consciousness of the non-being in question in one's conscious being). This presence can at once be both external (literally) and internal—existing in the individual mind. These non-beings or lacks are hidden within being.

Moreover, non-being has to do with the questioning human attitude, an act of consciousness, filled with meaning. Every question presupposes simultaneously a being that questions, and a being which is being questioned. So, in this act of inquiry, there is a conduct that reveals man's relation with the world. The same is also an attitude, more

---

[49] Ibid., p.30

than a mere sum of words or any psychological state, an attitude through which we expect a reply, a yes or no, a revelation of something or nothing—even nothing would be a reply.[50] And this admission to the possibility of a negative reply is admitting to the fact of beyond-possibility or non-existence of the fulfillment of the lack or non-being. This act of questioning, in expectation of a reply: a yes or no—a presence or absence—shows how both presence and absence are external to consciousness, but essentially related to itself. If we consider non-being as only external to consciousness, and not related to latter, concept of absence will be limited to negative judgments or statements existing only in our mind. Such a conception smacks ignorance of a proper understanding of negations, as Sartre points out that many negations reveal a truth that could be justified by recognizing non-being as an element of the real.[51] At this juncture, Sartre recognizes two kinds of non-beings in every attitude of questioning, viz. a) the expectation of the questioner which presupposes a certain nothing within the nature of knowledge, and b) possibility of a real non-being within being. A question then bridges the gap between these two non-beings by declaring the subject's expectation of a reply from non-being or being.[52] Sartre is basically inquiring into whether negative judgments are the foundation of our awareness of non-being or whether the non-being provide the foundation of both negative judgments and the notion of non-being—a) He affirms that non-being does come into reality only through man. b) He denies non-being as a mere subjective abstraction, for the reason that the same is a real experience.

For Sartre, all human attitudes of expectations and all true expectations are about some disclosure or non-disclosure of being. The expectation is due to an absence, but this expectation is real and the relation it establishes with being is real. So, an agent's expectation is not a mere void. For example, when I went to meet Pierre at café (expectation), he was not at café (absence). In this regard, non-being arises within being only through the upsurge of consciousness. But it is important to note that this non-being, while always being related essentially to man's consciousness, continues within being, independently of man's awareness of it. Non-being arises within being prior to and

---

[50] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p. 4
[51] Ibid., p. 5
[52] Ibid., p. 5

independent of man's knowledge of it—there is transphenomenality of non-being as well as being i.e. non-being as well as being is not reducible to our awareness of non-being or being.[53] Non-being then haunts the being in the sense that it is never there, that there is a void, but which constantly eludes being. And it is the attitude or act of questioning, which is an act of expectation, that non-being gets revealed in the structure of being.

Sartre considers Heidegger's approach of being (entity)—in a way to show distinctiveness of his own position with respect to being and non-being within the world and within human reality (Heidegger's *Dasein*). Sartre agrees with Heidegger that human reality experiences non-being as anxiety. Through the notion of non-being, Sartre seeks to explain the relation and experience of being with and in this world. Being-for-itself, which is human existence, in contrast to being-in-itself (objects and other entities in the world) questions its own being as consciousness of a pre-reflective cogito. Consciousness can question being because it has a certain distance from being, and every question is an attitude towards being. Human reality's non-being is then consciousness which could not be pictured but understood if we ask the question: who am I? This ability to question oneself is the sign of lack of identity with oneself.

Moreover, this understanding of non-being results from the questioning of the nature of being. As the foundation for inquiry and negations, non-being must always be in question, for otherwise it would have the stability and self-identity of a being-in-itself.[54] In questioning, the questioner negates its continuity with itself from its being, nihilating being in relation to other aspects of being. It would be seen how presence of "non-being" within being is not a logical construction, but an existential necessity which defines the nature of being in this world. This nihilation[55] within one's being represents the upsurge of non-being within one's consciousness. The being-for-itself is a region of being wherein everything is in question, even the very fact of its own non-being. Man is a unique being which is never sufficient or satisfied with itself. It is only in human being, that real non-being comes into existence. Being-for-itself can nihilate because its brute existence or factual necessity is already nihilated, whereas a being-in-itself cannot

---

[53] Catalano, *A Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre's "Being and Nothingness*." p.57
[54] Ibid. p. 65
[55] Sartre uses the term nihilation to emphasize that negation is more than a mere psychological state.

nihilate because it is what it is. Non-being is thus not to be understood as an independent void or emptiness within, but rather it is brought to be by the being-for-itself, which is in search of its identity. So, the relation between being and non-being is not on the level of meaning, but on the level of existence. It is the existing being that gives non-being its efficacy.[56] This phenomenon thus resonates how existence precedes essence, and this is how precisely non-being can be seen as becoming the site for human reality.

Basically in general philosophical point of view, 'Becoming' is related with two things, namely, evolution and movement which assume a "changing to" and a "moving towards" respectively. So, Becoming is seen as the process or state of coming into being in time and space. Sartre however goes to Heidegger's notion of Being, and holds that being and non-being is always in the process of becoming, thereby negating individual goals. For him, becoming or changing is identity of being and non-being. In this regard, Sartre defines being as the nihilation of non-being, which is the lack of being conceived in the consciousness—a desire for being, a relation to being—thus bringing non-being into the world. So, non-being is always in a process of becoming which is meaningful only when consciousness is directed towards object outside of itself. Non-being arises from being which is goal-directedness. So, being is always in a process of becoming.[57] In this connection, being is the source of non-being. For Sartre, individual action which originates from a person reveals one's own distinctive characteristics. It is in the act of questioning, reflecting and searching that man tries to realize through a casual series the possibilities of becoming, thus negating absences or non-beings which reveal what he is not. Being and non-being as parts of one's nature is most fundamental but least apparent.

Sartre thus insist that being, non-being and consciousness must themselves constantly become an opaque, thick, fixed in-itself. We never face non-being as a thing. It is rather in the nature of consciousness that allows for change or becoming through the limitation of ends or goals. There is an ontological change in the being wherein non-being is generated and actualized by human reality. As it has been seen from the earlier description of consciousness in Sartre's *Being and Nothingness,* that "consciousness is

---

[56] Catalao, Josep S. *A Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre's "Being and Nothingness.*"p.57
[57] Here I use non-being in the sense of consciousness

always consciousness of something," we can infer that consciousness is nothing more than a relation between subject and object. Sartre distinguishes between subject (consciousness) and object. He accepts the being of objects and affirms consciousness has essential intentional relation to them. Yet he insists on the special features of consciousness that can never be traced to fixed objective states. For example, the objective being of a mountain is a given; but human responses to it, such as seeing it as majestic scene or as a challenge to climb, or a natural resource to exploit, exhibit consciousness' free and open project of meaning-making that never resolves itself into something that simply is there hitherto.

CHAPTER 2

Epistemological Method of Intentionality

In this chapter the study analyses Sartre's epistemological method, focusing on the role of "intentionality" of consciousness at the epistemological level. At the epistemological level, intentionality pre-supposes that a person does believe on the consciousness of his mind, that what it perceives or understands is real or true. Modern western phenomenologists use "intentionality" as a technical term which often lends the impression of vagueness and opacity; yet it still carries meanings recognizable to general readers. Without reviewing the whole history of the emergence of the term "intentionality," firstly the study will deal with the idea initiated and propounded by Husserl. Here, the research will focus on the idea of intentionality as understood by the phenomenologists in contemporary time, which can be traced to Edmund Husserl, the renowned phenomenologist. Husserl can be considered the founder of modern phenomenological movement in Europe during the twentieth century. His enunciation of the key-concept of intentionality plays a central role in the entire process of phenomenological methodology.

According to Husserl, intentionality is the property of consciousness by virtue of which a subject's mental state is directed at, or is about, something other than itself. Intentionality, which is derived from the Latin word "interdere" which means "to point out" or "to aim at," was put forth by the nineteenth century philosopher and Husserl's teacher Franz Brentano.[58] In this chapter, an attempt is made to first show how Husserl developed the notion of intentionality. This will be an attempt to give complete account of Husserl's epistemological method of intentionality. In the second section of this chapter, a comparison of Husserl's concept of ego and that of Sartre will be taken up. A comparison is made between Husserl's concept of ego, and Sartre's view of the same, in

---

[58] MacIntyre, Ronald and David, Woodruff Smith. *The theory of Intentionality*. p.1

order to find their implications relating to epistemological approaches or methodology. Sartre's epistemological method of intentionality seems to suggest an initial relation between consciousness and belief.[59] It is required to clarify the connection between them. As of fact, Sartre conceived his thesis on consciousness by critically examining Husserl's assertions on the nature of consciousness. Sartre criticized Husserl's concept of the transcendental ego, his notion of transcendental perception and immanent perception—the two kinds of consciousness according to their different norms of givenness. Apart from these critiques, the researcher will look into Sartre's pre-reflective cogito which he claims as the primary consciousness. In the third section, the researcher will analyze how for-itself or human reality has the power for individual projection. These issues will be taken up in this chapter.

I. Husserl's Ideas of Intentionality

The notion of "intentionality" originally was introduced by Franz Brentano. Husserl, as his student in Vienna, got this concept from him. In his works *Logical Investigations* and *The Idea of Phenomenology,* Husserl elucidates that consciousness possesses intentionality because consciousness is always consciousness of something, about a thing or towards an object. Here Husserl's object of intentionality refers to an entity or non-entity, such as an idea or illusion. Furthermore, for Husserl, intentionality refers to a mental state or act that is characterized in its being conscious of or about something. The questions which arise are: what are you thinking of? What are you thinking about? etc. Intentionality is the about-ness or directedness of the mind (or state of mind) and this kind of directedness, about-ness, of-ness, lies in its capacity to relate thought or experience to objects.[60] As we know, Husserl's focus is not on objects or things in themselves, but concentrates on the characteristics of intentionality of the mind and the contents of its phenomenological experiences.

---

[59] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p. 99
[60] Beyer, Christian, "Edmund Husserl", *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*

Husserl's theory of intentionality can be expressed as "every act of consciousness is always consciousness of something."[61] A person is never just conscious; one is always conscious of something. In other words, one's consciousness is never empty or void, i.e. object-less. One never just perceives; one always perceives something—whether it's real or not, it doesn't make any qualitative difference phenomenologically. One never just imagines; one always imagines something. One never just fears, there's always an object of fear—an entity or event or situation one dreads. In this regard, in every act of consciousness, it "directs its attention," "points toward," and connects with—and in that sense "intends" (tends toward)—an object.[62] Thus intentionality pictures the connectedness of the mind and the object of which the mind is conscious or paying attention to.

Firstly, in Husserl's theory of intentionality, introduced in his work *Logical Investigations*, Husserl posits that the relation of intentionality is *irreflexive*. This would mean that in *no* act of consciousness, the consciousness is able to instantaneously reflect on that act. In other words, consciousness can not at the same time direct its attention on that very act of directing its attention on an object. When I perceive a book, I know the book is the object of my consciousness.[63] My perceiving of the book is not the object of consciousness; obviously it is the book which is the object of my intentionality. Of course, subsequently or later, I can always reflect or think about my perception of the book. Thus, my perception becomes an object of intentionality in another act of consciousness. In like manner, Husserl illustrates this *irreflexive* principle of intentionality by using a common movie-theater model. If I am "caught up" in the movie, I'm thinking about the events in the story. I'm not thinking about my watching the movie. In fact, if I do stop to think about my watching the movie, to that extent I have to "pull myself out" of the movie. There is an almost physical sense of pulling myself out of the one type of consciousness and putting myself into the other kind. So, we can say that the relation of consciousness to its object is an *irreflexive* one. This *irreflexivity* of

---

[61] Spade, Paul Vincent. (1995). *Jean Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness*. p.46

[62] Husserl, E. *Logical Investigations*. Vol. II p.79

[63] Husserl, E. *The Idea of Phenomenology*. p.29

intentionality clearly indicates that in a given moment the mind's consciousness is engaged or directed to *one* object, and not more.

At this point, it may be noted that *irreflexivity* of consciousness is not necessary to be confused with reflective consciousness. For, in the later, one act of consciousness of the past becomes the object of a subsequent act of consciousness. In other words, one says that the mind is reflecting on a mental act of the past. In this reflective act, one can see the operation of the same principle of *irreflexivity* i.e. only one object of consciousness in a given moment. Thus, reflective thinking does not violate the mind's *irreflexive* principle. Logically, after all, it is not possible for an act of consciousness to be reflexive in the sense of taking itself as its object. Howsoever, in his subsequent work *The Idea of Phenomenology,* Husserl himself appears to be not altogether of one mind on this claim of "*irreflexivity.*" Surprisingly, he claims that every mental process, while being enacted, can be reflected on.[64] If this means we simply have *two acts at once*, the one reflecting on the other, this clearly runs contrary to the aforementioned principle that the relation of intentionality is *irreflexive*. Perhaps, he seems to take into account the flexibility of the mind to switch its attention from one object to another object of consciousness. In this particular case, the mind would alternate its attention from an object of consciousness to that act of consciousness; in other words, the mind is alternately reflecting on an ongoing act of consciousness. This is so, even as a previous act of consciousness can become the object of consciousness in the next act of consciousness. Therefore, one may construe that the mind may be reflexive enough to change its object of intentionality in quick succession, all along obeying the law of *irreflexivity* of the intentionality of consciousness.

Secondly, Husserl claims in his thesis of intentionality that "the object of an act of consciousness is transcendent to that act," i.e. the object is not mind-dependent, partly or wholly contained or confined to that one act of consciousness.[65] So the object of intentionality is genuinely transcendent to consciousness and its acts. Closely following Husserl's theoretical deliberations that led to eidetic abstraction (reduction), those objects

---

[64] Husserl, E. *The Idea of Phenomenology*. p.27
[65] Spade, Paul Vincent. (1995). *Jean Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness*. p.48

of intentionality and contents of phenomena comprise things in themselves (entities) and universals (thinking, sensing, feeling, imagining, recollecting, hallucinating—mental acts, states, or processes; and the qualities of concrete or inexistence things). In eidetic reduction, a thought or *cogitatio* which is a particular experience of an individual consciousness (i.e. phenomenon) is dissected in terms of the essence of its components.[66] And essences are described in terms of universals. Universals are so called because they can be enacted or experienced repeatedly by not only the same individual, but by other individual in general. Hence universals are not exhausted in one single act of consciousness or phenomenon, and are not therefore strictly mind-dependent or mental content. They are therefore genuinely transcendent. When a consciousness enact or experience a universal or universals, the transcendent becomes immanent.[67]

Thirdly, Husserl's one main reason for postulating sense-data (mental contents) as objects of consciousness is to account for illusions.[68] If what I'm seeing is a "bent" oar—the object of my consciousness—then the object is illusory: it obviously isn't "out there." Is it therefore happening "all in my mind"? If the "bent" oar isn't really "out there," then is it by necessity "in my mind"? Husserl does not think so; he says that's a mistake. When I see the "bent" oar, it is the oar I see, and oars are not the kinds of things one can put inside a mind or consciousness. Oars are concrete objects—matter-stuff, not mind-stuff. So, Husserl just accepts the inevitable result of this. If the "bent" oar doesn't really exist "out there," as real oars are straight, then it doesn't exist at all, whether in the mind or outside it. It in no way follows that it does really exist "in my mind"—as if we have to find some place for it to exist! This case is to instantiate that an intentional object needs not exist. I can imagine all kinds of things that don't exist; I can think of things that don't exist, I can certainly fear things that don't exist. All of these are cases of being conscious of things that don't exist.

On the contrary, Husserl expounds on the occurrence the fallacy of inference as such: I am conscious of p; therefore, p exists.[69] It is this tendency of making a fallacious

---

[66] Husserl, E. *The Idea of Phenomenology*. pp.27-28
[67] Ibid., p. 28
[68] Husserl, E. *Logical Investigations*. Vol. II p.22
[69] Ibid., p.19

inference as such that causes us to say that things that don't exist "out there" in reality nevertheless do exist "in one's mind," as if their existence is necessarily implied by virtue of being an object of consciousness. For Husserl, that is simply a mistake, as it was considered a moment ago with the "bent" oar.

From the consideration of the above instances, one comes across in principle, Husserl convincingly advances his third claim on intentionality: the intended object (the object of intentionality) need not necessarily exist—within or without the mind.

In Husserl's scheme of the make-up of phenomenological experience, there are two categories or kinds of contents, which can be identified as truly or "genuinely" immanent contents and the "directly given" contents (which are immanent in the second sense).[70] The genuinely immanent contents correspond to the acts and sensations in the mind. This combination of conscious acts and sensations make intentionality possible i.e. through those acts and sensations the mind can direct on or connect with a transcendental entity or illusory object. Thus, the genuinely immanent contents provide necessary "points of support" for the consciousness to 'reach out' and 'lock on' to the object of intentionality.[71] They constitute the real make-up of the intentional experience. The second category of immanent content refers to the objects (real or abstract) presented directly to the mind through the act of intentionality. That which is transcendent now becomes immanent before consciousness. Hence, the mental representations of the transcendental objects are imminent in the second sense, in accordance with Husserl's technical definitions. (The mental representations are the direct presentations of objects or things outside the consciousness hitherto).[72] Husserl illustrates this point with this example: "I do not see color-sensations but colored things, I do not hear tone-sensations but the singer's song, etc., etc."[73] From this example, it becomes clear that the acts and sensations are not the objects intended; they serve only to bring an object (colorful thing or singer's song) into direct experience of consciousness.

---

[70] Husserl, E. *The Idea of Phenomenology*. p.7
[71] Husserl, E. *Logical Investigations*. Vol. II p.100
[72] Husserl, E. *The Idea of Phenomenology*. pp.24-5
[73] Husserl, E. *Logical Investigations*. Vol. II p., p.99

This theory of intentionality developed and advanced as such by Husserl promisingly offers to break out of the Cartesian bind of subjectivism and to avert the threat of solipsism. Because, as it is clearly evinced by the three claims of the nature of intentionality, as discussed above, Husserl is seen to put the mind back again into direct contact with transcendent realities.[74] It goes to show that not all the mental contents are mind-dependent, but are representations of the objects or realities that are beyond the mind. On this basis—it becomes clear—Husserl's eidetic reduction finds its reliability in the sense of describing the phenomena in terms of their essences i.e. by breaking them down into universals.

Transcendental ego: It may be recalled that at the early stage of Husserl's phenomenology, the ego assumed the role of a passive spectator placed at a specific position from where the phenomena appear in a certain way. The ego, thus differing from the psychological self or the transcendental ego (which constitutes raw data), is seen to be just an empty point of perspective.[75] The ego contributes nothing to the phenomena. But in the latter part of his philosophical development, he came to look at the ego as how Kant saw it, i.e. as one that constitutes the raw data and determines the nature and content of phenomena. In effect, Husserl assigns an active role to the ego, which is that of organizing the raw data into meaningful contents, unifying them further into meaningful wholes, distinguishing one whole from another. Husserl goes on to say that all the phenomena including the raw data have been constituted at different levels or stages in the mind. On this line of thinking, Husserl goes all the way to say that "all content comes from the transcendental ego," in total reversal of his earlier position that "all content comes from outside."[76]

---

[74] Husserl, E. *The Idea of Phenomenology*. pp.12-3
[75] Ibid., p.33
[76] Spade, Paul Vincent. (1995). *Jean Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness*. p.55

II. Sartre on Ego and Consciousness

Sartre in his famous book *The Transcendence of the Ego,* which was published in 1936, demonstrated his transitional idea from primitive epistemological thinking of "consciousness," moving away from the idea of Edmund Husserl's notion of intentionality. Sartre defines intentional objects with crystal clarity as all those objects, ideas, values, numbers and consciousness itself that can be perceived or reflected upon in one's consciousness. Here, consciousness is not only a human reality, but also our fears, hopes, wishes, desires, emotions, memories, possibilities, etc. Sartre also holds consciousness on the directed object, i.e. consciousness is consciousness of something else.[77] Thus, the intentional object or being-in-itself is a necessary foundation for consciousness. Intriguingly, Sartre avers that consciousness has no sufficient foundation. He presents it as a brute fact, without explanation, as it is with being-in-itself. The only 'causal explanation' Sartre tenders is that (an act of) consciousness is spontaneous. Also, in his work *The Transcendence of the Ego* he looks at ego, not as a pre-reflective or inherent component of consciousness, but is produced or constituted as a unity of all reflected acts of consciousness. Furthermore, Sartre identifies selfness as the "consciousness of oneself."[78] Consciousness of oneself will also imply or extend to, according to Sartre, the consciousness of individual lack. As for Sartre, absolute belief in the reality or veracity of the individual lack one is conscious of is the first requirement or pre-requisite. In other words, consciousness of an individual lack springs from the firm belief that there is a certain lack in oneself.[79]

Sartre does not refer to such a term as "phenomenological ego"; he also rejects the concept of "transcendental ego." In his theoretical frame-work of consciousness, Sartre will allow only the psychological ego—the psyche, the personality, the seat of character traits, the real 'me.'[80] This view of Sartre on ego emerges from the second part of his book *The Transcendence of the Ego.* Initially, Sartre in the first part of this book identifies the transcendental ego (which he rejects) as 'I' with the idea to characterize its

---

[77] Sartre, J. P. *Trascendence of the Ego.* p.44
[78] Chuchill, Steven. and Reynolds, Jack. *Jean-Paul Sartre Key Concepts.*p. 222
[79] Sartre, J. P. *Being and Nothingness.* p.99
[80] Sartre, J.P. *The Transcendence of the Ego.* p.36

active constituting function, as Husserl later came to accept. The pronoun 'I' is in the nominative case, and so stands as the grammatical subject of verbs. Thus 'I' is the ego as something active, which certainly fits the notion of the transcendental ego. At this stage of his theoretical development, Sartre looks at the psychological ego as a passive entity.[81] Hence, he refers to it as 'me.' The pronoun 'me' is in the objective case, which signifies that it is at the receiving end.

Transcendental ego ↔ the '*I*'

Psychological ego ↔ the '*me*'

As he advances with his theory on the constitution of ego in the same book, Sartre comes to perceive the psychological ego as having two sides or functions: the active and the passive. Now there is a shift of meaning in his usage of the terminology of 'I' and 'me':

Active side or role ⟶ 'I'

Psychological ego

Passive side or function ⟶ 'me'
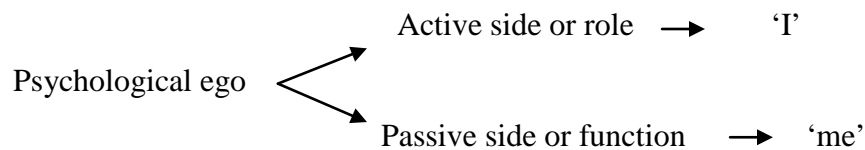
Sartre further elaborates on the distinction of the 'I' and 'me' aspects of the psychological ego:

> The 'I' is the ego as the unity of actions. The 'me' is the ego as the unity of states and of qualities. The distinction that one makes between these two aspects of one and the same reality seems to us simply functional, not to say grammatical.[82]

In the above statements, Sartre clearly distinguishes the role of the two sides of ego. On the active side, the 'I' constitutes the ideal unity of all spontaneous acts of consciousness. On the passive side, the 'me' constitutes "indirect" unity of the qualities and (mental) states. From his deliberations in his book, Sartre shows that 'I' is immediately or directly involved with the phenomena or conscious acts. Whereas, it is seen that 'me'—the passive side of ego—is linked with the qualities and states that characterize the overall

---

[81] Ibid.,54
[82] Sartre, J.P. *The Transcendence of the Ego.* p.60

personality of the individual. Sartre posits that these states and qualities are inert and passive.[83]

In order to elucidate the relation of acts of consciousness, states and qualities, Sartre employs a fictitious case of Sartre hating Peter. The sight of Peter evokes a sudden feeling of repugnance within him. He explains that there is a connection between that spontaneous act of repugnance and the state of hatred.[84] Yet he does not find a clear logical relation between the conscious act which is active and the state which is passive. Rather, he finds the connection contradictory. He calls such occurrence of relation as "magical."[85] In this case, Sartre terms it as "emanation", where the conscious act seems to proceed from the mental state.[86] Further on, he explicates that the presence of similar states—hatred toward different individuals—hint at the presence of a quality or trait of spitefulness. He explains that such an inert quality has the potentiality to produce particular states. He calls that process "actualization."[87] However, Sartre clarifies that the presence of one or few similar states does not necessarily imply the existence of the quality concerned. The quality may be optional.[88] For instance, my hatred for a particular woman or a few girls do not necessarily imply that I am therefore a misogynist—a quality or personality trait. By the same yardstick, an individual act or sporadic incidents of fright does not necessarily convey that one has a fearful state of mind. Sartre also indicates that there is a relation between ego (me) and the qualities or traits by which one (or ego) may be identified or characterized on a long term basis.

According to Sartre, in his work *The Transcendence of the Ego,* all acts of consciousness can be classified into two types: non-reflective or pre-reflective and reflective. He shows by example the distinction between these two kinds of conscious acts. When one is reading a moving story so that one is completely "absorbed" or "lost" in the story, one's consciousness is caught up totally with the story.[89] There is not a

---

[83] Ibid., p.54
[84] Ibid., p.61
[85] Ibid., p.79
[86] Ibid., pp.67-8
[87] Ibid., p.70
[88] Ibid., p.61
[89] Ibid. p.46

moment one is thinking about oneself while in progress with the story. There is found no act of reflecting on oneself. Here the object of the act of consciousness is just the story, where the self does not appear at all. In such a case, Sartre says that consciousness is engaged in non-reflective act. In general, when consciousness directs or intends upon an object which can be anything except the self or consciousness itself, that act is seen as non-reflective or pre-reflective.[90]

Sartre goes on to show in contrast that consciousness is involved in a reflective act when it turns back on itself or its act(s) as the object of its intentionality. Thus it is clear from Sartre's deliberation that consciousness can act either reflectively or non-reflectively. Obviously consciousness can not act in a third way or manner. Corollarily, any act of consciousness must be either of the reflective or non-reflective kinds or types. Recalling the principle of Husserl's irreflexivity of intentionality an applying the same here, one obtains Sartre's first law of consciousness: "every act of consciousness is either reflective or non-reflective, but not both."[91]

Further on in his observations on consciousness, Sartre shows the existence of two "sides" of consciousness, distinct or apart from the types of conscious acts (pre-reflective and reflective). He calls these two sides or aspects of consciousness as 'positional' or 'thetic' and 'non-positional' or 'non-thetic.' The word 'positional' derives its meaning from the Greek word 'thetic,' which means 'to put or place,' similar to 'posit' in meaning.[92] Thus, the positional side of consciousness is seen to be related to the placing or putting of an object or thing as its object of consciousness.[93] In other words, positional consciousness is responsible for the capacity of intentionality that consciousness is seen to inhere. It becomes clear that consciousness through its positional side directs upon or brings into view a thing as its intentional object. Hence, all conscious acts—non-reflective and reflective—are found to be 'positional' in this sense.

---

[90] Ibid. p.46
[91] Spade, Paul Vincent. (1995). *Jean Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness*. p.89
[92] Ibid. p.89
[93] Sartre, J.P. *The Transcendence of the Ego*. p.41

Non-positional side of consciousness apparently is not involved with conscious acts of its positional side. This aspect of consciousness appears to be responsible for its self-consciousness.[94] It enables consciousness to be aware of every act of itself. In other words, by this every act of consciousness is aware or conscious of itself, so to say. This self-awareness is not reflective since it belongs to the non-positional side of consciousness. Since, this self-awareness does not involve intending or positing, it does not violate the law of irreflexivity: consciousness simply is instantaneously aware of its every single act, *not as its intentional object*. It is as if this self-awareness or self-consciousness is self-given. Sartre illustrates this aspect of consciousness, taking the case of a person counting a package of cigarettes. He has an impression of the cigarettes in the package, and finds there are a dozen. His consciousness in the present case is positional consciousness. If someone comes along and asks him, "what are you doing?" He replies, "I am counting." This reply does not aim at the object—a dozen cigarettes in the package—but at his conscious activity. There are not objects or perception involved. Therefore, it is a non-positional consciousness of self.

From the above consideration of positional and non-positional consciousness, one obtains Sartre's second law of consciousness:

> Every act of consciousness is both positional consciousness of some object or other, and also non-positional consciousness. (And, of course, depending on what the object is, it will be either reflective or non-reflective.)[95]

In other words, every act of consciousness is simultaneously accompanied by the consciousness of itself (act).

Sartre's analysis of consciousness says that there is no such transcendental ego as the source of consciousness. For him, consciousness does not have an origin at all. Rather consciousness (awareness*) exists in terms of intentionality of consciousness (property of

---

[94] Ibid. pp.46-7
[95] Spade, Paul Vincent. (1995). *Jean Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness*. p.89

mind*)[96] i.e. consciousness directed at the object.[97] So, consciousness is goal-directedness i.e. the object of intentionality, and this object is the most important point of Sartre. This evidently refers to the positional side of consciousness. On the other hand, consciousness exists in terms of awareness of act of oneself or self-awareness i.e. there is no object-directedness in this case. This alludes to the non-thetic or non-positional aspect of consciousness.

According to Sartre, consciousness is the active principle assigning meaning and relation which arises because of lack[98]—the revelation or awareness of a state of lack or need in oneself. For him, consciousness is not a thing (entity), not a substance, not a subject, but a revelation or coming to awareness of the lack of something. So, personal consciousness is always a consciousness of a personal need or desire for an intentional object. This experience is appropriated pre-reflectively, prior to any interpretation which he becomes aware of in himself. For example, if I am hungry, I start to think of food in order to negate my hunger. My consciousness goes out of itself to the object (food). It shows the transcendence of my consciousness. My consciousness at the moment is fully directed toward my need or lack—to the food, to be precise.[99] My consciousness is pre-reflective here. I am so caught up or absorbed with the object of my lack. The question of reflecting on how I am or my thought or action does not arise at this moment. I am oblivious of myself in this sense. Thus in pre-reflective consciousness, an individual consciousness is totally directed on the object. Consciousness coincides fully with the object, i.e. consciousness envelops the object.

Moreover, Sartre goes on to show that belief plays a crucial role in the identification of lack and the process of negating the same. He elucidates that when an individual consciousness recognizes a personal lack, it is accompanied by an implicit belief that the perceived lack is real or genuine. In the strength of this belief, one turns to look around to identify the object(s) or the situation(s) that will be required to negate the

---

[96] The terms are added by the researcher to distinguish the two apparent meanings of *consciousness,* one as a mental event or phenomenon, and the other as a functional property of mind, in order to avoid confusion.
[97] Sartre, J.P. *The Transcendence of the Ego*. p.44
[98] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p.196
[99] Sartre, J.P. *The Transcendence of the Ego*. p.55

lack. [100] Likewise, the individual in question carries certain measure of belief or trust that those particular thing(s) or event(s) will meet the requirement of negating the identified lack.

III. For-itself and Projection

Sartre holds in *Being and Nothingness* that there are two basic notions of being: firstly, being-in-itself (*en-soi*), which represents unconscious being; secondly, being-for-itself (*pour-soi*), which represents conscious being. There is being-in-itself, which is "what it is, and is not what is not."[101] It is uncaused, has no explanation for its existence, and is the only kind of thing which exists by itself. It inheres no lack, and therefore requires no negation. It is sufficient or full in itself—something opaque. It exists independent of any subjective consciousness of its existence. And it's not subject to temporality or change—no past or future: it ever abides as it is. "It exists in a fully determinate and non-relational way."[102]

On the contrary, there is the being of consciousness, a being-for-itself, (as Sartre coined it) which is not "what is, and is what it is not."[103] It simply means consciousness as a being is something radically different from being-in-itself. Unlike the in-itself, consciousness according to Sartre is completely transparent. In contradistinction to the in-itself, the for-itself is basically characterized by a lack of identity of itself. To recall, Sartre has posited that consciousness is always consciousness of something. This makes consciousness to be defined in relation to something else.[104] It shows that the for-itself is dependent on the in-itself. Moreover, in as much as consciousness is spontaneous or free, it is indeterminate in its identity. In this connection, with every conscious experience (pre-reflective or reflective), the for-itself undergoes transformation of its identity, so that any attempt of consciousness or the for-itself to exactly identify itself (through reflection)

---

[100] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p. 99
[101] Ibid., p.200
[102] Ibid., p.200
[103] Ibid., p.98
[104] Ibid., p.197

is not possible. It is subject to temporality or process of change, so that it is not what it was (past) and it will be (future) not what it is (present).[105]

For Sartre, for-itself is human reality which has the power to negate something for personal fulfillment.[106] Human reality or in Sartre's term, the for-itself, is nothing else but the nihilation of the in-itself. Being-for-itself can be likened to a kind of being with many 'holes' being produced at the heart of its being. The 'holes' metaphorically signify the lacks or nothingnesses (*negatites*) that are conceived within consciousness. In other words, human reality or the for-itself discovers or determines its own needs or goals. Furthermore, the for-itself is in no way an autonomous or self-sufficient entity, like being-in-itself is. Instead, the for-itself looks for its resource in the in-itself for the negation of its perceived lack(s).

As in the example of Pierre's failure to appear in the cafe, his absence leaves or creates a void or nothingness against the background of the cafe setting. The expectation of finding Pierre at any part of the cafe hall makes Pierre the foreground that in effect nihilates everything else in the cafe as the background. Looking around for Pierre and not finding him, his absence or lack of being creates a negation. Hereby, Sartre claims, "it is evident that non-being always appears within the limits of human expectation."[107] So in general, nothingness or negation—the sense of lack or absence or need—appears or originates within consciousness or human reality (the for-itself). Sartre also employed numerous examples to evince that consciousness is the source of nothingnesses or non-beings.

In positional consciousness the notion of nothingness appears as the distance that separates consciousness from its intentional object. In non-reflective consciousness the object is in the world outside, and a certain distance between consciousness and the object is necessary to make intentionality possible. But in the case of reflective consciousness, the object is consciousness itself. By the same requirement of intentionality, a certain distance or nothingness is involved to separate consciousness

---

[105] Sartre, J.P. *The Transcendence of the Ego*. p.60
[106] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p.120
[107] Flynn, Thomas, "Jean-Paul Sartre", *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy.*

from itself in order to direct or reflect upon itself or its acts. It appears then that consciousness is able to "stand outside" itself to objectify itself. Sartre adopts Heidegger's term 'ekstasis' to describe this self-transcendence of consciousness. [108]

Sartre identifies three fundamental 'ekstases' of consciousness, three basic ways of standing outside itself that makes it possible for consciousness to see its own reflection. In short, there are three possible ekstases in reflective consciousness.

1st ekstasis:—temporality: the sense of the passage of time separates the consecutive acts of consciousness into past, present and future acts. This facilitates one act of consciousness to become the object of another act of consciousness. [109]

2nd ekstasis:—transcendence: the act of consciousness to reach out toward object(s) transcendent to itself. In the case of reflective consciousness, consciousness transcends itself to posit itself at a distance and make itself as its intentional object. In effect transcendence means intentionality. [110]

3rd ekstasis:—being-for-others: this term refers to other 'for-itselfs' or consciousnesses. The presence of "other minds" serves as a means for consciousness to stand at a distance and get a picture or reflection of itself. [111]

Another unique nature of consciousness is its constant state of flux: the being of for-itself alters or changes itself unceasingly. It does not behave at all as a stable, inert thing or substance like the in-itself beings. The being of consciousness therefore is like the being of an *event* or *process*, and not of an entity. [112] In other words, it is more proper to say that for-itself being *happens* than to say that consciousness exists.

Sartre employs certain observations and concepts to explain why consciousness is in a constant state of flux. First, Sartre posits that a reflective act of consciousness alters the fact of consciousness on which it is directed. This process proves to serve as an

---

[108] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p. 97
[109] Ibid., pp. 130-1
[110] Ibid., pp. 194-5
[111] Ibid., pp. 245-8
[112] Ibid., p. 108

important principle in his further theorization. If this principle holds true, then every act of reflection will bring successive changes to the consciousness that does the reflection. To be precise, this process of change as such takes place on the positional side of consciousness. On the non-positional side of consciousness, Sartre observes that its self-awareness, although not reflective, is homologous to reflective consciousness, in that the same also alters what it is conscious of, to wit, consciousness itself. He explains this dynamic phenomenon by looking at consciousness as a 'dyad.' He calls its function as 'reflection-reflecting.'[113] The functional meaning of this term may be likened to a kind of mirror which reflects its own image. Thus, the dyad nature of consciousness conveys in effect that the non-positional side of consciousness like a mirror captures the 'image' of the event(s) on the positional side of consciousness, thereby having a kind of reflection of consciousness without undertaking any intentional act.[114] This process within consciousness Sartre calls "Presence to Self."[115] What this implies according to his theory is that the consciousness reflected in the mirror of the non-positional side of consciousness as such undergoes alteration by reason of the principle Sartre has stated. The implication of this dyad or "reflection-reflecting" is that consciousness perpetually undergoes change, with or without reflective act of consciousness. The for-itself being is always therefore in a process of change or flux because of its very nature or structure. In contrast to in-itself being, consciousness is never stable or stationary. It ever transcends itself or is in state of transcendence and flux. This fact of consciousness is summed up in Sartre's pithy statement: "consciousness is not what is, and is what is not."[116]

In connection to this dual nature of consciousness, Sartre claims that only the positional side of consciousness *knows* its objects. For him, knowledge is a relation of positional consciousness to its intentional objects. Thus, 'to know', for Sartre, is equivalent to 'to direct at an object' or 'to perceive.' In consistency with this logic of his epistemology, the self-awareness of the non-positional consciousness can not be reckoned as knowledge—for the simple reason of the absence of directedness

---

[113] Ibid., p.196
[114] Ibid., p.197
[115] Ibid., p.101
[116] Ibid., p.98

(intentionality) or objectification on this side of consciousness.[117] Knowledge for Sartre therefore is of a perceptual kind. For instance, when I see the three sides of a cube, I can say that I know them as the three sides of a cube. Perception, to be more precise, is the basis of knowledge in Sartre's epistemology. Of course, the perception that the three sides are really part of a real cube remains to be confirmed. Hence, one may infer Sartre's definition of knowledge as "justified true perception." This definition can be contrasted with the traditional concept of knowledge as "justified true belief." For Sartre, belief amounts to a case of "bad faith" even as he defines belief in this sense:

> But it we take belief as meaning the adherence of being(consciousness) to its object when the object is not given or is given indistinctly, then bad faith is belief.[118]

From the above statement it is clearly implied that for Sartre the object of knowledge should be directly and distinctly given. This means that the same must be a perceptual phenomenon: the object must be clearly perceivable to the positional side of consciousness. In other words, the substance of knowledge is derived positionally (or through intentionality). Therefore, it follows that knowledge of things can be acquired through reflective and non-reflective acts of consciousness.

In the preceding analyses of the structure and characteristics of consciousness or being-for-itself, it becomes clear that consciousness can be seen as lack of being or a nothingness, creating its own lacks or *negatites*. Even as the same is in constant flux or change, the for-itself never coincides with itself. There exists always a fissure within consciousness so that it is not what it is. It constantly negates or alters itself so that it is what it is not. Thus, consciousness by its inherent nature is incomplete and unstable. Sartre goes on to say that at the heart of consciousness, there is a 'desire for being, or a 'desiring to be.'[119] In his theory, this desire also is inherent in the metaphysical nature of consciousness. This 'desiring to be' turns out to be the primary motivation of a fundamental project undertaken by the for-itself.

---

[117] Ibid., pp.98-9
[118] Ibid., p.112
[119] Ibid., p. 565

The fundamental project of consciousness Sartre talks about relates to the for-itself's awareness of the lack of self-identity. As seen above, consciousness is not what it was in the past and is not yet what it will be in future, but presently ever-changing. In this regard, according to Sartre, a fundamental lack in the being of the for-itself is self-identity such as is seen in the unity, completeness and stability of a being-in-itself. In essence, self-identity as consciousness projects or intends (aims at) here would coincide with a kind of a perfect being—as a God. The fundamental project of the for-itself is the task of attaining this self-identity. In his observation, there are number of 'minor' projects the individual for-itself may adopt in its pursuit of fulfilling its main or primary project. The act of identifying or determining such a project can be seen as a projection of the individual toward attaining the goal of self-identity. Clearly it can be seen that projection of this kind is the same as the intentionality of consciousness in the form of directing or aiming at a particular future-being identified as the goal.

In projection, as discussed above, the object or goal lies in the future. Consciousness projects into the realm of possibilities—which are real but not yet realized. (the ontology of possibilities is suspended for the moment, to be reserved for the third chapter.) That possibility which the for-itself chooses and posits as its project-goal, obviously is not the same as perception where the intentional object is in the form of a being-in-itself. That possibility as goal does not promise or predict its actualization as in the case of perception, where more phenomena are promised toward validating the same perception. Thus, projection is distinct from perception.

And yet in projection, consciousness posits the goal as it were a being-in-itself. Without ambiguity, such is an act of intentionality. In this particular case or instance of projection, where the intentional object is what is not yet, the kind of intentional act of consciousness implicitly involves belief—the belief that the posited goal can possibly be actualized.[120] In reflection, if such a belief is not there in the first place, logically, the act of choosing a possibility as a goal or end can not arise. In the absence of a belief as such, the being-for-itself or human reality can not possibly proceed with the task of fulfilling its

---

[120] Ibid., pp.98-9

fundamental lack or "desire for being."[121] Hence, in projection, it can be seen that belief is an important and necessary ingredient in the intentional act of positing a goal. If this inference is true, any scope of acquiring knowledge of things in future as a posited goal must be accompanied by a belief as such. In this sense, if the project is of an epistemological kind, i.e. the lack or desire refers to acquiring knowledge of beings, belief becomes a pre-requisite or is pre-supposed in such an act of projection.

---

[121] Ibid., p.61

CHAPTER 3

Existential Study of Freedom

Sartre's existentialism recognizes the importance of human freedom and responsibility. He takes note that freedom is the essential pre-condition of human action. In other words, freedom is pre-requisite for the possibility of conscious acts. Otherwise, an individual will not be able to choose his path of action. Choice and decision pre-supposes freedom.[122] According to Sartre, human reality is absolutely free; as he puts it: man is condemned to be free.[123] In his discussion of *the gambler* and *vertigo*, Sartre illustrates that consciousness is absolutely free to choose its conscious acts: nothing stands in the way for consciousness to choose or decide its own acts. Basically, this is the key-idea of *radical* freedom in Sartre's existentialist philosophy.

With freedom comes responsibility, points out Sartre: man is responsible to utilize his freedom, and is subsequently responsible for exercising his freedom, to wit, he is accountable for his free acts.[124] Through his absolute freedom, the power and the responsibility of building each person's future is in his own hands. Freedom is working out the demands of one's inner nature and expressing one's authentic-self. It is facing choices, making decision and exacting responsibility for his own act. But the future, as it is, remains uncertain, and the outcome of his choices and acts looks uncertain. Yet the individual is thrust with one's own freedom and responsibility to act anyway. Moreover, one finds that there are innumerable options or possibilities of action to choose from. Faced with these challenges constantly, and realizing that there is no escaping the reality, one feels *anguish* or *nausea* and often falls into despair.[125] Issues and implications related to this human predicament will be examined in the latter part of this chapter.

---

[122] Ibid., p.37
[123] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. pp. 461-2
[124] Sartre, J.P. *Existentialism is a Humanism*. p.23
[125] Churchill, S. & Reynolds, J. *Jean-Paul Sartre Key Concepts*. p.120

With this brief discussion of the chief features of the concept of freedom in existentialism, the issues arising out of the assertions regarding freedom and their significance for man as an individual in the face of his responsibility in the context of modern civilization, will be studied in the following part of this chapter.

I. Freedom of choice and its Inevitability

Sartre discusses freedom in terms of the being-for-itself's power to make individual choices all by himself.[126] For man, choice is an act which is revealed through every action of his being. It continuously manifests, even through the smallest details of a person's daily activity. A choice is said to be free if it is such that it could have been other than what it is. He defines autonomy of choice through freedom, and in this sense man is always free. As a generally accepted fact, plurality of persons exists in this world, and so they have their own freedom of choice. If everybody has freedom, what is the relation between one's own freedom of choice and others' freedom of choice? Is there any coordination or conflict amongst human beings in their freedom? Sartre opines that their freedoms are not in conflict with one another.[127] For him, an individual in the collective where his relation to the group is that he is a member, as a fall-out of his being a member, finds the suppression of his individual liberty, rather than its enhancement. The appreciation of the group seems to entail the negation of individual freedom. But conflict in the sense of mutual hostility and attempts at domination, in Sartre's view, is absent here. Insofar as the group enriches the power of the individuals within it, it is manifested in terms of more freedom that the individual members exercise. It does so by enabling them to attain goals they could never achieve alone. Freedom is totality of an individual as one who makes known to himself his freedom in terms of choosing his commitments, goals and ends.

Moreover, a question arises: who is free? For Sartre, a free for-itself has three characteristics: firstly, a free for-itself is one who is necessarily a conscious being and

---

[126] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness.* p.463
[127] Ibid., p.469

separated from others' consciousnesses. Secondly, a free for-itself is one who decides in the present the meaning of his past in view of the future. And, lastly, a free for-itself is one who employs for his own advantage his freedom in terms of making commitments, setting goals, and choosing ends.[128] Thus far Sartre has considered and deliberated only one aspect (mode) of freedom: personal or individual freedom or liberty. For example, I choose to get rich—for *my*self; I decide to eat wholesome food—for *my* good health; I determine to study hard—to establish *my* career. When I say I am free, then this freedom in question concerns only myself, in terms of moving towards the totality of myself.[129] Sartre holds that an individual is totally or absolutely free. In Sartre's doctrine of freedom, two different points are conveyed: freedom means to be successful in doing something. It means individual freedom consists in achieving a goal, i.e. to obtain what one desires to be. The other point concerning freedom is that it is the individual himself who freely chooses on his own to act. This, as one understands normally, is human autonomy. It means the liberty of choosing a personal goal. Freedom is synonymous with the autonomy of choice. It is the power to determine oneself what to choose.[130] Thus, Sartre views that freedom which is a metaphysical characteristic of consciousness makes it possible for a being-for-itself to freely choose its goal in the world where it exists, i.e. as a being-in-the-world.

Freedom, as already seen above, is manifested in the choices one makes for one's acts through out the day, and through the course of one's life. An act of choice happens when one commits one act and not the other one(s) which is/are equally possible. It calls for a philosophical investigation as to why one chooses to act in a particular way, and not otherwise. Is an act of choice purely contingent or whimsical? Is one's act of deciding subject to one's psychological or physiological conditions? Sartre on this point thinks otherwise. His view in this regards leads to a rejection of the notion that a subjective attitude is constitutive of choice.[131] For him, choice cannot be explained or accounted for as such by wishes, individual desires or moods. A choice is not made capriciously or arbitrarily, but can be traced back to the individual's original goal. The comprehension of

---

[128] Ibid., pp.458-9
[129] Ibid., pp.461-2
[130] Ibid., pp.456-7
[131] Ibid., p.501

a choice is affected in two opposite ways: by a regressive approach, one moves back from the considered act and grasp its integration into the totality of being-for-itself. One can see that for Sartre it is necessary for a choice, on the one hand, to require an integration of the world that makes one apprehend things by progressing from the total integration that exist to the particular structure that is interpreted in relation to this totality. On the other hand, one rises up into the world suddenly and one does so as an original requirement. This original requirement reveals the original relation of the for-itself and in-itself, for an original requirement remains a nihilation. This nihilation turns back upon the in-itself and expresses itself by a particular valuation or valorization of facticity.[132] No matter whether a person accepts and enjoys his affliction or suffering in order to be a winner or achiever or gives in to that situation and let's himself relax in comfort and ease, the original requirements are based upon certain modes of the organization of the facticity with regard to the world.

It follows that this original relation is nothing other than the being-for-itself's being-in-the-world—how the for-itself defines its existential relation with the world around. The original relation refers to how the for-itself relates with the world.[133] Thus, this being-in-the-world has finally to be understood as a choice: it is the choice to be one's own nothingness. It is the choice of qualifying its existence with a particular original lack. Hence, for Sartre, owing to the necessary reference back to an original need, it is clear that the *mode of being* of the for-itself in the world is a choice where this choice is a nihilation, a nihilation that has to be understood as an absolutely free act because there is no organized totality to explain this choice prior to it. The in-itself by itself is not capable of the unity that makes the world a whole. Thus the first phenomenon of (the mode of) being in the world is the original relation between the totality of the in-itself, organized as a world, and the for-itself's own totality detotalized.[134] The essence of a choice, therefore, is that "I choose myself as a whole in the world which is a whole."[135] Thus, such a choice for the mode of being in the world is both the being and the consciousness of the for-itself.

[132] Ibid., p.466
[133] Ibid., p.474
[134] Meszaros, Istvan. *The Work of Sartre*. p.216
[135] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p. 593

Sartre presents his view, contrary to the common view, that a choice is not made following a decision based on causes and motives posited by an original freedom.[136] On the contrary, Sartre holds that as soon as there are causes and motives, which are appreciation of things and of the structures of the world, there is already a positing of ends and consequently a choice.[137] Since the for-itself's fundamental act of freedom is to set a lack as an end, thereby a choice of the for-itself in the world is made at the same time. This constantly renewed act is not an independent or separate event from the being of the for-itself as a nihilation. Sartre submits that a choice of the for-itself is the same as the being of the for-itself. A choice as the choice of the for-itself is with reference to the world and at the same time a discovery of the world. In this manner, Sartre says, "the fundamental act of freedom is discovered."[138]

On the other hand, when Sartre says that a choice is not separate or distinct from the being of the for-itself and vice versa, he does not mean by any chance that this choice is unconscious.[139] On the contrary, he insists that a profound choice is just one with the consciousness we have of ourselves. This consciousness he is referring to here is the non-positional side of consciousness. Hence, the choice in question is we-as-consciousness, even as the former is not distinct from our being. And as our being, it is precisely our *original* choice, the consciousness (of) the choice is identical with the self-consciousness we have—to wit, the non-positional consciousness. Sartre's analysis so far conveys in effect that one must be consciousness in order to choose, and one must choose in order to be conscious. Choice and consciousness are construed to be one and the same thing in Sartre's existential theory of freedom. If it is accepted that consciousness is a nihilation, and, it is an enterprise of oneself toward this or that possibility, to be conscious of oneself and to choose oneself are one and the same, just as "to will to love" (or, to be loving) and to love (or, to choose to love) are the same, since to love is to choose oneself as loving by assuming or adopting a consciousness of loving.[140] The significant point Sartre emphasizes here is that a choice is not a consequence or derivative of a consciousness,

[136] Ibid., p.474
[137] Morris, Katherine J. *Sartre*. p.147
[138] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*, p. 594
[139] Ibid., pp. 501-2
[140] Ibid., p.484

but the same as consciousness. Choice is thereby traced back to its ontological foundation in and as consciousness.

In his analysis, Sartre goes on to show that, on the other hand, the consciousness in a choice is *positional*. This comes about when one withdraws from the world and turns it towards oneself in order to make the world appear such as it is. Through the negation by means of which one denies that one and the world are one and the same, one makes the world appear as world—a separate and distinct being. In turn, the world reflects back to one the image of what one is and in what manner one exists in the surrounding world, such as the dresses one wears, the furniture in the living room, the streets around the house, the city in which one resides, etc. All these outline one's image and inform one's choice, that is, one's being or the being of one's consciousness.

When Sartre says that a choice can be traced back to an individual's fundamental task of negating an original lack, it does not mean that the person in question has only one choice, that one is doomed to that one's original choice, or that he necessarily has to retain that choice.[141] On the contrary, a human being is perpetually engaged in his choice and perpetually conscious of the fact that he can change this choice. Such a change is possible by a radical conversion of one's being-in-the-world, that is, by changing one's initial need or lack and replacing the original choice by another choice and another end. For instance, a young man may give up his interest in movies, parties and other fashionable pursuits, and choose instead to turn to God, spiritual discourses and meditations. In this case, as in other similar instances, the person in question has shifted his originally identified lack and his choice of being-in-the-world.

Thus, the modification of a former choice is always possible. This capacity is inhered in the very nature of the being of the for-itself in the world: man envisages the future by his very being, but his existential freedom perpetually eats it away.[142] Because a person is perpetually threatened by the nihilation of his actual choice, and thus perpetually challenged with having to choose by himself, hence of becoming other than what he is. So says Sartre, "... we make known to ourselves what we are by means of the

---

[141] Ibid., p.502
[142] Ibid., p. 598

future but without getting a grip on the future which remains always possible without ever passing to the rank of the real."[143] In effect, a choice made does not present itself as an object for reflection and judgment to the one who makes it. For this reason, one's choice is always subject to change, rejection and replacement. Human anguish bears witness to this perpetual modifiability of one's initial purpose, for in anguish the possible that a man has envisaged is perpetually eaten away by his inherent freedom at work.

A general perception holds that a choice is produced in an instant. This turns out to be not exactly true in Sartre's view. He theorizes that a choice 'unlocks' time and is, in a fundamental way, unified with the three modes of time—past, present, and future. Since one's act of choosing brings about a nihilation of oneself, the same act of choice causes a future to come to make the individual in question known as what he is by conferring a meaning on his past.[144] Therefore to choose is to eventuate or facilitate the upsurge of a certain continuous duration. Hence Sartre avers, "Thus, freedom, choice, nihilation, temporalization are all one and the same thing."[145] If this be the case, how tenable is the general perception that a choice is made in an instant? How then is one to understand the positing of the "instant" in the unity of the three modes of time? In the process of temporalization the instant in question cannot be independent from a concrete lack. It is already seen that a choice is the unity of the three temporal modes of past, present, and future. The same cannot be identified with either the initial or the final term of a temporal process, for both these terms are an integral part of the overall unity of the process. The instant, as Sartre shows, is produced as a point on which overlap the collapse of a prior process and the arising of a following process. That instant can be seen as both a beginning and an end. To put it another way, that instant is a temporal reality located on the border between the end of one lack and the beginning of another (lack), a beginning that is given as the end of a prior lack (that has been negated). There is such an instant only if or when one is both a beginning and an end as such at the same time, within the unity of a single act.

---

[143] Ibid., p. 598
[144] Ibid., p. 502
[145] Ibid., p. 599

Furthermore, Sartre would point out that such an instant is created in the condition of a complete modification of a person's previous lack and as a result of his free choice. A person makes himself known to himself by a future being that he has chosen. In this way, Sartre explains that the present becomes a new temporalization as a beginning. At the same time, one's new choice turns one's past choice into just a part of one's past—a past decision.[146] Thus the new choice is posited as a beginning only in so far as it also is an end, and as an end only insofar as it is a beginning too. In this connection, the choice is limited by a double nothingness: a prior nothingness of the new choice and a posterior nothingness of the old choice (which *now* only exists in the past). In this way, it realizes a break in the temporal unity of the being of consciousness. So also an instant is the break in the temporal unity of one's choice. It happens at the moment when one's old choice is replaced or superseded by a new one.

A notable point in his theory of freedom is that Sartre does not reject or overlook the element of contingency in the free choice of the being-for-itself. The pursuit to apprehend one's ultimate goal or end does not suffice to account for the choice of one possible instead of another. For example, whether one decides to read *Existentialism is a Humanism* or watch video-recorded lecture on the same work of Sartre are equally possible choices. How can this phenomenon be explained? To this Sartre would answer: the connection between the secondary possible (i.e. to read or to watch) and the fundamental possible (that there is a free choice) is not a connection of deducibility. This shows that it is not a linear relation in which any chosen possible is necessarily related to the fundamental possible of there being a free choice. There is no cause-effect relation here. To be precise, it is a connection between a totality and a partial component. The being of any secondary possible is always grounded in the being of the for-itself as a totality of possibilities. In Sartre's pithy words, consciousness is its own possibilities.[147] So according to his theory of freedom, any other possible could replace this or that one without altering the fundamental choice that consciousness or for-itself is. Furthermore, a variety of secondary possible(s) may enrich consciousness as fundamental choice. A brief analysis of free choice brings to light and makes manifest that human freedom is entire

---

[146] Ibid., p.502
[147] Spade, Paul Vincent. (1995). *Jean Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness*. p.83

and unconditioned. This is the basic sense in which Sartre advocates his radical idea of man's absolute freedom. Also Sartre informs that these free choices are all integrated—no matter if they are complimentary or possibly even at cross-purpose with one another—into the unity of one's fundamental project.[148] The being-for-itself as the free agent chooses to consider the secondary possible in the direction of apprehending its fundamental possible.

Moreover, the being-for-itself can make choices that are contrary to its fundamental purposes. It often happens that consciousness as the free subject turns away from its original and initial goal. Here, on the volitional plan, for-itself takes upon itself such roles or plans that contradict its initial project without fundamentally altering or re-adjusting this original project.[149] This type of choice is usually involved in what Sartre calls 'bad faith.' In such choices, one is found to deliberately ignore the true ends chosen by spontaneous consciousness, and instead setting up false psychic objects as excuses for making such a decision. For example, someone aspires to be a great movie star—a superstar perhaps—but at the present chooses instead an inferior role or project—a supporting actor or extra. This inferiority implies a constant gap between the end pursued at heart and the end at present. Nonetheless, some artists prefers to maintain this gap as a 'safe distance' because though they desire to be great, they know that at present they are not in a capacity to be so, and therefore choose an inferior project or role instead. Thus it shows that a choice of ends can be totally free, yet not necessarily satisfactory or a happy one. The choice can come about in a situation of self-introspection, resignation, uneasiness, humiliation, anguish, bitterness or some inner turmoil.[150] Sartre clarifies that such a choice made in bad faith however need not be in contradiction with the fundamental or original project. In fact, the choice as such is conceived by the free agent as a means to attain certain ends. In the example as seen above, one's choice to be an inferior artist reveals a consciousness of inner turmoil and the emotion of diffidence of the artist, and at the same time manifests his desire to be a great star. If that is not the case, the inferiority would be felt, acknowledged and suffered by him, since in some

---

[148] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p.502
[149] Morris, Katherine J. *Sartre*. pp.144-5
[150] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. pp.456-7

other field the artist may possibly fare above the average without much ado. Obviously in this case, he opts to be the last in this artistic field rather than to dissolve into the general mass, purely by virtue of his hope to become a great movie-star some day in the future. Even so, he is aware that this hope may turn out to be unrealistic and futile in the end, and for this reason, he is liable to go into despair more often than not. In order to be set free from such a miserable 'inferiority complex' and the concomitant bitterness, a radical modification of the original goal becomes imperative. In such moments where radical acts of choice are committed, Sartre observes, "humiliation, anguish, joy, hope are delicately blended, in which we let go in order to grasp and grasp in order to let go— these have often appeared to furnish the clearest and most moving image of our freedom."[151]

In the above analysis of the freedom of choice, it is implied very clear that human beings are 'born free' or come into existence as free agents to choose for themselves the essence they desire to become or acquire. This inherent freedom of choice is not an option, but inevitable and necessary.[152] Further Sartre emphasizes the potentiality of this freedom of choice as the means or process by which the possible becomes the actual. This shows the two sides of responsibility that come along with the freedom of the for-itself: the responsibility to utilize one's inborn freedom, and the responsibility for the consequences of his choices. Moreover, Sartre asserts that this freedom of choice present in consciousness is absolute—nothing can either compel or prevent the act of freely choosing by the for-itself. Its act of choosing is not conditioned by anything. The implication of this Sartre's doctrine of human freedom adds to the weight of the responsibility—rather, the accountability—on the conscious being for his actions. In short, man is absolutely free, and is therefore absolutely responsible for his life and his acts. Thus, man is responsible to choose for his being-in-the-world. Sartre goes on to show that the initial and original orientation of man's existence with reference to the world happens to be his own choice, to be precise, his first and original choice.[153] The secondary choices that he makes subsequently may predictably but not necessarily and

---

[151] Ibid., p. 612
[152] Ibid., p.503
[153] Morris, Katherine J. *Sartre*. p.153

directly in line with the original choice of his life-purpose or project. Man often faces a reality-check, according to Sartre, that exposes the disparity between him and his original life-goal(s). This realization precipitates an inferiority-complex that leads to a personal crisis. At this point, Sartre observes a most moving image of man's freedom wherein he chooses to revise and change his original and fundamental project in preference of a more viable or realistic one.[154]

II. Projection as Future Possibility

One basic and recurrent conceptual view of Sartre concerning human reality is that there is no such thing as a primordial or pre-human structure or nature of his being and a destiny foreordained before the upsurge of his consciousness. Man as an essentially and absolutely free agent, according to Sartre, chooses what his being and life will be. The theoretical import of his view is captured in the famous statement: "existence precedes essence." In other words, the very essence man comes to acquire is the outcome of his free-choices. The process of his becoming involves the exercise of his freedom in choosing his ends or purposes for his life or existence. Sartre clarifies,

> But if we wish to avoid the error ... these transcendent ends as pre-
> human and as an a priori limit to our transcendence, then we are indeed
> compelled to recognize that they are the temporalizing projection of our
> freedom. Human reality can not receive its ends, as we have seen,
> either from outside or from a so-called inner "nature." It chooses them
> and by this very choice confers upon them a transcendent existence as
> the external limit of its project. From this point of view—and if it is
> understood that the existence of the *Dasein* precedes and commands its
> essence—human reality in and through its very upsurge decides to
> define its own being by its ends. It is therefore the positing of my
> ultimate ends which characterizes my being and which is identified
> with the sudden thrust of the freedom which is mine. And this thrust is

---

[154] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p. 502

an *existence*; it has nothing to do with an essence or with a property of a being....[155]

Thus, Sartre presents freedom as the foundation of ends. By his theory as such, man demonstrates freedom as projecting the possible(s) as his end(s) that in turn characterizes his being. This temporalization of freedom and possibility through projection of end(s) can be seen as a process: existence proceeding toward essence.[156]

Sartre puts forward that it is 'possibility' that constitutes the being of the for-itself. Indeed, according to Sartre, the for-itself is seen as a totality of 'possibles.' The possible in this context approximately connotes 'potential' in the Aristotelian sense. Every individual as a particular possibility is therefore articulated as an ensemble of 'possibles.' One possible relates to another, and these to still others, and so on to the ultimate possibility which sums up the being of the for-itself. This ultimate possibility comes to be conceived as the unitary synthesis of all actual possibles (or potentials). Each of these possibles inherently resides in an undifferentiated state in this ultimate possibility until a particular situation comes into prominence that causes one possible to stand out against the background of the totality. Every project can be seen as an endeavour of the for-itself toward a possible, because first one instantly apprehends the particular possible that one projects as a desired end. As mentioned before, this particular possible in question relates to other possibles up to the ultimate possibility which the for-itself in sum is.

Sartre affirms that possibility is prior to being i.e. to say, potentiality precedes actualization. Even so, possibility itself must have some kind of being. This is the ontological notion of the being of the possible(s). Thus, the possible(s) cannot be reduced to the subjective. It is a property of an already existing reality. Like lack, possibility is projected on the world from human consciousness. But possibility is not just the thought of the possible. Man must be able to envisage the possibility of a better future. A ray of hope overcomes the dark prospect of suffering and lights up at the end of the tunnel, the possibility of a better life. So, a possibility is the ontological projection of the upsurge of

---

[155] Ibid., pp. 465-6
[156] Meszaros, Istvan. *The Work of Sartre*. p. 214

the for-itself, whereby it in effect denies inauthentic living.[157] This projection envisages a goal that the particular free-agent seeks to realize. For example, with an aspiration to become a competent philosophical professor, a student is prudently studying philosophy to gain mastery of the subject. In a strange turn of event where philosophy as an academic discipline is dropped, the student freely explores for himself other possibilities and soon reframes his project(s). He may turn to literature or psychology, so on and so forth. Primarily the student's original project would be to actualize his potentials (possibles) through suitable projects in a progressive manner in order to realize his human reality.[158]

Existentialists such as Sartre generally affirm that man's freedom is absolute in the sense that nothing can prevent or resist his spontaneous conscious acts. At the same time, he points out that man's freedom is limited or restricted within the domain of possibilities found in the facticity with reference to the context of the individual existence.[159] Facticity is a concept that plays a key-role in the existentialists' doctrine of being-in-the-world. It conveys the notion of 'thrownness': man finds his existence in a certain temporal, spatial and ontological setting; and he plays no role of choice in the configuration or order of these givens.[160] In short, the particularities of the nature of the existence man finds himself in are as a whole considered and identified as his facticity. Facticity would therefore include the individual man's historical, geographical, economical, political, cultural and such other particular co-ordinates that associate with his present existence. By the conceptual definition of facticity, all the ontological structure and characteristics of the being of man also should be part of his facticity. For instance, freedom itself is a part of man's facticity. In this given picture of his facticity, man explores the domain of all the possibilities afforded by his facticity. Sartre elucidates that these possibilities in question originate in man's consciousness and their scopes and limits defined by his facticity.[161] Those possibilities as potentials inhered or latent in

---

[157] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p.466
[158] Morris, Katherine J. *Sartre*. pp.154-5
[159] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p.156
[160] Ibid., p.103
[161] Ibid., p.503-4

consciousness are conditional and dependent on the beings-in-themselves that constitute the facticity around the individual for-itself.

Sartre goes on to distinguish that man is not to blame for his facticity since he played no part in the constituting of his facticity. Man is not responsible for his facticity, in other words. Yet, Sartre points out that man is responsible *toward* his facticity even as the later is entrusted in his care.[162] By his free act of choosing, man exercises the power to definitely influence or affect the future course of the world around him. In other words, man is responsible in shaping the facticity of his future. In effect, man in a generic sense is to blame for his facticity insofar as he has transformed it as a consequence of all his acts chosen in his absolute freedom.

As already seen above and also analyzed in detail in the second chapter under the third heading "for-itself and projection," one may sum up as follows. Man by virtue of his freedom makes a choice from the possibilities in himself the scope and feasibility of which are grounded in his surrounding facticity. That possibility is chosen as an end or goal to be actualized. A string of specific tasks are selected that comprise a project for fulfilling or realizing the chosen end projected as the future possibility.

III. Authenticity and Ethical Consideration

In order to discuss Sartrean doctrine of authenticity and related issues, one needs to dwell a bit on Sartre's idea of 'bad-faith.' It is observed in general, and studied in psychology as well as in philosophy the common behaviour and capacity of self-deception peculiar to the human species. Without delving into the reasons or causal factors, it is commonly noticed that man often makes a projection of his being or life which is removed from the reality. In so doing, he assumes or adopts a form of existence or condition which Sartre terms as 'bad-faith.'[163] From his analysis, bad-faith can be identified in three forms. Firstly, a state of consciousness in which the for-itself attempts to escape the realities of his facticity by ignoring or avoiding them. Secondly, the for-itself projecting of itself as a

---

[162] Ibid., p. 504
[163] Ibid., p. 71

being-in-itself by identifying its existence with a formal or social identity/role. Thirdly, the mode of life in which the for-itself allows itself to be dictated or regulated by others' rules, views or expectations, and not genuinely its own. These three forms in which bad-faith can occur, on closer analysis, are interrelated.

Sartre's theory of bad-faith follows from his existential postulate: man is condemned to be free.[164] According to him, man constantly faces the challenging responsibility of choosing his act from a sphere of innumerable possibles (paths of action). This brings him to a state of anxiety, which gives him nausea or dizziness. Man therefore looks for escape, so opines Sartre, from his anxiety of having to exercise his freedom of choice in the face of his complex facticity. How he does this is by surrendering his freedom through adopting a fixed role or formal identity: a being-for-itself assumes the existence of a being-in-itself. He literally becomes a being which is not what it is, and is what it is not. As in Sartre's illustration of the waiter, the individual free-agent makes a self-projection or projects himself as a being-in-itself character who plays out a scripted role, as expected by a group, institution or society.[165] Thus, by playing out a formal character or pre-programmed role, the individual escapes the onus of having to make any free-choice of his own. In short, through bad-faith he forfeits his freedom—the very essence of his existence: being a human reality. Sartre specifically emphasizes that bad-faith is a formal projection of self where the whole existence of human reality is reduced to and presented as a formal and typical identity.

Thus, bad-faith can be seen as the guise of existing as a character, individual or person who defines himself through the social categorization of his formal identity.[166] This basically means that the person in question projects his human existence through a formal and fixed identity, say being a citizen of a state or member of a religious community or organization. Living a life confined to one's professional, cultural, political, racial or economic category, according to Sartre, is the very characterization of bad-faith. In effect, such human subjects adopt a narrow projection of their existence. Consequently, the condition of bad-faith cuts off the awareness of other realities

---

[164] Ibid., pp.461-2
[165] Ibid., p.70
[166] Churchill, S. and Reynolds J. *Jean-Paul Sartre Key Concepts*. p.121

pertaining to his genuine existence. In this connection, such individuals are actually living a life of pretence or hypocrisy—or plain ignorance. For in the first place, they have deliberately deceived themselves to be what they are not, and reduced their existence by projecting themselves as things-in-themselves.

Sartre deplores this condition of bad-faith by reason of which people involved are not able to transcend their low-level states of existence in order to realize their full potential in being human. He decries this contrived condition charging that this deceitful disposition makes man inauthentic.[167] In other words, such a person is untrue or insincere to himself through bad-faith in order to escape the discharging of his responsibility bound up with his freedom.

Yet the truth is, says Sartre, there is always a distinction between existence and identity or formal projection at the heart of human subjects who are swept into their self-chosen condition of bad-faith. In this connection, he reckons that a distinct separation between pure existence and formal projection of self can be maintained within the means of human control. He offers a solution to get out of bad-faith in order to return to what he calls 'the great human stream,' whereby one will recover his true self or original existential position. According to him, one must realize the difference between one's pure existence as human reality and the formal identity of his self-projection.[168] He says that the existent (human reality) must make an internal negation to separate his formal projection(s) of self-identity and his pure existence. That separation comes into being as a nothingness. In other words, he must admit to himself the fact that he is not this or that character, and accept rightly that he is a free-agent, basically a pure existence. This process of returning to one's true existential identity is understood as 'self-recovery,' in Sartre's terminology.[169]

Thus, Sartre maintains that in order to step out of bad-faith or inauthentic existence, man must realize what he is—the true essence of his existence—and what he is

---

[167] Ibid., p.140
[168] Morris, Katherine J. *Sartre*. p163
[169] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p.94

not—the temporal/social identity projection of his self.[170] By an internal negation as mentioned above, a nothingness must maintain a distinct separation between his existence and his projection(s). Sartre observes that by maintaining a balance between existence, projection and nothingness, man will become an authentic being. Here obviously the social roles or formal identities are not done away or discredited. But as Sartre puts it, those identities or roles are contrived or artificial but necessary, and one must be conscious that the role one is playing is but a lie. While maintaining that consciousness, one must enact a quantum of 'good-faith' in order to take advantage of those roles or projections to reach authentic existence.[171] Thus, to live and project into the future as a project of a self, while steering clear of bad-faith and living as a free-agent, in Sartre's judgment, is authentic living.

In *Existentialism is a Humanism*, Sartre evaluates good faith (authenticity) as "the attitude of strict consistency" of freedom. It involves the ideal that "I declare that freedom ... can have no other end and aim but itself;" and a man "can will only one thing, and that is freedom as the foundation of all values." Hence, "the action of men of good faith have, as their ultimate significance, the quest of freedom itself as such."[172] It follows that an authentic person, for Sartre, should forever consider freedom as the most consistent issue of the human condition and the ultimate end of human beings. The ethical implication of this Sartrean assertion leads to rejection of all a priori rules of morality and human nature, because "nature is one's choice of oneself in the face of other people's oppressive freedom."[173] In addition, authenticity requires that humankind preserve their freedom in all circumstances, always as an end because it is the very foundation of all values. For Sartre, those who will uphold their own freedom and that of others are authentic. Inauthenticity is the inevitable result, as Sartre judges, if our relations with others are based or founded on a denial of man's freedom individually and collectively.

---

[170] Webber, J. *Reading Sartre on phenomenological and Existentialism*. pp.3-4
[171] Churchill, S. and Reynolds J. *Jean-Paul Sartre Key Concepts*. p.134
[172] Sartre. J. P. *Existentialism is a Humanism*. p.51
[173] Sartre. J. P. *Notebooks for an Ethics*.p.6

Though Sartre has projected being authentic as the ideal state and the moral perfection of human beings, authenticity itself is howsoever not by itself the ultimate value. Sartre distinguishes that freedom is more fundamental and primary than authenticity. The reason he fields is that freedom is the essential and unique character of human consciousness, freedom alone is the source of all values and itself is the ultimate value. In contradistinction, Sartre clarifies that authenticity characterizes those individuals who are clearly aware and accept freedom as the fundamental condition of man and thereby do anything according to the principle of freedom. In this regard, Tomas C. Anderson sums up:

> Authenticity, is a relative term; an individual must be authentic about something, either a particular state of affairs or the general human condition, or both. To speak as if authenticity itself is the ultimate value in Sartrean ethics is to speak of an abstraction, and a rather empty one at that. Authentic is simply the term used here to designate the individual who in clear awareness of his freedom as the source of all value accepts his responsibility for this and chooses freedom as his ultimate value.[174]

From the above considerations, one may gather that the essential difference between freedom and authenticity is that for Sartre, freedom is the end of all human activities, whereas authenticity is a means to achieve this end. Even though man in practical reality frequently acts for a particular goal, that particular goal can in no way supersede freedom as man's ultimate end. Sartre strikes this difference in a clear statement in his *Notebook on Ethics*: "if you seek authenticity for authenticity's sake, you are no longer authentic."[175] On the contrary, as Sartre affirms in *Being and Nothingness*: "we will freedom for freedom's sake in and through particular circumstances."[176]

Furthermore, Sartre elucidates the two basic characteristics of authenticity. Firstly, an authentic person accepts himself in his facticity just as it is. He does not try to flee or escape from it by deluding himself. As seen before, the authentic person steers clear of bad-faith. The situation which brings about a rightly balanced and clear

---

[174] Anderson, *The Foundation and Structure of Sartrean Ethics*. p.44
[175] Sartre. J. P. *Notebooks for an Ethics*. p.4
[176] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p.307

consciousness involves the relation of man's own condition and the external world he encounters. He should therefore have a crystal-clear consciousness about his being and task(s), and never to confuse between the essence of his existential being and his self-projection(s) in his human situation. The second characteristic is human responsibility where a person accepts the responsibilities and liabilities that his situation involves. In a possible event or case that all values are created by himself, then authenticity involves recognizing this, and accepting the responsibility for his creative freedom. Sartre portrays man as one who bears full responsibility for the world, for himself, for other people and for the situation he finds himself in. Man's responsibility is therefore to be reckoned an indispensable part of his human reality. And therefore, man must courageously own up his responsibility and exercise his freedom in all spheres that are relevant for making his existence and living authentic.

In order to further look into the ethical implications of Sartre's philosophical assertions, one will quickly review the human situation and its related issues in the tradition of western philosophy. To start with, what it means to be human is a question that philosophy has been attempting to answer from its conception. Many believe that the concept of what is to be human is a pre-existing ideal transcending human thought. This line of thinking implies that essence precedes existence.

In a graphical manner, Sartre describes this view of being human by employing the analogy of the process by which a paper-knife is manufactured. The principle involved in the example of the production of inanimate object, Sartre will also apply to the belief of God as the creator of human beings. The *a priori* notion of human nature stemmed from the objective value theories (such as the hierarchical concept of universal ideas or forms) put forward by Plato and Aristotle gives man a distinct position in the world and necessitates man to be inhered with a fixed nature consisting of rational faculties that naturally envisage pre-ordained ends—the realization of these faculties. Philosophies of this sort require man to conform his actions into roles predetermined for him. Sartre believes that this notion of human nature (condition) takes freedom away from man, and places someone or something in control of his life and destiny. This consideration leads Sartre to develop a philosophy of human condition that does away

with any such notion of *a priori* human nature or essence. Sartre comes out with his formula: "Man is nothing other than he makes himself to be."[177]

Sartre's human condition begins with the concept of nothingness as an ideal.[178] Many thinkers in common would say or might have viewed that human life, as much as anything else, could never come from nothing. Indeed, long ago Parmenides expressed this view that only nothing can come from nothing (*nihil fit ex nihilo*). In contrast to the traditional viewpoint, Sartre takes a much more pragmatic and optimistic view of *nothingness* and what possibly can come from it. Sartre goes on to propound that humans when entering the world are devoid of any pre-determined essence, endowed nature or innate ideas. From this view follows his ideology that humans begin to define themselves through their actions. Actions are very specific, according to Sartre, for man is not defined through his perceptions of himself but his actual willful actions. This pre-supposes Sartre's ideal that man is free. As one may expect, Sartre strongly believes that an *a priori* concept of human nature removes freedom from man.[179] In such a case, Sartre shows that responsibility as well is removed from man. Responsibility turns out to be a key component in Sartre's theory of human condition. To be precise, this responsibility includes the responsibility of the individual's action and its effect upon humanity as a whole—including himself for sure. With these two ideals of freedom and responsibility in place, Sartre further broadens his description of the human condition that involves three aspects of human life.

First, man is thrown or abandoned into the world at a specific place and time. Man finds himself with distinct given facts such as being male or female, white or colored, or poor or rich etc. These facts or particularities are what Sartre calls facticity which makes up his world, and it is within these inescapable parameters that he must act. Sartre locates man's freedom within his facticity: one is free to choose absolutely on his own from the possibilities provided or available within the parameters of his facticity.[180]

---

[177] Wild, John. "Authentic Existence." Ethics 75.4 (1965): 227-39. JSTOR. Web. 9 Apr. 2010.http://www.jstor. org/stable/2379721.

[178] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. p.456

[179] Ibid., p.457

[180] Ibid., pp.503-4

Man is therefore completely responsible for the actions upon which he projects himself. As already said, man is not only responsible for his own actions, but how they will affect himself and all others in the world. For Sartre, this inescapable situation creates anguish in the individual free-agent. (Sartre basically borrows this from Heidegger's idea of 'angst'). This grim prospect of the human condition leads him often to despair. The feeling of despair ensues from the realization of the finality of man's choices, for once man has made his choice and acted accordingly, he is unable to change or undo it. This however, is not the only explanation for Sartre's human condition. In relation to human essence and ethics, Sartre posits a significant ontological statement: "I am a possibility to be achieved, so far as this is possible. But as long as I exist, I am unfinished and incomplete."[181] The last part of the quotation is an allusion to his ideal that there is no *a priori* meaning or essence for man. Since man has no pre-existing meaning or concept of his being and existence, he must create his own values within his condition. This individualized creation of values out of the human condition is where Sartrean ethics basically follows from.

The principal character of the human condition that is emphasized throughout Sartrean ethics is freedom coupled up with responsibility. Since no human lives and operates in isolation but his free choices and acts affect the world of other fellowmen as well as his, the responsibility of one's actions extends out to all men. This implies that making a choice can not be subjective i.e. confined to the individual's personal situation, but should be ideally inter-subjective with all mankind.[182] Sartre believes that if a man is adequately aware of his human condition, it will lead him to take decisions that are good for not only himself but for all humanity. The concept of "good," somehow is not clearly defined. Sartre however would follow an argument as such: "Whenever I make a choice, I choose the good. The good for one is the good for all. Therefore, in choosing for myself, I choose for all."[183]

[181] Wild, John. "Authentic Existence." Ethics 75.4 (1965): 227-39. JSTOR. Web. 9 Apr. 2010.http://www.jstor. org/stable/2379721.

[182] Rau, Catherine. "The Ethical Theory of Jean-Paul Sartre." The Journal of Philosophy 46.17 (1949): 536-45. JSTOR. Web. 19 Apr. 2010. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2019444.

[183] Ibid.

Predictably, no *a priori* meaning of mankind leads to no *a priori* moral law in Sartre's layout of his ethical guideline. This relates back to the condition of man's thrownness, anguish, and despair, having to choose means and ends, ideals and principles for his meaningful existence that in turn affect all of humanity, with no help from within himself or without to guide him in this situation.[184] Consequently, he is left just with his own logical judgment to guide himself. Yet there are no fixed rules or claims given as to how the individual should make that judgment. In this scenario painted by Sartre's description of human condition, man finds himself abandoned and left to construct on his own his knowledge, to make his own judgments, and to take his own decisions.

Sartre says there is only one thing that is ethically 'bad.' This vice is termed by him as 'bad faith.' As already discussed much before, bad faith is a condition that slips in through the continuous denial of the human condition. Man enters bad faith as an attempt to escape from the anguish, though it turns out to be an inconsistent unsuccessful attempt in self-deception. In this attempt, there is a denial of one's freedom, which itself is committed freely and therefore is still a free-agent. Bad-faith is therefore a condition of self-contradiction. This contradiction goes against rationality or logic and hence is required to be logically examined which will facilitate one to make a responsible 'good' choice.[185] Sartre succinctly deliberates on this point:

> Since we have defined the situation of man as one of free choice, without excuse and without help, any man who takes refuge behind the excuse of his passions, or by, inventing some determinist doctrine, is a self-deceiver. One may object. "But why should he not choose to deceive himself?" I reply that it is not for me to judge him morally, but I define his self-deception as an error. Here one cannot avoid pronouncing a judgment of truth. The self-deception is evidently a false-hood, because it is a dissimulation of man's complete liberty of commitment. Upon the same level, I say that it is also a self-deception if I choose to declare that certain values are incumbent upon me; I am in contradiction with myself if I will these values and at the same time say that

---

[184] Sartre, J.P. *Being and Nothingness*. pp.465-6

[185] Rau, Catherine. "The Ethical Theory of Jean-Paul Sartre." The Journal of Philosophy 46.17 (1949): 536-45. JSTOR. Web. 19 Apr. 2010. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2019444>.

they impose themselves upon me. If anyone says to me, "and what if I wish to deceive myself?" I answer, "There is no reason why you should not, but I declare that you are doing so, and that the attitude of strict consistency itself is that of good faith.[186]

At least Sartre makes a clear point that to be in good-faith is preferable for the reason that thereby man will be consistent in himself by honestly accepting his own human condition. In other words, man needs to be authentic or truthful. Furthermore, the ethics of living as an authentic human, in Sartre's view, is that one must be true to all that come spontaneously to him. Practically, this means one must follow the dictates of his own self, whether it comes from his will or his passion. This is what freedom means to Sartre. It follows that as long as he is not denying his spontaneous impulses (everything that makes one a free-agent), it is not only permissible, but in fact desirable. What is not desirable for man as a free-human, in Sartre's judgment, is the unquestioning conformity to conventional ethics or religious-traditional morality. In this regard, as seen earlier, it is man's responsibility to freely choose his ideals or create his own values. Essentially then, for Sartre, freedom is the very essence of living as an authentic human being.

---

[186] Lee, Sander H. "The Central Role of Universalization in Sartrean Ethics." Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 46.1 (1985): 59-71. JSTOR. Web. 19 Apr. 2010. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2107656.

CONCLUSION

The study has conducted a multi-faceted inquiry of Sartre's conceptions of Being and Freedom. A wide range of approaches such as ontological, historical, phenomenological, epistemological and ethical considerations have guided this research. Basically, Sartre developed his concept of 'being' from Heidegger's notion of Being. Heidegger's analysis of Being brought out a scheme of ontology that broke away from the traditional western philosophy. The study confirmed the well-established fact that Heidegger developed his ontology of Being from pre-Socratic philosophical ideas. As per the history of western philosophy, the nature of Being was contemplated for the first time by Parmenides and Heraclitus during the pre-Socratic philosophical era.

Parmenides presents Being as absolutely real and permanent. Further, he states that non-being is wholly unreal and illusory, which is identified with Becoming. In Parmenides' view, there are two methods of inquiry: *the way of truth* and *the way of opinion*. 'The way of truth' corresponds to the means of reason by which man can apprehend the knowledge of the ultimate reality or nature. By implication, the knowledge of Being can be attained or acquired only through 'the way of truth.' In other words, man by only resorting to his reason can launch out in his quest for the knowledge of Being. 'The way of opinion,' according to Parmenides, is deceptive and unreliable and therefore should be avoided or abandoned. The second method roughly corresponds to reliance on the physical sensory organs. In corollary, all sense-perceptions are illusory and false or unreal in Parmenidean view. Furthermore, in contrast to the concept of Being, Parmenides looks at non-being as a non-existent or nothingness, and to attempt to understand it will not only prove to be fruitless, but will also lead to deception or falsehood. 'The way of opinion' would incidentally yield the same outcome as that of attempting to enquire into non-being. Predictably, he would forbid any attempt to enquire into the nature of non-being, just as much as one ought to avoid or leave 'the way opinion.' This only goes to show definitely by implication that basically all sensory

objects (objects of sensory perception) and non-being are one and the same. Likewise, in the breath, 'the way of opinion' would correspond to the method of sensory perception.

In contrast to Parmenides' conception of *reality*, Heraclitus maintains that Being and non-being both are equally real and in fact identical. For him, becoming or flux is the characteristic identity of reality. Being or reality is always in a state of flux, i.e. one can observe that "everything flows" and changes with the passage of time. Change only therefore is permanent. In Greek philosophy, Heraclitus was the original thinker who introduced the idea of *Logos*. By employing the concept of *Logos*, Heraclitus sought to bring meaning and order to the seemingly inexorable process of change as seen everywhere. Beautifully he theorizes that every event in the world follows in harmony with a preordained plan or pattern he identifies or names as *Logos*. The underlying principle that governs the universal flux or process of change is none other than *Logos*. For Heraclitus, therefore, *Logos* is synonymous with an invariable truth which can and ought to be seen or noticed everywhere. Yet, in his observation and to his astonishment, hardly anyone seems to be able to perceive it.

Martin Heidegger puts forward that Being is the source of existence. Everything is generated from Being. He affirms that Being is the fullness of existence. Nothing outside of Being exists. Whereas 'beings' are the entities, a manifestation of Being. Being determines entities as entities. In this way, Being reveals entities. But compared to entities, Being is not an entity. Being is a kind of hidden or an absent aspect of the entity, an absence permeated with a presence.

Heidegger talks about the inner necessity and direct product of the Being-process. So, in this process, Being is permanent, appearing, already there as the given. It is complete, perfect, full—which is the meaning of "Being is." Appearing (Being) is the real, appearing is the fullness. It is the datum. On the contrary, anything becoming is incomplete, imperfect, not yet full. The becoming is the entities. Entities never attain the status of Being. Every thing other than Being is unstable, changing. They are vanishing or ephemeral. On the other hand, Heidegger makes a special case with human being as a being that seeks to apprehend Being. We think on the limitation of Being i.e. thinking on

thinking itself. Thinking is the work of a thinker. To think means to aim at, to remember, to intend and to apprehend. Apprehension of Being is a goal or end of thinking.

Heidegger attempts to deal with modes of human existence as well in relation to Being. Man's existence is related to Being and the world. There is no phenomena like subject and object. Man is a Being-in-the-world, as there is no man without a world. Man is no more defined in terms of traditional terms. Man's passion, feeling, etc. secured a place in Heidegger's thought. For Heidegger, man is no more ontic but he is ontological. Heidegger expounds the new orientation towards Being makes man a *Dasein. Dasein* refers to man's "there-Being." Being is concerned with the investigation of human existence. Man's existence is characterized by his relation to Being. *Dasein* is the domain for the revelation of Being. *Dasein* has a double relation between man and Being. So, man having an orientation to Being becomes *Dasein*.

Sartre's conception of 'being' can be concisely presented as follows. Being is a combination of two types or kinds of beings: 'being-in-itself' and 'being-for-itself'—the generic terms as Sartre coined to name the two fundamentally different classes or categories of beings. Being-in-itself is characterized by three features or aspects. Firstly, being is in itself, meaning it is self-contained or self-existent, implying such type of beings is neither caused nor created. Secondly, being-in-itself *is*, which means its existence has no explanation or purpose. Thirdly, being is *what it is,* i.e. it is solid, opaque and positive or affirmative. In other words, *it is what it is* and nothing else. In a similar manner, Sartre characterizes being-for-itself with three features in contrast to those of being-in-itself. Firstly, being-for-itself is *not* in itself: it arises or surges up out of being-in-itself. Secondly, the being-for-itself depends on the being-in-itself. For-itself's being is contingent upon and limited by being-in-itself. Thirdly, being-for-itself *is not what it is* and *is what it is not.* It comes to clarity that Sartre's being-for-itself refers to consciousness, and not the consciousness of any kind of beings, but specifically the consciousness of human being.

As the picture becomes clear in the course of the study, 'being' is the cause of existence. Just as consciousness depends on being-in-itself for its upsurge, 'non-being' or

nothingness arises within consciousness. In the act of questioning or inquiry, and in the awareness of the absence of a being, a certain non-being or lack is felt or reckoned within the conscious being. This peculiar form of human conduct or attitude of the mind engages in a nihilation or negation that in effect brings an awareness of a non-being or lack or nothingness. Thus, non-being can possibly be found only in the human mind, so concludes Sartre. Furthermore, the conscious human being or human reality (Sartre imported the idea of this term basically from Heidegger's *Dasein*) experiences non-being as anxiety. For example, the awareness of a lack of identity of oneself causes that kind of experience.

With this experience of the lack or nothingness, human reality according to Sartre seeks to negate the same. The being-for-itself strives to become a being-in-itself. The result is a process of becoming. But Sartre says it is an ideal which is never attained. Even so, consciousness is always in a process of becoming. Becoming is seen in two ways, namely, evolution and movement which assume a 'changing to' and a 'moving towards' respectively. Sartre posits that being and non-being are always in the process of becoming when a human reality endeavors to towards its individual goals. In this connection, he affirms that being is the outcome of the nihilation of non-being. Originally, it is the for-itself's 'desire for being' or 'desire to be,' as Sartre puts it, that ushers in the lack or non-being within itself and initiates the process of becoming.

It is found that Husserl's theory of intentionality plays a pivotal role in the development of Sartre's theory of consciousness. In Sartre's own word, "consciousness is always a consciousness *of something*." Consciousness is nothing more than a relation or connection between subject and object. Without the object there cannot be any kind of consciousness, according to his doctrine. In line with Husserl's theory, Sartre reiterates that the object intentionality is always transcendent to the subject. But departing from his predecessor, Sartre asserts that the directedness of intentionality does not emanate from any transcendental ego as Husserl would have it in his later theory. For him, the acts of intentionality are spontaneous acts of consciousness. They do not proceed from any a priori ego or self-will.

Sartre presents a two-tiered consciousness: positional (thetic) and non-positional (non-thetic). The positional is the active side of consciousness that posits or directs at an object. The rules of intentionality apply to this positional side of consciousness. The non-positional consciousness is the side that provides self-awareness by a kind of mirror-reflecting the positional acts to consciousness itself. This dyad nature of consciousness is what Sartre calls 'presence to self.' On this side, there is no intentional act or object of consciousness whatsoever. It simply provides a constant witness to what is happening in and around the individual's mind. Consequently, consciousness is aware of its every conscious act, whether it be imagining, perceiving or feeling of emotion.

In Sartrean scheme, positional acts of consciousness are of two types or levels: pre-reflective or non-reflective and reflective. Any positing act of consciousness whose object is transcendent to the subject is a pre-reflective act. When such a pre-reflective act of consciousness is posited as the object of intentionality, then the positional act is a reflective one. Sartre employed this scheme in his work *The Transcendence of the Ego* to do away with any self-existent *cogito* or ego. A sense of 'I' or 'me' arises as a correlate of the unity of all the reflected pre-reflective acts of consciousness. Thus, for Sartre, self or ego arises only after consciousness acts at the reflective level; there is no 'I' or ego at the pre-reflective level. Epistemologically, it is the act of intentionality or the positional act that brings consciousness into the knowledge of the object(s) posited or directed at. Likewise, by way of reflecting on its pre-reflective acts, consciousness gains in-depth knowledge. Curiously enough, Sartre insists that non-positional consciousness does not amount to knowledge. And yet for the reason of the self-awareness exerted from the non-positional side, Sartre claims that every act of consciousness is completely transparent or aware of itself.

One theoretical implication that follows from this structure of consciousness as Sartre has presented is that without any pre-existent or given ego or self-will, the acts of consciousness are not pre-determined and hence cannot be predicted. Sartre says the acts of consciousness are spontaneous and free. Another important implication is that since the acts of consciousness are transparent to itself, consciousness is fully aware of its acts,

and has no excuse but is fully responsible even as the acts are spontaneously its own, and not dictated or influenced by any entity or factor within or without.

From his central thesis, existence precedes essence, Sartre's theory of human reality follows that one has not come into this world with any pre-determined nature or constitution. In his worldview, the upsurge of consciousness or appearance of human individual in the world is a contingency or without any pre-destinated purpose or plan. Therefore, according to Sartre, every individual must work out his own essence.

Two realities are given by Sartre: facticity and freedom. Facticity refers to the specific settings around his existence such as the time, the place, the culture, the eco-political conditions etc. The particularities in which one is born constitute his facticity. Sartre says that one obviously cannot choose his facticity, but must choose from. In other words, man must take into account his facticity to project his future or to set his future goal. Secondly, and in close relation, man, born as a free-agent, must exercise his freedom to make his personal and deliberate choice from the possibilities that he can project on his facticity. The idea of human freedom in Sartre's existential doctrine is given a radical interpretation. For Sartre, the freedom that man possesses is absolute: nothing prevents, compels or influences his act of choice as a free-agent. This freedom of choice is an important particular of his facticity—man did not choose or had any say whether he would have freedom or otherwise. Hence, "man is condemned to be free," as Sartre dramatically emphasized this fact of human reality. Thus, in his theory, being human and being a free-agent are synonymous. To be human or authentic man, the individual person must exercise his free choice. In this sense, the one essence of being a true human being is his freedom. The analysis of freedom and choice reveals that for Sartre, consciousness and choice are one: one must be conscious in order to choose, and one must choose in order to be conscious.

In the day-to-day walk of life, Sartre informs that man who is a free-agent finds that his free acts bring consequences, either good or bad, to himself and to others. Man therefore is fully responsible for his free-choices, as his freedom is absolute. He must therefore exercise his freedom in a responsible way. This means he needs to consider his

facticity, which includes other conscious beings and their freedom, among other things. On the one hand, this limits or restricts his freedom even as his choices are afforded by the possibilities determined by his facticity. On the other hand, man finds that he cannot be absolutely certain of the outcomes of his choices, and he cannot but choose one course of action out of the virtually innumerable possible courses in a given situation. He is faced with this challenging responsibility every now and then. This predicament occasioned by his freedom and responsibility creates in him a state of *anxiety* (an idea Sartre ostensibly imported from Heidegger's notion of *angst*). This leads him to *nausea* or dizziness, and at times to despair.

In order to avoid or pre-empt this existential anxiety, Sartre observes that an individual man seeks to relieve himself of his responsibility (that arises from his free-acts) by assuming or 'turning into' a being-in-itself—an entity with fixed role(s) or behaviour(s) for which one is not responsible anymore. In this attempt to escape his responsibility, the individual is seen to deceive himself. He tries to be what he is not, and tries not to be what he is. Sartre calls this condition 'bad-faith.' This simply is a case of an attempt to escape facing reality, one way or the other, which man is often seen doing. Also, to identify or project one's existence solely with one's profession, one's cultural institution, one's nationality, religious community or economic class etc., by the same yardstick of Sartre's definition, comes under 'bad-faith' or inauthentic living.

Sartre advocates that one must 'recover' oneself from this condition of self-deception, (the attempt of which incidentally is never fully successful—because of the non-positional consciousness that constantly witnesses to the fact of living the lie). When one fully recognizes and accepts that his existence is being human essentially, Sartre assures one will enter "the great human stream." Therein one can live and conduct as an authentic man. This means, for Sartre, man must courageously own up his responsibility, be fully conscious of his facticity, and in 'good-faith' assume those roles and make future projections, while steering clear of 'bad-faith,' in order to live as an authentic person. To live an authentic life is also to recognize and uphold the places of individual and collective freedom and their balanced relation.

Though Sartre has projected being an authentic man as the ideal state or moral perfection of human reality, he does not accord it the ultimate value. For him, freedom is the most fundamental and primary in being human. The reason he gives is that by freedom alone man can project his future possibilities, and choose his fundamental project. Not only this, man as a free subject is responsible to work out his own ethical standards and values, just as he chooses what will be good for him. Insofar as Sartre is concerned, the ethics of an authentic man is to freely follow the dictates or impulses that come to him spontaneously from his own humanity or being, be it his will or passion. For him, there is no such thing as *a priori* systems or rules of morals or values to be adhered to. It is not desirable for man as a free subject, in Sartre's judgment, to unquestioningly conform to any conventional standard or system of ethics. Thus, it can be seen from this Sartrean view that freedom is the means by which man acquires essence: meaning, value and worth of his existence. Freedom is the essential character of the being of consciousness or human reality, according to Sartre.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Primary Sources

Sartre, J.P. (1933). *The Transcendence of the Ego.* Translated by Forrest Williams and Robert Kirkpatric. New York: hill and wang.

………….. (1943). *Being and Nothingness*. Translated by Hazel E. Barnes. Indian edition: Chennai Micro Print Pvt., Ltd.

…………... (1945). *The Age of Reason*. Translated by Eric Sutton. England: London. Penguin Book Ltd.

…………... (1946). *Existentialism is a Humanism*. Walter Kaufmann, ed. Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre New York: New American Library.

.... (1948). *What is Literature*? Translated by Bernard Frenchtman. United Kingdom: Methuen & Co. Ltd.

…………. . (1960). *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. Translated by Alan Sheridan-Smith. London: Verso. Vol. I

.... (1962). *Sketch for A Theory of the Emotion*. Translated by Philip Mairet. United Kingdom: Methuen & Co. Ltd.

.... (1963). *Search for a Method*. Translated by Hazel E. Barnes. New York: Alfred. A. Knopf.

……………. (1992). *Notebooks for an Ethics*. (trans.) David Rellauer. USA: Chicago University of Chicago Press.

Secondary sources

Craib, Ian. (1976). *Existentialism and Socialism: A Study of Jean-Paul Sartre*. London: Cambridge University Press.

C. Anderson, Thomas. (1979). *The Foundation and Structure of Sartrean Ethics*. Lawrence: The Regents Press of Kansas.

Catalano, Joseph S. (1985). *A Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Churchill, Steven. & Reynolds, Jack. (2013). *Jean-Paul Sartre Key Concepts.* Durhan: Acumen Publishing Limited.

Detmer, David. (1986). *Freedom as Value: A Critque of the Ethical Theory of Jean-Paul Sartre.* (LaSalle II open court).

David, Cerbone R. (2006). *Understanding Phenomenology.* UK: Acumen Publishing Limited.

Eatwell, John. (1980). *Sartre and Action Theory*. In Hugh J. Silverman and Frederick A. Elliston, eds, Jean-Paul Sartre; Contemporary Approaches to his Philosophy Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press.

Grossman, Reinhold. (1984). *Philosophy and Existentialism*. London: Roulledge&Kegan Paul.

Heidegger, M. (1927). *Being and Time,* (Trans.) Joan Stambaugh. State Univerty of New York Press, Albany.

……………… (1935). *An Introduction to Metaphysics*. Translated by RaphManhein London; Yale University Press.

………………. (1956). *The Question of Being.* Translated by William Kluback and Jean T. Wilde. London: Vision Press Ltd.

Husserl, E. (1913). *Ideas.* Translated by F. Kersten. Netherland: Kluwer Academic Publishers Group. Vol. II

…………… (1970). *Logical Investigations*. Translated by Findlay, J.N. London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd. Vol. I, II

…………. (1990). *The Idea of Phenomenology*. Translated by Hardy, Lee. London: Kluwer Academic Publishers. Vol.VIII

Henn, Martin J. (2003) *Parmenides of Elea: A Verse Translation with Interpretative Essays and Commentary to the Text*. London: Praeger Publishers, Inc.

Dreyfus, Hubert L., and Mark A. Wrathall, eds. (2006). *A Companion to Phenomenology and Existentialism.* Oxford: Blackwell.

Jeanson, Francis. (1965). *Sartre and the Problem of Morality*. Translated by Robert V. Srone. Indiana University Press: Bloomington.

Kahn, Charles H. (1979) *The Art and Thought of Heraclitus: An Edition of the Fragments with Translation and Commentary*. London: Cambridge University Press.

Kariuki, Joseph. (1981). *The Possibility of Universal Moral Judgement in Existential Ethics*. (Ben Peter Lang).

McIntyre, Ronald, and David Woodruff Smith. *The Theory of Intentionality Husserl's Phenomenology: A Textbook*. Washington D.C.: University Press of America,1989

Meszaros, Istvan. (2013). *The Work of Sartre.* India: Delhi Aakar Books Ltd.

Morris, Katherine j. (2008). *Sartre.* United Kingdom: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Stace, W.T. (1920). A Critical History of Greek Philosophy. India: Macmillan India Ltd.

Spade, Paul Vincent. (1995). *Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness*. Class lecture note.

Schroeder, William R. (2005). *Continental Philosophy*. USA: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

Tomas W. Busch, (1990). *The power of Consciousness and the Force of Circumstance in Sartre's Philosophy.* Bloomington Indiana University Press.

Warnock, Mary. (1965). *The Philosophy of Sartre*. London: Hutchinson.

Webber, Jonathan. (2011). *Reading Sartre on Phenomenological and Existentialism.* London and New York. Routledge: Taylor & Francis Group.

Research papers

Gennaro, Rocco J. "Jean-Paul Sartre and the Hot Theory of Consciousness" *final version in Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, Indiana State University 2002.

Gardner, Sebastian. "Sartre, Schelling, and Onto-Theology." *Religious Studies*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Sep., 2006), pp. 247-271

Honigsblum, Gerald. "Sartre by Himself: Film as Biography and Autobiography." *The French Review*. Special Issue, Vol. 55, No. 7, (Summer, 1982),pp. 123-130

Lee, Sander H. "The Central Role of Universalization in Sartrean Ethics." Philosophy and Phenomenological Research 46.1 (1985): 59-71. JSTOR. Web. 19 Apr. 2010. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2107656.

Morris, Phyllis Sullon, "Sartre on the Transcendence of the Ego." *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* Vol. xi, vi, No.2, University of Mechigan-Dearborn (December 1985)

MO, Weimin and Wei, Wang. "Cogito: From Descartes to Sartre." *Frontiers of Philosophy in China,* Vol. 2, No. 2 (April 2007), pp. 247-26

Paolucci, Gabriella. "Sartre's humanism and the Cuban revolution." *Theory and Society*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (June, 2007), pp. 245-263

Ronald E. Santoni, "Bad faith, good faith, and authenticity in Sartre's early philosophy." *Philadelphia: Temple University Press*, 1995. pp.320-5, 245

Rau, Catherine. "The Ethical Theory of Jean-Paul Sartre." The Journal of Philosophy 46.17 (1949): 536-45. JSTOR. Web. 19 Apr. 2010. http://www.jstor.org/stable/2019444.

Swartz, David L. and Zolberg, Vera L. "Sartre for the twenty-first century?" *Theory and Society*, Vol. 36, No. 3 (June, 2007), pp. 215-222

Wild, John. "Authentic Existence." Ethics 75.4 (1965): 227-39. JSTOR. Web. 9 Apr. 2010.http://www.jstor. org/stable/2379721.

Webliography

Beyer, Christian, "Edmund Husserl", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2015 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/ archives/sum2015/entries/husserl/>.

Flynn, Thomas, "Jean-Paul Sartre", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2013 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL=http://plato.standford. edu/ archieves/fall2013/entries/ sartre/.

Gallagher, Shaun and Zahavi, Dan. "Phenomenological Approaches to Self-Consciousness", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2010 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2010/entries/ self-conscious- ness-phenomenological/

Graham, Daniel W., "Heraclitus", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2015 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), forthcoming URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2015/entries/ heraclitus/>.

McDonald, William, "Søren Kierkegaard", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries /kierkegaard/>.

Siewert, Charles, "Consciousness and Intentionality", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford. edu/ archives/fall2011/ entries/ consciousness-intentionality/>.

Palmer, John, "Parmenides", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer 2012 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2012/entries/ parmenid- es/>.

Video Documentary:

Sadler, Gregory B. (oct. 12, 2012). *Core Concepts: Jean-Paul Sartre, Existence Precedes Essence*. 18 minutes 27 seconds: www.youtube.com

Regalona. (aug. 31, 20012). *Human all too Human- Sartre* 48 minutes 19 second: www.youtube.com