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Reduction Ad Absurdum (or About Freedom)

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Reductio Ad Absurdum (or About Freedom)

Senior Project submitted to
The Division of Social Sciences
Of Bard College

By

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Annandale-On-Hudson, New York

Fall 2016

Acknowledgments

I genuinely wanted, and still do want to avoid the Oscar speech-type dedication, but I do not think my willing is going to allow me to do so since there's something more than just my willing at stake. I guess that is why I wrote a whole senior project on freedom being located within oneself and morals that surround us, because even though I want to act otherwise, I'm still about to write a lot thanking everyone who has contributed to my formation in relation to this project. I can go on and on, never ending about everyone who I am going to mention, but I'll try to keep it short to avoid writing another 'senior project about them.. To give everyone "alphabetical fairness" and not to differentiate between the degrees of "thankhood" I'm just going to follow timeline of my life.

First and foremost I want to thank my parents – Marianna Oakley and Zurab Mamukelashvili. If they haven't decided to have me, or bring me up the way they did I wouldn't write this project at all. These are the people who have introduced me to the right and wrong for the first time and since then have been supporting my free choice even if they thought that my actions weren't as exemplary as they would want them to be. I give them promise that I'll do everything, literally anything for their retirement to be as peaceful and joyful as possible – as much as I'm their life, literally and figuratively, they are mine and no matter what, I will always always always love them to death.

The same can be said about my two other "moms" - my aunts – Eteri Andjaparidze and Nino Mamukelashvili. Both of whom have majorly contributed to my education morally and financially, hence making my high school or college journey possible. There doesn't pass a day when I don't think that I'm underperforming, and both of them deserve way more from me than what I aspire to or am currently doing, thus this thought pushes me to dedicate myself to studies

even more and do as much and as long as my body lasts. No one has ever met or had aunts like I do. They have supported my parents and literally devoted their lives to us, my brothers and me. It will always resonate in me and show forth in any type of an action that I perform.

Next I want say thank you to my young brother Sandro Mamukelashvili. I live for his well-being and am ready to die anytime if he needs me to. He represents the opposite side of this project. As my quest for freedom and self continues, he has ended his. Sandro found himself within this world and realizes his being to its fullest extent. He has set an example for me during my entire life with his kindness, compassion, hard work, and determination. Sandro is a basketball player who changed couple of teams in Georgia making the U-16 national team when twelve years old. Eventually, he ended up moving to Italy when he turned fourteen. Attended an Italian high school without knowing a single word in Italian, but with his focus, became one of the best students, as of course the athlete as well. As the time passed and he achieved a lot there, he was recruited by nationally ranked high school in the U.S. where he started his journey six months ago and now is looking at the bright future in college. It's always been my goal to live the way he does, with kindest heart and pure happiness. Hence my quest for freedom is prompted by him and developed by my older brother Giorgi Mamukelashvili who still is looking for his place in the world. So am I. We both are still searching and I salute every single human being who with us is in this quest for freedom as lies in answering questions such as: Who am I? Why am I? And What is that makes why the who or who the why? There's no end to the process. We are doomed to eternally search.

Following are my grandparents. The people who have filled my life with pure love, care, and understanding. They have taught me as much as everyone else has, if not more, and made me

truly realize the power of the family as they were willing to share every cent of their pension with me so I would be content.

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I want to thank my friends. Thank God, I've had an opportunity to have known and lived with the friends who simply put you first. My friends mean the world to me. I'm ready to give up anything for them. They have contributed to me being a man, a human, and a personality, showing me the world. I wish you all met them one day. As much as I enjoy solitude, I've grown into a person who loves solitude in company, with them. I won't be able to mention all of them, but some include Giorgi Tsintsadze, who has aided my development as a student, because basically I always wanted to be as educated, balanced, rational, and supportive as he is. Giorgi Chkuaseli, someone who I know I'm going to have a grave next to, Tornike Davitadze who simply I can't imagine living without. Sandro Gagua who has been with me since day one, literally, and also: Eduard Saakashvili, Giorgi Kvaratskhelia, Nutsa Bezhuashvili, Nacho Chachibaia, and Alex Kiladze.

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Next I want to thank philosophy department here at Bard. Especially, Garry Hagberg and Daniel Berthold. Professor Hagberg is the person who helped this project happen, and the one whose philosophy is closest to me. His teaching have urged me to continue being on this path and turn philosophy into something I'd want to dedicate my life to. Professor Berthold is the man who I always aspired to. His sharp personality, eloquence, and truthfulness, has been key to my development as a person and to my understanding of life in general. He's been with me from the very first day, and I'll always stay grateful to him.

Lastly, I want to thank you, the reader, and the rest of the world. There are nine billion people in this universe for a reason. We are all one and reflect each other's lives everyday. As long as one person is moving, everyone else is moving with him, because we are each other's reference and we create ourselves based on who has lived and who is living, and that is how we determine who is going to live. Thank you to everyone, no matter who it is. Someone who has looked at me at Subway, eaten a sandwich with me in a Diner, or has given me thousands to fund my education, you are all equal to me as long as your intentions are good and your strife is always positive.

Abstract

If I asked you what was your favorite book? Who was your favorite actor? Or which candy did you like the most? You would answer; furthermore support your response with reason. That reason would be the philosophical aspect of your response. However, even if I, also with reason, refuted your argument, there'd still be this spark of 'just because' in you, and that is what I want to dedicate my project to – that little sparkle of 'just because' – little inner faith, belief, and ambiguous attraction that we have towards things.

Philosophy asks for practice. It is something that requires us to bestow ourselves to; therefore, everything we argue for needs to have our utmost belief in it. All the conceptions should be supported with our heart and soul along with reason. Freedom is no exception. As much as I find freedom to be autonomous, and it being personal to us, I do believe that no matter what kind of a stance do we take upon it, we really need to believe in all: freedom, our understanding of it, and ourselves. Only then are all of our reasons for liking this or that type valid.

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Literature as a Metaphor

Growing up, I thought a philosopher was a person using very complex vocabulary in order to talk about seemingly inconsequential issues. It turned out to be very different and quite the opposite to be honest. Frivolous issues weren't that distant from the ideas of an everyday thinker and the vocabulary wasn't challenging at all. It was the profundity of the ideas surrounding the topics that philosophers dealt with that was causing my confusion. Hence, I couldn't relate and fully comprehend the depth of the presented problems within the realm of philosophy, and for this reason I will be using several literary texts to further explain my thoughts presented in the paper. Even though my main argument will not concern the use of the literature in philosophy and their relationship, literature will be used as a primary mean to portray and execute my analysis of several philosophical ideas.

Philosophy or other doctrinal conceptions such as religion have been using literary means to explain themselves throughout history. *The Bible*, *Confessions*, *Republic*, *Five Dialogues*, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, *Notes From the Underground*, and many other works have been created in a narrative form to express their ethical ideas. Some were primarily written as fiction, or plays.

As Hugh Mercer Curtler writes in his article *Does Philosophy Need Literature?*, discussing two novels by Jogn Barth, "The novelist's imperative is: 'Show! Do not discuss!' His domain is not conceptual knowledge, it is invention. He is not a preacher, moralist, or psychologist. Neither he is a philosopher." (Curtler, 115) The two novels that the analyst discusses portray ideas of nihilism and other philosophical concepts in a literary manner, of which Curtler approves. As he claims in this quote, the aim of the novelist is to show and not to discuss, because he is not a philosopher. Even though I would agree and say that philosophers

mostly discuss rather than show, they are also primarily concerned with showing. They bring multiple examples to explain what they are arguing for alongside their discussions. They are conscious of complexity of their texts, thus trying to set their viewers in some particular scenes where their ideas are comprehensible. Furthermore, university and college professors mostly require their students to include examples in order to support their views, as helps the reader and the student better understand the conceptions presented. Hence, I want to say that as novelists, philosophers too are deeply concerned with showing, as it aids the understanding of the argument. Therefore, when someone is concerned with showing, it entails creativity, thus a creation; consequently both philosophers and novelists can be considered 'makers'. They create the ideas as well as the lyrical demonstrations of those ideas and try to situate them within the contexts so the readers can apply themselves to their notions. Since novelists are more preoccupied with demonstrating, especially the one's concerned with fiction, their success is better, therefore, why not philosophers use more novels or fictional characters to show their premises – that is what I am going to try and do.

Personally, I hold a belief that both literature and philosophy ask for practice. They both want their readers to “do” what they explain, follow the doctrines, or simply consider them. Philosophy needs practice – philosophizing, which entails understanding, executing what is written in a text and living according to the morals formed by it. The same applies to fiction. It also aims at creating an example for its readers, even more, it urges being its characters. As Monroe C. Beardsley writes in his article *Philosophy and the Novel: Philosophical Aspects of Middlemarch, Anna Karenina, The Brothers Karamazov, A la recherche du temps perdu, and of the Methods of Criticism (review)*, “The method seems to be something like this: the novel is taken “as presenting a reader with a large number of cases and considerations’ (p. 108), from

which the interpreter is to draw general inferences, as though they were actual cases such as a biographer or clinical psychologist might present.” (Beardsley, 104) A novel offers their readers a lot of cases and their solutions. It offers emotions, states, responses, yet we are the ones who decide whether we want to follow these “teachings” or not. Some people try hard to relate their selves to different people, or always struggle with identifying themselves within the character, yet the aim should be different. One should be concerned with understanding the moral of the story, the bigger picture, rather than the particulars of the character.¹

If one takes a metaphor and as Ted Cohen writes in his book, tries to understand that A is B, he might struggle if he looks at it literally. Literally, A may not possess any properties relating to B, and it is going to be impossible to decipher the metaphor. The same applies to literature. One’s aim should not be to apply him or herself literally to the situation, characters, or the problem. One should aim at understanding the situation portrayed, analyzing it and only then applying the morale, idea of the problem to itself. As Garry Hagberg writes about Cohen’s book,

Cohen, as he insists, is not writing a book on metaphor, and he is happy to accept as what he calls a wonderful mystery our ability to see A as B; he is writing a book on the connection – a connection that, for Cohen, is a significant part of what makes us what we are as humans beings – between literally false but irreducibly meaningful A-B identifications and imaginative acts or leap of seeing ourselves as another (and thereby meeting one fundamental precondition for one person genuinely understanding another). (Hagberg, 1)

As Cohen and Hagberg claim, the aim of the book isn’t to show and explain how metaphors work, but rather to explain how does this magical relationship of understanding that A is B, and a metaphor work. What makes a metaphor so powerful is our ability to comprehend the idea that doesn’t share anything with the presented sentence. The same applies to philosophy. One might get lost in the whirlwind of ideas and confusing terms that one uses, therefore an example, the placement of an argument might require changing, and literature is the one I see to be the best

¹ Of course the particulars of the character can also teach, but it shouldn’t be the first instinct to relate to them.

option. Translating the whole problem of free will, freedom, ontological, or existential arguments into the literary worlds helps and explains the notions better, placing the reader in the same world, on the same panel, thus leading him (the reader) forward from the point to which they are all familiar to.

As Hagberg continues,

What is surely not misbegotten is cultivated understanding of metaphors as ‘entrees to human understanding’ (p. 85), understanding that comes from – precisely what this marvelous companion of a book provides – an intricate, detailed, and powerfully insightful close study of cases of the metaphorical usages that engender an irreducible, non-formulaic sense of what it is to recognize other persons, to become able to see ourselves in them, and to become able to see them in us. (Hagberg, 6)

Recognizing others, being able to see ourselves in them, and to be able to see them in us, are all the conceptions that bothered the philosophical world for a long time as well.² What a metaphor teaches us is being able to relate to others and learn through others mistakes or lives – or simply just understand them. This notion of simply just understanding something is where philosophy meets literature. As I claimed, philosophy asks for discussion, showing, practice, and comprehension. Its’ primary aim is for the people to understand, therefore, if it doesn’t happen through a philosophical text due to it being more dedicated to a discussion, literature will play a role of a metaphor for it, and place everyone in the same basket, eventually helping them to understand the notions.

One might object to these claims and also argue for literature not being able to fully elucidate complex philosophical ideas into a new world. I might agree and say that, “yes”, literature might only be powerful with the notions that are more continental, broad, or

² “Externalization” became one of the bases for Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*.

metaphysical, yet this objection will not really concern me because the field and the problem that I will be dealing with (free-will, freedom and morality) will fit into the literary standards.³ Moreover, literature has already produced thousands of books concerned with these topics and what I'm going to do is simply explain the notions through them, ultimately portraying my argument in a philosophical manner.

Lastly, I want to say that it doesn't even matter whether someone will treat a novel purely as fiction and claim that it doesn't do anything, nor applies to him, because it's just fiction and everything is invented. As Garry Hagberg writes,

In the main, this supposition, Cohen insists, is misleading. It is not just that, as has been clear since Kant's discussion of the ontological argument, that 'the thought of something is the same whether the thing is real or not' (p.29). It is rather that neither of the two main and much discussed reasons for supposing the categorical distinction" between real and fictional emotions really comport very well with many of our other closely related engagements in human life. (Hagberg, 4)

What Hagberg writes here is that it doesn't really matter whether everything in a novel is fictional and whether it takes place in the city, imagined universe, or whether it has human characters. Because it is going to be real for us as long as it produces emotion, or some kind of a feeling within us. It becomes real once we emphasize with it, since if it changes something in us at all, it means that we did emphasize with it. It becomes real once we read and learn from it, because it translates into our world. If we think of something, it is already as real as reality. If we picture a novel, study it, or understand it, it becomes real, because it influences us. It doesn't matter if the protagonist is a fox, alien, or a brick, as long as it loves, hates, dislikes, and in

³ Moreover, I do not feel that language in itself is either powerful enough to transmit one's true ideas, as Wittgenstein writes, "The limits of my language means the limits of my world," hence blaming everything on literature, and saying that it's not really capable of explaining the issues isn't write, because language might also fail one in transmitting the philosophical thought.

general feels, we also develop our opinions about everything it (the character) does, therefore learning and actively engaging with the storyline and morale.⁴

Therefore, if literature strips us away from the philosophical world, we shouldn't be afraid, because it ultimately will lead us to the same point. One can get seven by adding two to five, or three to four, and it won't matter as much which combination will one use. Literature might pick us up and without us even realizing it teach us a philosophical argument, or help us understand it, without us even noticing it. Literature helps us understand that B, which on its own hand leads us to the A. The two texts might not have anything in common, yet as a powerful metaphor works with the language, literature might be able to explain something that can't be put into words through its context and masterfully execute ideas through sentences. Literature does the same for philosophy as does the metaphor for the language, it helps communicate incommunicable, in a universal language, available for everyone.

⁴ As Hagberg further explores, one has to have a capacity to understand in order to get to the heart of the novel, and most of us do have this capacity, "And the variable and wide-ranging identifications we form with characters like Mrs Mulwray, identifications that, for Cohen, are 'no different from the variability we display when we come to like, love, dislike, hate, empathize with, blame and praise the real people who inhabit our real world' (p. 78), are dependent upon an ability that is identical to our capacity to use and comprehend metaphor, to see one thing as another that it is not, to see a thing we thought familiar in a new light." (Hagberg, 6)

Introduction

Three o'clock is always too late or too early for anything you want to do. – Jean-Paul Sartre

It is not the answer that enlightens, but the question. - Eugene Ionesco

In *The Brothers Karamazov* by Dostoevsky, Ivan, one of the three brothers, tells a parable of the Grand Inquisitor, who challenges Christianity by coming face to face with the God and questioning him. Ivan is a character confused about his beliefs. Being an atheist, the story that he narrates focuses on the person who dedicated ninety-three years of his life to religion, yet ended up being lead astray and doubting it himself. Ivan as a character and his allegorical self - the Grand Inquisitor, represent atheists, but not the ones who deny God based purely on the existential basis, but also because of the Biblical fallacies and the human nature. As the religion, they are also concerned with the ideas of morality, freedom, free will, etc., yet cannot situate these notions under the religious doctrines, since they find them incompatible.

After Jesus comes down to earth, Grand Inquisitor catches and verbally doubts him and the freedom that humans possess through the religious ideology. The Inquisitor structures his rebuke around three questions that Satan asked Jesus during the three temptations of Christ.⁵ Inquisitor believes Jesus in the idea that he (Jesus) rejected and turned down all of these temptations in the name of freedom, but what he argues against is that, for him, human nature isn't strong or "virtuous" enough to handle the type of freedom the God is offering humans. For the Inquisitor, humans will always fall and lose to the material side of the world, if contested by this type of freedom offered by God since they will locate their freedom in their hedonistic lifestyle, which is not what Christianity offers. According to the Inquisitor, humans were offered

⁵ 1. To turn stones into bread 2. To cast himself from the Temple and be saved by the angels 3. To rule over the kingdoms of the world.

to choose, thus, this free will shall lead them astray and eventually accompany them in turning their back to the religion, hence free will is eventually going to corrupt them.

As Dostoevsky writes,

An all again in the name of freedom! I tell you that man has no more tormenting care than to find someone to whom he can hand over as quickly as possible that gift of freedom with which the miserable creature is born”, Continuing, “with bread you were given an indisputable banner: give man bread and he will bow down to you, for there is nothing more indisputable than bread. But if at the same time someone else takes over his conscience – oh, then he will even throw down your bread and follow him who has seduced his conscience. In this you were right. For the mystery of men’s being is not only in living, but in what one lives for. Without a firm idea of what he lives for, man will not consent to live and will sooner destroy himself than remain on earth, even if there is bread all around him. That is so, but what came of it? Instead of taking over men’s freedom, you increased it still more for them! Did you forget that peace and even death are dearer to men than free choice in the knowledge of good and evil? There is nothing more seductive for man than the freedom of his conscience but there is nothing more tormenting either. And so, instead of a firm foundation for appeasing human conscience once and for all you chose everything that was unusual, enigmatic, and indefinite, you chose everything that was beyond men’s strength, and thereby acted as if you did not love them at all – and who did this? He who came to give his life for them! Instead of taking over men’s freedom, you increased it and therefore burdened the kingdom of the human soul with its torments. You desired free love of man, that he should follow you freely, seduced and captivated by you. (Dostoevsky, 254-255)

The Grand Inquisitor says man is willing to give up his freedom for his material security. Man will bow down to bread, but once his mind is seduced with something else he will give up the bread too. That is how human mind works; it becomes a slave to the material thought surrounding it, eventually dispersing its freedom to others. As the Inquisitor continues, he agrees with Jesus on some aspects of human being, such as man being determined for what he lives for and not who he actually is. Actions and his (humans’) takes on life are what constitute to his existence on earth and without the firm idea of what one is fighting for, men would probably destroy themselves. Therefore, they try to avoid the destruction by the easiest way out, selling themselves in order to guarantee having even a little purpose in life, even if it means them being

“enslaved” to someone or some idea. Also, during this monologue Inquisitor poses one of the biggest and most important questions to God, “Instead of taking over men’s freedom, you increased it still more for them! Did you forget that peace and even death are dearer to men than free choice in the knowledge of good and evil?” Men don’t want to be all knowing; as much as knowledge elevates humans it also corrupts. There’s nothing more seductive than freedom of the conscious, yet it is the most tormenting thing as well. Men do not want knowledge of right and wrong, because it brings chaos and torment to their mindset and morality, they’d rather know nothing but lead a quiet life. Nonetheless, instead of doing this and giving them guaranteed, calm life, God increased their freedom and burdened them with free will and choices, which would not lead to their love towards God, but to pure insanity and denial. What Inquisitor points out to be one of the most important things is the human nature. The Grand Inquisitor says that humans are feeble and can’t resist the temptations of being well off, because all they are looking for is peace.

In an eloquent way, the Grand Inquisitor finds religion to be ephemeral because of us being very ostentatious and sybarite, thus the cloying and very meretricious nature of the august lifestyle would lead everyone to betray his or her mores and faith, eventually falling to the legerdemain nature of luxurious existence.

The problem of human nature that the inquisitor poses is quite interesting regarding the state of freedom: would one choose a secure life or life in freedom offered by God? This problem asks for a lot to be considered while thinking about it. First of all, what does settling with material existence entail – namely having enough bread? What inquisitor means when he poses this dilemma is that one succumbs to the other’s rule, acknowledges his/her power and abdicates his own virtuousness, morals, and values. The second option is the one Alyosha, brother of Ivan (who tells the parable), would advocate: to keep existing individually, coping

with the state of being, nonetheless, get to the gates of heaven⁶ once you die and be able to retain your honor, dignity, values, morals, hence live and continue afterlife freely. Where does the concept of freedom lie in the first instance? Arguably, if we claim that morality goes hand in hand with freedom, there is no actual freedom in the first instance, but if we don't, it lies in once survival and in the 'accepted' life. Nor Leibniz, nor Kant, nor Sartre I would say would find that type of existence as the one leading to the outside of the cave. Sartre could have argued saying that living in moral slavery could have been a deliberate decision, or that someone could actually endorse the ruler and his beliefs, thus his life would not be of survival anymore, yet I feel Sartre would eventually disagree as he also promotes the idea of the escape from the outside world in his *No Exit* discussed later in the paper.

The second option could have been of noble state for Leibniz, or Kant, but the existentialist thought like Nietzsche's would never be okay with one coping with his state of miserable being and would always push the person for overcoming the self and re-evaluation of his human thought.⁷ Leibniz grounds his philosophy in logic and religion, saying that faith is the key to once freedom and fecund mindset. While Kant, even though raised in a Christian family, diverts from the actual religion, still finding one's freedom in moral thought and reason. Hence, do we possess free will to choose what to we want to believe in? Or are we weak and will eschew the edifying religion? I do not believe that human nature is weak; it is not restive and is always able to be ameliorated. Consequently, I'd say that humans are free in their decisions, even

⁶ Albert Camus also comments on this issue in his *Myth of Sisyphus*. As much as he believes that one can be Christian and absurd, he also says that Kirillo, Stravogin, and Ivan are all defeated when in the end Alyosha affirmatively responds to the question whether people continue living after death and see each other again. (Camus, 110-112)

⁷ Kirillov is very Nietzschean in *The Brothers Karamazov*, as he too shares the belief that if there's no God, he is the God himself. Hence, it should be the job of every person denying God to take the responsibility of creating the morals for themselves, thus constantly re-evaluating their state.

in the one's that give up their freedom, but that doesn't hint to their weakness, all are decisions made by us.

It might be easy to see free will in one's divergence from religion, but how much of free will would one have when staying in religious mindset? I would say infinite, yet the realization of this abundant amount of choices and options would be hard, or would actually promote the thought of going against the belief that one took the side of. Nevertheless, if one did realize his state of being as the engine for his personal movement, I think he/she would go far in their quest for true freedom, because at the end of the day it would lie in their minds.

From the religious standpoint, and Leibniz's too men choose to be in the state that they are in – namely possessing the free will, or simply living in the world where when creating the universe, God made everything perfect. Therefore, earth and all inhabiting it, namely trees were good in itself, “The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good.” (Genesis: 1:12) None of the things created possessed any evil, nor would inflict any type of moral or physical pain upon Adam and Eve, except for the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. As God warned them, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden; of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.” (Genesis: 2:15 – 2:17) When consuming the tree, God promised that as a punishment Adam and Eve would die, therefore, it was in their interest to do anything, but eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. Yet, after being tricked into it the first humans decide to consume the fruit from the tree. The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was the symbol of one's free will. The only choice that Adam and Eve would ever make would concern the Tree of

Knowledge of Good and Evil. One cannot blame all on the snake since even if in the perfect Garden of Eden, where snake might have possessed hands (according to the Bible God took away snake's hands after tricking Adam and Eve into the "Original Sin") it wasn't the one who physically put the apple in their mouths. It was a rational and conscious choice made by the two inhabitants of Garden of Eden. As promised, the world of free will and decision-making became open to them. Moreover, as said in the Bible, God doesn't kill Adam and Eve, but just exposes them to shame, guilt, and many other "earthly" feelings and emotions that they never had. The couple are forced out of the heaven and start living in the world full of choices and offers, and as in the case of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, they have to decide their future actions.

The popular claim, and the one that could have also been proposed by the Inquisitor, against the biblical story is that, God was afraid for Adam to know Good and Evil and become as knowledgeable as he was. Then why does he even put the tree there? If He is all knowing and all-powerful, why doesn't already know that his creation will fail the test of temptation? Or why does he doubt them at all? First of all, God was not afraid of humans becoming like him, even more, he wished it, "When God created humankind, he made them in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them "Humankind" when they were created." (Genesis: 5 – 5:2). Adam and Eve were already created in the image of God, weren't troubled by any issues and remained free in the Garden. Consequently, God created the tree to test their loyalty, trustworthiness, and obedience. They fail, and the God knows that they will do so. Did he want them to? "Yes." The God knows that the only way for everyone to achieve salvation and be on the right path of the eternal life, they need to coexist and be making rational and moral decisions, "Then the Lord God said, "see, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life,

and eat, and live forever” – therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken.” (Genesis: 3:22 – 3:23) God lets humanity be. He lets us decide, with free will being in our possession whether we want to go to heavens or not. He lets our actions, choices, decisions, speak for themselves, and is always ready to help humans out, in case they try hard and it doesn’t work.

The only reason I advocated the religious standpoint in the paragraphs presented above was to portray that we do have free will, even the inquisitor would agree with it⁸. Yet, the point that we arrive at is the same as in the beginning of this introduction, even within the Garden of Eden, humans fail to deal with the notion of the free will and freedom, and keep making wrong decisions from the religious standpoint. The Grand Inquisitor literally tells God that humans are corrupted by the free will and the knowledge that they have. The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil corrupted them by giving them free will and by giving them knowledge.⁹ It was not necessary for them to have it. God also told them not to eat from the tree, and the Grand Inquisitor too admitted of them needing just the sensual and material pleasures more than anything else, because of their state, nature, being genuinely weak. Grand Inquisitor believes that humans will fail every single time to try and achieve ultimate, religious freedom, since by their nature they need miracles¹⁰. They require people demonstrate their power, after which they will trust and willingly give their freedoms up to them. Whatsoever, God didn’t really make mistakes

⁸ As he exclaims in the book, “You want to go into the world, and you are going empty-handed, with some promise of freedom, which they in their simplicity and innate lawlessness cannot even comprehend, which they dread and fear – for nothing has even been more insufferable for man and for human society than freedom! But do you see these stones in this bare, scorching desert? Turn them into bread and mankind will run after you like sheep, grateful and obedient, though eternally trembling lest you withdraw your hand and your loaves cease for them.” (Dostoevsky, 252)

⁹ Knowledge of what’s good and bad. Basically, by knowledge I also mean the capacity to learn, understand, and judge.

¹⁰ As he continues to say, “But you did not know that as soon as man rejects miracles, he will at once reject God as well, for man seeks not so much God as miracles. And since men cannot bear to be left without miracles, he will go and create new miracles for himself, his own miracles this time, and will bow down to the miracles of quacks, or women’s magic, though he be rebellious, heretical, and godless a hundred over.” (Dostoevsky, 256.)

when incorporating the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden. Overall, the aim of this Biblical inclusion isn't to argue for the righteousness of religion, or for that God actually did everything correctly, foreseeing his creations' failure; but to just show the power of one's free will and the concept of freedom through the religious perspective juxtaposed to the Inquisitors perspective.

The idea of God having falsities is reinforced in the section where the Inquisitor portrays Him as merciless. Again, neither I am advocating him (the inquisitor), nor urge someone to believe in Him (God), yet I want to say that one can have a free will while also being restricted under His doctrine. Nonetheless, it's unquestionable that God's character is controversial and full of confusion, especially when, He tortures everyone in Hell without considering her mother's requests not to.¹¹

Nevertheless, as exclaimed by the Grand Inquisitor, The God takes no mercy upon the ones who end up in Hell - on the people who end up making wrong decisions in their lives. So, how does one live according to the idea of the free will and in the world of the decision making without making the "wrong" ones. Why did God invent the free will at all, if it entailed something bad and evil in it? It turns out that the notion of freedom isn't that easy to comprehend, or to achieve. A simple choice might not meet the Godly "expectations", and therefore lead one to the eternal suffering. Thus, why do we have free will if it is not actually

¹¹ Inquisitor reminds the reader of this story when God, didn't pay attention to his mother's request and continued punishing people in Hell, "And so the Mother of God, shocked and weeping, falls before the throne of God and asks pardon for everyone in hell, everyone she has seen there, without distinction. Her conversation with God is immensely interesting. She pleads, she won't go away, and the God points out to her the nail - pierced hands and feet of her Son and asks: 'How can I forgive his tormentors?' She bids all the Saints, all the martyrs, all the angels and archangels to fall down together with her and plead for the pardon of all without discrimination. In the end she extorts from God a cessation of torments every year, from Holy Friday to Pentecost, and the sinners in hell at once thank the Lord and cry out to him: 'Just art thou, O Lord, who has judged so.'" (Dostoevsky, 247)

free? Or, how are we free if we do not have the free will? Would one even want this type of a free will?

No science will give them bread as long as they remain free, but in the end they will lay their freedom at our feet and say to us: 'Better that you enslave us, but feed us.' They will finally understand that freedom and earthly bread in plenty for everyone are inconceivable together, for never, never will they be able to share among themselves." Continuing, "They will marvel at us, and look upon us as gods, because we, standing at their head, have agreed to suffer freedom and to rule over them – so terrible will it become for them in the end to be free!
(Dostoevsky, 253)

As explained by the Inquisitor, everyone who gives up his or her freedom for bread will suffer. They will totally become dependent on the ruling power, still glorifying them (the nobility) for keeping them alive. People might even understand that they gave up freedom for food, but they are going to be in such a desperate need that they will still be contempt with their state of being, so terrible and unachievable the state of freedom is going to become for them. What the Inquisitor argues here is that humans will fall. They will fall giving up on everything pure, moral, or religious, eventually praising the people who own them, just because the concept of ideal freedom will be so distanced from the "real" world. That is the human nature. It can't grasp the idea of free will, nor understands what does it mean to be fully free – human nature is weak. The personal problem that I have with Inquisitor's point is that, if one is going to be so desperate that he/she will tremble for food, it means they won't have much to lose in case they give up on that food as well. Therefore, the "non-existent" freedom might actually turn out well on them, by promoting their rebellious character to fight. Grand Inquisitor also claims that "human is a rebel." Consequently, one can rebel against someone who gives him bread as he can rebel against the God. Especially, if it is in his nature and if one believes he has no free will he might live according to the doctrine that everything is permitted (not that it's going to be good, but he

can still live with it), which is going to promote him believing in his free will. 'If I can do everything, therefore I can kill, succumb to the rulers or simply choose not to have free will and do as I wish, which paradoxically will entail "me" doing something that I will' – which initially will have the false and wrong value in it, yet could end up being beneficial for one. So, by negating the idea of free will, one still would be performing under its roof, moreover, embracing the concept of freedom even more broadly.¹² And this is the line that I think an atheist, theist or any type of a human should agree with each other on, and say that there is a line between freedom and responsibility. First of all, in any type of a ruling system killing would not be regarded as a good thing, therefore no matter what ones beliefs are, killing would still be forbidden, therefore, I can actually claim that one has to remain responsible for some kind of laws, which happen to be the basic moral ones. One has to be responsible for all of the actions performed, because he would want the moral law according to which he acts be the universal one. The morals might change, they are not catholic in their existence, but they will always be present. Consequently, the line between freedom and responsibility is where morality begins and taking my claims even further, I want to say that, even under this type of a restriction (not even talking about all the other ones – governmental or religious) one can still remain free, possessing a free will, because achieving a conscious state of morality will allow one to be free.

What is morality? It is a principle that distinguishes between good and evil. Therefore, every step we make in life, or every action that we pursue, is the product of our moral state. We either choose to act 'well' or 'badly'. First of all, let's explore the notions of the good and the evil. Who establishes what is good and evil? God? Humans? Social Construct? Instincts based on our history? I would say everything together, little by little. Therefore, it is undeniable that we

¹² All I'm trying to say here is that, one being in the state of fake freedom and thinking that all it entails is doing what he pleases is better than him submitting to power and staying quite.

live in the world where one has some feelings about whether what is “considered” good or bad. Is it likely to avoid living in this world and lead an amoral life? Technically, but it is almost impossible. Even if one rejects any type of “right” and “wrong”, he would still know, subconsciously which one is which. In order for someone to remain free under this understanding, he has to act according to the maxims that he feels are good. What I mean is that the initial drive, the intention¹³, aim of an action, has to be always inclined towards the good. Will this deprive someone of his or her free will? At first glance ‘yes’, overall ‘no’, because once someone starts living “truthfully” according to the moral codes, his values will become so solid, established, and spiritual, that he will even forget that there was another option.¹⁴ This is a very unrealistic “thesis” to argue for, but there is away, and the way is to simply negate the utilitarian take on the world and not to act according to the common good, but according to one’s own willing. Consequences of the action should not matter, because it will be simply impossible to foresee or predict them, therefore, the genuine thing one would be aiming at will always be the action/intent itself. So, if one always aims at “good” will and “good” intent, he will remain moral, because that is what “moral” entails, and in this case, in the end he will achieve freedom as well (initially possessing a free will whether to act intentionally “good” or not).

But at the end of the day, all lies in a human being and his decisions whether which path to choose in life, and what type of freedom to embrace, if at all. As for what sets what are good and bad Socrates writes in the *Euthyphro*, “Is the holy approved by the Gods because it’s holy, or

¹³ As Immanuel Levinas explains in his writing, “It is the new vigor given to the medieval idea of the intentionality of consciousness: all consciousness is consciousness of something, it is not describable without reference to the object it “claims.” The intentional aim which is not a knowledge, but which in sentiments or aspirations, in its very dynamism, is qualified “affectively” or “actively.” (Levinas, 31)

¹⁴ This reminds me of Socrates’s take on happiness in *Euthydemus*, ...“So what follows from what we’ve said? Isn’t it this, that of the other things none is either good or bad, and that of these two, wisdom is good and ignorance bad?’ He agreed. ‘Well then let’s have a look at what’s left,’ I said. ‘Since all of us desire to be happy, and since we evidently become so on account of our use—that is our good use—of other things, and since knowledge is what provides this goodness of use and also good fortune, every man must, as seems plausible, prepare himself by every means for this: to be as wise as possible. Right?’ ‘Yes,’ he said.” (Plato, 281e2-282a7)

is it holy because it's approved? (10a)" As he continues he says, "it gets approved because it's holy." (10d) What Socrates searched by his question was the essence of moral standards. What gives bases to the wrong and right? Is it God¹⁵ or is it the preconditioned norms that we have. For him it is the norms. Within our society it is common to assume things as they are and never to challenge them, hence we accept some morals, involuntarily coping with them. What Socrates and I'd also suggest is to always be in the state of questioning, "it is not the answer that enlightens but the question."¹⁶ For Socrates, God's word had an equal importance as the civil duties that humans were asked to perform; yet he also urged people to doubt some standards. This doesn't mean, nor entail to deny them but to simply educate oneself on what do they actually say.

Whether we possess a free will, are free and what determines this state of being will always be one of the biggest questions asked by us. Philosophy in itself allows us to be free, it is the mean that pushes us towards the path that eventually will make us find ourselves, within ourselves. The side I take doesn't matter as much as the idea that all are the shapes of freedom. The state everyone is trying to cope with. All we want, is to assure ourselves that we possess the free will, hence are free in our decision making process in life. All different ideologies and concepts together make up our rational or irrational thinking processes. Our being and nature is directed at us finding a place within this world, the place in which we find ourselves powerful, in other words the place where we are free. As we read in Euthyphro Socrates's dilemma, the problem of freedom and moral stance we take about it is very similar to it. Do we take freedom to be this ultimate, firm ideal that is very hard to reach because that is how it is portrayed in the realm of philosophy, or is it something that has always been hard to obtain thus we take it to be

¹⁵ Even though he doesn't address Judeo-Christian God, the idea remains the same.

¹⁶ Eugene Ionesco.

in the same condition. Who or what sets the steps about the question of freedom or how to approach it? There are a lot of answers to these questions, all individual, separate approaches, consequently, I wish for every reader of this project to take at least one step closer to their ultimate moral happiness, which as I will argue has a one-two relation with his/her true state of freedom.

Kantian Categorical Imperative, Leibniz's take on human freedom through religion and Sartrean Existentialist views alongside some literary pieces will all be analyzed in this paper. These three totally different periods in the history of human thought represent the progression of human approach to global subject such as freedom. They represent not only the development of philosophical approach but offer different shapes of understandings to which every single human being can individually assimilate, what for me is the key idea in finding one's true self. Hence, if one chooses to act according to the universal maxims, put his life in gods hands, or dwell upon his being, finding happiness within himself is totally dependent on the person, and all of these approaches would be right because it is the process of search that matters and not the ultimate ideal. Do I claim that there is no ultimate Platonic or Kantian freedom, something that is true for everyone – I don't. For someone there might be, but what I say is that the path for every single wanderer is unique, and their choice is "true" within their own universal takes. Does this belief make me lean more towards existentialist thought? Basing my approach on human being within himself? It can seem so, yet is untrue, because I as much as I deny the universality of the approach, that ideal approach should be centralized within the human beings, hence there might be a "maximal" path for someone, or the religious one, and for them that is going to be the exact path to take. But what all of these concepts share within my understanding is the fact that

freedom is personal, grounded in our moral thought, yet there is the true path for the seekers but individually, not societally, or communally.

I acknowledge that by writing in this paper I am committing myself to the “true” (for me) lifestyle offered here, yet I think everyone at least should know that they always have the option to be moral and righteous and strive for the freedom (I know it’s hard to take a different position when facing a problem of famine, thus think about freedom and morality, however, I think it is the right decision and the one I would want to force myself into making). Philosophy is the thought that promotes life; it is life.¹⁷ It is a way of thinking that shapes one’s being, hereafter it asks for loyalty and commitment. If you don’t live your ideas or beliefs, you can’t argue for them. Thus, this paper aims at helping one shape their understanding of freedom and find the path to achieve it, through three totally distinct takes on the subject matter. Life is not about someone’s ideas, political campaigns, or parental upbringings, the only movement that matters is personal and how much of the outside world can we internalize and turn it towards our own benefit. All this philosophy was written to be absorbed, united, picked from, and developed, spread, by living and executing it physically, morally, and ideologically.

¹⁷ As one of the most prominent Georgian philosophers wrote during the Soviet Union, hence in Russian, (Merab Mamardashvili), “И еще: если мы подойдем к тексту не как мертвому грузу учености, а как к чему-то живому, где бьется пульс мысли, то тогда чтение текстов имеет смысл. Нужно все время держать в своем сознании отношение философии к нашей жизни, то есть попытаться установить такое отношение между нами и философией, чтобы философия представлялась некоторым жизненно важным явлением, имеющим отношение к нашей обыденной, повседневной жизни в той мере, в какой она сознательна, в той мере, в какой мы пытаемся прожить жизнь как сознательные и достойные этой характеристики существа.” (Mamardashvili, 11) What the Mamardashvili claims here is that we shouldn’t treat philosophy as a dead entity not reflecting upon our lives today, but quite the opposite. We should understand its value and translate its teaching to our lives in the modern world. Hence, if we translate philosophy as something central to our everyday lives, having an effect upon us constantly in a conscious manner, it would eventually establish that there is no history of philosophy in our world as philosophy is happening today as well.

Leibniz

The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil

So that, however it may be mistaken, the end of law is not to abolish or restrain, but to preserve and enlarge freedom. Continuing, Where there is no law, there is no freedom: for liberty is, to be free from restraint and violence from others. – John Locke

When creating the universe, God made everything perfect. Therefore, earth and all inhabiting it, namely trees, were good in itself, “The earth brought forth vegetation: plants yielding seed of every kind, and trees of every kind bearing fruit with the seed in it. And God saw that it was good.” (Genesis: 1:12) None of the things created possessed any evil, nor would inflict any type of moral or physical pain upon Adam and Eve, except for the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. As God warned them, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden; of Eden to till it and keep it. And the Lord God commanded the man, “You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.”” (Genesis: 2:15 – 2:17) When consuming the tree, God promised that as a punishment they would die, therefore, it was in their interest to do anything, but eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil.

When God commands Adam and Eve not to eat from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, he knows what they are eventually going to do, because he is all-powerful and all knowing. Thus a question is raised, why at all does God create the tree or put it in the Garden of Eden? Does he not trust his own creation? Does he doubt them? What is the reason for putting something that eventually will “doom” humanity? To say that he wants humans to fall will sound odd, yet I think that is what God wants. He wants people to realize their real worth and value in life, how precious it should be. God wants people to fall and then rise. By putting the tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden, God tests humanity, he presents them with the idea of free will. He gives Adam and Even an option, an opportunity for a decision, in which they are

totally free to choose. Men are capable of learning only by themselves, hence God gives them a chance to fulfill this drive. As Genesis continues,

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?" the Woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden; but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'" But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves. (Genesis: 3 – 3:7)

Even though one can argue that Eve was pressured into making a decision that would lead to her fall, serpent even possessing hands in the Garden of Eden never actually gives an apple to her. It talks to her and leaves it all up to them to make a decision. To argue that Eve was tempted by the fact that she would be equated to God and become also all-knowing is not true either because, "Then the Lord God said, "see, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever" – therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken." (Genesis: 3:22 – 3:23) Continuing, "When God created humankind, he made them in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them "Humankind" when they were created." (Genesis: 5 – 5:2) God created humans in his image; he wants them to know good and evil and wills for them to become knowledgeable and moral. That is the sole reason why they fall; to rise again. Falling is the only way through which one can realize the true essence of the mistake. It was not eating an apple, as promised, Adam and Eve didn't die, nor it was the disobedience, they were not punished, it was possessing a free will, an option to choose and making an immoral decision that as known would lead one to fall.

The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil was the symbol of one's free will. The only choice that Adam and Eve would ever face would concern the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. They would either trust God and not eat from it, or choose and willingly take the fruit. By choosing to eat the apple the world of free will and decision-making became open to them. Moreover, as promised, God doesn't kill Adam and Eve, but just exposes them to shame, guilt, and many other "earthly" feelings and emotions that they never had. They fall spiritually not physically, but are encouraged to regain that spirituality through the religion again. They are forced out of the heaven and start living in the world full of choices and offers, and as in the case of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, they have to decide what do they want to do. God knows that the only way for everyone to achieve salvation and be on the right path of the eternal life, they need to coexist and be making rational and moral decisions. God lets humanity be. He lets us decide, with free will being in our possession whether we want to go to heavens or not. He lets our actions, choices, decisions, speak for themselves, and is always ready to help humans out, in case they try hard and it won't work.

Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil is right next to the Tree of Life, "The Lord God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (Genesis: 2:9) Inherently, all of the trees in the garden were pleasing to the eye and good for food, they were good in themselves, so again, it is not the apple that corrupts and leads to the fall of God's ultimate creation, but it's their wrong choice. Does this mean that God doesn't want people to have free will? No, he wants to, but free will doesn't entail choosing anything. This can be quite paradoxical, but the free will has to be supported by a rational choice, the one that is good in itself, like in Kantian Categorical Imperative. God wants people to be free, but this can

only happen through a moral life. The line between freedom and responsibility is where morality begins, and that morality is already setting one free from the ideologies and social constructs created around him, which already entails setting one free in general too.

God gave freedom to humanity from the very first day. Adam and Eve had options and we still do. We are free in our decision-making process and aren't restricted by anything, because there were no doctrines before. Even now, with the Bible, and many other morals that faith carries, one can be fully free due to it depending on the decision and values we are going to have. We have options, yet for religious world, there are right ones as well. How can there be a right choice if we have free will and are free? I'll try to explain that with next two books: Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Leibniz's *Discourse on Metaphysics*.

“Divine” Personality

God, who hath given the world to men in common, hath also given them reason to make use of it to the best advantage of life, and convenience – John Locke

Satan, in Milton's *Paradise Lost* is another representation of a skeptic personality, alongside Ivan, and Eve. In the book, he is more moral than the God himself, and in some senses he questions His omnipotence by showing more humanlike feelings than Him. Satan moves God to the second plane as a character and becomes more central in Milton's narrative. He too, doesn't understand a lot of things about the world, even feeling bad about being Satan – head of the underworld. He pities himself, being torn between moral issues imposed on earth. He takes the shape more of a sinner, or a regular person, just doubting God or his power, or even himself. Satan in Milton's book is just another person fighting for his freedom and knowledge.

God punishes angels; kicking them out of heaven, because they try to gain control over it. This already shows some questionable parts of God's personality. He could have punished them within heaven and in that way; He would have shown his power over them morally and mentally, but as he decides to kick them out, it can be concluded that He somehow is manipulated by fear, so to avoid a problem, He just gets rid of the Angels. It wouldn't be virtuous or even noble within the Christian doctrines to treat anyone, especially angels like that. Forgiveness is what the religion teaches, yet possessed by fear and anger God distances himself from the rebelled angels. As Milton writes, "His utmost power with adverse power opposed//In dubious battle of plains of heaven,//And shook his throne. What thought the filed be lost?//All is not lost; the unconquerable will,//And study of revenge, immortal hate,//And courage never to submit or yield://And what is else not to be overcome?" (Milton, lines 102- 109, p.7) The wording here is interesting. In this book, God is often referred to, as a person who is throned - is He a king? Was He a human who gained power? Kings may lose their power, but Gods can't. However, these lines portray God very humanlike, being protective over his power and rule. On one hand this might show His close relationship to humans, in fact people were created in his image, nevertheless as God he shouldn't be afraid of anything at all. As in the Bible snake told Adam and Eve that God was afraid of them reaching His level; Milton captures this side of His character. Moreover, it's not only the fact that he is scared or angry; God shows his material sides a bit here too. The real moral character possessing all the freedom from any type of moral or physical restrains would not care about his position, if necessary fall, to regain the status back in the end. As Jesus comes down to the humans and to the Grand Inquisitor to face them, that is what is expected from the divine being, and not his fear of losing His power, because who are these angels at the end of the day? Just humans doubting God.

Satan is a character, which is angry with God because of his decision to kick the angels out of Heaven. From the beginning he is a rebel, questioning His decision and wanting to overtake the power. Yet, later in the book he becomes less and less problematic on the matter of ruling. But up until this point his greed and lust to power are dominating over his more sentimental and more side. He says, "Better to reign in Hell, than serve in Heaven." (Milton, line 262, p.11) This line shows that he somehow comforts himself in the place where he is. He'd rather revolt and fight for the truth and be a leader in Hell than succumb to the rules and dogmas set by the God. This is true if and only if we read Satan's character as one fighting for justice, which I think is the case, however, if he is the one fighting for power than he is a slave to the will to power, hence a moral slave. As Rousseau writes, "Man is born free, and everywhere he is in chains. One believes himself the others' master and yet is more a slave than they." This quote can be applied to Satan's character since he finds it wrong and unjust to serve. As we've seen, under governance one can still be free and powerful.

Satan's drives are directly connected to his moral state and mentality; he knows that God's decision is fixed and that he won't get back to heaven. However, there is one angel, who during the meeting of the fallen angels tells everyone to just wait for forgiveness (he reminds me of one of the robbers being crucified along Christ – the one who eventually ends up in heaven just because of understanding his mistake and believing), but Satan cuts his own way back by rejecting that idea. He claims, "Awake, arise, or be forever fallen." (Milton, line 330, p.14) For Satan one being a servant leads to the constant state of being fallen, hence he motivates others to strive for power as well. Nevertheless, he is not an arrogant being, and fully acknowledges the state that he is in.

On the other hand, arrogance can be attributed to God. He gets mad at his own creations - Humans, and segregates himself from them. He says that they “offended majesty of God by aspiring to Godhead, and therefore with all his progeny devoted to death must die,” (Milton, intro to book III, p.61) Here, again, the language is quite explicit because of the word ‘majesty’ being used, which shows his material contempt in his role and being. Later on Milton continues, //“Now had the almighty father from above, //From the pure empyrean where he sits //High throned above all height, bent down his eye, //How own works and their works at once to view: //About him all the sanctities of heaven //Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received //Beatitude past utterance; on his right //The radiant image of his glory sat, //His only son;” (Milton, lines 56-65, p.63) These lines once more show his flamboyance and portray Him as a really egotistic “king”, as He is again “high throned above all height”. The chemistry between the lines is essential, because Milton shows this image of God, being so powerful, yet so disappointed by his own creation. However, afterwards this scene is contrasted by His perfect creation – His son, sitting on his right side, which calms God down.

At the start of Book IV, Satan falls into an existential crisis and actually regrets his deeds. He questions his decisions and showcases his values and morals. In Lines 1-113 we see his sentimental side too, //“Sometimes towards Eden which now in his view //Lay pleasant, his grieved look he fixes sad, //Sometimes towards heaven and the full-blazing sun, //Which now sat high in his meridian tower: //then much revolving, this in sighs began”. This is an introduction to his speech, where Satan is sad and starts his monologue with a sigh, //“Till Pride and ambition threw me down //Warring in heaven against heaven’s matchless king: //Ah wherefore! He deserved no such return //From me, whom he created what I was //In that bright eminence, and with his good //Upbraided none:” (Milton, lines 39-45) Satan confesses that ambition and pride

were the things that lead to his downfall. He says that he made a mistake and even admits that God didn't deserve such a response from him. Satan also mentions that God is above him and is the one who created him. These lines promote pity in reader as we Satan's break down in front of us, "Yet all his good proved ill in me" (Line 47). Milton continuing, // "Which way I fly is hell; myself am hell; // And in the lowest deep a lower deep // Still threatening to devour me opens wide, // To which the hell I suffer seems a heaven." (Milton, lines 75-78) Satan says, "Myself am hell" and regrets what he has done. He says that he is going lower in deep, and the only thing in which he is supreme to everyone else is miser, as he proclaims, "The lower still I fall, only supreme in misery." Satan is like a human, regretting all his mistakes and realizing the wrong path he/she has chosen in life. This is like a confession to God Himself. Satan has suffered, and is suffering that leads him to different conclusions in life as he states, "Evil be thou my good" which can be interpreted as him accepting his fate and trying to turn it around. One must not forget that he was once in heaven with God, knew what beauty was, knew what was good and bad, and had all the knowledge. He fell, but it doesn't mean that these understandings have been taken away; they are still present in him.

In all of the lines presented above Satan is portrayed as having an existential crisis. He no longer knows who he is, what he wants, or how should he act. Satan understands all of the mistakes made by him, and embraces pain and suffering possessed by him. He becomes free by freeing himself from the "wrong" and negative intentions that he had, therefore his state becomes much purer and literally better. He doesn't will bad, nor continues to possess all of the negative deeds and emotions he has developed towards God. By saying "Evil be thou my good", I kind of see him saying "God is dead" and now I have to move on – overcome myself and remain free. He negates everything he has done, or knows, but instead of going back, tries to start anew and

fully triumph over his old self. “Evil be thou my good” doesn’t mean he’s going to perform evil, thinking it is good, but it means that all the evil that he has done, he’s going to turn into his own benefit, learn from it, and make it his good.

As the story develops, Satan takes the shape of a serpent to deceive Eve, but the climax of his character emerges throughout the lines 100-178, where there is a long, amazing, beautiful soliloquy of Satan, talking about Garden of Eden and his own state: “For only in destroying I find ease//To my relentless thoughts; and him destroyed, //Or won to what may work his utter loss, //For whom all this was made, all this will soon //Follow, as to him linked in weal or woe, //In woe then;” (Milton, lines 129-135) Satan, here, evaluates his own situation and says that only in destruction does he find comfort and like earlier, he again mentions woe, in which destruction may arise. This again is very existentialist, as he wants to negate and takes pleasure in destruction, however he’s not a nihilist because his destruction is a start of something new. Moreover, if he comes back as a serpent deceiving Adam and Eve, what we know from the Bible is him telling them to consume an apple just to know Good and Evil and be knowledgeable. Therefore, this can be seen as him advocating his state of being, one of learning, but later questioning everything.

Like Nietzsche, or Zarathustra, John Milton’s Satan is a being, who is like God himself. He wants to rule, impose moral doctrines and realize himself. He possesses every pure feeling one should have. He is judgmental and emotional. Satan is a being with morality, or at least with values. God has to be like that, God has to expose all of these feelings, which Satan exposes to the reader – he has to be forgiving, struggling what to do with everyone, not wanting to punish them, yet he is angry with them. All God has to offer is a sense of arrogance and persuasion of his own omnipotence, which already questions His true identity. He also may be said to be

frightened, having a negative personality - the one, which Satan should have. I think this partly shows Milton's relationship with regular/religious authorities or people. The ones, who impose their beliefs upon others, remain material through their devotion, trying to portray themselves higher than everyone else. God isn't present in the book very often, nor is He often mentioned, but when He is, He is always angry and shown as a being who always tries to punish, kill, or shows his power, as if he treasures over it and is afraid of losing it because morally he has already lost it – Satan and God kind of switch places throughout the book and God is the one who becomes a slave to the authoritative morality, who trembles for his power and always tries to make a statement. Of course He still is a God, but Satan stand higher as his mental state overcomes Gods'. Satan creates this new image of himself, as if he has a dual personality, which comes closer to the human heart and understands him more than understands God himself. Satan questions and overcomes himself, finding freedom and pleasure in learning from his mistakes. Everything makes him Divine, starting with his later attitude ending with his pity and compassion to others. He is a character, which God (or a human has to be since humans are eventually urged to be Gods themselves through the Nietzschean thought) has to be; he is the one with true feelings and emotions. He doesn't portray a negative being; in fact he has the traits, which other characters lack and acts through his free will and freedom. He acts through his thought process, through his questioning, which simply can be made into a maxim for everyone else – sit back, look at yourself, re-evaluate, learn, understand and keep marching.

Therefore, Satan is like Ivan, free at certain level. Leibniz in his *Discourse on Metaphysics* claims, "29. Yet we think immediately through our own ideas and not through those of God." (Leibniz, 31) Satan takes the shape of his own individuality, exercising his free choice and freethinking. As Leibniz continues, "However, I am not of the opinion of certain able

philosophers who seem to maintain that out very ideas are in God and at all in us.” (Leibniz, 31) As much as the philosopher takes a religious stance, for him a human is still an autonomous being that can give rise to a lot of ideas. Nevertheless, freedom in religious doctrine is unconscious. It is not something one fights for or gains, rather something one realizes to have. However, as Leibniz also claims, “But when we are concerned with the exactness of metaphysical truths, it is important to recognize the extent and independence of our soul, which goes infinitely further than is commonly thought, though in ordinary usage in life we attribute to it only what we perceive most manifestly and what belongs to us most particularly, for it serves no purpose to go any further.” (Leibniz, 29) Our souls are free and can reach further than we conceive; yet the reach still stays within our own understanding.

Leibniz’s take on Satan’s personality would be ambiguous. On one hand, for a rationalist, positivist philosopher, who has established philosophy of mathematics and logic Satan would have total governance over his actions that would eventually justify his torment, baptizing him as a free being. But the philosopher also wants us to admire the maker for what he has created, and the only way we can fully commit to him is to act according to his will, thus be content with our lives. Satan definitely doesn’t fall under this understanding, yet fits the independent aspect of the philosophy. Is he free according to Leibniz? He is, as long as he realizes who God is and admits of his creations, what he definitely does.

Leibniz

Leibniz takes a different stance, more “Alyoshian,” to the question of human morality and freedom, basing his philosophy on religion, thus finding freedom and salvation only within its doctrinal borders. As he writes in his *Discourse on Metaphysics*, “Consequently, power and knowledge are perfections, and, insofar as they belong to God, they do not have limits.”

(Leibniz, 1) Power and knowledge are perfect notions as long as they are in hands of God. Does Leibniz mean that once humans take the possession of the two conceptions, they loose their perfect state? He might, at first sight, but I think all he wants to argue is that God created both of them in a perfect entities, therefore, as long as they are used for good reasons, with the good will, and with God, they can remain perfect in any way, “Whence it follows that God, possessing supreme and infinite wisdom, acts in the most perfect manner, not only metaphysically, but also morally speaking, and that, with respect to ourselves, we can say that the more enlightened and informed we are about God’s works, the more we will be disposed to find them excellent and in complete conformity with what we might have desired.” (Leibniz, 1) As long as humans learn about the creations of God and his being, trust his power and the doctrine that he imposes, they (the doctrines) will also possess the same type of purity in themselves for the humans as well.

Leibniz is an optimist who basically argues for human perfectness through God, “Only minds are made in his image, are of his race (so to speak), are like children of his house, for only they can serve him freely, and act in imitation of the divine nature, knowing what they are doing.” (Leibniz, 26) It is not the physical trait - the human body that was made in the image of God, but it is the mind. The mind that serves God is free and independent. These minds, people, strive for happiness and perfection (not sure about this word, since he also uses it in referring to

animals) that creates a completed world itself, because it is the moral world and happiness that matters, “And if the ultimate explanation of the existence of the real world is the decree that it should have the greatest perfection that it can, then the ultimate aim for the moral world – the city of God, the noblest part of the universe – should be to infuse it with the greatest possible happiness.” (Leibniz, 27) The world that Leibniz writes about can be said to be the one existing in the Garden of Eden – Free of sin and full of moral thought.

By arguing and stating that the God is a perfect being¹⁸, that goodness should be found within people (in the world) or that God created a faultless world, I think Leibniz tries to show hope in human existence and thought, “So we can say that God alone is our immediate external object, and the we see al things through him.” (Leibniz, 20) Honestly, I want to think that this is what Leibniz wanted to say: that by describing the God, he wanted to write about people, motivate, and help them discover their true, kind, selves.¹⁹ ²⁰ Free will is what humans have been granted, but only because of the fact that God knew they would not make arbitrary decisions, that their incline would always be good; God granted us minds for a reason, “We can’t fully explain how God chooses to distribute them by appealing to his foreknowledge (whether absolute or conditional) of how men are going to act in the future; but we must not think of them as absolute or arbitrary decrees for which there are not rational grounds.” (Leibniz, 22) God knows how

¹⁸ The place where he mentions it, “We must unite morality with metaphysics. That is, we must think of God not only as the root cause of all substances and of all beings, but also as the leader of all persons or thinking substances, or as the absolute monarch of the most perfect city or republic – which is what the universe composed of the assembled totality of mind is. For minds certainty are the most perfect beings, and express the Divinity.” (Leibniz, 25)

¹⁹ Evidence that leads me to conclude the assertion, “But in whatever way we take the term ‘notion’, it is always false to say that all our notions come from the so-called external senses. For my notion of myself and of my thoughts, and therefore of being, substance, action, identity, and many others, come from an internal experience.” (Leibniz, 20)

²⁰ Another quote that leads me to the pint, “Furthermore, he determines our will to choose what appears to us the best, yet without necessitating it. He does this by decreeing that out will shall always tend towards the apparent good, thus expressing or imitating the will of God to the extent that this apparent good has (as it always does have) some real good in it.” (Leibniz, 21)

people will act, yet we should treat our actions as if we were not knowing anything beforehand, because we do possess a free will and need to be acting morally. If we think of our minds and decisions as absolute arbitrary decrees for which there are no rational grounds, also being inclined to God and believing in his word, we will make all of our decisions independently and will exercise our free choice.

As I said, I do not think this is about God more than it is about humans and who they are, or what they ought to do. God and humans are like father and his children. We belong to each other and are dependent. World created under Christian doctrine is unified, as is the Holy Trinity. By writing about God, Leibniz explains bad sides of negativity and says that we all are free under His doctrine; we are all kind and happy, because part of Him is living within us. Leibniz glorifies men, but also reminds them that it is going to be their souls' fault if they sin, because it has its own existence, separate from the body, more divine and can rationalize itself. The philosopher's deeply religious ideas might be exactly opposite of what Ivan believes in. Leibniz attributes all the power to God, who even though might have a lot of flaws as mentioned in *The Brothers Karamazov* still needs to be trusted and believed in. Freedom for Leibniz primarily lies under religion as it drives us away from the evil, leading us to moral beliefs that make our lives more comprehensible and easy to understand. Freedom is also very internal in Leibnizian philosophy, it exerted by the God is put into us, and if we understand this, we will get to the Gates of Heaven and live freely there. Freedom is something that follows the moral and happy lifestyle automatically. We are born free, hence there is no way to gain freedom during our lives, since we already possess it. If one is free of all restraints and just focuses on his belief, living according to it, freedom or free will become solitary notions that do depend on religion to exist, yet we forget them because we are free. It may sound paradoxical but that is how religion works,

material worlds become so invaluable that one doesn't really pay attention to his physical freedom anymore concentrating on his happiness, hence becoming free subconsciously.

Leibniz's ideas come close to the Kantian understanding of morality and action. Yet, the latter wrote during the Enlightenment, where religion wasn't the biggest attraction to the human thought. As Leibniz writes, "Furthermore, he determines our will to choose what appears to us the best, yet without necessitating it. He does this by decreeing that our will shall always tend towards the apparent good, thus expressing or imitating the will of God to the extent that this apparent good has (as it always does have) some real good in it." (Leibniz, 21) According to Leibniz too, one has to will good. His/her actions have to be good in themselves, because the consequences do not matter as long as the intention is positive, "For, although the outcome might perhaps demonstrate that God did not wish our good will to have effect at present, it does not follow that he did not wish us to act as we have. On the contrary, since he is the best of all masters, he never demands more than the right intention, and it is for him to know the proper hour and place for letting the good designs succeed." (Leibniz, 2) Our moral stance is the one that matters. But in all of the cases the intention has to be rational, otherwise it won't be good. Consequently, if the action, in order to be good, needs to be rational, one might argue of not having the free will to perform the said action. But as I want to argue, if one only wills good and tries to just will good throughout his whole life, he automatically negates all of the "bad" options and chooses between the goods. He has a free will, but within the rational options. So, how does this make one free? The fact that his morality is always looking at good, thus unconsciously never wishing "bad", one is stripped away from the social and moral constructs that exist and therefore is free in his own being. He forgets, mechanically neglecting all of the evil means and actions, therefore vanishing the evil end too (because an evil end achieved through conscious

“good” willing, doesn’t count as an evil action overall). Hence he becomes free because is not bothered by the social stance/ideology anymore. He bases all of the roots of actions and decisions within his own mind, within his own responsible, but moral mind, and this exact morality liberates him as a “being.” As Leibniz writes,

For, if the action is good in itself, we can say that God wills it and sometimes commands it, even when it does not take place. But if the action is evil in itself and becomes good only by accident, because the course of things (particularly punishment and atonement) corrects its evilness and repays the evil with interest in such a way that in the end there is more perfection in the whole sequence than if the evil had not occurred, then we must say that God permits this but does not will it, even though he concurs with it because of the laws of nature he has established and because he knows how to draw a greater good from it. (Leibniz, 7)

Eventually the accidental good is permitted God since he willed himself when creating the universe, hence it is in us too, the primary factor determining the morality and the action that we perform. One can be free to his or her fullest extent within the Christian doctrine and all that will matter is that he or she follows the good will within every single decision made, which is going to liberate him or her from the social ideology; by finding the line between the responsible and moral life, one will be lead to the ultimate freedom by not caring about anything but a good action within itself.

Faith entails our state within the religious teaching. If we are believers we therefore will be happy, says God. Thus, if we are happy we will consider ourselves free because our happiness and righteous life also guarantees our afterlife in heaven. Situating and believing in happiness is a very strong force leading one to the state that we are seeking here. If one makes himself believe that he is happy, even though he lives a terrible life, how can he not be free? How can a happy man not be free? Freedom as it goes hand in hand with morality also entails happiness in it

within the Christian thought. The three make their own Trinity. If one is moral hence he acts rationally and seeks good he knows that his soul will survive in the afterlife if not in this life, thus he is happy and content, making him totally free. The scenario where one might not be happy or moral is if someone is in jail or physically restricted, nor has acted morally throughout his life. However, it's impossible for a deeply religious person to end up in jail, because if there is a huge reason to kill, he still won't due to the the high morality and Christian teaching that he will need to exercise, like forgiveness. So, the option of somehow getting to a very unwanted place isn't really valid if one is raised Christian, nevertheless if one ends up in jail and then finds God, Christianity also offers his salvation, therefore his soul can also be saved. That is the idea of *Crime and Punishment* by Dostoevsky, or even Augustinian *Confessions*, the earlier book portraying a life of a non-believer who in the end finds the goodness to be the key in life after seeing his wife be purely loved by the prisoners. Or the latter, showing a path taken by a Saint from his disbelief to complete faith. One can come back to religion and be happy within it, as this realization is the one that determines our fate. Once someone understands God, he becomes free, possessing a free will. Even though, God might determine his or her actions, or know and predict them as seen on page four, the focus of life switches so much when one becomes religious that freedom doesn't lie in conscious life anymore, but more in subconscious, ideological, and transcendental thought that tell us the we give up ourselves to Him, yet he grants us choice, happiness and freedom. As paradoxical as it is, that is how magic of religion works, faith determines our fate and makes religion and ourselves very impersonal, yet totally focused on our actions.

Kant

St. Augustine

Religion needs philosophy and vice versa. Ultimately it is a form of informative education that craves for explanation. Often, and as we've seen, religion is neglected due to its lack of reason and evidence, however philosophy can be this supporting material that the believers need. If we take Kant and his code of thought, the apple won't fall too far from the religious tree. In fact, Kant was born in a religious family during the enlightenment period during which religion was starting to be questioned, hence he realized that the only way to implement his beliefs was to derive from it, yet stay with its' core. In his Categorical Imperative, he reinstates one of the most famous commandments and parts of Christian thought: treat others, as you want to be treated. By taking this conception, he derives a method a dialectic according to which he states that we, as humans, do not want to be pure means towards some kind of an end, therefore, we shouldn't treat others likewise as well. This doctrine becomes central to his thought, but it takes time for a believer or a Kantian to get to this point. Kant supports morality and values, which are crucial to the understanding of a type of freedom and ideal state of being that he is offering. This time and path has been taken by all of followers of his philosophy; so is the path taken by a religious thinker to ultimately get to the point when the teaching is interpreted as a moral doctrine urging one to be a 'kind' and respecting human being. As much as Bible and Christianity should be taken literally and also allegorically, the endnote is always very moral and applicable to the relative contemporary world of the thinker.

One of the most prominent examples of someone living without rational and reasonable beliefs in religion, but in the end understanding its' moral and true side is St. Augustine. In his *Confessions* St. Augustine tells a story of his life. As the saint proclaims, "For it is better for

them to find you and leave the question unanswered than to find the answer without finding you.” (Confessions, 27) For him the truth in finding God isn’t in finding him and not answering the question why does someone believe in him, but quite the opposite. One has to question, understand, and finding him is only going to be an afterthought, an unavoidable point that is going to be reached. As St. Augustine continues he says, “This clearly shows that we learn better in a free spirit of curiosity than under fear and compulsion.” (Confessions, 35) In freedom and under no pressure, to himself, is one capable of learning who and what is the God. The message that Kant transmits is the same in an abstract way. He too believes that we should only act through ourselves, we should be alone with our thoughts and judge our decision to the morals derived from the world, however comprehended individually. We do learn in free spirit and fear only restricts us and frightens. Leibnizian and a ‘true’ (this term becomes hard to use when writing about St. Augustine, because after all he is a Saint) Christian would say that fear shouldn’t be present in our thought, nevertheless, it is a human condition that governs over us with ease, so we have to try to avoid it.

For Kant freedom is achieved through our morals, however unlike religion it is a conscious entity, an achieved point after one starts living according to some maxims. However, the morals that we have aren’t the rules that somehow restrict us but are merely the ideologies and beliefs present in the world since humanity had existed. They are trivial in understanding and determine one’s rationality, which doesn’t need to be treated as something limiting us from acting, because we all subconsciously are aware of the fact that killing is a negative action. As St. Augustine writes, “But how should I know whether what he said was true? If I knew this too, it could not be from him that I got such knowledge. But deep inside me, in my most intimate thought, Truth, which is neither Hebrew nor Greek nor Latin nor any foreign speech, would

speak to me, though not in syllables formed by lips and tongue.” (Confessions, 256) Truth is something that we feel. That we understand within us. We are in control of our freedom and our consciousness shouldn't treat these ultimate truths as things that somehow prohibit us from reaching the free state. We do possess a free will and can treat them (truths) as we want, but as rational thinkers, understanding the ideas of good and bad, there are some trivial things that go without saying. Such is Kantian Categorical Imperative that solely asks from others what one asks from himself. The boundaries set are the same for everyone, therefore no one is pressured to a different level, but is expected to act according to a common understanding that lies within him, and he too wills it. Hence, free will is still present in him and it is the one that consciously chooses the state he or she has to ultimately be.

For St. Augustine, a deep believer, we shouldn't be even questioning our truth after we find the truth in God, because we inherently should be believing in him and have faith in our fate, “When we pray we ask for what we need, yet the Truth himself has told us: Your heavenly Father knows well what your needs are before you ask him.” (Confessions, 253) Same applies at certain level to Kant, we will always be treated well if we believe in the doctrine that he imposes upon ourselves. Everyone is required to act according to it, and the trivial relationships are going to be very positive. Kant situates power in human being but at the same time advocates morals and our freedom under some beliefs as well. He respects past, values, but at the same time locates power in a human who he believes is clever enough to find the answer himself. So does St. Augustine. Both theorists strive for and find freedom in human, within his mind, which on its hand is essential in comprehending this ultimate state of freedom.

St. Augustine starts loving God after being exposed and failing in the world of decisions, as he states, “I have said before, and I shall say again, that I write this book for love and of you

love.” (Confessions, 253) Continuing, “Then we shall no longer miserable in ourselves, but will find our true happiness in you.” (Confessions, 253) Happiness and freedom once arrived paired will result in one’s salvation. It is a matter of understanding that there are no limits to our mind and no one can inhibit our inner except ourselves as well. Kant too, believes in this, that we are the ones setting the attitude towards morality and as long as we act according to the doctrine our conscious will not feel guilty. There is a line between freedom and responsibility, which merely is morality from Kantian perspective, as St. Augustine asks, “O Lord? Can it be that any man has skill to fabricate himself? Or can there be some channel by which we derive our life and our very existence from some other source than you?” (Confessions, 26) As much as we find our existence in God and are made in his image as well, as much our fabrication of our selves happens based on his teaching, it still happens within us. So happened to St. Augustine, who had to be a severe non-believer to turn back and find the truth. So, in Kantian terms too, unless one understands what he is believing in and why is it necessary to act according to his imperative, he or she won’t be free, because it is necessary to fully comprehend the doctrine in order to then exercise its teaching.

St. Augustine questions time and says that we live in the present, “The past is always driven on by the future, the future always follows on the heels of the past, and both past and the future have their beginning and their end in the eternal present.” (Confession, 262) Present is where we make decisions and are entirely free. Past and Future are dependent on each other, which prompts our thought to exist in ‘today.’ Augustine finishes with deep belief in literal God and stories of the Bible, which are inseparable parts of a true believer, however he still notes that if we live according to Him and according to morality in Kantian case, we do actually forget that we are restricted, as we start integrally acting and inclining towards the ‘good,’ which is

categorical imperative in Kant's case: As Augustine concludes, "If we make it our first care to find the kingdom of God, and his approval, all these things shall be ours without the asking." (Confessions, 255) We don't need to ask for anything once we find Him, because as faith becomes part of our existence we just know that we are free. We just know that everything is going to be fine, because we live according to his doctrine. The belief doesn't become conscious, but deeply, heavily deeply unconscious, it becomes us, it becomes a natural law. So happens during the categorical imperative, but with a conscious mind. It becomes part of our culture and ideology that is shared without questioning; hence we become free in our decisions. This goes back to the start and the idea of philosophy needing religion and vice versa. Philosophy too needs this notion of belief and acceptance through reason, but this sheer reason needs faith in it for it to be executed purely. Kant understands this and bases a lot on the religious teaching, which subconsciously already exists in people. They can relate to it and they can find reason alongside faith in that reason in his teaching. Therefore, his philosophy becomes much bigger than just a morality and a way of life; it becomes truth in itself, together with freedom becoming an undisputed conscious state.

Kant

Philosophy is not a theory but an activity. – Ludwig Wittgenstein

As Kant writes in his *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, "The second proposition is: an action from duty has its moral worth not in the purpose that is to be attained by it but in the maxim according to which it is resolved upon, and thus it does not depend on the actuality of the object of the action, but merely on the principle of willing according to which –

regardless of any object of the desiderative faculty – the action is done.” (Kant, 15) What Kant claims here is that only thing that matters in performing an action is its’ willing. All of its moral worth lies in its intention, which makes it (the intention) primary aim of the action that is to be performed, “- but reason as a practical faculty, its true function must be to produce a will that is good, not for the other purposes as a means, but good in itself – for which reason was absolutely necessary-“ (Kant, 12) Reason, namely “why” we act is the primary fuel for our intentions, therefore the reason in itself has to be good for the action to become purely good in itself too. As Kant continues, “Now, if the action would be good merely as means to something else, the imperative is hypothetical; if the action is represented as good in itself. Hence a necessary in a will that in itself conforms to reason, as its principle, then it is categorical.” (Kant, 28) This becomes Kant’s categorical imperative. Where one’s will conforms to reason, therefore becoming a principle according to which one acts, “Act only according to that maxim though which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law.” (Kant, 34) Therefore every action has to be done for its sake, and only that is going to make it morally good; “For in the case of what is morally good it is not enough that it conform with the moral law, but it must also be done for its sake;” (Kant, 5-6) so good that one should will it become a law for everyone else.

When one performs an action and aims at the good will, through which the action is performed, his state of mind more or less is already inclined towards the good, as it becomes his habit to constantly address all of the actions in this manner. He is not performing an action just for God to see that he is nice so that he can go to heaven, because in that case the aim of the action would be different. So when one follows the Categorical Imperative and tries to make his actions laws for the others and acts according to those maxims, he inherently is already a good

person,²¹ because of he doesn't treat one as ends, and applies everything that he wills upon himself to others. Religiosity becomes secondary to Kantian doctrine, even though he regards God as Supreme Being, for the reason that anyone can act according to categorical imperative and as long as they do, they might even fall under some religious teaching as well. As for freedom, the moral way of life, the morale, is going to overshadow our thoughts of being restricted in making a decision since we always will aim at the good of the action, therefore we will always remain free in choosing in what way to act according to the maxim. That person is always going to have free will, therefore, will have freedom. That is why I think that moral way of life might lead to the ultimate freedom in life, through the conceptions of free will and freedom.²²

Kant even equates free will with freedom, saying in *Critique of Practical Reason*, "Freedom in the practical meaning of the term is the independence of our power of choice from coercion by impulses of sensibility." (Kant, 536) What encapsulates our freedom is the power of choice and its independence from all the outside pressure. The fact that we have will and that will is independent, solely existing in us, on it's own makes us free. The moral though determines our will, we ought to do what's right because it's is the right thing, even though sometimes it goes against our wanting. Hence does our moral free us if it determines our willing? Yes, because as Kant says,

"Freedom, I this meaning of the term, is a pure transcendental idea. This idea, first, contains nothing borrowed from experience. Moreover, second, the object of this idea cannot be given determinately in any experience whereby whatever occurs must have a cause, and whereby, therefore, also the cause's causality

²¹ I do not think Kant is dealing with irrational instances, namely someone who thinks that killing is good, and also wants to die, won't fall under his doctrine.

²² As Kant elaborates on the subject, "Yet there still remain for us one way out, namely try: whether when, through freedom, we think of ourselves as causes efficient a priori we do not take up a standpoint that is different from when we represent ourselves according to our actions as effects that we see before our eyes." (Kant 60)

which itself has occurred or come about must in turn have a cause. And thus the entire realm of experience, however far it may extend, is transformed into a sum of what is mere nature.” (Kant, 535)

Continuing in his *Critique of Judgment*, “The moral is the formal rational condition of the employment of our freedom, and, as such of itself alone lays its obligation upon us, independently of any end as its material condition. But it also defines for us a final end, and does so a priori, and makes it obligatory upon us to strive towards its attainment. This end is the highest good in the world possible through freedom.” (Kant, 278) Kant believes that freedom is something mystical, lying somewhere in the air, not determined by our experience, but by our mind. Freedom must be felt. It is independent of any material conditions, and moral is the formal rational condition that entails freedom in itself. Even though it determines us in some way that happens a priori and makes us strive towards it conditionally, which with it's strive is the highest good one can achieve.

Kant reinstates this idea of freedom being a state achieved through our itneligibility in his *Critique of Practical Reason* where he states,

“Here one soon becomes aware that in this table freedom is regarded as kind of causality - which, however, is not subject to empirical determining bases – with regard to the actions possible through it as appearances in the world of sense, and that freedom is consequently referred to the categories of its natural possibility, while yet each category is taken so universally that the determining basis of that causality be assumed even outside the world of sense, viz., in freedom as a property of an intelligible being, until the categories of modality introduce, though only problematically, the transition from practical principles in general to those of morality, which afterwards can for the first time be exhibited dogmatically through the moral law.” (Kant 88-89)

The philosopher once again here states that freedom isn't empirical and it lies in the mean between practical principles and those of morality, which in the end are prompted to be the universal moral laws. That is where freedom is found, within the doctrine itself. It determines our free will, hence our freedom. It (freedom) is something subjective according to maxims because

we will them, objective according to principles because these principles are the same for everyone, however it still lies within us and is only attainable through both a priori objectivity and subjectivity of the laws. Consequently, as we have argued in St. Augustine, freedom is something that falls under the rationale of God, but is more determined by our own state and morals, which can be set by God.

In fact, Kant doesn't deny God and finds him to be the end of everything. As freedom asks for causality, so do other principles, therefore the end to our actions is God. Meaning, we have requirements for moral laws, and its final end is God, thus, God is the moral author of the world. And it is a logical procession that follows up that, whoever denies Him, denies his or her moral obligation, which inherently becomes bad and wrong. So, God needs to be understood and welcomed, as he is the ultimate end of our morals and the imperative set by Kant. However, this doesn't mean that one has to be religious or must have deep faith, etc., Understanding God entails understanding his teachings and it's a way to make believers get faith in his doctrine however, "This proof, to which we may easily give the form of logical precision, does not imply that it is as necessary to assume the existence of God as it is to recognize the validity of the moral law, and that, consequently, one who is unable to convince himself of the former may deem himself absolved from the obligations imposed by the latter." (Kant, 279) God is just a reason for the believers to find validity in the moral laws, but it doesn't take Him to fully comprehend it. It can be achieved without Him as well, hence reason is something a priori present in the moral law, "It is the principle that if there is to be a final end at all, which reason must assign a priori, then it can only be a final end at all, which reason must assign a priori, then it can only be man – or any rational being in the world – standing under moral laws." (Kant, 277) If reason isn't something applied a priori, than the end can't be judged, nor the intention. Reason

can't follow after an end; it has to be an end in itself from the beginning for the moral law and action to be valid. So, it doesn't take God to explain his notion, and a non-believer is also totally capable for finding causality and reason within the moral law without God, as long as his end is the reason itself. Hence, reason becomes God in itself.

Freedom, which is also directly related to happiness, is our ultimate goal and philosophy leads us to it. Kant's imperative and laws determine who we are and the way we act, nevertheless, he too finds faith in the doctrine in itself to be of importance, as he writes in *Critique of Pure Reason*,

“The merely doctrinal faith, however, has something shaky about it; for the difficulties encountered in speculation often drive one away from this faith, although inevitably one always returns to it again. The situation is quite different with moral faith. For here there is an absolute necessity that something must occur, viz., that I comply in all points with the moral law. Here the purpose is inescapably established and – according to all the insight I have – only a single condition is possible under which this purpose coheres with the entirety of all purposes and thereby has practical validity, viz., the condition that there is a God and a future world.” (Kant, 752-753)

Doctrinal faith is dry, while moral faith has a promise to itself. It gives hope and also guarantees an action. Moral faith is something that we possess and makes us fuller. It is a condition that also determines our happiness since if morals determine our freedom and we are free, we stay happy in that state and moral faith can guarantee our happiness as well, as it makes us put faith in some value that we believe in and if it became a universal law it would eventually bring us joy. In *Critique of Judgment* Kant writes, “Consequently the highest possible physical good in the world, and the one to be furthered so far as in us lies as the final end, is happiness – subject to the objective condition that the individual harmonizes with the law of morality, regarded as worthiness to be happy.” (Kant, 279) Morality, freedom, and happiness make a chain of life and are dependent upon each other to exist. There is inherent right and wrong in life and we should

act according to what we feel is right. And what is right for us is something that we want to happen to us, hence if it does it will make us happy, leading to our moral freedom, which is sufficient condition for our ultimate freedom since our material and physical world doesn't advocate nor lead us anywhere. As much as we say that we are free in all that we do and there is no morality, and we should be negating values and principles, eventually re-evaluating them, it is impossible to escape the present moment, one described by Augustine, because in a certain present we can't avoid having an opinion or an inclination towards a position, hence we should and subconsciously will always act morally. There might not be one right, a lot of options might lead to a happy state but there's always wrong, but out of all the right options as well there's always one showing itself as the most rational, reasonable and the most right one, which isn't something negative as "some animals are equal and some are more equal than others'. This right choice is what prompts us to making it. Its' existence also promotes our moral thought and creates guilt in us if we don't according to it, hence anyone with a conscious mind will try and avoid the moral guilt that's going to accompany them if they make the 'wrong' choice. That is why in George Orwell's *Animal Farm, 1984*, or Louis Lowry's *The Giver*, society can never stay in constant utopia. Knowledge, curiosity, and other humane feelings always come forth. There's always more than sheer emptiness in our world and often rebellious nature is prompted by morality as well, as human can't comprehend living in the same manner entire life, hence as much as Nietzsche and other existentialist can urge no morality and values, the constant line of life that they offer might be also broken by the outburst of interest and righteousness within once drives.

Sartre

No Exit
(Or Is No Exit an Exit?)

Forgive him, for he believes that the customs of his tribe are the laws of nature – George Bernard Shaw

Jean-Paul Sartre himself used some literary mechanisms to portray his takes on the ideas of freedom and individuality. The play *No Exit*, depicts three characters (Garcin, Inez and Estelle) all meeting each other in the room called Hell. The inhabitants of the “afterlife” are surprised by its’ (afterlife’s) presentation. They encounter no torture, no flames or whips. In fact, it’s quite the opposite, they each have a couch for themselves, signifying their own personal space, and have each other to share a couple of words with.

The first person brought to Hell by a Valet is Garcin. Who, as soon as he walks tries to evaluate the situation, where he is and why, hence one of the first remarks he makes is,

“Garcin: My little joke? Oh, I see. No, I wasn’t joking. [*A short silence. He strolls round the room.*] No mirrors, I notice. No windows. Only to be expected. And nothing breakable. [*Bursts out angrily.*] But, damn it all, they might have left me my toothbrush.

Valet: That’s good! So you haven’t yet got over your-what-do-you-call-it? – sense of human dignity? Excuse me smiling.” (Sartre, 4)

There are no mirrors in Hell. In this we can conclude that the play’s central theme might be the notion of the “other” and it’s control of one’s freedom. Mirrors are the tools to look into and most of the times enjoy our faces, yet there are none in Hell and the only faces to look at are of the others’. The power of mirror for a person who has sinned, or for a person in general, is enormous. The mirror helps one realize that they are alive, that they exist, still possessing some feelings and having human like qualities. In desperation, or especially for the people who go to Hell, the one’s who have done some things that might have caused them the validity to call

humans, express their necessity in mirrors, to look into them and confirm their being. This idea is stressed even more later in the play, when Estelle touches upon the same subject,

“Estelle: [*opens her eyes and smiles*]: I feel so queer. [*She pats herself.*] Don't you ever get taken that way? When I can't see myself I begin to wonder if I really and truly exist. I pat myself just to make sure, but it doesn't help much.

Inez: You're lucky. I'm always conscious of myself – in my mind. Painfully conscious.

Estelle: Ah yes, in your mind. But everything that goes in one's head is so vague, isn't it? It makes one want to sleep. [*She is silent for a while.*] I've six big mirrors in my bedroom. There they are, I can see them. But they don't see me. They're reflecting the carpet, the settee, the window – but how empty it is, a glass in which I'm absent! When I talked to people I always made sure there was one near by in which I could see myself. I watched myself talking. And somehow it kept me alert, seeing myself as the others saw me. ... Oh dear! My lipstick! I'm sure I've put it on all crooked. No, I can't do without a looking-glass for ever and ever, I simply can't.” (Sartre, 25)

As the character claims, “When I can't see myself I begin to wonder if I really and truly exist. I pat myself just to make sure but it doesn't help much.” All of the characters, despite their differences in morals (which I will explore a little later) have the yearn and wish to confirm their existence. Their own selves are what is left of them, their physicality, only thing that they can be identified with is their physical appearance, thus, all of them need a mirror or be touched to make sure that they are still worth something. This doesn't mean that a mirror can't remind one of their failure or their moral being. It doesn't mean that it can't show one's inner self, yet all three of them are used to omitting the inner self while staring in the mirror. They neglect it and take pleasure from the delusionary existence that the mirror offers, as Estelle claims, “Estelle: Oh, I don't know. You scare me rather. My reflection in the glass never did that; of course, I knew it so well. Like something I had tamed. ...” (Sartre, 27) All the mirrors that Estelle or the other's looked into are tamed, but it's not the mirrors that are tamed as much as the characters

themselves, who became very good at forgetting their actual, inner self, while looking into mirrors, and all they trained themselves to see the outside beauty, the materialistic one.

What one mustn't also forget is the fact that this is a play and the character's constant quest for the mirrors is only confronted by the faces of the audience, by the people who are trying to figure out their worth. We can also interpret the taming of the mirrors as Sartre's negligence of morals. Since there is no inner self to be seen in the mirror and their physical existence is what they crave, Sartre might be hinting that we make our lives; hence, there are no morals to be found at all. However, all of them still suffer as they come from the world that sets a lot of standards.

Sartre locates human freedom in oneself, the others only limit it for us, as he writes, "Garcin: Hell is other people." (Sartre, 61) As Inez argues and Sartre intends, "Inez: I mean that each of us will act as torturer of the two others." (Sartre, 23) By the sheer existence humans restrain each other from achieving the ultimate stage of freedom, in fact Inez can't even bare with Garcin looking at her because she feels that he is judging her. When the "other" exists, he has opinions, ideas, he acts, looks, eats, thinks, consequently sets standards that the other human beings try to match or overcome. In Sartrian sense I would argue that one is not weak in terms of giving up his freedom for material security, but is weak in not comparing himself to others and acting according to their actions. Humans measure themselves based on others and create this universe of competition where they usually fail, because the only way to win is not to submerge yourself in this world. Others give us their opinions; judge us and we shouldn't fall to that. As Estelle claims, "Estelle: I never could bear the idea of anyone's expecting something from me. It always made me want to do just the opposite." (Sartre, 19) The irritation, from being told to do something, or being told what is right has driven humanity to insanity. There is no truth, or right

and wrong, in Sartrean terms there is no morality, hence right and wrong are relative, relative to one's being and decision. One shouldn't act according to the maxims set by the other, but nor there is a universal law.

The way that the inhabitants of Hell find to achieve salvation is not to look at each other.²³ This obviously fails as Estelle tries to seduce Garcin, not because he is attractive, but to ensure herself that she still has the looks and is worthy. Garcin almost falls for it, yet Inez who is troubled and disgusted by the ongoing interrupts the whole procedure. However, she has her own motifs to doing so, as she finds Estelle attractive. The rejection and switch of the plot multiple times in the room evokes sense of torture. All the characters are being tortured with the ambiguity and feelings. Meanwhile two of them, namely Estelle and Garcin try to find peace in their past, they can't let go of it. Inez, on the other hand is a character that comes closest to Sartrean ideals. She finds no value in the past and decides to live according to the present, she even says, "Inez: Well, I won't stand for that, I prefer to choose my hell; I prefer to look you in the eyes and fight it out face to face." (Sartre, 30) We, the humans should also be choosing our lives in this world.

Inez starts living with the present trying to conquer her own self and avoid living in Bad Faith. Bad Faith is a conception developed by Sartre, which argues that humans live in Bad Faith when they choose not to live according to their heart, or when they choose not to strive for the best option possible. A famous example brought in *Being and Nothingness* is of a 'garçon' working in a café, while he still is young and has his whole life ahead of him. The idea is not to cope with what we have and keep striding forwards never being content with our being. Inez gets very close to this state and even though she is already in Hell she decides to make the best out of it.

²³ As Sartre writes, "Garcin: Yes. And that way we – we'll work out our salvation. Looking into ourselves, never raising our heads. Agreed?" (Sartre, 23)

As the scene unfolds, and situations gets heated up, the doors open, but none of them and especially Garcin who has been craving to run out and leave decide to go through the doors. The decision to stay inside encapsulates the play's and Sartre's central themes in his writing: freedom and responsibility. As the philosopher claims in his *Existentialism is a Humanism* "existence precedes essence," thus it makes one responsible for all of his decisions and actions. But the fear of this responsibility restricts a person from performing those actions. That is why Garcin doesn't leave the room. It's not because he doesn't want to, but he is unable to. The anxiety of responsibility that comes with freedom, outside of his bad faith scares him to perform, thus leads to him coping with his existence. Humans, once they exist, can choose their essence, but for this to be done, one has to be extraordinarily strong. Garcin even says this, "Garcin: I 'dreamt,' you say. It was no dream. When I chose the hardest path, I made my choice deliberately. A man is what he wills himself to be." (Sartre, 58) Yet, when Garcin says this is very Sartrean and true, however awkward coming from the man who never let his will determine his being. So, when Garcin is incapable of leaving, or when he asks for being called brave and right, he leaves to two other inhabitants of Hell to judge and identify his essence, which directly goes back to Sartre claiming: "hell is other people."

Nonetheless, we are the ones creating this hell for us by escaping freedom and responsibility of our actions, but what's even more controversial and paradoxical is that, we think we have nothing to do with others making up our essence, however, our inaction prompts them to judge us, which directly makes us responsible for our bad faith as well.

One other crucial topic raised by the trio is whether it is by chance that they were put all together,

"Estelle: Then you must be right. It's mere chance that has brought us together.

Inez: Mere chance? Then it's by chance this room is furnished as we see it. It's an accident that the sofa on the right is a livid green, and that one on the left's wine-red. Mere chance? Well, just try to shift the sofas and you'll see the difference quick enough. And that statue on the mantelpiece, do you think it's there by accident? And what about the heat here? How about that? [*A short silence.*] I tell you they've thought it all out. Down to the last detail. Nothing was left to chance. This room was all set for us." (Sartre, 19)

Inez, one more time shows her practical mind by saying that nothing was left to chance in the room where they are, in fact all has been set up. Whether she is talking about the technical details of the room or people included I am not sure, but people-wise it wouldn't matter who it was, since the "other" in general would create torturous hell for everyone in the room. But if Inez means the room in itself and its representation, then what can be inferred from her claims is that everything including the decorations was set up for them and the only way to avoid the desperation is to work around it and get as much as possible out of it. However, Inez also questions the idea of chance in general. Is there anything left to chance in life, or are we predestined to most what is happening around us? Again, I think that Sartre would claim that we are in power of our fates, thus not much would be left to chance, and therefore, Inez kind of takes a step away from being entirely Sartre's voice in the play.

No Exit portrays Sartre's philosophy in its entirety. It shows his main beliefs and questions other philosophy as well, especially deterministic one. The play criticizes everyone who decides to cope with their being and self, eventually urging them to strive for more. The title itself is very pessimistic as I think Sartre is hinting that there is no escape from the "other," as much as we try to be in control of our fate and conduct our lives ourselves there's no exit from it, yet the truth lies in constant negligence of the morals, beliefs, dogmatic doctrines that surround ourselves. The "other" for Sartre is not just a standard set by the community, it encompasses all canonical beliefs that we have like religion, morals, or ethics. For him an individual is an

independent being who has to strive for freedom himself, making his inner being central to the quest for rebellious nature. That is why Garcin is very upset when he realizes that there is no sleep in Hell,

“Garcin: Your eyelids. We move ours up and down. Blinking, we call it. It’s like a small black shutter that clicks down and makes a break. Everything goes black; one’s eyes are moistened. You can’t imagine how restful, refreshing, it is. Four thousand little rests per hour. Four thousand little respites – just think! ... So that’s the idea. I’m to live without eyelids. Don’t act the fool, you know what I mean. No eyelids, no sleep; it follows, doesn’t it? I shall never sleep again. But then – how shall I endure my own company? Try to understand. You see, I’m fond of teasing, it’s a second nature with me – and I’m used to teasing myself. Plaguing myself, if you prefer; I don’t tease nicely. But I can’t go on doing that without a break. Down there I had my nights. I slept. I always had good nights. By way of compensation, I suppose. And happy little dreams. There was a green field. Just an ordinary field. I used to stroll in it. ... Is it daytime now?” (Sartre, 7)

Eyelids and sleep represent coping with reality and static way of life that doesn’t entail constant questioning of the self, hence Valet doesn’t really respond to this issue by other than saying that there’s always daylight in Hell since the only way to salvation in life and in “Hell” is to be constantly awake and aware of changes or stagnation in life. Freedom for Sartre lies in a human being and in his or her determination to escape the bad faith, consequently, yearn for more in life. He totally denies morality and all the other established beliefs that might halt someone from self-development.

The freedom that Sartre offers is totally mental and channeled inside, which awkwardly still relates to the previous types of freedoms that were tightly connected to each other, yet is totally different and quite the opposite from them. However, Kant, Leibniz, and Sartre at some bizarre level might have agreed on the fact that human is also very important in realizing freedom and that he can reach it through his mindset.²⁴

²⁴ Obviously, this is very vague and the only connection that can be inferred between the philosophers.

So, is the realization of one's true character an exit for Sartre, does reading *No Exit* and his other works an exit if we really digest them? Or is it totally impossible to reach the Sartiran ideal? Can one actually get to the point where he develops to his abilities fullest extent, or will the new challenges be risen after achieving a particular stage, hence is the quest and "torture" eternal? I would say "yes," furthermore claiming that there is no exit from this conscious anxiety of being a failure or vice-versa, but that is they true way of life. Philosophy is a practice and only in search are we going to be true to ourselves. Humans are doomed to being in a constant struggle, with a conscious mind. All this makes existentialism in general and Sartrian philosophy seem very dehumanizing and hopeless to a certain extent, unlike Leibniz's which promises afterlife or Kantian that gives one a set of ways to behave, thus also guaranteeing his/her well-being and happiness. Therefore, Sartre wrote a book called *Existentialism is a Humanism* that delves into the ideas of his philosophy and explains their beneficial and positive nature, exploring the concept of existence even deeply, thus, the next segment of the project will show where does existentialism's beauty lie alongside explaining the particular features of his philosophy deeper.

Existentialism is a Humanism

To tell the truth, it is a futile question. On the other hand, I see many people die because they judge that life is not worth living. I see others paradoxically getting killed for the ideas or illusions that give them a reason for living (what is called a reason for living is also an excellent reason for dying.) I therefore conclude that the meaning of life is the most urgent of questions. How to answer it? On all essential problems (I mean thereby those that run the risk of leading to death or those that intensify the passion of living) there are probably but two methods of thought: the method of La Palisse and the method of Don Quixote. Solely the balance between evidence and lyricism can allow us to achieve simultaneously emotion and lucidity - Camus, Myth of Sisyphus

In his essay *Existentialism is a Humanism*, Jean-Paul Sartre tells a story of his student coming up to him and asking for an advice. The student's brother had been killed during the war in 1940, and his dad has left his mom alone to raise him. The student wanted to avenge, yet didn't intend to leave his mom alone either. Facing the dilemma he asked his professor what to do, who never gave a definite answer. The reason to this was simple; As seen in *No Exit* Sartre didn't want to influence the final decision made by the student, forcing him to make an independent call.

Sartre argues that humans are condemned to be free. We are in the constant state of looking for freedom or fighting for it, as the philosopher writes in his *Being and Nothingness*, "To be free is to have one's freedom perpetually in court. To be free is to have one's freedom perpetually on trial." (Sartre, 644) Also, reiterated in *No Exit* freedom needs to be challenged and questioned; that is the reason why it is always tackled by various interpretations. There is no exit from the world of values, standards, methods, etc., and the only way to at least be true to thyself is to try and always challenge your understanding of freedom, hence re-evaluating your being. Humans should and do interpret freedom and free will differently, the problem with the notion though is the idea that existentialism in itself, a doctrine urging this type of an understanding of our main right is often seen as a negative one, as the one actually limiting our freedom and human choice.

As Sartre writes, "What we mean to say is that a man is nothing but a series of enterprises, and that he is the sum, organization, and aggregate of the relations that constitute such enterprises." (Sartre, 38) Man makes himself, he is a being that is determined by his actions and decisions, in which, he is always free. As Sartre continues, "What complicates the matter is that there are two kinds of existentialists: on one hand, the Christians, among whom I would

include Karl Jaspers and Gabriel Marcel, both professed Catholics; and on the other, the atheistic existentialists, among whom we should place Heidegger, as well as the French existentialists and myself. What they have in common is simply their belief that existence precedes essence; or, if you prefer, that subjectivity must be our point of departure.” (Sartre, 20-21) At this point, right at the start of his paper Sartre claims that even though there might be some differences between existentialists themselves, they all admit that existence precedes essence. What he means by this is simple: When one creates a paper knife, or comes up with the idea of a paper knife, the ideological existence of the notion is enough to already have a concept of it, therefore existence precedes essence. Essence is generated when something is created, yet existence is necessary for the essence to emerge, thus, having an idea in mind is already a sufficient condition for it to have a full existence.

Sartre continues to claim that he belongs to the second type of existentialists; the one’s who deny God. He denies morality and all types of canonical beliefs, offering his own type of immorality – quietism²⁵. For him reality exists only in action – actions prove our decisions and our freedom (of choosing). As the philosopher writes, “In this sense, we can claim that human universality exists, but it is not a given; it is in perpetual construction. I choosing myself, I construct universality; I construct it by understanding every other man’s project, regardless of the era in which he lives.” (Sartre, 43) One constructs himself through the ‘other,’ meaning one evaluates decisions/actions made by others and contrasts himself using them, he learns from them. However, quietism shouldn’t be interpreted as non-action, it’s quite the opposite, being

²⁵ Sartre has shown definition of immorality, which is synonymous to quietism – “Conquer yourself rather than the word,” he actually meant the same thing: we should act without hope. Marxists, with whom I have discussed this, reply: “Obviously, your action will be limited by your death; but you can rely on the help of others. You can count on both others are doing elsewhere, in China, in Russia, to help you, and on what they will do later, that is, after your death, to carry on your work and bring it to fruition, which will be the revolution. What is more, you must rely on it; not to do so would be immoral.” (Sartre, 35)

unresponsive to injustice or any type of an issue isn't an option for Sartre. Hence, even if he advocates the free will and freedom of choice, and as much not making a choice can be a choice, when an action has to be executed it has to be performed, thus, staying quite is not a decision for a human anymore.

Unlike the popular claims, Sartre's philosophy is positivist. He just simply doesn't need God to be the one imposing the morality on humans – they have to be the ones deciding for themselves what to do and what to not. Existentialism is a humanism; it circulates around human behavior and means of the action, still never treating a human as means, but mostly as ends. For Sartre, “There is no difference between free being – being as a project, being as existence choosing its essence – and absolute being.” (Sartre, 44) One chooses his essence by deciding to act the way he does, he is free, hence is an absolute being. As the philosopher also claims, “That is what I mean when say that man is condemned to be free: condemned, because he did not create himself, yet nonetheless free, because once cast into the world, he is responsible for everything he does.” (Sartre, 29) As shown in *No Exit* we take responsibility for every action, which on their hands makes us who we are, yet we are condemned to be free. One is free in making decisions. In Sartrian terms, we kind of are our own free will; consequently for him our freedom and free will are almost synonyms. We should act as we think and that is the only way to achieve the ultimate state of nonexistent freedom, yet we will be free in our actions. All of which should be conscious and full of awareness. Consciousness played a huge role in the play presented in the previous segment as well. Our awareness is what makes what we do valid.

I think I would agree with Sartre and claim that for me too free will and freedom are tied in very closely with each other – one leads to another or is the product of another. Nonetheless, I wouldn't concur with this statement, “When I affirm that freedom, under any concrete

circumstances, can have no other aim than itself, and once a man realizes, in his state of abandonment, that it is he who imposes values, he can will but one thing: freedom as the foundation of all values.” (Sartre, 48) I think values are the one’s determining the way we are going to act, but in Sartrian world we are the one’s making values. But even within it, I think those made up values are the foundations of our freedom, yet Sartre claims that one thing we should will is freedom as the foundation of our values, meaning freedom being the ultimate aim in all of our beliefs and actions. But I would argue that once couple of values are set they are also going to start predetermining our future actions aimed at the ultimate freedom. Thus, freedom laying in our actions, can, and is not, be opposite for me, we could be free and that’s why we would act, because often as Dostoevsky would claim human nature might be able to fall to the outside standards presented by Sartre as the “other,” hence no action can be prompted. One might argue that no action is also action, thus determining our nonexistent freedom, to which I would say that non-action wouldn’t put forth the real qualities within someone because all still might lie in inside, that is why I would swerve and submerge Sartrian position with the idea of intentions and say that our freedom can lie in our intentions/thoughts about the action. One might argue and say that thought or an intention isn’t yet a projection of an action, nor counts as one, because it is not performed or externalized – yet I would say as existence precedes essence, therefore, I think our freedom lies in our rationality of choosing how to act, in the pure thought process that we undergo, before we choose to act – the afterward action doesn’t really matter anymore, or the consequences that it is going to produce, as long as it is the ‘good’ and ‘rational’ one and that is determined in our minds , even though there is no universal good for Sartre. However ultimately uniting Kantian philosophy with his, would produce an ideal case for me.

If we go back to the mother and son example, which Sartre brings, the values are what help the student determine what matters for him – the values are the one's that make him choose his mother over vengeance. Consequently, regardless if he is aware of that or not, values determine his decision. He might not comprehend that going to war; he might not avenge anyone, or might not even get to the front as said. He might risk more by going to the war than by staying, yet even if he doesn't understand this, the value of his mother is what prompts his action and that is where his freedom lies – in his moral understanding of life and the concrete situation, within his heart, and within his self.

In the Q&A after the lecture Sartre answers Naville – “We agree on this point: human nature does not exist; on other words, every era evolves according to its own dialectical laws, and men are defined by their era, not by human nature.” (Sartre, 70) But what defines the era? Isn't it, all of the decisions and actions made? I think Sartre would agree with this, therefore, what determines the actions and decisions – humans and their being – their nature. If all of the decisions made within different eras resemble each other, we can conclude that there is a certain pattern and nature that we follow and possess, and I think there is a resemblance. As Hegel says, Governments have never learned anything from history, or acted on principles deduced from it.” - ‘History repeats itself,’ hence we show the same qualities as before. Things happen again and again, all over again. Everything reoccurs, thus we can say that we follow some type of a pattern, which is prompted by the identical pattern within humans, moreover, during the lecture Sartre even says, “Man possesses a human nature; this “human nature,” which is the concept of that which is human, is found in all men, which means that each man is particular example of a universal concept – man.” (Sartre, 22) This universal concept says that man has to have something in common with every other man, which can only be its nature (even thought for

Sartre there is no human nature) and nothing else. The notion of “man” is the one uniting us, which inherently possesses some kind of traits to itself.

Even though Sartre derails from the Kantian thought,²⁶ I would say, he still happens to be under the latter's influence, so much, that the key understanding of the human morale are also present in former's philosophy. As Sartre writes, “Choosing to be this or that is to affirm at the same time the value of what we choose, because we can never choose evil. We always choose the good, and nothing can be good for any of us unless it is good for all.” (Sartre, 24) Here Sartre, basically re-states the categorical imperative. For him too, nothing can be good unless it is performed by others too. No action has its validity, unless it is good for all, meaning when one acts, he should want that particular action to be shared by everyone else. This is the conception to which Sartre dedicates a whole section in his *Being and Nothingness* – “Freedom and Responsibility.” As he claims there too, humans are responsible for all that is happening around them since they are the ones determining how others will act through their good. As he continues to write in *Existentialism is a Humanism*,

“Certainly, many believe that their actions involve no one but themselves, and were we to ask them, “but what if everyone acted that way?” they would shrug their shoulder and reply, “But everyone does not act that way.” In truth, however, one should always ask oneself, “What would happen if everyone did what I am doing?” (Sartre, 25)

“What would happen if everyone decided to act the way I am acting,?” is also one of the central questions that Sartre wants people to ask themselves. He believes in human morality and self-awareness, meaning he wants people to take responsibility for what they do. Our freedom should not allow us to overstep the boundaries of “goodness”,

²⁶ As he explains, “Kant states that freedom wills itself and the freedom of others. Agreed. But he believes that the formal and the universal are adequate to constitute a morality. We, to the contrary, believe that principles that are too abstract fail to define action.” (Sartre, 49)

“Around 1880, when some French professor attempted to formulate a secular morality, they expressed it more or less in these words: God is useless and costly hypothesis, so we will do without it. However, if we are to have a morality, a civil society, and a law-abiding world, it is essential that certain values be taken seriously; they must have an a priori existence ascribed to them. It must be considered mandatory a priori for people to be honest, not to lie, not to beat their wives, to raise children, and so forth.” (Sartre, 28)

Even in a Godless world for Sartre people can but shouldn't implement moral doctrines. Yet, there is a need to exist for some a priori understandings that never should be omitted or disregarded. Therefore, with my humble opinion and stance I would like to claim that, as Sartre says that there is no human nature or human condition where every man fits, nor morality or ethics, he still is under an influence of earlier thinkers does human to have some inherent characteristics within himself, which he or she should turn towards good. For him what God did was encourage this message even more, and as he argues later, it's no the matter that God doesn't exist, because people just don't believe in him or don't like him, but the case is that, even if he did exist, their viewpoints would not change,²⁷²⁸ and the doctrine that he is offering would still be applicable. Thus, the conception of freedom or free will is untouched, it still lies within a human and a human is central to creating morals for himself, only to negate them later and be in a constant struggle of searching, yet he or she needs to be open to this type of a being and needs to embrace, and also understand where does the actual “living” lie.

Basically, what I am trying to say is that Sartre's take on one possessing a free will and being condemned to freedom is true, and I would agree with it, yet my position stands right between him and Kant. What I would disagree with Sartre on is his take that human being is an

²⁷ As Sartre writes, “Existentialism is not so much an atheism in the sense that it would exhaust itself attempting to demonstrate the nonexistence of God; rather, it affirms that even if God were to exist, it would make no difference – that is our point of view. It is not that we believe that God exists, but we think that the real problem is not one of his existence; what man needs is to rediscover himself and to comprehend that nothing can save him from himself, not even valid proof of the existence of God.” (Sartre, 53-54)

²⁸ As Sartre writes, “Existentialists, on the other hand, find it extremely, disturbing that God no longer exists, for along with his disappearance goes the possibility of finding values in an intelligible heaven.” (Sartre, 28)

external creature and needs to locate his/her freedom in the 'other'. This Hegelian²⁹ stance that Sartre takes is as important as the Kantian one. For Sartre there might be no values, nor maxims, or morals, however the primary place where a person should be seeking for freedom is within his own self determined by the other, "Man is nothing other than his own project. He exists only to the extent that he realizes himself, therefore he is nothing more than the sum of his actions, nothing more than his life." Continuing, "In life, a man commits himself and draws his own portrait, outside of which there is nothing." (Sartre, 37) Outside of the portrait that man creates with his actions is nothing. Everything is empty; all is stored in one's own being.

Sartre writes, "You are free, so choose; in other words, invent. No general code of ethics can tell you what you ought to do; there are no signs in this world." (Sartre, 33) Continuing, "Man makes himself; he does not come into the world fully made, he makes himself by choosing his own morality, and his circumstances are such that he has no option other than to choose a morality." (Sartre, 46) We are free in our actions and beliefs. Nothing can determine our thoughts or ethics, hence one is forced into choosing a morality; there is no other way of living. One is in a construct build of his beliefs and I would argue that this process in itself is the one that makes him or her free. It doesn't matter whether he's going to succeed or not, but as long as one will be in a constant search of morality, keeping an open mind, hence always evaluating his self and the circumstance he's going to be free, because, all freedom is already stored in him.

²⁹"We will freedom for freedom's sake through our individual circumstances. And in thus willing freedom, we discover that it depends entirely on the freedom of others, and the freedom of others depends on our own." (Sartre, 48) Sartre takes the doctrine of "I think therefore I am" as an ultimate doctrine, the only true one among all. As he writes, "Contrary to the philosophy of Descartes, or of Kant, when we say "I think," we each attain ourselves in the presence of the other, and we are just as certain of the other as we are of ourselves." (Sartre, 41) consciousness confronts itself in this doctrine, consequently, since it is determined by the 'other' (that is the reason why it confronts itself – it is shaped by the other) Sartre takes human freedom to be also lying beneath the relationship of the 'other' and the self - "Man is always outside of himself, and it is in projecting and losing himself beyond himself that man is realized; and, and on the other hand, it is in pursuing transcendent goals that he is able to exist. Since man is this transcendence, he is himself the core and focus of this transcendence." (Sartre, 52)

Sartre even continues to say, “Thus, although the content of morality may vary, a certain form of that morality is universal.” (Sartre, 49) The form of morality that people seek can be universal for Sartre; it’s not the doctrine in itself and the belief, but the form of it, the way we look for it and the way it is when it comes to being.

Personally, I would want to hold a belief that one always has a true option in decision-making. One possesses a free will, is condemned to his freedom, but that freedom entails him making the right choice. It sounds very paradoxical, yet it is what I believe in. Philosophy is reason, and often is devoid of faith and belief in the particular doctrine, yet I think the two are compatible, and need to be closely held together. The belief in the idea is what prompts the search for the reason, and vice versa. There is always one true solution to every single problem or decision that we can make and if we don’t make that decision we won’t be wrong, yet the awareness about the fact that there was a true option might force us to think that we were wrong. Our actions will not be called righteous even if they were made through our free will and state of freedom. Sartre even says (but probably doesn’t really believe), “It is obvious that there is no predefined picture to be made, and that the artist commits himself in painting his own picture, and that the picture that ought to be painted is precisely the one that he will have painted.” (Sartre, 45) There is no predestined, predefined picture to be painted, yet when one starts with a blank slate and paints a picture; that is the picture that ought to have been painted. Hence, I still find an element of ultimate predestined existence in things unlike Sartre. Existence precedes essence, therefore whatever we do, or whatever decision we will make is going to have to be the right one, the one that exists in the “platonic” perfect world and awaits us to pick it.³⁰

³⁰ Therefore, as Sartre claims, “So I have within me a host of untried but perfectly viable abilities, inclinations, and possibilities that endow me with worthiness not evident from any examination of my past actions,” (Sartre, 37) is not entirely true, because all of these viable abilities, inclinations and possibilities are “condemned” to be wrong. Only one of them is the one that actually even Sartre himself would choose. As he answers Naville in the Q&A held

As stated in the prologue “the balance between evidence and lyricism can allow us to achieve simultaneously emotion and lucidity.” The same applies to philosophy and literature, the balance between the two can achieve transmitting a true message, and furthermore, the same applies to philosophy in our times. The balance between the ideologies can lead us to the true understanding of freedom and free will, thus showing the ideal state of morality, which we all have to strive for. Yet, balance is something that also urges inaction in everyday life. When someone is trying to rationally find a mean between the two opposites, this balance and the ‘awareness’ that I’ve mentioned above might lead to his indecision, which is horrific. No one should want this ‘sum of philosophies’ and the golden mean if it will prompt him or her to inaction, hence this “puzzling³¹” should be the first stage in determining the true belief that one will hold. The balance should only be held if, and only if, it will urge someone to lean towards an actual philosophy he or she will vouch for. Because the philosophy that we abide is the only thing we should be living by and acting upon, thus it should be a concrete line of thought.

after the lecture, “If he comes to you asking for advice, he has already chosen a course of action. In practical terms, I could very well have given advice. But since his goal was freedom, I wanted him to be free to decide. In any sense, I knew what he was going to do, and that is what he did.” (Sartre, 72) The only reason Sartre knew what the student was going to do is primarily because he knew that there was only one solution to the problem, which moreover was determined by the ethical take on the subject (not leaving a mother alone), and that is why he gave him the freedom to choose, because there was not a single chance of avoiding that solution – all the others would be wrong.

³¹ I use the word as a synonym to the action of picking different parts to create one picture.

Conclusion

**Notes From the Underground
(Or the Steps out of Plato's Cave)**

"The World is a masquerade. Looks, dress and voice, everything is only a pretension. Everyone wants to appear to be what he is not. Everyone is deceiving, and no one ever knows himself." – Francisco Goya

We fall into the abyss when we roll with life. All three thinkers presented urge self-exploration and constant thought. They center our inner selves and make us work around them. Hence... is the Grand Inquisitor free? He who questions all of the doctrinal beliefs offered by God? Or is he not, since he technically is choosing the wrong path because he diverts from God? Is Ivan free, the brother who tells the story of the Inquisitor to Alyosha, a person who is a deep believer?

At the end of the parable, when the Inquisitor finishes his critique, Jesus leans in and kisses him on the lips. As Dostoevsky writes,

"His silence weighed on him. He has seen how the captive listened to him all the while intently and calmly, looking him straight in the eye, and apparently not wishing to contradict anything. The old man would have liked him to say something, even something bitter, terrible. But suddenly he approaches the old man in silence and gently kisses him on his bloodless, ninety-year-old lips. That is the whole answer. The old man shudders. Something stirs at the corners of his mouth; he walks to the door, opens it, and says to him: 'Go and do not come again... do not come at all... never, never! And he lets him into the 'dark squares of the city.' The prisoner goes away."

- 'And the old man?'

- 'The kiss burns in his heart, but the old man holds to his former idea.'

- 'And you with him!' Alyosha exclaimed ruefully. Ivan laughed." (Dostoevsky, 262)

The Inquisitor wanted Jesus to get mad at him, to explain himself, contradict him with arguments, yet all he got was silence, which even drew him crazier. Jesus wants belief and if one doesn't provide it, he understands that no words are going to work. Alyosha does the same to his brother, as he finishes the story he leans and kisses his brother,

“Alyosha was looking at him silently.
 (Ivan) - ‘I thought brother, that when I left here I’d have you, at least, in all the world,’ Ivan suddenly spoke with unexpected feeling, ‘but now I see that in your heart, too, there is no room for me, my dear hermit. The formula, ‘everything is permitted,’ I will not renounce, and what then? Will you renounce me for that? Will you?’
 Alyosha stood up, went over to him in silence, and gently kissed him on the lips.”
 (Dostoevsky, 263)

Alyosha’s response portrays Dostoevsky’s side in the argument:³² one can be arguing against the religion, pose many arguments against the fallacies within the Bible, however, it is not going to make that much sense because the whole point of it is belief. Dostoevsky understands that "yes" there might be problems with the doctrine, it might be paradoxical, it might contradict itself, or show something that is totally unacceptable within its own teaching, yet it won't matter, and what will is someone's rational reading of it. By rational I mean balanced, understanding, accepting; I mean someone understanding the overall idea and the teaching that it offers, namely something like "be kind," or "don't do to someone else what you won't like to be done upon yourself" and so forth. The same will apply to freedom; freedom doesn't lie within any doctrines at all, it is autonomous and one is in charge of understanding it as he or she wills it.

Does Dostoevsky also side with Ivan? – ‘Yes’. Dostoevsky believes that Ivan too is a positive character who is erudite and doesn’t need to be edified upon anything. He is just an atheist, who by believing strongly in his values can also achieve the gates of Heaven. Thus, for Dostoevsky it’s not the religion that carries as much of importance (even though he was religious) I think it is the element of belief. Whatever position one holds, whatever one finds reason in, he has to be believing in it. A ‘person’ can’t be void of feelings, emotions, points of views, and “faiths”, he has to have a drive. Even though for Dostoevsky humans reach the state

³² Even though for example Camus argues the opposite.

of inherent goodness with the belief in God, they are also capable of doing this outside of it. Consequently, the kiss symbolizes forgiveness, compassion, and empowering, a blessing towards the path that Ivan, the Grand Inquisitor, or any of us take. We are also kissed by Jesus or Dostoevsky. It is the approval of their skepticism, which portrays Dostoevsky's existentialist side as well. If someone lives and believes in his beliefs like Ivan he will be granted freedom and will be set free.

After the kiss Alyosha exclaims, "If you wish, you can take it as a declaration of love. And now you go right, I'll go left – and enough, you hear, enough." (Dostoevsky, 264) The author of the book makes an atheist, Ivan, realize his own path, yet he realizes that he is free in his decision whether to stay religious or not, he is like Sartre in a way, not coping with his existence in the world to which he came to be, the religious one, negating it and setting his own morality - becoming his own God. Thus, I do think Ivan is free. He wants, he understands, his decision is educated. Within the religious realm though the 'left' path is said to be the non-religious one, while right the religious one – even more, the word "right" kind of hints to which path is actually correct to choose from Alyosha's perspective. Overall, as Dostoevsky sides with religion, he still finds humans capable of finding themselves within the different ideology and hopes for one to achieve salvation through non-religious life too.

Ivan is free and so is the Grand Inquisitor. They chose through their free will and contest religion, yet what determined their freedom wasn't the outcome but the decision making process. Their wanting was what contributed to their unchaining from the canonical thoughts. For me, if one believes in freedom, if one believes in his strength of freedom and power to choose, he can free himself from everything, and even consider himself free in the world without bread or any type of material security and support. Our state of mind, our approach is what is going to

determine our freedom within our lives, even under moral, physical, or mental restrictions. We can be free within religious, Leibnizian mindset, within Kantian, or Sartrean. Freedom is a universal entity transcending philosophies and the state all philosophy is trying to achieve. Freedom is a right that we possess; hence we need to exercise it.

In his book, *Notes From the Underground*, Dostoevsky creates another character through which he depicts his philosophy. This is a man who has lived in the underground for 40 years. The underground is a metaphor for seclusion and loneliness. As the underground man claims, “What we mean to say is that a man is nothing but a series of enterprises, and that he is the sum, organization, and aggregate of the relations that constitute such enterprises.” (Sartre, 38) For him, a man is a sum; he is a sum of all the relations that he establishes with people, morals, beliefs, or worldviews in general. We make up ourselves, we pick what to infuse within ourselves and what not to. So we have to treat our philosophy in order to be free. We have to pick from all that we read and encounter the mindsets that apply to us the most. I still want to claim that picking evil shouldn't be an option, because it can't form any type of morality at all, even if there is no morality, evil is taken as something negative, hence we should be aiming at the better sides.

Conscious man is sick says the underground man, “But all the same I am strongly convinced that not only too much consciousness but even any consciousness at all is a sickness.” (Dostoevsky, 7) Continuing, “But that is simply because I don't respect myself. How can a man of consciousness have the slightest respect for himself?” (Dostoevsky, 16) When we are conscious we are aware of all that we do. We know our worth and all the misdeeds that we have indulged in, hence it is a sickness as it slams our humanity and makes us lose respect towards ourselves. By regarding consciousness as sickness, the underground man resembles the Grand

Inquisitor's quest, it shows man's weakness, but in the latter case at least a man gave up his freedom for security, but nothing was said of being conscious in giving up the freedom. But in the case of the underground man if one gave up his freedom for security and bread, he would be conscious of the limitations he or she would be thrusting upon himself, therefore, this conscious state of being would torture them as they would know they gave up the most valuable trait of their lives.

The underground man holds a belief that if everyone does what he or she really wants, no one would act through evil or be destructive to others. He questions the idea of reason behind action, because it can prompt some other motives other than 'good'. For him, a human is a being that has to be diverging from reason once in a while applying himself totally to his wanting. He doesn't negate reason, but believes that if some natural laws governed human behavior in accordance with reason, that would be the idealistic state for someone. As the man says, "You see: reason, gentlemen, is a fine thing, that is unquestionable, but reason is only reason and satisfies only man's reasoning capacity, while wanting is a manifestation of the whole life – that is, the whole of human life, including reason and various little itches." (Dostoevsky, 28) Wanting is something that we desire; it is the personification of our free will that asks for its use. As the underground man continues, "What does reason know? Reason knows only what it has managed to learn (some things, perhaps, it will never learn; this is no consolation, but why not say it anyway?), while human nature acts as an entire whole, with everything that is in it, consciously and unconsciously, and though it lies, still it lives." (Dostoevsky, 28) For Dostoevsky, reason is something that can be pragmatic, practical, yet empty of actual willing and representing what do we want. While wanting is something that encompasses and totally identifies us, it projects who

we are and what do we yearn for. That is why reason needs a pair, a belief or wanting alongside it to fully encompass a human being.

As Dostoevsky continues he criticizes the natural laws on their own as well,

“Oh, tell me, who first announced, who was the first to proclaim that man does dirty only because he doesn’t know his real interests; and that were he to be enlightened, were his eyes to be opened to his real, would immediately become good and noble, because, being enlightened and understanding his real profit, he would see his real profit, he would see his real profit precisely in the good, and it’s common knowledge that no man can act knowingly against his own profit, consequently, out of necessity, so to speak, he would start doing good?” Oh, the babe!” (Dostoevsky, 20)

Humans do not primarily do good. Our wanting alone will not allow us to perform good on its own. It has to be paired as well. Continuing, “Moreover, he will immediately turn from a man into a sprig without desires, without will, and without wantings, if not a sprig in an organ or something of the sort; because what is man without desires, without will, and without wantings, if not a sprig in an organ barrel? What do you think? – let’s reckon up the probabilities-can it happen or not?” (Dostoevsky, 26) Hence, wantings are essential parts of our being and so are reasons that together can exert our free will. He believes that humans value their freedom and free will over reason, and just making sure that they possess it is of higher value to them than vice-versa. Underground man hesitates in applying reason to things; he’d rather seclude himself and be wrong in his free will than apply reason to all. By this, he is critical of the society living in Russia, the utopian socialists. The underground man is the personification of negation of dogmas. He questions and he’d rather suffer for his beliefs than succumb to the nature of society. He wills and wants to act so to portray the fact that he has a free will, because under reason how much of it do we possess? If we always act according to reason, and do what’s right within the context, we’d be devoid of feelings, emotions, passions, wantings; we would act against our

will³³. I do believe freedom can exist under reason, but it takes time to get there and just reason alone shouldn't be the measure of our actions. That is why consciousness is a disease, because it prompts the understanding of the fact that we do not act according to our will when we reason, our will might be different sometimes. Therefore, rarely, but we have to seclude ourselves from just reason. Pragmatism won't always be the case.

Once we start believing in what we are told and cope with ourselves, we start to die,

“And who knows (one cannot vouch for it), perhaps the whole goal mankind strives for on earth consist just in this ceaselessness of the process of achievement alone, that is to say, in life itself, and not essentially in the goal, which, of course, is bound to be nothing other than two times two is four – that is a formula; and two times two is four is no longer life, gentlemen, but the beginning of death. At least man has always somehow feared this two times two is four, and I fear it even now. Suppose all men ever does is search for this two times two is four; he crosses oceans, he sacrifices his life in the search; but to search it out, actually to find it – by God, he's somehow afraid.” (Dostoevsky, 33)

This goes back to Socrates asking Euthyphro whether something was holy because the gods approved it, or did the gods approve it because it was holy. The way we believe in two times two is four is going to determine our being. We definitely can believe in it, but we have to question it first. We can't blindly sit and accept it, because if we do we'll be stuck in platonic cave forever never seeing the light again.

Consequently, one can be free under Leibniz's, Kants', or Sartres' philosophy. Freedom is malleable; it adjusts to us and to who we are. It inherently lies within us and we are the central figures in channeling it within ourselves. We have to clean it from things like our physicality,

³³ As Dostoevsky writes, “For if wanting someday get completely in cahoots with reason, then essentially we shall be reasoning and not wanting, because it really is impossible, for example, while preserving reason, to want senselessness and thus knowingly go against reason and wish yourself harm.. And since all wantings and reasonings can indeed be calculated – because, after all, they will someday discover the laws of our so-called free will – then consequently, and joking aside, something like a little table can be arranged, so that we shall indeed want according to this little table.” (Dostoevsky, 27)

governmental laws, etc., since it simply is an inner job, it lies in our heads where and how we will be free.

“But anyhow: what can a decent man speak about with the most pleasure? Answer: about himself. So then I, too, will speak about myself.” (Dostoevsky, 6) I spoke about myself this whole time. This project was my quest to my freedom that is why I presented the thinkers that help me achieve this state, maybe one was missing – Nietzsche. However, the quest is eternal, it never ends, it lies in our self-education, so if one doesn’t do it (educate himself), I do not know how he or she will find morality, thus ultimately freedom. Education is what helps us become independent human beings. School, college, and philosophy have got me to where I am. Without reading or their help I wouldn’t be where I stand. So, we all have a line, a path to follow. We create it as we learn. Philosophy is freedom. It is the tool that helps us realize that we are independent thinkers and we should, and must think to ourselves. That I find to be it’s true aim, what happens after is only a side effect.

The project was mine. I do not want to advocate any of those beliefs because I find freedom everywhere; it is in every word, action, or belief that we hold. Our morality might be determining it, but there might be no morality as well. There might be a universal law that leads to our self-realization but there might not. I do stand somewhere, but I will keep it to myself not to be imposing my path upon others, because as Sartre doesn’t give an advice to his student and lets him figure what he wants to do himself, it is up to you to figure out where you stand and my advice will only chop off all the possibilities that you have and center you on a path that’s not yours. We might be heading the same way, but the only way to figure that out is to find each other in the end.

At the end of the day who am I to teach you? I am no one. Just a student not even knowing what he really believes in; a student hanging in between faith, morality, and reason, not knowing which way to expand. As Dostoevsky writes, “Oh, gentlemen, perhaps I really regard myself as an intelligent man only because throughout my entire life I’ve never been able to start or finish anything. Granted, granted I’m a babbler, a harmless, irksome babbler, as we all are. But what’s to be done if the sole and express purpose of every intelligent man is babble—that is, a deliberate pouring from empty into void.” (Dostoevsky, 18) I am a babbler without being intelligent, seeking to find my place. Dostoevsky finds any type of an identification a positive thing, “Question: who is he? Answer: a lazybones. Now, it would be most agreeable to hear that about myself. It means I’m positively defined; it means there’s something to say about me. ‘Lazybones!’ – now, that is a title and a mission, it’s a career, sirs.” (Dostoevsky, 19) We want to be defined and I am not. I’m not even a lazybones. So don’t take my words for anything. Read what the people say, read all the people and make a choice by yourself. It might be irrational, unreasonable, unfaithful, but it’s going to be a choice, but remain good within yourself and open minded. That is what school and education does, it opens minds, it questions two times two, but it is okay to say that the answer is four after the quest.

“Man needs only independent wanting, whatever this independence may cost and wherever it may lead. Well, and this wanting, the devil knows.” (Dostoevsky, 26) We need and want wanting, but don’t get lost within thyself, don’t get confused in your wanting and stubbornness. Man is a stubborn being to whom others are important but only to show his superiority upon them. There’s nothing more pleasurable than to hear ‘you are right.’ We listen to respond, not to listen. I can go on and on and on with this, with the ideas of who we are and what we do, but it’s not my job to tell you, but it’s yours to have enough respect to the history of

humanity and philosophy to at least figure out who you are. I can cite more texts, find more sources - it's going to be easy, everyone wrote, filmed, painted, or thought about freedom, but there's no use anymore, because it's enough for me. I've written seventy-six pages, in a very colloquial manner and have arrived nowhere. I've come to absurdity; my argument has come back where it started. So, If you still do not know where you going, go back, and go again, meanwhile I'll stop to allow you to do so.



Francisco de Goya y Lucientes - *Sleep of Reason Produces Monsters*

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