

Discourses on Freedom: A Critical Study of Sartre and Camus

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This thesis is dedicated to my parents.

For their immeasurable love, encouragement and support....

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Introduction

Human beings have been subjected to the most horrifying inhumanity during the “revolution” that undermines existing social institutions. It has led to the emergence of various wars resulting in a massive scale of destruction of human life, industries, economy and society. It also brings about unsurmountable hardship to human life. Individuality is pushed to the fringes with the breakdown of peaceful and long-held-traditional community life to be soon replaced with nationalism. The Second World War saw animosities created in the name of nationalism, mainly in France, Germany, and Italy. Young and, every abled body was reminded of their citizenship and forced to go to war. It was a Challenge to face death in the name of the “fatherland” or the “motherland.” It brought out the worst in human beings. The vast destruction of material bodies and human lives led to the point where citizens could no longer afford to have the necessities of life. The second world war indeed created a turbulent time, and it was impossible to comprehend individuals living a meaningful and free life. The absurd and chaotic environment raised various questions: What is freedom in its real sense? Are people living (exercising) a life of freedom? Are we forced to go to war for the sake of our country regardless of individual consent? How is one supposed to lead a free, authentic, life? Various questions emerged out of this moment in history. The questions on freedom were responded to in different ways by various philosophers and thinkers of the 20th century. To arrive at a more generalized, extensive apprehension of the contested notion of freedom, I shall attempt to critically look at the issues concerning the notion of freedom as conceived by Sartre and Camus– who responded with their concepts of freedom and absurdity.

The emergence of revolution and war is mainly caused by unequal relations of power among men, leading to the oppressor and the oppressed in human relations. The use of violence and its corollary, terror, became a dominant aspect in achieving individual and group projects. The oppressor and the oppressed have recourse to the cruelest methods of ill-treatment, varying from communal savagery to mass slaughter, to re-establish the “imagined humanity.” Resorting to the use of violence means to resolve social conflicts has brought into question the foundations of social credibility. Whether knowingly or unknowingly, existing political structures also contributed to millions’ debasement into an unbelievable state of depravity in the time of revolution. The force favouring peaceful means to solve man’s existing conflict becomes doubtful as it is sorely tested. The hope of changing the unjust society through

peaceful dialogue and communication is being ruined by resolute social, economic, and political systems. Even the Algerian people opt for violent means of revolution against the French rule instead of striving towards peaceful dialogue and communication due to the inhumanity caused by the French colonial rule. Crime, war, massacre, genocide, self-inflicted wounds, terror, torture, and the class struggle's intricacies represent few instances of the multiple prevalences of violence discussed based on Sartre's and Camus' works and individual participation in the context of Algeria.

What led to the production of violence? Can the use of violence be a justifiable means to sought-after-ends? What is the epistemological and ontological basis for the use of violence? Is violence an inevitable appendix for human relations? To answer these queries about the use of violence, I will attempt to offer the perspective of the two most prominent and controversial intellectuals of the 20th century: Jean-Paul Sartre and Albert Camus.

The study will venture broadly into their understanding of freedom and violence by engaging primarily with their works, and commentaries on their works and actions. An attempt will be made to comprehend the importance and practicability of their ideologies. Further, I shall compare and contrast the two philosophers and inquire into the extent to which their thoughts remained realistic, acceptable, and consistent to their political inclinations and alignment with either of the dominant and opposing ideologies of the time, mainly the communist and the anti-communist. Also bringing into clarity, their mutual contestations of one another's notions of political freedom.

Like most existentialist thinkers, Sartre and Camus believed that there is no essential human nature. They also denied God's existence or higher laws, but their rejection did not lead them to develop a doctrine that everything is possible. They believed only in the values established by reason and denied the objective a priori values that lie beyond man's reason. A man should reside in terms of what reason can ascertain; he is not qualified to an illogical leap into some form of a conviction. Moreover, they shared a passionate allegiance to man's freedom and authenticity and detestation towards domination and despotism. As there are similarities, there are differences. Sartre and Camus have different perspectives on freedom and the role of violence in personal and human relations. To examine their similarities and differences on freedom, I shall venture into Sartre's early conception of freedom in his early writings, *Transcendence of the Ego*, 1936 and *Being and Nothingness*, 1943. Further, its growth, transformation, and the reformulated notion of freedom in his later writing, *Existence is a*

Humanism, 1946. The present work will also look into how Camus understands freedom as different from Sartre. In this regard, Camus' notion of absurdity will be critically engaged, for absurdity formed the necessary foundation in deriving his understanding of limited freedom and authentic life. It will engage critically with his book *The Rebel*, 1951 where Camus discusses his conception of limited freedom. In *The Myth of Sisyphus*, 1942, he discusses the absurdity of human life. His understanding of limited freedom and absurdity is further engaged through his other books and novels.

The purpose of looking at their thought and the concepts of freedom and absurdity is to highlight and investigate several contesting claims about political freedom and grasp their different takes on political violence. Sartre was a Marxist (made apparent by 1952) and was involved in several political struggles. Sartre believed that humiliation and oppression, often masked, are orderly constructs into everyday life under capitalism and colonialism. The means to overcome it is through revolution. On the other hand, Camus had a negative outlook on the idea of revolution. For him, a revolution could lead to political tyranny and totalitarianism in contrast to Sartre's claim and propounded an "authentic" form of rebellion. Even though the two philosophers are in their own ways concerned about the value of human dignity and freedom, they had an altogether different take. This study will strive to give an accurate account of their different philosophical and political stands to reach a comprehensive apprehension of the root of vicious behaviour, precipitated both by the individual and the group. On Sartre, I shall engage with his book, *Colonialism, and Neocolonialism* (1964); and on Camus, *The Rebel, Resistance, Rebellion, and Death Essays* (1944). It will be substantiated by secondary works on Sartre and Camus.

In the first chapter, I would take up few significant issues dealing with freedom from the two philosophers, Sartre and Camus. Sartre's early formulation of ontological freedom has bothered many eminent scholars, including Camus, who claims that Sartre's absolute freedom is practically impossible. An individual cannot attain such a state of being. Sartre discusses his notion of absolute freedom in *Being and Nothingness* as the autonomy of choice – to choose also a choice. It is absolute as it is free from external and internal determination in making a choice. A man ought to evaluate their actions with their free choices and decisions. Simultaneously, Sartre talks about his notion of absolute freedom, not in the abstract sense but about the world. He terms it as the inescapable brute givenness or facticity as an indispensable factor of freedom. It is necessarily connected with the world (culture, race, ethnicity, national

origin, physical make up, etc.) plus the indispensable facts that freedom is to exercise in the concrete world.

Moreover, others' freedom act as limitations in exercising one's multifaceted choices in the world. It creates a paradoxical situation: my freedom restricts others' freedom, and others restrict my freedom. The present work will look into the check and balances between free human subjects. The tussle for freedom among free subjects opens up the Pandora's Box on the very nature of freedom. Is my freedom restricted to other's freedom? Does my freedom objectify others? If my freedom violates other's freedom, my act of freedom is an act of violence. If this is the case, freedom as an emancipation act is contradicted by the same act, thus leading to a paradox. It is here that these philosophers have brought up the idea of reciprocity. It will be discussed in the course of deliberation on freedom and action.

Freedom highlights the meaning of existence by transforming the given to reality. The meaning of the world is known not through the givenness but the transformation of the givenness – through existence – as one lives and transforms. Freedom is also awareness, to be conscious of the existing world. It is through the consciousness of freedom that the world is realized. The co-dependency of freedom and the world enables man to exercise his absolute freedom of choice. In this context, questions arise whether it is redundant to divide the absolute freedom of the autonomy of choice at the ontological level and freedom at the practical/existential level. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre, by defining consciousness as equivalent to nothingness, argues that “Man is condemned to be free.”¹ Man is condemned because he did not invent himself, and once abandoned into the world, he is accountable for everything he does. He talks about both ontological and practical freedom. Ontological freedom meant the autonomy of choice.² However, his notion of absolute freedom did not end in defining freedom with an absolute choice. He claimed freedom as given – “I am never free except in the situation.”³ His absolute freedom is always situated in the world. It is carried out in making commitments, choosing ends, decision, and setting goals followed by absolute responsibility for all the courses of action.⁴ The absolute individual choice is limited or restricted within the domain of possibilities found in “facticity” regarding the content of

¹ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 461-62.

² *Ibid.*, p. 483.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 509.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 458-59.

individual existence. Further, his notion of freedom is linked with the concept of anguish, bad faith, authenticity, and self-recovery.

In *Existentialism is a Humanism*, Sartre broadens his notion of practical freedom by considering the significance of others' existence. His notion of absolute freedom and responsibility is not limited to a specific individual, but it applies to humankind.⁵ In the text, he points towards the reciprocity of human freedom, claiming that to will one's freedom requires willing others' freedom. Taking this into account, whatever one chooses should be of good not only for himself but for all humankind. Sartre affirms that we always choose the good, and nothing can be useful for anyone unless it is suitable for all.⁶

Santoni also points out two dimensions of Sartre's notion of freedom – he called it “ontological” or “factual” and “practical” or “existential” freedom. The absolute ontological freedom, the total “autonomy of choice,” to which men are deserted, which make up human existence, and the extent to which men choose to live, practice exercise, “exist” the freedom we are – is referred to practical or existential freedom.⁷ Further, Santoni argues that Sartre's notion of freedom goes contrary to the “common sense” understanding of freedom, where freedom does not signify “to obtain what one has wished,” as such “success” is of no significance to freedom. Instead, freedom means “by oneself to determine oneself to wish.”⁸ By differentiating Sartre's notion of ontological and practical freedom, Santoni argues against Camus's critic of Sartre's absolute freedom as inadequate to differentiate the ontological from the existential freedom. Camus miss-conception view of Sartre absolute freedom is seen in his review of *The Wall*(1939), *The Myth of Sisyphus*(1942), and *The Rebel*(1951), as well as in some of his major literary works like *The Fall*(1956), sees Sartre's freedom as ultimate, as an uncontrolled, pronouncedly dangerous, freedom without restraint. A kind of freedom that leads to total consequences, a murderous revolution, destruction of values and freedom, human beings' objectification, dominations, and totalitarianism.⁹ Jeanson also distinguishes Sartre's absolute freedom between “factual freedom” and “freedom as valued.” The former refers to the very structure of our being to which human reality is abandoned, and the latter refers to both ontological freedom and a sense of freedom that “enjoins one to evaluate the value of the

⁵ Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, p. 23.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

⁷ Santoni, *Camus on Sartre's "Freedom": Another "Misunderstanding"*, p. 791.

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 789-90.

⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 788, 801-02.

various uses to which it may be put.”¹⁰ The argument raised by Santoni and Jeanson on the vital dimension of Sartre’s absolute freedom is convincing. In my study, I have put forward their argument to critically look into Camus’ conflated comprehension of Sartre’s notion of freedom before and during 1952, at most, before Camus’ death in 1960, with an attempt to bring forth Sartre’s early and controversial view on freedom.

The dissertation also attempts to show the paradox of Sartre’s notion of freedom; for Sartre, absolute freedom implies the autonomy of choice. At the same time, freedom relies on the situation for its existence. As such, would it be justifiable to consider his absolute freedom as the freedom that permits a man to do anything? It engages with Sartre’s notion of absolute freedom as situated or engaged in a resisting universe to explicate the paradox inherent in his notion of absolute freedom. Moreover, it also critically engages with Sartre’s view of freedom from Sartre’s post-Camus, post-1960 writings, to show Sartre’s transformation of thought in his understanding of freedom.

The second chapter examines the work of Sartre and Camus on the foundation of freedom and its impact on the political domain. Both the philosophers develop their notion of freedom distinctly. Sartre derives it from the ontology of consciousness and nothingness. He identifies the nature of human reality with consciousness and nothingness. Consciousness is understood as nothingness, which means it is devoid of any content and derived its contents from the external world. He further equates freedom with human reality; consciousness and nothingness as the ground of freedom enable man to have a spontaneous relationship with the world; through questioning and negating the given world. On the other hand, Camus develops his notion of freedom from his intended meaning of absurdity and unavoidable death. Camus is not concerned about metaphysical liberty – knowing whether one is free or not. Besides, his notion of freedom is not derived from established theories. According to him, everything finds its meaning in the context of individual experience, not beyond – “The only one I know of freedom is freedom of thought and action.”¹¹ Camus advocates a limited and absurd notion of freedom. It is limited as the conception of freedom he has is that of the prisoners or the individual in the state and the unavoidable death of a human being.¹² Besides, it is absurd since he derives his notion of freedom from the consciousness of absurdity, which he regards to be

¹⁰ Jeanson, *Sartre and the Problem of Morality*, p. 14.

¹¹ Camus, *The myth of Sisyphus*, p. 54.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 54.

the first step of absurd freedom.¹³ The concepts of death and absurdity in Camus enables man to realize his freedom of thought and action.

Considering their complexity and polarity regarding their notion of freedom, this work examines several issues related to their freedom and the use of violence as freedom of action. It studies their objective idea of freedom or truth of freedom; and their distinct way of linking the idea of truth with freedom. Whether there can be a truth about freedom or is freedom merely absurd or meaningless. It also examines their ways of linking freedom to the concept of goal-orientedness in terms of an individual's actions and group projects. The study thoroughly probes the different grounding on freedom with an attempt to grasp their distinct approaches to the use of violence in rebelling back against the unjust and unequal society of their time. To derive a definite certainty in understanding their perception of violence, I have drawn heavily in examining the epistemological and ontological foundations of their freedom.

Sartre and Camus gradually developed different views on political freedom and followed by contested takes on concerning particular situations, places, and contexts. The main reasons that parted Camus and Sartre's ways in 1952 were political violence – accurately, communism, and colonialism. They both have different takes on the practicability of violence. Sartre targets the systemic structured kinds of violence embedded in colonialism and capitalism. And this target, for Sartre, has to be violent. On the other hand, Camus targets violence in the revolutionary movement against capitalism and colonialism.¹⁴ Sartre sees the revolutionary not as wanting to objectify and dominate, but as wanting to liberate the oppressed from domination by the strongest, and in doing so, minimize – not maximize – their destruction. The revolutionary's use of violence, for Sartre, is a strategic means to fight back against the subjugated violence for a good cause. Countering Sartre, Camus maintains that the revolutionary is not a man who fought for rights but a man who shattered the intrinsic idea of rights, considering them an outcome of convention and force.¹⁵ For Camus, the revolutionary movement sought abstract justice instead of concrete justice; by sacrificing individual freedom and present harmony for a future cause. Aronson argues that conflict between Sartre and Camus is unresolved; neither one won the debate, for they possess no more than a half-truth, and each was blinded to the others' sight.¹⁶ The present study critically ventures on their different

¹³ Ibid., p. 57.

¹⁴ Aronson, *Camus versus Sartre: The Unresolved Conflict*, p. 303.

¹⁵ Santoni, *Camus on Sartre's "Freedom": Another "Misunderstanding"*, pp. 801-02.

¹⁶ Ronald, *Camus versus Sartre: The Unresolved Conflict*, pp. 303-07.

understandings of political violence to comprehend the significance of violence and its obscurity.

The third chapter engages with the issues related to violence as an act of freedom in the face of forces of capitalism and colonialism. Sartre and Camus take different political stands in solving the rampant violence of their times. Sartre became a supporter of Marxist ideology and believed that violence is rigorously established into everyday life under capitalism and colonialism. As part of the problems, the systemic form of violence and the violence embedded in the revolutionary movement are discussed from Sartre and Camus' perspective. For Sartre, the existence of systemic violence is intrinsic in capitalism and colonialism. It is known through the unequal relation of power among men. Sartre explicates two kinds of violence: the violence exerted by the oppressor and the oppressed's violence. For Sartre, these two kinds of violence have distinct intention and significance. He is against the use of violence by the oppressor as it is based on the forceful domination over the oppressed class's rightful existence. However, he supports the use of violence by the oppressed class as justifiable means to established fair reciprocity of power in man's relation with others.

On the other hand, Camus does not distinguish the variation of violence in human relations; instead, he denies violence to control or liberate from the control system, as the outcome of violence leads to the destruction of innocent lives. He sought an alternate path to liberate people by peaceful means rather than resorting to violence. Contrary to Sartre, Camus believes that violence is set up into varied movements that claim to emancipate people from capitalist and colonial domination and were against authorized use of violence and emphasized on "authentic rebellion." His notion of authentic rebellion is developed from his notion of absurd and the relativity of human nature. As the world is absurd, man can have an only relative knowledge of the world. He is against any form of authorized violence to obtain legitimate future goals by compromising the present; to overturn an existing society entirely is unattainable. He instead gives importance to the present cause and propagated civilian truce to achieve man's justice and freedom. He considered life as the absolute value, and to deny this to man is the greatest crime against humanity.

The present work also examines several other issues relating to the dynamics of violence in human relations as conceived by Sartre and Camus. It discusses violence in the political struggle in Algeria's context to comprehend the exercise of violence, an act of freedom that seems morally justifiable for Sartre. It looks into the kind of violence that Sartre

considered morally justifiable and the kind of violence he firmly holds against its morality. Moreover, Camus, standing firmly in propagating peaceful means to solve the political, social, and economic problems rather than violent revolution. I have tried to examine together the rationality of Sartre's and Camus's distinct stance on violence by engaging primarily with their philosophical writings, essays, plays, novels, and secondary sources.

In the conclusions, I have attempted to give an overview of Sartre's and Camus's approaches of freedom and violence to arrive at a provisional integration of their distinct views. To examine how far they remain authentic in their proclamation of freedom and truth of freedom, despite having contrasting political stances. Aronson also holds that it is necessary to bring them together rather than keeping them distinctly to comprehend a wholesome truth about violence. Only then will we be able to see them appreciatively and critically at the same time genuinely.¹⁷ It aims to provide the practicality of Sartre's contested concept of freedom alongside discussing Camus' concept of freedom. The significance and obscurity of their immense insight into the problems of violence that plagued their era remain significant till date. However, I have confined myself only to deliberating the philosophical themes, which I have tried to focus on in this dissertation.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 310.

Chapter 1

The Conceptions of Freedom

The concept of “freedom” is one of the most contested concepts in philosophy where a commonly agreeable conception cannot be developed. It has been discussed and argued by many prominent philosophers up to this point. This chapter will critically engage with the contested notion of Sartre’s “absolute freedom,” which has been questioned and criticized by many eminent scholars. The brilliant writer Albert Camus found Sartre’s absolute freedom unrealistic and impracticable to execute in our everyday life. Considering the critical view on Sartre’s freedom, I shall revisit the complexity of Sartre’s dimension of freedom (ontological and practical freedom). To make an effort to explore Sartre’s absolute freedom as remarkably more complicated than many passing readers and renowned scholars usually treat it. To substantiate the argument, I shall discuss some of Sartre’s remarks in his early writings on the freedom to critically engage with the misreading of his original position on freedom. It will also examine the latter aspect of his freedom to lay out his freedom’s concreteness to develop an argument against Camus’s view on Sartre’s freedom. Camus considered the notion of Sartre freedom as too vague and futile to imply in our routine life. The chapter contains two sections; in the initial part, I shall discuss what Sartre means when he regards freedom as “absolute.” In the later part, I shall present Sartre’s existential aspect of freedom to nihilate Camus’s claim that Sartre’s view of freedom as unlimited is synonymous with anarchy, oppression, totalitarianism, and dehumanization.

I. Ontological Freedom

Sartre’s notion of ontological freedom has been occasionally misunderstood with absolute/unlimited freedom that morally permits human beings to do whatever they wish. To make a case against this brutal claim, I shall begin by discussing the fundamental feature of Sartre’s ontological freedom early in *Being and Nothingness*, and his further clarification of ontological freedom in *Existentialism is a Humanism*. Sartre’s early position on ontological freedom is expressed in *Being and Nothingness*. His existentialism holds that man is abandoned in this world without his consent and should define and create himself by exercising his absolute freedom. What we are interested in is to know what he means when he explains absolute freedom. In *Being and Nothingness*, he equates human reality with freedom: “Human

freedom precedes essence in man and makes it possible; the essence of the human being is suspended in his freedom; what we call freedom is impossible to distinguish from the being of “human reality.” Man does not exist first to be free subsequently; there is no difference between the being of a man and his being-free.”¹⁸ Sartre equates human reality with freedom and claims that human existence is absolutely free; as he puts it, “man is condemned to be free.”¹⁹ It means that no limits to “freedom can be found except freedom itself, or if you prefer, that we are not free to cease being free.”²⁰

Sartre discusses his absolute freedom in terms of the autonomy of choice. His autonomy of choice means “the freedom of choosing but not the freedom of not choosing. Not to choose is, in fact, to choose not to choose. We are a freedom that chooses, but we do not choose to be free.”²¹ Human beings are forced to be free. Every living being has to choose, and even suicide is a choice.²² In this sense, Sartre’s freedom is kind of “absurd”: “freedom is not free, not to exist or not to be free.”²³ From Sartre’s position, man is free, and that man proves it by his free choice by planning and acting upon it. If human beings were not free, they would not be capable of initiating, pretending, and evading things. In a way, he considered freedom of choice as fundamental since this choice is the primary factor for the possibility of freedom. There can be no reason why freedom is absolute, for “it is this which creates originally all the reasons and all the motives that can lead to particular actions and gives the world its meaning, its instrumental complexes and its coefficients of adversity.”²⁴ An evaluation of Sartre’s perception of free choice manifests that human freedom is unconditioned. The undeniable fact of choice, which Sartre advocates, is the radical idea of man’s absolute freedom.

Specific questions can be raised concerning Sartre’s autonomy of choice. Does the autonomy of choice mean we are capable of doing whatever we want? Can the choice be free from any kind of determinism? Is freedom of choice a sufficient condition to determine free being? In order to have a resolute understanding of the concept of his autonomy of choice. It will be significant to begin by discussing what he means by the autonomy of choice. Sartre

¹⁸ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 439-41.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 439-85.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 461

²¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 484-85, 481, 509, 529.

²² *Ibid.*, pp. 559, 565.

²³ Santoni, *Camus on Sartre’s “Freedom”: Another “Misunderstanding,”* P. 789.

²⁴ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 543.

considered man as a futile passion.²⁵ Man is condemned to be free and perpetually to use it in every course of his action. As for Sartre, every effort is directed towards one's entire project. However, according to him, no human being will ever reach a state of absolute contentment of having no future desires; particular aims may be satisfied but will never reach reliable ease. It shows the logical necessity of the autonomy of choice in man's existence. The inescapable notion of the autonomy of choice is to confront the world in terms of choices and decisions. And accordingly, evaluate their actions in the light of that freedom. Given this, to understand his absolute freedom in an abstract sense will be mistaken. It will be more accurate to comprehend a concrete notion in existential/practical freedom. He asserts that every being found oneself amid material circumstances, For which we are not responsible but are necessary things out of which we constructed or framed our free choice. We may not have a hand to the circumstances to be born in a low-income family, but how we allowed it to influence us in our lives is something that lies in our hands even though we did not have the complete power over the given circumstances. By the very fact, choice implies the possibilities of doing otherwise. It will be discussed in detail in the latter part of the chapter.

If Sartre's concept of the autonomy of choice is not read accurately, it would not be surprising to misunderstand it as capable of doing whatever one wants to obtain or fulfill. His autonomy of choice never implies being able to do whatever one might wish to or succeed in achieving "what one has wished."²⁶ Ronald E. Santoni also has pointed out against this misunderstood notion of Sartre autonomy of choice – Sartre stands against "common sense," that freedom does not assert "to obtain what one has wished," and that "success" is of no significance to freedom. Instead, freedom means "by oneself to determine oneself to wish (in the broad sense of choosing)," and Sartre insists that "the technical and philosophical concept of freedom, the only one that he is considering, means only the autonomy of choice."²⁷ It should be noted that Sartre's claims of man as always free is in terms of the choices. Even though we feel our options are entirely restricted, for example, we are forcefully kidnapped or prison for our wrong actions; even in such situations, we have the power to conceive the possibilities of escape or release can evaluate the conditions. It is not an affirmation that we will be succeeding in attaining our chances; nonetheless, there still exists a freedom of choice.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 708.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 483.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 483.

The other important aspect of his autonomy of choice is making it real. His truth of autonomy of choice exists only in action. All forms of thinking, dreaming, desiring, wanting, anticipation, deliberation should be put into action to make it real. He acknowledges man as nothing other than his project. Man's existent is only to realize himself. He is simply the sum of his actions, nothing more than his life."²⁸ The only thing that matters for Sartre is reality, and all forms of dreams, expectations, and hopes are unreal until it is put into practice. Sartre claimed that there could be no lover other than which is shown in the act of love. To be a genius is to express in the work of art.

Moreover, the choice remains absolute since it is free from all kinds of determinism. Sartre has rejected the view that the actions arose out of circumstances and past influence; and that of random and unpredictable actions. It is important to note that Sartre's essential autonomy of choice is absolutely free from any form of determinism and ought to express in action. Sartre says, "I am indeed an existent who learns freedom through my actions, but I am also an existent whose individual and unique existence temporalizes itself as freedom."²⁹

Since Sartre regards man as condemned to be free, a man ought to choose himself; nothing can determine his action from outside and within. He cannot "sometimes be a slave and occasionally free; he is wholly and forever free, or he is not free at all."³⁰ In light of his autonomy of choice, he states that decisions and actions manifest in particular situations. It can be understood from the analysis of one of his students needing help in deciding between two courses of action. He was faced with "two totally modes of actions, one concrete and immediate, but directed towards only one individual; the other involving an infinitely vaster group – a nation corps – yet more ambiguous; needs an interruption before being carried out. At the same time, he was vacillating between two kinds of morality: a morality motivated by sympathy and individual devotion and another morality with a broader scope but less likely to be fruitful. He has to choose between the two."³¹ Sartre holds that almost all forms of values, whether it is Christian doctrine or Kantian morality, appear so broad and vague to practice specific and concrete cases under consideration. In such situations, we have no choice but to rely on our instinct.³² Our original choice exists only in a particular action, and that each act is a renewed choice of the original choice. It is not to deny that it can be changed, "for radical conversion"

²⁸ Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, p. 37.

²⁹ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 461.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 462-63.

³¹ Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, p. 33.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 32.

is always possible. Thus Sartre claims that “one should not seek within oneself some authentic state that will compel one to act.”³³ Under any concrete circumstances and situations, a man should make himself by choosing his morality, and his freedom should be the foundation of all values.³⁴ In light of this, one can see himself as the one who can choose or fail to choose authentically; this form of pressure, according to Sartre, can arouse anguish in human beings and, for the more significant part of the time, man take refuge from anguish in bad faith.³⁵

In the light of the above discussion of the autonomy of choice, it can be affirmed that Sartre’s notion of freedom is not a property of freedom; to talk of someone as free is only to say that nothing determines his actions.³⁶ Sartre state that “to speak of man (or all men) as free is dangerous, for it leads us to think of men as possessing the property of freedom.”³⁷ Sartre’s notion of freedom applies equally to each distinct individual being. Each man lives in a complete and physical world; everyman encounters the same questions of whether he will attain his goal. Regardless of its differences, each man is free as every other, even though his origin point, difficulty, and motive may vary. As for Sartre, It is because we assume that we can differentiate our circumstances from that of another person that we have the deceptions of being less free than he is.³⁸ Sartre’s notion of freedom is synonymous with the autonomy of choice, as man is the author of himself. There is no legislature other than himself, and that he must, in his abandonment state, makes his own choice. To convey that it is not by introversion, but by continually pursuing a goal external of himself in the form of deliverance or some remarkable accomplishments, that man will comprehend himself as an authentic being.³⁹ It becomes evident that his ontological freedom means to be born free or come into existence as a free agent to choose the essence they desire to become or acquire. His notion of freedom is absolute because each individual’s inherent freedom of choice is necessary, not an option that can be owned or denied concerning one wish or want.

The act of freedom or progress becomes actual in the existential term. Freedom of the conscious being is neither a given nor a property; it can only choose itself.⁴⁰ Sartre discusses his notion of ontological freedom as the autonomy of choice not solely in its abstract sense but

³³ Ibid., p. 33.

³⁴ Ibid., pp. 46, 48.

³⁵ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 642.

³⁶ Manser, *Sartre a Philosophic Study*, p. 117.

³⁷ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 513-14.

³⁸ Manser, *Sartre a Philosophic Study*, pp. 110,132.

³⁹ Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, p. 53.

⁴⁰ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 501

concerning the world, which means our free choice is always situated. Our ontological freedom encounter with the brute given, which is inevitable to carry out our free action, this function as a possible condition to one's freedom of choice at the practical level. For Sartre, freedom and situation cannot exist independently; they need each other equally for their existence. The ontological freedom must be lived within practical limitations that facticities impose on us. Sartre considers the different aspects like commitment, responsibility, anguish, bad faith, authenticity, and the significance of others' intersubjectivity. Further, he talks about individual actions in terms of commitment and responsibility, extending to all humankind.⁴¹ The liability to bear the responsibility of one's actions and towards others leads to despair and anguish.

Nonetheless, each individual needs to own this responsibility to live an authentic form of life. Any attempt to escape by excuses or determinism is to live in bad faith. It goes against human beings' nature, which is inevitably free. Besides, others' existence constituted a vital factor in exercising choice without which freedom will make no sense. The presence of others is essential to existence and the knowledge of oneself.⁴² There is an inter-subjectivity in exercising freedom; our freedom depends on others' freedom and vice versa.⁴³ Sartre's freedom is not of an imaginary kind, to fantasize and create things out of our reach but within our limit in what we can see.

As such, Sartre's ontology of freedom lies with the sense of the undeniable presence of a choice in the concrete world rather than a kind of mere fantasy or desire or a kind of property that permits a man to do whatever they want. Considering Sartre's conception of the autonomy of choice, can we consider his notion of freedom as unlimited or unconditioned? As to make a choice means to deny other possibilities of choice. It will be discussed thoroughly in the preceding section by considering the various concepts of Sartre's freedom to evaluate critically whether (or not) his freedom is necessarily a practical one with a limit.

II. Absolute versus Conditioned Freedom

As we have discussed above, Sartre's notion of freedom is identical to the autonomy of choice. To be a man is to choose oneself without relying on anything but oneself in making decisions and actions. Man defines himself by his choice, for not choosing is also a choice; since "the

⁴¹ Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, p. 24.

⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 42

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

choice is the foundation of being chosen but not the foundation of choosing.”⁴⁴ There is no way a man can escape from making a choice. The choice indicates the possibilities of other choices. The possibilities of these choices are neither made explicit nor posited, should be lived in the feeling of unjustifiability. It expressed the absurdity of choice and the consequences of being.⁴⁵ “Whatever our being, maybe, it is a choice, and it depends on us to choose ourselves as “great” or “noble” or “base” and “humiliated.” If we have chosen humiliation as our being’s very stuff, we shall realize ourselves as humiliated, angered, inferior, etc.”⁴⁶ If choice becomes an essential aspect of it to be free, Sartre’s notion of freedom is absolute or condition? Is a choice free from any form of (internal/ external) determinism? In this case, it will be fundamental to look into how choice is formed. To explore the formation of choice, it will look into how Sartre has considered the role of intentions, motives (or cause), passion, emotions, and the brute gave (facticity) in the process of forming a choice.

Sartre defines human reality with consciousness, which can negate itself and the brute given. It is crucial to consider the idea of consciousness propounded by Sartre. When Sartre considers human reality as self-conscious, it never means to assume a consciousness of the moment; it is only a particular view of the mind. Even if an instant consciousness existed, a consciousness that would capture itself in an instant would no longer discern anything.⁴⁷ The consciousness of oneself can be assumed when one is engaged in this or that result or ends, and employing aggregating these apprehensions, outline the whole figure as Sartre says, “when I am writing, I am not the pure perceptive consciousness of my hand, making marks on the paper. I am well in advance of this hand to the completion of the book and its meaning and philosophical activity in general, in my life.”⁴⁸

Man, as a conscious being, logically follows that they are capable of exercising free choice. Free choice implies free action, for it is the first condition of freedom. In consonance with Sartre, our action is always intentional or directed towards some projects or ends. Sartre’s notion of the project is the choice of oneself in the world and, simultaneously, discovering the world. Action, as opposed to mere happening, entails intentions. Moreover, for a free being to act, he must have a motive, and this motive cannot be mere thought, but it should be thought about the situation in which he finds himself, link with an idea about the future. Well, this does

⁴⁴ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 503.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, P. 502.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 490.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, P. 484.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, P. 484.

not deny that some of our actions are caused due to negligence or carelessness. “The careless smoker, who has though negligence, caused the explosion of a powder magazine has not acted.”⁴⁹ But generally, most of our activities are intentional, for our actions necessarily associate with our general project or ends. It is necessary to talk about causes or motives when we talk about particular actions. Since the action is primarily composed of cause and motives, what we are concerned about is whether cause and motives can constitute a priori constitution for the actions. It must be marked that Sartre denied any form of a priori cause for our course of action. He remarks cause and motives as necessary for the act, but that does not cause the act. Sartre holds that it is, in fact, impossible to find an act without a motive, but that does not imply that we must conclude simply that the motive causes the act, which will be a misunderstood notion because the motive is an integral part of the act.

For Sartre, man is a free being who is always directed towards his original projects or ends by making choices and decisions concerning his original projects. Cause (or motives) has meaning only outside itself in the end ideally posited; the motive is understood only by the end; that is, by the non-existent that is yet to happen. Sartre state that if I accept a meager salary, it is absolutely because of fear and fear is a motive. But it is fear of withholding from malnutrition; that is, this fear has meaning only outside itself in the end ideally posited, which is the preservation of a life which I apprehend as “in danger.” Moreover, this fear is understood only with the worth I firmly give to this life; that is, it is assigned to the hierarchical system of ideal objects that value.⁵⁰ Thus cause and motives have connotation only to a evaluate end, which is still yet to attain. Our free acts decide their cause and end, and this free act is the exposition of absolute freedom. In conformity with Sartre, man must confer its worth to cause or motive. The cause cannot refer to another real and specific existence; that is, to a prior cause.⁵¹

Similarly, intentions, passions, emotions cannot be a priori cause of the actions. After all, they are developed and have meaning only to the projected ends. In and through its very advance, human reality decided to explain its being by its ends.⁵² Freedom is none other than the foundations of ends, and it tries to achieve it through motives, emotions, and intense effort. They would have no meaning or value if there were no projected end to make. In line with Sartre, our actions cannot be limited to voluntary actions alone. On the contrary, like passions,

⁴⁹ Ibid., P. 455.

⁵⁰ Ibid., P. 459.

⁵¹ Ibid., P. 459.

⁵² Ibid., P. 466.

even volition is an individual personal demeanor by which we attempt to attain the end posited by fundamental freedom.⁵³ Freedom is none other than the existence of a will or passions in so far as this presence is the nihilation of facticity; that is, the existence of a being is its being in the mode of having to be it.⁵⁴ Human reality seems as the unbound base of its emotions only if it has chosen itself. As Sartre asserts, “my fear is free and manifests my freedom; I have put all my freedom into my fear, and I have chosen myself as fearful in this or that circumstances. Under other conditions, I shall exist as deliberate and courageous, and I shall have put all my freedom into my courage. There is no privileged psychic phenomenon to freedom – All “modes of being” manifest freedom equally.”⁵⁵ Hence motive, intention, passion, emotion, far from dictating the action, appears only in and through the strategy of action. There is no reason or motive for an entire project, for it is only in the context of a project that they would be or be seen as motives. All possible are arranged in an imperishable unity by the powerful upsurge of freedom, which is superior to causes, motives, and ends.⁵⁶ In confirming to Sartre, the action is composed of “cause-intention-act-end” by a free exercise of freedom. For this reason, Sartre concedes human freedom should be free from any form of internal determination that forces specific actions beyond our freedom. Since the meaning held by particular fear, desire, emotions makes sense only when it is freely projected towards the future, it is decided alone by the free being.

An action is possible only because it arises from the human ability to create negative judgments, repudiate, and perceive how things are not. This capacity is identical to freedom. Sartre regards motives in a way that arises when we considered the state of affairs to change it, overcome it, and initiate it by conferring specific values to things. On the other hand, Marry Warnock is critical of Sartre’s notion of motive as meaningful only in terms of the projected end. By stating that Sartre does not entirely succeed in doing it. Sartre discusses the motive in terms of the end or intention of the act but does not say whether or not he thinks that the end must, in some way, consciously or knowingly envisaged by the agent. According to Warnock, if we attempt to assign responsibility to people for what they do, if we ever wish to praise or blame them, or wish that they were otherwise or urge them to improve, then we must have some theoretical notion of what they are and are not capable of choosing.⁵⁷

⁵³ Ibid., p. 466.

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 466.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 467.

⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 472.

⁵⁷ Warnock, *The Philosophy of Sartre*, pp. 114-15.

Sartre's concept of ontological (or absolute) freedom cannot exist in itself. To exist, it requires the given world for various reasons to exercise one's absolute freedom. Freedom can exist "only as of the "nihilation" of a given. To the extent that it is an internal negation and a consciousness, it participates in the necessity that prescribes that consciousness be consciousness of something."⁵⁸ The other side of absolute freedom is the freedom that needs to exist in the given world, which can be termed as practical freedom. The given world is revealed through the existence of freedom in the world. In compliance with Sartre, the given or facticity instead of being a threat to freedom enables the rise of freedom. There can be a free human being only by encountering the resisting world. Outside of this confrontation, the notion of freedom, determinism, of essentiality loses all essence.⁵⁹ In human reality, being free is not by choice, but free is the facticity of freedom. It does not mean that man exists first to be free afterward. The terms afterward and first are not independent but are the product of freedom itself. As specified by Sartre, contingency and facticity are one; there is a being in which freedom has to be in the form of non-being (that is, of nihilation). The fact of freedom to exist or to be a being in the world is the same thing, which means that freedom is originally a relation to the given.⁶⁰

There is a co-dependency of freedom and facticity. There can be freedom only in the given world. Freedom is always situated, always in a "situation," and still has a "coefficient of adversity."⁶¹ Freedom is found only in a situation, and there is a situation only through freedom. Neither of them can exist self-sufficiently, and by the situation, Sartre means the natural product of the juncture of the facticity and freedom. It means that there can be no consciousness unless there is something to be conscious of, a world to which it can upsurge, relate, nihilate, choose to project towards its possibilities.⁶² Human freedom is not purely a matter of consciousness, or can it be reduced to the given. It is a combination of these two. We experienced two different kinds of facticity, namely the given world example, mountain, trees, soil, stone, etc., and the things we are endowed with from the moment we were born. Example being a Jew, male, female, black, fair, etc. It is not foreign that we are born in a particular place at a specific time with certain characteristics that are not of our choosing, and we are committed to living as we do by all these factors, which are built into us and are beyond our control.

⁵⁸ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 503

⁵⁹ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 505.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 508.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 481-87.

⁶² Santoni, *Camus on Sartre's "Freedom": Another "Misunderstanding"*. P. 786.

Further, merely by being human, we are, as we have seen, committed to individual views, attitudes, desires, just in virtue of being aware of things in the world, and being in addition to that, and in conflict with other conscious beings.⁶³

In as much as facticity becomes an essential requirement in exercising our absolute freedom of choice. The questions remain, to what extent are we free? Given the necessity of facticity, are we free to choose? How far can a free agent escape from his particular situation? If, to any degree, we are free to choose, is that mean some choice is superior to others? How much responsibility must a free agent accept for his action? How are we supposed to understand the relation to the given? Is given a limitation/condition to freedom? In order to attempt to answer these concerned questions. Firstly, it will look into what Sartre meant by the given situation and how he understood the relation between absolute freedom and the given.

Sartre deliberate about facticity in terms of place, past, environment, neighbour, death without which freedom will make no sense. My habitat is simply the location in which I reside, the “country” to which I belong, its particular weather, its resources, population, culture, etc. Human reality is found as the absolute fact of a being – there without choice and necessity. “I am there, not here but there. It is the absolute and incomprehensible fact that is at the origin of extension and, consequently, of my original relations with things (with these things rather than those). It is a fact of pure contingency – an absurd fact.”⁶⁴ Human reality is always found in a particular place at a particular point in time. That does not mean we cannot change our place according to our project goals. But we cannot exist without being- there or here.

The place that we are in existence functions as a limit to our freedom concerning the planned project, and hence the place appears either as an aid or a hindrance.⁶⁵ My place’s facticity did not necessarily exist as a limit to freedom but is revealed only through the end’s free choice. From the standpoint of the chosen end, it is that facticity appears with its significance, attribute, feature, fragility, and improbability. In accord with Sartre, freedom can be considered genuinely free only if we considered facticity that we encounter as its limitation. For this reason, there is an unavoidable connection between facticity and freedom. As specified by Sartre, freedom would not remain a capability of nihilation and choice without facticity, and without freedom, facticity would not be unearthed and would have no significance.⁶⁶

⁶³ Warnock, *The Philosophy of Sartre*, p. 111.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 512-13.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 514.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 516-17.

All man has a past and cannot exist without a past. The past plays an active role in determining our present and future action. We are concerned about not denying the role that the past plays in determining our actions but how it determines our actions. Sartre considered the past as one form of human facticity because freedom cannot alter its past in any case; the past is out of reach and visits us at a distance without our even being able to revert to face it in order to consider it.⁶⁷ One has to be one's past because "we do not receive our past, but the necessity of our contingency implies that we cannot choose it."⁶⁸ But that does not mean that it infringes our freedom. Cause human reality is a conscious being always projecting towards the future by making a choice that supposes eliminations and selection by positing an end. The dire essence of the past evolves from the real choice of the preceding course of actions; freedom is the choice of a projected end in relations of the past; on the contrary, the past is merely what it is. The practicality of the past is entirely conditioned on the established project.⁶⁹ Therefore the "actual project decides whether a defined period of the past is in continuity with the present or whether it is a broken fragment from which one is emerging and put at a distance."⁷⁰

The environment that we encounter in the given world is made up of the instrumental things surrounding us. It either works as peculiar coefficients of adversity or utility in terms of the projected ends. The environment exists independently of us because others can change it without my participation in the change. Human reality discovered the existing environment as utility or adversity concerning one's principle project that does not exclude the fact that the environment, in a way, affects the anticipated end. Instead, the weather can emerge as favourable or adverse in conformity with the assimilated project.

On the other hand, in some cases, the environment's unpredicted adversity can lead to my project's changing; nonetheless, our freedom is not limited by the environment. It is perpetually unfeasible to get around the obstacle and mend the damage, but the very impracticability of continuing in a particular direction must be freely initiated. The unfeasibility of activities must be from our open repudiation, which is not prompted by the impossibility of continuing the behaviour.⁷¹ We must remember that the absolute freedom of Sartre is to choose and should not be demented with the freedom to acquire. As per Sartre, freedom means to change the existing environment, clear the common hurdles, tools to be used in resolving, for

⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 517.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 518.

⁶⁹ Ibid., p. 519.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 522.

⁷¹ Ibid., p. 527

it is the freedom that discloses them as obstructions. However, by exercising free choice, the meaning of their being can be interpreted.⁷² For Sartre environment is an essential requirement for the human reality of exercising its freedom.

On the other hand, since our freedom is grounded on “nihilation,” the real world appears as indifference, unpredictability, utility, adversity, out of reach, separated. Because man “is condemned to be free – i.e. man cannot choose itself as freedom – that there are things; that is, an abundance of contingency at the heart of which it is itself contingency.”⁷³ Through the contingency of the freedom and the given, which is found in the situation, the unpredictability and the adversity of the environment become a free choice of human reality. In a way, human reality is responsible for finding himself and can be free only in a situation.

Every human reality found itself in an inhabited world, along with the facts of other presence amid our existence. We appear in the world constituted by the conventional techniques used to apprehend the given, whose meaning is not my creation. These techniques will determine the sense of belongingness to the collective: to the human species, to the nation collectively, to the professional, and the family group.⁷⁴ The fact of other existence is a given facticity that is independent of our choice and creation. Freedom encountered the problems of the presence of conventional techniques and the independent life of other freedom. Instead, it is in this situation; human reality must excise their absolute freedom of choice by clarifying the meaning of the prevailing situation by their free choice. The existence of the others appears as absolute determinism, which is not chosen by us.

Amid other existence, we can be labeled as dark, fair, attractive or hideous, tall, short, etc. We have no power in changing it, the labeling that is derived from the others. The freedom of others giving meaning to certain things is different from my deliberating meaning on brute existence or acquiring my account’s liability. The emergence of others constitutes a new dimension of being.⁷⁵ That is with others’ existence; we suddenly encounter the total alienation of our being: we become a mere object for others.⁷⁶ The actual limit in our freedom is that we can be others’ look, which lies purely and simply in other judgment and conception of me as the object for others. The other “corollary fact is that my situation ceases for the other to be a

⁷² Ibid., pp. 527-28.

⁷³ Ibid., p. 530.

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 533.

⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 545.

⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 545.

situation and becomes an objective form in which I exist as an objective structure for them. It is precisely these two inherent limits which represent the boundaries of freedom.”⁷⁷ Instead of these inherent limits, freedom can only be bounded by freedom. In a sense, we have the freedom to accept or reject solely or partly the definition of others imposing on us and to things. To deny the purpose and values imposed by others does not mean I abstain totally to what I am (for the others) – for to deny is not to avoid but still to suppose – nor can I give in to it passively. Whether in anger, detest, pride, humiliation, or cheerful order, I ought to choose to be what I should be.⁷⁸

The existence of others can, in different ways, bumps up against our freedom, those that impose on our freedom without our will, but that does not mean that it limits our freedom; in a way, we are bound to be this or that. Instead, it lies in us how we considered the point of view of others on us. In consent with Sartre, a man rising against others does not bring suffering to others’ “existence; he is compelled to make the other’s existence manifest to himself in the form of free choice. It is by choice alone that he will apprehend the other as the-other-as-subject or as the-other-as-object. In as much as the other is for him the other-as-a-look, there can be no question of techniques or different meanings; human reality experiences itself as an object in the universe beneath the other’s look. As soon as a man surpasses the other towards its ends, it makes of him a transcendence – transcended, that which is a free surpassing of the given towards ends appears to it as meaningful, given conduct in the world (fixed-in-itself).”⁷⁹ Others can label us good or bad or prohibit us in our path as no Jew allowed here or no women can enter. All these labelling and constraint can have meaning only on and through the foundation of undetermined choice. Under the project I have chosen, I can either accept or disobey the determinism freely. But it should continuously be from my free choice, not interference from outside determinism. In this manner, the existence of race, the infirmity, the ugliness, minority, and untouchability are for the other. However, it can be as inferiority or pride for me only if I choose them to be. It makes sense when we understand Sartre’s absolute freedom solely as the autonomy of choice.

When we are alive, we have the power to create meaning about the present and the future that is yet to accomplish. It occupies inherently a force of self-criticism and self-metamorphosis, which causes it to decide itself as a “not-yet” or that can redefine itself. On the

⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 546.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 550.

⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 541.

other hand, death is entirely adverse for life, the dead does not cease to change, yet it is all done.⁸⁰ Death does not give purpose to life; on the contrary, it removes all-purpose from life. It does not belong to man's ontological structure since it is the nihilation of the possibilities; it is outside of the possibilities. Therefore man cannot wait for it as a man can in terms of his possibilities. It is due to the existence of death that estranges man entirely from his life to the other's interest. "To be dead is to be prey for the living. To embrace the meaning of his forthcoming death is to discover himself as the future prey of others."⁸¹ Therefore death is an unforeseen reality that does not lie in our control to escape or experience it and thus originally belongs to the facticity. Sartre states that "death is a pure fact, as is birth; it comes from outside and transforms into the outside. At the bottom, it is in no way different from birth, and the identity of birth and death is a facticity."⁸²

Sartre maintains a clear distinction between death and finitude. It should not be misunderstood with the concept of finitude. Death is an accidental reality that belongs to facticity; on the other side, "finitude is an ontological structure of the for-itself that actuates the freedom and exists only in and through the free project of the end, by making it known to us. In other words, human reality would remain finite even if it were immortal because it makes itself finite by choosing itself as human."⁸³ To be a finite being is to define oneself by projecting towards one achievable to the omission of other possibilities. The very fact of freedom is the assumption and creation of finitude.⁸⁴ Death can neither be found in freedom nor an obstacle to freedom; it is only a true destiny of human life. For this reason, Sartre acknowledges the absolute notion of freedom as total and infinite. It "is not because death does not limit freedom, but because freedom never encounters this limit. I am not "free to die," but I am a free mortal."⁸⁵

The various facticity relating to habitat, past, neighbour, surroundings, and death helps us have a more definite conception of the situation where we decide our free choices. Man is bound to find himself in the world and defined himself by freely interpreting the instrumental usefulness or difficulty of the facticity, which he can always "nihilates." Nonetheless, Sartre did not consider the immutability of the past, place, surroundings, and attitudes, etc., as a given

⁸⁰ Ibid., pp. 563-69.

⁸¹ Ibid., p. 564.

⁸² Ibid., p. 566.

⁸³ Ibid., p. 567.

⁸⁴ Ibid., p. 567.

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 568.

condition. Instead, they are disclosed on things only in association with the continuity of one's project. Human reality is nothing but the project of one-self beyond a regulated situation, the project pre-outlines in terms of the real situation. Besides, it enlightens the particular circumstances in terms of choice; Sartre's notion of freedom in terms of choice autonomy plays a significant role in determining the anticipated project situation

III. Camus and Sartre on "Absolute Freedom"

Sartre's notion of absolute freedom in terms of the autonomy of choice has led many thinkers to doubt the practicability of his notion of freedom, condemning it as practically impossible. Among one of the famous thinkers was Albert Camus. As early as 1939, in his review of Sartre's *The Wall*, Camus criticizes Sartre's absolute freedom for their surplus autonomy. Camus admits Sartre's freedom is, in fact, free, but he says their freedom is of no relevance to them, as his freedom is free of the manacle of his prejudices, sometimes from his essence, and is reduced to self-contemplation. Camus goes on to say that Sartre's human being is "alone, enclosed in his liberty."⁸⁶ As followed from the above background of Sartre's notion of absolute freedom, it can be said that Camus has failed to appreciate the choice/ action dimension of Sartre's notion of freedom. In this context, Santoni argues that Camus has been unable to distinguish between Sartre ontological freedoms: the total autonomy of choice man is deserted and constituted by his nature. And the existential freedom and extent to which we choose to practice, reside, and exert the freedom we are.⁸⁷ As we have discussed, freedom for Sartre is the autonomy of choice in the real world; it is continuously engaged: there can be no freedom for Sartre except concerning a given world. Without the given world, freedom will not be able to exist as nihilation and of choice. Moreover, the choice itself is limited; to choose is to negate the other possible option.

In the *Myth of Sisyphus* (1942), Camus informed us that knowing whether a man is free does not interest him, as he can experience only his freedom. He claimed that the only conception of freedom man could have is that of the individual in the State or the prisoner. The absurd and death become the "principles" of the "only reasonable freedom"; freedom holds no meaning outside of its limited fate. He states that the only one he knows is "freedom of thought and action. The absurd man enjoys not the illusion of freedom but freedom from the

⁸⁶ Camus, *Lyrical and Critical Essays*, pp. 203-06.

⁸⁷ Santoni, *Camus on Sartre's "Freedom": Another "Misunderstanding"*, p. 791.

conventional rules; the absurd man realizes that [hitherto] he was not free, although he might have felt free.”⁸⁸ Conforming to Santoni, Camus’s notion of freedom in the Myth of Sisyphus is an indirect critic aimed at Sartre’s total ontological freedom to develop further a philosophical basis for the early criticism of his review of *The Wall*. Santoni argues that, if his judgment holds right, Camus has misconceived Sartre’s ontological and existential freedom. Moreover, when Camus states that the only concept of freedom that he can entertain is that of, for example, “the prisoner in the state,” he does not realize that Sartre’s freedom is always situated, always about a brute given.⁸⁹ The foundation of Camus’s notion of freedom from absurdity and death will be discussed in detail, along with Sartre’s foundation of freedom in the latter chapter, with an attempt to bring forth their epistemological grounding on the knowledge of freedom.

In *The Rebel*, Camus comments on absolute freedom: “absolute freedom is the right of the strongest to dominate”;⁹⁰ “Absolute freedom mocks at justice; absolute justice denies freedom”;⁹¹ absolute freedom demands “the right to destroy the existence and the freedom of others.”⁹² For Camus’s absolute or total freedom turns into a “total violent revolution.” “Total revolution” commands the “ultimate power to inflict death”⁹³ and the “control of the world.”⁹⁴ In turn, it leads to the destruction of freedom – that is, the destruction of Camus’s freedom “with limits” – and, hence, totalitarianism. According to Camus’s judgment, Sartre absolute, total, freedom, full passion leads to others’ total objectification, the entire “subjection of the Majority,” to “coldly planned” dehumanization, a cynical, oppressive, nihilistic totalitarianism.⁹⁵ Camus’s critic of absolute freedom is implicitly or explicitly link to Sartre’s notion of absolute freedom. It was known in their Famous quarrel in 1952, Camus was disoriented with Sartre– a debate I will discuss briefly in the latter chapter.

Camus’ critic of Sartre’s absolute freedom shows how he understand Sartre’s freedom as an unlimited, unrestricted kind of freedom that allows the human being to do anything he wishes, unobstructed by the given state of things. Santoni points out that Camus fails to understand Sartre’s “paradox of freedom,” in which man is situated in the world and that

⁸⁸ Camus, *The Rebel*, pp. 41-45.

⁸⁹ Santoni, *Camus on Sartre’s “Freedom”: Another “Misunderstanding”*, pp. 796-97.

⁹⁰ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 287

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p.291.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 284.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 305, 107.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 46-47.

Sartre's freedom and facticity are inseparable. The individual does not create the world; neither totally under his power what the world construct of him. Freedom and facticity always exist together in the context of Sartre's freedom. As we have discussed above for Sartre, facticity did not destroy freedom, and there is no freedom without facticity. This necessary correlation of facticity and freedom can also be seen from the prisoner's example. It is not always the case that a prisoner is all the time free to go out of prison, which would be absurd, nor that he is still free to desire for discharge, which will be an unrelated expectation. Besides, he is invariably free to attempt to breakout: that is, that whatever his circumstances maybe, he can project his flight and acquire a knowledge of the value of his project by taking up some action.⁹⁶ This explicit instance shows how a prisoner encounters obstacles to his freedom, but on the other, it does not stop him from making a choice.

Moreover, Sartre's autonomy of choice does not mean that we can do whatever we want. It is important to note his autonomy of choice to repeat– not to choose is also a choice. It presents to us our inability to escape from choice. It forms the essential requirement for absolute freedom but not of the freedom to do anything at any moment. Sartre states that his autonomy of choice does not mean that I can do whatever I desire or wish – if one means by freedom here, an unreasonable, whimsical, unwarranted, and inarticulate occurrence. To be sure, each one of man's acts, even the most trivial, is entirely free does not signify that man's action “can be anything whatsoever or that it is unforeseeable.”⁹⁷ This statement itself goes counter to Camus's view on his absolute freedom. It is essential to realize again that his autonomy of choice means choosing among the given possibilities and not merely surrendering to any kind of determinism without being its author. It implies only that man should be an author of one's life by freely deciding and defining oneself in the given world.

Sartre makes explicit some concept of freedom that goes against his absolute freedom. Sartre makes very clear that his notion of freedom is not of the “common sense” and general understanding of freedom, which picture freedom as the potentiality to achieve what one has wished or to obtained whatever one wishes or freedom to do whatever one can. But instead, he clarifies that his freedom means the freedom that can determine one to wish, desire, or act; specifically, success is not essential to freedom. Similarly, he holds that the genuine and general concept of freedom originated from political, historical, and moral situations is equal to “the

⁹⁶ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 505.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 475.

ability to obtain the ends chosen.”⁹⁸ There is no autonomy of choice in the factual and general concept of freedom since it considered the situation to be the sole factor of determining one course of action by declaring that the circumstances make me free or not free to pursue this or that end.⁹⁹ In this kind of freedom, one fails to take honours of their action and exercise autonomy of choice defined by Sartre.

The only freedom that Sartre considered is only the autonomy of choice and nothing else. Taking note of the clarification of his notion of freedom, we can, at least to some extent, holds a view against Camus’s misunderstood notion of Sartre’s absolute freedom. It provides a piece of evidence that contra Camus – Sartre’s ontological freedom has practical, living implications and, thus, is of significant use, not “no use,” to man. It makes it fairer that his ontological freedom is not empty or detached from the world: the free choice is always “situated.”¹⁰⁰

To further clarify the misunderstood notion of Sartre’s autonomy of choice as permissible to do whatever one wishes or desires, it would be necessary to discuss Sartre’s conception of responsibility to the autonomy of choice. He discusses man as the ability to choose, and to choose implies assigning values and commitment for our anticipated project or ends. His freedom does not deny responsibility in any aspect. “As man is condemned to be free carries the weight of the whole world on his shoulders.”¹⁰¹ It means responsibility for our actions comprises, from the single incident in personal life to the world’s widest happenings.

In *Being and Nothingness*, where he said that absolute responsibilities are “not resignation; it is merely the logical requirement of the consequence of freedom. Anything that appears to me spring through me, and I can neither influence myself with it nor revolt against it nor surrender myself to it; everything which happens to me is mine.”¹⁰² Every situation in the world is created by humans, including non-human situations, simply because humans are free beings who can decide the coefficient of usefulness and affliction in things and even their uncertainty in the light of absolute freedom. Sartre state that there is no coincidence in life. If any community events instantly emerge and involve man, it does not come from the outside. If a man is a marshal in a war, the war is his war; it is the image, and he deserves it. He procures

⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 505.

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 507.

¹⁰⁰ Santoni, *Camus on Sartre “Freedom”: Another “Misunderstanding,”* p. 804.

¹⁰¹ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 574.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 574.

it first because he could have always escaped it by suicide or by flight; these ultimate possibilities are present to man when there is a quarry of anticipating a situation. The inability of getting out of it, he has chosen it. It can be due to passivity, due to lack of courage or confidence in the face of collective judgment, or he favour specific other values to the value of the denial to join in the war (the sensible opinion of his relation, the honor of his family. etc.), it is all a matter of a choice.¹⁰³ Sartre would in no way accept excuses in terms of our action, every action arises out of our free choice, and so there is no place for compulsive or accident, or passive action. Even to make passive action “in the world, to refuse to act upon things and upon others is still to choose oneself, and suicide is one mode among others of being-in-the-world.”¹⁰⁴ As a conscious being, man is responsible for all things except for the very responsibility, for man is not the base of his being.¹⁰⁵

Although there is clarity in Sartre’s notion of freedom and responsibility, the existence of ambiguousness cannot be ignored; to some extent, his approach of absolute freedom and responsibility can be considered ambiguous. It can be theoretically possible that we are always free to choose and be solely responsible for it. However, in a practical sense, it is challenging and sometimes not possible in most cases. Mary Warnock and Anthony Manser have pointed out ambiguousness in Sartre’s absolute freedom and responsibility. From Sartre’s viewpoint, we are free, and that we prove it by actually choosing and acting and planning in a way, no unfree object can irrespective of any determinism. We should be responsible for our chosen action. Manser argues that there is always a distinction between the effective and the ineffective between doing things and having things happen to one, which is a noticeable difference that can be experienced all the time.¹⁰⁶ As we have discussed above, Sartre will not accept that things happen to us sometimes without our awareness.

As for him, things do not merely happen to us; on the contrary, it happens according to how we interpret or accept them by exercising our freedom, without which we will lose our actual human reality. Manser also argues against Sartre’s original choice that each man resides in a full and concrete world; every man faces the same questions of whether he will attain his aim, whichever it may be. Thus, each man is as free as any other, although his initial point, issues, and objective may vary from one to the other. Man assumes that he can differentiate his

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 575.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 576

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 576

¹⁰⁶ Manser, *Sartre a Philosophic Study*, p. 111.

condition from that of another person that he has the illusion of being less free than others. It can be noted that for Sartre, everyone enjoys freedom equally, being it a black, Jew, master, slave. Contrary to Sartre's claim, Manser argues against the original choice, which Sartre talks about is not applicable in every stage of human life. He takes up the example of the childhood stage to support his argument; it is hard to see how an infant can be aware of what he is doing, and if he is not, then it is odd to call him responsible.

Moreover, Sartre's original choice as well is relegated to the genuine unconscious. On the other hand, Sartre will not allow the existence of a genuine unconscious; however, an unconscious idea could never be recognized as "belonging to" its owner.¹⁰⁷ Instead, Sartre would argue that the critical point about this procedure involves the admission that the patient is, in some sense, conscious of the trouble; it is not just the result of a past happening.¹⁰⁸ As for Sartre, since the responsibility is a logical requirement of the action. It is not surprising for us when Sartre mentions in *Being and Nothingness* that the responsibility of the being-for-itself "is overwhelming since he is the one by whom it happens that there is a world; since he is also the one who makes himself be, then whatever may be the situation in which he finds himself, a human being must wholly assume this situation with its peculiar coefficient of adversity, even though it be insupportable."¹⁰⁹

Warnock has also criticized Sartre's extreme notion of choice and responsibility. She argues against Sartre's ultimate responsibility; for Sartre, we confer specific values upon things, making them into our action motives. But do we necessarily know that we are doing this? Could we do otherwise? Sartre fails to succeed in answering this question. Since he discusses the motives of our action in terms of the end or intention of the act but does not say whether or not he thinks that the end must be in some way consciously or knowingly envisaged by the agent.¹¹⁰ Warnock further asserts that if we attempt to assign responsibility to people for what they do, if we ever wish to praise or blame them, or wish they were otherwise, or urge them to improve. It is then essential that we have some theoretical notion of what they are and cannot choose.¹¹¹ On the contrary, Sartre will hold that everyone has the equal ability to choose and act irrespective of whatever they think they are or the society considered them to be. Man does not

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 123

¹⁰⁸ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 661-62, 537.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 574.

¹¹⁰ Warnock, *The Philosophy of Sartre*, p. 115

¹¹¹ Ibid., p. 114.

have a definite essence; they should define themselves by forming an adverse judgment, denying, and seeing how a thing is not, and for Sartre, this is identical with freedom.

Man is free and must necessarily be so, led to Sartre's total rejection of the view that we are determined by the past and must hold absolute responsibility for our character. Warnock objects to the exaggerating independence of the past claimed by Sartre. By stating that even if we cannot be forced to do one thing rather than another by what has occurred to us in the past, our character is formed by what happens to us. We act through our character most of the time and could not perhaps, at any time, choose what characters to have.¹¹² This argument makes sense in as much as it is theoretically possible to explain our character's formation. In the initial stage, we form our character through our free choices and decisions. But once it is formed, it is not easy to simply distance it from the formed character. Most of the time, it may just come out frequently in our performance without actually realizing it at that instant. It does not mean that we cannot construct our character; obviously, we can make an effort to improve it gradually but not through instant decisions and choice as understood by Sartre.

To have a complete understanding of Sartre's freedom. It is essential to look into whether Sartre has a morality aspect in his notion of freedom and responsibility that we have discussed. In general, ethical theory first concerns human beings' behaviour towards one another, for morality consists of this behaviour's regulations.¹¹³ The moment man becomes aware that he sees himself as the one who can choose or fail to choose, it arouses anguish as understood by Sartre. Anguish is necessarily derived from responsibility; it comes from the fact that choice is "fragile."¹¹⁴ It has no guarantee that it will be maintained; that choice is "unjustifiable."¹¹⁵ Alternatively, "absurd."¹¹⁶ There is no reason outside the choice by which it can be justified. Anguish is a reaction to the fact that man is deserted into the world without his will and yet must assume responsibility for being there by taking responsibility for all our actions. For Sartre, anguish is direct and clear, of the sort encountered by each man who has born responsibilities, and it is not a screen that divides man from his action, but a condition of actions itself.¹¹⁷ Freedom is recognized freedom when we experienced anguish. Sartre

¹¹² Ibid., p. 119.

¹¹³ Ibid., p. 123.

¹¹⁴ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 543.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., p. 542.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., pp. 558-59.

¹¹⁷ Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, p. 27.

recognition of this anguish is the essential preliminary to morality. In a way, anguish helps man be more sensitive to freedom and relation to others.

As we have discussed earlier, Sartre is against any predetermined social structure, laws, principles, rules, preconditioned values, norms, systems in determining our action. Concerning Sartre's concept of morality, it is the man who decides his morality; he does not appear into the world entirely developed; he constructs himself by choosing his morality. His conditions are such that he has no choice other than to choose morality. Man can be defined only concerning his commitments.¹¹⁸ Sartre compares morality with a work of art by stating a commonality between morality and art: creation and invention. Moral choice is like constructing a work of art.¹¹⁹

Sartre does not show what morality should be, but it can be understood as something that provides criteria or reasons for assessing choice and actions.¹²⁰ What would be for Sartre to live a moral life? We can try to attempt to answer in two ways. Firstly, living a moral life for man is to take full responsibility for one's own choice and action. In other words, a man should be the sole author of his life. The moment he takes refuge behind his passion, he fabricates some deterministic theory. He accepts values from others, accepts any general rules for behaviour, and treats oneself as ultimately driven in our behaviour by the view that others take of us as living in bad faith. Sartre considered bad faith a lie, not the general lie that we understand, but it is a form of self-delusion since it is a lie to oneself in as much as it is a dissembling of man's complete freedom of allegiance.¹²¹ To free from living in bad faith, Sartre insists that man must define himself against his passion and other judgment by considering it as a means of enslaving him. It is by acknowledging that existence precedes essence and that man is a free being who, under any situations, can only ever will his freedom, simultaneously acknowledge that he must will the freedom of others.¹²² Only then, a man will realize himself as genuinely human.¹²³

Secondly, Sartre discusses the relationship among men in terms of choice and responsibility. It is essential to note that in *Being and Nothingness*, he considered the relation between man as a conflict by suggesting that it is metaphysically impossible for human beings

¹¹⁸ Ibid., p. 46.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., p. 46.

¹²⁰ Manser, *Sartre a Philosophic Study*, p. 116.

¹²¹ Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, pp. 47-48.

¹²² Ibid., p. 49.

¹²³ Ibid., p. 53.

to do anything other than fight each other. Moreover, the thesis that to accept general rules to bring about the possibility of treating other people as an end in themselves is to fall in bad faith. On the other hand, morality means taking in the interest of one person to the interest of another, and this is what Sartre has ruled out in *Being and Nothingness*.¹²⁴ We can see a shift in his thoughts in *Existentialism is a Humanism*, where he did not consider here man as a conflict. Instead, Sartre suggests that each of us is interested in his freedom, but that this necessarily involved others' freedom; in willing his freedom, man discovered an exclusive interdependence of freedom between him and the other. Moreover, he says that even though freedom as an exposition of man does not build upon others, when there is a commitment, man is obliged to will the freedom of others synchronously as to will his own. He cannot set his freedom as an objective without also setting others' freedom as an objective.¹²⁵

We can see that Sartre expand his notion of responsibility to all humankind in *Existentialism is a Humanism*, which was published after *Being and Nothingness*. But his notion of extending morality to all humankind for Warnock is ambiguous, for he provides no argument to reveal why choosing freedom for oneself required choosing it for others. The whole basis of the discussion of our relationship to one another in *Being and Nothingness* was the very opposite belief – namely, that one man's freedom was a hopeless obstacle to another's.¹²⁶ However, there is ambiguity in Sartre's notion of absolute freedom, responsibility, and morality, as pointed out by some thinkers. At the same time, we cannot deny the fact that his freedom is practical, concrete, and to some degree, has a moral impact both on individuals and on humankind as a whole.

¹²⁴ Warnock, *The Philosophy of Sartre*, pp. 133-34.

¹²⁵ Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, pp. 48-49

¹²⁶ Warnock, *The Philosophy of Sartre*, p. 131.

Chapter 2

Foundations of Freedom: Nothingness and Absurdity

This chapter deals with the ontological and the epistemological foundation of freedom as envisaged and conceptualized by Sartre and Camus. The purpose of engaging with the foundation of freedom is to accurately comprehend – how both of them, even though passionately concerned with the “human condition” and “freedom,” provide different epistemological groundings in deriving their ideas of human freedom. Sartre has his grounding of freedom in “nothingness” and “negation.” By distinguishing between two modes of being: the *being-in-itself* and the *being-for-itself*. He identified *being-for-itself* with consciousness; to be free is to be conscious. He considered man as the only being, endowed with a consciousness that differentiates him from the physical being (*being-in-itself*). He derived his freedom from the phenomenological understanding of consciousness and nothingness, which considered consciousness as always intentional that in-itself has no content. It is always directed towards the existing physical object as well as the a non-physical object like (emotion, anger, and hatred.) As consciousness is nothingness, his conception of freedom is absolute, free from all kinds of determination.

On the other hand, Camus derived his freedom from the notion of “absurdity” and “death.” The unavoidable existence of absurdity and suicide constitutes the essential question of man’s life: It signifies the importance of being alive in the presence of absurdity. Man cannot be free from his absurd existence, and everything ceases when a person encounters death; he lost everything, including his freedom. As such, freedom only makes sense amid absurdity, and since death is an essential facet of human beings, it logically follows that our freedom is limited. The idea of the absurdity of life and death plays a vital role in conceiving his notion of freedom. In this chapter, Sartre’s and Camus’s epistemological grounding of freedom will be critically discussed to comprehend practicality their conceptions of freedom. Moreover, it will also discuss their arousal of differences in each perspective of freedom that contributed to their unending debate from 1952 till Camus’s death in 1960.

I. The Problem of Being, Nothingness and Negation in Sartre

Sartre not only made unique conceptual articulations, but also employed unique theoretical approach in developing his notion of freedom by deriving it from the concepts of nothingness and negation. At the same time, his philosophy is concerned with the facts of human existence and its justification pre-requisites inside the world; the world's existence is necessary for human beings' activities. Then how does he establish an equal relation between his theoretical aspect and its practicality? Sartre explains the spontaneous relation of man and the world through his conception of consciousness. He derived the notion of consciousness by discussing the existence of two ontological modes of being: *being-for-itself* and *being-in-itself*. He gives more details explaining the complexity of *being-for-itself* and does not emphasize explaining the *Being-in-Itself* simply because it is what it is. As being what it is, there is not much to say about its complexity. *Being-in-itself* is treated as complete positivity; it is identified with a specific identity. "The in-itself has no secrets; it is massive...it is entirely positive. It knows no otherness: it never affirms itself as other than any other being; it can have no relation with any other. It is itself indefinitely, and it exhausts itself in so being."¹²⁷ It is devoid of any form of possibilities and negations. Moreover, *being-in-itself* cannot be potential nor have powers. In-itself, it is what it is in the total fullness of its integrity. For example, the cloud is not probable rain; it is, in itself, a definite amount of water vapour for a specified temperature and pressure: *being-in-itself* is what it is. *Being-in-itself* is the possibility in the world by the existence of human beings.

On the contrary, it is impossible to give an equally brief account of the *being-for-itself* since it is a being, which is what it is and what it is not: a being full of possibilities and powers. Sartre identifies *being-for-itself* with consciousness and nothingness. It is through the existence of *being-for-itself* that organized and made known the existence of the *being-in-itself*. The rise of man amid being "invest" causes a world to be discovered.¹²⁸ The *being-for-itself* operates as a means to relate to the world or creates the world. As such, the relation of *being-for-itself* and *being-in-itself* is possible because the *being-for-itself* is a conscious being. The term *being-for-itself* is justified as a description of mind or consciousness, as it performs activities in terms of the pre-reflective cogito, which means being mindful of what one is doing. Such awareness

¹²⁷Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 33-34.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

cannot occur in the realm of the *being-in-itself*. Sartre's notion of the *being-for-itself* and *being-in-itself* has its existential notion in the world as differentiated from the metaphysical system.¹²⁹

Since Sartre derived his notion of freedom by equating it with consciousness, it will be vital to examine what he implied by the term consciousness. He obtained his notion of consciousness from a phenomenological understanding of consciousness. His notion of consciousness does not consider the concept of "I." Rather, it is defined by Intentionality. Intentionality enables an object to transcend to the consciousness that grasps it. With the object, the unity of the consciousness and intentionality is found;¹³⁰ Consciousness consolidates itself by fleeing from itself. Sartre considered the existence of consciousness as an absolute, non-substantial, and emptiness: which signifies that nothing can limit consciousness other than itself. It is absolute as to be conscious is to be conscious of itself.

Through consciousness is always directed towards an objects, it by itself is non-substantial because its intentional object is by nature outside of it, which consciousness postulate and embraces the object in the same act. Consciousness is a vacancy or an emptiness since all material, psycho-physical, and mental objects, all facts, all worth are outside it, but it is the consciousness of all these objects.¹³¹ Consciousness is that which enables the ability to distinguish between thoughts and objects. Furthermore, the distinction between consciousness and objects creates a gap or distance between thoughts and objects. The gap enables the consciousness to affirm or deny what is factual of its objects, designing and deliberating what is erroneous or denying it. Thus, the consciousness functions to fill up space; between thought and the object of thought.

Sartre's notion of consciousness is unceasingly conscious of something; does that limit consciousness's function to the instant experience, which occurs when experiencing a particular thing? His notion of consciousness is continuously connected with the future. For him, the conscious object cannot differentiate reasonably from consciousness. The consciousness of pain makes up the pain; in the same manner of its existence, it is made and not as a form imposed after the event. There is no more a consciousness first, which afterward receives the states of pain like water to which colouring is added. There is no such thing first as "unconscious or psychological," which afterward obtains the aspect of consciousness as if

¹²⁹ Manser, *Sartre a Philosophic Study*, p. 53.

¹³⁰ Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, p. 38.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 40-41,43.

it were illuminated.¹³² Besides, his notion of consciousness is not that of the instant consciousness; instead, it is consistently directing ahead, away from a more transitory experience at the moment. As for Sartre, reading a book is not merely conscious of particular words or sentences or the paragraph; reading the whole book refers to all the pages already read and still yet to be read.

The consciousness existence as lack, an absence of completed possibilities, and it will always remain unsatisfied as long as a being is conscious. “There is not a moment of any consciousness which is not similarly defined by an internal relation to the future; whether I write, smoke, drink, or rest, the sense of my consciousness is always at a distance, over there, outside.”¹³³ As such, consciousness is an interconnection of past, present, and future. If consciousness were instant, it would be compelled to spell out each word, which is impractical.

Moreover, the notion of consciousness for Sartre is absolute, which means consciousness in itself is its totality without any content. His notion of consciousness is against the view of some philosopher and psychologist who claims that the “I” is a necessary inhabitant of the consciousness, as the regulator of our desire and acts in our psychic life.¹³⁴ The entirety of consciousness and its unique quality belongs to itself, aside from whatever relations it may have to the “I.”¹³⁵ It steered us to question how Sartre places the notion of “I” in consciousness. If “I” is disclaimed as the content of consciousness, how does Sartre define our actions’ synthetic unity? Sartre differentiated two types of consciousness: reflective and pre-reflective consciousness. He considered unreflective consciousness as an ontological priority over the reflective consciousness: the pre-reflected entail emerges a second-degree consciousness, i.e. the reflected consciousness. “Everything happens as if we live in a world whose objects, in addition to their qualities of warmth, order, and shape, has the qualities of repulsive, attractive, delightful, and useful. As the qualities were forces having a certain power over us.”¹³⁶ Nevertheless, reflective consciousness appears as a second-degree consciousness by directing upon the pre-reflected consciousness’s interiority. It is through this reflective operation; it gives birth to the notion of “I.” For Sartre, a consciousness can direct upon consciousness, a

¹³² Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 52.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, pp. 169-70.

¹³⁴ Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, P. 31

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, P. 39.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 58

consciousness that takes consciousness as an object.¹³⁷ In the view of Sartre, “I” becomes a reflective “existent: that is to say, an object for consciousness.”¹³⁸

As for Sartre, “I” is nothing but an object of consciousness, even though it is not of the same kind as *being-in-itself*. It is consciousness that creates a link between me and the world. Neither can create a connection on their own; through the help of total, impersonal consciousness, it is under this consciousness that they are linked.¹³⁹ Our everyday action is composed of impersonal acts like “going to school,” “writing,” “driving a car,” “playing football,” “talking to a friend,” and so on... and even those “purely psychical actions like doubting, reasoning, meditating, making a hypothesis.”¹⁴⁰ It does not occur as a matter of probability, due to the temporary lapse of attentiveness, but because of the very form of consciousness. All of our actions are directed towards a transcendent object. We did not perform reflective consciousness in most of our daily activities, both in physical and mental acts. It does not mean reflective consciousness plays no role in our consciousness; Sartre explains the reflective and unreflective act through an example. When I help Peter, I bring Peter’s help in the unreflective act because Peter is “having to be helped.” On the reflective act, I am watching myself act; “it is no longer Peter who attracts me; my helpful consciousness appears to me as having to be perpetuated.”¹⁴¹ Thus, from the perspective of Sartre, the “I” is no other than the object of consciousness, which is brought to light through a reflective act, whereas unreflective consciousness is the one that constitutes the integration of consciousness; it is they which show themselves with values, with enchanting and resistant qualities.¹⁴²

Since “I” is an object of consciousness, it cannot be the direct unity of reflected consciousness. Consciousness in itself is an intrinsic unity of the reflected consciousness. The fluidity of consciousness makes itself up as the integration of itself. Moreover, there exists a transcendent unity: states and actions.¹⁴³ The notion of “I” emerge as a transcendental unity of states and action but is not the same as the transcendental unity of consciousness. In line with Sartre, state and action are also transcendent objects. State appears to reflect consciousness: it is the object of accurate intuition. For example, if I love dogs, my love for dogs is a state apprehended by my reflection. The state of hatred for John appears in the form of an infinity

¹³⁷ Ibid., p. 44.

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 42.

¹³⁹ Ibid., pp. 105-06.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 69.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., p. 59.

¹⁴² Ibid., p. 49.

¹⁴³ Ibid., p. 61.

of angered or repulsed consciousness of both past and future. Hatred in the real state of experience is the transcendent unity of this infinity of consciousness. For Sartre, this exertion of hatred towards John is a transcendent object.¹⁴⁴ The ego emerges from reflection as a transcendent object affecting the unity of the psychic. It found itself in the “concrete totality of states and actions though it is transcendent to all the states it unifies, but not as an outsider whose function is only to unify them. Instead, it is the infinite unity of states and actions that cannot be identified as a state or an action.”¹⁴⁵ Thus, the ego is the consciousness’s product; the consciousness comes first, and through it, the ego is later constituted. As such, the spontaneity of the ego and consciousness is not compatible. “The ego does not bind up the unity of phenomena; that it is limited to reflecting an ideal unity, whereas the real and concrete unity has long been effected. However, the essential role of the ego is to mask from consciousness its very spontaneity.”¹⁴⁶

Sartre also claims that the reflective consciousness is not valid and precise and cannot ignore its dubitability character. Everything that arises from the ego’s intuition is always given to be contradicted by subsequent intuition. For example, when I claimed myself as jealous, loved, ill-tempered, there is no confidentiality that I cannot be mistaken. Moreover, every statement of “I” is not qualified to be a reflective consciousness. If someone asked what you are doing, and the consequence response is “I am cleaning the room,” or “I am gardening,” these statements cannot be designated as reflective consciousness.¹⁴⁷ Thus for Sartre, the “I” being an object of consciousness is not the origin of consciousness. The “I” cannot express “I” in solitary that exists as absolute,” it must contend that “absolute consciousness alone exists as absolute,” which Sartre claims to be a truism.¹⁴⁸ According to Sartre, the transcendental consciousness cannot be replaced by the transcendental “I” that will lead to the death of consciousness: “The existence of I in consciousness destroys, congeals consciousness, darkens its. Consciousness is then no longer a spontaneity; it bears within itself the germ of opaqueness. Nevertheless, besides, we would be forced to abandon the original and profound view of consciousness; it is non-substantial absolute.”¹⁴⁹ For Sartre, consciousness will always remain

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., pp. 61, 64, 63.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., p. 74.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 100.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 75-76, 89.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 104.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 42.

as an independent source of existence. Thus, the “I” cannot be more than recognizing the thought or perception as one’s own.

Considering Sartre’s absolute notion of consciousness, it is necessary to consider his concept of nothingness and negation. For Sartre, to have a relation between man and the world, man needs to be conscious, and to be conscious is to negate the existing world. To negate is considered the core condition for being-in-the-world, so it becomes necessary to examine what Sartre means by nothingness and negation? As Sartre regards consciousness as nothingness, it is through nothingness that enables the functions of negations. The exciting characteristic of the *being-for-itself* is undefinable because it has no fixed essence, unlike that of the *being-in-itself*. As such, *being-for-itself* has no fixed essence. Its existence precedes essence, which means man has no pre-defined nature. It is continuously defining itself in the existing world. “Human freedom precedes essence in man and makes it conceivable; the essence of the human being as suspended in his freedom.”¹⁵⁰ To utter of the nature of a thing is to say it as inevitably being as it is and behaving as it does behave.¹⁵¹ In terms of *being-in-itself*, existence precedes essence, which means the purpose, value, meaning pre-exist before its existence. For example, the pen and chair creator created it by considering its particular essence to write and sit. The *being-in-itself* is full of possibilities; they are what it is in themselves merely. “The room of a person absent, the books of which he turned the pages, the objects which he touches are in themselves only books, objects, i.e., full of actualities.”¹⁵² Besides, *being-for-itself* made possible the natural world’s existence, in-themselves, they are devoid of possibilities and purpose. It is realized when the *being-for-itself* encounters them in their crude form.

Sartre defines *being-for-itself* in terms of freedom and consciousness that lack essential base and as nothingness. Sartre considered nothingness as that which isolates freedom from the essence. “I must discover the nothingness which separates me from what I shall be. In so far as freedom is the possible destroyer, in the present and the future, of what I am,”¹⁵³ Sartre considered *being-for-itself* as the originator of nothingness through which conscious beings develop questions and negations that enables *being-for-itself* to distinguish itself from the existing things in the world. Nothingness can have just an acquired presence, and it obtains its reality from being. Its nothingness of being is confronted exclusively in the limits of being.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 49.

¹⁵¹ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 62.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 50.

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 54.

The complete fading of being would not be the emergence of the rule of non-being, but on the opposite, the joint dissolution of nothingness.¹⁵⁴ Negations or questions are possible due to the nature of the *being-for-itself* as nothingness. Sartre claimed that *being-in-itself* could not be the origin of nothingness because its nature is full of positivity and does not contain nothingness as part of its structure

The nature of man is such that it brings nothingness and negations in the world –“man is the being through whom nothing comes in the world.”¹⁵⁵ Human nature brought nothingness in the world since it is devoid of any essence that stands against his past and future: being both his past and future and not being them. Human reality is such that it can deny any fixation of meaning on it. It sustains nothingness within itself as the nothing which disunites its present from all its past. As Sartre state, “the being by which Nothingness arrives in the world is a being such that in its being the nothingness of its being is in question. The being by which nothingness comes to the world must be its nothingness.”¹⁵⁶ It signifies that being-for-itself cannot coincide with *being-in-itself*, which is merely what it is. A man may be a waiter and a father to a child. Nevertheless, these are not his static nature but are merely temporary and contingent features. Man can be a waiter, teacher, or social worker. However, if he is such, it is not in a manner of the material world; he is a teacher in the sense of being what he is not.¹⁵⁷

It is through the nature of *being-for-itself* the possibility of negation emerged through questioning. The ability to ask questions is not accessible for the being-in-itself as the being-in-itself exists in causal determinism, the sequence of determining events, where one event follows another event. As such, in the case of *being-in-itself*, nothingness or non-being has no place. On the other hand, man can ask questions freed from the chain of causal determinism. “In so far as the questioner must be able to effect concerning the questioned a kind of nihilating withdrawal, he is not subject to the causal order of the world; he detaches himself from being.”¹⁵⁸ A question does not give rise to its solution in the manner in which fire produces heat. Nor is it probable to predict on inductive grounds from examining the given world.¹⁵⁹ As the questioner has the endless possibilities of distancing from the causal series, man can annihilate them as free from the world’s causal order. As *being-for-itself* is the source through which

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 40

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 60.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., pp. 98-100.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁵⁹ Warnock, *Philosophy of Sartre*, p. 49.

nothingness is produced in the world, is a being, such that in its being the nothingness of its being is in question – “The being by which nothingness comes to the world must be its nothingness.”¹⁶⁰ Unlike *being-for-itself*, *being-in-itself* is structured in terms of real cause and effect. In terms of complete positivity, the relationship is exclusively being what it is, and nothing else – “it depends on the cause, it cannot have within itself the tiniest germ of nothingness.”¹⁶¹

The nature of man produces negation and non-being in the world. Nothingness and negations become an essential aspect of human reality, without which such a relationship cannot prevail. The existence of the world is known through the origin of the human “act, an expectation, or a human being’s project; *being-for-itself* indicates an aspect of being as it appears to the human being engaged in the world.”¹⁶² Human reality has a self-detachment in questioning, systematic doubt, skeptical doubt any form of annihilating withdrawal. Nothingness, as the essential feature of human reality, from the base of negation since it conceals the negation in itself, as it is the negation of being.¹⁶³ The negation of man’s reality can be elucidated through two mediums of nihilations: self-consciousness and temporality. Temporality constitutes an essential aspect in which the *being-for-itself* is related to the world and can transcend or create the world. In the light of Sartre, a being who does not coincide with himself is bound to exist in the present, past, and future simultaneously, spreading itself in these three dimensions. The for-itself is temporal from the single fact that it nihilates itself.¹⁶⁴ Consciousness is nothingness, as it is not its motive in as much as it is empty of all content. Moreover, according to Sartre, the “consciousness confronts its past, and its future as facing a self in the mood of not-being refers to a nihilating temporality structure.”¹⁶⁵ Thus, nothingness can be understood in terms of human nature, as the meaning of nothingness is rooted in human experiences of temporality and the dearth of fixed essence.

For a man to exist in the world and raise questions concerning being, nothingness must be given before negation somehow. Moreover, negation makes our awareness of the world and ourselves, where we can differentiate ourselves from the existing world. To this extent, all our knowledge involves negation, that the person who is aware knows that he is not

¹⁶⁰ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 47.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 188.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 58.

the entity of his knowledge. He establishes himself by relating to the numbers of things that are distinct from himself.¹⁶⁶ The possibility of negation was introduced through questions. “Negation would be simply a question of judgment, and the expectation of the question would be an expectation of the judgment–response.”¹⁶⁷ The negation function is not merely limited to judgment related to a thinking being but extends towards the existing things. For example, the concept of negations slips into expectations, which may be pre-oral, and is essential such that it may be let down. For example, “if my car breaks down, it is the carburetor, the sparks..., that I question and may find out that there is nothing wrong with the carburetor.”¹⁶⁸ Another example, I can expect my friend to be at his house, and I see that he is not there in his house immediately. Negations become an essential aspect in arranging the reality: “in order for the totality of being to order itself around us as instruments. For it to parcel itself into differentiated complexes which refer one to another and which can be used, negation must rise not as a thing among other things but as a rubric of a category that presides over the arrangement and the redistribution of great masses of being in things.”¹⁶⁹

The possibility of negations as the basis of man’s association to the world led to the origin of non-being. Man can ask questions and is capable of his nothingness, which makes him the potential originator of non-being. According to Sartre, non-being always emerges in the limits of social expectations – “non-being exists only on the surface of being.”¹⁷⁰ The non-being makes sense to man only if it is first posited as possibilities. For example, “I expect to find fifteen hundred francs that I find only thirteen hundred.”¹⁷¹ Sartre has articulated the concept of non-being through the example of Pierre’s absence in the cafe; Pierre is considered as an expectant observer in the cafe. In the Cafe, Pierre became the center of attention for the observer since the observer intends to find Pierre. When the observer failed to find Pierre in the cafe, everything in the cafe disappeared into the background. The absence of Pierre appears as non-being. It is the expectations and presupposition that produces the concepts of absence or non-being in us. “Example of Pierre shows that non-being does not come to things by a negative judgment; it is the negative judgment; on the contrary, which is conditioned and supported by non-being.”¹⁷² Thus, every further explanation designed to allot human beings

¹⁶⁶ Warnock, *The Philosophy of Sartre*, p. 49.

¹⁶⁷ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 30

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 35.

their position in the universe, their distinctive modes of behaviour in the world and each-other, is ultimately based on Nothingness, Negation, and non-being; it enables man's association to the world.¹⁷³ Thus, man's reality is the ability to transcend the past and future in his temporal being.

As a conscious being, man can affirm or deny and imagine what was not the case; and this established a gap between Man and things, which is the nature of human freedom or consciousness. Freedom of Sartre is fundamentally nihilating because it comprises the possibility of answering "no" to each proposal of what I should do and dismissing every project for the future I have formed.¹⁷⁴ If man were unable to form an adverse judgment, he would become like the unconscious being-in-themselves, wholly determined by whatever they are. For Sartre, freedom is synonymous with human reality. Human reality is composed of consciousness and nothingness, and freedom becomes the hallmark of human consciousness. "What I call freedom is thus impossible to distinguish from the being of "human reality." Man is not first a being and free afterward; there is no difference between the being of man and his being free."¹⁷⁵ As such, the concept of nothingness is solely connected with his notion of freedom, to the extent that it determines the actualization of nothingness. To be conscious of freedom is to constitute oneself as the awareness of the plausible as one is possible by recognizing its existence at the end of his project and grab it as oneself, pending in the future, and detached from it by a nothingness. In a sense, it is apprehended by oneself as the source of one's possibility.¹⁷⁶

Sartre's understanding of freedom builds in the notion of consciousness and nothingness. Nothingness means the ability to own ourselves in understanding the world in which we are abandoned, as freedom fills the gap between us and things by our free choice and actions. It enables us to understand things globally and fill it by our choice, actions, plans, and project. Sartre claims that "through the description of negation and nothingness, it is clear that freedom is not a faculty of the human soul to be envisaged and describes in isolation, the being of man in so far as it conditions the appearance of nothingness, and this being has appeared to us as freedom. As such, freedom is the requisite condition for the nihilation of nothingness is not a property that belongs among others to the essence of the human being."¹⁷⁷ According to

¹⁷³ Warnock, *The Philosophy of Sartre*, p. 50.

¹⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁷⁵ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 49.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 49

him, nothingness as man's nature enables him to question, differentiate, and connect with the world. It is through freedom of consciousness that man successfully carries out the appearance of nothingness. Thus for Sartre, the notion of nothingness and consciousness constituted an essential aspect in understanding his absolute freedom.

Sartre also discusses *bad faith* as a particular behaviour in man, signifying nothingness as an essential feature for freedom's consciousness. He treated *bad faith* as an essential and familiar human trait seen everywhere in men's life; in the form of insecurity, self-deceiving, semi-deliberate, the playing of roles for others in their everyday life. It is a common aspect of human behaviour, which shows man's capability to conceive what is not the case. Understanding Sartre's notion of human reality, Bad faith is bound to occur in men's life. He has to exercise absolute freedom in defining or creating his life in his temporal existence. He has to construct meaning, values, priorities, and possibilities, whomever he wants to be, by putting into practice his free choice to determine any form of action. As human beings, we have the absolute freedom to be who we want to be in terms of our beliefs, values, character, behaviour, designation, and so forth. The fact is that we should fulfill or practice them because we want to – we choose to live in this way rather than that. To fall into any form of deterministic way of life, considering life in a certain way, is valuable in itself beyond our choice, and the decision is to fall into bad faith. The analysis of bad faith gives the cash value of the phrase "being what one is not, and not being what one is."¹⁷⁸ It is a desire to be free as well as to be determined: "The impossible synthesis of the *being-for-itself* and the *being-in-itself*. To become a being which would be its foundation not as nothingness but as being and which would retain in-itself the transparency necessary for consciousness at the same time, as the coincidence with itself on the in-itself."¹⁷⁹ The behaviour of bad faith arouses in man when he attempts to escape from anguish, which he encountered when he is brought face to face with freedom. The anguish experienced usually does not appear in our regular activities, where we occasionally act without thinking or reflecting on what we are doing. When we start reflecting on our lives and our absolute freedom, we tend to think of our activities concerning ourselves reflectively; only then are we liable to suffer anguish. Thus, anguish reflects freedom itself; the moment we turn to reflection, we discover freedom.¹⁸⁰

¹⁷⁸ Manser, *Sartre a Philosophic Study*, p. 62.

¹⁷⁹ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, p. 133.

¹⁸⁰ Warnock, *The Philosophy of Sartre*, pp. 54-55.

Anguish is not an everyday experience; it emerges when our activities are reflected upon. We usually take action in most decisions; only in some instances, we tend to change the mind that brought in us the awareness of unpredictability in a disturbing way. Sartre also distinguishes fear from anguish: fear is the fear of beings in the world, whereas anguish is anguish before me. His notion of anguish can be broadly understood in two ways: anguish in the face of the future is precisely the consciousness of being the future; “in the mode of not-being and the face of the past, it is of the gambler who has freely and sincerely decided not to gamble anymore and who when he approaches towards the gaming table, suddenly see all his resolutions melt away....”¹⁸¹ Whatever resolution we have made in the past does not have a definite surety that prevents us from not doing; it is where the consciousness separates itself from its past and future by its freedom. As a free being, anguish remains in man; everything lies beneath the present choice. It also depends on our freedom to decide whether to violate the resolutions made in the past. As such, anguish as the expression of human freedom signifies that man is lack definite essence, he is what he makes himself to be: “it is an anguish that man gets the consciousness of his freedom, or if you prefer, anguish is the mode of being of freedom as the consciousness of being; it is an anguish that freedom is, in its being, in questions for itself.”¹⁸² In the present, man fears future decisions and projects as it can be changed or no longer even wish to fulfill them. For man have the complete choice to change his possibilities, and also, there is no certainty that the chosen possibilities are bound to accomplish. As such, in Sartre’s notion of absolute freedom, man apprehends its being as the “possible destroyer in the present and in the future of what he is.”¹⁸³ According to him, man is free from all kinds of determinism. To surrender in any form of determinism is to flee from anguish, exhibiting a behaviour known as *bad faith*, fleeing from responsibility by considering that things are as it is when they are not. By believing one way or the other, we are constrained to a determined way of life and no means of escaping even though we wish or desire to. Sartre admits that as long as man is free, he can neither flee from anguish nor avoid it; it will sustain as part of his life. “To hide anguish from ourselves, the veritable “immediate given” of our freedom, is not our freedom as it appears to itself; it is the freedom of the other.”¹⁸⁴ To avoid anguish is to apprehend as a *being-in-itself*, which can never be attained. It is merely a desperate desire to be something else that is impossible. “Anguish is opposed to the mind of the serious man who

¹⁸¹ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 53, 56-57.

¹⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 53.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 66-67.

apprehend values in terms of the world and who settle in the reassuring, materialistic substantiation of values.”¹⁸⁵

Despite the continuous presence of anguish in man’s life, Sartre insists that one must not live a life of bad faith but live an authentic life by denying bad faith in every aspect of our existence. Considering the complexity of how the human mind and society function, it is impossible or challenging to live a pure, authentic life. “If all conscious beings are necessarily separated from their future actions and the vision of themselves by a gap; if consciousness consists in the presence of this emptiness which has to be filled by free thoughts and choices, then plainly we cannot avoid bad faith altogether. A man may aspire to be a complete being, but he can never achieve this.”¹⁸⁶ Thus, man as a conscious being must be aware of falling in *bad faith*, and even if we are trapped in bad faith, we cannot become like the *being-in-itself* as long as we remain conscious, nor can we become the object of definitions for others.

Engaging Sartre’s concepts of consciousness, nothingness, negations, anguish, and lousy faith provides a better prospect for understanding his structure of “absolute freedom.” As such, his notion of absolute freedom cannot be reduced to a general understanding of unlimited freedom that permits individuals to do whatever they want without any constraint.

II. Death and Absurdity in Camus

The notion of “death” and “absurdity” play an essential aspect in the foundation of Camus’ freedom. His limited notion of individual freedom demands us to understand how he considered individual life itself as “absurd” and “limited”: devoid of essential meaning, hope, and eternal life. Camus established his freedom through the awareness of death and absurdity in one’s life without establishing a general theory or well-defined meaning of freedom. As he states, “knowing whether or not a man is free does not interest me. I can only experience my freedom. As to it, I can have no general notions, but merely a few clear insights. The problem of “freedom as such” has no meaning.”¹⁸⁷ Understanding life’s absurdity and the certainty of death makes the individual realize that his freedom is found in thought and action. In alignment with Camus, the actual essence of freedom of thought and action is known only after being conscious that life is absurd, and the only sure thing is death. He attempts to make sense of the

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 63.

¹⁸⁶ Warnock, *The Philosophy of Sartre*, p. 60.

¹⁸⁷ Camus, *The Myth of Sisyphus*, p. 54.

derivation of his limited freedom by discussing the relation between man and the world. Even after knowing life itself is absurd and meaningless, the desirability of life and the unavoidable death liberated man from his careless way of living. It enables man to reflect on life more seriously, rather than believing in life after death, by accepting life's absurdity instead of committing suicide.

To determine the significance of life: it is essential to examine the undeniable presence of absurdity in man's life found in the relation between man and the world; beyond this, the notion of absurd lost its essence. As for Camus, absurdity constitutes an essential aspect of man's life; it is futile to have the utmost desire to label meaning and purpose in every aspect of life, which is impossible as man is limited in his knowledge to extract meaning from the silent world. It enables man to realize that they clothe the meaning of things. Hence, there are no such things as pre-given or fixed meaning. Through this realization, the existence of absurdity slipped into man's life; the well-constructed world evades man and becomes itself again. Thus, the awareness of absurdity is the born of consciousness that enables man to reflect on his habituated way of life. After living a reflective life, man becomes conscious of his limited and rebellious though.

The only thought to free the mind is that which leaves it to itself, sure of its limits and imminent end.¹⁸⁸ Man can have a different way of accepting the absurd by submitting it to a higher power, transcendent being, or God. However, Camus' notion of the absurd is in man's universe, which man has to ascertain its existence without consenting to it in any form. "The intoxication of the irrational and the vocation of rapture turn a lucid mind away from the absurd."¹⁸⁹ In alignment with Camus, an absurd man has to exist by a constant revolt against life's absurdity, which is the gateway for man to realize his freedom of thought and action.

Man is not born with the absurd consciousness; it is acquired after reflecting on every aspect of his existence. As Camus state, "we get into the habit of living before acquiring the habit of thinking."¹⁹⁰ It does not suggest that man can remain forever ignorant of the presence of the absurd. There is no exact instance or situation where and when he will realize, but the absurd can slip into man's consciousness at any state of mind and place. As such, the absurd consciousness had to be realized and what matters is how man responds to it. Man lives in a world of illusion by manipulating words in addressing meaning to the world and become

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 113.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 34.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 6.

habituated to believe in the necessity of meaningful life. To refute the established meaning of life drives a man to believe that life is not worth living. It signifies man's lack of intelligence to understand the true essence of the absurd and is a form of confusion and inconsistencies in living an authentic life. The absurd, which appears after the moment of mechanical and habituated life breakdown at a certain point of time, enables man to start questioning everyday life. It strikes a man with horror by the existence of uncertainty. As Camus' state, "it happens that the stage sets collapse. According to the same rhythm, rising, tram, four hours in the office or factory, meal, tram, four hours at work, meal, sleep, and Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. This path is effortlessly followed most of the time. However, one day, the "why" arises, and everything begins in that weariness tinged with amazement."¹⁹¹

Furthermore, the awareness of "time" also plays a significant role in realizing the absurdity of life: when man surpasses childhood and enters his youth, he realizes that time no longer awaits him; instead, it is time that carries him. "A time comes when a man notices or says that he is thirty: he situates himself with time. He takes his place in it. He admits that he stands at a certain point on a curve that he acknowledges having to travel to its end. He belongs to time, and, by the horror that seizes him, he recognizes his worst enemy."¹⁹² It developed in man the feeling of weariness as he finally realizes the difference between what he desired to know and what he knows. The absurdity will forever remain as an undeniable gap that exists between man knowledge and the uneducable world – "This heart within me I can feel, and I judge that it exists. This world I can touch, and I likewise judge that it exists. There ends all my knowledge, and the rest is constructions."¹⁹³ It signifies that man desires unity and clear vision but lives with ideas that it is unachievable. His reason can never fill the gap between his existence and the meaning he tried to give to that assurance. The absurd is a confrontation of a wild man longing for clarity and the irrational that exists in man's heart. Thus, there cannot be absurd without man; it depends on man as on the world. They are no melting point in them, but it is all that links them together.¹⁹⁴

For Camus, to be a conscious being is to live with the absurd, deprived of meaning, ideas, hope, and eternal life. To look for meaning will be an insistence upon familiarity with the world, which runs contrary to man's nature. Unlike trees or animals, a man is a conscious

¹⁹¹ Ibid., p. 11.

¹⁹² Ibid., p. 12.

¹⁹³ Ibid., p. 17.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 20.

being; thus, he cannot lack the core ability to be conscious of the absurd's apparent existence. If Camus regards life and freedom itself as devoid of meaning, does life remain desirable for purposeful existence? The awareness of absurdity enables man to carry out his thoughts and actions profoundly. Camus insisted that man should be aware of the absurd to live out the most in him. As he states, "belief in the absurd is tantamount to substituting the number of experiences for the quality."¹⁹⁵ For Camus, an absurd man is a person who is aware and accepts the unquestionable existence of the absurd. He willingly declaims his ultimate desire for absolute unity, for he knows the futility of reducing the world to logical and rational truth. Camus applied the term to an absurd man because he lives on what he has without speculating on what he has not. He is also a genius, for he knows the boundary of his intelligence and does not attempt to derive meaning from the little world; instead, he finds happiness in the limit of his reason.

On the contrary, the deceived mind may well assert that all is certain. Through Sisyphus's life, Camus gives a perfect example of an absurd man finding happiness in the midst of irrational. Sisyphus was condemned by God to endlessly roll a rock to the peak of a mountain, whence the stone would retreat of its mass.¹⁹⁶ He is solely aware of his absurd actions. However, he did not think that his actions depend on the pre-determined conditions upon him but considered it to depend solely on him and find contentment in his repeated actions. Thus, Sisyphus is like the absurd man who "teaches the higher fidelity that negates the gods and raises rocks."¹⁹⁷ He finds happiness in the quantity of his experience by himself without deriving the meaning of his actions from himself or any higher being; he simply does his actions for its sake. It enables him to reject any form of universal reason, principles, or moral categories, ideas that propound to explain everything. Its acceptance would negate the "profound truth which is to be enchained in this unintelligible and limited universe; man's faith henceforth assumes its meaning."¹⁹⁸

The absurd man is aware that he can neither know the man nor the existing world in its totality. It will forever remain as a vast irrational, which he needs to confront and struggle endlessly until his ultimate end. For the "absurd is not in man nor the world, but their presence together."¹⁹⁹ It is the only bond that unites man and the world. The absurd man simply knows

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 58.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 115

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., p 119.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., p. 19.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 29.

that he needs to be the author of his life, and he is solely responsible for who he is, beyond which everything disappears into nothingness. He ought to negate hope and the tendency of consoling the absurd beyond his limited reason.

On the other hand, the absence of hope does not imply despair and renunciation, and a conscious dissatisfaction does not mean immature unrest. Instead, the absurd gave them a royal power to liberate them from mechanical life and imputed them to live out his life freely.²⁰⁰ An absurd is that which liberates man from its false hope and belief.

An absurd man did not explain and solve but experienced and described the transparent world presented to him.²⁰¹ The moment an absurd man agreed to the irrational in any form by submitting to the divine, illusions of every day, or the idea, he turns himself away from the absurd and no longer exists as an absurd man. The character of Meursault from the novel *The Stranger* resembles an absurd man living in a well-constructed meaningful society. He entirely lives out the life of an absurd man by continually staying true to his thought and actions and refuse to impersonate a life that does not resemble his actual feelings and thoughts. He feels lonely but does not even attempt to find purpose in his existence. He receives the situation as they are and does not reveal any aspiration to improve them. He exists neither in the past nor in the future. As a result, his presence is nothing but an endless void. For him, nothing has significance or meaning. He knows himself as engulf by his fate, but he does nothing to free himself. When his life took an unfortunate turn after committing an unintended crime, he was misjudged for his usage of words and conduct. His straightforward actions and opinions were strange and horrific to society. His qualities of being an ordinary man are used as damning evidence for his guilt rather than judging his actions against the committed crime. The novel exposes how a man is peculiarly considered by society if he fails to conform to social prejudices and irrational beliefs. Thus, Meursault's behaviour and character depict an authentic life that exercises free thoughts and actions irrespective of life's circumstances.

An absurd man is a lucid thinker who consistently struggles to live in harmony, despite his experience of weakness and voidness in the universe. He admits that existing is keeping the absurd alive. Keeping it alive is to be in a constant revolt with the absurd; it is a perpetual encounter between man and his disappointment. It is persistent upon unfeasible clarity that exists in man's desire for certainty and the world that disappoints, without giving up in any

²⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 30, 88.

²⁰¹ Ibid., p. 91.

form of resignation that ought to accompany it.²⁰² The moment the absurd is settled, life itself vanished: its logical outcome is a consistent revolt, not suicide, for suicide is no different from leaping; it is an extreme leap from the absurd. As such, suicide is an unacceptable form of death, for it implies giving up life on one's own free will, which settles the absurd. Instead of suicide due, an individual must accept it through ceaseless revolt. "Suicide is not a solution to escape from the absurd. For it does not represent the logical outcome of revolt."²⁰³ Giving up one's life by pre-thinking the dreadful future is a form of a leap from the absurd. As such, absurdity cannot be compromised; it is consistent mindfulness and refutation of voluntary death – "the contrary of suicide is the man condemned to death."²⁰⁴ Whatever the absurd situation a person faces in his life, he should always be ready to revolt against the absurd situations; by accepting the absurd situation and, at the same time, in a continuous battle with it, instead of giving up on life. It does not imply that Camus is against the concept of undeniable natural death – "it is essential to die unreconciled and not on one's own free will. Suicide is a repudiation."²⁰⁵ A person who understands the real essence of absurd will not plunge himself into voluntary death because he has recognized, even instinctively, or habituated, the absence of any subtle reason for living, the irrational character of routine distress, and the futility of suffering.²⁰⁶

The thought of horror appears in man's life when he contemplates the notion of death, as it brings the notion of ultimate destruction: the end of everything. Camus' notion of death does not limit bringing horror and anxiety in life but teaches man to live life to the fullest. It implies that his notion of death is also against Christian's concept of death; Christian believes in life after death and "implies infinitely more hope than life implies, even when the life is overflowing with health and vigour."²⁰⁷ For Camus, the Christian form of death is another way to escape an absurd life, which man needs to evade to live life to its most. It is essential to understand why Camus considered life an essential thing in man. The most crucial question for Camus is whether life is worth living or not. As Camus states, "If he asks himself how to judge that this question is more urgent than that, I reply that one judges by the actions it entails."²⁰⁸ As life questions are concerned with the passion of living or the worthlessness of life, it becomes an urgent question to be thoroughly looked into, as he examines the importance of life above

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 52.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 53.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

²⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 38.

²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

everything. He argues that the value of life ought to be realized in the absurd world rather than submitting to it in the form of suicide by regarding life as worthless: “it is confessing that life is too much do understand it. It is merely confessing that is not worth the trouble.”²⁰⁹ For Camus, the proper understanding of death insists man have a thoughtful living – to make the most living out of every little thing, as death waits for none irrespective of any effort to justify it before death. Death has a multi-role; it suppresses man’s life to its lowermost and liberates man from his irresponsible way of life. Thus, Camus’ main concern is to find the value of life and not its meaning amid absurdity.

Camus’ notion of absurdity and death plays an essential role in understanding his notion of limited freedom. As it is only through the awareness of absurdity and death that enables man to realize his freedom of thoughts and actions. It assists man in understanding human life’s essence by being in a constant revolt with the irrational. The awareness of the certainty of absurdity and death justifies man’s false belief in freedom to be, which in reality does not exist. The only sure thing that exists and to which man can look forward is death alone – “To return to consciousness, the escape from everyday sleep represents the first steps of absurd freedom.”²¹⁰ Before the absurd freedom is realized, he is like a mechanical man who lives with purpose, aspirations, hope, meaning for the future. He believes that someday he will be happier, prosperous, or his dream will come true. He believes that part of his life can be determined. In reality, he acts as if he were free, even if all the facts make a point of repudiating that liberty.²¹¹ Thus, for Camus’ the notion of death and absurdity stands as the only way to reasonable freedom, which is the sole of individual thought and action in the world. As man does not have the slightest power to either change or add his period of life span, it will only remain undisclosed until his unsuitable death reveals it. Thus, it can be deduced that through the notion of death and absurd, Camus’ propound his idea of limited freedom – freedom itself is temporary, “of his revolt devoid of future and his mortal consciousness, he lives out his adventure within the span of his lifetime.”²¹²

Camus’ notion of freedom derived from death and absurdity is not about knowing whether a man is free.²¹³ Instead, it is the solidarity he maintains by a constant revolt against the irrational world till his death settles all contradictions – death is the only proof for the

²⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 4.

²¹⁰ Ibid., p. 57.

²¹¹ Ibid., p. 55.

²¹² Ibid., p. 64.

²¹³ Ibid., p. 54.

consequences of his freedom. As Camus state, “If the absurd cancels all my chances of eternal freedom, it restores and manifests, on the other hand, freedom of actions.”²¹⁴ The freedom he proclaimed is limited in nature, as he is interested only in individual experience; any form of freedom given by a higher being is worthless.

If Camus’ notion of freedom is realized by the individual experience of absurdity and death, does that imply freedom as absurd? He discussed his idea of freedom in conformity to standard rules and denied actions that destroy other rightful existence. His consciousness of the absurd does not give man the absolute freedom to do whatever he wants or desires. As he states, “the absurd does not liberate; it binds. It does not authorize all actions. Everything is permitted does not mean that nothing is forbidden. The absurd merely confers an equivalence of the consequences of those actions. It does not recommend crime, for this would be childish, but it restores to remorse its futility.”²¹⁵ His notion of limited freedom derived from the absurd does not imply freedom as absurd and free of responsibilities. To explain this, he considers the role of reason in playing an efficient role in exercising freedom of thought and action. He is not against the significance of reason but the belief that man’s reason has the potential to reduce the world to his knowledge. “It is useless to negate the reason. It has its orders in which it is efficacious. It is properly that of human experience. Whence, we wanted to make everything clear. If we cannot do so, if the absurd is born on that occasion, it is born precisely at that very meeting-point of that efficacious but limited reason with the ever-resurgent irrational.”²¹⁶ Appreciating the absurdity in man’s relationship with the world does not entirely discard reason and admits to irrational. It enables him to remain to his experience, rather than going beyond his experience – which is futile. In his view, to live with the absurd does not mean to go against social system, norms, ethics, moral, but to simply realize that they are not the end product of absurd reasoning – “the only truth that might seem instructive to him is not formal; it comes to life and unfolds in men.”²¹⁷ The absurdity experience is essential for man in guiding his thoughts and actions – It sustains absurd reasoning by giving it a confident attitude and warmth.²¹⁸ Camus’ understanding of freedom through the certainty of death and absurdity does not in any way lead to the allowance of absolute freedom. Absolute freedom goes against the constructed social structure. He takes into account man to be a product of society. As such, he

²¹⁴ Ibid., p. 55.

²¹⁵ Ibid., p. 65.

²¹⁶ Ibid., p. 34.

²¹⁷ Ibid., p. 66.

²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 66.

should exercise his freedom in conformity with the norms of social structure. As he states, “the only conception of freedom I can have is that of the prisoner or the individual in the state.”²¹⁹ Camus argues that a man can exercise his freedom of thought and actions to its most only when he becomes aware of life’s absurdity and can use it in absurd reasoning.

If Camus deliberated life as absurd, devoid of futuristic hope and meaning, how does he transcend his use of individual freedom to solidarity with other beings? In *The rebel*, Camus brings a leap in the notion of individual solitude experience of absurdity, death, and freedom that he discussed in *Sisyphus’s myth*. As such, man’s experience of absurdity, death, and freedom makes sense in terms of the existence of otherness. In *The Rebel*, he brought in the concept of “basic values” that a man sought by refusing to be ruled and define by others in his usual encountering with the irrational. For Camus, “a rebel is a man who says no: but whose withholding does not imply an abstention. He is also a man who conveys yes as soon as he begins to think for himself.”²²⁰ To rebel is to assert something in oneself that is of value and refuse that about the world, denying this value.²²¹ He gives slave and master examples to hint at the inequalities, evil, and injustice in society. As he states, there reaches a specific limit where the slave can no longer tolerate the unequal treatment that he has been receiving throughout his life. At a specific point in time, the master “exceeds the bounds that the slave established for himself and demands that he be treated equally.”²²² Camus’ implication is that man cannot express his freedom if others deny his fundamental values of living an authentic life. The rebel realized that he has to be “all or nothing to carry out the desired freedom: the rebel wants to be all to safeguard a standard of values so far from being false that he is willing to preserve them at any cost. And nothing which means to be destroyed by the power that governs him.”²²³ To the extent the rebel accepts the notion of death, if he were denied the rights that he defends, the shared values he defends are more important than his life.²²⁴ Camus claimed that rebel does not emerge as a lack of feeling or pure reason for revenge but solely on the moral ground to be treated as equal with others – “better to die on one’s feet than to live on one’s knees.”²²⁵

²¹⁹ Ibid., p. 54.

²²⁰ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 1.

²²¹ Isaac, *Arendt, Camus and Modern Rebellion*, p. 120.

²²² Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 2.

²²³ Ibid., pp. 1-3.

²²⁴ Ibid., p. 3.

²²⁵ Ibid., p. 3.

The values that the rebel fights for his life are indeterminate as the world is filled with irrationality and uncertainty, but he is convinced that it is justified on the ground of the common good. For Camus, if a rebellion is limited to individual wants and needs, it will fail to justify the notion of all or nothing.²²⁶ For him, the notion of “all” or “nothing” demonstrates that rebellion, even though it evolves from each thing that is solely individualistic in man, undermines the very conception of the individual.”²²⁷ As such, the rebel stands for all humankind and the ultimate human solidarity. Nonetheless, Camus’ notion of absurdity and death remains a ground for the rebel to strive for freedom. The strangeness is shared with all men – “the entire human race suffers from the division within itself and the rest of the world.”²²⁸ Through rebellion, a man leaps from the individual experience of freedom and absurdity towards the shared experience of all human race. To resist or reevaluate one’s condition is to move beyond oneself. Every act draws upon a common foundation of meanings.²²⁹ “I rebel – therefore, we exist.”²³⁰

Through his notion of the rebel, Camus considers the importance of meaningful life in a just society that enables one to exercise freedom for itself and the common good. For him, to be human is to experience and to confront the absurd life, to demand that the world be comprehensible, that it confirms a sense of meaning, that it provides us reliability and justice. As such, rebellion for Camus is the act of an educated man who is mindful that his right is not limited to himself but stand in solidarity with humankind. Thus, *the rebel* shows how his notion of freedom derives its wholesome meaning in living with the otherness of the other by explicating the importance of solidarity through the spirit of rebellion. The core argument of his rebellion will be discussed in the third chapter.

III. Sartre and Camus Debate

The Sartre-Camus relationship had already begun before their first encounter in June 1943, at the opening of Sartre’s play *The Flies*. Their actual relationship began with their enthusiastic discovery of each other’s’ early books; on Camus side a year ago in 1938 when he read the novel *Nausea* and on Sartre’s in 1942 as he reviewed *The Stranger* and along the side reads the

²²⁶ Ibid., pp. 3, 8, 9.

²²⁷ Ibid., p. 3.

²²⁸ Ibid., p. 10.

²²⁹ Isaac, *Arendt, Camus and Modern Rebellion*, p. 121.

²³⁰ Ibid., p. 10.

book *The Myth of Sisyphus*.²³¹ They build their relationship much more comfortably, as they had read each other books well before they encounter. As Aronson states, the intensity of their friendship and rivalry opportunities have so much to do with their writings. Their writings are the primary source of the story of their relationship from 1939 to 1960. They communicate with each other, about each other, and in response to each other.²³² In the climate of occupation, resistance, and liberation in France, they soon become the leading intellectuals of post-war France. In the middle of liberation and the end of 1945, they obtained fame that extends across all audiences. They become ubiquitous, writing philosophy, criticism, novels, plays, stories and essays, and journalism. Their celebrity lay in their ability to voice the extraordinary experience France has been living through crucial times. They equip young people and students, and the educated French in general, with new literary heroes. They took the place of distinguished writers of their time.²³³ Considering their rose of popularity and fame in times of France's acute and absurd situations, their relationship is accounted as highly robust and complex.

Their various coalition and a diverging view can be an outcome of their distinct temperament. Sartre was preoccupied with theories and popular ideas. While, Camus was more or less a conventional – the opposite of Sartre. As a person, Sartre was less vulnerable than Camus; Camus's vulnerabilities are more visible and can be easily captured from his skin, moods, and in his eyes. As Aronson state, such differences each one momentarily complemented and, in some sense, completed each other.²³⁴ Despite their differences, their initial admiration developed from the proximity of their origin points and their projects' similarity. It is reflected from their writings, with its unconventional plots and seemingly indifferent characters in their novels and plays "stressed that existence was absurd."²³⁵ Moreover, "they faced this absurdity honestly and lucidly and agreed upon most people either ignored or take it for granted."²³⁶ Their writings and life marks in literature and philosophy are quite different in French education and life. They advocate and promote an authentic way of engaging with the world.

They did not limit themselves in philosophy and literature and were passionately engaged in the occupation, struggle, liberation, and post-war. In terms of political engagement,

²³¹ Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and The Quarrel that ended it*, p. 10.

²³² *Ibid.*, pp. 8, 21.

²³³ *Ibid.*, p. 44.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²³⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

²³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

Camus was a giant step ahead of Sartre; he had already been a comrade of the communist party for two years, from the fall of 1935 until the summer or fall of 1937. In German occupation, Camus wholeheartedly works for the underground newspaper “combat” by risking his own life in the real world. Camus is the one who introduced Sartre to the world of political engagement by requesting him to write a descriptive report of the liberation period. It enabled Sartre to engage himself directly in the world, which he had not done before – by going into the streets and observing events, and then describing them to a mass audience.²³⁷ In return, Sartre wrote an article on it, which became highly sensational and known at French liberation. The written article became controversial after Sartre’s death; Beauvoir claimed that she had written them because “he was too busy.”²³⁸ Nonetheless, during that period, the article becomes a turning point for Sartre. It designates “Sartre coming down to earth in a new and decisive way, at a defining historical moment, and they have long been regarded as the best eyewitness account of those days.”²³⁹

In the initial stage of their friendship, Camus’s writing, activity in resistance, and above all, his personality became an outstanding exemplar of commitment for Sartre. Camus and Sartre sketched joint post-war projects: they were against commitment. They participated in resistance independently without commitment to any political groups. After the war, they both aimed at strengthening the non-communist– “their common rejection of “political realism” was, in part, a rejection of the communist outlook.”²⁴⁰ As they gradually developed in the political sphere, Sartre became more engaged in politics, and Camus’s political growth gathered momentum in a parallel. However, it sometimes ran counter to the one Sartre was thinking.²⁴¹ Thus, after the war, Camus and Sartre took a different turn in politics: communism become Camus’ enemy. On the contrary, it became a polestar for Sartre.²⁴²

It brings to our moral concern how such an authentic independent thinker and a strong political activist end up taking sides against each other? What led them to give up the middle ground they both had occupied together before the post-war? How and what compels them to become one’s own side’s morale and intellectual leader instead of working together for the alternate path? Sartre and Camus’s well-known debate in 1952 has a lot to do with their gradual

²³⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

²³⁸ Bair, Simone de Beauvoir, 293. Quoted in Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and The Quarrel that ended it*, p. 24.

²³⁹ Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and The Quarrel that ended it*, p. 24.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 65.

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 64.

²⁴² Ibid., p. 65.

political growth since 1944. Even though Camus was the first place to introduce Sartre in the sphere of political engagement, later, Sartre became more enthusiastic in engaging directly towards social conditions. Their argument began from 1946-47, mainly concentrated on two themes: violence and commitment. These themes were at the center of each man's development in the years leading up to their break in 1952.²⁴³ After France's liberation from colonial rule, France was still not master of its destiny. It was subjected to much more powerful forces, which eventually followed with the cold war. The cold war played a significant role in pressuring the intellectual thinkers and political activists to fight against communism. As the Cold War became intense, Sartre and Camus also became victims in choosing aside; they discontinued working for an independent "third force" that they worked before liberation and planned to work rigorously after the post-war. The cold war demands everyone to take a side in a political struggle of good against evil: the outcome of taking sides is such that if one was right, then the other had to be wrong.²⁴⁴

Starting from 1949 to 1951, Sartre and Camus were moving in opposite directions. Camus, since the 1940s, was against the idea of communism. His stance towards the communist was shaped by his experience with the communist in the 1930s. He claimed that communist stress solely on objective social structures and the urgency to transform them neglect individual subjectivity. Individual freedom and voice were less important; what matters most was to destroy capitalism and industrialize by any means to follow the aim of democracy and social development. As for Camus, such a movement neglects individual freedom and action and will lead to totalitarianism – that legitimizes murder and brutality for the cause of the future, which is not absolute. For Camus, harmonizing the present social condition was more critical than sacrificing the present's peace for the future cause. After a dozen years of interaction with the French Communist People (PCF) to bring in a medium of dialogue for mutual understanding that fails consistently, led him to give up optimistic hope towards communist revolution and later he came to treat communism as a civilization disease, "the modern madness."²⁴⁵

On the other hand, Sartre, through his political participation growth, communism became his polestar from 1946 onwards.²⁴⁶ Unlike Camus, he becomes more concerned about the working class's French condition, state violence, and its economic system's built-in

²⁴³ Ibid., p. 145.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 4.

²⁴⁵ Camus, Notebooks 1942-51 (New York, 1996), p. 128, Quoted in Aronson, Ronald, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of Friendship and The Quarrel that Ended it*, p. 82.

²⁴⁶ Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of Friendship and the Quarrel that Ended it*, p. 65.

violence. Sartre believed that communism, however its incompetency in safeguarding individual freedom and controlling brutal actions, can be the only possible means to liberate the working class from various oppression and injustice. He did not accept communism instantly. Initially, he was a critic of communism who sought an alternative path and had participated devotedly in the resistance movement during the war till French liberation – the resistance aim of the revolution was quite different from communism. He established a resistance group called Rassemblement Démocratique Révolutionnaire (RDR) – it was popularly known as “Sartre’s and Roussel’s party.” Its functions were to oppose both blocs (capitalist and the communist) and the pressure for war to establish an independent and genuinely socialist France.²⁴⁷ Unfortunately, it split apart in the fall of 1949, crushed by the Cold War’s pressure and its lack of political experience. The collapse of the resistance group had an immense effect on Sartre, as his notes show, “splitting up the RDR hard blow. New and definitive apprenticeship to realize. One cannot create a movement.”²⁴⁸ The RDR fall destroyed his belief in creating a radical change by working as an independent leftist, which forced him to choose a side towards communism that Camus could never accept throughout his lifetime. As such, his latter inclination towards communism was his personal experience in the political realm. He turned towards committing himself solely in the historical realities; by now, he integrated his existentialism into Marxism, espoused violence and revolution, and took his stand decisively against the west. Moreover, from then on, he confronted and rejected Camus’s example and arguments without mentioning him by name.²⁴⁹

As a result, Camus gradually loses patient with Sartre as he finally inclined towards history and communism. On the other hand, Sartre explicitly came out in support of communism. Simultaneously, Camus published a book, *The Rebel*, overtly turned the entire argument against Sartre and *Les Temps Modernes*.²⁵⁰ His developed book is also an aim against intellectuals who support revolutionary violence for the future cause. For Camus, they are a person who is concerned with justice in the abstract but take little significance of concrete individuals. Persons who worship violence and believe in the future over the present, who hate life, including their own lives – apocalyptic, were willing to kill endlessly to end killing.²⁵¹ Their different outlook on communism led to their final outburst in 1952: Sartre considered

²⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 103.

²⁴⁸ Beauvoir, *Force of Circumstances*, p. 176, Quoted in Aronson, Ronald, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and The Quarrel that Ended it*, p. 106.

²⁴⁹ Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and The Quarrel that Ended it*, p. 107.

²⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 147.

²⁵¹ Ibid., p. 110.

communism the only means to liberate French workers. On the contrary, Camus considered it to be humanity's foremost enemy and instead opted for world citizens.

Sartre and Camus are unable to resolve their massive public conflict of 1952, mainly on communism and violence, after many years of friendship and fondness of each other and knowing each other grow in a similar direction that sometimes overlaps with contradiction. Sartre gradually turns towards the communist movement; despite the evil of the Soviet Union, he acknowledges it as the only real hope and political expression of most French workers. While Camus, demanding to understand how a historically oriented movement can be morally justifiable, slowly becomes impatient with Sartre as he turns towards communism that finally impelled him towards a confrontation with Sartre, after many years of avianation, a way to maintain their friendship.²⁵²

Unlike Sartre, Camus takes an opposite stance in *The Rebel* by emerging as a prominent voice of the non-communist left. The book was published in May 1952; many positive and critical reviews appear from different aspects: political, literary, religious, and general-interest publications; in dailies, weeklies, and monthlies; in publications across the political spectrum; and by literary reviewers as well as by well-known figures, including Camus's comrades from the resistance. The book was widely talked about and generally well-received both in terms of positive and critical review.²⁵³ His main target of the book was mainly against those who justified murder, the intellectual accomplices of communism, those who rationalized it to the rest of the world. He considered communism as the real problem of that time, and the urgent need of every person is to acknowledge it and denounce it at any cost.²⁵⁴ On the other hand, Sartre and his journal (*Les Temps Modernes*) headed towards supporting communism. Their growing impatience was not just a coincidence, as right after the liberation, Camus has been critical of Sartre's tendency to historicize his thought, and for years he had been distinguishing himself from Sartre. Thus, this led Camus to unapologetically critic against Sartre and the other intellectuals aligned with communism after many years of avoiding to confront Sartre. Near the end of the book, Camus sought to provoke Sartre's response, but it delayed, causes him more furious towards Sartre.

Why Sartre chose to ignore to review the book in the first place by handing over Francis Jeanson, a junior collaborator? Sartre's unwillingness to reply can signify various intentions

²⁵² Ibid., pp. 131, 151.

²⁵³ Ibid., p. 134.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 145.

to safeguard their friendship and avoid severe political conflict. Sartre was very much against Camus's arguments in *The Rebel*. Sartre thought Camus discussed matters he had not understood and had read neither Marx nor Engels directly but merely used other writer's summaries.²⁵⁵ However, Sartre remained quiet, as he was well aware of the impact his review will mean on Camus, for they both have long years of personal relationship. Taking all this into account, he led Francis Jeanson, the journal's nominal managing editor, who had no personal relationship with Camus, to review the book, hoping that he will deal with Camus in a "polite" manner. As Sartre said, "it will be even more disagreeable for him if we say nothing at all about his book."²⁵⁶ In this way, Sartre detested Camus' philosophy, whose politics he rejected to safeguard their friendship, later turned out against his credence.

Jeanson's comes about with a review of twenty-one-page reads as "A critical study of man in revolt" that engages its main themes by attacking both the author and the book. Jeanson harshly criticizes beyond the book's substance; he criticized Camus, his earlier writings, the book's approach, and its form. Jeanson did not attempt to provoke a debate with Camus; instead, he treats him as an antagonist, targeting his arguments, pointing out his errors, and ultimately devaluing his political thoughts and ideas. Jeanson's harsh treatment was not the kind of treatment Sartre wanted and expected. Sartre complained that Jeanson "wrote the article in the way he had not wanted, that is to say, it was violent and slashing, and it pointed out the book's faults, which was not difficult to do."²⁵⁷ Jeanson detested Camus for seeing revolutions as aiming at "the divinization of man," which neglects "any role for history and economics." He also criticized that Camus fails to study "the concrete structures of revolutionary actions," which involve how revolution emerges and develops as well as "the behavior that constitutes it." He claims that Camus gives "absolute primacy" to ideologies and blames everything that has gone wrong on thinkers and their thoughts by futilely praising revolutionary syndicalism as the only genuinely efficacious political stance. Jeanson believes that Camus is ignorantly championing "humiliated rebellion" against the "triumphant rebellion" embodied in the Soviet Union. The fact is that the communist party, Jeanson, contends, speaks for the working class and rejects it out of hand to prescribe failure. Jeanson considered Camus' rebellion as "a radical way of refusing history – when rebellion is characterized by "limits," while "history" is made the very locus of "excess," of cynicism, of destruction and limitless servitude, an indefinite

²⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 136.

²⁵⁶ Quoted in Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and The Quarrel that ended it*, p. 136.

²⁵⁷ Beauvoir, *Adieux*, p. 269, Quoted in Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and The Quarrel that Ended it*, p. 139.

series of “convulsions” and “a prodigious collective agony.”²⁵⁸ Jeanson was disturbed by Camus’s rejection of revolution; considering that time, the revolution was often people’s only hope to overthrow those in power and radically change their situations. Without denying the fact about the ugly consequences of such actions, but as the only significant cost for social change, taken into account the immense forces usually available to those in power.²⁵⁹ Thus, to merely rule it out ultimately dooms them to futile protest devoid of any hope for better tomorrow.

Camus’s response with a seventeen-page to Jeanson’s review of his book on June 30, 1952, showed that he read Jeanson’s article as Sartre breaking with him. He firmly believes that Sartre was in solidarity with Jeanson’s position and accused Sartre’s inability to criticize him directly. He begins his letter by referring to “the article your journal has devoted to me.” Alternating between “your collaborator” and “your article.” He even personally attacks Sartre by accusing him of turning solely towards the direction of history. As Camus states, “I am beginning to get a little tired of seeing myself – and even more, of seeing former militants who have never refused to struggle of their time – endlessly receive lessons in efficacy from critics who have never done anything more than turn their theatre seat in the direction of history.”²⁶⁰ Camus expressed his outrage as he regarded the article as a blatant and unflattering distortion of him, his life, and what he intended to say in *The Rebel*. By falsely accusing him of being in the clouds, of disengagement, of writing, “against all evidence, an anti-historical manual,” of being “separated from reality,” of being “an unrepentant idealist.” Camus claimed that his book had been misread due to its incompetence reading or malevolence. Camus’ revealed his frustration even towards Sartre’s journal “*Les Temps Modernes*,” for misconceiving his central arguments rather than providing “loyal and wise critic.” Camus claimed that Jeanson’s article has failed to grasp the core thesis of his book: namely, that “whoever seeks to serve history for his own sake ends in nihilism.” “For its own sake” signify history apart from norms and values. Jeanson, in his article, has criticized Camus’s central thesis as a radical evasion from history. Camus was unsatisfied with his unthoughtful and brutal critic and argued that Jeanson and Sartre should have instead “tried to demonstrate that history can on its own provide values that are not exclusively those of force, or else tried to prove that one can act in history without

²⁵⁸ Camus, “révolte et servitude,” p. 754, Quoted in Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and The Quarrel that Ended it*, p. 141.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 140, 141, 142.

²⁶⁰ See Roger Quilliot’s comment, *essais*, 1719, p. 772, Quoted in Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and The Quarrel that Ended it*, p. 145.

appealing to any value.” As Camus states, it will be a problematic demonstration, “but that effort would have contributed to the joint progress of all of us, and to be honest, I expected them from you (Sartre). I was wrong.”²⁶¹

Halfway through the letter, Camus fully and directly tells Sartre what was wrong with his thinking and politics, mainly Sartre’s commitment towards existentialism and communism. He criticized him for defending Marxism as an implicit dogma and ignoring all non-Marxist revolutionary traditions, distorting the possibility of third solutions. There are no alternatives to the status quo or cesarean socialism.²⁶² Camus asserts that the article wrongfully critiques him for not engaging to the core of the matter. At the same time, they are confident enough to agree on communism’s doctrine of communism and remain silent about the policies that it demands.²⁶³ Thus according to Camus, Sartre, and the supporter of the communist will agree with people to rebel against anything except the party and the communist state. Camus argues that Sartre, in alignment with communism, has betrayed his existential notion of freedom by submitting towards historical necessity. It was relatable at that moment, as Sartre explicitly came out in support of communism.²⁶⁴ Thus, in a way, Camus’ aggressive arguments mainly turned out to be against Sartre for his insensibility to his book *The Rebel*’s central thesis and intentions.

In response to Camus’ review, Jeanson responded again with thirty pages, and Sartre with twenty pages by *Les temps Modernes* on Camus’ as a person and his ideas. After Camus broke off their friendship in his response to Jeanson’s article, Sartre finally bursts his public anger. Sartre holds nothing back as Camus treated him secondarily for the second time: by attacking him indirectly without mentioning his name both in *The Rebel* and Jeanson’s article. It makes Sartre more frustrated with Camus’ nature. Sartre claimed that Camus has troubled him during the past ten years by his prickly, self-righteous, and judgmental traits while they were friends, which Sartre regarded Camus as intellectual shallowness and laziness.²⁶⁵ Sartre half of his letter is towards a malicious attack on Camus. Breaking ties with Camus, Sartre treated Camus politically and objectively – as someone who had broken with him and was no more or less than an anti-communist.²⁶⁶

²⁶¹ Aronson, Ronald, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of Friendship and Quarrel that ended it*, pp. 143-45.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 146.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 147.

²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 148.

The reason for breaking off their friendship openly in a cruel manner lies in their differences in politics, mainly their reason for condemning and supporting communism. As Sartre states, “there is no way of escaping the cage all of us are in today, and if you hope to prevent any movement of the people from degenerating into tyranny, do not begin by condemning it without appeal and by threatening to retreat to a desert. To merit the right to effecting men who are struggling, one must first participate in their struggle, and this first means accepting many things if you hope to change a few of them.”²⁶⁷ Sartre further blamed Camus for his rejection of communism by believing in “personal salvation as accessible to all.”²⁶⁸ Sartre is considered as patently false for Camus’s stubbornness to change his position; what Sartre means by change is that keeping some of his beliefs and, at the same time, answering the needs of the oppressed masses. Sartre even states that Camus turning his back against communism can be the insult he received from the French communist people (PCF) representatives. Thus, Sartre is considered Camus as a person who does not bother to engage with events for the social cause. Sartre silences their friendship by ending his article with a final cruel note stating: “in any case, it was good that I could tell you what I thought. The journal is open to you if you want to reply to me, but I will not further reply. I have said what you meant to me and what you are to me now. However, whatever you may say or do in return, I refuse to fight you. I hope that our silence will cause this polemic to be forgotten.”²⁶⁹

Their end of friendship in the famous outbreak of 1952 is chiefly caused by taking a different turn in politics: Sartre towards supporting communism despite its inherent evil, as the only hope to bring change for the oppressed masses. On the contrary, Camus condemned communism as a real evil, a weapon of destruction, and dehumanization rather than emancipation; engage in history differently from Sartre. Camus continued fighting for an alternate path to bring about social change that would be morally justifiable. Their development of different political stances plays a massive role in receiving “violence” differently. In fighting against oppression and injustice for French workers and against Algeria’s colonized rule, it will be discussed in the third chapter.

²⁶⁷ Sartre, “reply to albert camus,” in *situations*, 71, p. 90, Quoted in Aronson, *camus and sartre: The Story of Friendship that Ended it*, p. 151.

²⁶⁸ Sartre, “reply to albert camus,” in *situations*, 71, p. 99, Quoted in Aronson, *camus and Sartre: The Story of Friendship that Ended it*, p. 153.

²⁶⁹ Sartre, “reply to albert Camus,” in *situations*, 71, p. 105, Translation Modified by Adrian Van Den Hoven, Quoted in Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of Friendship The Quarrel that Ended it*, p. 154.

Chapter 3

Freedom and Violence in the Context of Capitalism and Colonialism

The first section of this chapter critically investigates Sartre's nature of human relations and unequal relations of power amongst humans; that led to the emergence of systemic violence in controlling the weaker sections of society. It discusses the employment of a systemic form of violence in Algeria's French colonial rule. The second section discusses Sartre's and Camus's impact on their different take on "violence" as freedom of action – particularly in politics; due to their distinct foundation of freedom. It critically looks into Camus's reasons behind the negative outlook on violence and Sartre's positive outlook on the act of violence if it is employed to recover one's freedom. The third section deals with their divergent stands on the Algerian conflict. It discusses their contrary reason and arguments on the means to re-establish humanity in Algeria. Camus stands against the demand of the Algerian people's independent nation and the emergence of war in solving the French Algerian and Arab conflict in Algeria. To prevent the employment of violence in killing innocent civilians. In contrast, Sartre supports the emergence of war and the Algerian people's demand for an independent nation as the only means for the Algerian people to re-establish the life they deserved, despite the disastrous consequences.

I. Colonialism and Structural form of Violence

Sartre developed his thought and actions on political freedom through a multiplicity of transformation; His shift in ideas is seen in between his works written in specific periods or phases of his life. The continuity of his work is seen throughout the whole of his lifework. His thought development is the outcome of the complex external and internal interactions hugely influenced by the social and political events of his time. To understand his firm assertion on the structural and systematic form of violence embedded in colonialism, it becomes essential to look into his initial theorization of the notion of the "gaze" in *Being and Nothingness*. The presence of the other becomes the original crisis in exercising one's freedom of actions; under those conditions, one's experiences the feeling of initial infringement of freedom. The existence of the other "gaze" can objectify the other person.

Moreover, as man is a conscious being, he has the ultimate power to “gaze” back and vice versa. Thus, Sartre argues that man can never be reduced to other needs and desires; man’s relations can never be reconciled, and it ought to find their meaning in conflict. Man’s attempt to reach the ultimate unity with others in presenting oneself as an object for others or reducing others as objects is a form of “bad faith” – an inauthentic way of life.

He further developed his idea of power relations and the existence of bad faith in the *Critique of Dialectical Reason*; where he elucidates the problems of violence as an inherent factor of power relations in man; “he interpolates the violence of colonialism and anti-colonial response at a philosophical and historical level: colonialism, in this analysis, consisted of a process in which uncontrolled violence was gradually transformed to controlled violence, asserting a legitimacy of rule, as in Algeria.”²⁷⁰ In “Colonialism is a system,” he developed the dialectic of power relations; the colonizer and the colonized, “the torturer and tortured, racist and victim, the empowered and the disempowered, was crypt in symbolic relations in which the first could not escape the consequences of his relationship with the second.”²⁷¹ He substantiated his insight into the Manichaeic system of racism and violence of colonialism, particularly in Algeria, in his preface to Albert Memmi’s *The colonizer and the Colonized*. He further promotes and justifies counter-violence by the oppressed towards systemic violence in his preface to Fanon’s *The Wretched of the Earth*. He developed a history theory in which colonialism and the colonial regime’s endemic violence were a significant component in subjugating and controlling the colonized.²⁷² In alignment with Fanon, assert that the colonial regime’s violence was a significant component and necessity for the oppressed class to use the same amount of malicious violence imposed on them as a means of resistance.

The initial development of the notion of the “gaze”²⁷³ led to the gradual development of his “systemic violence” inherent in the function of colonialism. This section will critically engage with Sartre’s understanding of “systemic violence” present in the hierarchy of human relations. What makes Sartre’s belief in the systemic form of violence: violence as systematically construct into everyday life under capitalism and colonialism? What drives him to believe that violence is enclaved systematically in the operation of colonial relations with the colonized? By believing in the systemic form of violence, why does he encourage the

²⁷⁰ Sartre 1976a: 727, Quoted in Young, Robert J.C. in his preface “Sartre: the African Philosopher” in Sartre, *Colonialism and Neo-colonialism*, p. xviii.

²⁷¹ Sartre, *Colonialism and Neo-colonialism*, p. xvi.

²⁷² Ibid., p. xxii.

²⁷³ Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*, pp. 341-49.

colonized or oppressed to fight back with the equal amount of violence imposed on them to bring an end to all forms of injustice? These give rise to several issues on his understanding and use of political violence: what makes him encourage the oppressed to use an equal amount of violence to the oppressor? Does that logically imply that the systemic use of violence is an unjustifiable form of violence? What makes him strongly counter-argue against the operation of systemic violence as an inauthentic exercise of freedom?

Since there is a distinct development in Sartre's thought in relation to the human condition and exercise of freedom, it becomes essential to consider his later views of human relations: to arrive at the overall understanding of his unjustifiable use of systemic violence. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre considered man as a conscious being endowed with absolute freedom of choice. The conscious being can create itself through free choice and contemplate upon itself. It is the source of all relations; it makes relations with others possible.²⁷⁴ As such, the relation between men finds its initial meaning in conflict, in the existence of others' "gaze." It acts as "a constant threat towards his freedom, even more so as there is a chance to enter into complicity with the other in seeing oneself through their eyes."²⁷⁵ The others may objectify us by their "gaze," but since man is a conscious being can do the same with the others. For Sartre, to freely reduce to other "gaze" or objectify others by our "gaze" is to live in bad faith.

As man is deprived of definite essence like that of being-in-itself, according to Sartre, the inextricable ambiguity of Man's relations with the others usually leads him to adopt two patterns of behaviour; sadism or masochism. The former is an attempt to appropriate the other entirely. The latter is one's willingness to surrender one's freedom by accepting as an absolute object for the others, both of which is to live a life of bad faith. A man ought to be aware of his freedom and the freedom of his fellow beings, and to develop relations with others on that basis of understanding is to have an authentic way of life. Any attempt to either subjugate or objectify others may lead to forceful denial of others' freedom that will develop endless hatred among man.

As a man cannot exist in isolation, his concrete existence will only find its meaning in others' presence. Besides this, he found himself with a particular given situation, history, values, and structures imposed on him by the existing society that affect his exercise of freedom. His notion of violence is more intelligible when the dimension of societal behavior is taken into

²⁷⁴ Quinn John, *Sartre on Violence: A Political, Philosophical and Literary Study*, p. 42.

²⁷⁵ Majumdar, "The Subversion of Colonial Ideology: Jean-Paul Sartre," p. 86.

account.²⁷⁶ As for Sartre, since conflict constitutes the core of human relations, certain forms of violence are inevitable when the relation becomes actualized in a social structure.²⁷⁷ His concern is how we understand and put violence into practice in our day-to-day life. In the later stage, Sartre relates his notion of the “gaze” in understanding the “definite power relations of domination and subordination, arising from social factors, rather than a phenomenon limited to individual consciousness.”²⁷⁸

Sartre articulates the notion of “force” and “gaze” of the colonialist to establish his knowledge of the colonial rule’s systematic violence.²⁷⁹ His notion of the gaze is the relationship of the subject, the vogue, to the gaze’s object, although “it is possible to see without being seen. Nonetheless, the dialectic of the gaze implies, at the very least, the possibility of reciprocity, in which the other is not merely the object of the subject’s gaze, but also a subject who has the equal access to look back at the observer, thus constituted the observer as an object.”²⁸⁰ Only through the implication of “force” by the colonial subject towards the other, particularly the colonial other, man’s undeniable reciprocity is put into control. He sees the denial of fair reciprocity in the colonial system, which he considered the most inhuman act of violence against others’ freedom. It becomes his prime reason for developing his colonial other theory; it attempts to subvert the colonialist’s dominant perception towards the colonized. In *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, he developed the colonist’s racial supremacy, which acts as the cement of “serial unity.”²⁸¹

Sartre states that colonial ideology is primarily based on the enlightenment and republican universalism. However, their objectives are to establish the division of subject and objects, the self and the other. There is no space for the notion of distinction or the other within the indivisible French Republic’s discourse. Subjugating the others’ existence in all forms enables the colonialists to establish a relation between them and the other (colonized). Thus, it is carried out by the use of forceful operation by destroying the possibility of reciprocal relationship with the colonized and constructed so that the colonized are initially unaware even that he/she is being “look at” or “spied upon.”²⁸² The colonial differentiating the other has always followed with a value judgment that considered the others to be inherently inferior.

²⁷⁶ Quinn John, *Sartre on Violence: A Political, Philosophical and Literary Study*, p. 52.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 47.

²⁷⁸ Majumdar, “The Subversion of Colonial Ideology: Jean-Paul Sartre,” p. 86.

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 92.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 85.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 87.

²⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 88.

Thus, it shows the colonizer's double face: The humanity granted to themselves remains foreign to the colonized. The notion of the subversion of the colonized gaze becomes a prime reason for Sartre to develop his theory of the other to expose the elements of the colonial rule, i.e., the use of repressive violence subjugated the colonial other. Thus, Sartre's "theory of the other undermines and subverts the "official" discourse of the Universalist republicanism."²⁸³

Sartre gives greater importance to "force" than "ideology" in maintaining colonial power; he insists firmly that the colonial system is based practically on brute force. Colonialism is a preconceived system constructed by the colons to justify their actions against the oppressed native. It is organized violence and forces applied to a native population through economic, social, and political structures for its self-perpetuation. It is a system that privileged the colonizer to produce economic misuse and exploitation to an enormous extent towards the colonized.²⁸⁴ He considered Algeria as the most precise and most lucid example of the colonial system.²⁸⁵ The history of colonialism in Algeria, according to Sartre, took a more defined form during the second empire owing to industrial and commercial expansion. Subsequently, the tremendous colonial companies were established in Algeria by gradually developing a system to curb its economic, social, and psychological functions under the constructed system's mechanism.²⁸⁶

The colonial system did not put itself in place on its own; the fact is that it begins with systematic implementations to obtain a specific goal. In Algeria, the gradual development has begun since the middle of the nineteenth century, which began to deliver results in about the 1880s. It begins by overcoming the resistance, smashing the framework, subdue, terrorized, and then putting the economic system in place.²⁸⁷ The French colonies established the customs union in 1884 to "ensure that France's industry, impaired in the international market by prices that are too high, has a monopoly over the Algerian market."²⁸⁸ The concomitant of this colonial imperialism is to take advantage of the native Algerians and create artificially created consumers. But not the Algerians who are inadequate of resources to do so, but the French settlers, who were given every privilege to acquire land and benefit from all the privileges, will

²⁸³ Ibid, p. 89.

²⁸⁴ Quinn John, *Sartre on Violence: A Political, Philosophical and Literary Study*, pp. 30-33.

²⁸⁵ Sartre, *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*, p. 38.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., pp. 37-38.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 49.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 40.

be converted into efficient buyers. Thus, “the colonist is the artificial consumer, created overseas from nothing by capitalism seeking new markets.”²⁸⁹

The colonialists kept their system intact by imposing a foreign code on the Algerians because they were confident that the established code could not be carried out to them. It could have no alternative outcomes than to destroy Algerian society’s internal structure. They begin by capturing the fair lands of Algeria in the form of military occupation and forced labour. It gradually led to the growing concentration of European land ownership at the expense of Algerian ownership.²⁹⁰ The colonial system is kept in tack by French-frying and dividing up the property of the tribal society and turned them into massive agricultural wage-earners. “It has been said that the Algerians work the same land; in place of owning it, they are the slaves of those who own it.”²⁹¹

The colonists did not stop depriving their lands, depriving them of the fertile soil, forced to work for a minimal stipend. However, they intentionally made the Algerian people illiterate to keep intact their evil and destructive methods. The colonist is well aware that “education, whatever it may be and wherever it may come from, is a device of emancipation. The French right-wing governments are so aware of this that they refuse to educate them”.²⁹² Moreover, most Algerians were deprived of education in the French language, but even educating them in the Arabic language was also decreased, and the Arabic language gradually become a foreign language. “Since 1890, the Arabic language has been considered a foreign language in Algeria; it is still spoken, but it barely survives as a written language.”²⁹³

As the illiteracy rate reaching 80 percent in Algeria, Sartre states that the extent of any “ideological indoctrination was, in any case, bound to remain limited.”²⁹⁴ He explains the colonial ideology in the form of a “civilizing mission” has less role in maintaining their power in oppressing the Algerians; “the logic of the system was such that force increasingly became the only option left for the colonist.”²⁹⁵ The colonialism increased rigorously by occupying their country, forcefully taking their land, and reducing the farmer-owners at starvation rates. With the rise of mechanization, the framers were exploited with cheap labor by reducing the

²⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 40.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 41.

²⁹¹ Ibid., p. 43.

²⁹² Ibid., p. 50.

²⁹³ Ibid., pp. 47-48.

²⁹⁴ Majumdar, “The Subversion of Colonial Ideology: Jean- Paul Sartre”, pp. 89-90.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 90.

least possible wages to regain the energy to work, which is still too expensive. It took away the natives their fundamental right to work and deprived them of primary education by reducing them to the worst poverty state.²⁹⁶ The colonial system is destructive in such a measure that the Algerian people even become fearful of rebelling back against the colonist destructive system; “the fear of unemployment dishearten their revolts; strikers fear that blacklegs might be recruited from among the unemployment...”²⁹⁷

Sartre further elaborates on colonialism’s systemic violence in his preface to Albert Memmi’s *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. There, “he differentiated between the subjects of ideology and colonialism, between the insidious function of the former and naked systemic violence of colonial oppression.”²⁹⁸ He explicates the notion of self and other in the relation of the colonizer and the colonized: “colonialism denies human rights to people it has subjugated by violence, and whom it keeps in poverty and ignorance by force, therefore, as Marx would say, in a state of “sub-humanity,” racism is inscribed in the events themselves, in the institution, like the exchange and the production.”²⁹⁹ The colonial apparatus reinforced and sustained the existence of racism, for “the colonist, Privilege, and humanity are the same things; they assert their humanity through the free exercise of their rights and for the colonized, the absence of rights sanctions their poverty, their chronic hunger, their ignorance, in short, their sub-humanity.”³⁰⁰ Thus, according to Sartre, the political and social status have direct relation: since the natives are subhuman, the pronouncement of human rights does not appeal to them; since they have no rights, they are deserted without security from the brutal forces of nature, to the “iron laws” of economics.³⁰¹ Thus, racism is constructed by the colonial apparatus; “it compensates the latent universalism of bourgeois liberalism: since all human beings have the same rights, the Algerian will be made a subhuman.”³⁰²

As the colonial conquest over Algeria is achieved by oppressive and destructive violence, heartless reciprocity binds the colonizers to the colonized, their outcome, and their fortune.³⁰³ As for Sartre, since existence precedes essence, the colonizer constructs their privileges over the colonized by diminishing the colonized by denying their status of human

²⁹⁶ Sartre, *Colonialism and Neo-Colonialism*, pp. 46-48.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 46.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

³⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

³⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 51.

³⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

beings and fundamental rights. To exult themselves is a form of bad faith. Sartre firmly argues that such an existent of inauthenticity is by the colonial apparatus itself. It supports and maintains the inhuman relations; it deprives the colonized of everything cause the “colonialist practice has engraved the colonial idea on thing themselves; it is the movement of things which designates both the colonist and the colonized.”³⁰⁴ Thus, the domination justifies itself: the system produces and maintain by force, the oppressor will continue to dehumanize the oppressed class as long as the colonial apparatus exist. The colonist will continue to terror, exploit, and dehumanize to justify their further exploitation. Sartre argues that “the machine runs smoothly; impossible to distinguish between an idea and praxis, and between the latter and objective necessity.”³⁰⁵ For Sartre, the only means to bring an end to this form of systemic violence constructed to dehumanize the colonial other can be achieved not through economic and social reformation alone but by the destruction of the system.

As colonization results from a long history of the developed systems, Sartre argues that it is not veritable that there exist two types of colons: exceptional colons and wicked. There are colons, and that it is.³⁰⁶ The only way to terminate this form of fundamental inequality operated by the colonial relation of power, which is intrinsic in the colonial system, can only be achieved through the destruction of colonization. The colonizer may argue that it is unnecessary to bring in the importance of politics in the fight for Algerian liberation, as the politics are abstract. There is no point in voting if a man is dying of hunger. Ignoring the claim about free elections, about a constituent assembly, about Algerian independence, and are condemned as agitators or trouble makers who only make the condition worse. Sartre supports the response to the colonist arguments by the leaders of the FLN: even if they were contented under French bayonets, they would fight. Sartre states that the FLN is right, for they know that all dehumanization’s root cause lies in the system itself. Even if the French bayonets attempt to improve their social and economic conditions, they can only be unhappy, as their intentions are not really to improvised them. It is a fact that the larger number of Algerian people exist in unbearable poverty. However, indeed, the necessary reform cannot be brought by either right colonists or the French herself, “as long as she intends to maintain her sovereignty in Algeria. These reforms were the Algerian people’s responsibility when they won their freedom from the colonist.”³⁰⁷

³⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 60.

³⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 60.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., p, 38.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., pp. 37-38.

To liberate themselves from the colonial systemic rule, what methods are they going to use to fight back against them? In that context, Sartre advocates using violence in his preface to Fanon's *The wretched of the Earth* as the essential means to counter-response the colonial regime's violence. Re-emphasizing the new ontology and epistemology of liberation developed by Fanon "provides the basis for the renewal of selfhood through the reversal of anti-colonial violence."³⁰⁸ Sartre talks about the colonized third stage of violence, as the moment of a boomerang: "no gentleness can efface that marks of violence; it is violence alone that can destroy them. Moreover, the colonized cure themselves of the colonial neurosis by driving out the colon with weapons."³⁰⁹ Sartre found the utility of violence in his preface to Fanon's *The wretched of the earth*. He claimed that since the colonizer creates and finds their humanity by dehumanizing the colonized in return, the colonized make themselves human beings by opposing the colonizer.³¹⁰ The colonized humanity would be derived from every act of their violence: colonizers were human beings at the colonizer's expense, the colonized now "are making themselves human beings through the colonizer; different human beings of better quality."³¹¹

It is essential to understand the kind of violence Sartre considered morally justifiable, i.e., the counter-violence used by the oppressed and the colonized. Sartre's support for the recourse to violence cannot be wholly comprehended by merely considering the materialistic or idealistic terminology to describe the violence and the counter-violence, which will fail to grasp his diversified outlook on violence. His notion of violence can only be rendered intelligible by examining the manifold nature of human relations.³¹² In the context of the correlation between the colonizer and the colonized, the violence used by both cannot be understood in the same manner. The colonizer's intention in using violence towards the colonized is to exploit them for their economic gain. On the contrary, the colonized violence has different motives and projects, i.e., to re-established their humanity they rightfully deserved. Sartre makes it intelligible that there is a fundamental contrast between the colonizer's gratuitous violence and that of the colonized, which "is not an absurd storm, nor the resurrection of savage instincts, nor even an effect of resentment."³¹³ Thus, colonized violence is necessary to reconstruct themselves from the inauthenticity and bad faith. As for Sartre, the

³⁰⁸ Ibid., p. XXV.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., pp. 165-66.

³¹⁰ Ibid., p. 170.

³¹¹ Ibid., p. 168.

³¹² Quinn John, *Sartre on Violence: A Political, Philosophical and Literary Study*, p. 24.

³¹³ Sartre, *Colonialism and Neo-colonialism*, pp. 165-66.

exercise of one's freedom does not have the right to infringe others' freedom and extend to the necessary reciprocity of freedom in man's relation to his fellow beings.

The colonized reversal of the colonizer's gaze alone for Sartre is insufficient to eliminate the colonial system; "for this, the full espousal of counter-violence to meet the violence of the colonial power was deemed necessary."³¹⁴ Sartre, like Fanon, believes and supports the use of violence to overcome violence. Sartre, in his preface to Fanon's *The wretched of the earth*, clearly state that "For, in the first stages of the revolt, it is necessary to kill; killing a European is like killing two birds with one stone, getting rid in one throw of both an oppressor and one of the oppressed! Afterward, there remains a dead man, but also a free man; the survivor feels he is treading on his national land for the very first time."³¹⁵ It will enable the colonized to attain freedom in every aspect of their life, free from oppression and dehumanization. The new emergence of violence strip-tease colonized humanism. "It is completely necked and not beautiful: it was nothing but an illusory ideology, the exquisite justification for pillage; its tenderness and affection sanctioned acts of aggression."³¹⁶

The dynamics of violence that exist in human relations compel him to develop the theory of counter-violence. As for Sartre, man's use of violence to objectify his fellow man is an unjustifiable exercise of freedom. On the other hand, violence becomes an essential element to fight back against this form of objectification to end any dehumanization. Thus, for Sartre, this form of counter-violence becomes a justifiable act of freedom. In the following section, the issue of violence will be raised and discussed more in detail from Sartre and Camus's account. It will critically envisage their differences in violence in the context of political struggles – of the oppressor and the oppressed.

II. Legitimization of Violence as a Political Struggle

Sartre and Camus take different political stands in solving the rampant violence of their times. The main reason they parted in 1952 was their take on political violence, especially communism and colonialism. Sartre became a supporter of Marxist ideology and believes that revolution is the only productive way to end the systemic violence constructed into routine life under capitalism and colonialism. He gradually supports violence by the oppressed class to

³¹⁴ Majumdar, *The Subversion of Colonial Ideology: Jean-Paul Sartre*, pp. 92-93.

³¹⁵ Sartre, *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*, p. 166.

³¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

counter-attack the unjustly imposed violence by social systems based on inequality. He believed that the only means the oppressed can overthrow the structural violence is to turn back the oppressor's violence. For Sartre, "non-violence only perpetuates oppression violence; the tool of oppression is the only possible path of liberation."³¹⁷ He supported the revolutionary movement by the workers against capitalism and colonialism as the only practical means to liberate themselves from the unjust system.

On the contrary, Camus stands against the notion of revolution and believes that the severe form of calculus violence is found in revolutionary movements itself that profess to liberate people from capitalist and colonial oppression and was against the use of violence but emphasized "authentic rebellion." He argues against the revolutionary use of violence to bring an end to all forms of social injustice. Unlike Sartre, he was solely against the Algeria war and instead proposed a civilian truce to bring justice and order in Algeria temporarily. These give rise to several problems: if violence is an act, is it a meaningful exercise or meaningless exercise? If it is a meaningful exercise, is violence an act of freedom? If violence is an act of freedom, can it be morally justified? Why is violence morally justifiable for Sartre, but is it justifiable for Camus? If it is not morally justifiable for Camus, then what must be the rationality for it? Sartre and Camus, by taking their political stances and ignoring the other, how far do they remain authentic in their proclamation of freedom and truth of freedom? It will critically look into their understanding of violence in their exercise of political freedom in the context of capitalism and colonialism.

The notion of "absurdity" and "death" plays a significant role in Camus's political foundations. He explicates his notion of absurdity, like a wild man longing for clarity and the silence of the world and his understanding of death as the inescapable finitude, which enter without warning. It makes man appreciate his finitude and temporality that compels him to acknowledge the fragile, constructed, provisional character of his efforts to sustain meaningful life and social institutions³¹⁸. Nevertheless, his notion of absurdity did not imply that there is no ground for human lives. In *The Myth of Sisyphus*, he maintains that man should be in a constant revolt with the absurd: to be human is to experience and defy absurdity, to stand against absurdity while taking into account its undeniable existence affirms a sense of value in man's life. He did not conceive man as a "useless passion or figure of discourse but a creative,

³¹⁷ Aronson, *Camus versus Sartre: The Unresolved Conflict*, p. 308.

³¹⁸ Isaac, "Revolt and the Foundation of Politic", P. 119

if tragic, of his destiny.”³¹⁹ He arrived at his notion of absurd reasoning by repudiating suicide and consenting to the unavoidable confrontation between ongoing human inquiry for meaning and the silence of the universe. It logically follows that acceptance of suicide is the end of the encounter, which Camus denied. He considered “human life as the only necessary goods since it is precisely life that makes the encounter possible, and since, without life, the absurdist wager would have no ground.”³²⁰ Thus, any form of death which goes against natural death is unacceptable; in this regard, murder and suicide become indifferent and must be rejected altogether to sustain humans’ values.

As though the absurd would seem to license any form of action, upon a deeper understanding of human values, it is clear that suicide and murder deny the essential value in man, which is itself presupposed by the experience of absurdity. In *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus states that man learns to live with the “absurd” while surpassing it. He considers the absurd as a shared experience of the individual, which is not limited to a specific individual. “The first step for a mind overwhelmed by the strangeness of things is to realize that this feeling of strangeness is shared with all men and that the entire human race suffers from the division between itself and the rest of the world.”³²¹ Moreover, the existence of Absurd implies that man is devoid of absolute knowledge and freedom and can claim only a limited form of knowledge and freedom. In *The Rebel*, he took a leap from the absurd to rebel: “rebellion arises from the spectacle of the irrational coupled with an unjust and incomprehensible condition.”³²² To rebel is to establish a borderline, an ethical distinction between permissible and impermissible, good and bad. The rebel demands that he should be regarded as an equal. The rebel obstinate resistance becomes the rebel personified. He put self-respect as the base of his existence and reveals that it is more superior to life itself. He wants to be “All”– which means to be treated equally or “nothing” – which means destroyed by the power that governs him.³²³ Thus, to rebel is to safeguard specific standard values, and for that, he is ready to protect them regardless of whatever happens.

Camus’s notion of the rebel is not limited to individual revolt against inequality and injustice. However, it is a thought process “that is already convinced of the absurdity and apparent sterility. In absurdist experience, suffering is an individual struggle. However, from

³¹⁹ Ibid., P. 121.

³²⁰ Ibid., p. 120.

³²¹ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 10.

³²² Ibid., p. xii.

³²³ Ibid., pp, 2-3.

the moment that a movement of rebellion begins. Suffering is seen as a collective experience – as the experience of everyone.”³²⁴ According to him, the purpose of rebellion is to safeguard the values common to all men recognized separately by man, without which the world will be run by crime and disorder. An act of rebellion is a demand for lucidity and integrity in the absurd universe.³²⁵ For Camus, rebellion is solely based on human solidarity. “Any rebellion which claims the right to deny or destroy this solidarity simultaneously loses the right to be called rebellion and becomes an accomplice to murder. Rebellion is the common ground on which every man based his first values. I rebel – therefore, we exist.”³²⁶ Thus Camus, derived his notion of rebellion from the shared feeling of absurdity and death, which enables the rebel to proclaim the fundamental values that are shared by all man: “in order to exist, man must rebel; but rebellion must respect the limits that are discovered in itself – limits where minds meet and, in the meeting, begin to exist.”³²⁷ As such, the rebellious thought cannot be overcome at once: it is a constant state of tension, and man’s responsibility is to stay true to the origin of rebellion.

As such, for Camus, the only absolute value is life, from which he argues that one cannot kill. To commit suicide or murder is rejecting the absolute value of life: “on the level of the absurd, murder would only give rise to logical contradiction; on the level of rebellion, it is mental laceration.”³²⁸ As such, man’s solidarity through the experience of absurdity and revolt cannot be reduced to murder, which is an act that brings ultimate destructions. To force seclusion on a man who has just realized that he is in solidarity with others is an actual crime against humanity. Logically murder and suicide are contradictory to rebellion. In the world of absurdity and meaninglessness, man is the only being who can claim meaning and values, and to deny his rightful existence means the end of everything. “If a single master should be killed, the rebel in a certain way is no longer justified in using the term “community of men” from which he derived its justification.”³²⁹ The rebel who accepts violence and murder to achieve their ends is no longer a rebel: “he has in vain replaced, in order to preserve the hope of existing, the “we are” by a “we shall be.”³³⁰ For Camus, murder is a desperate exception, or it is nothing.

³²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

³²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

³²⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 9-10.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

³²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

³²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 223.

³³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 224.

Thus, it can be understood that the reasons behind his strong views against political assassination and violence are from his ethical derivation of rebellion.

How should we understand Camus's notion of rebellion as different from the revolution? He argues that rebellion is a constant revolt to safeguard individual freedom and justice; on the contrary, revolution silences individual freedom and justice for the future cause. He differentiates rebellion against revolution: he upholds that the rebellion originated from the shared sense of absurdity and death by all humankind, a claim for unity. It is a denial to be treated as an object and defined in terms of absolute historical conditions. It is against total negation and total affirmation. However, "it affirms the existence of a limit, human dignity, and beauty common to all men entails the necessity of extending the values to embrace everything and everyone and of advancing towards unity without denying the origins of rebellion. It takes into account every man's life to be treated with the utmost importance."³³¹ However, according to Camus, a man initially begins by rebellion against the unjust society. Power relations tend to end up in a metaphysical revolution: the slave starts by begging for justice and finish by wanting to wear a crown.³³² Then, when rebellion, in rage or intoxication, adopts the attitude of call or nothing and the negation of an existence of all human nature, it is at this point that it denies itself completely.³³³ This kind of consequence of reducing totality is rebellion forgetting its original purpose completely. Thus, for Camus, rebellion starts from a negation, which is later supported by an affirmative understanding of life. In comparison, the revolution begins by absolute negation and is condemned to establish a certainty, which is ousted until the end of time. The rebellion is inventive to exist more and more completely; revolution is nihilistic as it "is forced to produce results in order to negate more and more completely."³³⁴

Camus' philosophy against the civilization of violence is based on his foundation of "rebellion" and "measuredness" as the most justifiable means of a man taking part in opposition to totality and nihilism to fight against various kinds of social injustice. He believed in the idea of "limit": "every human is surrounded and defined by limits, including human finitude. Human existence cannot include, to know, or to feel everything-to be limitless, in other words. But, precisely because of these limits, there is always the possibility to include, to know or to

³³¹ Ibid., p. 196.

³³² Ibid., p. 13.

³³³ Ibid., p. 196.

³³⁴ Ibid., p. 196.

feel something otherwise.”³³⁵ His alternative to violence is the principle of measuredness and balance, which acts as a yardstick against to measure a limitless action. For Camus, our system of thoughts can only be justified based on relative greatness. Approximation thought is the only creator of reality. If man could derive absolute knowledge, then there will be of no importance to search for reality. The “law of “moderation” extends to all the contradictions of rebellious thought: neither the rational nor the irrational is real. The irrational imposes limits on the rational, which, in its turn, gives it moderation. As the world is not in a condition of pure stability, but it is the only movement. It is both movement and stability.”³³⁶ As such, it will be wrong to seek to conquer the world and equally wrong to flee from it; “it is wrong to seek a rationalistic system that explains everything and equally mistaken to dismiss the demands and power of human reason.”³³⁷ The notion of moderation is a rebellion that does not claim absolute truth. Instead, it is an existence of endless conflict, produced continuously and refined by intelligence. According to Camus, to maintain justness and coherence in our continuous pursuit of reality, rebellion should always guide man’s tendency to reduce to excess in every act. The existence of man’s exile, crimes, and ravages is not to unleash them on the world; instead, it must be fought in ourselves and others.³³⁸ Thus, we must seek approximate truths as a means to achieve a more just and purposeful life.

The notion of measuredness and limits is against any form of absolutism and totalitarianism that aims to transform human conditions. It is against an ideology that aims to forcibly transcend human limits and offer false solutions to man's unending problems. However, sincere aims and objectives will ultimately become indifferent to individual freedom to serve its political expediency merely. Thus, he distinguishes rebellion from the revolution: the rebel is someone who quietly, and always circumspectly, seeks to affirm human dignity while avoiding the fateful entanglements of political commitment and organizational membership: in fact, it lives in the obscure existence of the present. On the contrary, a revolutionary aspires to transform society into total and is willing to license any means to pursue this grandiose desire.³³⁹ Man cannot justify the present integrity and freedom to be sacrificed for the future cause.

³³⁵ Quoted in Jahanbegloo, *Albert Camus: The Unheroic Hero of Our Time*, p. 20.

³³⁶ Camus, *The Rebel*, pp. 237-38.

³³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

³³⁸ Issac, “Revolt and the Foundations of Politics,” p. 110.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

On the other hand, revolution is an ideology of consent and not of rebellion. It considered history as “absolute, attempting to conquer a new existence by action that recognized no moral strictures. That is why it is condemned to live only for history and in a reign of terror. According to the revolution, man is nothing if he does not obtain from history, willingly or unwillingly, unanimous approval. At this exact point, the limit is exceeded; rebellion is first betrayed, and then logically assassinated for it has never affirmed. Thus, it is the total negation of all existence.”³⁴⁰ It demands man to remain faithful and live by its ideologies and doctrine of instant expediency and maintain quiet or tell lies for the sake of a definite objective future. It is non-different from absolute nihilism or rationalism. It is useless to know the absolute rationality of history, for the human condition can never reach either a definite or specific point until the end of history. For the sake of power and history, revolution ignored the concept of limit, which is an essential aspect of human nature, which is to turn into ultimate tyranny. Thus, revolutionary spirit solely based on its principles has forgotten the present for the future, humanity for the deception of power, the hardship of the present for future justice, and the total destruction of individual freedom and justice for the uncertain cause beyond and above history.

Individual freedom and justice, according to Camus, can be obtained in active mindfulness of the relative. As for him, total freedom insult justice, and absolute justice reject freedom. What are the means to attain relative justice and freedom that safeguard human dignity? He propounds the use of dialogue in employing political means, organizations, and strategies for social reconstruction. Since the human condition makes the future indeterminate and the ultimate consequences of our acts unknowable, we must be sober in our commitments and circumspection to avoid any excess or absolute position. The existence of the oppressor and the oppressed give rise to the most terrible silence; a person cannot express as he has been reduced to an object of use. To eliminate this form of destructive relation, man must opt for implicit and untrammelled dialogue that enables man to recognize their similarities and consecrate common destiny.

On the other hand, the total exercise of power refutes the eternal idea of justice and freedom; it generates the silent hostility that destroys the fundamental part of human existence, which can be obtained through men’s bilateral understanding.³⁴¹ Thus, Camus believes that dialogue is the only means that justifies the end through mutual understanding and

³⁴⁰ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 196.

³⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

communication discovered by rebellion. Ignoring the importance of dialogue will lead to a misunderstanding that will separate man from other men, ultimately followed by violence and murder, bringing destruction to human life.

Camus argues that the new revolution of the 20th century used absolute power to eliminate unequal power relations; it accepts the evil of history wholeheartedly; agrees to kill and lie since it is the same reasoning that justifies murder and violence on the rational ground. It affirms itself to the totality of history without giving space for peaceful dialogue and communication. It demands man to absolutely submit himself to history to accept any supreme sacrifice to eradicate injustice, whether it be silence, violence, or murder, for the promise of absolute justice to come.³⁴² Revolution longs for absolute justice to silence the expression of rights until justice is obtained to silence it infinitely, for there is no such thing as absolute justice. It confides justice into the hand of those in power; they alone can make themselves heard. Their privilege has been considered a favour for the right cause. As such, revolution kills freedom to establish the reign of justice; in turn, it destroys justice, for justice cannot exist in a controlled world, enslaved and mute, demolishes mutual complicity, and finally can no longer be justice. According to Camus, the twentieth century's revolution has arbitrarily destroyed two essential ideas of an individual – justice, and freedom, for the sake of over-ambitious ends of conquest. It has become a symbol of a monologue by the closure of communications and argument; this is unjustifiable. It deprives individuals of the plausibility of maintaining relative justice and freedom in a world. Such a denial is a form of slavery, as they are denied of their voices, which is not different from treating a person like an object to be used and commanded for their predicted cause.

Revolution owing to power and history becomes a violent and brutal apparatus, where the present individual freedom and justice are sacrificed to doctrinaire promises of its future fulfillment. On the other hand, rebellion sought moderation and of life. For Camus, human freedom and justice can be realized only by remaining genuine to the origin of rebellion to maintain human solidarity; it is a culture of dialogue against falsehood, injustice, and violence. As expressed in his 1946 essay, “neither victims nor executioners,”: “what is necessary to combat today is fear and silence and with them the separation of minds and souls that they entail. What is necessary to defend is the dialogue and universal communication between men. Servitude, injustice, falsehood are the sources that shatter that communication and forbid that

³⁴² Ibid., pp. 231-32.

dialogue.”³⁴³ He believes that freedom cannot be achieved in the name of void heroism. However, in order to defend justice. Camus writes, “from all restrictions in order to them practically cage them up in historical necessity Comes back to taking away first of all their reason for fighting. Hence, in the end, throw them into any sort of party, provided that this has no rules other than efficiency. So it is about passing, according to the law of nihilism, from extreme liberty to extreme necessity; it is nothing other than devoting oneself to manufacturing slaves.”³⁴⁴ Human solidarity can be maintained by considering the otherness of the other only then justice and freedom can be achieved.

On the other hand, revolution demands absolute freedom and justice in place of relative justice and freedom found in rebellion. As such, total freedom becomes the right of the strongest to dominate. Therefore it exists by denying the right to be different; the result is the rule by injustice. The elimination of all contradiction achieves total injustice: therefore, it destroys freedom.³⁴⁵ Thus, according to Camus, rebellion, his original “resistance” and “revolt” are based on human difference and peaceful dialogue. In this sense, “rebellion, in its primary aspect of authenticity does not justify any purely historical concept. Rebellion claim is unity; the historic revolution’s claim is totality.”³⁴⁶

Upholding the relative notion of politics against the absolute does not imply that Camus is against standard foundations for human actions. Man to have a peaceful co-existence ought to base and justify his activities by recognizing the contingent and limited character of such base and justifications – that is, “to be conscious of the historically relative and fallible nature of even the best considered theoretical judgments.”³⁴⁷ However, any kind of essentialism take the considered foundations as absolute and deny any form of contradictions. Such an absolute rule denies the human condition compose of both power and finitude. For man is an absurd being who can never reach absolute certainty, the gap will never be filled; instead, he should be in a constant revolt against injustice and falsehood. Rejecting any ethical absolutism and ideologies believes that ideas are only as good as how it seeks to achieved and embody them; Camus insists that there can be no justice without the freedom to criticize and challenge the existing institution.³⁴⁸ He argues that the revolutionary leader demands justice without

³⁴³ Quoted in Jahanbegloo, *The Unheroic Hero of Our Time*, p. 22.

³⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 28-29.

³⁴⁵ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 229.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

³⁴⁷ Issac, “Revolt and the Foundations of Politics,” p. 107.

³⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 129.

freedom and does not care about freedom because “justice alone can provide them the material least they need.”³⁴⁹ On the contrary, he chooses freedom instead of justice: “finally, I choose freedom. For even if justice is not realized, freedom maintains the power of protest against injustice and keeps communication open.”³⁵⁰

Unlike Camus, Sartre’s notion of political violence could be understood by considering human relations’ complexity and ambiguity. In *Being and Nothingness*, he states that man’s relation with others discovers its initial meaning in the conflict caused by others’ existence amid his freedom. In his later writing, like in *Existentialism is a Humanism*, he discusses human relations’ reciprocity; he stated that man’s conflict relations should not destroy others’ freedom. Instead, man needs to be aware of his ambiguous nature and his fellow men. He should develop relations with others by respecting their freedom to develop an authentic attitude and way of life. In this context of human relations, the rationality of violence depends on individual consciousness’s perception and choices. However, since man is a social being, this rationality is subjected to modification by others’ existence upon which the man must search for meaning and identity. As such, “the ethical and social-political implications of this alienation inherent in man are that he should strive to reduce this conflict by establishing relations with others based on mutual recognition of freedom.”³⁵¹ In the *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Sartre developed a deeper solid basis of the origin of conflict and violence in social relation. He states that the universal problem of Scarcity modifies the possible reciprocity with the others. “To accomplish one’s objective needs and desire is hindered by the presence of the other, who at the same time, is aiming to fulfill the concrete exigencies of his own needs.”³⁵² Thus, Sartre’s notion of violence is engraved in unavoidable human relations, and the existence of needs and scarcity operates as the basis of action and morals. Until scarcity and needs to regulate man project in the world, the existence of violence and conflict is irremediable. As such, the existence of violence is needed to regulate the negative reciprocity. This negative reciprocity can itself be negated in collaborations with others, which becomes essential in strife to control scarcity or be a means to subjugate others for its benefits.

He established his necessity of violence by establishing the dynamics of violence in human relations. According to Sartre, there are two primary types of social structures; the

³⁴⁹ Quoted in Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and the Quarrel that ended it*, p. 82.

³⁵⁰ Quoted in Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and the Quarrel that ended it*, p. 82.

³⁵¹ Quinn John, *Sartre on Violence: A Political, Philosophical and Literary Study*, p. 187.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, pp. 55, 187.

series and the group, each of them has different features. The series is constituted by a group of persons that are united only by external proximity. They form a plurality of solitude, the nature of which can be understood as a relationship of negative reciprocity, which has been negated, in silence, in an attempt to keep away from a fight. Sartre believes that humankind's social life is pervaded by such series. Unlike the series, a group is a form of society based on discipline and its commitment to each member's common goal. The form of society is come "into being as each member is faced with the danger of scarcity; they give their pledge to become a member of the collective and not to defect from or betray it in any way."³⁵³ In this context, Sartre develops the significance of pledge, the necessity of violence and terror – all three of these constitute the group's basis to keep itself from being dissolved into unorganized seriality. This form of group-fusion binds the individual together to fight in unity against the presence of material danger.

To keep the group-fusion intact from its original pledge, the notion of violence and terror becomes an essential categorical imperative to maintain the group's unity. Each group member has a fear of terror (threat of violence) that could be imposed on them if they go against their joint pledge. Suppose a man murder his friend because of his selfish desire of hatred towards him. In that case, he must act mindfully that the group has the power to end his existence or imprison him for violating the social covenant laws. This presence of terror has a positive effect. The terror is a force imposed by the group as contra-violence administered towards the act of unjustifiable violence and the anticipated counter-attack. This form of violence against the unjustifiable violence that goes against the pledge holds society's integrity and has a positive counter effect on their "fraternity, love, friendship, hate, and finds its purpose in terror."³⁵⁴ As such, Sartre's notion of violence is seen as the action of freedom upon freedom by the material world's mediation. For if a man were allowed to exercise their freedom without the fear of terror that guards their actions, their actions would bring total disaster to others' freedom by stratagems and mystifications. Moreover, violence can be a desirable action of one's own or another's to avoid the plausibility of dissolving into seriality. The perception of the practicality of Sartre's notion of violence depends on the perceiver. The exercise of violence can be an act of an individual or other freedom to safeguard the integrity of justice, equality, fraternity, and humanity.

³⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

³⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 59.

On the other hand, the use of violence can be an act of freedom to dehumanize, subjugate, and oppress others' freedom for his unjustifiable projects. Thus, Sartre has a broader perspective on the use of violence as freedom of actions; it is not to be viewed as the product of brutal savagery, love of murder, torture, or other factors purported to explain its causes.³⁵⁵ As such, violence becomes a direct or indirect necessity of man's relations with others. Man admits existing under the perpetual presence of terror of violence if, in any case, he violates others' freedom.

The nature of the social group is conceived by Sartre, initially as a reaction to the violence executed against seriality. It led to the unorganized number of exploited farmers to instantly rise forth in the world to form a group- infusion; to counter-attack the violence to which it is being subjugated, mindful of the categorical imperative is the struggle against scarcity. They became victims of institutionalization and rigid bureaucracy, where they have become merely a dispensable tool in the face of the social class that governs their labour and productions. They were used as an object to overcome scarcity for others and not for them. Their work has no longer reciprocal nature.³⁵⁶ It is within the context of class struggle that the use of violence becomes objective forms of violence.

Challenging the concrete form of the historical reality confronts individuals in every walk of life with real existential crises that cannot be simply ignored impels Sartre to choose the revolutionary means opted by the communist party and the colonized. Despite its various inefficiency and falsehood inherent in the movement itself for countering the worsening destruction of humanity. He adopted a positive stance towards the communist party in the *Communist and Peace*; his conviction was that the agglomeration of an isolated individual and the popular masses of the workers was incapable of meeting humanity's historical challenge potential destruction of the horizon. Only the workers as a class – in the Marxian sense of “the class for itself” – could do that in Sartre's view, repeatedly expressing in these articles his full agreement on the subject with Marx. Unlike Camus, he believes that the communist party constituted the necessary mediation without combining and unifying the masses of workers into the class required for the radical transformation of the dangerously developing social order was unthinkable.³⁵⁷ Sartre's prime reason for supporting the communist party and revolution

³⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 59-60.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., pp. 189-90.

³⁵⁷ Meszaros, *The Work of Sartre: Search for Freedom and the Challenge of History*, p. 236.

was to find an organized group based on adequate ground for countering the oppressor's use of violence.

According to Sartre, the revolutionary movement should adopt "each of its adherents' iron discipline if it is to combat the threat of oppressor to its existence effectively. It is the rule of terror and violence invoked for all members of a group-in-fusion."³⁵⁸ The use of violence in the revolutionary means is necessary to safeguard the revolution's cause. If violence is to be employed by the revolutionary movement, it should only be a strategic means to obviate the violence to which it is being subjugated. Furthermore, most importantly, Sartre's revolutionary violence is directed against the systemic form of violence used by the colonizer and the capitalist and not towards a man in particular. Violence should be employed as the last resort when all else has failed, and the instruction of human lives caused by it "be kept at a minimum."³⁵⁹ Unlike Camus, Sartre did not consider the reasonable use of violence by the revolutionary as its last resort, as nihilistic or totalitarian with no exemption.

Sartre contempt strongly against any form of human relations where the abusive use of force turns the subject into an object: in this kind of condition, an individual ought to re-establish his freedom by taking up the necessary responsibility to transform oneself back into a free agent. The abusive power relations are found in colonialism and capitalism; there is an extreme inequity between the colonizer and the colonized and the oppressor and the oppressed. Sartre believes that the only means the colonized and oppressed can regain their authentic self is by counter-violence. In the capitalistic society, and unjust class structure established the oppressed class's alienation (the worker class). It unjustly limits them from their true authentic self and from achieving the deserved product of their labour. The working class is subjected to torture, violence, manipulation, and exploitation in social, political, and economic structures. For Sartre, the kind of violence used by the ruling class is morally unjustifiable as their intention and objectives are not for safeguarding the rights, justice, dignity, and livelihood of the oppressed class. However, only as an absolute means to exploit them for their overall benefits.³⁶⁰ "Sartre contends that recourse to either materialistic or idealistic terminology to help explain this violence and counter-violence fails to provide a reasonable ontological base"³⁶¹ to counter this form of destructive use of violence. This form of violence can only be

³⁵⁸ Quinn John, *Sartre on Violence: A Political, Philosophical and Literary Study*, p. 189.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

considered comprehensible by a revolutionary movement to counter the violent situation. Sartre is aware that the revolutionary movement will cost blood, sweat, and human lives to overthrow the capitalist society. The revolutionary use of violence as a last resort is morally justifiable. The movement belongs to those directly or indirectly imposed violence by the dominant class, and its objective is not to objectify them. However, it is the only means to redeem themselves as an actual historical agent. Its goal is to demolish the unequal relations within and among men.

The revolutionary movement's fundamental political objective is to abolish the ruling capitalist system and socialism. Sartre declared that the revolutionary should adopt a peaceful means in achieving its end, but at the same time, he accepts the use of necessary violence "which could not be accomplished without resorting to violent means – has been his basic political frame of reference since the publication of *Materialism and Revolution*."³⁶² For Sartre, the necessary use of violence by the worker is a response to the natural, routine violence: "his discomfort must be transformed into a strike, his strike into a brawl, the brawl into murder."³⁶³ And then society imposes a repressive calm, "which is not pacification but a return to the original violence."³⁶⁴ From this point of view, worker's violence is "positive humanism." "Humanism and violence are the two indissoluble aspects of his effort to get out of his oppressed condition."³⁶⁵ As such, for Sartre, politics becomes an essential factor of morality; and the morality of political violence should be determined by the political philosophy of the revolutionary project. Unlike Camus, who is against the use of revolutionary violence as destructive towards human solidarity and dignity. Sartre considers the extreme historical condition and supports revolutionary violence as its necessary substance and strength to counter unjustifiable violence. On the other hand, Sartre is exceptionally critical and skeptical about the exercise of violence by the ruling class to subjugate and silence the oppressed class that obstruct the oppressed class to carry out their optimum life.

From 1948 onwards, Sartre was mainly bothered with colonial and third- world issues. He discusses the necessity and inevitable use of violence by the oppressed in the context of colonialism as well: he argued that a similar kind of abuse use of torture and violence is found in colonialism. The nature of the relation between the colonizer and colonized is of a complete

³⁶² Ibid., p. 25.

³⁶³ Quoted in Aronson, *Camus and Sartre: The Story of a Friendship and the Quarrel that Ended it*, p. 129.

³⁶⁴ Ibid., p. 129.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., pp. 129-30.

absence of reciprocity. The colonizer's fundamental inequality, which is reinforced by brute force, where the colonizer treats the colonized as an object: the colonized were regarded as the absolute negation of them in every aspect. The critical element of colonial rule is the use of repressive violence to subjugate the colonized. In "colonialism is a system," Sartre explicates the French colonial system's economic foundation towards Algeria, which is primarily maintained by brute force. For Sartre, despite the variation of the colonizer's rule towards the colonized in most third-world countries, one thing remains constant: the use of repressive violence as a tool to control the colonized in every aspect of their existence.

The colonized struggle's essential objective is to regain their voice, as they have been denied of its freedom and reduced to an object, where they cannot be themselves as a free individual being. As for Sartre, violence becomes an essential means for the oppressed class to regain themselves; it provides the basis for selfhood renewal. The use of violence for the oppressed class becomes a necessary means to re-established their freedom and dignity. As such, the workers' violence and the colonized towards the colonizer and capitalist is nothing but a justified reciprocal against the unjustifiable use of violence. Thus, Sartre clarifies the difference between violence used by the oppressor and the oppressed: the violence used by the oppressor is a brutal force with the sole objective to subjugate and dehumanize the oppressed.

On the contrary, the use of violence by the oppressed is not a sudden uprising, "nor the resurrection of savage instinct, nor even an effect of resentment. It is no less than reconstructing the true self."³⁶⁶ In agreement with Fanon, Sartre supports the call of revolution of all the oppressed class to fight in unity against all the discords and all the particularisms to regain their humanity by using their violence against the colonizer, different human beings of better quality.³⁶⁷ For Sartre, this new movement of violence will strip-tease colonized humanism and reveal its actual colour. The oppressed could able to attain their freedom and humanity.

Camus and Sartre's main reasoned ways were their differences in political violence, especially in colonialism and capitalism. Sartre believes the use of violence by the oppressed class is necessary to liberate themselves from unequal power relations. Any demand from the outside that such violence is measured and controlled undermines their capacity to struggle.³⁶⁸ On the contrary, Camus held that violence inherently built into a revolutionary movement that maintained to free people from capitalist and colonial domination destroyed human lives'

³⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 7.

³⁶⁷ Ibid., p. 168.

³⁶⁸ Aronson, *Camus versus Sartre: The Unresolved Conflict*, p. 308.

fundamental values: solidarity and dignity. He believes that commitment to any form of movement ends by becoming either a tyrant or a skeptic. The revolutionary acts of liberation and foundations often require coercion and sometimes murder. At the same time, Camus rejects the doctrine of absolute non-violence, which is equivalent to the acts of violence. Violence, he writes, is inherent within human reality since the capacity for injustice is an intractable aspect of humankind's destiny; it is impossible to opt for ultimate non-violence. Camus holds that "systemic violence is part of the order of things; categorical non-violence is thus itself culpable because it asserts to the Status quo in renouncing the exercise of powers necessary to change it. Violence can thus never be ruled out in principle."³⁶⁹ For Camus, conflict and injustice should be solved with minimum use of violence, as an utmost limit to counter another form of violence. Counter violence with violence provides no certainty for a future; it can never be a legitimate form of action like a purely historical attitude. A rebel can perform an act of murder under only one condition if he allows himself "to accept his death and sacrifice: He kills and dies so that it shall be clear that murder is impossible. He demonstrates that, in reality, he prefers the "we are" to the "we shall be."³⁷⁰ Camus argues that the revolutionary commit an act of murder without risking their own lives, which runs contrary to the notion of limit that resides in inter-subjectivity and dialogue. Even though Camus considers the necessity of violence in certain situations, he favours his arguments in favour of non-violence. For Camus, the revolution movement legitimizes violence, in the form of authorized murder, for future justice. As such, there is no future for moral humanism and violence. Revolutionary for Camus is a reign of terror that dedicated itself solely to history: "it considered man as nothing if it does not obtain from history, willingly or unwillingly, unanimous approval."³⁷¹ All revolutionary dreams turned out to become thermodynamics of violence.³⁷² Thus, unlike Camus, Sartre has a more positive outlook on the use of violence by the revolutionary movement that sought to liberate the oppressed class from its subhuman existence. At the same time, Camus argues that the present cannot be sacrificed for the future cause, as proclaimed by revolution.

³⁶⁹ Quoted in Isaac, "Revolt and The Foundation of Politics," p. 129.

³⁷⁰ Camus, *The Rebel*, p. 224.

³⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

³⁷² Jahanbegloo, *Albert Camus: The Unheroic Hero of Our Times*, p. 31.

III. Camus and Sartre on the Algerian war

During the war in Algeria, one of the major issues that divide them was the use of violence and terrorism by the colonialists and the FLN (freedom fighter, member of the Algeria national liberation front), at times when Algerian people are fighting against the French colonial rule in Algeria. Sartre contributes immense support to the demand for independent nations by the Algerian people; he felt that is the only way out to reconstruct themselves from France's dehumanized domination for a century. He upholds that fighting for liberation is desperately needed. The use of violence to express one's freedom of shame and despair is necessary rather than a nihilistic act. He became obsessed with anti-colonialism, never questions about or excused the atrocities committed by FLN, as he considered it the only means of struggle. At the same time, strongly explicate and denounce every misstep of the French government. While Camus vehemently accused the use of torture and terrorism to counter the French government. His anti-communism disable him to connect colonial violence with the reality of Arab life in French, ruled Algeria; and ignored the privileges of his paid- noir community in Algeria, and attempted to resolve the Algerian conflict with minimum use of violence. He never thoroughly questions the systemic violence imposed and maintained by the French government and dismissed as irrational the Algerian demand for independence. They both have a conflicting view in solving the unequal relation of power between the French colonizer and the colonized Algerian. It arouses specific issues in their diverging political views: What makes Sartre support the Algerian war by assaulting his community while making himself the leading European voice against Algeria's French colonial rule? Unlike Sartre, what makes Camus, by having a firm attachment towards his paid-noir community, established his arguments against the Algerian people's demand for an independent nation as irrational?

To resolve the conflict between France and Arabs in Algeria, Camus proposed the pacification of the Arab movement and the French authorities that would leave room for exchanging views. Despite a limited role it may have, to ease the situation, however slight and temporary it may be.³⁷³ He believes that their destinies are closely linked together, and any action on the part of one will have an equal effect on the other: "if you want France alone to reign in Algeria over eight million mutes, she will die. If you want Algeria to separate from France, both of them will perish in the same way."³⁷⁴ As such, it is necessary to establish common ground through peaceful dialogue and communication to enable French and Arab to

³⁷³ Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death Essays*, p. 128.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 118.

deliberate upon each opponent's motives for the sole purpose of effective discussion. Nevertheless, suppose the two Algerian population, accuses each other of their fault with absolute hatred and uncompromising nature. In that case, it is heading towards horrific madness and destruction, where any possibility of understanding will be reduced to blood.³⁷⁵

The century of the French colonial system in Algeria has resulted in Arab's distrust of whatever is imposed on them, has lost all their hope to re-establish a life of dignity and freedom, and the complete distrust in any political solution warranted by France government. It has led most young Arab insurgents, with or without a political background, to accept the inevitable. To organized combatants and their general staff to call for national independence. However, for Camus, such a demand in the context of Algeria is irrational; as far as Algeria is concerned, "at present, the Arabs do not alone make up all of Algeria. The Jews, the Turks, the Greeks, the Italians, the Berbers would have just as much right to claim the direction of that virtual nation. Besides, French Algerians have been in Algeria for more than a century, and there are more than a million of them. The Algerian French's size and seniority are legitimate enough in the most potent meaning of the word, natives."³⁷⁶ As such, it is irrational and meaningless for both the France government and FLN to make war: The France government ready to organized "war without calling it by name, want to have an independent policy and beg money from the allies to invest in Algeria while protecting the standard of living in metropolitan France"³⁷⁷ and the FLN statement of independent "Algeria under the direction of the most relentless military leaders of the insurrection – in other words, the eviction of 1,200,000 Europeans from Algeria and the humiliation of millions of Frenchmen."³⁷⁸ Undertaking this form of means to solve the conflict will only lead to a more disastrous outcome. Irrespective of the cause they uphold, it will always be defile by the merciless killing of innocent civilians when the killers know in advance that he will strike down women and children. For Camus, any form of movement opted by the Arab movement and the French authorities for a cause must at all cost respect and protect the civilian population.³⁷⁹

In the context of the France colonial rule in Algeria, Camus did not detail the French Algerian and the Arabs' unequal privileges regarding social, political, economic, and psychological. Instead, he states that both the community should not often go back to the past

³⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 135.

³⁷⁶ Ibid., pp. 127, 140, 145.

³⁷⁷ Ibid., p. 122.

³⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 122

³⁷⁹ Ibid., pp. 115-16, 134.

errors but instead look forward towards a purposeful future, which could be attained only in terms of coming to terms with each other, despite their differences. “The eternal questions as to who was first responsible loses all meaning then. Furthermore, because they could not manage to live together, two populations, similar and different at the same time but equally worthy of respect, are condemned to die together, with rage in their hearts.”³⁸⁰ The differences of the two communities should not result in attempting to outdo each other. However, their differences should be a means for unity. As Camus state, “our differences ought to help us instead of dividing us. Here, as in every domain, I believe only in differences and not in uniformity. First of all, because differences are the roots without which the tree of liberty, the sap of creation and civilization, dries up.”³⁸¹ Thus, in his lecture given in Algiers in February 1956, Camus appealed for a civilian truce in Algeria to solve the conflict between unequal power relations and privileges among French and Arab. According to Camus, If his appeal for civilian truce success, it will triumph, save precious lives, create a space for productive discussion and dialogue to solve Algerian problems’ utmost need, and prevent violent act caused by stubborn uncompromising attitudes.³⁸²

Unlike Camus, Sartre has an overall different outlook on French Algerian and Muslim conflict by explicating the French colonial rule’s systemic violence, mainly towards Algeria’s Muslim community. Even the most under-privileged French Algerians cannot be compared to the life of the Arab community: “the general income of the French in Algeria is ten times that of the Muslims.”³⁸³ Sartre developed his argument for violence in defense of Arab dignity of life and freedom. He claimed that France had manipulated the Algerian Arab for a century by brutally invading their land in 1830 and graduating taking over their social, political, and economic through imposing systemic torture and violence in their every way of life to maintain their colonial system intact. The extreme condition also has psychologically exploited the Algerians: they have established an inferior complex about the French colonialist. In such an unthinkable condition of dehumanization, the only means left for the Algerian people to counter the systemic form of violence is violence itself. His support for the emergence of war and counter-violence appears in *colonialism as a System* and his preface to Franz Fanon *The Wretch of the Earth*.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 136.

³⁸¹ Ibid., p. 136

³⁸² Ibid., p. 138.

³⁸³ Ibid., p. 58.

The colonist believes that Algeria problems can be resolve by acting upon economic, social, and psychological factors. “If he eats enough to satisfy his hunger, if he has worked and can read, he will no longer suffer the shame of being a sub-human, and we will rediscover that old Franco-Muslim fraternity.”³⁸⁴ The colonist denied the importance of politics, as abstract: “about free elections, about a constituent assembly, about Algerian independence, are agitators or troublemakers”³⁸⁵ who will only make the Algerian condition worse. Sartre condemned these colonists’ views by claiming that this will be fruitless until the colonial system itself is wholly eliminated from Algeria. If mainland France proposes a reform, according to Sartre, three scenarios are possible: first, “the reforms will turn automatically to the advantage of the colonist and the colonist alone;”³⁸⁶ second, it will be “denatured in such a way that it is rendered ineffective;”³⁸⁷ thirdly, it will be “left dormant with the complicity of the administration”³⁸⁸ as the primary problems lie in the system. In alignment with the FLN, Sartre denied the colonizer’s viewpoint and upheld that the Algerian people can reform themselves only when they have won their freedom. As the larger number of the Algerians indeed live in extreme poverty. The necessary changes can be brought neither by the exceptional colonists nor by France government, as long as France desire to prolong her supremacy in Algeria. These “reforms will be the business of the Algerian people when they have won their freedom.”³⁸⁹ The systematic violence and torture deploy by the colonial system by its very essence will destroy all efforts for advancement and will only lead to continual deterioration to maintain the system. In Algeria, all means are blocks for the Algerian people to recover from the French colonial rule, so it becomes necessary to take up violence to counter systemic violence. As the misery of the Algerian people is the immediate and undeniable result of colonialism.

Sartre supports the independent Algerian movement as the only means to liberate themselves from France. He argues that the colonists’ dehumanizing treatment causes the Algerian people’s awakening of nationalism. They kept them at a distance that cannot be integrated by denying all the democratic rights towards the colonized. The colonist can successfully maintain their overexploitation and oppression by the use of force and violent methods. For Sartre, the demand for an independent Algerian nation is a response to century-long discrimination. The Algerians have discovered their personality in living with everyday

³⁸⁴ Sartre, *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*, p. 37.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

³⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

³⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

despair and misery. Thus, Algerian demand for independence is not merely a revival of ancient tradition, old attachments; “it is the only way for the Algerians to end their exploitation.”³⁹⁰ For Sartre, the form of force and violence that the Algerian people are ready to respond to colonialist violence is not a sudden appraisal of emotions or a form of blunt force. However, it is a lesson they have gradually learned from the colonists. They have shown them through their systems of forceful dominance that no solutions or methods could overcome their political and economic predominance other than the use of force and violent acts.

It becomes essential for Sartre to either take sides towards France or Arab freedom fighters in the Algerian war. He willingly took his stance towards the Arab freedom fighters demanding an independent nation for Algeria by denying France’s hypocritical functions unequal treatment towards its citizen and Muslim community in Algeria wholeheartedly. Its prime intentions are to dominate and subjugate mainly the Arab community for their economic gain. On the other hand, he accepts and supports violence by the FLN as they intend to regain its political, social, economic, and psychological freedom. Contrary to Sartre, Camus was furious about those who took sides and support counter-violence to solve the issues. As such, the other party’s violent acts are justified on the other party’s crime. However, such consequences will lead to more hatred and blood sheet among innocent civilians and bring more conflict than a desirable solution.

Furthermore, for Camus, an intelligent, rational person should not support an excuse for violence and denounce the other. “It has the double result of enraging the violent group that is condemned and encouraging to greater violence the violent group exonerated.”³⁹¹ Instead, all understanding citizens should be condemned to join combatants themselves. They should instead opt for pacification to solve the prevailing social conflict rationally.

The terror and terrorism used by the FLN to counter the colonial systemic violence are more or less become justifiable for Sartre: “no gentleness can efface the marks of violence; it is violence alone that can destroy them. The colonized cure themselves of the colonial neurosis by driving out the colon with weapons.”³⁹² His support of the advancement of war and taking up arms by the Algerian freedom fighters appear in his preface to Franz Fanon, the wretched of the Earth; he supports Fanon’s call for the revolutionary movement of all the colonized countries. As it is only in solidarity, colonized countries will be able to denounce the old

³⁹⁰ Ibid., pp. 53-54.

³⁹¹ Camus, Albert, *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death Essays*, p. 116.

³⁹² Sartre, *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*, p. 166

colonist act of oppression. The only means left for the colonized is to take up arms, which is irrefutable. It has developed from their wounds and sufferings: “the colonized become what they are only by a profound and radical negation of what colonist have made of them.”³⁹³ The terror imposed by the colonist developed a fear and an inspiration for the colonized furry. Colonized, read Fanon: “in their time of powerlessness, murderous madness is the colonized’s collective unconsciousness.”³⁹⁴ To pick up arms becomes their only weapon of humanity, as they have been reduced to a stage where they prefer a justified death is better than living a dehumanize life. Thus, killing a European colonist become essential in their first stage of revolt. It was eliminating the oppressor and oppressed simultaneously. At this moment, he realized for the first time the joy of being a free man in his nation, where he did not feel deserted by his nation: “it is found wherever he goes, wherever he is – never any further away, it merges with his freedom.”³⁹⁵

As for Sartre, violence is necessary to maintain a desirable society, but when violence is used to dominate other sections of society, it no longer becomes justifiable. The same applies to the French colonist violence towards the colonized Algerians. In this kind of unequal power relation, the emergence of war becomes an unavoidable necessity to regain humanity for the oppressed class. Thus, for Sartre, “war institutes new structures for the institution of peace. Here human are established in new traditions, the future daughters of a dreadful present, here they are legalized by a right which is about to be born, which is being born each day in the fire: where the last colon is killed, shipped back home or assimilated, the minority species disappear, giving away to the socialist fraternity.”³⁹⁶ The colonized violence is a way of returning to themselves; they find their worth of life beyond torture and death. They establish their humanity against the colonist at every act of violence, a kind of human being different from the colonist. This new form of movement by the colonizer despoil colonist hypocrite humanism: Europe packed with abundance, granted de jure humanity to all its settlers but denied wholly towards its colony.³⁹⁷ French condemn this war, but they are unwilling to stand in solidarity with the Algerian fighters and have to face the war finally they want it or not as it results from their long years of oppression.³⁹⁸

³⁹³ Ibid., p. 162.

³⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 163.

³⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 166.

³⁹⁶ Ibid., p. 167.

³⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 169.

³⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 173-74.

On the other hand, Camus stands firmly against the Algerian fighters' independent nation's demand and opting for war to solve the conflict. As for Camus, this means fighting for the truth will lead to unnecessary bloodshed of innocent civilians irrespective of man, woman, or children, which according to him, cannot be accepted at any cost. Any result obtained by such a method will not solve the existing conflict but will make it more disastrous for the generations to come. For the nation's values or humanity to survive, the "fight is not enough to justify them. The fight itself must somewhat be justified and elucidated by those values. When fighting for the truth, one must take care not to kill it with the very arms used to defend it."³⁹⁹ Camus is against the use of torture and terrorism use by both the France government and Algerian fighters: in such a condition, words lost their living meaning, and there is no hope for a peaceful dialogue and communication. For Camus and intellectuals should avoid taking sides and condemn those values and words obtained by using absolute force. As Camus states, "to believe, concerning Algeria and everything else, that such aberration both on the right and on the left, merely define the nihilism of our epoch."⁴⁰⁰ Instead, an intellectuals' role has to reveal the necessary limits of force and justice in each group. "Their role is to clarify definitions to disintoxicate mind and calm fanaticism, even when it runs contrary to the current tendency."⁴⁰¹ Opting for war is no different from supporting nihilism that shows the immaturity of men's politics capable of committing disastrous acts on French Algerian and Arab. War will not bring any victors, and once the war is over, the French Algerian and Arabs still have to live forever on the same soil.⁴⁰² He believes in differences as a means of unity that enables to unite, progress, and creation instead of division.

Camus believed that the French Algerian and Arab conflict could have a better outcome through pacification and reconciliation from both sides to save human lives. At the same time, Sartre believes that war in Algeria's context is the beginning of the peace institution, where humanity is derived from every act of violence. Sartre claims that war is not possible without terrible losses. However, he accepted in the name of reviving better humanity: "the colonial army becomes ferocious: controlling, combing the terrain, rounding up, and carrying out punitive expeditions; women and children are massacred. They knew: these new men begin their life as human beings at the end of it; they regard themselves, plausible dead men. They will be killed: it is not just that they accept the risk of it, but rather that they are certain of it;

³⁹⁹ Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death Essays*, p. 121.

⁴⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁴⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

⁴⁰² *Ibid.*, pp. 129-30.

these potential dead men have lost their wives, their sons; they have seen so many agonies that they prefer victory to survival; other will benefit from the victory, not them: they are too weary.”⁴⁰³

Camus and Sartre carried different outlooks on the Algerian war: Camus believes that the French Algerian and Arab of Algeria conflict cannot be solved by separating the two: “a purely Arab Algeria could not achieve the economic independence without which political independence is but a deception.”⁴⁰⁴ An attempt to separate them will lead to acceptance of violent acts and practice of terror, which will only bring degradation to human civilization by randomly killing uncountable innocent lives; and the feeling of hatred and revenge will be passed down from generation to generation, endlessly. To avoid this deadly future, each responsible citizen needs to avoid violent acts and instead opt for pacification and peaceful dialogue to subside the undeniable conflict. On the other hand, Sartre believes that to revive humanity in Algeria, and the Algerian people have the right to an independent nation, which can be obtained through the violent act with indubitable losses of lives resources. Nevertheless, this is a necessity for a better future for the Algerians.

The prevalence of systemic violence in colonialism and capitalism and the authorized form of violence in the revolutionary movement is undeniable. As a result, Sartre and Camus took a distinct stance in solving the rampant violence that engulfed every function of human relations. They struggle to stay firm in their ideology by not aligning with any particular political group. However, they gradually changed due to the immense pressure and situations of their time. Sartre cautiously becomes a supporter of communist and strongly advocates against structurally inbuilt violence in colonialism and capitalism. His strong attachment towards communism, in a way, led him to ignore the presence of the ambiguous use of violence in the revolutionary movement itself that fought against capitalism and colonialism. In contrast, Camus’ firm commitment against the use of violence disable him to relate the functions of colonial violence towards the oppressed class. He becomes a vigorous adversary of the authorized use of violence in the revolutionary movement that claimed to liberate people from their oppressed and humiliated lives. In Algeria’s context, they both engage heavily in the one-sided prevalence of violence instead of others. Sartre’s direction is most sharply embracing revolutionary violence. At the same time, Camus is against violence, especially revolutionary violence. However, to have a comprehensive understanding of violence, it will be essential to

⁴⁰³ Sartre, *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*, pp. 167-68.

⁴⁰⁴ Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death Essays*, p. 145.

consider both sides of violence. Aronson has a judicious view on the one side view of Sartre and Camus on violence. For him, neither won the debate on violence. They were half-wrong: Camus about colonialism and Sartre about violence.⁴⁰⁵ As such, to side with Camus or Sartre will fail to have an all-inclusive perception of violence. Instead, it will be more constructive to engage with their notion of violence jointly to establish a better outlook on violence's various functions.

⁴⁰⁵ Aronson, *Camus versus Sartre: The Unresolved conflict*, p. 303.

Conclusion

The study has taken up a multi-faceted inquiry of Sartre's and Camus's notion of freedom and the act of violence associated with the conception of freedom. The epistemological and ontological foundations of freedom have been closely studied; also took up the contested notions of freedom and associated act of violence. Primarily, Sartre developed his notion of absolute freedom from "consciousness" and "nothingness." While Camus derived his notion of limited freedom from his notion of "absurdity" and "death." The study examines their understanding of freedom in the context of colonialism and capitalism and affirms that their distinct views on freedom has made considerable impact on their divergent outlook on violence, practicality and absurdity. Sartre gradually accepted the use of violence by the oppressed class as justifiable means to resolve the unequal relations of power in men. In contrast, Camus took a decisive stand against the legitimate use of violence, which he authentically upholds till his death. In this respect, the study has critically examined Camus's notion of rebellion and Sartre's notion of revolution in explicating the manifold existence of violence in their times.

Sartre defines his notion of ontological freedom as absolute freedom synonymous with human reality: to be a man is to be free. He discusses his absolute freedom with the autonomy of choice and claims that man's existence is free from all kinds of internal and external determinations. His autonomy of choice asserts that man is forced to be free and is carried out to make free choice and decisions; Sartre's choice occupies an essential aspect of his conception of freedom. The idea of freedom, for him, cannot be reduced to a general understanding of absolute freedom that permits men to do whatever they want. For, to be free means to be to able to choose. Besides, he deliberates his ontological freedom concerning a given world, which he terms as a brute given or facticity. It is bound to encounter the brute given to execute the autonomy of choice. The brute given functions as a possible condition to the ontological notion of freedom at the practical level. Man is not found alone; he finds himself in a particular situation, environment, place, race, culture, society, etc., which is independent of his choice. He considers the co-existence of freedom and the given world as the primary factor for the possibility of freedom: freedom needs the existence of a brute given and vice versa. His radical notion of ontological freedom is to be born free to choose the essence they desire to acquire or become in a given world. It is absolute as the man's inherent freedom of choice is necessary, not an option that lies on one wish. With the inseparable existence of the brute given in determining the possibility of freedom, it is logically incorrect to understand his

notion of freedom in an abstract sense. Besides, his radical notion of freedom is not solely determined by brute given; rather, it depends on the projected goals. Man free choice and decision are always directed towards his projected goals. The meaning of his past life, situations, intentions, desire, and motives depend on the projected ends.

Moreover, he develops his concept of fair reciprocity of freedom by considering the necessity of other freedom: the existence of one's freedom should not infringe other freedom. Besides, other's freedom can objectify us, but that does not mean freedom is determined. Instead, it lay on us to interpret and considered the other's point of view. To merely accept others' objectification is to escape from one's responsibility of living an authentic life. By free choice, man will decide whether to be a subject or object in the presence of others' freedom.

Sartre does not openly talk about the moral aspect of freedom; he discusses bad faith, responsibility, anguish, and authentic life. The notion of absolute responsibility is the necessary logical requirement of his absolute freedom. Man is responsible for all his actions and decisions as it is carried out freely and denies any claim of action as accidental, passive, or compulsive. The burden of the ultimate responsibility tends to push man into a state of anguish. Any attempt to flee from responsibility is to live a life of bad faith or inauthentic life. Considering the complexity of Sartre's notion of ontological freedom, many profound thinkers, including Camus, claimed of Sartre's absolute freedom as practically impossible because of its excess liberty, is an abrupt ignorance of Sartre's ontological and existential dimensions of freedom. Despite the prevalence of ambiguity in his notion of absolute freedom, responsibility, and morality, the practical aspect of freedom cannot be condemned altogether.

Sartre derived his notion of freedom by distinguishing between two modes of being, i.e. being-for-itself and being-in-itself. He identified being-for-itself with consciousness and being-in-itself with lack of consciousness. The nature of being-for-itself is full of possibilities and power, while the being-in-itself is devoid of any possibilities and negations. He considered man as the possessor of consciousness that enables to create and relate to the world (being-in-itself). It is through the existence of the being-for-itself that constructs and made known the existence of the being-in-itself. The nature of man enables us to sustain a spontaneous relationship with the world.

Sartre equates man with the freedom, which means that man is bound to be free independent of his choices. His freedom is synonymous with human reality, i.e. consciousness

and nothingness. He obtains his notion of consciousness from a phenomenological understanding of consciousness as devoid of any content. For Sartre, consciousness is nothingness: absolute, non-substantial, and emptiness in itself; it signifies that consciousness cannot be limited other than itself. Moreover, it is always intentional and directed towards transcendent objects that enables an object to transcend to the consciousness that grasps it. As such, his notion of consciousness always remains an independent source of existent free from all forms of internal and external determinations. The nature of man brings nothingness and negations to the world. Nothingness and negations are in the heart of the very being of existence. Unlike being-in-itself, man is devoid of any fixed essence. He is what he creates himself by implying his autonomy of choice. All the meaning that he chooses for himself remains temporary and has the ultimate power and potential to denounce any fixation of meaning. Thus, man's ability to negate questions and doubt logically follows from the nature of consciousness and nothingness. Thus, consciousness and nothingness as the foundations of freedom make it possible to execute free act: through nothingness, man can own his understanding of the world in which he is abandoned, and consciousness fills the gap between man and things by his free choice and actions.

On the other hand, Camus did not derive his notion of freedom from theories and concepts. Instead, he was more or less conventional; his foundations of freedom and responsibility lie in his notion of death and absurdity. He considers man's life as absurd and limited, devoid of fixed meaning, hope, and eternal life. Amid absurdity and death, a man ought to realize his limited freedom to live out life to its best. Camus considers life as an essential question in man. As such, the most urgent question for him is whether life is worth living or not. He argues that life's value should be attained in the absurd world rather than giving up on life in the form of suicide regarding life as of no value. For Camus, men desires to obtain clarity from the world, but he cannot extract meaning from the silent world since his knowledge is limited. It leads to the emergence of the consciousness of the unavoidable absurdity in man's life. It signifies that man's desire to obtain unity, and a clear vision of the world is unattainable. For Camus, an authentic man is a conscious being, who lives with the absurd, deprived of legitimate meaning, hope, and of an eternal life.

According to Camus, the only sure thing in man's life is death; the thought of it brings horror and anxiety in man's life, as it brings the reality of ultimate destruction. Such horrific awareness of death also liberates man from his careless way of living. Since man can encounter

death at any point in his life, he takes life more preciously in accomplishing his projected goals. For Camus, the awareness of the existence of absurdity and death makes man realized that his freedom is found in thought and action. Even though Camus claims that the world is absurd, he does not regard life and freedom as devoid of meaning. Instead, the significance of man's life is achieved by the presence of absurdity in man's life found in the relation between man and the world; beyond this, the absurdity lost its essence. There is no melting point, but it is through absurdity that links man with the world and vice versa. Whatever the absurd situations a person faces, he should accept the absurd situations and persistently revolt back against them rather than giving up on life in the form of suicide. To give up on life by considering life as too much to live or worthless is a form of escaping from the absurd, which runs contrary to Camus' authentic life.

Thus, Camus' notion of limited freedom can be understood from his notion of absurdity and death: since only by realizing the existence of absurdity and the significance of death, men realized his notion of limited freedom, which is reflected in his thoughts and actions. It also makes man aware of its false belief in freedom, which does not exist in reality. Camus's rational freedom is a man who accepts the undeniable existence of absurdity and death and lives it out in constant awareness and revolt against the absurd.

Sartre and Camus, despite their different foundations of freedom, both deliberate freedom in the practical domain. For Sartre, the world and others' existence are essential in executing free choice and actions. There is an ultimate dependency between freedom and the world: there can be no freedom without the world and vice versa. Moreover, one's exercise of freedom should not infringe other freedom; thus, one should consider the existence of other freedom as equally as of his own. On the other hand, Camus's understanding of his freedom from absurdity and death does not allow the exercise of absolute freedom. As such, a man ought to exercise his freedom in conformity with the norms of social structures. He transcends his notion of individualistic experience absurdity in his conception of the rebel; a person obtains his wholesome meaning of freedom in living with the otherness of the other by living in solidarity with others through the spirit of rebellion. The rebel realizes that all men had an equal share of absurdity and death. Through rebellion, an individualistic experience of freedom and absurdity is shared with all men.

In the initial stage, Sartre and Camus admired each others' works; they gradually developed a relationship and were determined to search for an alternate path by not aligned to

any political groups to fight against the prevalence of social injustice and unequal power relations of their time. However, as the Cold War pressure intensified, they gradually developed a distinct political stance that led to their different notion of freedom in the political domain. They parted their ways in 1952, mainly on account of violence and commitment. Sartre cautiously becomes a supporter of communism with his personal experience in politics. He believes that it becomes essential to support the revolutionary movement against capitalism and colonialism to bring a positive change for the oppressed and working-class.

In contrast, Camus' stern position against communism was shaped by his experience with the communist party in the 1930s. He asserts that communist neglect individual freedom and voice but rather give all their importance to obtaining a socialist Society. For Camus, a revolutionary movement that legitimizes the murder of innocent civilians for the future cause cannot be a justifiable means of southing for ends. Their development of adverse political stances plays a significant role in conceiving violence differently in the political domain, particularly in Algeria's French colonial rule.

Sartre and Camus have a distinct notion in the use of violence as freedom of action. They both were very much concerned and actively engaged in safeguarding human dignity and freedom but assert different means in achieving it. Sartre has a broader outlook on violence in the political domain regarding human relations' complexity and ambiguity. He explicates mainly two kinds of violence: one way of using violence is to objectify, subjugate, dehumanized, and oppressed other freedom and dignity for unjustifiable projects and the other is the use of violence to regain or safeguard the integrity of justice, equality, fraternity, and humanity. Sartre is against the use of violence that is intentionally employed to humiliate and dehumanized others. He claimed that such kind of violence is systematically inbuilt in colonialism and capitalism. The only means to overcome it is to counter back with an equal amount of violence. At the same time, he supports violence by the oppressed class, as their objective of using violence is to regain their dignity and freedom. He supported and accepts the prevalence of violence in the revolutionary movement opted by the communist party and colonized, despite its various destructive consequences, as the necessary means to safeguard the revolutionary cause. For Sartre, the practicality of violence as freedom of actions lies on the perceiver.

Unlike Sartre, Camus had a critical outlook on the use of violence as freedom of action, as it destroys human life. For Camus, man's most essential thing is life, and it is death that

brings ultimate destruction in man. In the absurd world, man must safeguard the absolute value, i.e., life, as he is the only being that gives meaning and values to the world. By firmly upholding the importance of a man being alive, Camus derived his notion of rebellion. Rebellion is based on human solidarity to safeguard the fundamental values shared by all men. Since Camus upholds life as the absolute value, he condemned any act of killing. To commit suicide or murder is to reject the absolute value.

Thus, Camus's understanding of human solidarity runs contrary to murder and death. Any form of rebels fighting against injustice and inequality that accepts violence and murder for a more significant cause is no longer a rebellion that Camus upholds. Camus stands firmly against the revolution and believes that revolution in claiming to liberate people from capitalism and colonialism legitimized murder for the future absolute justice. On the other hand, his notion of rebellion considers the notion of measuredness and limits to safeguard individual freedom and justice. While revolution silence individual freedom and justice for the sake of a definite future cause. For Camus, since man obtains values and meanings from absurdity and death, man can never claim absolute justice and freedom. Individual freedom and justice for Camus should be obtained in active conformity with the relative.

Both Sartre and Camus have distinct reasons for contemplating the prevalence of violence of their time. Their contemplating the use of theoretical violence is seen in their active participation in the Algerian war. The primary issue that divides them was the justifiable and unjustifiable use of violence when Algerian people fight against the French colonial rule in Algeria. Sartre supports the demand for an independent nation by the Algerian people. He felt that the only way to reconstruct themselves from the dehumanized domination is to organize a rigid revolution to destroy the systemic violence inbuilt by France colonial rule. He claimed that the France government systemically employed violence by manipulating their economic, social, and political for their benefits. As such, unequal reciprocity of human relations prevails, where the colonial other is merely reduced to an object of gaze and objectification. In such an unthinkable human condition, the Algerian people's use of violence becomes a justifiable means to express their freedom of shame and despair. Sartre condemned every aspect of the colonialist's violence but supported the Algerian freedom fighters to employ the same amount of violence to eliminate the colonial system from Algeria completely. For Sartre, the demand for an independent Algerian nation as the only means to liberate from century-long segregation.

Unlike Sartre, Camus condemned the emergence of war to solve the prevailing conflict as it is bound to bring disastrous consequences to millions of innocent civilians. He had a different outlook on the Algerian war: Camus is against the independent nation demanded by the Algerian freedom fighters and believes that French Algerian and Arab cannot be solved by separating the two. Any attempt to separate them will legitimize violent and murderous acts, which will only bring degradation to generations of human civilization. He believes that their destinies are closely linked together in terms of social, economic, and political. It is unimaginable to separate them, as their actions on each part have an equal impact on both of them. It should establish a common ground to have peaceful dialogue and communication to enable to resolve French and Arab conflict for the sole purpose of peaceful existence. For Camus, responsible citizens should consider all aspects to prevent the blind slaughter of innocent crowd in the name of freedom and justice. Any form of revolution that legitimizes the violent and murderous acts in the name of future justice instead destroys the very essence of freedom and justice. Camus strongly asserts that the differences between French Algerian and Arab of Algeria should not attempt to outdo each other, but their differences should be a means for unity. The conflict should not end with the war. Instead, a peaceful reconciliation should be established from both sides to save lives.

By having a different outlook on violence in the complexity of human relations, Sartre and Camus gradually become a strong opponent in the one-sided truth of violence. Sartre having a firm conviction with the communist party, becomes obsessed with anti-colonialism and communism, hardly questions or excuses the inherent atrocities committed by the revolutionary movement in the name of establishing a socialist society. He became blinded by one-sided truth and the practicality of violence. On the contrary, Camus became a vehement accusation of anti-communism, let him condemn the use of legitimizing violence and torture by the revolutionary movement without exception. Thus, it became one of the prime reasons that disable him from connecting colonial and capitalistic violence with the reality of oppressed and colonized life. Aronson rightfully argued that to side with either Sartre or Camus would fail us to comprehend violence wholesomely, as they both have one-sided truth on the notion of violence. Considering the immense pressure and situation of their time, Sartre's supports for the oppressed class's violent methods in re-establishing their freedom and dignity cannot be condemned as horrific. While the practicality of peaceful methods, propagated persistently by Camus, seems less relevant at their times, holds more realistic in the long run. To have a more in-depth conception of the complexity of violence, it will be necessary to give equal importance

to the significance of violence that has been authentically propagated and practiced by Sartre and Camus in their era.

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