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The Ambivalent Self

Judith Farr Tormey

No problem strikes more at the heart of our relation to the cosmos, to others and even to ourselves than the problem of ambivalence. Throughout human history forces in the universe have appeared both friendly and hostile. Other persons seem capable of both loving and hating. And an individual experiences with disquieting frequency the opposing motives that lead to both wanting and not wanting—to do, to be or to have.

Possibilities for the development of themes associated with ambivalence are innumerable. The focus of my discussion will be Sartre's work as it can be contrasted with that of Freud. To form this contrast, I shall be concerned with a cluster of interrelated concepts: ambivalence, contradiction and self-deception. Philosophically, the concept of contradiction is the most basic because what is interesting and problematic about the other two, ambivalence and self-deception, stems directly from their seeming to violate the "law of contradiction" and from the heroic struggle that has been required of the human mind to try to render their occurrence intelligible in the face of this violation.

A contradiction arises when it seems necessary for an adequate description to attribute to one and the same thing both a property and its opposite. Thus Freud, in "Instincts and their Vicissitudes" says of the ambivalence of feeling:

The fact that, at the later period of development (after reversal has occurred) the instinct in its primary form may be observed side by side with its (passive) opposite deserves to be distinguished by the highly appropriate name introduced by Bleuler: ambivalence It is particularly common to find [both love and hate] directed simultaneously toward the same object and this phenomenon of their co-existence furnishes the most important example of ambivalence of feeling.¹

And Jeffrey Russell describing personifications of evil in Western and non-Western cultures says:

Because the cosmos is sometimes benign and sometimes hostile to humanity, and because human nature is also divided against itself, most societies that accept the idea of a divine principle consider the principle

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ambivalent. The God has two faces: he is a coincidence of opposites. In monotheism the God may be thought of as embodying two opposite tendencies in one person.²

When this tension of opposites becomes too great to sustain the unity of contradictory elements within one self, however, a splitting or "twinning" occurs and one aspect takes on separate (if not always independent) existence. The various forms of theological dualism or polytheism reflect the intellectual unwillingness to accept the contradiction of ambivalence. As we shall see, a contrast strikingly similar to the contrast between monotheism and dualism (or polytheism) can be found in a comparison between Sartre and Freud—Sartre essentially embracing the contradictory in an attempt to preserve the unity of self (or consciousness), Freud being driven to split the ambivalent self into parts. (The development of Plato's reflections on the soul from the Phaedo to later dialogues such as the Phaedrus exemplify the problem.)

Self-deception is a common maneuver, at least on the human level, to escape the agony of ambivalence, but it also seems to generate new contradictions. When we use the expression 'self-deception,' we can see that it translates easily into the notion of 'lying to one's self.' Since to tell a lie one must believe one thing but get one's victim to believe its opposite, self deception becomes a form of epistemological ambivalence involving believing and not believing the same thing. The motivation for the lie to one's self may be the belief that I have conflicting emotions toward a person, e.g. I both love and hate that person. The content of the lie is the denial of one of the ambivalent motivational branches, e.g. I don't hate that person. It is interesting to speculate whether self-deception may, in some cases, be necessary for action in the face of the paralysis that would otherwise be a consequence of genuinely ambivalent motives. Perhaps if Hamlet had been able to be more self-deceptive, he would have found it easier to act.

My thesis, then, is that a unified self requires, in the face of ambivalence and self-deception, an acceptance of contradiction; and I will illustrate this with a detailed examination of Sartre's philosophy. Since the acceptance of contradiction has been seen as a violation of rationality, major theorists such as Freud have been driven to a splitting or "twinning" of the subject—in fact, a form of complicated psychological Manichaeism. This in turn, is problematic because it represents an abandonment of the unity and integrity of the self. The Id becomes an "alien other" such like the personification of the devil as a principle of evil described by Russell.

So we are faced with an uneasy dilemma: accept monism, whether psychic or cosmic, and embrace contradiction or move in the direction of a dualistic split that generates paradoxes of its own.

I will first examine Sartre's reasons for accepting contradiction; then discuss, briefly, his arguments against Freud.

Sartre and Contradiction

There are a variety of ways that the "law of contradiction" (or alternatively the "law of non-contradiction") has been interpreted. However it is interpreted, it is essentially a law that sets or describes limits. Thus if it is given a metaphysical interpretation, its truth implies restrictions on what can be the case, on what properties, for example, things can have--what they can be. Thus the same god could not be both good and evil. When it is interpreted as a law of thought, it describes restrictions on what can be conceived, imagined or believed. A person could not believe that an object both has and does not have a certain property. This becomes particularly problematic when the belief is about one's self. In a third formulation, the law of contradiction can be seen as the ultimate limitation on what can intelligibly be said, a limitation on our description of objects and of ourselves.

However the law of contradiction is interpreted, it can be seen from an examination of Sartre's philosophy that he does not consider it to hold. In fact, the existence that human beings as conscious beings have, according to his account, violates the law in its metaphysical interpretation; some attitudes or beliefs conscious beings adopt toward themselves violate the law as a law of thought; and finally, as a consequence of its failure to hold in the metaphysical and psychological spheres, our descriptions of human existence must contain contradictions in order to be adequate descriptions, thus it cannot hold as a law of language. The alternative, Sartre wants to claim, is a division in the unity of consciousness that, itself, ultimately violates the law of contradiction. Thus, there may be no escape from contradiction.

It is interesting to note that philosophers who represent, perhaps paradigmatically, an approach to philosophy significantly in contrast with the Sartrean method have provided important insights into the problematic status of the law of contradiction. Ernest Nagel argues in "Logic without Ontology"³ that it can't be proved as a metaphysical principle without circularity. More recently G.H. von Wright raises the question in Time, Change and Contradiction whether "time saves us from contradiction." He notes that only the divisibility of time into discrete intervals enables contradictory characterizations to be avoided. But, von Wright argues, if we substitute a continuous flow theory of time we must characterize the world when it changes as $\neg q$ and q . That is, our description of the world will contain a contradiction. "The world will sometimes have to be described as being both in a certain state and in the contradictory state . . ."⁴

We must see, then, how and why Sartre places himself in the camp of those philosophers (beginning perhaps in Western philosophy with Heraclitus) for whom contradiction is first of all a metaphysical reality, and, in addition part of some at least of our thought processes. To illustrate this aspect of Sartre's philosophy, I will focus on his famous exploration of the problem of human freedom. The thesis I propose is that the self that is both A and -A--i.e. the ambivalent self--is not determined to act by anything. It is, in fact, "radically free." If anything at all is done (Cf. the famous story of Buridan's Ass), it is done freely.

A fundamental question to raise in an approach to any philosopher's work is 'What does s/he conceive the task of doing philosophy to be?' We can give at the outset at least a negative reply to this question for Sartre. He makes it clear that he does not conceive his task to be construction of proofs. When a contradiction arises in a proof, it must be eliminated by alterations in whatever led to its appearance. (Contradictory premises imply everything--as I want to argue contradictory psychological states open the self faced with the necessity to choose to every possibility.)

Sartre explicitly states that the experience that reveals freedom to us, the experience of anguish, cannot be thought to be a proof that we are free:

. . . anguish has not appeared to us as a proof of freedom; . . . We wished only to show that there exists a specific consciousness of freedom, . . . this consciousness is anguish.⁵

The experience of anguish is first of all an experience generated by certain features of human existence. Central among these is the capacity of human beings to raise questions. Man, for Sartre, is a question-asking animal, and understanding the presuppositions of the activity of raising questions is essential for understanding much of Sartre's philosophy from this period. It is through the raising of questions, Sartre claims, that we experience nothingness, and the experience of freedom. First then:

Every question presupposes a being who questions and a being which is questioned. The question is a kind of expectation; I expect a reply from the being questioned.⁶

Raising a question introduces the expectation of a reply. But the reply may be negative. Thus, to use one of Sartre's examples, the question 'Is Pierre in the cafe?' leaves open the possibility that the answer will be 'No, Pierre is not in the cafe.' My raising the question creates the expectation that I will see Pierre, but it may not be fulfilled. When it is not

fulfilled, according to Sartre, I experience nothingness:

I have an appointment with Pierre at four o'clock.
I arrive at the cafe a quarter of an hour late.
Pierre is always punctual. Will he have waited
for me?

Having raised the question, I expect a reply. In looking for Pierre, Sartre goes on, I reduce the cafe to a background against which Pierre will stand out if he is there. When I see that he is not there (when there is a negative reply to my question):

His absence fixes the cafe in its evanescence; the cafe remains ground; . . . [The figure of Pierre raises itself] as nothingness on the ground of the nihilation of the cafe. [W]hat is offered to intuition is a flickering of nothingness.⁸

It is not Wellington's absence or Napoleon's absence that I experience, although they are absent; it is the absence of whatever object is the object of the expectation created by raising the question.

Now, suppose the question I raise is about myself, rather than about other things or other people. Suppose I ask, 'what should I do?' Or, suppose I am engaged in some activity and ask: 'Should I go on doing what I'm doing?' or 'What am I going to do next?' My raising the question introduces the expectation of a reply. What do I expect to find (on the analogy with expecting to find Pierre in the cafe) that will provide my question with an answer? I expect to find some determinants in my present self or in my present situation that will govern, cause or in some way yield my future behavior. When I look for such determinants, however, just as when I looked for Pierre in the cafe, they are not there in my experience. I experience their absence. As long as I remained absorbed in activity and did not pause to reflect on what to do next, as long as I did not raise questions about myself, I was not aware of my freedom. But in raising the question, I set myself off from my past--from what I have done or have been doing--by expecting to find in it something that (in my experience at least) it does not contain: a sufficient condition for my future behavior. I set myself off from my future because I do not know what I will do. I expect to find something there in my future as my next act, but my expectation is not fulfilled. I can't predict my future behavior because, at least with respect to my consciousness, I do not experience its determinants. Psychological determinism, Sartre claims, is not given in intuition. It exists in the form of a hypothesis to explain the facts. It must be accepted on faith since it is not experienced on introspection.

To understand this point more fully, we must notice an important distinction: the distinction between those things a person does and those things that happen to him. Two distinct

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modes of awareness, fear and anguish, reflect the contrast between what happens to us and what we do; and they can be differentiated in part by their objects:

First we must acknowledge that Kierkegaard is right; anguish is distinguished from fear in that fear is fear of beings in the world whereas anguish is anguish before myself.⁹

Fear is not the result of reflection but arises out of unreflective awareness of objects in the world. They are seen to be dangerous, harmful, potentially destructive. The raising of questions about what I am going to do to meet the danger introduces anguish:

The artillery preparation which precedes the attack can provoke fear in the soldier who undergoes the bombardment, but anguish is born in him when he tries to foresee the conduct with which he will face the bombardment, when he asks himself if he is going to be able to "hold up."¹⁰

Here, although Sartre does not discuss ambivalence, we can see how a reflection on "what I am going to do" can bring me face to face with contradictory impulses in the self. I want to do something courageous--face the danger--and I want to flee. The two cancel each other. I experience nothingness, that is, I am radically free.

Anguish arises out of a paradoxical feature of human existence, one that is a corollary of the fact that as question-asking beings human beings experience nothingness:

Nothingness has slipped into the heart of this relation [between my future being and my present being]. I am not the self which I will be. . . . I am not that self because what I am is not the foundation of what I will be. . . . Yet as I am already what I will be (otherwise I would not be interested in any one being more than another) I am the self which I will be, in the mode of not being it.¹¹

Sartre appears to reject the law of contradiction in its interpretation as a metaphysical principle. "I am the self which I will be, in the mode of not being it." And the contradiction provides the philosophical underpinnings for an understanding of the experience of anguish.

It is in his discussion of the ways we escape from anguish that we find Sartre rejecting the law of contradiction as a law of thought. How is it, he asks, that the feeling of anguish is so rare given that human beings are "question-asking animals"? One answer is that most men are "men of action" too absorbed in

action to reflect, to question, to feel anguish. To reflect, as Dostoevsky's Underground Man reminds us, is to make oneself susceptible to the disease of hyperconsciousness--a disease from which "men of action" do not suffer:

I swear to you, gentlemen, that to be hyperconscious is a disease, a real positive disease. Ordinary human consciousness would be too much for man's everyday needs, . . . it would have been quite enough, for instance, to have the consciousness by which all so-called straightforward persons and men of action live.¹²

Since, however, we are "question-asking animals" we are bound at some point to ask ourselves 'What am I going to do next?' and the chasm of freedom will yawn at our feet. This, I want to argue, is especially true if our motives are ambivalent.

Once the reflective move has been made, is there any way to avoid the anguish that is the experience of freedom? The answer, for Sartre, is that we can and do avoid anguish by engaging in self-deception or "bad faith" (mauvaise foi).

We have already seen how conscious beings experience negation through the raising of questions. In addition, Sartre's examination of consciousness results in the description of consciousness itself as a nothingness:

Consciousness is consciousness of something. This means that transcendence is the constitutive structure of consciousness; that is that consciousness emerges supported by a being which is not itself.¹³

Mirrors are a favorite symbolical representation of consciousness for Sartre. A mirror is empty until a being other than it is reflected in it.

More significantly, perhaps, and more closely related to the development of the relationship between consciousness and ambivalence is the way that an experience of nothingness may arise through the "canceling out" of ambivalent motives. As contradictory premises in logic "imply everything," I have suggested that genuine ambivalence creates an emptiness in the self that may require something comparable to self-creation ex nihilo. Some of Sartre's most convincing examples can be seen as examples in which the person in anguish is vacillating between incompatible possibilities. The capacity for ambivalence must be one of the defining characteristics of conscious existence. Things, strictly speaking, could not be ambivalent. They are what they are and do what they do. Thus we see another reason why in its attempt to negate its own nothingness consciousness attempts to apprehend itself from without as an Other or as a thing.³⁰

To apprehend one's self in this manner, however, is to engage in self deception. Thus the metaphysical escape from nothingness is an escape into a paradoxical psychological state. The plausibility, viz. the non-contradictory possibility, of ordinary cases of deception depends on a duality between the deceiver and the deceived. Self-deception, if this duality is collapsed, appears to be impossible.

Deception usually occurs when, as Sartre observes, there are at least two persons: a deceiver and a victim. This duality between the deceiver and the deceived is common to all cases of deception except those of self-deception. And it is this duality which seems to make deception possible. Suppose, for example, I tell you that the train leaves at 11:30 (hoping, perhaps, you'll miss it and be forced to stay an extra day) when I believe that it leaves at 11:00. If I succeed in deceiving you, one of the ingredients in the situation responsible for my success is that my belief is hidden from you. Presumably, I know what I know, but unless you can read my mind, you do not have access to my knowledge except as I report it to you. If you had an independent source of information, e.g., in this example a train schedule, it would be exceedingly difficult for me to accomplish the deception. Suppose, however, I am mistaken in my information. The train really does leave at 11:30. In general terms, I believe p to be true, assert not- p with the intention of deceiving you, get you to believe not- p , and not- p is true. It is not clear that I have really deceived you although I intended to. Success in getting you to believe something that is not the case is required for deception, and it is clear in his examination of deception that Sartre has this strong model of deception in mind:

The essence of the lie implies in fact that the liar actually is in complete possession of the truth which he is hiding. A man does not lie about what he is ignorant of; he does not lie when he spreads an error of which he himself is the dupe; he does not lie when he is mistaken.¹⁵

Deception, then, however epistemologically complex, is not paradoxical. It depends on my being able to hide what I believe from you, to give you a false report:

Thus there is no difficulty in holding that the liar must make the project of the lie in entire clarity and that he must possess a complete comprehension of the lie and of the truth which he is altering. It is sufficient that an overall opacity hide his intentions from the other; it is sufficient that the other can take the lie for truth. By the lie consciousness affirms that it exists by nature as hidden from the Other; it utilizes for its own profit the ontological duality of myself and myself in the eyes of the other.¹⁶

What is the motive for self-deception? I want to argue that the strongest motive is the experience of ambivalence accompanied by the necessity for action. The ambivalent self wants and does not want to do x. Something must be done, therefore it is necessary to believe that doing x is what the self wants; i.e. for action, a lie to oneself is necessary.

Since the plausibility, viz. the non-contradictory possibility, of ordinary cases of deception depends on a duality between the deceiver and the deceived, how is self-deception possible? Freud, according to Sartre, unsuccessfully attempts to retain the duality between the deceiver and the deceived in cases of self-deception by splitting the self. As we saw earlier, when the tension between opposites becomes too intense to tolerate rationally, splitting or "twinning" is often the "solution". The price, however, for this resolution of contradiction is frequently the generation of a new set of paradoxes.

On Sartre's account of Freud, which has been much disputed, the ego is deceived by the id in a manner analogous to the way one person deceives another. And it is interesting to note that in arguing against Freud, Sartre uses contradiction in a traditional way. He argues that certain contradictory assumptions would have to be made about the relations between id and ego if the Freudian account were to be upheld. This emerges in his discussion of the phenomenon of resistance where some part of the self seems both to know and not to know that the analyst is "getting close to the truth." When Freud introduces the censor to resolve such problems, he must according to Sartre see the censor, mediating between the ego and the id, as in bad faith. With the introduction of a "self-deceived censor," however, the duality between the deceiver and the deceived has collapsed. Freud has not really shown us how self-deception is possible. The analogy with deceiving others will not work.¹⁷

How, then, is self-deception possible according to Sartre. It is possible only because human beings are capable of engaging in the "art of forming contradictory concepts." Sartre preserves unity by seeing those who are self-deceived as exemplifications of the violation of the law of contradiction as a psychological law.

What unity do we find in these various aspects of bad faith? It is a certain art of forming contradictory concepts which unite in themselves both an idea and the negation of that idea.¹⁸

Why is it necessary for us to be able to "form contradictory concepts" to be in bad faith? To identify ourselves as conscious beings with something fixed, to conceive our existence as like that of a thing requires contradictory concepts since, according to Sartre, "consciousness is a being the nature of which is to be conscious of the nothingness of its being." There is an analogy here with Kierkegaard's exploration of

faith in God. For Abraham, as Kierkegaard describes him, to have faith, he must be able to entertain, if not strictly speaking contradictory concepts, highly incompatible ones. He must believe that God will keep his promise and give him descendants through Isaac at the same time that he fully intends to sacrifice Isaac in accordance with God's command.¹⁹

While other philosophers intrigued by the phenomenon of self-deception have tried to rid it of its paradoxical air, Sartre appears to accept its contradictory qualities. For him, then, to understand this central aspect of our existence we must deny that the law of contradiction holds as a law of thought.

Finally, to describe human existence we must use a contradiction. "We have to deal with human reality as a being which is what it is not and which is not what it is."

NOTES

1. Sigmund Freud, "Instincts and their Vicissitudes" (1915) in Collected Papers, Volume 4. New York, Basic Books, 1959, 74-76.
2. Jeffrey Burton Russell, The Devil: Perceptions of Evil from Antiquity to Primitive Christianity. Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1977, p. 55.
3. Ernest Nagel, "Logic without Ontology," in Logic without Metaphysics.
4. G.N. von Wright, Time, Change and Contradiction. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.
5. Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, tr. Hazel E. Barnes, New York, Philosophical Library, 1956, p. 33.
6. Op. cit., p. 4.
7. Op. cit., p. 9.
8. Op. cit., p. 10.
9. Op. cit., p. 29.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.
12. Pyodor Dostoevsky, Notes from Underground, tr. Ralph E. Matlaw. New York, E.P. Dutton, 1960, p. 6.
13. Sartre, Op. cit., p. 29.

14. Op. cit., p. 30.
15. Op. cit., p. 48.
16. Op. cit., p. 49.
17. Unfortunately, there is not time to discuss the recent, intricate attempts by Herbert Fingarette, Ronald de Sousa, Amelie Oksenberg Rorty and others to show that self-deception can be redescribed in such a way that its seemingly contradictory character is dispelled. See also, for psychoanalytic theory, Roy Schafer's A New Language for Psychoanalysis. New Haven, Yale University Press, 1976.
18. Sartre, Op. cit., pp. 31-32.
19. Soren Kierkegaard, Fear and Trembling, tr. Walter Lowrie, Garden City, Doubleday Anchor, 1954.



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The Sartrean Self: Ambivalent or Paradoxical?

George J. Stack

Although I am in substantial agreement with many of the questions that are raised in Judith Torrey's interpretation of a central feature of Sartre's conception of the self, there are a number of points she makes with which I would have to disagree. In general, the characterization of the self in Sartre's thought as "contradictory" is also disputable even though it must be said, in all fairness, that Sartre himself sometimes suggests such a notion.

It is ironic, in a way, that Freud's conception of the splitting of the self is described as a form of psychological Manicheanism. For, if anyone has Manichean tendencies of thought, it is Sartre. But his tendency to think in terms of radical dualities is primarily found in his distinction between repulsive "beings-in-themselves" (or what others call material beings or things) and the transcendent purity of the "for itself" or consciousness. Relying basically on Sartre's reference to the role of contradictory concepts in bad faith, Ms. Torrey assumes that this means that the self described by Sartre is "contradictory" and relates this assumption to the psychological conception of ambivalence. It is precisely this concatenation of ideas that is questionable.

Ambivalence, as I understand it, is a psychological state in which an individual experiences uncertainty because he or she is unable to make a choice or because he or she has a simultaneous desire or proclivity to say or do opposite things. This general definition of ambivalence has a more specific application to psychoanalytic thought: it is the coexistence of positive and negative feelings towards the same person, object, or action. In terms of either a general or specific notion of ambivalence, it is difficult to see why it should be construed as analogous to logical contradiction. A love-hate relationship certainly has contradictory tensions and conflicting desires or attitudes that are disquieting; but neither are contradictory in a strictly logical sense. Having positive and negative feelings towards someone or something is an understandable psychological state, and it does not violate the law of contradiction. It is for this reason that I believe that much of what is said about Sartre's ostensible notion of an ambivalent self is questionable.

The ambivalent self that Torrey describes as a kind of living logical contradiction, one that is determined to act by nothing, seems to be more her creation than Sartre's. And the suggestion that Sartre holds that the self is radically free

because it is 'ambivalent' is, at least, misleading. For Sartre, the self that has been (one's past) is not free; it is a "facticity". The self that exists for others is an objectified self, a being for others that is petrified not only by "the look," but by evaluation and judgment as well. In terms of the inwardness of consciousness, the 'self' is dynamic, in process, "surging" (in Sartre's metaphorical language) towards what it is not yet, but may become. We are free, for Sartre, for the simply stated, but metaphysically complex, reason that, as consciousness, we are not beings in the world: we are an undetermined no-thing. We are radically free because, in Sartre's view, our present consciousness is not determined by anything, not even our own past. So, if my interpretation of Sartre is viable, the point of the ambivalence of the self is irrelevant to his defence of freedom. Between our past series of choices, decisions, and actions and a present choice, there is what Sartre calls a caesura, a break, a pause or, in more dramatic language, "nothingness". Given his rather daring theory of the 'structure' of consciousness, Sartre has the basic ingredient for his defence of radical freedom. Ambivalence may impede or inhibit choice and action, but once an act is undertaken (in Sartre's account of the matter), then we are subject to the universal causal nexus of physical events. What I have elsewhere called the idea of abstract freedom rooted in the ontological structure of consciousness is central to Sartre's conception of the origin of freedom. Even the most ambivalent of persons cannot act concretely in an 'ambivalent' way. And an action, despite the Marxian belief in ontological 'contradictions' in nature or society, cannot be literally construed as contradictory.

In regard to the issue of deception of others, I agree wholeheartedly with what Judith Tormey has said on the matter. The deceiver of others must, obviously, know what he is not telling others. The corporation executive who tells a group of workers that if they increase productivity, then they will probably forestall future staff reductions is deceiving them if he knows that there will be inevitable reductions in the workforce with or without increased production. The cunning deceiver, of course, usually only implies or suggests something which he knows will not take place. Deception is lying; but it is also sometimes misleading others, offering veiled promises, manipulating the feelings of others, and much more.

Self-deception, as Tormey correctly shows, is somewhat more complicated. While it does seem to entail a kind of duality, it is not necessarily a duality in the self. It is one and the same person who tries to disguise or hide his or her true motives, beliefs, or feelings from himself or herself. Freud is quite competitive with Sartre on this score. Especially in his analysis of the "defence mechanisms" that people commonly use, he is insightful. In rationalization, for example, we present for public consumption an acceptable reason for our behavior which disguises a rationale that may not be too

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flattering. A person makes a generous contribution to a popular charity out of pure generosity (he says to others and to himself), but, in his subjective consciousness, he knows that he made the contribution purely for self-interested reasons (to display public service for some anticipated gain, to obtain a substantial reduction of taxes, etc.). Of course, since these motives for behaving in a certain way may not be acceptable to the image or self-image of such a person, he endeavors to obscure them from his own view by "pushing them into the unconscious mind." Less esoterically put, one could say that the self-deceiver engages in "selective forgetting." The subjective transformation of a motive or rationale may, as Freud affirms and Sartre denies, involve something very much like "unconscious" patterns of thinking. Certainly, as Torney points out, this process would probably be more complicated in cases of genuine ambivalence. But, again, I see no reason to assume a 'split' or division in the self to account for this. When we act out of a state of ambivalence, we may honestly say that we do not actually know why we performed a certain act. That is, in the case mentioned above, if a person desires to be generous and to seek personal gain through generosity, the action may, indeed, proceed out of conflicting motives. This testifies to the complexity of self, but not to its logomorphic 'structure'.

It is not, as is said, the condition of ambivalence that creates an "emptiness" in the self, for Sartre. In a strict sense, consciousness is not the "self" in Sartre's view. Consciousness is the primordial origin of freedom, possibility, and hence, choice, decision, and action. The self is what we become through action. As Sartre says in his popular essay, "Existentialism as Humanism," a "man is the sum of his actions." The realization of one project entails the negation of competing projects. Ambivalence in regard to competing choices is only resolved through decisive choice and subsequent action. While deliberation is an act of consciousness, it does not entail concrete action. If we were able to remain in a state of ambivalent immobility or indecisiveness, then we could not strive to realize a "project" and, hence, in Sartre's view, we would neither act nor exist in the strong sense of that word. The tension in human existence that Sartre refers to in regard to "bad faith" has to do primarily with a tendency to deny our freedom by trying to become an object, a "being in itself." The waiter, in Sartre's example in Being and Nothingness, who thinks of himself wholly and entirely as a "waiter," as a kind of "waiter-in-itself," is not ambivalent towards his behavior and he is not in a state of ambivalence. He is consciously willing to present himself as, and think of himself as, a waiter by denying his "transcendence," his freedom. Self-deception is immanent in such a situation because this project cannot be completed. . . because the person (or consciousness) who endeavors to be a waiter only is aware that, as a free consciousness, he is above or outside what he is trying to be.

Tormey is right when she says that self-deception requires what Sartre calls the "art of forming contradictory concepts." The person playing the social role of "waiter" in "bad faith" knows that he is trying to exhaust his entire being in the role of "waiter" and he is quite aware that he is not, in a strict sense, solely a waiter. By trying to become the "facticity" of being a waiter, the person thinks, "I am a waiter." However, as I understand Sartre's position here, the same person also knows, as a free consciousness, that "I am not a waiter." This is the paradox of "bad faith": as long as man has the nature of both a bound facticity and a totally free consciousness, he cannot achieve authentic self-deception insofar as he is consciously aware of acting in "bad faith."

The analysis of bad faith in Being and Nothingness and the corollary analysis of self-deception is one of the most subtle arguments in a work replete with sophisticated philosophical arguments. Briefly stated, Sartre argues that no one can claim to be, wholly and entirely, what he is and no one can claim to be entirely what he is not. I cannot, to take Sartre's example, think of myself as a total coward, as an absolute coward, because I cannot determine myself as a finished, complete entity, as a being in itself. For, my consciousness of intentionally determining myself as a "coward" is a free act of a free consciousness that eludes my cognitive determination of myself as a "coward." No one can be a total coward any more than anyone can be an "honest person." With sufficient knowledge of someone after his or her death we may say, "He was a coward." This is possible because the person referred to is now a complete facticity. In the hell in which three characters live in No Exit, the characters suffer from the full illumination, without excuse, of their being, their facticity shaped through their actions in life. For one who has lived in "bad faith" or who has tried to do so, this is, indeed, hell. As long as we are actively involved in the process of life, however, we are paradoxical beings comprised, essentially, of transcendence (freedom) and facticity (determination). It is this duality, and not states of ambivalence, that make the project of bad faith possible, but unattainable.

If it were genuinely possible, which it is not, literally to be (let us say) courageous, then the projects of bad faith and self-deception could be carried out. If one were completely courageous, then one would have become a complete being, a finished human product, an object like others. Living in bad faith, as Sartre describes it, positively requires that my project to be courageous be impossible. A non-conscious object cannot be in "bad faith" because it is what it is. It has no alterity in itself; it cannot be what it is not. The purity and perfection of works of art, especially sculptures, is espoused by Sartre precisely because of his consistent ontology. A fine piece of sculpture is complete in itself, perfect of its kind, a pleasing, beautiful, aesthetically perceived facticity. If we ask why Sartre maintains that no one can be totally sincere or completely immersed in bad faith,

we must turn, as Torrey almost does, to his ontology of human being. At this point, of course, temporary states of ambivalence, as well as the "ambivalent self," are left behind.

In concluding portions of the paper under consideration, it is said that human existence must be described in terms of contradiction presumably because the self has a contradictory nature. Admittedly, this is an interpretation that Sartre himself sometimes seems to invite. However, it is misleading. Without getting into the intricacies of Sartre's unusual ontology and some of its internal conceptual difficulties, we can safely say that Sartre's phenomenology moves from a description of consciousness, its being and its acts, to a description of being-for-others and finally to concrete action in a world comprised of "instrumental complexes," cultural objects, and the ever-present, slightly menacing, "others." In a sense, we have to read Being and Nothingness forwards, but understand it backwards. For, what Sartre presents serially, out of phenomenological necessity, is really experienced all at once in the dynamics of actuality. The concrete freedom and concrete action mentioned at the conclusion of his work entails an interaction of consciousness and facticity, an interaction that is explored in Critique de la raison dialectique. Aside from the artificial descriptions of a phenomenology of human reality, existence takes place in a causal network comprising "the world" and, in that world, consciousness is immanent in man's facticity. The living self is neither consciousness nor facticity: it is created, for better or worse, through the action of what may be called a "consciousness-body." As ironical as it sounds, given Sartre's preoccupation with the internal processes of consciousness, the self is a public entity, something that exists for others. It is for this reason that he says that Marcel Proust is the author of Remembrance of Things Past and other works, the person known by others who lived his life in a certain way. Proust is not what, in imagination, he may have thought he was; his dreams, his fantasies, his unfulfilled plans, his hopes, all of these are evanescent and irrelevant to what, finally, he was. This view of the self is what accounts for Sartre's tendency to present individuals in what seems to be a harsh, unescapable, total illumination. Put simply, we are what we become in our lifetime through the realization of our projects, no matter how humble or grandiose they may be.

The incomplete self, the self in process of formation, the self we are ineluctably becoming through our projects, our choices, and our actions, this self is paradoxical, but not ambivalent. The formula cited at the end of "The Ambivalent Self" should have been cited at its beginning. For, it is the key to Sartre's understanding of the becoming of the self. Although some philosophers in the Anglo-American, linguistic analysis camp have found this conception of human reality "untidy," Sartre knows exactly what he is saying. From Kierkegaard, in the first instance, and from Heidegger, Sartre

has adopted the fundamental ontology of man that conceives of him as a dynamic synthesis of what Kierkegaard called "necessity" and "possibility" and Heidegger called Faktizität and Möglichkeit. In terms of what an individual has done up to the present and in terms of what he or she has endured up to the present, the individual's being is characterized by facticity. Only what has already occurred is 'necessary' or has been empirically determined. If man were only what he has been or is now, he would be analogous to a mere being (Seiende) or an être-en-soi. However, as Kierkegaard first said and later William James asserted in the name of a "Danish thinker," man "lives forward." What a person has done or has undergone cannot be effaced or negated. But a person's potentialities or existential possibilities have "not yet" been realized. If they may or may not be realized in futuro, then they are contingent possibilities. Since thinkers as diverse as Aristotle and Hampshire have insisted that man has unique potentialities, then, in this sense, potentiality is part of the being of man.

Translating the above into Sartre's paradoxical idiom, we see that he holds that man is not what he is (i.e., is not his necessity or his already determined empirical actuality) and is, in a sense, what he is not (i.e., is his potentialities or his possibilities). An individual is construed as living towards future, as yet unrealized, possibilities (or projects) and being motivated in his behavior by what Kierkegaard accurately described as a "subjective teleology." The person exists, in a sense, at the ontological intersection of facticity and possibility and is not truly either, but a paradoxical synthesis of both. This, I believe, is what Sartre means in his often cited formula for the nature of human reality. In this sense, the self that is in process of becoming cannot be entirely determined because it is volatile, dynamic, or undergoing change. The self is in the process of creation, for better or worse, throughout a person's lifetime. It is not analogous to a logically self-identical concept and it is not a living "contradiction." Ambivalent sometimes, but essentially paradoxical. In fact, as Kierkegaard once said, if man were not paradoxical in his being, then he could not change, could not strive to realize possibilities, could not, in a strict sense, exist. Sartre says that it is through man that "nothingness" (=consciousness) enters the world; he might just as well have said that in human existence possibility enters the world. Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Sartre all acknowledge "objective possibilities" in the world as much as the dedicated empiricist does. However, given their philosophical concerns, they are more interested in examining subjective possibilities.

Contradiction in thought and being that Tormey attributes to Sartre's ostensible conception of the "ambivalent self" are really paradoxical features of the dynamic nature of the self that Sartre defends. It does not take a genius to show us that individuals are subject to conflicting motives, ambivalent

feelings, and conflicting goals. But these subjective states of being are not testimony to the ambivalent nature of the self. Even in the most common choices we make we are, as Kierkegaard insightfully put it, "in-between" possibility (a projected possibility of choice and action) and actuality (our empirical actuality up to and including the present). An ambivalent self such as Torrey depicts would suffer the paralysis and immobility that she aptly describes. But this 'self' is actually only a potential self, a character who is unable to resolve the problem of opposing possibilities of choice or action, who is indecisive. This is virtually a portrait of the character "A" in Either/Or, a character who is compared to a pawn surrounded on a chessboard that is unable "to move." Such a person is paradigmatically living an inauthentic mode of existence.

Central to the existential 'therapy' of Sartre (and his predecessors) is the attempt to encourage them to become decisive in their lives, to liberate them for genuine choice. The appeal to von Wright's notion that temporal processes are both p and $\neg p$ brings us back to an Hegelian conception of actuality. And this, in turn, brings us back to Aristotle's idea that change requires a transition from a potential state to an actual state. This, of course, is where Kierkegaard, Heidegger, and Sartre enter the picture. But they prefer to point to the paradoxical tensions of human existence rather than using the logical model of what seems to be a kind of existential contradiction in the self. To be sure, there are opposing tendencies in the self, even dialectical oppositions, but man is not subject to a living, logical 'contradiction.' The simple reason for this, especially in Sartre's case, is that man is not interpreted in accordance with the model of logic. A person is never logically self-identified and never logically self-contradictory. It is Sartre's phenomenological ontology of human reality that determines his rather complex analysis of the self, self-deception, and "bad faith." Needless to say, it is decidedly not a logomorphic ontology. If it is sometimes a psychologist ontology of human existence, this is because Sartre believes, with good reason, that the psychological states of, and psychological experiences of, man are relevant to a full understanding of how man experiences himself, others and the world. How we can talk about man and his experience without impinging on the deep psychological dimension of human life is difficult to understand. Ambivalence is, indeed, part of that experience; but it is not the basis of Sartre's conception of the self.