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Metaphysical Implications of Man as Relation in Sartre's Being and Nothingness

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METAPHYSICAL IMPLICATIONS OF MAN AS RELATION IN SARTRE'S BEING AND NOTHINGNESS

by

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VITA AUCTORIS

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PART ONE

THE PROBLEMATIC WITHIN THE SARTREAN SYSTEM
The Sartrean ontology, presented in *Being and Nothingness*, is paradoxical inasmuch as it rests upon two radically distinct realms of being, which, nevertheless, are totally bound. These realms which serve as the ultimate ontological principles of Sartre's system are: being-in-itself and being-for-itself, or "thing" and consciousness, *Being and Nothingness*. Yet, while the In-itself and the For-itself function as ultimate principles, Sartre does not wield them to generate further principles. Instead, he employs descriptions of concrete human attitudes to show that the diverse experiences of man-in-the-world are but variations upon one ontological theme: the For-itself's de facto relation to the In-itself.¹ Consequently, he claims the complete comprehensiveness of the In-itself and the For-itself as ontological principles and thereby repudiates any need for a deduction of further principles. But what, precisely, is Sartre's perspective in developing his philosophy?

¹For Sartre, it is an abstraction to treat of these principles in isolation from one another. He states: "It is not profitable first to separate the two terms of a relation in order to try to join them together again later. The relation is a synthesis. . . . The concrete is man within the world . . ." *Being and Nothingness* (cited hereafter as BN), trans. by Hazel E. Barnes (New York: The Philosophical Library, 1956), 3. The metaphysical import of Sartre's contention that the For-itself exists only as a relation to the In-itself is the dominant concern of this thesis.
How, specifically, does he arrive at his ontological principles and evince their comprehensiveness? What is the structure of these principles?

THE METHOD AND STARTING POINT OF SARTRE'S ONTOLOGY

As revealed by the subtitle to Being and Nothingness: "An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology," Sartre's philosophic intent is to establish an ontology on phenomenological grounds. Indicative of this interplay of ontology and phenomenology in the eyes of Sartre is the very structure of Being and Nothingness. For, the Introduction reveals the In-itself and the For-itself on the phenomenological ground of the fundamental intentionality of consciousness and the remaining chapters disclose the Sartrean employment of the phenomenological method to show the presence and the original relation of these principles in basic human situations. Phenomenology's attention to the concrete as revelatory of fundamental ontological structures, its descriptive bent and its emphasis upon the basic intentionality of consciousness thus bear heavily upon Sartrean ontology—an ontology which takes its rise from phenomenological grounds and returns to phenomenology to evince the comprehensiveness of its principles. But, more specifically, how does Sartre's phenomenological approach reveal the In-itself and the For-itself, the two distinct regions of being?

To answer this question, we must traverse the rough terrain of the Sartrean Introduction to Being and Nothingness.
In his opening statement, Sartre credits modern thought with having realized considerable progress by reducing the existent to the series of appearances which manifest it. The impetus for this reduction had been to surmount the prevalent dualisms of being and appearance, act and potency, essence and appearance. But, granting that being does not stand behind appearances, granting that the phenomenal being is nothing more than the connected series of its manifestations according to an essential law, Sartre questions whether modern thought succeeded in its attempt to remove all dualisms from a legitimate status within philosophy. It seems to him, rather, that a new dualism has emerged: the finite and the infinite, a dualism which affords Sartre not only a new interpretation of the former dualisms, but also a means of access to the two regions of being. But, what is this "new dualism"?

The meaning of the Sartrean duality of the finite and the infinite can perhaps best be grasped by describing a perceptive act. For example, I am walking down the street and my eyes rest upon a tree situated off in the distance. As I first approach the tree, this mass of greens and browns appears as though it were an Impressionist painting. But, as I draw closer, the mass becomes more defined, takes on its peculiarly distinctive shape. My attention is drawn to the random arrangement of the leaves, to their various shades of green, to the multiple hues within one leaf, to the branch from which it springs, to
the asymmetrical disposition of the branches, to the trunk from which they originate and so on ad infinitum. Each appearance of the tree is transcended by me toward another manifestation within the series of appearances which constitute 'tree.' Then, too, in walking about the tree, I perceive that the array, the colors appear novel at each stopping point. I recognize that if it were possible for me to stop at each point in this circular path about the tree and take a point of view on it, each profile would be unequalled. Thus, as there are potentially an infinite number of points within a circle, though the circle be bound, finite, so, too, are there an infinite number of points of view to be taken on the tree, though the tree be finite. Because I am a subject capable of changing my points of view on the tree, the finitude of the appearance of the tree is surpassed toward infinity. This, then, is what Sartre means by the dualism of finite and infinite.

The significance of "the infinite in the finite" for Sartre's ontology lies in its staging his sole point of departure—the fundamental intentionality of consciousness. This the dualism achieves in two interrelated ways: (1) by revealing the phenomenal existent as transcendent, and (2) by posing the problem of the being of the phenomenon through its readmission of the former dualisms. These points, however, require examination.

Regarding the first, Sartre maintains that the infinite
series of manifestations of an object, indicated by the infinite number of points of view that can be taken on it, reveals the phenomenon as transcendent. In other words, the inexhaustibility of an object, manifested by the inability of a consciousness to grasp it in its totality, shows that the phenomenon is not a subjective affectation, but rather is other than consciousness, independent of consciousness as subject. Thus, Sartre's statement, leveled against any idealistic position: "Understand that our theory of the phenomenon replaced the reality of the thing by the objectivity of the phenomenon and that it has based this on an equal to infinity."\(^2\) But this appeal to infinity has another consequence for Sartre's theory of the phenomenon—that of readmitting the former dualisms which modern thought disclaimed.

Among the dualisms re-entering the legitimate sphere of philosophy, Sartre avers, is that of potency and act. Because the inexhaustibility of an object implies a reference to the infinite, a certain "potency" returns to inhabit the phenomenon—the "potency" to exhibit an infinite number of manifestations. This possibility, however, is revealed only because there is a consciousness capable of taking an infinite number of points of view on the object. Hence, "potency" returns to the phenomenon but only on the ground of intentional activity.\(^3\)

\(^2\)BN, xlvii.

\(^3\)Inasmuch as the major question of this thesis concerns
Another dualism readmitted by Sartre is that of essence and appearance. Because of the inexhaustibility of an object, essence is in principle that which must be manifested by an infinite series of individual appearances. Consequently, essence is severed from any one appearance which refers to it and a dualism arises. Yet, Sartre claims that proceeding from individual appearances, one "can always determine the essence which they imply, as a sign implies its meaning." The severance of essence from appearance, then, takes the form of a severance of the meaning of a sign from the sign. From which position Sartre concludes: "The essence is not in the object; it is the meaning of the object,..." But, if essence is not in the object, what is the source of essence? Sartre answers, it is through consciousness that the meaning of an object, its consciousness as the source of metaphysical categories, it should be noted that the very appeal to infinity is grounded in the structure of consciousness. That the finitude of the appearance of an object is surpassed to infinity rests upon the fact that a subject is capable of changing points of view on an object. Thus, the potency-act dualism, together with the other dualisms to which the infinite-finite duality gives rise, has consciousness as its ultimate source. This crucial role of the Sartrean consciousness will also be indicated in the subsequent discussions of the other dualisms.

4BN, xlix. Via this claim, Sartre, however, retreats from the logical conclusion that the essence of any object cannot be determined inasmuch as the infinite "series itself will never appear." (BN, xlvii).

5BN, xlix.
essence, comes into the world. For, he claims, it is only be-
cause a consciousness is in an intentional relation with an ob-
ject that the object is revealed as structured. Thus essence
re-enters the philosophic arena in a manner similar to the
readmission of potency—as a correlate of human intentional ac-
tivity.

There is, however, still another dualism readmitted on
the basis of the infinite-finite duality and thereby on the
ground of the intentional activity of consciousness: the dual-
ism of being and appearance. Rejecting a Kantian interpretation
of this dualism, Sartre claims that there is nothing behind the
appearance. Are we to conclude, then, that the being of phenom-
ena appears? Inasmuch as we have some grasp of being and can
speak of it, Sartre avers, there must be an appearance of being
and, in fact, being is manifested to us through the immediacy
of lived experience. Yet, he asks, "is the being which dis-
closes itself to me, appears to me, of the same nature as the
being of existents which appear to me?"6 Is the phenomenon of
being identical with the being of phenomena? Is the appearance
of this page identical with the being of this page? Granted
that the whiteness of this page appears to me, yet being cannot
be reduced to a simple quality. Granted that the various qual-
ities of this page refer to an essence, to the meaning of this
object, yet meaning is not identical with being. That any

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6BN, xlviii.
object is in principle inexhaustible, moreover, precludes the disclosure of the totality of its being. And yet, it cannot be said that the object hides its being, since being is not "behind" the qualities which appear. What, then, can be said of the being of phenomena? Simply, that being is the condition of all revealing and is coextensive with the phenomenon. That any object is in principle inexhaustible precludes the reduction of the being of the phenomenon to the phenomenon of being, and herein lies the meaning of the dualism of being and appearance for Sartre. The being of phenomena, as the condition of revealing, cannot exist only insofar as it appears. Thus the being of phenomena surpasses the knowledge which we have of it and provides the basis for knowledge. But a problem remains as to the character of this transphenomenal being.

Sartre's sole point of departure in solving the ontological problem of the transphenomenal being—a departure already indicated by the structure of the infinite-finite dualism, the dualism founded upon the former and the transcendent character of objects revealed by the former—is the fundamental intentionality of consciousness. Adopting the Husserlian thesis...

7Inasmuch as the method and starting point of Sartre's ontology is under consideration, the thesis of James Collins demands comment. Collins claims that Sartre's ontology rests upon a twofold option that precedes all his philosophizing: "Nietzsche's atheistic postulate and Husserl's postulate of a self-sufficient phenomenology." (Cf. his "Sartre's Postulatory Atheism," The Existentialists [Gateway edition; Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1960], 46). "In his system, atheism is not
that "All consciousness is consciousness of something," Sartre wields this thesis in such a way that it is responsive not only to an elucidation of the transphenomenal regions of being, but also to the waging of a criticism against the epistemological stances of realism and idealism. How does Sartre maneuver this dual play upon his treatment of consciousness?

Seeking ultimately to show the irreducibility of the being of consciousness and the being of phenomena, Sartre part of the evidence but a presupposition deliberately laid down as a determinant of evidence." (Op. cit., 87). Issue is taken with the evidence cited by Collins in support of his thesis of a postulatory atheism. The "system" of Sartre qua "system" is presented only in Being and Nothingness which indicates solely the basic intentionality of consciousness as a point of departure. Sartre's declaration of atheism, moreover, does not appear in his novels, essays or plays until after the publication of Being and Nothingness. There is no evidence, furthermore, that Sartre chose phenomenology in order to dispose of God—a view which Collins seeks to show (Op. cit., 46-48)—particularly in view of Sartre's utilization of phenomenology to arrive at the transphenomenal being of consciousness. Finally, Collins' emphasizing of Nietzsche's atheistic influence upon Sartre, together with his statement that "He permits criticism of Nietzsche only on those points where the latter ceases to be the prophet of atheistic existentialism" (Op. cit., 50) is highly questionable inasmuch as Sartre, prone to cite historical influences, merely mentions Nietzsche twice in Being and Nothingness (xlvi, 541) and neither of the insignificant passages refers to an atheistic context or criticizes Nietzsche. Gilbert Varet points out the only position which can be internally evinced in Sartre's systematic work: "Chez Sartre le point de départ n'est pas la réalité-humaine, ou l'existence, ou la mauvaise foi, ou l'athéisme, mais bien la phénoménologie de Husserl,--et d'abord son 'acquisition fondamentale: l'intentionalité'." (Cf. L'Ontologie de Sartre [Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1948], 2).

8 Varet points out the general relationship of phenomenology and epistemology in his L'Ontologie de Sartre, 14-25.
interprets the dictum of Husserl as meaning that "consciousness has no 'content',"\(^9\) that consciousness is in itself something other than a knowledge turned back upon itself, that consciousness is a positional consciousness of the world. In other words, consciousness is such that it goes outside itself to reach its object. In being conscious of a tree, one's consciousness is absorbed in the tree. The tree, Sartre maintains, is not in one's consciousness, not even in the form of an adequate representation. For, to introduce an object into consciousness would involve introducing an opacity into consciousness because of the inexhaustibility of any object. Such an introduction would refer to infinity the inventory which consciousness could make of itself, would "make consciousness a thing"\(^{10}\) and would thereby deny the Sartrean cogito. Hence Sartre's insistence that consciousness has no content. But what is the Sartrean cogito?

\(^9\) BN, 11. Sartre initiates this discussion with a criticism of Husserl's epistemological and ontological stance. He claims that while Husserl understood that the foundation of being for the totality "perceived-perception" could not itself be subject to the percipio, he erred in concluding that the being which founds knowledge is the transphenomenal being of consciousness. For, Sartre avers, this conclusion has as its counterpart the equally erroneous position that the being of the percipio, of the phenomenon, can be reduced to the being of consciousness. Yet, while intent upon refuting idealism, Sartre is equally using Husserl's position to serve the development of the Sartrean ontology by its introduction of another dimension of transphenomenal being— that of consciousness.

\(^{10}\) BN, 11.
Continuing his manipulation of epistemological concerns to yield ontological information, Sartre seeks to disclose the Sartrean cogito by examining the necessary condition for all knowing consciousnesses. The prerequisite for all knowing consciousnesses, he cites, is an awareness of being conscious of something. This secondary awareness, however, must be implicit in the primary consciousness, or one should be aware of being conscious of something and aware of being aware of being conscious of something ad infinitum. Why an infinite regress? Because of the subject-object dualism constitutive of any knowing consciousness. Thus, Sartre maintains that, unless we wish to admit an infinite regress, "there must be an immediate, non-cognitive relation of the self to itself." There must be a non-thetic consciousness accompanying and founding every positional consciousness.

That there is such a non-thetic consciousness can, moreover, be quite simply illustrated. In playing tennis, although my positional consciousness is directed toward the tennis ball, I am nevertheless implicitly aware that I am now making a smashing backhand. Furthermore, if anyone were to ask me what I was doing, I would immediately reply: "Attempting a backhand." What does this response indicate? First of all, it reveals that my consciousness as positional is also a reflecting consciousness and can posit the instantaneous

\[1^{\text{st}}\text{BN, liii.}\]
consciousness as its object. Secondly, and more strategically, it verifies the existence of those implicit awarenesses which have passed without being reflected upon and yet condition and make possible the reflection. In terms of such evidence as this, then, Sartre claims the existence of a non-thetic or pre-reflective consciousness conditioning the thetic Cartesian cogito. This non-thetic consciousness, however, is not to be considered a new consciousness. Rather, the Sartrean cogito is "the only mode of existence which is possible for a consciousness of something," it is the being of the knower, "a mode of apprehension which is not a phenomenon of knowledge but is the structure of being." Sartre's employment of epistemological concerns has thus led to the discovery of a transphenomenal being of consciousness, but Sartre has still to prove the irreducibility of the transphenomenal being of the knower and the transphenomenal being of phenomena, has still to solve the problem of the character of the being of phenomena.

In effect, however, the Sartrean repudiation of the idealist reduction and the Sartrean avowal of the primacy of the thing perceived over our knowledge of it have already been staged. For not only does the transcendent, inexhaustible character of the object preclude its identification with the knowledge one has of it, but experience also evinces that in knowledge

\[12^{BN,\ liv.}\]
\[13^{BN,\ lvii.}\]
the object does not become consciousness and disappear as this object. The perceived being is thus cut off from consciousness, is independent of consciousness in its very being. Hence the transphenomenal being which is consciousness can neither found the phenomenon of being nor be identified with the being of the phenomenon.  

Though the preceding conclusion puts to rest the idealist reduction, Sartre formulates an "ontological proof" of the independent being of the phenomenon, a proof derived from the existential status of consciousness, from the non-thetic cogito. Utilizing the dictum "all consciousness is consciousness of something" as the definition of the being of the knower, Sartre considers two alternative meanings for consciousness. Consciousness can be interpreted either as constitutive of the being of its object or as, in its innermost nature, a relation to a transcendent being. The first interpretation, however, is fallacious since consciousness of something is consciousness of an inexhaustible plenitude which consciousness is not, as was previously shown. That consciousness is consciousness of something must thus be interpreted in the second way as meaning that

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14 Sartre points out that the phenomenalists erred in failing to recognize this non-identity: "Having justifiably reduced the object to the connected series of its appearances, they believed they had reduced its being to the succession of its modes of being." (BN, lx)
"transcendence is the constitutive structure of consciousness."\(^{15}\)

In other words, the structure of consciousness is such that it reaches out beyond itself. As intentional, consciousness has no being other than to be a revealing and hence requires something revealed. Built into the very structure of consciousness, therefore, is the demand for the support of a being which is other than consciousness. This being, which supports consciousness in its being, is but the transphenomenal being of phenomena, the In-itself.\(^{16}\)

The Sartrean "ontological proof" thus reveals the independence of the being of phenomena, of the In-itself, by claiming that the being of consciousness is a consciousness of something which it is not and thereby is dependent upon something which it is not, namely, the In-itself. Sartre's employment of the phenomenological method and his wielding of the fundamental intentionality of consciousness have hence yielded three ontological discoveries expressed in the "ontological proof": (1) the In-itself is independent in its being; (2) the For-itself is not the In-itself; and (3) the For-itself is a relation to the In-itself in virtue of its dependence upon the latter. These ontological conclusions, afforded Sartre by phenomenology, point,

\(^{15}\)BN, lxi.

however, to a dual paradox which grips the Sartrean ontology. 
First, the two regions of transphenomenal being, viewed as radically distinct, are nevertheless declared bound in virtue of the For-itself's intrinsic relation to the In-itself. Secondly, the For-itself's dependence upon the In-itself reveals the ontological priority of the In-itself in Sartre's system, but within that system the For-itself—not the In-itself—bears the ontological burden of bringing "potency" and "essence" into the world, of issuing, in general, the categories of being. To gain a clearer grasp of this twofold paradox which engulfs the Sartrean ontology, however, we must consider what Sartre conceives as the characteristics of the In-itself and the For-itself.

THE IN-ITSELF AND THE FOR-ITSELF

Being-in-itself

The being of phenomena, or being-in-itself, is nothing other than the being of this page, of this typewriter. As indicated by the infinite-finite dualism, the "primary characteristic" of the In-itself is "never to reveal itself completely to consciousness."\(^{17}\) But what are its other characteristics? The In-itself, Sartre claims, is inherence in self without distance; it is total coincidence with itself and hence cannot refer to itself. Because of such utter undividedness, the region of the

\(^{17}\)BN, lxii.
In-itself is thus governed by the principle of non-contradiction. Its complete self-containment and identity preclude its requiring connection with what it is not. But, having no otherness, the In-itself, moreover, escapes becoming. Beyond becoming, it has no past and no future and hence is also beyond temporality. It simply is, is what it is, is in-itself. Derived neither from another existent nor from a possibility, since possibility is a structure of consciousness and consciousness itself depends upon the In-itself, the In-itself, Sartre concludes, is contingently, escaping both necessity and possibility.

If one were to ask Sartre to describe the manner in which such characteristics are disclosed, he might well proceed in somewhat the following way. Take the example of a rock. The infinite-finite duality reveals that my consciousness cannot exhaust the being of this rock. Not only is this true of a simple confrontation with this rock, but it is equally true of any scientific analysis that my consciousness makes upon this rock. Though I may well discern the constituents of this rock and their respective percentages of composition, the being of this rock eludes my analysis. The rock is so opaque, so self-contained, that I cannot "break in" and "get a grip on its being." The rock is a rock with full positivity, complete identity. I

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18 Sartre states: "Being is. Being is in-itself. Being is what it is. These are the three characteristics which the preliminary examination of the phenomenon of being allows us to assign to the being of phenomena." (BN, lxvi)
cannot say of it: "It isn't itself today," because it has no otherness; it is--rock. That it is situated on this patch of grass, moreover, makes no difference to the rock, as verified by my moving it, for this rock has no intrinsic connection to what it is not. Then, too, this rock does not reveal itself as having a past or a future. Nor is it meaningful to speak of the rock as having a past or a future, for the rock is, and, as utter coincidence with itself, escapes temporality which requires dimensional distance. From a confrontation with an object such as the rock, Sartre thus discerned an ontological principle characterized by undividedness, identity, opacity, fullness, permanence, independence and non-temporality--this is the In-itself.19

Being-for-itself

If one were to negate the characteristics of the In-itself, one would have, in a limited way, a view of the For-itself. Limited, for to consider these regions in strict isolation would be to misconstrue reality as Sartre envisions it. The concrete, the real, is the synthetic totality, man-in-the-world. Hence, as the characteristics of the In-itself are

19 Only a brief sketch of the In-itself is intended in these introductory remarks. An amplification upon the characteristics cited will be made in a later context. Cf. M. Corvez, "L'Etre-en-soi dans la philosophie de Jean-Paul Sartre," Revue Thomiste, LVIII (1950), 360-72, for an exceptionally good account of the Sartrean In-itself.
revealed because a consciousness is in relation to it, so, too, the characteristics of man are revealed only if he is considered in the world. But what can be said of man-in-the-world, of the For-itself?

Examining various attitudes and activities which man assumes in and toward the world, Sartre claims the discovery of a transphenomenality of non-being as actual as that of being-in-itself. To illustrate this disclosure of non-being, he puts forth an analysis of a concrete, negative judgment. Having an appointment with Pierre in a cafe, one goes there, looks around and states: "He is not here." Is it absurd to speak of an intuition of the non-being, of the absence of Pierre? Or, is it absurd to assert the truth of a negative judgment that is unfounded in reality? Employing the Gestalt premise that perception always implies the construction of a figure on a ground, Sartre maintains that when one enters the cafe his attention is directed toward the appearance of Pierre. So directed, one negates the elements of the cafe which appear as not being Pierre and thus orientates them as the ground upon which Pierre is given as about to appear. But Pierre is not here and yet the whole cafe remains the ground upon which the absence of Pierre looms before him, given intuitively. Granted that one's expectation has caused the absence of Pierre to happen, Pierre's absence is nonetheless a real event; the non-being of Pierre haunts the cafe in all its plenitude. There is, then, a real
relation between this non-being and the being of the cafe, in contrast to the relation of thought between Napoleon's absence and the cafe. Thus Sartre concludes: "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." There is, therefore, a transphenomenality of non-being. But what is the relation between being and that non-being which haunts it? What, moreover, is the origin of nothingness?

Regarding the relation between being and non-being, the Sartrean example has illustrated that Pierre's absence appears only on the ground of the cafe's plenitude of being and hence that non-being "exists only on the surface of being," subsequent to being. Sartre claims, however, that non-being must not be considered as a peripheral threat surrounding being. If the négatités that occur within the world—absence, destruction, distance—are to be founded, then non-being must

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20 BN, 11. Sartre also considers the human activities of interrogation and destruction as revealing a transphenomenality of non-being. But the import of the consideration of negative judgment is the repudiation of the view that non-being is solely a structure of negative judgment. Cf. BN, 6-12.

21 BN, 16. Cf. BN, 12-16 for Sartre's negative dialectic with the Hegelian view of the relation between being and non-being.

22 Sartre is here rejecting Heidegger's view of the relation between being and non-being. For his critique of the Heideggerian view, cf. BN, 16-21.
appear at the heart of being, must be grounded in a negative being which itself appears at the heart of the world.

What is this negative being which issues nothingness? That the In-itself is in principle excluded from being the source of nothingness is evinced, according to Sartre, by its very positivity, plenitude and identity. Since the only other region of transphenomenality is that of the For-itself, since patterns of conduct including interrogation, destruction and negative judgment reveal forms of non-being, human reality must be the source of nothingness. To emit nothingness, human reality, moreover, must be nothingness. As Sartre asserts: "The being by which Nothingness comes into the world must be its own Nothingness." That consciousness is nothingness, furthermore, fulfills Sartre's demand that non-being be subsequent to being; for, as attested by the "ontological proof," consciousness requires in its being the support of the In-itself inasmuch as it constitutes itself as not In-itself. Consciousness, then, existing only as a dynamic naughting of the In-itself, is the nothingness which issues the négatités which appear at the heart of the world.

The preceding Sartrean argumentation claiming nothingness as the structure of the For-itself represents Sartre's initial pronouncement in favor of the view that the For-itself is

\[23\text{BN}, 23.\]
non-substantial,\textsuperscript{24} that is, that consciousness lacks identity with itself; that consciousness is not opaque, self-contained, fully determinate; that consciousness is not determined by something which it is; that consciousness is not a static unity, a mere support. The Sartrean claim of insubstantiality for the For-itself is thus a claim that human reality cannot be in a fixed and final manner. As insubstantial, as nothingness, human reality is rather the possibility of self-detachment, of perpetual withdrawal in relation to itself—a possibility which, moreover, conditions every rupture with the world, every nihilation of the contingent In-itself. In other words, as insubstantial, as nothingness, consciousness is freedom.\textsuperscript{25} Continually on the road of self-construction, consciousness must continually choose. As a freedom engaged in the task of self-construction, consciousness is at one stroke the putting of its past (an instance of its necessary connection with the In-itself of its facticity) out of play and the choice of an end which is not-yet, an end which is in the future. Consciousness as freedom is thus the self-temporalizing present which finds its

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{24} Cf. Norman N. Greene, \textit{Jean-Paul Sartre: The Existentialist Ethic} (University of Michigan: Ann Arbor Paperbacks, 1963), 16-18 for a lucid account of the non-substantiality of consciousness.
\end{itemize}
future an open horizon of possibilities and which transcends via
nihilation what it has been, what it has made itself, that is, its essence. Freedom, as consciousness, as nothingness, hence reveals that human reality is never simply what it is, that human reality is always at a distance from itself.

Inasmuch as consciousness is a negative being of internal distance, is the nihilation of the In-itself, consciousness lacks the permanence, fullness, coincidence with itself, in a word, the substantiality which characterizes the In-itself. As lack, consciousness is desire--desire of the substantiality of the In-itself while retaining the translucidity of consciousness. Consciousness attempts to recover the substantiality which it perpetually nihilates by relating itself to the In-itself through knowledge and action. But, Sartre avers, the attempt is doomed to failure. For, to become In-itself, consciousness would lose itself as consciousness. Hence, consciousness, as the nihilation of the In-itself and as the project toward the value In-itself-For-itself or God, is an internal negation in suspension, neither In-itself nor In-itself-For-itself. "The nature of consciousness simultaneously is to be what it is not and not to be what it is."26 Consciousness is the In-itself, in the mode of not-being it, and is its possible, the In-itself-For-itself, in the mode of not-being it. As internal negation, consciousness thus exists after the manner of

26BN, 70.
a relation. As Sartre asserts: "The For-itself is relation," the original relation between the realms of In-itself and For-itself.

Dynamism, possibility, freedom, temporality, facticity, non-coincidence with self, lack, desire, value, internal negation, non-substantiality, relation--such are the characteristics of the Sartrean For-itself as viewed in a preliminary fashion.

But there is one further point to be indicated at this time. Recalling Spinoza's dictum: "All determination is negation," Sartre claims that determination springs from negation. Consciousness, as internal negation, thus bears the burden of issuing all the determinations in the world, of issuing the traditional categories of being as such. The reason for the paradoxical disproportion between the ontological priority of the In-itself and the ontological task of the For-itself within the Sartrean system, a disproportion previously cited, hence rests with the structure of the For-itself as internal negation and

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27BN, 362.
28BN, 617.
29Two good articles dealing with the Sartrean For-itself are: M. Corvez, "L'Etre de la conscience dans la philosophie de J.-P. Sartre," Revue Thomiste, LVIII (1950), 562-74; and J. Grooten, "Le soi chez Kierkegaard et Sartre," Revue Philosophique de Louvain, L (1952), 64-89.
30Cf. above, 15-17.
Sartre's acceptance of the principle that determination springs from negation. But, while Sartre's grounds for assigning consciousness the task of issuing all determination have been discerned, a problem, nevertheless, emerges.

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Within the Sartrean framework, consciousness thus looms before us as a dynamic negation which originates the determinations of being as such. Multiple dimensions of this functioning of consciousness have been manifested in this introductory consideration of Sartre's ontology: first, that the finitude of the appearance of an object is surpassed to infinity occurs because there is a consciousness capable of taking diverse points of view on an object; second, that certain "potencies" return to inhabit the In-itself, as the "potency" to exhibit an infinite number of manifestations, occurs because there is a consciousness relating itself to the In-itself; and finally, that essence, the meaning of an object, re-enters the region of the In-itself occurs because of human intentional activity. Yet, these are but a few of the determinations of being as such which issue from consciousness. Sartre further deems consciousness responsible for the upsurge of such traditional categories of being as place, quantity, quality, potentiality, temporality and relation itself. In view of this striking affirmation, our question to Sartre is: "Can consciousness, the For-itself,
bear the burden of originating the categories of being qua being?" This question arises in terms of the radical distinction between the For-itself and the In-itself, a distinction indicated by the diverse characteristics of these regions and culminated by the assertions that the For-itself is relation, while the In-itself is substance; that the For-itself is Nothingness; the In-itself, Being. How can the For-itself, then, so ontologically dissimilar from the In-itself, issue categories of being which bridge both ontological realms and are applicable to each?

That this type of question is posed justifiably is recognized by Sartre himself in the concluding remarks of Being and Nothingness. Considering the question of whether the regions of For-itself and In-itself can be classified under a general heading termed "Being," Sartre points out that such a question is not ontological, but rather is metaphysical. To those who wish to concern themselves with such issues, Sartre suggests, however, that the notions of immanence and transcendence should both be taken into consideration.

Following Sartre's suggestion in discerning whether the For-itself as relation can bear the burden of originating the categories of being, we shall consider the meaning of the

31 Cf. **BN**, 171-72, 362; 492-93; 575-76; 624.
32 Cf. **BN**, 171-72; 459; 506.
33 Cf. **BN**, 621-25.
For-itself qua relation from the dual aspect of immanence and transcendence. But we shall raise the further question of whether this relation, the For-itself, is substantialized. Although Sartre repeatedly denies that the For-itself is substantial with such remarks as: "Our description of the for-itself has shown us how this, on the contrary, is removed as far as possible from a substance..." the justification for our questioning such assertions will be made evident by an examination of the characteristics of the For-itself and of the way in which Sartre handles the For-itself in drawing out the categories of being. This question of the substantialization of the For-itself, moreover, bears upon our metaphysical concern inasmuch as a substantialization of the For-itself would indicate a common ground between the two regions of being, which, in turn, would give more plausibility to the Sartrean attempt to introduce the categories of being through the For-itself. Our approach, then, is to elucidate the meaning of the For-itself as relation and to examine the question of whether the For-itself is substantialized, with the hope that the insights gleaned from these investigations will give us the answer to

\[34\] BN, 171. Cf. also BN, 84; 174; 431; 453; 459; 462; 551; 618.
PART TWO

THE MEANING OF THE FOR-ITSELF AS RELATION
CHAPTER I

THE SELF-RELATEDNESS OF THE FOR-ITSELF

One frequently hears himself or others remark: "If only I could be myself," "I'm struggling with myself," or "I'm not myself today." Are such statements expressive of an ontological structure lived by man or are they without ontological significance? Opting for the former, Sartre claims that such remarks indicate that the For-itself always exists at a distance from itself in a relation of identity denied—an ontological structure that pervades human reality in multiple dimensions of engagement with itself. This Sartrean claim, however, reaffirms a radical distinction between the two regions of being, between the relational For-itself and the non-relational In-itself,¹ and thus seems to jeopardize the Sartrean view concerning the For-itself as the source of the categories of being as such. In order to decide, however, whether the For-itself, an insubstantial relation, can bear the brunt of issuing categories applicable to a region of non-relational substance, the Sartrean

¹Though the non-relationality of the In-itself was expressed in our introductory remarks, this view is reaffirmed by Sartre's statement: "The principle of identity is the negation of every species of relation at the heart of being-in-itself." (BN, 77).
meaning of the For-itself qua relation must be explored from the dual stance of its self-relatedness, the concern of this chapter, and its relation to the world, the topic to be dealt with in the succeeding chapter. What, then, are the multiple dimensions of the For-itself's engagement with itself?

Presence to self

Sartre states: "The law of being of the for-itself, as the ontological foundation of consciousness, is to be itself in the form of presence to self." But what does Sartre mean by "presence to self," the fundamental intra-structure of the For-itself? To illustrate, consider a man who is struggling with himself. That a struggle grips his entire being indicates a duality within the unity of his consciousness, points to a relation whereby he stands at a distance from the self which he wants to be in the mode of utter self-coincidence. His struggle to gain total identity with this self which he wants to be, his desire to come to himself only serve to re-emphasize the distance at which he stands from himself within the unity of his being. The self which he wants to be, though indicative of himself as subject, thus represents only his way of not being his own coincidence. Presence to self, then, implies a detachment in the subject related to himself—a fissure or a disintegration of coincidence within human reality—and thus defines the subject as subject, as other than In-itself.

\[2^{BN, 77}\]
But what separates the subject from himself in the case of presence to self? Nothing, answers Sartre. For to consider some thing as effecting this separation would be to introduce into the subject an opacity which would shatter the unity and translucency of consciousness. In order to be subject, rather than a substantial In-itself, consciousness must then include within the unity of its being its own nothingness as the nihilation of identity, of the absolute cohesiveness of the In-itself. 3

Rooted in the notion of presence to self and further indicative of the radical contrast between the For-itself and the In-itself is, moreover, what Sartre terms "bad faith," a lie to oneself, a lie within the unity of a single consciousness. A typical example of bad faith, according to Sartre, is the attitude of a waiter who seeks to be a waiter as this table is a table. He assumes the role of a mechanical waiter, of an entity with a fixed and determined nature, and thereby runs from the reality of the free, unpredictable For-itself. He plays at being a waiter. But, by the mere fact that he is playing a role, he places himself beyond that role. He thus reveals that he is a waiter in the only mode possible for human reality—in the mode of not being one. Human reality, in other words, defies consideration as being absolutely what it is. Or, as Sartre states, human reality "is a being which is what it is

3Cf. BN, 77-78.
not and which is not what it is, ⁴ a being which is governed by neither the principle of identity nor the principle of non-contradiction, but rather by the law of presence to self, the perpetual disengagement of the self from itself.

Considering the man in bad faith from another point of view, Sartre formulates the phenomenon of presence to self in terms of a dyad: the reflecting-reflection dyad. The man in bad faith believes that he is a waiter in the same way a tree is a tree. He, moreover, has an immediate or non-thetic awareness of this belief. Yet, while belief and consciousness (of) belief are immanent within the unity of this man's being, while these terms are mutually referent and dependent, belief and consciousness (of) belief are distinct. What separates them? Nothing, but that consciousness. For, Sartre maintains, the very structure of consciousness is to exist as a translucent consciousness of what it is not. As such, consciousness exists in the form of a reflecting-reflection dyad. In self-consciousness, moreover, the terms of this dyad are so incapable of presenting themselves separately that the duality remains perpetually evanescent and each term, while positing itself for the other, becomes the other. If one attempts to grasp the reflection, in this case belief, the fissure reappears; if one attempts to grasp the reflecting, one finds only the reflection, belief. The reflecting, then, is the reflection, but as

⁴BN, 58.
presence to the reflection, as witness of the reflection, the reflecting constitutes itself as other than the reflection.\(^5\)

Presence to self, in its various manifestations, hence expresses the disengagement of consciousness from itself. Continually constituting itself as not that of which it is consciousness, consciousness--in the form of presence to self--perpetually falls short of achieving the absolute coincidence, the cohesive identity, attributed by Sartre to the In-itself. But such is the being of the For-itself. As Sartre states: "It is the obligation for the for-itself never to exist except in the form of an elsewhere in relation to itself, to exist as a being which perpetually effects in itself a break in being."\(^6\)

That the For-itself exists only "in the form of an elsewhere in relation to itself" is thus the fundamental meaning of presence to self. It is, moreover, indicative of a synthesis of the subject and the self to which he stands, of the reflecting and the reflection--a synthesis which, however, must be negative in that the subject stands to himself as not being the self which he is at an ideal distance from himself, in that the reflecting constitutes itself as not the reflection which it is. As such a nihilating synthesis, the For-itself, in the form of presence to self, is hence a relation of denied identity.

\(^5\)BN, 74-78.

\(^6\)BN, 78.
The For-itself--Value Dyad

Presence to self, Sartre claims, reveals that consciousness, as a relation of denied identity, lacks coincidence with itself—or, is a lack of self. The existence of desire, moreover, attests that human reality is lack. As lack, as desire,\(^7\) the For-itself thus seeks completion, surpasses itself toward __. But, toward what?

Founding itself as consciousness by denying in relation to itself a certain mode of being, that of being-in-itself, human reality lacks the self from which it effects a perpetual nihilating withdrawal—the self as being-in-itself. This missing mode of In-itself, however, cannot be construed as a concrete, contingent In-itself. For, if consciousness were to coincide with such an In-itself, it would cease being consciousness and would become a "thing." The In-itself which the For-itself lacks, then, must be an absent In-itself, devoid of contingency, an In-itself which the For-itself can be while retaining its consciousness. Sartre thus asserts that the ideal being toward which human reality projects itself is a being which "would be its own foundation not as nothingness but as being and would preserve within it the necessary translucency of consciousness along with the coincidence with itself of

\(^7\)For Sartre, desire is consciousness, is a lack of being-in-itself. Cf. BN, 87-88.
In other words, that toward which the For-itself surpasses itself is the impossible synthesis: the In-itself-For-itself.

Claiming that man's hypostatization of this synthesis as a transcendence beyond human reality, as God, is a betrayal of its wholly immanent character, Sartre avers that this totality has no priority over consciousness since the ideality of its being is dependent upon consciousness. But, neither does consciousness have priority over this ideal synthesis. For, Sartre points out, consciousness derives its very meaning as lack from the In-itself-For-itself. Interdependent and yet distinct, the In-itself-For-itself and the For-itself thus form a dyad at the heart of human reality.

Because the In-itself-For-itself is non-thetically apprehended as desirable, its being, moreover, is to be value. As Sartre states:

Value is the self insofar as the self haunts the heart of the for-itself as that for which the for-itself is. The supreme value toward which consciousness at every

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8Inasmuch as consciousness depends in its being upon the In-itself which it reflects, consciousness must assume the contingency of the In-itself. Consciousness must exist on the surface of being-in-itself. "Everything takes place as if the in-itself in a project to found itself gave itself the modification of the for-itself." (BN, 621) This In-itself, nihilated in the For-itself, remains at the heart of the For-itself as its original contingency. The For-itself's necessary connection with the In-itself is termed its facticity. It is in an effort to escape its facticity, its contingency, that human reality seeks to become a being which would be its own reason for being, that is, a necessary being, the In-itself-For-itself.
instant surpasses itself by its very being is the absolute being of the self with its characteristics of identity, of purity, of permanence, etc., and as its own foundation.9

"Value is the self." Value is as the meaning of the For-itself; value is as an absent In-itself; value is as given with the nonthetic translucency of the For-itself. Yet, value, as forever unrealizable, is not. The For-itself, in seeking the substantiability of the In-itself while retaining the translucidity of consciousness, thus relates to value as the ideal self which it is—but in the mode of non-being, in a mode which is not that of being-in-itself.

Inseparable and yet distinct, the For-itself and value hence form a dyad within the unity of human reality. Value, then, upsurges with the For-itself and only because there is a For-itself.10 But, while sustaining the ideal being of value, the For-itself is denied an actual attainment of the impossible synthesis: In-itself-For-itself. Though absent, value nevertheless qualifies the For-itself, makes an intrinsic difference

9BN, 93.

10That value arises with the For-itself and only because there is a For-itself represents the Sartrean thesis that the For-itself is the source of all determination, of all the categories of being. Though we are here concerned with the meaning of the For-itself as relation, such Sartrean manipulation of the For-itself should be noted.
to the being of the For-itself. For, it is via value that the For-itself non-thetically grasps itself as lack and hence engages in the process of self-construction, a process terminated by death but never completed inasmuch as value is never realized. The self-relation which is human reality in the form of the For-itself-value dyad is thus one of internal negation: value is immanent within human reality as an ideal being, but the For-itself is denied being value in the mode of an In-itself.\footnote{Though we have considered the For-itself-value dyad in an abstract fashion, Sartre avers that value is not merely a pure abstraction. Concrete consciousness always emerges with a situation. Cf. BN, 90-92.}

The Possible and the Circuit of Selfness

Sartre capitalizes on the For-itself as lack in still another way to manifest the self-relatedness of the For-itself. Each particular For-itself lacks a specific concrete reality which would constitute this For-itself as itself. Again, we ask, what is the nature of that which consciousness lacks? As a quarter moon lacks three-quarters of the moon which it is in order to be a full moon, so, too, Sartre maintains, the For-itself lacks precisely the For-itself which it is in order to complete itself. In view of the ideal of coincidence with self, the For-itself which I lack, then, must be the For-itself which I am, not a strange For-itself. Nevertheless, I cannot be the
For-itself which I lack in the mode of identity, otherwise I would lapse into In-itself. I, then, am the For-itself which I am not, which I lack, in the mode of having to be this For-itself in order to attempt identification with it in the unity of the self. This particular For-itself which I am and yet lack constitutes a possible for me, a possible which accompanies my upsurge into being as the nihilation of the In-itself, a way of being what I am--at a distance from self.\(^\text{12}\)

Let us consider an example to elucidate the meaning of possibility. Even in writing this sentence here and now, there is consciousness (of) writing this work. The consciousness (of) writing this work refers me, not only to the pages written, but also to the pages unwritten. With the consciousness (of) writing this work emerges the consciousness (of) the completed product, my possibility. I am this consciousness (of) the completed work, not as a tree is a tree, but rather as not yet or at a distance from self. That distance from self qualifies possibility is indicative, moreover, of Sartre's position that only consciousness has the structure of possibility and hence that only consciousness can issue possibilities.\(^\text{13}\)

\(^{12}\)BN, 95ff.

\(^{13}\)The In-itself, as fullness, cannot have possibility as its immediate structure. The possibilities attributed to the In-itself have consciousness as their source. Again, the Sartrean For-itself is called upon to issue a category of being as such.
One may question, however, whether the For-itself does not achieve coincidence with the lacking For-itself when the latter is realized. Consider again the example. The consciousness (of) the completed work as realized is itself a For-itself. Emerging with this realized consciousness, then, is another horizon of possibilities—the possibility of a sequel, the possibility of publication. The realized consciousness thus upsurges with a possible which it is as not yet and hence lacks. Consciousness, then, always falls short of realizing the ultimate value which it intends by realizing its possibles. But what separates the For-itself from the For-itself lacked?

The separation, in one sense, is effected by a nothingness which slips in between the For-itself and its possible. For, non-thetically conscious of the possible, the For-itself constitutes itself as not the possible which it is. Yet, in another sense, the separation is effected by the totality of existents in the world, for the possible arises as a presence to a particular state of affairs. To revert to our example, the possibility of publication arises as presence to the concrete situation concerning the market for such a work, the publisher's opinion and so on. In the effort to seek coincidence with this possible, one must thus traverse the existents in the world.

Sartre terms this relation of the For-itself with its possible the "circuit of selfness." What, however, does he
mean by the term "selfness"?

Selfness represents a degree of nihilation carried further than the pure presence to itself of the pre-reflective cogito—in the sense that the possible which I am is not pure presence to the for-itself as reflection to reflecting, but that it is absent-presence. Due to this fact the existence of reference as a structure of being in the for-itself is still more clearly marked.

Wielding again the nihilating activity of consciousness, Sartre composes contrapuntally another variation on the theme of self-relatedness. Having heard the variations of the For-itself's relation with pure presence (reflection) and with pure absence (value), we are introduced to the For-itself's relation with absent-presence (possibility). But, precisely, what is the structure of the relation of the For-itself with its possible, the lacking For-itself?

The For-itself which I am as presence to self and the For-itself which I am but lack as an absent-presence to self are the terms of this relation considered abstractly. But the terms themselves have the status of relation. For the

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14 BN, 103. Sartre repudiates any attempt to identify selfness with the Ego which is of the nature of In-itself within the Sartrean perspective. Cf. BN, 102-103.

15 The delineation of specific relations of the For-itself is an abstract consideration in that the For-itself cannot be considered as an independent term entering into a relation, save through abstraction. But the For-itself exists its ontological dimensions simultaneously. More will be said about this later.
For-itself which I am as presence to self is relation and the For-itself which I am yet lack is relation as an absent-presence to self. The relation of the For-itself with its possible is thus a relation relating two relations which are denied the identity of being-in-itself. This marked play on relation hence serves Sartre's purpose to evince the referential structure of the For-itself and its radical distinction from the In-itself, but does it serve his employment of the For-itself as the source of categories of being?

That a tension is developing within the Sartrean system concerning the preceding question is evinced, moreover, in that Sartre's handling of the For-itself's relation to its possible reveals transcendence at the heart of immanence. Not only is there within the For-itself a going out toward value and possibilities, but there is also a projection toward objects in the world, objects which must be traversed in order to realize any given possible. In virtue of its transcendence, then, the For-itself refuses the self-containment, the substantial limits of the In-itself and, Sartre avers, the instantaneous Cartesian cogito. Bound to the meaning of the For-itself's transcendence and its refusal of such substantiality is thus the Sartrean notion of the For-itself's temporality.  

16Cf. BN, 104-105.
Temporality

Viewing temporality as a dynamic synthesis of past, present and future, Sartre seeks to show that temporality is the being of the For-itself. Approaching an examination of time by considering the type of relation obtaining between the past and the present, Sartre points to the irreversibility of the temporal dimensions as evidence of an internal relation. That the past and present, together with the future, involve such a relation, moreover, excludes the non-relational In-itself from temporal dimensionality. For relationality demands a distance excluded from the region of the absolutely cohesive In-itself. As Sartre says regarding the past, there can be a "past only for a present which cannot exist without being its past--back there, behind itself." In other words, there can be a past only for the For-itself, since only the For-itself is at a distance from self.

17 For Sartre's opposition to treating time as a series of externally related "nows," cf. BN, 107-13; 130-36. Sartre's intention to evince that temporality is the being of the For-itself is ultimately an intention to show that temporality comes to the world through the For-itself, that the For-itself is the source of the time of the world.

18 A certain temporality will come to rest upon the region of the In-itself, but only through the intentional activity of the For-itself. This point will be considered in Chapter II of Part III.

19 BN, 114.

20 As will be discussed, Sartre considers the present as the being of the For-itself.
Though distance qualifies the For-itself's relation to its past, the For-itself, Sartre maintains, must nevertheless be its past. Or, there would be no ontological foundation for such phenomena as bearing responsibility for past actions, as sustaining in some way the being which I was, that is, my essence, the consummated possibles which define me. But, while I must be my past, my past is behind me, is fixed, congealed or, as Sartre states, my "past is substance,"[^21] is In-itself. I must then be my past, but not in the mode of identity of being-in-itself or I would lapse into In-itself. In other words, though the "relation of being which I have to sustain with the past is a relation of the type of the in-itself—that is, an identification with itself,"[^22] I nevertheless am not my past, for I was it. As Sartre expresses this paradoxical situation:

> If already I am no longer what I was, it is still necessary that I have to be so in the unity of a nihilating synthesis which I myself sustain in being, otherwise I would have no relation of any sort with what I am no longer, and my full positivity would be exclusive of the non-being essential to becoming.^[23]

[^21]: BN, 119.
[^22]: BN, 116.
[^23]: BN, 117.

In virtue of its very structure, then, the For-itself is always beyond its past. But the very nihilating activity in terms of which the For-itself surpasses its past also binds the
For-itself to its past in a relation of identity denied. That this is a case of identity is evinced by the fact that the past is the For-itself become In-itself;\(^{24}\) that this identity is denied the type of identity of the In-itself is secured by the nihilating activity which is the For-itself.

Unlike the past, the present is For-itself. On the basis of the "ontological proof," the fundamental meaning of the present for Sartre is grounded in the notion of presence: the presence of the For-itself to being-in-itself. Concerning presence, Sartre asserts: "Presence to __ indicates existence outside oneself near to __,"\(^{25}\) involves an internal relation between the being which is present (the For-itself) and the being to which it is present (the In-itself). In terms of intentionality, the For-itself's presence, moreover, involves the For-itself non-thetically witnessing itself in the presence of a being as not being that being. In other words, presence to __ expresses the For-itself's internal relation with being-in-itself as the nihilation of the In-itself. The present, as presence to __, as For-itself, then, is not. As Sartre states: "It makes itself present in the form of a flight. . . . It is

\(^{24}\) The past is indicative of the For-itself's facticity, that is, of its necessary connection with the In-itself. In terms of facticity, a type of identity, other than the identity of being-in-itself, can be predicated of the Sartrean cogito. But this will be considered in Chapter I of Part III.

\(^{25}\) AN, 121.
a flight outside of co-present being and from the being which it
was toward the being which it will be. "26 The present thus
refers not only to the past, but also to the future.

As revealed in the relation of the For-itself with its
possible, the For-itself is a being which transcends itself
toward __, a being which comes to itself in terms of the future,
a present which is a flight toward the For-itself which it
lacks, toward its possible. The future is then a mode of the
For-itself's being, a mode which non-thetically brings meaning
to the present. The future stands to the present as that com-
plement of the For-itself which would secure self-coincidence,
but a complement which remains at a distance from self. The
future, in other words, is that which the For-itself is, but
not yet. The For-itself's project toward the future which it
is, project toward self-coincidence, however, can never succeed,
since the future slips into the past and a new future--a new
possible--arises on the horizon as presence to co-future being.27
But what can be said of the For-itself as relation in the con-
text of temporality?

An intra-structure of the For-itself, temporality "is
the being of the For-itself insofar as the For-itself has to be
its being ekstastically."28 The For-itself is a nihilating

26 BN, 123.
27 Cf. BN, 124-29.
28 BN, 136.
transcendence suspended between modes of its being, but sus-
pended dynamically so as to issue the synthesis of the temporal
dimensions which it holds in separation. 29 The For-itself,

hence, is what it is not (its past) and is not what it is (its
future). As present, it enters into the terms of past and
future, sustaining their being and yet constituting itself as
present by refusing the mode of identity of being-in-itself with
its terms. Neither the terms of past and future nor the For-
itself as present, then, can exist in isolation from one an-
other. The relation which is For-itself is thus decidedly an
internal relation in that the For-itself as present determines
itself in terms of its flight from the past and projection
toward the future. Such internality, however, ought not to be
construed as an importation of past and future into the For-
itself as present. For the For-itself as relation, in the con-
text of temporality, is: "before itself, behind itself: never
itself." 30 An internal relation of identity denied, the

29 Temporality, while an intra-structure of the For-
itself, is also the source of the meaning of "horizontal"
transcendence, of the For-itself's relation with being-in-
itself. The present as For-itself is bound not only to its past
(which the For-itself sustains even though the past has the
character of In-itself), but also to the co-present region of
the In-itself. Such "horizontal" transcendence is further mani-

fested to a limited extent in the present's relation with the
future, since the future is a presence to a co-future region of
In-itself. But an explicit consideration of the For-itself's
horizontal transcendence is the concern of the following chapter.

30 BN, 141.
For-itself—as temporality—once more reveals that its being is a refusal of the self-identity of the In-itself, of the substantiality of the In-itself.

**Reflection**

In considering the thetic consciousness of enduring and its relation to non-thetic temporality, Sartre discusses the nature and the laws of reflection—a discussion which concerns us primarily since it reveals another self-relation of the For-itself. "Reflection," Sartre states, "is the For-itself conscious of itself."\(^{31}\) The reflective consciousness and the consciousness reflected-on, however, cannot be fundamentally related in terms of a thinking subject perceiving an object. For to grant such independence in being to consciousness would be to eradicate the type of internal relation requisite for knowledge and to lapse into the Cartesian substantialist illusion. Thus, "reflection must be united to that which is reflected-on by a bond of being,"\(^ {32}\) and yet the reflected-on must be distinct from the reflective as object and subject are distinct.

The familiar ontological structure of the Sartrean For-itself again becomes apparent: the reflective consciousness must both be and not be the consciousness reflected-on.

\(^{31}\) BN, 150.

\(^{32}\) BN, 151.
Regarding reflection, Sartre maintains that, while the reflective and the reflected-on tend toward independence (unlike the reflecting-reflection dyad), neither can achieve independence. For, the reflective non-thetically witnesses its own being only through the appearance of the reflected-on and the reflected-on, altered by reflection, non-thetically witnesses itself as having an outside, as tending toward object, only through its dependence upon the reflective. Thus, the operation of reflection reveals a totality of reflective and reflected-on as a unitary structure of a being which issues a nothingness forever separating these terms, while holding them in unity. In the case of reflection, however, both terms are in the form of the reflecting-reflection dyad, that is, in the form of presence to self. Hence, the separation between the reflective and the reflected-on manifests that reflection is a nihilation of the For-itself. But, how can this be?

By means of reflection the For-itself attempts to "be for itself what it is." According to Sartre, this involves a

33 The ideal pole of the nihilation constituting reflection is an external negation, a scissiparity which would render the reflected-on as In-itself. This scissiparity, however, is stifled by the fact that the reflected-on has to be the reflective and vice versa. Only in the For-itself's relation to the Other is the scissiparity effected--as will be seen in the next chapter.

34 BN, 153.
dual endeavor, an endeavor to achieve objectification and interiorization: to be for itself an object-in-itself, an object which is the subject as it is. But the project to grasp itself in the mode of self-coincidence is doomed to failure, since the recovery of the being which is lost requires a recovery in the mode of its own being, that is, in the mode of the For-itself, thus of flight. As Sartre states, it is this failure which is constitutive of reflection.

This turning back upon the self is a wrenching away from self in order to return to it. . . . For the necessary structure of the for-itself requires that its being can be recovered only by a being which itself exists in the form of for-itself. Thus the being which effects the recovery must be constituted in the mode of the for-itself, and the being which is to be recovered must exist as for-itself. And these two beings must be the same being. But exactly insofar as this being recovers itself, it causes an absolute distance to exist between itself and itself—in the unity of being.

The project of the For-itself to achieve substantiality via reflection thus serves only to fling the For-itself back upon itself as non-substantiality, as relation—as a refusal of the self-coincidence of the Sartrean In-itself and the Cartesian cogito.

In its relation with temporality, however, reflection may be pure or impure. In pure reflection, "the simple presence of the reflective for-itself to the for-itself reflected-on,"36

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35 **BN**, 154.
36 **BN**, 155.
the reflective has to be the reflected-on in complete immanence and yet without being In-itself. Because of such immanence, moreover, reflection must be a peculiar type of knowledge. For, while knowledge involves making oneself other and thereby denying that one is the other, the unity of being of the reflective and the reflected-on precludes such a total detachment of the reflective from the reflected-on, as does the very motivation of reflection—to achieve the coincidence of the reflective For-itself and the For-itself reflected-on. Hence, Sartre claims, pure reflection is a lightning recognition rather than knowledge in the strict sense.37

The lightning character of this recognition, however, does not mean that the reflective and the reflected-on are instantaneous; each qua For-itself is in diasporatic fashion the temporal dimensions. In fact, it is in terms of the past and the future that the reflected-on is distinguished from the reflective within the unity of being-for-itself. For when one makes any reflective statement: I think, I doubt, one is already ahead of oneself in the future. The reflective is always presented as ahead of the reflected-on, thereby precluding the attainment of the absolute self-coincidence of the In-itself. As Sartre asserts in maintaining that pure reflection is consciousness of the three ekstatic dimensions: "Pure reflection

37Cf. BN, 155-57.
still discovers temporality only in its own original non-substantiality, in its refusal to be In-itself.” Pure reflection, then, while doing no violence to original temporality, fails to achieve the project of the reflective consciousness, the project from which the very meaning of reflection is derived: to be For-itself as the In-itself is.

Impure reflection, though having pure reflection as its original structure, yields, however, only a succession of psychic states. Defined as "the apprehension of the reflected-on as in-itself in a circuit of selfness in which reflection stands in immediate relation with an in-itself which it has to be," impure reflection, in contrast to the pure form, has three terms: the reflective, the reflected-on and an In-itself. For, in seeking to grasp the reflected-on as In-itself, the reflective takes a point of view on it, posits itself as not being the reflected-on and thereby effects the appearance of an In-itself as a shadowy being of the reflected-on. By effecting the appearance of an In-itself engulfing the reflected-on, impure reflection, however, does violence to the non-substantial historicity of the reflected-on and thereby manifests itself as bad faith. For, while there is a declaration that the reflective is not the reflected-on, impure reflection still seeks to make itself the object, the reflected-on as In-itself.

38 BN, 158.
39 BN, 160.
Hence, Sartre states, "impure reflection is an abortive effort on the part of the for-itself to be another while remaining itself."\(^{40}\) To view oneself from the outside within the unity of one's being, to grasp oneself as what one is in the mode of coincidence, thus remains forever impossible.

Reflection, whether pure or impure, hence reveals the failure of the For-itself's project to attain the substantiality of being-in-itself. For the reflective, remaining always ahead of the reflected-on, causes an absolute distance between itself and the self-reflected-on and thus denies of itself the mode of identity of being-in-itself.\(^{41}\) The self-relation which is reflection, then, manifests the For-itself as a relation of internal negation, of identity denied.

**Summary**

Having examined the various self-relations of the For-itself, are we now in a position to declare the significance of Sartre's statement: "The For-itself is relation"? Are we now in a position to pinpoint the meaning of the For-itself as a "relation of internal negation," as a "relation of identity denied"? A capsule summary of our results seems indispensable.

\(^{40}\)BN, 161.

\(^{41}\)Because the reflective consciousness is always ahead of the consciousness reflected-on, Sartre avers that the Cartesian cogito might rather be formulated: "I think; therefore I was." Cf. BN, 119.
to ascertaining our stance. 42

Presence to self reveals the For-itself as the synthesis of the reflecting-reflection dyad, a dyad constitutive of the being of the For-itself as the foundation of its nothingness, as its original intra-structure. That this relation is internal is manifested by the fact that the For-itself qua For-itself would vanish without the dyad. That a dyad is held within the unity of being-for-itself discloses, however, a distance within the For-itself: the ideal distance at which the reflection stands from the reflecting. In virtue of this distance, in virtue of the distinction of its terms, the For-itself is thus denied the identity of being-in-itself. As presence to self, the For-itself is hence an internal relation of identity denied: an internal relation as the synthesis of the reflecting-reflection dyad constitutive of its being, identity denied as the denial of the identity of the In-itself. Inasmuch as the reflecting constitutes itself as not the reflection which it is, inasmuch as the subject stands to himself as not the self which

In delineating the diverse self-relations of the For-itself, it is necessary to keep in mind that the consideration is an abstract one, as noted previously (above 41, n. 15). In the cohesive Sartrean ontology, no one ontological dimension of the For-itself stands alone; the For-itself can exist only if all its dimensions are sustained. But while the existent For-itself refuses consideration as an independent term of any of its self-relations, to differentiate these relations and yet find a common thread of meaning among them, it is necessary to treat the For-itself under one aspect as a term of a relation which is For-itself from another point of view.
he is at an ideal distance, the For-itself--as presence to self--however, is not a denial of identity per se: the reflecting is not the reflection which it is in the sense that it is not what it is in the mode of identity of being-in-itself.

Constructed upon the relation of presence to self--a relation revealing the For-itself as lacking the substantiality of the In-itself--is the For-itself-value dyad. Upsurging with the For-itself, as presence to self, as lack, is an absent In-itself, the lacked. Because the For-itself is qualified at the heart of its being by the absent In-itself and exists only in relation to that elsewhere which it is denied by absence, the relation which the For-itself is in the form of the For-itself-value dyad is decidedly an internal relation, a relation constitutive of the being of the For-itself. That the For-itself fails to achieve a synthesis with the absent In-itself, to attain value, indicates, moreover, a distance between the terms of this dyad. Thus, again, the For-itself manifests itself as an internal relation of identity denied. A refusal of the mode of identity of being-in-itself, the For-itself, however, is not to be construed as a refusal of identity per se: for, the For-itself in the form of the For-itself-value dyad encloses value within its being and hence is value, the ideal which qualifies its every action, but not in the mode of identity of the In-itself.
A relation relating two relations, the For-itself-possible relation has as its terms the For-itself which I am as presence to self and the For-itself which I am but lack as an absent-presence to self. In its effort to attain the self-coincidence of the In-itself, the term For-itself requires coincidence with a For-itself which it is, as absent: the For-itself which is its possible.\(^{43}\) This absent For-itself qualifies the For-itself at the heart of its being inasmuch as the For-itself, as presence to self, non-theetically grasps its possible, thereby constitutes itself as not that possible which it is and hence as a perpetual flight toward it. That the For-itself perpetually determines itself in relation to its possible thus reveals that the For-itself-possible relation is an internal relation. That the For-itself can never achieve absolute coincidence with its absent For-itself, however, reveals that the For-itself again is denied the type of identity of being-in-itself. Nevertheless a type of identity pervades the For-itself-possible structure, since the possible to which the For-itself relates is its possible, since I call a certain possible mine. Thus, the For-itself, as an internal relation

\(^{43}\) In that the effort of the For-itself to achieve coincidence with its absent For-itself is ultimately an effort to gain substantiality, that is, the being of the In-itself which is absent, the For-itself-value dyad is implied as a presupposition for the analysis of the For-itself-possible relation—a presupposition pointing to the cohesive character of Sartre's ontology.
of identity denied, is a refusal only of the identity of being-in-itself.

Temporality, too, is viewed by Sartre as a relation of identity denied. The dimensions of temporality pose a problem, however, in that the past is In-itself and the future "is not in itself and neither is it in the mode of being of the For-itself, since it is the meaning of the For-itself." Consequently, the past and the future are forever separated from the For-itself as present. Yet, the For-itself as present, as flight, requires at the heart of its being the past from which it flees and the future toward which it projects. The paradoxical being of the For-itself again emerges. An internal relation denying of itself the mode of identity of the In-itself, the For-itself, as temporality, has to be its being ekstatically, while maintaining some type of identity of itself as present with its past and future.

In the case of reflection, the For-itself, as the bond of the reflective consciousness and the consciousness reflected-on, manifests still again its structure as an internal relation denied the mode of identity of being-in-itself. For,

44. The self-relations of the For-itself previously reviewed Sartre considers immediate structures of the For-itself. Temporality, however, is not an immediate structure of the For-itself. For the past as In-itself remains outside the For-itself even though the latter gives itself as being its past in the mode of non-identity. The relation of the For-itself as present to its past is thus highly problematic as a self relation.
while the reflective must be the reflected-on, the reflective is always ahead of the reflected-on, thereby precluding its goal of attaining coincidence with the reflected-on, of grasping itself as what it is. That the reflective is ahead of the reflected-on means, moreover, that the reflected-on must be in the past, held as a quasi-object, as quasi-outside the For-itself. The problem here, as with non-thetic temporality, is the character of the past as In-itself, together with Sartre's claim that the reflective is the reflected-on in complete immanence, though not in the mode of identity of being-in-itself. This problematic concerning the relation of the For-itself to its past, of the reflective to the reflected-on, reveals, however, a fundamental Sartrean thesis regarding the structure of the For-itself. But, before the implications of this problem are considered, it would be well to formulate the meaning of the For-itself qua relation as revealed by the various self-relations of the For-itself and to elucidate the bearing of this formulation upon the further questions concerning substantialization and the ability of the For-itself to introduce categories of being.

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45 The problem of immanence, coupled with the In-itself character of the past, becomes even more acute in impure reflection wherein a shadowy In-itself appears. But more will be said concerning this problem in a later context.
That the For-itself is an internal relation of identity denied has been manifested in each of the self-relations examined. By formulating the various structures of the For-itself in terms of relation, Sartre has sought to emphasize the For-itself's "own original non-substantiality, ... its refusal to be In-itself." Pushing ahead his distinction between the two regions of being, he further expresses the structure of the For-itself as a relation denied the identity of being-in-itself. Thus, the phrase--"internal relation of identity denied"--as predicated of the Sartrean For-itself appears to signify that being-for-itself has neither the identity nor the substantiality of being-in-itself.

But, while stressing a radical differentiation between the two regions of being, the Sartrean handling of the For-itself's self-relations sets the ontological stage for his utilizing the For-itself as the source of such categories as value, possibility and temporality. It would appear, however, that Sartre's consideration of the For-itself as an internal relation of identity denied would continue to jeopardize his assignment of this ontological task to the For-itself. Yet, the self-relations examined reveal a very interesting point with respect to this problem. For, in dealing with these self-relations, Sartre has clearly expressed that the For-itself is the self to

\[46\text{RN, 158.}\]
which it is present, \textit{is} the value which it seeks, \textit{is} the possible which it attempts to realize, that the For-itself as present \textit{is} its past and its future, that the reflective \textit{is} the reflected-on--but not in the mode of identity of being-in-itself. This suggests, as does the very notion of self-relation, that the For-itself has a type of identity with itself, though not the same type of identity as the In-itself. In other words, Sartre appears to have employed an analogical concept of identity, though he himself makes no explicit avowal of an employment of analogy and indeed seems to disavow it by claiming the principle of identity as a regional principle governing only the In-itself. The appearance of analogy, however, suggests that Sartre may have substantialized the For-itself in an analogous sense, while maintaining its refusal of the In-itself's substantiability. If this is the case, then, perhaps Sartre can maintain a differentiation between the For-itself and the In-itself and still justifiably claim the For-itself as the sources of categories of being \textit{qua} being. But, before the question of substantialization can be considered in depth, the implications of the problem regarding the relation of the For-itself to its past, of the reflective to the reflected-on, must be elucidated.

That the For-itself, within the unity of its being, relates to its past, an In-itself, points to a more fundamental
relation which the For-itself is, a relation which undercuts the various self-relations of the For-itself. As evinced in the Sartrean "ontological proof," the For-itself exists fundamentally as a relation to In-itself. In other words, the For-itself cannot be contained within the arena of self-relations; the For-itself escapes such bounds; the For-itself goes outside itself as manifested by its circuit of selfness, as manifested by what was termed its "horizontal" transcendence. It is this engagement in the world that must be examined, then, before the meaning of the For-itself qua relation can be explicated fully and the issue of substantialization taken up.
CHAPTER II

THE RELATIONS OF THE FOR-ITSELF IN THE WORLD

The self-relations of the For-itself indicated its relation to beings other than itself. The discussion of the circuit of selfness and of the present as presence to being-in-itself explicitly pointed to what we termed the For-itself's 'horizontal' transcendence, its engagement in the world. To adequately discern the meaning of the For-itself as relation, we are thus bound, as Sartre asserts, "to describe the relations of the for-itself with the in-itself inasmuch as these are constitutive of the very being of the for-itself."¹ In this context, knowledge, as well as doing and having, come under consideration.² But there are two other relations which enter into a discussion of the For-itself's relation with the world: the For-itself's relation with other consciousnesses and the

¹BN, 172.

²The For-itself has other relations with the In-itself in terms of its issuing the categories of being, but these arise on the foundation of knowledge and need not be considered in this context. These other relations, however, will be treated in Chapter II of Part Three, but from the standpoint of evincing whether the For-itself can bear the metaphysical burden of issuing categories of being.
For-itself's relation with its body. That these relations of the engaged For-itself are indicative of the For-itself's fundamental "elsewhere" and/or its refusal of the substantiality of the In-itself is the Sartrean thesis.

Knowledge

Viewing deduction and discursive argumentation as tools leading to knowledge, Sartre claims immediacy as the key to knowledge and declares all knowledge intuitive. By defining intuition as "the presence of consciousness to the thing," he strategically equates knowledge with the being of the For-itself as a relation to In-itself. Although the "ontological proof" and the consideration of the present have already manifested this fundamental relation of the For-itself, Sartre seeks to show the For-itself's refusal of the self-containment of the In-itself in a more pointed manner--by establishing that the basic intra-structure of the For-itself, presence to self, demands the presence of consciousness to In-itself, demands knowledge as the being of the For-itself.

3 The justification for considering the relation of the For-itself to its body in this context rather than as a manifestation of the For-itself's self-relatedness rests with the fact that the body is the For-itself's point of insertion in the world and that Sartre himself does not consider the For-itself-body relation in his discussion of the structure of the For-itself itself.

4 BN, 172.
Pointing to the evanescence and mutual nihilating of the terms of the presence to self relation, of the reflecting-reflection dyad, Sartre asserts that the For-itself can be saved from vanishing only if the reflection be "a relation to an outside which it is not"—as a mirror qua reflecting and its reflection can be maintained only if the reflection relates to something outside which it is not. The very being of the For-itself as presence to self thus requires a relation to that which it is not, to the In-itself. As presence to In-itself, the For-itself, moreover, is knowledge, "the very being of the for-itself insofar as the for-itself has to be its being by making itself not to be a certain thing to which it is present." Knowledge, as the being of the For-itself, is thus a relation of For-itself to In-itself. But what type of relation is knowledge?

That knowledge is a negative relation is evinced by the fact that consciousness does not lapse into the In-itself to which it is present. A negation, however, may be either external or internal. For example, to say "This pen is not a pencil" is to place oneself as a witness present to two beings which are bound in a purely external way by means of such witnessing; neither the pen nor the pencil is altered by such a

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5BN, 173.
6BN, 174.
bond. But if one were to say "I am not well," the negation involves neither an independence in being of the terms nor a third being, a witness, through whom the relation arises; moreover, one is indicating that "not being well" is a negative, though real, quality of his being, a quality affecting his disposition and so on. This latter example thus illustrates an internal negation: a negation in terms of which the For-itself qualifies itself by what it is not and thereby alters its very being. That knowledge is an internal negation is Sartre's claim.

Prior to pursuing the significance of knowledge as an internal negation, it would be well, however, to consider Sartre's statement on the meaning of an internal negation.

In the case of an internal negation . . . it is within and upon the being which it is not that the for-itself appears as not being what it is not. In this sense the internal negation is a concrete ontological bond. . . . In the internal negation the for-itself collapses on what it denies. The qualities denied are precisely those to which the for-itself is most present; it is from them that it derives its negative force and perpetually renews it. In this sense it is necessary to see the denied qualities as a constitutive factor of the being of the for-itself, for the for-itself must be there outside itself upon them; it must be they in order to deny that it is they. In short the term of origin of the internal negation is the in-itself, the thing which is there, and outside of it there is nothing except an emptiness, a nothingness which is distinguished from the thing only by a pure negation for which this thing furnishes the very content.7

7BN, 176.
What, then, is the Sartrean meaning for the For-itself as "internal negation"? In Sartre's terminology, we might say, the For-itself, as internal negation, must be the In-itself to which it is present, not in the mode of being-in-itself, but rather in the mode of non-being, that is, in its own peculiar mode of being. Or, the For-itself exists only in relation to the In-itself to which it is present, but exists qua For-itself only by constituting itself as not that In-itself. Or, still again, the For-itself exists outside itself in the In-itself to which it is present. But what do such statements mean? Simply, that the For-itself, as presence to In-itself, as knowledge, as internal negation, cannot exist in the mode of the In-itself's radical self-containment. Man is a being-in-the-world. Consciousness is presence-to-In-itself. Man determines himself in relation to his world; the For-itself grasps itself as lack and engages in the task of self-construction in relation to the region of In-itself. To consider man apart from the world, to consider consciousness apart from the In-itself is a hopeless abstraction as seen in the case of the substantial cogito of Descartes. But, while the For-itself depends in its being upon the In-itself, it does not exist as In-itself. Hence the For-itself is a relation of internal negation; presence to In-itself, knowledge, is the fundamental bond of the For-itself to the In-itself and it is a bond of being.

This bond, however, is not to be understood as the
For-itself's relation to a lack or an absence. For, Sartre points out, in knowledge, considered as an ontological bond of being, the For-itself is present to the absolute plenitude of the contingent In-itself, not an absent In-itself. In fact, it is the For-itself which is the lack, the absence, which determines itself in existence from the perspective of this plenitude. In knowledge, then, the only being encountered is the known, the massive In-itself. But, if the bond of the For-itself to the In-itself cannot be understood in terms of the For-itself's relation to an absence or lack, neither can it be understood as continuity or discontinuity. For, Sartre asserts, the supposition of an intermediary term in the notion of continuity and the substantialization of the nothing separating two discontinuous elements preclude the immediacy of the relation of the For-itself to the In-itself evinced in intuition. How, then, are we to understand the ontological bond which is knowledge? Sartre answers: "It is pure denied identity."^8

To illustrate this conclusion, he considers two tangential curves. If the curves were hidden, save for the length of their tangency, it would be impossible to distinguish them. Here, then, there is only pure identity. But, if one were to view the curves in their entirety and reconstitute the movement which made them, each is seen as the negation of the other. The

^8BN, 178.
curves are apprehended as two, but with no distance between them. Thus, the pure identity is denied.

Though Sartre's illustration leaves something to be desired,⁹ the notion of the curves being distinct, though without distance, is meaningful for the being of the For-itself as knowledge. For, in knowledge, there is no distance between consciousness and the known; consciousness is the known. Yet, there is a distinction between them in that consciousness cannot simply be what it knows. For, while the ideal of knowledge is being-what-one-knows, the structure of the For-itself, as manifested in the reflecting-reflection dyad, is fundamentally not-being-what-is-known.¹⁰ The For-itself, as knowledge, is thus a relation to In-itself, a relation whereby consciousness is the known In-itself, but not in the mode of being-in-Itself.

The ontological significance of Sartre's discussion of knowledge, as it bears upon the question of the meaning of the For-itself qua relation, lies, however, in his claim concerning the intrinsic dependence of the For-itself upon the In-itself. For such dependence precludes the For-itself existing in the

⁹First of all, the two curves could exist in isolation, which is not the case with the For-itself whose very being depends upon the In-itself. Secondly, the dual nihilating implied in the case of the curves misrepresents the ontological structure of the In-itself, which of itself simply is; only the For-itself nihilates.

¹⁰Cf. BN, 218.
mode of radical self-containment, self-completion attributed by Sartre to "substance," to the region of In-itself. Hence, it is basically in virtue of the For-itself's intrinsic dependence upon In-itself that Sartre designates the For-itself "relation," rather than "substance."

Doing, Having and Being

As manifested in the discussion of knowledge, the For-itself, in virtue of its perpetual nihilation of the contingent In-itself to which it is present, refuses the substantiality of being-in-itself. The For-itself thus exists as lack, as a desire of being, as a project toward acquiring as For-itself the density of In-itself. Sartre states:

The for-itself projects being as for-itself, a being which is what it is. . . . It is as consciousness that it wishes to have the impermeability and infinite density of the in-itself. It is as the nihilation of the in-itself and a perpetual evasion of contingency and of facticity that it wishes to be its own foundation. . . . The fundamental value which presides over this project is exactly the in-itself-for-itself.11

Supported by, suspended between the contingent In-itself and the ideal In-itself-For-itself, consciousness exists then as a lack of the substantiality of the In-itself and hence as a desire of being, as a project to be In-itself-For-itself, to be God. The project of being is thus the fundamental project in terms of which man acts and defines himself.

11BN, 566.
Sartre avers, however, that man—as desire—relates not only to the In-itself-For-itself, but also to concrete objects in the world. That man's relation to the contingent In-itself from the standpoint of doing and having is ultimately reducible to his project of being constitutes, moreover, Sartre's thesis. Upon examination, then, the "cardinal categories of human reality"—doing, having and being—are intended by Sartre to evince in still another way that the For-itself must and does exist as a lack of the substantiality of being-in-itself.

Examining doing first, Sartre seeks to show that doing is reducible to having. The simple action of taking a cigarette from a pack in order to have it appears to readily attest this Sartrean tenet. But Sartre wishes to fortify his case by considering a variety of human actions, actions which reveal, moreover, not only the reduction of doing to having, but also the reduction of having to being.

In creating his masterpiece, the artist, Sartre claims, aims at possessing something which bears the mark of himself and yet can be encountered in the world. The research scientist, too, seeks to appropriate the object known, the discovered truth, in a way that makes it his own and leaves it public for others to know. Even in games and sports, Sartre maintains, the player aims at appropriating—in this case, victory; the skier

\[12^{\text{EN}}, 431.\]
attempts to master the snow and thereby make it his field of
snow for others to witness. What do such activities reveal?
Certainly, the reduction of doing to having. But something more
is manifested by the Sartrean interpretation of these actions.

In each of the actions considered by Sartre, the appro-
priative character is marked simultaneously by the object's
being a subjective emanation of the For-itself and by its re-
main ing indifferent to the For-itself, that is, by its remain-
ing In-itself. This duality of the appropriative character
symbolizes the union of possessor and possessed, the union ex-
pressed by the term "mine," a term which signifies the middle
ground between the utter interiority of the me and the utter
exteriority of the non-me. But this middle ground, Sartre
points out, is nothing other than an attempt to realize value,
the In-itself-For-itself. Thus having, like doing, is not ir-
reducible; having is ultimately reducible to the project of
being.\textsuperscript{13}

While appropriation remains an element, then, in the
various actions of man, what is sought is the realization of
the In-itself-For-itself, of self as self-cause and as cause of
one's world. In view of this project of being underlying man's
appropriative efforts, Sartre views appropriation as expressive
of a continuous creative bond between possessor and possessed.

\textsuperscript{13}Cf. BN, 577-86.
The possessor is the *raison d'être* of the possessed in that he has the object *for himself* and sustains it as being possessed. But, while the object, emanating from the self, exists through the self and appears as that self, the union of self and not-self remains ideal, since the very concept of creation—which establishes the bond of ownership—requires that the object be at once wholly the possessor and wholly independent of that possessor, an independence which thus precludes a real synthesis of self and not-self. Hence, the self's desire to internalize a contingent In-itself through appropriation remains unrealizable.

Emphasizing this unrealizable character of appropriation, Sartre speaks of possession as "a magical relation; I am these objects which I possess, but outside, so to speak, facing myself; I create them as independent of me; what I possess is mine outside of me, outside all subjectivity, as an in-itself which escapes me at each instant and whose creation at each instant I perpetuate." The goal of possession, the attempt of the possessor to enjoy his being-in-itself, to grasp himself as

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14 According to Sartre, creation occurs not only when the possessor makes the object possessed, but also when the possessed object is bought. For buying an object symbolizes creating the object; money appears as a creative force. Cf. *BN*, 589-90.

15 *BN*, 591.
what he is in the possessed, is thus doomed to failure. As Sartre states: "We see that appropriation is nothing save the symbol of the ideal of the for-itself or value." The dyad, For-itself possessing and In-itself possessed, is thus a symbolic relation, a relation symbolizing the unrealizable project of the For-itself to become In-itself-For-itself. But, how does appropriation reveal the For-itself qua relation?

Focusing upon appropriation as an internal bond of being, Sartre claims that this bond demands the non-substantiality of the For-itself. In opposition to substantialist philosophies, he asserts:

The possessed object exists in itself, is defined by permanence, non-temporality, a sufficiency of being, in a word by substantiality. Therefore we must put Unselbständigkeit on the side of the possessing subject. A substance cannot appropriate another substance, and if we apprehend in things a certain quality of "being possessed," it is because originally the internal relation of the for-itself to the in-itself, which is ownership, derives its origin from the insufficiency of being in the for-itself.

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16 BN, 592.

17 Because appropriation is only symbolic, Sartre maintains, it does not afford satisfaction and thus the insatiability of possession can give way to destruction of the possessed. Yet, he claims, destruction is akin to creation, inasmuch as it seeks to absorb the object in the self. Destruction, in fact, "realizes appropriation more keenly than creation does, for the object destroyed is no longer there to show itself impene-trable." (BN, 593)

18 BN, 588.
In other words, Sartre maintains that the fact of appropriation can be explained only on the grounds of a lack of being in the possessor, in the For-itself, since the permanence and self-sufficiency of substance precludes any appropriative tendency. Thus there is appropriation only because the For-itself, in its being, is a refusal of the substantiality of being-in-itself, a refusal which it continually seeks to counter.

That appropriation is "an internal bond of being,"¹⁹ as evidenced by various burial customs, by the importance attached to the property of a famous man, affords Sartre, moreover, another opportunity to lash out against substantialist philosophies. For, as an internal bond of being, appropriation cannot be construed as an external relation between two substances. Thus, Sartre avows, appropriation must be non-thetic. That it could be otherwise would require a radical, reflective scissiparity on the part of the For-itself—a scissiparity which is impossible for it as For-itself to achieve. Moreover, that appropriation occurs within the circuit of selfness attests its non-thetic mode of being. To possess, hence, "does not mean to know that one holds with the object possessed a relation identified as creation-destruction; rather to possess means to be in this relation or better yet to be this relation."²⁰ But,

¹⁹BN, 588.
²⁰BN, 595.
how can the For-itself be a "symbolic and ideal"\textsuperscript{21} relation?

In the first place, that the symbolic relation of appropriation is based upon the real relation which the For-itself is as a nihilation of In-itself appears to save the For-itself from collapse into utter ideality.\textsuperscript{22} In the second place, that the For-itself is altered in its very being by the appropriative relation evinces this relation as an internal bond of being. For, while this alteration does not result in the realization of the ideal In-itself-For-itself, the For-itself's appropriation through action does result in a further determination of its essence. The appropriative relation, however, remains negative inasmuch as the For-itself must constitute itself as not that which it possesses, as not the substantial In-itself, in order to possess. Hence, appropriation reveals the familiar structure of the For-itself: a relation of internal negation, a relation which is the being of the For-itself as the continual nihilation of the substantiality of being-in-itself.

\textsuperscript{21}BN, 592.

\textsuperscript{22}In a similar manner, the For-itself-Value dyad is founded on the For-itself's nihilation of the contingent In-itself and thereby upon its lack of being. For desire, as lack of being, has a single goal--to recover its missing being. Hence, Sartre claims, the desire to be and the desire to have are in reality inseparable. The former seeks to confer being upon the For-itself directly, while the latter attempts to realize this goal through the mediation of the world in the circuit of selfness, attempts to appropriate this world across a particular In-itself. Cf. BN, 597-98.
Being-for-others

Though the For-itself's attempt to transfer itself to the possessed object in an effort to enjoy its being-in-itself, its being-outside, is doomed to failure, the For-itself can indirectly grasp that it does have an outside in terms of its being-for-others. Claiming that "others are the Other, that is the self which is not myself," Sartre declares negation as constitutive of the being of others and avers that the For-itself's fundamental connection with the Other must be an internal negation which is a relation of being. But what is the nature of this relation which obtains between the For-itself and the Other?

Wielding the fundamental intentionality of consciousness

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23 BN, 230.

24 Situating his consideration of the Other in terms of the historical perspective of the problem of solipsism, Sartre finds the theme of negation as constitutive of the structure of the being of others common to the various philosophic interpretations. But he rejects modern philosophy's consideration of this negation as an external relation between two substances, a relation through knowledge. For, he comments, not only does the substantialist perspective preclude any relation with the Other as Other, as another consciousness, but its option of a cognitive relation also precludes a revelation of the Other as subject. While Husserl, Hegel and Heidegger surpassed the endeavor of the moderns by abandoning the postulate of external negation, by refusing the substantialist view, they nevertheless failed to recognize, according to Sartre, that the For-itself's relation to the Other cannot be primarily cognitive. To refute solipsism, the Other must be given as subject. Cf. BN, 223-52 for Sartre's historical account.
to elucidate the structure of being-for-others, as well as to repudiate the solipsistic stance, Sartre claims that the existence of the Other as subject can be secured when and only when I feel myself becoming an object for him, when I experience myself as being seen by him. But what does being seen mean for me? What is the significance of the Other's look?

To illustrate this phenomenon, Sartre considers the situation of peeping through a keyhole. In such a situation, my positional consciousness is directed outside myself toward the scene behind the door. Suddenly, I hear footsteps; I am seen. I become ashamed. That I am ashamed is an effect of my being non-thetically aware of myself as existing for another. The Other makes me be for him, pulls me into his world as an object among objects, confers an In-itself upon me via his look. Establishing my transcendence as a given transcendence, the Other thus gives me a nature, a limit, an outside, which I am aware of non-thetically, but which I can never know, never see. As Sartre states: "All of a sudden I am conscious of myself as escaping myself, not in that I am the foundation of my own nothingness, but in that I have my foundation outside myself. I am for myself only as I am pure reference to the Other."\(^{25}\)

But, while myself as object escapes me, while I never know my outside, I nevertheless accept it. For my shame at being

\(^{25}\text{BN}, 260.\)
caught is a confession that I am this being-outside, that I enter into a relation with my being-for-others. Sartre expresses this relation as follows:

The appearance of the look is apprehended by me as an ekstatic relation of being, of which one term is the "me" as for-itself which is what it is not and is not what it is, and of which the other term is still the "me" but outside my reach, outside my action, outside my knowledge.26

Via the Other's look, then, the For-itself relates to the "me" which it is, but out of reach. Here, again, the For-itself is revealed as a being which precludes the type of cohesive identity of the In-itself and yet identifies in some way with this "me" which it is outside its reach.

But in what sense is the For-itself's relation with the Other an internal bond of being? That my unreflective consciousness apprehends myself insofar as I am an object for the Other reveals that the Other's look has struck my very being. For, through the Other's look, a self comes to appear indirectly on the unreflective level--"the 'me' but outside my reach," the "me" of which I am ashamed. It is in terms of this modification then, that Sartre considers the relation between the Other as subject and me as object an internal relation of being.27

26 **BN,** 268.

27 Sartre maintains, however, that "being-for-others is not an ontological structure of the For-itself." (BN, 282). For, in terms of the For-itself's immediate structure, the self as object is prohibited on the unreflective level by the evanescence of the reflecting-reflection dyad.
The For-itself, however, can reverse this relation with the Other by looking at the "look" and making the Other object. In order that the Other appear as object, the For-itself, moreover, must constitute itself as not the Other, must include "the being of the Other in its being insofar as its being is in question as not being the Other."\(^{28}\) For Sartre, this internal negation, which constitutes "a unitary bond of being"\(^{29}\) between the For-itself and the Other as object, is thus a reinforcement of the For-itself's selfness and an expression of the For-itself's continual choice of its selfness. Hence, again, the For-itself, while denied the mode of identity and independence of the In-itself, reveals itself as a being having a mode of identity and a type of independence.

In retrospect, being-for-others requires therefore two moments, two internal negations which preclude synthesis, since the Other as subject and the Other as object cannot be united. If one experiences the Other, one fails to know him; if one knows the Other, one achieves only his being as object.\(^{30}\) But, while the synthesis of these two moments remains impossible, each moment reveals the Sartrean view of the For-itself as relation. In the first moment, I non-thetically grasp myself as

\(^{28}\)BN, 283.

\(^{29}\)BN, 284.

\(^{30}\)Cf. BN, 302.
object for the Other who is an internal negation constituting himself as not-me and thereby giving rise to my self-as-object, the self with which I identify but not in the mode of being-in-itself. In the second moment, however, since I remain transcendence for myself, I can refuse myself as object and make the Other object via my look. In this moment, then, I am a relation of internal negation, choosing and reinforcing my selfness by rejecting that of the Other. Hence, while Sartre expresses the being of the For-itself as "the scattering of being-in-itself, of a shattered totality, always elsewhere, always at a distance, never in itself, but always maintained in being by the perpetual explosion of this totality," the For-itself continues to affirm itself as a being denied only the specified mode of identity of being-in-itself, rather than identity per se.

**Body as For-itself.**

In opposition to the Cartesian dualism, Sartre claims: "Being-for-itself must be wholly body and it must be wholly consciousness." To clarify this claim, he takes as his

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31 Footnote 300.

32 Though Sartre considers three dimensions of the body (the body as For-itself, the body as known by the Other, the For-itself's non-thetic grasp of itself as a body known by the Other), our concern is limited to the body as For-itself, since the other dimensions are structured upon the previously examined relation of the For-itself to the Other.

33 Footnote 305.
starting point the primary relation of the For-itself to the world—knowledge. Rejecting a pure knowledge, he declares that knowledge implies a specific point of view and obtains only as engaged. But this requires illustration.

I look at this table and see not only the table, but also the ashtray to the left, the cup of coffee to the right. That I see these things in a certain order, that my point of view is limited to seeing a specific profile of this cup, that these instrumental things are oriented toward me as a center of reference demands that I appear in the midst of the world, that I be located, that I be bodied. As Sartre states: "The structure of the world demands that we cannot see without being visible." But, as my sense of sight seizes these objects in the world, rather than itself, so, too, with my body as the center of reference; it is that which I am, but it is never an object for me. It is my point of view upon which I cannot take a point of view.

As the body of a consciousness engaged in the world, my body, moreover, must be inserted in the field of instrumentality as an instrument. Yet, Sartre maintains, the body is not to be construed as a physical instrument utilized by a soul, since such a utilization would admit an infinite regress and reduce instrumentality to nonsense. Thus, my body for me

34 BN, 317.
is an instrument which I am. My body is lived, neither utilized nor known.

Yet, as the For-itself's point of view, as the For-itself's center of reference with respect to a specific instrumental complex, the body is that beyond which the For-itself is as presence to the object, is that which the For-itself surpasses toward a new complex in its projection toward its possible. Expressing the implications of the body as surpassed, Sartre states:

Thus the body, since it is surpassed, is the Past. It is the immediate presence to the For-itself of "sensible" things insofar as this presence indicates a center of reference and is already surpassed either toward the appearance of a new this or toward a new combination of instrumental-things. In each project of the For-itself, in each perception the body is there; it is the immediate Past insofar as it still touches on the Present which flees it. This means that it is at once a point of view and a point of departure—a point of view, a point of departure which I am and which at the same time I surpass toward what I have to be.35

That the body as a point of view, as a point of departure, is perpetually surpassed reveals, moreover, that the "body is the contingent form which is taken up by the necessity of my contingency."36 What does this mean?

Though the contingent form of the For-itself, the body is the necessary expression of the For-itself's inability to  

35BN, 326.
36BN, 328.
found its being. For, in virtue of this lack, the For-itself seeks to found itself by engaging in the world and thus requires a body in order to be this point of view--here. The body, therefore, is a manifestation of the For-itself's necessary connection with In-itself, of the For-itself's facticity. As that which the For-itself nihilates in its revolt against contingency, as the nihilated immediate past, the body, in other words, refers to the For-itself's original necessary connection with In-itself--the nihilation of that primary In-itself through which the For-itself was metaphysically born. Assuming the For-itself's necessary contingency, then, the body is "a permanent structure of my being and the permanent condition of possibility for my consciousness as consciousness of the world and as a transcendent project toward my future."37 What, however, is the relation of the For-itself to its body?

Declaring that consciousness exists its body only as consciousness, Sartre contends that "the relation of consciousness to the body is an existential relation."38 Not an object of knowledge for the For-itself, the body belongs to "the structure of non-thetic self-consciousness."39 And yet, as the

37 BN, 328.

38 BN, 329. The employment of "exist" as a transitive verb serves to emphasize that the primal relation of consciousness to its body is a lived relation, not cognitive.

39 BN, 330.
nihilated immediate past, the body exists in the mode of In-itself and thus cannot be simply identified with the non-thetic consciousness, with a free project toward its possibilities, toward its future. The body for the For-itself, then, appears to be simultaneously "nothing other than the for-itself" and "the in-itself which is surpassed by the nihilating for-itself." This bedrock paradox expresses for Sartre two facets of body-for-itself: (1) as the For-itself's point of view and insertion into the world, the body is a necessary manifestation of the For-itself's contingency and thus "nothing other than the for-itself," and (2) as the point of view on a specific complex of things, the body is the surpassed, the nihilated immediate past, a nihilated In-itself, in the For-itself's projection toward the future and a new complex of things. With regard to this second point, Sartre adds: "Nowhere else shall we come closer to touching that nihilation of the In-itself by the For-itself." And yet, though the body, as the For-itself's point of view, is perpetually surpassed, it is reborn in the very act of surpassing as a point of view on a new complexus of objects. There is, then, no ready-made formula for expressing the For-itself's relation to its body.

40 BN, 309.
41 BN, 309.
42 BN, 333.
At most one can view this relation as an existential or non-theistic relation through which the For-itself expresses an identity with its body as its point of view on the world, as its immediate past, and yet refuses the congealed, solidified identity of being-in-itself.

Summary

The unfolding of the structure of the For-itself in terms of its relations to the world, as well as its self-relations, discloses that Sartre employs the term "relation" to designate the For-itself as a being which is refused the substantiality, the mode of radical self-containment of the In-itself. Perhaps, Sartre's most acute tour de force against the abstraction of a self-enclosed For-itself lies in his avowal of the dependence of the For-itself's self-relations upon its relations to the world. This Sartrean strategy is thus sufficiently significant to deserve brief consideration.

Recall, presence to self--the primary self-relation through which the For-itself found its nothingness--requires, according to Sartre, the For-itself's presence to In-itself in the form of an existential relation of knowledge. Only on the foundation of the For-itself relating to In-itself, then, is presence to self--the basic, immediate structure of the For-itself--sustained. Moreover, because presence to self reveals

\[43\] Cf. above, 64.
the For-itself as lack and constitutes, in turn, the necessary condition for the upsurge of the lacked (value) and the lacking (the For-itself's possible), all of the immediate self-relations of the For-itself refer ultimately to its metaphysical birth as the nihilation of a primary In-itself and its continual nihilation of the In-itself with which it engages in the world. Hence, not even in terms of its immediate self-relations can the For-itself be considered a self-contained thing.

For Sartre, then, the For-itself must be viewed as a lived relation suspended between the contingent In-itself which it perpetually nihilates and the In-itself-For-itself toward which it perpetually projects itself. Its being as temporality, moreover, reveals a similar structure, for the For-itself as present is a relation suspended between its past from which it flees\(^4\) and its future toward which it projects itself. Implicit in this self-relation of temporality is, again, the For-itself's nihilation of the In-itself and projection toward the In-itself-For-itself.

In a striking repudiation of the Cartesian, substantial cogito, Sartre claims that even the self-relation of reflection

\(^4\) Though the body as surpassed is past and thereby In-itself, Sartre contends that the body is also a non-thetic structure of consciousness. But from this latter standpoint, the For-itself non-thetically grasps its body only through the indication of the instrumental things in the world. In this sense, a self-relation is again seen to be revealed in terms of an engagement in the world.
arises only in terms of the For-itself's engagement in the world. Because reflection consists in a dual effort to make the reflected-on an object and to appropriate it, the reflective consciousness seeks to view the reflected-on from the outside, to see itself as the Other sees it. But this attempt presupposes that the For-itself has been seen and has non-theoretically grasped itself as having an outside. Moreover, the goal of appropriation implicit in the reflective effort has as its primary analogate the For-itself's appropriative relations to the In-itself. Hence, reflection, though a self-relation, is dependent upon the For-itself's relation to the Other and to the world.

That the For-itself's self-relations imply its engagement in and across the world evinces unequivocally for Sartre that any treatment of the For-itself as a self-enclosed thing, existing in the same manner as the In-itself, is a hopeless abstraction. As previously stated, to convey that the For-itself is refused the In-itself's mode of self-containment, of substantiality, Sartre designates the For-itself "relation." Included in the Sartrean polemic against the substantialists are, moreover, significant ontological implications. The For-itself has repeatedly been characterized as a relation of internal negation, as a relation of identity denied. The relation which is being-for-itself, furthermore, has been found to be a dynamic activity in terms of which the For-itself
determines and defines its essence. That the term to which the
For-itself relates remains static reveals, moreover, that the
For-itself is a univocal relation.\(^{45}\) But what are the ontologi-
cal implications of a relation characterized by internality,
negativity and univocity?

The demands upon a relation which is internal are
usually twofold: (1) each term must affect the other in its
being and (2) each term must thereby be included in the being
of the other. Because Sartre considers the For-itself a univ-
ocal relation, however, the term which the For-itself includes
in its being, the term which affects the For-itself in its
being, need not itself include or be affected in its being by
the For-itself. Take, for example, a man who has a general
grasp of the contemporary, world situation. That situation
neither includes this man in its being nor is affected directly
by the fact that the man knows it. The internality of this re-
lation is thus only one-sided, on the side of the For-itself.
But the character of this internality must be further explored.

That this man adopts certain attitudes toward life, toward his fellow man, toward himself evinces that what is known
has affected him at the heart of his being, that what is known

\(^{45}\) Cf. BN, 284, 308. The notable exception to this uni-
vocity is the relation of being-for-others. But in an effort
to find a general meaning of the For-itself as relation, one
can only note exceptions.
is included in his being. For the only way to explain such phenomena is to say that he is what he knows, that he exists the contemporary situation, that he non-thetically lives what he knows. But yet, while he is what he knows, he does not collapse into being simply what he knows, since this would involve his slipping into In-itself and ceasing to be For-itself. The For-itself, then, while including what is known in its being and while being affected intrinsically by what is known, nevertheless constitutes itself as not being simply what is known. The For-itself, in other words, is what it knows, but not in the solidified mode of being-in-itself. For the For-itself includes in its being the term to which it relates in the only mode ontologically open to it—in the mode of non-being, in the mode of flight, in the mode of For-itself. As Sartre states of the For-itself's futile attempt to gain the self-coincidence and self-containment of the In-itself: "I want to grasp this being and I no longer find anything but myself." 46 But this is the fate of the For-itself in its relations to the world, as well as its self-relations. 47 For the For-itself is a being which is intrinsically affected by a term that is included in its being, but not in the concrete mode of identity of being-in-itself. Whether the term be the self to which it is present,

46BN, 218.

47Cf. the summary of Chapter I of Part Two for a review of the For-itself's failure to achieve the self-coincidence of the In-itself even in its self-relations.
the In-itself-For-itself, its horizon of possibles, its past, its future, the consciousness reflected-on, its body, the concrete In-itself which it knows and appropriates or the Other, the For-itself relates to it in a bond of being, a bond in terms of which it is intrinsically altered, a bond in terms of which it constitutes itself as this For-itself by its non-thetic grasp that it is not any of these terms in the mode of In-itself. Ahead of itself, behind itself, outside itself: the For-itself finds itself only as flight, as lack, as a being dependent in its being upon the region of In-itself, as a being dependent in its process of self-construction upon the various terms cited, as a being whose being is diasporatic, as a being refused the solidification, identity, self-containment and fullness of being-in-itself.

For Sartre, that the For-itself is what it is not and is not what it is conveys its meaning as a relation of internal negation, as a relation of identity denied. That the For-itself be conceived in this way stems ultimately from the Sartrean perspective of its metaphysical birth as the nihilation of an In-itself. But there are certain options that Sartre made with regard to this metaphysical phenomenon. That the For-itself be an internal relation was his option when confronted with the alternative of a self-contained substance entering into only external relations and existing in the mode
of the Sartrean In-itself. This primal rejection of such a substantialist view of the For-itself constitutes the foundation for Sartre's refusal to attribute to the For-itself the substantial characteristics of the In-itself. But, while refusing the For-itself the same mode of substantiality as the In-itself, has Sartre actually refused it a mode of substantiality?

From the examination of the For-itself's self-relations in the preceding chapter, it can be ascertained that the For-itself sustains its relationality within the unity of its being and possesses a mode of identity with the terms to which it relates in virtue of the very character of self-relations. That Sartre repeatedly asserts that the For-itself is each of the terms to which it relates, but not in the mode of In-itself, further suggests that the For-itself has a type of identity. Moreover, the Sartrean avowal that the For-itself, in making the Other be as object for it, reinforces its selfness and expresses a continual choice of its selfness indicates again that the For-itself grasps a mode of identity with itself and evinces, in addition, that the For-itself has a mode of independence. Furthering this view of the For-itself existing in a mode of independence is the Sartrean option to consider the For-itself an internal relation of negation. For it is solely in terms of constituting itself as not simply that to which it relates that the For-itself constitutes itself as a this. Then, too, it is
in terms of its nihilating activity that the For-itself can never simply be the In-itself that it knows and seeks to appropriate. Since the For-itself, therefore, does not lapse into the being of the In-itself which it knows and seeks to appropriate, it appears to have a certain mode of independence from the In-itself. Finally, Sartre's declaration that the For-itself is freedom suggests a mode of independence accruing to the being of the For-itself. Hence, once again, the question arises as to whether Sartre has substantialized the "relation" which is For-itself. 48

48 Because this final paragraph was intended to suggest, on the basis of the considerations of Part Two, that Sartre might be attributing to the For-itself characteristics analogous to the substantial In-itself, no documentation was offered. To treat systematically this question concerning the substantialization of the For-itself and to provide the necessary documentation is the task of Part Three.
PART THREE

THE FOR-ITSELF: SUBSTANTIAL OR NON-SUBSTANTIAL?
CHAPTER I

IS THE FOR-ITSELF SUBSTANTIALIZED?

As disclosed by the examination of the structure of the For-itself, the Sartrean declaration that the For-itself is relation has as its principal target the substantialist equation of human reality with a self-contained thing. In rejecting this equation, Sartre claims transcendence as the chief characteristic of human reality and denounces the substantialist illusion as a hopeless abstraction. He holds that the substantialist denial of the internal relationality of the being of man constitutes a failure to consider the fact of man's dependence on being-in-itself for the data with which he works in the process of self-construction, as well as for the very foundation of his being. He contends that the substantialist identification of human reality with what it is at any given instant neglects to take into account the dynamism of man as a being which is temporality, as a being which forges its own essence, as a being which is perpetually ahead of this self-constructed essence in pursuit of further possibles, in pursuit of the In-itself-For-itself. Ultimately, the Sartrean polemic against the substantialists rests with his view that both the project of man—to be a consciousness which has the
substantiality of the In-itself—and the actions in terms of which man seeks to realize this project are explicable only if man is considered as a lack of the substantiality of the In-itself or, in Sartrean terms, non-substantial.

Yet, it was observed in the closing paragraph of the preceding section that Sartre, while maintaining the For-itself's lack of the mode of substantiality of being-in-itself, nevertheless appears to provide the For-itself with a type of unity, identity, "thisness" and independence—in short, with a type of substantiality. A question thus arises as to whether Sartre has substantialized the For-itself in a mode analogous to that of the In-itself. The philosophical import of this question lies not only in its immediate metaphysical ramifications, but also in its bearing upon the Sartrean utilization of the For-itself as the source of traditional categories of being. For, with regard to this latter point, the establishment of a Sartrean employment of an analogous notion of substance would mitigate his declaration of a radical distinction between the two regions of being and would thus make plausible his wielding of the For-itself to issue categories of being. In an effort to resolve the question concerning whether the For-itself can bear the ontological burden of issuing the categories of being, it hence becomes necessary to ascertain first
whether Sartre has substantialized the For-itself.

In handling this question of a possible Sartrean substantialization of the For-itself, it would be advantageous to consider initially a selective, historical sketch of the notion of substance, for such an approach would provide a review of traditional characteristics assigned to substance and would afford a sharper focus upon Sartre's own historical context for his polemic against substantialist philosophies. It is necessary, moreover, to re-examine the Sartrean consideration of the For-itself to see whether Sartre actually stocks the For-itself with characteristics analogous to those substantial characteristics ascribed to the In-itself and/or recorded in the history of philosophy. Such are the concerns of this present chapter. The following chapter will further pursue this issue of the substantialization of the For-itself, but from the standpoint of a consideration of the ontological status of the For-itself as it is operative in the Sartrean account of the issuance of the categories of being. The attempt to settle the question of substantialization and the ultimate question concerning whether the For-itself can bear the ontological burden of originating the categories of being will be delayed, however, to Part Four.
A Historical Sketch of the Notion of Substance

Pervading the treatment of substance throughout the history of philosophy is an ambiguity regarding the meaning of the term "substance"—an ambiguity originating with Aristotle. For Aristotle used this term to designate not only the individual thing, but also the essential nature common to many things. This duality of signification, however, need not concern us directly, since our interest lies principally with the characterization of substance as the individual thing.

Regarding substance as the individual thing, Aristotle claimed that substance can be said to exist apart or have an independence in mode of being only if considered as the whole thing inclusive of qualities. Since the qualities "are not something outside it which it needs in addition to itself," the Aristotelian substance is thus self-contained. Or, as expressed in other words: "The individual alone is that which belongs to itself only, which is not borne up by some other,

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1 In this presentation of select notions of substance voiced in the history of philosophy, secondary sources are being employed in order to allow one freedom from involvement in the problematic of substance as it grips the various systems. In cases where Sartre himself has put forth interpretations of historical notions of substance, the Sartrean interpretation will be employed. Our chief interest in this section lies only in a listing of characteristics ascribed to substance.


3 Ibid.
which is what it is by reason of itself, and not upon the basis of some other being."\(^4\) This mode of independence in being, moreover, attests that "individual substances cannot be relative."\(^5\) Chief among the characteristics of Aristotelian substance, then, are "thisness," independence, non-relationality in mode of being and determination--both in the sense of a "whatness" and singularity.\(^6\) The Aristotelian "this here thing," however, is always more than what it is essentially, is always more than a "such."\(^7\) Furthering this notion and the Aristotelian repudiation of change as a bare succession, it has further been suggested that the ability to admit contrary qualifications be affirmed as a chief characteristic of Aristotelian

\(^4\) B. Costelloe and J. Muirhead, Aristotle and the Earlier Peripatetics, I (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1962), 331-32. This statement expresses well the type of view of substance which Sartre refuses the For-itself. In this regard, it is interesting to compare it with Sartrean statements concerning the For-itself: "Consciousness is born supported by a being which is not itself." (BN, lxi) Again, "consciousness is a being such that in its being, its being is in question in so far as this being implies a being other than itself." (BN, lxi) And, still again, "the for-itself without the in-itself is a kind of abstraction; it could not exist any more than a color could exist without form . . ." (BN, 621)

\(^5\) Ibid., 287. Cf. also 289.


substance. Hence, independence, individuality, determination, non-relationality in mode of being and ability to admit contrary qualities emerge as the primary characteristics of substance as viewed by Aristotle.

These characteristics ascribed to substance by Aristotle are affirmed also by St. Thomas Aquinas, though there is a difference in perspective in the latter's discussion in terms of his insight into "esse." Whether "substance" be used to designate a metaphysical principle of being or an individual thing, Aquinas demands its being considered in relation to "esse." Substance, as a metaphysical principle, he defines as the essence of a thing as directly related to "esse," and thus as the principle by which the being is determinate. As a metaphysical principle distinct from accidents, substance, moreover, is the potential principle by which the being admits of contrary qualifications within the determinate limits of its essence. Hence, determinateness and the capability to admit contrary qualifications accrue to the individual thing in virtue of the metaphysical principle of substance.

This being--the individual thing--Aquinas also terms "substance." "Substance is the thing in its necessary role of independent existence." Because finite substances, however,

8Cf. Ross, Aristotle, 24, 166.

are caused beings, "the independent existence proper to sub-
stance means independence not as to cause but as to mode."\(^{10}\)

Independence as to mode of existence thus ranks with determin-
ateness and the capability to admit contrary qualifications in
characterizing substance. Moreover, in view of the Thomistic
notion of signate matter, individuation, too, comes to rest
upon substance. Then, too, because Aquinas views being as con-
vertible with the transcendental one, substance—as the whole
thing—must be actually undivided in itself.

In addition to these characteristics of Thomistic sub-
stance, one more should be cited—identity. According to
Thomistic philosophy, substance constitutes:

\[\ldots\] the concrete expression of the principle of
identity. Without substance there is no limit
placed on the number of predications, because there
is never anything at which a final point must be
reached for the two mutually exclusive alternates:
being so or not so. \ldots\] The eternal dichotomy
of something or nothing pushes its roots into sub-
stance.\(^{11}\)

This consideration of identity is intrinsically bound to the
Thomistic account of accidental change, since substance—as a
metaphysical principle—is viewed as the enduring substrate, as

\(^{10}\)Ibid., 148.

\(^{11}\)Ibid., 54. This statement expresses well the type of
substantialist view which Sartre refuses the For-itself. For
the view of substance as the determinant regarding whether a
thing is so or not so, is incompatible with the being of the
For-itself, since the For-itself, as transcendence, reaches a
final point only when it ceases to be transcendence, only in
death.
the permanent, throughout such a change. But so much for the Thomistic doctrine of substance.

The historical setting for Sartre's own polemic with substantialist philosophies is provided by the period of modern philosophy and, within that period, by Descartes in particular. Refusing a univocal predication of substance to God and created things, Descartes distinguished between absolute substance, that which exists in and of itself, God, and relative substance, that which is caused in existence, mind and body. With respect to mind and body, however, he employed a univocal concept of substance. Relative substance, whether mind or body, he averred, can be termed such to the extent that it is the support of the qualities which inhere in it. Moreover, as support, relative substance is the unchanged throughout change.

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12 Cf. G. P. Klubertanz, S.J., *Introduction to the Philosophy of Being* (2nd ed., New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1963), 91-96. For a further account of substance, cf. 243-51. It may be said, by way of suggestion, that this view of substance as the enduring subject of accidental change tends to mitigate the Thomistic view of substance as a potential principle which, when actualized by accidents, is the principle by which the being exists according to a new, accidental modification. This point will be further developed, however, in a later context.

13 This view of a non-univocal predication of "substance" to God and created things is posited also by Aquinas. It is in terms of this distinction that the independence of created things is restricted to mode of existence.

14 The consideration of substance as the unchanged was
But, in addition to being characterized as an unchanged substrate, relative substance, as revealed by the Cartesian possession of clear and distinct ideas, exists independently of other such substances. Each is simply what it is in total self-containment. Thus the Cartesian relative substance emerges as an insular, permanent "what-it-is." It is precisely this type of substantiability which Sartre denies the For-itself.

Sartre's comments in repudiation of the substantiability of the Cartesian cogito further a sharpening of focus on his issue with substantialists. He states: "The ontological error of Cartesian rationalism is not to have seen that if the absolute is defined by the primacy of existence over essence, it can not be conceived as a substance. Consciousness has nothing substantial." In terms of this statement, Sartre rejects the Cartesian claim to have made the cogito an object of knowledge, for such a claim, according to Sartre, entails the petrification of the cogito into a "what-it-is." Sartre contends, moreover, that the Cartesian cogito fails to express the dynamism of prevalent in the classical period of modern philosophy. Locke, for example, also treated substance as the bare, faceless, inert support of qualities. Then, too, for Kant, substance was equated with the noumenon "behind" the phenomenon, with the unchanged "behind" the changing.


16 NN, lvi.
the being of consciousness. "It preserves the character of
being-in-itself in its integrity, although the for-itself is
its attribute. This is what is called Descartes' substantialist
illusion."\textsuperscript{17} This is the illusion which the Sartrean consider-
ation has sought to repudiate. As Sartre states: "This being,
under our observation, has been transcended toward value and
possibilities; we have not been able to keep it within the sub-
stantial limits of the instantaneity of the Cartesian \textit{cogito}."\textsuperscript{18}
In virtue of the dynamic temporality of the For-itself, more-
over, "the Cartesian \textit{cogito} ought to be formulated rather: 'I
think; therefore I was.'"\textsuperscript{19} For the Cartesian, reflective
\textit{cogito}, according to Sartre, cannot be in a congealed mode of
identity with the consciousness-reflected-on; it must be ahead
of the reflected-on, thereby placing the latter in the immediate
past.\textsuperscript{20} Thus, from Sartre's perspective, the being of the For-
itself continues to refuse the Cartesian predication of sub-
stantiality, continues to refuse the Cartesian abstraction of

\textsuperscript{17}HN, 84.

\textsuperscript{18}HN, 104. Cf. also 84-85, 131-35, 156 for Sartre's
further comments on the instantaneity of the Cartesian \textit{cogito}.
It should be noted, moreover, that the Sartrean \textit{cogito} differs
from the Cartesian \textit{cogito} as the non-thetic consciousness condi-
tioning the latter. Cf. Part One, 10-11.

\textsuperscript{19}HN, 119.

\textsuperscript{20}Cf. Part Two, Chapter I, 48-53 for the foundation of
this Sartrean criticism of the Cartesian \textit{cogito}. 
instantaneity. Moreover, in view of the Sartrean consideration of the relationality of the For-itself, the For-itself emerges as a being which is denied the Cartesian cogito's self-containment and radical independence from the world. As Sartre states: "There is not a for-itself on the one hand and a world on the other as two closed entities for which we must subsequently seek some explanation as to how they communicate. The for-itself is a relation to the world."\(^{21}\) From this abbreviated sketch of the Sartrean critique of the Cartesian cogito, then, it can be attested that Sartre's rejection of substantiability for the For-itself has as its target the type of substantiability of Descartes' cogito--a self-contained, permanent "what-it-is." It is thus the Cartesian notion of substance which Sartre rejects when he avows the non-substantiability of the For-itself. It is, moreover, in terms of the Sartrean adoption of the Cartesian notion of substance in his characterization of the In-itself that Sartre views the For-itself as lacking the substantiability of the In-itself. But what, specifically, are the substantial characteristics which Sartre himself attributes to being-in-itself, to the region of substance?

In virtue of his regional view of substance, Sartre claims that only the In-itself "exists in itself, is defined by permanence, non-temporality, a sufficiency of being, in a word

\(^{21}\)BN, 306.
by substantiality." That being-in-itself exists in itself is, moreover, an affirmation of its independence, the primary characteristic of substance for Sartre, as well as for Aristotle, Aquinas and Descartes. As Sartre states: "It is this independence which constitutes in the in-itself its character as a thing." The independence of the In-itself, however, refers not to that of a *causa sui*, but rather to the mode of being of the In-itself. For, as "fully formed," the In-itself is what it is and thus requires no relation to other things. It is the principle of identity, moreover, which expresses this self-containment and permanent determinateness of the In-itself. A regional principle of being, according to Sartre, the principle of identity designates "the opacity of being-in-itself," "the negation of every species of relation at the heart of being-in-itself." In terms of this solidified mode of identity, in terms of its

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22BN, 588.
23BN, 506.
24Cf. BN, lxiv, 620. It is Sartre's contention that the In-itself would have to be consciousness in order to found itself and thus that the In-itself cannot be a *causa sui*. Though he repudiates any theory of divine creation as explanatory of the In-itself, he prescinds from making a definitive statement as to the foundation of this region of being.
25BN, 174.
26Cf. BN, lxvi.
27BN, lxvi.
28BN, 77.
bedrock permanence, being-in-itself, furthermore, is beyond change and thus beyond temporality. Hence, independence, determinateness, identity, permanence, non-relationality and non-temporality emerge as the characteristics of the realm of In-itself, the realm of Sartrean substance.29

In terms of this historical consideration of select notions of substance, it can be ascertained that the following characteristics are commonly ascribed to substance: independence as to mode of being, identity, unity, determinateness, permanence and non-relationality. In addition to such common denominators, the potentiality to admit contrary accidents should also be cited as a distinctive feature of the Aristotelian-Thomistic doctrines of substance.30 These characteristics, however, suggest only guidelines for approaching the

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29 With respect to non-relationality, substantialist philosophies, in general, admit external relations as compatible with substance, though they reject internal relations. Sartre, however, in line with his general thesis that the For-itself issues all categories of being, claims that the In-itself can enter into external relations only on the grounds of a For-itself's presence to it. Cf. BN, 77, 362. Nevertheless, the important point with regard to non-relationality is the denial of internal relations for any substance and on this point Sartre concurs with traditional substantialist philosophies.

30 It is interesting to note that this admission of such a potentiality for substance does not deter Aristotle and Aquinas from using substance as the focal point of a thing's independence, unity, identity and permanence. For it appears paradoxical that those who consider substance as a potential for further actualization and those who consider it as the bedrock unchanged nevertheless are agreed on the function of substance with respect to these other characteristics. But this point will be reconsidered in Part Four.
question concerning whether the Sartrean For-itself is substantialized in a manner analogous to the In-itself. To proceed more directly on the road to a resolution of this issue, it is necessary to re-examine the Sartrean For-itself from the standpoint of such guidelines.

Characteristics of the For-itself: Substantial or Non-substantial?

In reconsidering the Sartrean For-itself in terms of the question of substantialization, it should be noted at the outset that Sartre himself does not claim to have wielded an analogous notion of substance. This fact, together with his repeated repudiation of the substantialist illusion, suggests that, if the substantialization of the For-itself be ultimately affirmed, the affirmation will go beyond any declaration within the Sartrean system. Moreover, in terms of Sartre's refusal to use substance—a "what-it-is"—as a "caricature" for the independence, unity, identity and permanence of human reality, an affirmation of a Sartrean, substantialized For-itself would imply a suggestion of different ways in which a substance can be said to have independence, unity, identity and permanence and would thus have significant metaphysical ramifications for a general doctrine of substance, as well as for an explicit

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31BN, 561.
working out of the analogy of substance. But let us re-examine the For-itself.

The review of historical doctrines of substance has revealed independence as the principal characteristic of substance and has thus provided us with a starting point in our inquiry concerning the substantialization of the For-itself. Such Sartrean assertions as "the for-itself is in no way an autonomous substance," "the for-itself without the in-itself is a kind of abstraction" would appear, however, to eradicate any hope of attributing independence to the For-itself. Sartre's account of the metaphysical birth of the For-itself as a nihilation of a particular In-itself, together with his ontological proof, moreover, would appear to efface independence from the being of the For-itself. And yet, while the For-itself is intrinsically bound to the In-itself, it nevertheless constitutes itself as not in the mode of being-in-itself that In-itself to which it is present. Thus the Sartrean For-itself manifests itself as not the things to which it is present,

32 In addition to these general metaphysical implications stemming from the issue of substantialization, there is, moreover, the point with which we are particularly concerned, namely, whether a substantialization of the For-itself would make more plausible the Sartrean employment of the For-itself to issue the categories of being.

33 BN, 618.
34 BN, 621.
as independent from these things, but this independence is revealed only on the ground of its fundamental dependence. This, however, requires further consideration.

The Sartrean account of the For-itself's relations to the world revealed a common theme bearing significantly upon the question of the For-itself's independence. For Sartre averred that every relation which the For-itself sustains with the In-itself and the Other in its effort to be In-itself-For-itself flings the For-itself back upon itself as this For-itself, as always other than the beings to which it relates. As Sartre states: "I want to grasp this being and I no longer find anything but myself."36 That I do not collapse into the being of what I know, into the being of what I act upon, into the being of what I possess thus attests a real independence in being on my part. Then, too, since I never attain the unitary synthesis of myself and In-itself which is the In-itself-For-itself, my independence from the In-itself is further evinced. Sartre himself, in speaking of the For-itself's failure to realize the ideal synthesis of In-itself-For-itself, asserts: "It is this perpetual failure which explains both the indissolubility of the In-itself and of the for-itself and at the same time their relative independence."37 The For-itself is thus considered by

36BN, 218.
37BN, 623.
Sartre to have an independence in being. But my independence as For-itself is such that it does not eradicate my real dependence on the In-itself and Others in my task of self-construction; my independence, in other words, is such that it does not deny that my relations to the world are demanded by my being as a consciousness of something other than itself. Hence, the independence of the Sartrean For-itself--its being other than others to which it relates--is an independence which asserts itself across the field of the For-itself's fundamental dependence upon the world.

The Sartrean claim that the For-itself is freedom, moreover, develops this same theme--an independence in the face of dependence. For, in virtue of the For-itself's relation to In-itself, freedom exists only in situation. Freedom, as the For-itself's independence, then, emerges in the context of the For-itself's dependence on In-itself. But, in what way does my freedom assert my independence from the particular things to which I relate in my concrete situation?

While I always exist in a concrete situation, while I always exist in relation to the things within that situation, my freedom is the source of my making these things exist for me. It is my freedom which allows me to crystallize an end across a given and to provide a new meaning for that given in the light of my end. For example, in walking along the shore,
I detect sea-shells and choose to collect some and use them for decorative purposes in my home. By removing them from their natural locale, by incorporating these things into my concrete project, I assert my independence from them by making them exist for me. It is my freedom which is my possibility of detachment from things as they are, which is my choice of a concrete change to be bestowed on a concrete given, which is my assertion of independence in the face of dependence.

In virtue of my freedom, my concrete projects, moreover, are always open, always contain the possibility of further modifications. If I am driving down a road en route to an appointment and suddenly discover that the road ahead is strewn with fallen branches, through my initiative I can act upon these givens which offer resistance to the realization of my end. I can cast them aside and proceed on my way. My freedom thus reveals itself as a spontaneity "beyond reach" of things in my situation and thus as independent of these things. Hence, as a spontaneity "beyond reach" and yet "as having to do with something other than itself," freedom affirms that the For-itself is independent in the sense of being other than others and in the sense of dominating other things.

In terms of this discussion, then, it can be said that

38 EN, 506-507.
39 This discussion of freedom is based upon the Sartrean account presented in EN, 433-556.
Sartre does provide the For-itself with an independence in being. As he states of the For-itself: "It 'is' in the mode of For-itself; that is, as a separated existent inasmuch as it reveals itself as not being being," that is, as not being being-in-itself. He defines a free existent, moreover, as "an existent which as consciousness is necessarily separated from all others because they are in connection with it only to the extent that they are for it." This independence which Sartre assigns to human reality, however, does not involve a self-sufficiency in being, is not the same as the independence of a stone. For to exist as For-itself, as a consciousness of something other than itself, demands internal relations to the world. Yet, Sartre maintains that the For-itself's dependence, expressed in terms of its internal relations to the world, does not deny its real independence, since the very positing of internal relations involves the "positing of an otherness" and thus involves the For-itself's non-thetic grasp of itself as other than this otherness, that is, as independent.

The independence of the For-itself, moreover, in securing the For-itself's dividedness from others, secures a dimension of what is traditionally termed "unity." For the one

\[\text{BN}, 123.\]
\[\text{BN}, 453.\]
\[\text{BN}, 77.\]
is defined as that which is actually undivided in itself and divided from others. But, while independence manifests the For-itself's dividedness from others, in what sense can the actual undividedness of the For-itself be affirmed? That Sartre does affirm the For-itself's unity can be evinced by turning to virtually any page of Being and Nothingness. The question, however, remains: in what sense can a being which is what it is not and is not what it is be considered as actually undivided in self?

A reconsideration of the self-relations of the For-itself reveals that, although the For-itself has distinct "dimensions," it nevertheless admits of an interpenetration of its dimensions. Recall, the reflecting-reflection dyad, the For-itself-value dyad, the For-itself-possible relation and the reflective- reflected-on relation each manifested a distinction of terms, but within the bounds of a fundamental interpenetration. For in each relation neither term could achieve actual independence from the other. But, if there is no actual

43 For a discussion of each of these self-relations, cf. Part Two, Chapter I. It should be noted that Sartre formulates these self-relations in terms of the For-itself's refusal of the same mode of identity as that of the In-itself. To the extent that identity is oneness with self, these self-relations, however, can be considered from the standpoint of an analogous predication of unity. Moreover, if the Sartrean For-itself is discovered to be actually undivided in itself, in a mode analogous to the unity of the In-itself, this would be suggestive of its identity—the "I am I." The question of the For-itself's identity, however, must be considered separately.
independence of the terms which the For-itself sustains in its self-relations, then the For-itself must be a being which is actually undivided or one.

The Sartrean view of the For-itself as "the being which has to be its being in the diasporatic form of Temporality," however, poses a problem with respect to the question of the For-itself's unity, since Sartre considers the past as In-itself, as substance. Yet, the Sartrean account of temporality affirms the unity of the For-itself inasmuch as the For-itself as present is conditioned by its past and its future as much as it conditions them. Hence, again, Sartre maintains a type of interpenetration as coming to bind the For-itself's distinct dimensions: "None of them can exist without the other two." If, then, none can achieve actual independence, can exist actually divided from the other two, the For-itself—as temporality—must be a being which is actually undivided in itself.

44 BN, 142.
45 Cf. BN, 115, 119. Sartre's ontological characterization of the past as In-itself poses a bedrock problem. Though Sartre does state at one point that the past "is at the same time for-itself and in-itself," (BN, 119) this only complicates what appears as an insolvable problem.
46 Cf. BN, 142. This view is reiterated numerous times in Sartre's discussion of temporality (cf. BN, 107-49) and in his consideration of the relation of freedom to the past (cf. BN, 496-504).
47 Cf. BN, 142. Though Sartre admits that the For-itself
The consideration of the ontological structure of the For-itself in its various dimensions thus manifests the fundamental unity of the For-itself. The For-itself is one, is actually undivided in self, in the sense that it exists as an interpenetration of distinct terms. That the For-itself's mode of unity is analogous to that of the In-itself can be exemplified, moreover, by considering the unity of a stone. A stone, too, is actually undivided in itself, but in the sense of an inner cohesion of the same kind of matter admitting of no distinctions. Hence, if unity is predicated analogously, instead of univocally, the Sartrean For-itself can be affirmed as one. But this affirmation of an analogical unity for the For-itself has been worked out in terms of a consideration of the ontological structure of the For-itself—a structure which pervades each and every For-itself.\(^48\) Sartre, however, seeks to express a personal mode of unification for the individual For-itself. Thus the unity of the For-itself requires further examination.

as present, as freedom, is independent of the past, he employs "independence" here to convey the For-itself's power of self-determination and domination over the past, instead of to convey the present's independence in existence from the past. Cf. \(\text{EN}, 496-504.\)

\(^{48}\)In addition to the various dimensions of the ontological structure of the For-itself considered, the consciousness-body union offers a striking illustration of the For-itself's admission of distinction within unity. For, Sartre avers, the For-itself exists its body, its body being its point of insertion in the world and point of view upon that world. Cf. Part Two, Chapter II, 80-85.
In repudiation of psychological methodology which attempts to analyze man in terms of abstract, original givens, Sartre asserts:

Either in looking for the person, we encounter a useless, contradictory metaphysical substance—or else the being whom we seek vanishes in a dust of phenomena bound together by external connections. But what each one of us requires in his very effort to comprehend another is that he should never have to resort to this idea of substance which is inhuman because it is well this side of the human. Finally, the fact is that the being considered does not crumble into dust, and one can discover in him that unity—for which substance was only a caricature—which must be a unity of responsibility, a unity agreeable or hateful, blamable and praiseworthy, in short personal. This unity, which is the being of the man under consideration, is a free unification, and this unification can not come after a diversity which it unifies. . . . this is the unification of an original project, a unification which should reveal itself to us as a non-substantial absolute.  

Thus, according to Sartre, I non-thetically affirm my actual undividedness in being by my lived assumption of responsibility for my past and future, as well as for my present. Moreover, I freely unify my being in terms of my original project, my project of being, my project to become God—the project which stands as the meaning of my freely chosen, concrete ends—the ends which I pursue in relating to my particular situation. As For-itself, then, I am a being whose concrete projects reveal the "original way" in which I have chosen my being, my way of relating to the world. Hence, that a particular For-itself

\[ ^{49} \text{BN, 561.} \]
\[ ^{50} \text{BN, 599.} \]
asserts its personal unity in terms of its assumption of responsibility for its actions across its history, in terms of its original project which stamps each of its concrete projects, attests once more a Sartrean employment of an analogical notion of unity for the For-itself.

Because Sartre views the For-itself as one across its history, the For-itself also emerges as a being having a type of identity with itself, since identity is traditionally considered as the sameness, the oneness of a thing with itself at two points of time or under different considerations.\(^{51}\) Moreover, because I, as this For-itself, do not collapse into the being of the In-itself and the being of the Other, because I, as this For-itself, am actually undivided in myself in virtue of the interpenetration of my distinct "terms," it can be said: "I am myself." But what concrete manifestations of self-identity does the Sartrean For-itself reveal?

That the individual For-itself exists as a pre-reflective self-consciousness assuming its past and projecting its future involves its grasp of its self-identity across its history. For example, if someone asks me what I did this afternoon, I would immediately respond: "I read a book." This response reveals that I as present grasp this past "I" who read the book as myself. Moreover, that I express pride or shame for

\(^{51}\)Cf. Klubertanz, Introduction to the Philosophy of Being, 80, 92.
my past actions, for those actions which are mine and define me from behind, manifests that I grasp this past "I" who had freely performed these actions as myself and thus assume responsibility for these past actions. Hence, what Sartre termed a "unity of responsibility" emerges as an expression of my identity--my oneness with myself across my history.\(^{52}\)

The Sartrean view of the For-itself's original project, a project reflected in each of its concrete projects, further attests the individual For-itself's oneness with self across its history. For, though I--as an individual For-itself--am perpetually changing, am perpetually engaged in the process of self-construction, these changes "are, nevertheless, changes which I discover as changes 'in my life'--that is, changes within the unitary compass of a single project,"\(^{53}\) my project to become In-itself-For-itself, to become God.\(^{54}\) My original project thus, according to Sartre, remains the same throughout my history.

There are, however, other concrete evidences of my self-identity acknowledged by Sartre. My perpetual constitution of myself as not In-itself affirms my oneness with self across my

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\(^{52}\) There are numerous examples presented by Sartre in his discussion of temporality which attest his affirmation of the For-itself's self-identity. Cf. BN, 107-49.

\(^{53}\) BN, 553.

\(^{54}\) Cf. BN, 599.
history. Moreover, in my relation to the Other, in my reversal of the Other's look, I reinforce my selfness. For, as Sartre states of my constitution of myself as not the Other:

This negation which constitutes my being and which, as Hegel said, makes me appear as the Same confronting the Other, constitutes me on the ground of a nonthetic selfness as "Myself." We need not understand by this that a Self comes to dwell in our consciousness but that selfness is reinforced by arising as a negation of another selfness and that this reinforcement is positively apprehended as the continuous choice of selfness by itself as the same selfness and as this very selfness. 55

In terms of my wresting myself-as-object from the look of the Other and making the Other be object for me, I thus freely choose to affirm this self which I am throughout the duration of this relation, throughout my history. Then, too, since my body is lived by me as my insertion in the world of the In-itself and the Other, since my body "represents the individualization of my engagement in the world," 56 my body at every point in my history "is present in every action." 57 Hence, from several Sartrean perspectives (the particular For-itself's original project; its assumption of responsibility for its past and its future, as well as its present; its body as lived

55 BN, 283.

56 BN, 310. Sartre avers that the For-itself is its own individualization. Cf. BN, 310, 523, 524, 599. In terms of its metaphysical birth, this For-itself upsurges as a nihilation of a particular In-itself. Cf. BN, 618.

57 BN, 324.
throughout every action; its reinforcement of its very selfness through its constitution of itself as not the In-itself or the Other to which it relates), the individual For-itself manifests itself as having a sameness, a oneness with itself across its history.

The individual For-itself, then, can be said to have what is traditionally termed a numerical identity--the basic sameness of one and the same individual throughout its duration. But the individual For-itself is refused the same mode of identity as that of the In-itself. For example, a stone has numerical identity in the sense that it remains the same passive, congealed, homogeneous matter, admitting of no intrinsic development and fixed by its physical boundaries throughout its duration. The individual For-itself, however, has numerical identity in the sense of a sameness with self against the backdrop of contrast, of perpetual change, of perpetual self-construction. Its numerical identity, moreover, is dynamically, though non-thetically, sustained across its history in terms of this For-itself's perpetual choice of its selfness, in terms of its perpetual renewal of its original project, in terms of its perpetual awareness of its responsibility for its past, present and future. Thus the Sartrean For-itself does have a numerical identity, but this identity must be predicated analogously.

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Does the Sartrean For-itself, however, admit of a specific identity, an identity which belongs to each and every For-itself qua For-itself? To allow a facile way of distinguishing this inquiry from the preceding one, let us rephrase this question. Let us ask whether the For-itself has a structural determinateness which belongs to each and every For-itself qua For-itself. Inasmuch as Sartre presents an ontology in *Being and Nothingness*, an affirmative response can readily be given to this question. Every For-itself upsurges in the world as a relation to In-itself. Every For-itself emerges sustaining the self-relations described in Chapter I of Part Two. Every For-itself exists its body. Every For-itself is consciousness, freedom, choice, nihilation, temporalization. As Sartre himself asserts: "Naturally certain original structures are invariable and in each For-itself constitute human-reality."\(^5^9\) Thus the For-itself, like the In-itself, emerges with a structural determinateness. But, unlike the In-itself, unlike the stone, the For-itself's very structural determinateness casts the For-itself into the world as lack, as indeterminate, as a being which is self-determining, as a being which forges its own essence, as a being which "makes for himself his own gate,"\(^6^0\) as a being continually engaged in the process of self-construction. Hence the For-itself's structural determinateness

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\(^{5^9}\) *AN*, 456.

\(^{6^0}\) *AN*, 550.
is such that the For-itself, unlike the stone, must be a self-determining being, a being which seeks to escape its structure as lack, as indeterminateness, in a project forever unrealized.

Inasmuch as the For-itself has manifested itself as a being having an analogous numerical identity and structural determinateness, can it be concluded that the For-itself is also characterized by permanence? Prior to pursuing this question, it should be recognized that the numerical identity of a particular For-itself is a lived "reaffirmation" of its sameness with the self which is behind it in the past and the self which is ahead of it in the future. There must be such a dynamic, non-thetic "reaffirmation" since the Sartrean For-itself exists as flight from its past and toward its future, exists as temporalization, as perpetually changing. 61 Similarly, in accord with the Sartrean system, there must be a dynamic, though non-thetic, sustaining of its very structural determinateness on the part of the For-itself, since its structural determinateness as lack is perpetuated only on the ground of the For-itself's continual nihilation of In-itself to which it is present. 62 Thus, while a mode of numerical identity and a mode

61 Cf. BN, 323.

62 Because the structural determinateness of the For-itself is perpetuated only on the ground of this For-itself's nihilation of In-itself, the "for-itself causes a human-reality to exist as a species." (BN, 551)
of structural determinateness come to rest upon the Sartrean For-itself, they should not be so construed as to arrest the inherent dynamism of the For-itself as temporalization. But, if this is the case, can permanence be attributed to the Sartrean For-itself?

The Sartrean repudiation of permanence for the For-itself is staged against the backdrop of modern philosophy. Citing specifically Leibniz and Kant, Sartre condemns their consideration of the permanent as something apart from change. In opposition to the tradition of modern philosophy, he moreover, asserts:

The unity of change and the permanent is necessary for the constitution of change as such. . . . It must be a unity of being. But such a unity of being amounts to requiring that the permanent be that which changes, and hence the unity is at the start ekstatic and refers to the For-itself inasmuch as the For-itself is essentially ekstatic being. . . . Moreover resorting to permanence in order to furnish the foundation for change is completely useless. What Kant and Leibniz want to show is that an absolute change is no longer strictly speaking change since it is no longer based on anything which changes--or in relation to which there is change. But in fact if what changes is its former state in the past mode, this is sufficient to make permanence superfluous. . . . Since this link with the past replaces the pseudo-necessity of permanence, the problem of duration can and ought to be posited in relation to absolute changes.63

Because Sartre views the For-itself as temporally ekstatic, as continually changing (its future becoming its present and its

63BN, 143.
present submerging into its past), he thus rejects any permanence that would render the For-itself a congealed, self-coincident "what-it-is" across time. And yet, while he posits absolute changes for the For-itself, he affirms that the For-itself which changes is its former state in the past mode. This suggests that there is some mode of enduring for the For-itself. Furthering this viewpoint, moreover, is the Sartrean assertion regarding the upsurge of a "new" present: "We must guard against seeing here the appearance of a new being." Then, too, Sartre avers: "The for-itself endures in the form of a non-thetic consciousness (of) enduring." But, precisely, what is the enduring element of the For-itself?

In considering the Sartrean answer to this question, it can be discerned that Sartre is rejecting a given, passive permanence for the For-itself. For he states:

The For-itself is a temporalization. This means that it is not but that it "makes itself." It is the situation which must account for that substantial permanence which we readily recognize in people ("He has not changed." "He is always the same.") and which the person experiences empirically in most cases as being his own. The free perseverance in a single project does not imply any permanence; quite the contrary, it is a perpetual renewal of my engagement . . .

64 BN, 147.

65 BN, 150. Our considerations of the For-itself's numerical identity and structural determinateness are also suggestive of an enduring "element" for the For-itself, but they do not bring into focus what Sartre views as the ultimate expression of the For-itself's enduring "element."
On the other hand, the realities enveloped and illuminated by a project which develops and confirms itself present the permanence of the in-itself; and to the extent that they refer our image to us, they support us with their everlastingness; in fact it frequently happens that we take their permanence for our own. In particular the permanence of place and environment, of the judgments passed on us by our fellowmen, of our past—all shape a degraded image of our perseverance. . . . It should be noted that this permanence of the past, of the environment, and of character are not given qualities; they are revealed on things only in correlation with the continuity of my project.

According to Sartre, then, it is the individual's "free perseverance in a single project," a project perpetually renewed, that constitutes an enduring "element" throughout the individual's history. Opposed to viewing the For-itself's permanence as passive, as given, Sartre wields the dynamism, the spontaneity, the freedom of the For-itself to enunciate a type of "permanence" which endures only because the individual For-itself perpetually renews its way of being in the world, its concrete expression of its project of being, at every point in its history, at every point in its adventure of self-construction. Hence, if predicated analogously, a type of "permanence" can be attributed to the For-itself, but it is a permanence which is perpetually renewed across perpetual change. It is not the same type of permanence which belongs to the In-itself, to the stone; it is not a static, given endurance.

There remains for consideration one further characteristic ascribed to substance by the Aristotelian-Thomistic

66RN, 551-52.
tradition specifically: the capability to admit contrary qualifications. The Sartrean For-itself, by definition, as the being which is what it is not and is not what it is, assuredly admits of such a capability. Our very inquiry concerning the substantialization of the For-itself, moreover, confirms the For-itself's ability to admit contrary qualifications. For this inquiry has revealed the following observations regarding the Sartrean For-itself:

(1) The For-itself is independent in its being from the In-itself and the Other inasmuch as it does not collapse into the being of the In-itself and the Other to which it is present; yet this very independence is revealed across the For-itself's intrinsic dependence upon the In-itself and the Other in its perpetuation of itself as For-itself, as this For-itself.

(2) The For-itself is one inasmuch as it is actually undivided in itself and divided from others (independent); yet its very actual undividedness in itself is revealed as a dynamic interpenetration of its distinct "terms" or "dimensions"; the very unity of the For-itself is thus revealed across its inner distances, across its inner "distinctions."

(3) The For-itself has numerical identity with itself in the sense that it dynamically sustains a sameness with self across its history in terms of its assumption of responsibility for its past and its future, as well as its present, and in virtue of its perpetual renewal of its original choice of its being, of its way of relating to the world; this very numerical identity, however, is sustained across contrast—the contrast afforded by its perpetual process of self-construction, the contrast afforded by its inner distances, the contrast afforded by its being as temporalization.

(4) The For-itself has structural determinateness inasmuch as each and every For-itself exists as a
relation to In-itself, exists its body, exists the immediate structures of its self-relations, exists as lack, freedom, nihilation, choice, temporalization—as consciousness; this very structural determinateness, however, is such that it allows self-determination on the part of the individual For-itself who perpetuates it through nihilating the In-itself; this structural determinateness, moreover is such that it is manifested as lack, as indeterminateness, thereby revealing the For-itself as a being which forges its own essence, which continually engages in the process of self-construction.

(5) The For-itself has permanence inasmuch as it perpetually renews its original project, its choice of its own way of relating to being, its concrete expression of the project to become In-itself-For-itself; this permanence, however, as the perpetual renewal of a single project by the free For-itself, is sustained across the history of the For-itself, across its perpetually changing being.

That the For-itself is a being capable of admitting contrary qualifications is thus evinced by this reconsideration of its other "substantial" characteristics.67

Summary

The investigation of the question as to whether Sartre has substantialized the For-itself has hence shown that traditional characteristics of substance are assigned to the Sartrean For-itself. But, as a general methodical practice

67That the For-itself is capable of admitting contrary qualifications could equally well be evinced by a reconsideration of the relations discussed in Part Two. But there is no need to belabor a consideration of what is the most obvious "substantial" characteristic of the For-itself.
stemming from his view of the For-itself as a dynamic, nihilating temporalization, Sartre disengages these characteristics--as predicated of the For-itself--from their traditional context as the given. This disengagement has two important implications: (1) Sartre rejects outright the attempt of modern philosophy to treat man as a given, insular, non-changing "what-it-is," to view man as substance in this sense, and (2) he repudiates any univocal predication of independence, unity, identity, determinateness, permanence to man and In-itself. Are we to conclude, then, that Sartre has substantialized the For-itself on the basis of an analogical predication of substantial characteristics? The answer to this question should be delayed since there remains another approach to this issue.
CHAPTER II

THE FOR-ITSELF AS THE SOURCE OF CATEGORIES

In an effort to gain further information concerning the question of a Sartrean substantialization of the For-itself, it would be well to consider the ontological status of the For-itself as it is actually operative in Sartre's account of the origination of categories of being. Such a consideration, moreover, admits of a dual strategy: it provides us with another approach to the issue of substantialization and it allows us direct access to an examination of the Sartrean manipulation of the For-itself as the source of categories applicable to being. This final investigation should thus be informative not only with respect to the question of a substantialization of the For-itself, but also with regard to the ultimate question concerning whether the For-itself can bear the burden of its ontological task of issuing categories of being. It would, however, be well to review the relationship of these two questions and the Sartrean thesis regarding the task of the For-itself.

As discussed in Part One, Sartre wields Spinoza's dictum: "All determination is negation" to claim that all determination springs from negation. In the Sartrean system, then,

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1Cf. Part One, 24-25. Cf. BN, 180-86.
the ontological burden of issuing all the determinations in the world, of issuing categories of being, falls to the For-itself since only the For-itself exists as negation. Thus, relation, space, motion, temporality, the one and the many, quality, quantity, potentiality, instrumentality, beauty, value—all come to the world through human reality.\textsuperscript{2} But the Sartrean assignment of this ontological task to the For-itself poses a question which can be formulated in the following way: Can the For-itself as relation bear the burden of issuing categories of being applicable to a region of being so ontologically dissimilar from it, to the region of In-itself, to the Sartrean region of substance? There are, moreover, two grounds for raising this question. First, within the Sartrean system, the For-itself's dependence upon the In-itself confirms the ontological priority of the In-itself and yet the burdensome ontological task of originating categories falls to the For-itself. This disproportion between the ontological priority of the In-itself and the ontological functioning of the For-itself thus gives cause for questioning the Sartrean perspective. Secondly, the lack of a common ground between the For-itself as relation and the In-itself as substance appears to jeopardize Sartre's employment of the For-itself as the source of categories of being. Both of these grounds for questioning the Sartrean

\textsuperscript{2}Cf. BN, 180-216 for Sartre's discussion of the manner in which human reality brings these determinations into the world.
thesis would, however, be mitigated somewhat if Sartre substantialized the For-itself. Hence, as we approach a selective consideration of categories issuing from the For-itself, we should be attentive not only to the question of the ontological status of the For-itself, but also to the ultimate question of the For-itself's capability to bear the ontological burden of issuing categories of being.

Quality

It is the Sartrean view that the For-itself in relating to In-itself causes the "this" to emerge against the backdrop of the totality of undifferentiated In-itself. As the correlate of intentional activity, the "this," in other words, arises across the ground of the totality as "the being which I at present am not." But what is the relation of quality to the "this"?

Defining quality as "nothing other than the being of the this when it is considered apart from all external relation with

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3 It should be noted that an affirmation of the substantialization of the For-itself, if this be the conclusion, does not necessarily imply the For-itself's capability to bear the ontological burden of originating categories of being.

4 It is neither necessary nor possible within the scope of this thesis to consider all the categories which Sartre views as issuing from the For-itself. An examination of quality, quantity and potentiality is sufficient for enunciating the theme common to Sartre's wielding of the For-itself as the source of all determination.

5BN, 182.
the world or with other thises," Sartre claims that the "this" is nothing but the total interpenetration of its qualities. To illustrate this view, he avers that the yellow of a lemon is its sourness and vice versa. Not only is the lemon extended throughout all its qualities, but each of its qualities is extended throughout each of the others. Quality is thus not an external aspect of being. However, for there to be quality, for the qualities of a being to be differentiated, requires the presence of a For-itself. But, specifically, how does the "this" come to have distinctive qualities? How does its undifferentiated unity emerge as differentiated?

In answer to such questions, Sartre asserts:

It is the for-itself which can deny itself from various points of view when confronting the this and which reveals the quality as a new this on the ground of the thing. For each negating act by which the freedom of the For-itself spontaneously constitutes its being, there is a corresponding total revelation of being "in profile." This profile is nothing but a relation of the thing to the For-itself, a relation realized by the For-Itself. It is the absolute determination of negativity, for it is not enough that the for-itself by an original negation should not be being nor that it should not be this being; in order for its determination as the nothingness of being to be full, the for-itself must realize itself as a certain unique manner of not being this being. This absolute determination, which is the determination of quality as a profile of the "this," belongs to the freedom of the For-itself.7

According to Sartre, then, my perceiving this paper as white is

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6BN, 186.
7BN, 188.
what reveals this quality across the undifferentiated unity of this page. Moreover, through such a perception, I am consciousness of the impossibility of existing as color, as white, as a what-it-is. To perceive this color, then, involves my awareness of self as the internal negation of this color, as not this color, as other than this other, as independent. I thus come to know myself and to constitute my being by my free engagement with the "this," an engagement which is a determination of quality, "the indication of what we are not and of the mode of being which is denied to us." But what is the ontological status of the For-itself as the source of determinations of quality?

As manifested in the Sartrean discussion, the For-itself issues a determination of quality through a negating act in terms of which its being is constituted. As negation, the For-itself thus constitutes itself as not the "this," as not the particular quality, as denied "the mode of being" of the quality, and hence as independent in its mode of being. Moreover, in terms of its internal negation, the For-itself has an awareness of self which manifests that it is a being with a mode of identity and a mode of unity. Hence, the For-itself, in its issuance of the determination of quality, reveals itself as having certain substantial characteristics which, of course,

8BN, 187.
would have to be considered in the analogous context discussed in the preceding chapter.

Quantity

As the "this" arises only through the intentional activity of the For-itself, so, too, with the "this-that." According to Sartre, however, not only do two "thises" emerge against the backdrop of the undifferentiated totality of In-itself through the negating act of the For-itself, but an external negation between the "this" and the "that" appears as well through the For-itself's presence to being. Yet, this external negation between the "this" and the "that," Sartre avers, belongs in no way to the "thises" considered. That there is a separation between "thises" hence constitutes only an ideal separation which is simply what it is—an ideal separation In-itself—and which thus belongs neither to the being of the For-itself nor to the being of the "thises." It is this ideal separation In-itself which Sartre terms quantity.\(^9\)

To illustrate his view of quantity as pure exteriority, Sartre considers an example of counting—the making of "an ideal distinction inside a totality capable of disintegration and already given."\(^10\) He claims that, if there are three men conversing opposite me, I do not count them in terms of an

\(^9\)Cf. BN, 189-91.
\(^10\)BN, 191.
initial apprehension of them as a group. When I do count them as three, the fact of my counting, since it issues a purely external and negative relation among the members of the group, in no way jeopardizes the concrete unity of the group; the group is left perfectly intact. Thus "three" is not a concrete property of the group, but neither is it a concrete property of the members of the group. For, Sartre avers, we cannot speak of any member as "three" or even as a "third," since the quality of "third" depends on the freedom of the For-itself who is counting. Each man can be the "third," but being the "third" belongs to the being of no man, because it is an ideal character dependent upon the choice of the For-itself who is doing the counting. Hence, the For-itself's introduction of quantity adds nothing to being but an ideal separation. As Sartre states:

"It [quantity] is isolated and detached from the surface of the world as a reflection of nothingness cast on being."\(^{11}\)

That the category of quantity, issued by the For-itself in virtue of its relation to being, belongs neither to the being of the For-itself nor to the being of the "thises" has serious ramifications.\(^{12}\) For it appears that, even though the For-itself continues to evince its independence in mode of being from the In-itself as it originates categories and thus continues to manifest this chief "substantial" characteristic, it is

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\(^{11}\) fn, 191.

\(^{12}\) Cf. fn, 190-91.
incapable—whether substantialized or not—to issue categories having metaphysical import. But this view requires further investigation.

**Potentiality**

In elucidating the manner in which the For-itself brings certain potentialities to the In-itself, Sartre emphasizes his view of the For-itself as a being which is always about to come to itself. The importance of this view in the present context lies in the fact that the For-itself, as the internal negation of the In-itself to which it is present, denies with the dimension of a future. It is in terms of the For-itself's relation to its future that potentialities come to rest lightly upon In-itself to which the For-itself is present. Permanence, for example, comes to the In-itself from the future. As Sartre states:

> In so far as the for-itself denies itself in the future, the this concerning which it makes itself a negation is revealed as coming to itself from the future. . . . The revelation of the table as table requires a permanence of table which comes to it from the future and which is not a purely established given, but a potentiality.\(^{13}\)

Hence, because I consider the table within the dimension of my relation to my future, a potentiality of permanence comes to the table—a potentiality which is correlative to my future.

There are, however, other potentialities manifest in

\(^{13}\)BN, 195.
the "this." For example, Sartre claims, the For-itself as a relation to its future is beyond the crescent moon to which it is present and thus the full moon becomes the potentiality of the crescent moon. This potentiality of the crescent, however, remains purely external to it, since the crescent is fully what it is and needs nothing other in order to be what it is—a crescent. Sartre maintains: "Potentiality on the ground of the future turns back on the this to determine it, but the relation between the this as in-itself and its potentiality is an external relation."14 Pushing ahead this view of potentialities being in a state of indifference in relation to the "this," he considers the example of an inkwell which can be broken. This potentiality of being shattered, however, is totally cut off from the inkwell, because it is only the correlate of my possibility to shatter it. In itself, Sartre claims, "the inkwell is neither breakable nor unbreakable; it is."15 It is thus the Sartrean thesis that potentiality comes to rest lightly on the In-itself as the meaning of being beyond the present "this," as a meaning introduced in the world through the intentional activity of the For-itself. As he states: "Here again knowledge adds nothing to being and removes nothing from it; knowledge adorns it with no new quality. It causes

14BN, 196.
15BN, 196.
being to-be-there by surpassing it toward a nothingness which enters into only negative exterior relations with it."\textsuperscript{16}

Hence, though the For-itself casts its potentializing perspective upon the In-itself to which it relates, the In-itself remains indifferent to such deposited potentialities. The category of potentiality thus appears as an \textit{ideal category} issuing from the intentional activity of the For-itself, the being which, as "potentializer," manifests itself as \textit{independent} in the face of its dependence on the In-itself to which it is present, as \textit{one} in virtue of the interpenetration of its present and future and as \textit{identical with self} in the sense of grasping its future self as a mode of its being, as its being to come.

\textbf{Summary}

On the grounds of this selective consideration of categories emanating from the For-itself as it relates to the In-itself, it can be ascertained that Sartre has again stocked the For-itself with certain "substantial" characteristics, chief among which is the For-itself's independence in mode of being and as freedom, an independence revealed across the backdrop of the For-itself's intrinsic dependence on In-itself. It can, moreover, be observed that Sartre has employed the For-itself to issue categories of being which are only \textit{ideal categories}, as opposed to metaphysical categories. But such observations are

\textsuperscript{16}BN, 197.
not enough. A stance must be taken upon the chief issues of this thesis—the issue of the substantialization of the For-itself and the issue of the Sartrean employment of the For-itself as the source of categories of being.
PART FOUR

CONCLUSIONS: THE METAPHYSICAL IMPLICATIONS OF MAN AS RELATION
Our attempt to glean metaphysical implications from the Sartrean theory of man as relation has been staged in terms of questioning Sartre's employment of the For-itself to issue categories of being. This ultimate question has afforded us access not only to an inquiry concerning the meaning of the For-itself as relation, but also to the further question of a possible, Sartrean substantialization of the For-itself. All these questions, however, have been posed from two perspectives which demand comment.

First, from within the Sartrean system, it initially appears paradoxical that the For-itself as relation should issue categories of being which are applicable to the region of In-itself, to the Sartrean region of substance. How can the For-itself, so ontologically dissimilar from the In-itself, be manipulated by Sartre to draw out such categories! That Sartre assigns this task solely to the For-itself, however, has a serious ramification for the Sartrean proclamation that the For-itself is relation, not substance. For, what type of relation is the For-itself if it can stand apart from the In-itself to perform this ontological feat? More pointedly, what type of relation is the For-itself if it must stand apart from the In-itself to which it relates, if it must not be the In-itself to
which it relates, in order to originate categories? Still again, what type of relation is the For-itself if it manifests an independence in mode of being from the In-itself to which it relates? Since Sartre himself affirms independence as the chief characteristic of substance,¹ there are grounds inherent in his own system for considering whether he has substantialized the For-itself. Thus, each of the questions we have raised emerge from tensions within the Sartrean system itself.

There is, however, a second perspective from which the principal questions of this thesis can be posed—the perspective of the philosophic tradition. Across the history of philosophy, until relatively recent times, those who engaged in metaphysics viewed a doctrine of substance as a central topic, if not the pivotal doctrine, in the construction of a theory of being. Substance rose to the forefront to perform a variety of metaphysical tasks dependent upon the particular metaphysical system. Relation, however, in general, was relegated to a relatively insignificant role as an accidental modality of substance. Thus, when Sartre, though admittedly not a metaphysician, declares that the For-itself as relation issues categories of being, the declaration engages the interest of one nurtured in the metaphysical tradition recorded in the history of philosophy. That Sartre, moreover, employs the For-itself to cause categories only adds further fuel to the

¹BN, 506.
interest of one metaphysically oriented, since he has thereby placed a greater burden upon the For-itself as relation than that placed upon substance by the traditional metaphysicians who employ individual substances for purposes of discerning the various given modalities of beings. Hence, from the vantage point of traditional metaphysics, the question concerning whether the For-itself can bear the burden of issuing categories and the inquiry regarding a possible, Sartrean substantialization of the For-itself quite naturally arise.

The principal issues of this thesis have thus been posed from the dual perspective of the Sartrean system itself and the general, metaphysical tradition. But from what perspective are these issues to be resolved? Because the issues which concern us arise from tensions within the Sartrean system, it is necessary to go beyond this system itself for answers. Are we to look, then, to a traditional, metaphysical viewpoint as a guideline for settling these questions? Because the Sartrean system, in our opinion, manifests both a certain originality and an advancement over past philosophic systems in some respects, it is also necessary to go beyond the context

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2 The tradition specifically referred to in this context is the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition. The contrast between the Sartrean view of the For-itself as cause of categories and the Aristotelian-Thomistic analysis of substances for purposes of enunciating given modalities of being suggests the profound difference in their employment of the phrase "categories of being," the difference between ideal modalities and real modalities. But this difference will be dealt with in more detail shortly.
of a historical dialogue. Thus, the conclusions reached with regard to the questions of this thesis must come from our own assessment of the Sartrean system and its contributions to a perennial metaphysics.

The Question of Substantialization

On the basis of the ground already traversed with respect to this question, it should be evident that the Sartrean refusal of substantiability for the For-itself pivots upon his repudiation of a univocal predication of substance to all beings. To view both man and stone alike as an insular, totally self-contained, non-changing what-it-is constitutes, according to Sartre, the substantialist illusion to which Descartes, Leibniz and Kant fell prey. Working out of this historical context, Sartre thus signals his rejection of such substantialism by declaring: "The For-itself is relation." And yet, as evidenced in our discussion of the characteristics of the For-itself, it appears that substantial characteristics do come to rest upon the For-itself if they be predicated analogously. Has Sartre, then, substantialized the For-itself in an analogous fashion?

The chief requirement which any "X" must meet in order to be termed a "substance" is an ability to stand apart from other "X's." Both the philosophical tradition and Sartre assess independence in being as the principal trait of any
substance, an assessment with which we concur. To the extent, then, that the For-itself constitutes itself as not the In-itself to which it relates through knowledge and action, to the extent that the For-itself constitutes itself as not the Other to which it relates, to the extent that the For-itself in order to issue categories must constitute itself as not the In-itself to which it relates, to the extent that the For-itself in seeking to grasp an In-itself always falls back upon itself as For-itself, it may be said that the For-itself is substantialized. But why has Sartre failed to concede this substantialization?

The "failure" in this case appears to rest not with Sartre, but with the metaphysical tradition. Substantialist philosophies have refused to admit internal relations as compatible with an independence in being. Thus, since Sartre claims that the For-itself is internally related to the world, he could not, even if he so desired, term the For-itself "substance" in a traditional sense. But what of the substances in our experience? Does experience evince the Sartrean view or the traditionalist view? Perhaps, a stone is not intrinsically dependent upon other things; perhaps, a stone could be in a vacuum. But what about me? I cannot exist even as a vegetable in a vacuum; I need air and food to exist even on this minimal level of animate life. Since my continuance in existence hinges on these necessities of life, I am in a very real sense intrinsically dependent upon them. Moreover, as consciousness, I
require objects to know; as freedom, I require something to choose, something to act upon; as a being with possibles, I require the world in order to gain a self-consciousness of what I lack, in order to project my possibles. I am thus intrinsically dependent upon things and others in the world. And yet, while I would not be this For-itself without such an internal relationship, I do not collapse into the being of the things to which I relate, of the Others to which I relate. I stand apart in the face of intrinsic dependence. The employment of experience as a sounding-board thus evinces the Sartrean reconciliation of an independence in being with an internal relatedness in the case of the For-itself. Aside from the perspective of traditional metaphysics, it can hence be maintained that the For-itself is substantialized to the extent that it does stand apart from others. This position, however, can be maintained only on the foundation of an analogous predication of substance, of independence in being. For, as I refuse a univocity of substance based on the being of stones, stones refuse a univocity of substance based on being-for-itself. In his polemic with traditional substantialists who would admit only external relations as compatible with independence in being, Sartre has thus shown metaphysicians that differing regions of being must be examined before metaphysical conclusions are asserted and that the analogous character of these assertions must be
explicated and exemplified.

But what of the other traditional characteristics of substance? Though we have suggested ways in which the Sartrean For-itself appears to manifest such traditional characteristics as unity, identity, structural determinateness, permanence and the admission of contrary qualifications, we must now assess the precise relation of the Sartrean For-itself to the traditionalist view. Because Sartre considers the For-itself as temporalization, as flight, he not only disengages such characteristics from the traditionalist stance of being givens, but also disengages the For-itself from the notion of an enduring subject. This dual disengagement comes to cast a different light upon the For-itself's "substantial" characteristics. First, the For-itself's admission of contrary qualifications must be here and now, since the For-itself is the present temporalizing itself. Secondly, the unity and structural determinateness of the For-itself would have to be dynamically asserted at every upsurge of the present. Thirdly, the identity and "permanence" of the For-itself could not be considered in traditionalist terms as the "same" and the "unchanged," but would have to be viewed from the perspective of the continuity of the For-itself across its history. The In-itself character of the past, however, emerges to create problems. For the past

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3 Cf. Part Three, Chapter I, 112-27.
as In-itself would appear to disrupt the unity of the For-itself not only on the level of temporal unity, but also on the levels of the For-itself-body unity and the unity claimed in the act of reflection, since both the body and the consciousness reflected on are considered as in the immediate past. Moreover, because the past is the For-itself become In-itself, Sartre avers that the For-itself as present undergoes absolute changes and yet suggests a continuity of the For-itself across its history by repudiating the appearance of a new being. But how can the For-itself be granted such continuity if the past as In-itself is outside the For-itself as present, if the For-itself can wrench itself from its past via nihilation, if the For-itself emerges as though it were starting at zero in every present? It would thus appear that the For-itself cannot sustain even analogues of traditionalist characteristics of substance. Yet, Sartre's concrete descriptions of the For-itself would enrich any substantialist perspective and, in a sense, it can be said that the For-itself functions as if it were "substance," but without foundation.

To clarify this view that the For-itself functions as if it were "substance," but without foundation, it is necessary to consider what we mean by "substance" in this context. Certainly, the Sartrean For-itself does not function as if it were a Cartesian substance. Certainly, the Sartrean For-itself refuses any notion of substance predicated univocally of man and
stone. And yet, Sartre's rich descriptions of the For-itself are suggestive of a certain view of "substance" which must now be enunciated.

What do we mean by "substance"? Consider first a stone. This stone, to the extent that it stands apart from other actualities, to the extent that its physical boundaries mark it off from the grass, has an independence in actuality. The congealed, solidified state of its matter, moreover, is indicative of an actual undividedness or unity. Then, too, its retention of its matter and boundaries across time manifests a continuity with itself. 4 That the stone is a certain type of matter, furthermore, indicates a structural determinateness. In the case of the stone, these characters, however, are given; the stone in no way acts to sustain its independence, unity, continuity and structural determinateness. Because its structural determinateness is given in completion, the stone, moreover, admits of only external relations, admits of only extrinsic dependence upon others. The force of rain, for example, can move the stone to another place on a hill, as well as make it wet. Yet these conditions rest lightly on the stone, since its integrity as this stone requires no intrinsic dependence upon others. But so much for the stone.

4 The notion of continuity is being introduced as a substitute for the traditional notion of identity in order to allow a departure from the traditional metaphysical implications of the notion of sameness.
What allows me to call myself "substance"? To the extent that I am bodied, I, like the stone, have physical boundaries which mark me off from other actualities. This independence is a given. I, however, unlike the stone, have another level of independence—my freedom. I come into the world as an actuality with the potential of self-determination. Though this potential is a given, my actuation of it is not. It is I who am continually engaging in the process of self-construction via my free acts. Each act, as free, is a further realization of my selfhood and to that extent a further realization of my standing apart from others. Hence, my independence is affirmed at various levels—as a given physical independence, as a given potential of self-determination, and as an independence forged by myself in the further realization of my selfhood.

My independence, unlike that of the stone, however, is such that it is compatible with my intrinsic dependence upon other actualities. That I, unlike the stone, require internal relations to other actualities is rooted in my structural determinateness. Though I came into the world, like the stone, with a given structural determinateness, my structural determinateness is a given potential, a potential with a given limit. I came into the world as an actuality given the potential for realizing the perfection of myself as a rational animal; to be this rational animal in the state of completion, as this stone
is a stone in the state of completion, is my given limit and goal. In order to actuate my consciousness, my freedom, in order to engage in the process of self-realization, I, however, require the world. I require other actualities to know, to act upon. I require other "I's" to communicate with, to love. I require the world in order to realize my concrete possibles which arise in terms of my project to attain my given limit. I require the world, then, to concretize the given structural determinateness which I exist. The world thus stands as the source of data for my self-construction, for my self-realization of this given potential, for my furthering my individualized approach to the given limit. Hence, though I am independent, I am intrinsically dependent upon other actualities in the process of realizing my given potential, in the process of constructing myself.

If I am continually in the process of self-realization, if I am perpetually changing, have I no identity with self? Do I not have a basic sameness with self across my history? To the extent that I am perpetually furthering my approach to a given limit, I cannot say that I am the same "I" that I was ten years ago, ten minutes ago. I can and do express, however, a continuity with that I of ten years ago because I today am a further development of that I of ten years ago. That I assume responsibility for the actions of this past I, moreover,
indicates a continuity. A theory of continuity, however, demands a theory of time which admits of the past as given in the present. A man who had a heart attack two years ago takes certain precautions today because the body of today is a further development of the body of two years ago and thus has an inherent heart condition. Then, too, a person who speaks of having a deeper understanding or a deeper love of someone indicates a cumulative act, indicates the immanence of the past in the present. That the past is immanent in the present, moreover, need not swallow up my freedom. For, while my past is immanent in my present, I, as present, am relating to the world of today, a world in terms of which I can project new concrete possibles, a world offering novel data for my process of self-construction. The novelty of the present, in other words, precludes its immanence in my past and thereby precludes the functioning of my past as a determinant of my present actions. A theory of continuity, worked out in terms of the notion of the immanence of the past in the present, can be applied then to a free actuality, to the "I." There are thus several ways in which my continuity across my history can be expressed. To the extent that I am a self-realizing actuality, it is I who "give" continuity across my history to the given potential which constitutes my structural determinateness, for it is I who further the actualization of that given potential. To the
extent that my past is immanent in my present, providing with my present a backdrop for my future, my continuity is again secured. In other words, to the extent that I do not emerge in every present as though I were starting at zero, the immanence of my past in my present is a given. Yet, as a conscious, free actuality, I can assert my continuity across my history by acknowledging responsibility for my actions—past, as well as present. Unlike myself, the stone, however, has only a sheer given continuity across time.

Inasmuch as my determinate structure is a given potential, I thus exist as the actualization of that potential. My structural determinateness cannot be construed as an element of sameness, of permanence, throughout change, since as a potential is furthered from day to day, from moment to moment, I cannot say that I have the same structural determinateness that I had ten years ago, ten minutes ago. To assert with the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition, for example, that I remain specifically the same across my history is either to do metaphysics on a formalistic level or to take me for a stone—or, perhaps, both. Are we to say, then, that there is no permanent element, no element of sameness across my history? There is an element of sameness, there is an unchanged element: the given limit, but I, across my history, only further my approach to this limit; I never attain it. What is this limit which
functions simultaneously as a goal? Self-completion, self-fulfillment, self-perfection in the sense of having attained the total actualization of my given potential, in the sense of having no more options because I have realized all! Because this limit and goal cannot be attained by me, because this limit and goal can only be approached, my determinate structure, unlike that of the stone, remains open, to be closed only by my death and even then as incomplete.

What of my unity? To what extent am I actually undivided in self? I appear in the world as a consciousness existing its body. This unity is a given and yet a given which is a potential for continuation or division. Unlike the stone, then, I must eat, drink and so on to sustain this unity. I, as consciousness, as a self-determining actuality, also manifest my unity in terms of my continued actualization of a given potential, in terms of a single, cumulative endeavor. To the extent that my past is immanent in my present, providing with my present a backdrop for my future, my selfhood permeates my temporal dimensions at each degree of its realization. Then, too, since I acknowledge responsibility for my actions across my history, I affirm my oneness. Finally, because my multiple activities in my process of self-construction are ordered to a single limit and goal, self-completion, my unity is again attested.
Having considered the stone and myself as "substances," we must summarize our requirements for "substance." A substance is an actuality which can stand apart from other actualities, though not to the exclusion of a relatedness to others (external in the case of the stone; internal, as well as external in the case of myself). A substance is an actuality existing a given determinate structure (complete in the case of the stone; a given potential in the case of myself). A substance, finally, is an actuality having unity and continuity across time (given in the case of the stone; with both given and self-determined features in the case of myself). Such are our requirements for predicating "substance" of an "X." That "substance" must be predicated analogously of the stone and myself is, moreover, our contention.

We can now clarify our view that the Sartrean For-itself functions as if it were "substance," in the preceding sense, but without foundation. Certainly Sartre's general perspective and rich descriptions regarding the For-itself suggest that Sartre acknowledges the fact of the For-itself's structural determinateness, unity, continuity and independence. Yet the ramifications of the Sartrean ontology are such that minimally the "fact" of the For-itself's unity and continuity is without foundation. Because Sartre avers that the past is the For-itself become In-itself, because he views the For-itself
and the In-itself as antithetical, he cannot ground the temporal unity or the continuity of the For-itself as For-itself. For such unity or continuity is disrupted by his insistence that the For-itself as freedom, as spontaneity, can wrench itself from its past, can start, as it were, at zero with the upsurge of each present. That the past, for Sartre, is outside the present, that the past is In-itself in character, moreover, poses a question as to whether he can ground ontologically the unity of the For-itself in the act of reflection and the body-consciousness unity. Sartre's refusal of an immanence of the past in the present, however, is but one instance of Sartre's general repudiation of admitting givens as immanent within the For-itself. Even the structural determinateness of the For-itself as lack is such that it is not given, but perpetually renewed by the present For-itself. This general repudiation of the immanence of givens in the present For-itself thus renders the For-itself a being which is pure spontaneity, which is absolute freedom, and which hence can stand apart from the In-itself to which it relates. But, while its spontaneity, its freedom, its nihilating activity, secure the For-itself's ability to stand apart from the In-itself, these very characters work to undermine the For-itself's continuity, to call into question certain levels of the For-itself's unity and to burden
the For-itself with the sheer self-determination of its structural determinateness as lack. We thus conclude that the In-itself character of the past and the absolute freedom of the For-itself as present work against each other so as to preclude an ontological foundation for affirming that the For-itself is "substance." If Sartre would simultaneously give more weight to his notion of facticity and temper the freedom of the For-itself, then perhaps a substantialized For-itself would emerge. But such a For-itself does not emerge from the pages of Being and Nothingness.5

The For-itself and Categories of Being

Our original question to Sartre was: Can the For-itself, as relation, bear the ontological burden of issuing categories of being? As we reconsider our selective treatment of the categories of quality, quantity and potentiality, we recognize a peculiar twist to this inquiry. For, whether the For-itself can bear the burden or not, the categories have no metaphysical import for the In-itself. According to Sartre, no category can "appear as an objective characteristic of the thing, if we understand by objective that which by nature belongs to the in-itself--or that which in one way or another

5 Cf. W. Desan, The Tragic Finale, 144–59 for a consideration of the unity and identity of the For-itself but from the standpoint of the Sartrean repudiation of the Ego.
really constitutes the object as it is."⁶ And, again, he maintains that the categories issued by the For-itself are only "the ideal mixing of things which leaves them wholly intact, without either enriching or impoverishing them by one iota; they merely indicate the infinite diversity of ways in which the freedom of the for-itself can realize the indifference of being."⁷ Hence, in virtue of Sartre's limited and impoverished view of the region of non-human things, of the region of In-itself, the For-itself's issuance of categories can have no metaphysical import for the In-itself.

But the question still remains as to whether the For-itself can bear the burden of issuing categories which Sartre labels "ideal"? In attempting to answer this question, it should be noted that the Sartrean reference to ideality is a limited one. For Sartre is not suggesting that the categories are merely subjective whims of the For-itself. He explicitly asserts that the For-itself's issuance of the categories "can not be a way of disposing and of classifying phenomena which would exist only as subjective phantoms, nor can it 'subjectivize' being in so far as its revelation is constitutive of the For-itself."⁸ Refusing a radical subjectivism, Sartre thus claims that the For-itself's issuance of categories requires the

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⁶BN, 185.
⁷BN, 191-92.
⁸BN, 185.
For-itself's presence to a "this," to a brute In-itself. What, then, is the status of the categories? Neither subjective nor objective, the categories, Sartre maintains, "remain 'in the air,' exterior to the For-itself as well as to the In-itself." Hence, the Sartrean categories are modalities of meaning thrust upon the brute In-itself by the For-itself as a result of the For-itself's presence to a "this." Exterior to the being of the For-itself, exterior to the being of the In-itself, the Sartrean categories thus cannot be construed to have metaphysical significance as modalities of being.

In view of the foregoing, it can be said that a metaphysical import cannot come to rest upon the Sartrean categories whether the For-itself be affirmed "substance" or "relation." Moreover, the For-itself can in no way bear the burden of issuing even the Sartrean categories, even modalities of meaning. No theoretical argument, however, would have any force against the Sartrean thesis. What do we mean by this? To the extent that we are presence to the world, we cannot remove ourselves from the world to test the Sartrean option that the region of In-itself is undifferentiated without the presence of the For-itself. But neither can Sartre evince such an option. Thus we and Sartre must evince our stances on the concrete ground of being present to In-itself. From this common

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9BN, 185.
ground, we ask Sartre only one question: If the In-itself is undifferentiated, if the categories "merely indicate the infinite diversity of ways in which the freedom of the for-itself can realize the indifference of being," what is the foundation for this page being categorized as rectangular, as white, as destructible by two or ten or one hundred free For-itselfs? In order to account for our common experiences of "thises," it appears that more is required by way of foundation than spontaneity confronting indifference. Hence, we maintain that the For-itself cannot bear the burden of issuing the Sartrean categories.

The Sartrean Contributions to a Perennial Metaphysic

In drawing our study to a close, it would be well to point out the insights afforded by Sartre for a perennial metaphysics. We suggest that Sartre is thrusting a challenge upon contemporary metaphysicians: to do metaphysics at the level of the concrete existent, instead of the formalistic level. This general Sartrean challenge can be formulated, moreover, in very specific terms. Sartre has done well to challenge traditional, substantialist philosophies which predicate "substance" univocally of all actualities. While it is true that Aquinas and Descartes suggest a non-univocal predication of "substance" with regard to God and finite things, both fail to

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go beyond a univocity of substance in dealing with the finite. Though analogy is writ large across the Thomistic system, an explication of the analogous character of substance as applied to the various levels of being is virtually non-existent. This general failure of substantialist philosophies not only strips their doctrines of substance of any relevance to the concrete, but also leads to the positing of other doctrines equally irrelevant. For example, the traditional, substantialist position that independence in mode of being precludes internal relatedness cannot stand the test of experience, as Sartre has shown, unless the metaphysician base his doctrine of being upon the being of stones. Then, too, as Sartre has pointed out, the traditional, substantialist doctrine of change which claims an element of sameness throughout change actually nullifies the very meaning of change. To consider substance the unchanged is to deny change and to relegate time, moreover, to the arena of a mathematical abstraction. Though it is true that the Thomistic tradition, with respect to the problem of change, views substance as a potential principle actualized by accidental forms, the inherent formalism of that tradition comes to arrest the significance of substance as a potential principle with its pronouncement that the thing remains the same what-it-is, remains the same substantially, since such a pronouncement denies that the potential is the actualized. It appears, then, that
Sartre has well-directed his attack upon traditional, substantialist systems by pointing to the serious implications which metaphysical formalism has upon such doctrines as those of substance, relation, change and time. But, in summary, what are we to say of the Sartrean metaphysical insights?

Sartre was led to a repudiation of a univocity of substance, to a reconciliation of independence in being with internal relatedness, to a reconsideration of theories of change and time in terms of his analysis of human reality. The Sartrean system thus suggests that a more meaningful and more realistic metaphysics could be had if metaphysicians would utilize man as a starting-point in their metaphysical investigations and work down the hierarchy of being to the level of the inanimate, if metaphysicians would actually work out the analogy of being. It is hence our conclusion that Sartre's critique of traditional metaphysics is acutely perceptive and should lead to a more productive metaphysics than the formalistic systems of the past, if it be given a hearing.11

11The work of John Wild, The Challenge of Existentialism (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1959) should be cited as an excellent attempt to show the continuity of existentialist themes with traditional themes and thereby to locate the existentialist movement within the realm of serious, philosophic thought.
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APPROVAL SHEET

The thesis submitted by Carol Ann Keene has been read and approved by three members of the Department of Philosophy.

The final copies have been examined by the director of the thesis and the signature which appears below verifies the fact that any necessary changes have been incorporated, and that the thesis is now given final approval with reference to content, form, and mechanical accuracy.

The thesis is therefore accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts.

June 5, 1966  
Date

Signature of Adviser