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## **Self-consciousness and the body in Sartrean phenomenology**

David Michael Reisman

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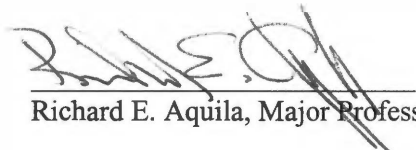
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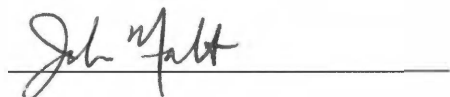
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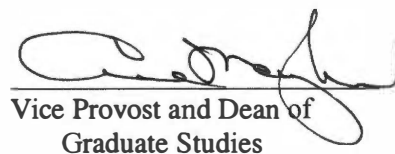
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**Self-Consciousness and the Body in Sartrean Phenomenology**

A Dissertation  
Presented for the  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Degree  
The University of Tennessee, Knoxville

David Michael Reisman  
December, 2003

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## Abstract

Commentators interested in applying Sartre's work to topics currently discussed in analytic philosophy of mind have missed some crucial distinctions and relations. Most notably, they have paid no attention to the relationship between the apprehension of a kind of Cartesian ego in "impure reflection" and the apprehension of oneself as a physical object. My dissertation examines Sartre's analyses in *Being and Nothingness* in relation to more familiar approaches to the mind-body problem, the problem of other minds, and the problem of personal identity over time. Crucial to Sartre's analyses are distinctions between several types and levels of reflection or self-awareness. Corresponding to these are various dimensions of selfhood and bodily existence ignored by more familiar approaches.

The "constitution" of a Cartesian ego in impure reflection is the issue to which *The Transcendence of the Ego* is primarily devoted. However, Sartre also notes in that work that one's body, as an object of one's own consciousness, is a "synthetic enrichment" of this ego. This is taken up in detail in *Being and Nothingness* when, after examining "the look," i.e., the experience of apprehending oneself as an object for another consciousness, Sartre distinguishes three "ontological dimensions" of the body: the body-for-itself, the body-for-others, and the body as it is experienced by oneself as an instrument or object for others. What commentators seem to miss is that the last of these is the Cartesian ego, now "enriched" by the sense of oneself-as-another which has been gained through the look.

In addition to providing material for the apprehension of one's own body, the Look is also essential to apprehension of other persons. In fact, apprehension of another person is apprehension of one's body for others, now in turn enriched by apprehension of certain observable physical features.

Sartre's account of what is involved in the various levels of apprehension of oneself and

others invites comparison with Strawson's analysis of the person as a "basic particular" to which "M-predicates" and "P-predicates" equally apply. While Sartre could agree that on the level at which one can think of a person as a subject to which both sorts of predicates apply, these predicates do apply equally, he would insist that in some sense a person is necessarily apprehended as a consciousness "before" being apprehended as a material object. This is true both of another person, who is first apprehended as a Look, and of oneself, whom one first apprehends as purely a relation to the world.

That there are different types of awareness, and different levels of awareness, both of oneself and of other persons, is relevant to the question of what is involved in experiencing a person as extended in time. For instance, since the Look is involved in the experience of one's body as an object, it is also involved in the experience of oneself as temporally extended. Prior to being apprehended as one's body, however, the ego is experienced as temporally extended, although not in an entirely consistent manner.

Finally, and more generally, I attempt to relate the "constitutional" relation that Sartre seems to intend with his talk about "enrichment" to more familiar talk about a possible variety of "senses" or "references" for the word "I."



## Preface

It makes sense to say that a person is a body, a physical object, with consciousness. We usually assume that we know well enough what a physical object is. Attempts to understand what a person is, by philosophers both of dualistic and of materialistic leanings, can thus be seen as attempts to figure out what “with consciousness” means. For the dualist, having consciousness has to do with having (or being) some sort of nonphysical thing, a “mind,” somehow associated with the body. A person is a body with a mind. For the materialist, consciousness is a quality of certain physical objects, or perhaps something more like an activity in which these objects are engaged. A person is a physical object having such a quality or engaged in such activity. In either case, a description of consciousness will tell us what it means to satisfy one of the most important criteria for being a person and, if we have the relevant information, which physical objects are persons.

In *Being and Nothingness*<sup>1</sup> Sartre attempts to provide such a description, but his approach and conclusions differ in important ways from those of both dualists and materialists. Sartre’s view is developed by examining the way in which the world appears to consciousness. His starting point, like Descartes’s, is our experience of the world as it appears to us. Rather than thinking of experience as providing evidence for the existence of an immaterial substance (something that has a manner of existing different from that of material objects), however, he thinks of the Cartesian ego as constituted by the process of reflection. He ends up identifying the subject of consciousness with the body, but his view, if it can be considered to be a form of materialism at all, is unlike other forms.

For Sartre, in order to understand what we mean by a person we have to understand the process by which we constitute ourselves as persons. On Sartre’s view, consciousness originally

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<sup>1</sup>Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1992). Hereafter, “B&N.” References noted by page number alone.

apprehends itself in terms of what it is consciousness *of*, i.e., as an activity of apprehending the world. As for Descartes, one is immediately aware of this activity and its objects. However, Sartre stresses that at this level one is not aware of any substantial self supporting one's consciousness. One is aware only of the world and the activity of apprehending it. The question of how one gets from this minimal form of self-awareness to apprehending oneself as a person, for Sartre, is the topic of this dissertation. However, this is not a study in developmental psychology. What is crucial is to see how Sartre regards the end-product in question, not as a "level of consciousness" in some causal or historical way related to others, but as a structure within which exist a multiplicity of radically distinct levels.

A standard way to formulate some sort of mind-body problem is to ask some question about the apprehension of certain physical objects as subjects of conscious acts. By contrast, as we might put it, Sartre's view is that our fundamental notion of a subject of conscious acts involves *some sort of apprehension of conscious acts of consciousness as physical objects*. Admittedly this is a melodramatic way of speaking. It should not be taken to mean that having a body, or weighing one hundred seventy pounds, are apprehended as *predicates* of the act of consciousness. But the value of putting it this way is that it brings out that: for Sartre (1) it is only acts that do the experiencing, the act of consciousness apprehends *itself* as having a bodily subject; and (2) the experience of the act of consciousness and the experience of the subject of consciousness are not two *separate* experiences which are somehow combined, e.g., by way of a judgment predicating the one of the other.

According to Sartre, an act of consciousness originally apprehends itself merely as presence to some sort of object of consciousness. It is able to apprehend itself as having a bodily subject only by being incorporated into a sort of higher-level act. Actually, the original act of consciousness needs to be progressively encompassed by two such higher-level acts. The first of

these, reflection, enables the act to apprehend itself as having a subject, but not a bodily one. It is only with the help of the Look, a second encompassing act, that this subject can acquire bodily features. The original act can be said to have a subject, and a bodily subject, only insofar as it is eventually incorporated into such higher-level acts.

It is possible to recognize that, for Sartre, the subject of consciousness is ultimately the body without appreciating this process of constitution of the bodily subject. In Chapter One, I begin discussing a commentary that does precisely this, Phyllis Sutton Morris's book, *Sartre's Concept of a Person*,<sup>2</sup> to which I refer throughout the dissertation. Toward the end of that chapter, in the context of replying to some of Morris's claims, I take the opportunity to discuss briefly the crucial notion of the body-for-itself.

Chapters Two through Five are devoted to the levels of constitution of oneself as a bodily subject of consciousness. In Chapter Two I discuss consciousness's original apprehension of itself as a presence to an object of consciousness which turns out to be more like a perceptual field. The next two chapters deal with the first higher-level act and with the way in which consciousness apprehends itself as having a subject prior to the Look. In chapter three I discuss impure reflection, in which, according to Sartre, the ego is constituted. Although impure reflection occurs on the basis of what Sartre calls pure reflection, I leave the latter topic for chapter four.

Chapter five is devoted to the Look. As we will see, as the original act of consciousness is encompassed by these higher-level acts, the perceptual field is progressively enriched as well. In this regard, the modifications that come with the Look are very important. The Look plays a central role in our apprehension of other persons and physical objects, as well as in our apprehension of ourselves.

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<sup>2</sup>Phyllis Sutton Morris, *Sartre's Concept of a Person: An Analytic Approach* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1975). Hereafter, "SCP."

In Chapters Six and Seven I put to use the account of the various levels of self-constitution developed in the prior chapters. In Chapter Six I discuss ambiguity, a topic central to understanding Sartre's notion of bad faith. I then discuss this latter notion, which I had touched upon in Chapter Four. Next I discuss whether, and in what sense, the word I might be said to be ambiguous for Sartre, and what might be involved in apprehending oneself and others as the same over time, a topic mentioned in Chapter One in connection with Morris's view. Finally in Chapter Seven I try to see in what ways Sartre's views on self-apprehension and on the concept of a person compare to Strawson's.

## Table of Contents

### Chapter One: Domesticating Sartre: Morris and the “Body-Subject”

1. Introduction .....	1
2. Morris and the “Body-Subject” .....	12
3. Monasterio on “The Body in <i>Being and Nothingness</i> ” .....	23
4. Morris’s Body-Subject View and Personal Identity over Time .....	31
5. Two Ways of Apprehending Oneself as the Same Body .....	40

### Chapter Two: Intentionality and Temporality

1. Introduction .....	58
2. Sartre and Husserl on Consciousness and its Objects .....	60
3. Morris’s Account of Intentionality: The Difference between a Person and a Material Object .....	68
4. Consciousness and Temporality .....	80

### Chapter Three: Impure Reflection and Psychic Objects

1. Introduction .....	100
2. Pure and Impure Reflection .....	105
3. Impure Reflection, The Ego, and Psychic Objects .....	111
4. The Ontological Status of the Psychic Object .....	118
5. The Magical Relations between Psychic Objects and Physical Objects, and among Psychic Objects .....	124
6. From Apprehending Psychic Objects to Apprehending One’s Body and its Psychophysical States .....	136

### Chapter Four: Pure Reflection

1. Introduction .....	157
2. Wider’s Criticism of Sartre’s Account of Pure Reflection .....	158
3. Busch and the Importance of Pure Reflection .....	161
4. Anguish, Nausea, and Pure Reflection .....	172
5. Selfness in the World of the Immediate .....	181

### Chapter Five: The Three Ontological Dimensions of the Body and the Role of the Look

1. Introduction .....	193
2. The Body-For-Itself, the Body-For-Others, and the Look .....	198
3. Sartre and Two Traditional Approaches to the Mind-Body Problem .....	208
4. The Role of the Look In Apprehending Other Persons, the Objective World, and Oneself .....	219

### Chapter Six: Bad Faith, Ambiguity, and the Ambiguity of “T”

1. Varieties of Self-Apprehension and the Senses of “T” .....	247
2. Bad Faith .....	255
3. Morris’s Account of the Ambiguity of “T” .....	271
4. Morris on Bad Faith and the Ambiguity of “T” .....	279
5. The Ambiguity of “T” and Personal Identity over Time .....	300

### Chapter Seven: Sartre and Strawson

1. Introduction .....	311
2. Descriptive and Revisionary Metaphysics: What Strawson is Not Interested in .....	313
3. Strawson’s Claim that “T” is Univocal and its Role in his Descriptive Metaphysics of Persons .....	320
4. Sartre and Strawson: Considerations on the Senses and Reference of “T” .....	334

<u>Bibliography</u> .....	347
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<u>Vita</u> .....	356
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## Chapter One: Domesticating Sartre: Morris and the “Body-Subject”

### 1. Introduction

The approach to *Being and Nothingness*<sup>3</sup> taken by some analytic philosophers can be contrasted with one more oriented to the phenomenological side of this work. Phyllis Sutton Morris’s book, *Sartre’s Concept of a Person*,<sup>4</sup> is my primary example of the former. I identify parts of her account that can be adapted to the more phenomenological reading, though her account of what Sartre would say about issues in traditional metaphysics and epistemology, attempts to find answers to questions that Sartre is not addressing. What are Sartre’s questions and how they differ from the traditional ones?

It makes sense that somebody studying philosophy of mind in the analytic tradition would want to see what insights the phenomenologists might have. And it would make sense for such a philosopher to turn to Sartre’s early work, to *Being and Nothingness* in particular. Since, unlike Husserl, he claims to be doing ontology and, unlike Heidegger, he writes about consciousness, Sartre is a natural bridge between the traditions to connect. And B&N contains compelling, lucid examples one can cling to when the text tries to get away. Finally, not only does Sartre talk about consciousness, but seemingly also about the body, other minds, freedom, and something like self-deception -- ideas that make analytic philosophers feel at home.

B&N is as good a place as any to start relating phenomenology to analytic philosophy of mind. But we must not be misled by the apparent familiarity of Sartre’s concepts and examples. Anthony Manser has already noted that Sartre’s notion of bad faith has been misconstrued by those who have identified it with self-deception.<sup>5</sup> We are too eager to figure out *his* answers to *our*

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<sup>3</sup>Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (New York: Washington Square Press, 1992). Hereafter, “B&N.” References noted by page number alone.

<sup>4</sup>Phyllis Sutton Morris, *Sartre’s Concept of a Person: An Analytic Approach* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1975). Hereafter, “SCP.”

<sup>5</sup>Anthony Manser, “A New Look at Bad Faith,” *Sartre: An investigation of Some Major Themes*, ed. Simon

questions. It may have been better if Sartre had used less familiar terms -- that way we would be less likely to be misled into thinking that we understand him.

Both Phyllis Sutton Morris and Gregory McCulloch<sup>6</sup> feel that Sartre has something to offer to analytic philosophy of mind. But while Morris says that Sartre makes certain claims about what the subject of consciousness is, what the criteria are for personal identity over time, and what the differences between persons and other material objects are, McCulloch seems to be saying that Sartre is not interested in making any such claims. Most strikingly, McCulloch says that Sartre is not interested in "what a conscious entity is (e.g. brain, biological organism, immaterial substance, or whatever)," while, according to Morris, Sartre claims that consciousness is a relation whose subject term is the human body.

#### ***1a. What Sartre is and is not interested in***

McCulloch's book, *Using Sartre*, is an instruction manual for analytic philosophers who want to get the most out of him. In it he offers the following important warning:

[O]ne must be aware of what Sartre means by 'being' in phrases like 'Being For-itself'. The word can be used to mean *entity* (as in 'The world is full of human beings'), but Sartre most often uses it in the sense of *way* or *mode* or *manner* of being.... So in speaking of consciousness as Being For-itself, Sartre is not thinking of individual conscious agents as entities, but is adverting to the kind of conscious existence which human agents enjoy. He is interested in what is involved, from the phenomenological point of view, in existing (*be-ing*) consciously, rather than in what a conscious entity is (e.g. brain, biological organism, immaterial substance, or whatever.)<sup>7</sup>

Since in B&N "Sartre seeks to describe and analyse... the relationships between his different modes of being,"<sup>8</sup> and since being-for-itself is conscious being and being-in-itself is non-conscious being, much of this book is nearly an essay on the mind-body problem. But if we take

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Glynn (Brookfield: Gower, 1987): 55. Bad faith plays a very important role in B&N. For one thing, Sartre takes the possibility of bad faith to be essential to persons, and believes that this possibility reveals something important about our nature. Moreover, the misapprehension of oneself that occurs with bad faith does not begin at the cognitive level. I return to the topic of bad faith in Chapter Six.

<sup>6</sup>Gregory McCulloch, *Using Sartre: An Analytical Introduction to Early Sartrean Themes*. (New York: Routledge, 1994).

<sup>7</sup>McCulloch 3.

McCulloch's warning about Sartre's use of the word "being" seriously, as I think we ought to, this problem is totally transformed. It is no longer a question about the relationship between two sorts of thing (e.g., mental and physical entities, states or events) but rather a question about two ways of existing.

In a way this is obvious. Everybody knows that it would be wrong to think of consciousness, or acts or states of consciousness, as any sort of "thing" or "things" for Sartre. But it would also be wrong to think of being-in-itself as a sort of thing. If, in reading B&N, we try to see what Sartre has to say about the relationship between the mind and the body, or between mental phenomena and physical phenomena, when Sartre talks of the relationship between consciousness and being-in-itself we first will get excited, and then frustrated because we cannot tell what he means by "being-in-itself." Does he mean the world? Does he mean the human body? Does he mean "all the matter"? Does he mean the object of consciousness?<sup>9</sup> When Sartre

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<sup>8</sup>McCulloch 4.

<sup>9</sup>Thomas Busch says, "the very notion of the in-itself is a muddled one because Sartre fluctuates, in presenting the notion, between a phenomenological ontology and a speculative metaphysics." Understood phenomenologically, the term refers to the way of being of, e.g., objects of perception, which are apprehended as self-identical. Busch explains that self-identity "is revealed in opposition to the temporal self-surpassing of the for-itself." Thus, "From the perspective of phenomenology the notion of for-itself and in-itself are reciprocally intelligible." In any case, Busch notes that as well as ordinary perceptual objects, Sartre characterizes a wide range of items as "in-itself," including the past, the Ego, odors, probabilities, lacks, and the bodies of others. Thomas Busch, *The Power of Consciousness and the Force of Circumstance in Sartre's Philosophy*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990): 23. Each of these items is apprehended as self-identical, in contrast to the acts of consciousness directed at it, just as a perceptual object is. Thus: "The character of in-itself is applicable to to all that appears to the self" (p. 25). Hazel Barnes lists three meanings of "being," the third of which corresponds to the phenomenological sense of being-in-itself. Barnes says, "Being-in-itself' is a term that can be applied to anything whatsoever that is the object of consciousness. Suddenly the domain of being-in-itself is infinitely enlarged, and we find a complex relation of consciousness to being, one that results in the production of a distinct type of being-in-itself, one that so totally reflects the modification imposed by intentional consciousness that we may say consciousness has created it." Hazel Barnes, "Sartre's Ontology: The Revealing and Making of Being," *Existentialist Ontology and Human Consciousness*, ed. William McBride (New York: Garland, 1997): 71. She categorizes the ego as such an in-itself. The second sense of "being" listed by Barnes is "being-in-itself as the external, material universe" (p. 69). She explains that consciousness "orders" the material universe as it reveals it. Absence, distance, quality and quantity, destruction, and potentiality, she says, are "in the world but revealed by consciousness" (p. 70). When talking about the first sense of "being" she lists, Barnes says that it "cannot be said to include nothingness" (p. 69). Since the ordered material universe, according to Sartre, does include nothingness, Barnes's first two senses are different.



talks about “the relations between consciousness and being” is he talking about consciousness’s relationship to the object it perceives or is he talking about its relationship to the body? At this point we must remember that Sartre is talking about the relationship between two ways of being, not two items.

Perhaps the best interpretation of being-in-itself is *an item’s way of being, insofar as it is being what it is*, or existing in the way that a non-conscious entity (*qua non-conscious*) exists.<sup>10</sup> Being-for-itself, then, would be *an item’s way of being, insofar as it is being other than what it*

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Joseph Catalano says that Sartre uses the term “in-itself” in two ways: “sometimes he uses it to refer to the ‘brute’ existent, and sometimes to existence as already altered by the advent of consciousness.” Joseph S. Catalano, *A Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre’s “Being and Nothingness”* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980): 46, n.16. “Sartre seems to refer to the in-itself in two different ways: (1) matter as it would have been without the advent of consciousness; (2) matter as now intrinsically altered by the advent of consciousness” (p. 141, n.6). I take these to correspond to Barnes’s first and second senses, respectively. In any case, the “speculative metaphysics” mentioned by Busch is a story that begins with “being” in Barnes’s (and Catalano’s) first sense. It goes on to explain the existence of consciousness, reflection, and being-for-others in terms of an “attempt” *on the part of being* to ground itself. I don’t know how seriously Sartre takes this. (See note 28, below.)

Barnes’s goal in delimiting the latter senses of “being” is to distinguish that of the ego and mental states (as well as “worked matter”), which we in some sense create, from that of the absences, distances, and material objects which we only reveal. All these are “in-itself” in Barnes’s third sense. But, “Material things have a ‘coefficient of adversity,’ of resistance. One cannot do just whatever one wants with being-in-itself” (p. 71) in Barnes’s second sense. In any case, the only sense of “being-in-itself” with which I am genuinely comfortable is Busch’s phenomenological one (Barnes’s third). While it is important to distinguish psychic objects, such as the ego, from other objects of consciousness, I don’t think the best way to do this is to say that Sartre means something special in calling a material object “in-itself.”

Robert Schroeder identifies being-in-itself with the being of material objects. Robert Schroeder, *Sartre and his Predecessors* (London: Routledge, 1984): 174. He goes on to say, “Material objects are complete, self-sufficient, full, and inert; they need not sustain themselves to remain what they are; they simply are what they are” (p. 175). He cites the section of the introduction titled “Being-in-itself,” in which Sartre indeed characterizes being-in-itself in this way. However, as Busch notes, material objects are only one class of things that Sartre refers to as in-itself. The ego, for example, is apprehended as complete, inert, etc., in contrast to the reflective acts directed at it. The same can be said for qualities of objects and numbers. Sartre may believe that consciousness is ultimately dependent upon material objects, but this is metaphysical speculation rather than phenomenological ontology. Thus Jeanson says that “the in-itself is not a substantial foundation of the appearing object but only the character of its being (which is closed in on itself, full of itself, and inert).” Francis Jeanson, *Sartre and the Problem of Morality*, trans. Robert V. Stone (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980): 111. Phenomenological Ontology states only that consciousness always has an object and that this object is “in-itself” in the phenomenological sense.

As we will see, the constitution of intersubjective objects in general is based on the apprehension of objects of consciousness which exist in the in-itself mode, but are not yet constituted as intersubjective. The notion of a material object, insofar as this notion includes the sense “intersubjective object,” thus goes beyond the most minimal phenomenological sense of “in-itself.”

<sup>10</sup>See previous note.

is.<sup>11</sup> Thus far this has very little to do with the mind-body problem, supposed to be a problem concerning the relationship between entities that are conscious and bodies. The things that Sartre says which bear most directly on the mind-body problem come in his discussion of being-for-others, because on Sartre's view one constitutes oneself as a body -- i.e., for Sartre as a certain sort of psychophysical object -- on the basis of some sort of apprehension of one's being-for-others. As we will see, however, the mind-body problem is totally transformed by Sartre's approach. It becomes two questions. The first is how consciousness, which is immediately aware of itself as awareness of the world, becomes aware of itself as a psychophysical object. The second is how consciousness, which is immediately aware of "the Other" as the consciousness for which it is itself another, becomes aware the Other as a psychophysical object. It is Sartre's answers to such questions to which this dissertation is devoted.

In the meantime, following McCulloch, Sartre is using human being as an *example* of conscious being. He is interested in this unusual way of being, a manner of existing so different from the way in which non-conscious entities exist, and from the non-conscious way of existing that conscious entities may share with them. Seeing Sartre's investigation in this way makes sense of why he seems to assume that humans are the only conscious entities: since he is not interested in the entities, but in their way of existing, there is no reason for him to treat more questionable cases. Finding conditions that conscious entities must satisfy or common characteristics they share is not his task. Perhaps other animals also exist in the way that humans exist. But this is not a question Sartre is asking.<sup>12</sup> Nor would he be interested in whether a 23rd century robot could exist in this

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<sup>11</sup>I don't mean to imply that an item's existing in one mode excludes the possibility of its existing in the other. In fact, I think that Sartre's view is that something must exist in the former mode to exist in the latter. Thus Barnes says, "insofar as being-for-itself *is*, it has the same being as being-in-itself" (Barnes 61).

<sup>12</sup>Sartre says that consciousness is "the instantaneous nucleus" of "the human being" (116), and goes on to use the term "being-for-itself" to refer to this mode of being without ever suggesting that animals may also exist in this mode. In a late interview, after being informed that one commentator had accused him "of human racism, of anthropomania," Sartre says that he has always thought that animals have consciousness. "An Interview with Jean-Paul Sartre," by Michel Rybalka, Oreste F. Pucciani, and Susan Gruenheck, *The*

way. He is not interested in figuring out which entities are conscious; he is interested in what it is to exist consciously.

### ***1b. Morris's book***

Morris's book is devoted to several major questions in the philosophy of mind, questions on which both Sartre and analytic philosophers seem to have opinions. One is whether there is a difference between a person and a material object, and if so what that difference is. Morris says that for Sartre there is a difference: persons exhibit "intentionality." She gives a valuable account of what intentionality is for Sartre,<sup>13</sup> one that will be useful in answering the question of what it is to exist consciously. This is because to exist consciously, for Sartre, is to "intend." But as I have emphasized, the question of what characterizes conscious existence is not the same as the question of what characterizes conscious *entities*.

Morris is examining intentionality as a criterion that conscious entities will satisfy and non-conscious entities won't. She notes that since billboards refer, if intentionality is reference billboards are conscious. She discusses a robot that finds library books, thus exhibiting purposive

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*Philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre*, ed. Paul Arthur Schilpp (La Salle: Open Court, 1981): 28. He goes on, "I consider that what is said about animals in animal psychology is generally stupid or, in any case, absolutely unconnected to the conscious experiences we have. Animal psychology has to be redone, but it is difficult to say on what foundations" ("Interview," 28-9). As is well known, and as we will see, he is also very critical of the foundations of human psychology in B&N, as well as in the works preceding it. Later in the interview, he said that he was interested only in defining consciousness: "I was not interested in doing a study on the relations of consciousness and the brain, because I first wanted to define consciousness.... I wished to define it as it presents itself to us, for you, for me. In so doing, I wanted to posit a definite object which others would then have to try to explain with a materialist system, that is, to study its relation to the brain" ("Interview," 40). I take this to confirm McCulloch's claim about the restriction of Sartre's interest. In any case, it makes sense that Sartre did not think he would benefit much from animal psychology. Either a fish nihilates its environment in light of a project or it doesn't. If it does, we still are not going to learn much about having a project from watching fish. To know what it is to exist consciously, one does not need to know whether fish are conscious. The question of whether what Sartre says about being-for-itself applies to fish is a separate study (a study about fish).

This might lead one to say that it requires a separate study to see whether other persons exist consciously, whether they have projects, etc. This makes sense, and indeed Sartre does not say anything about how to tell whether another would-be person is conscious. However we will see that, according to Sartre, there is an apprehension of oneself-for-another which is (1) somehow *more direct* than the apprehension of another person, and (2) somehow *involved* in the apprehension of another person.

<sup>13</sup>I discuss this account in Chapter Two.

behavior. She is considering counterexamples to one of “Sartre’s claims,” that “only conscious existents can refer purposively” (SCP, 23). This sort of investigation is about which entities are conscious. She is trying to show how Sartre could defend his claim that the only conscious entities are human bodies: only human bodies exhibit the right sort of intentionality.<sup>14</sup> But on McCulloch’s view Sartre should not be making claims of this sort at all.

McCulloch says that Sartre is not interested in what a conscious entity is, whether it is a brain, a biological organism, an immaterial substance, or something else. Morris’s main thesis is that, “for Sartre, the body is the subject of conscious relations,” that consciousness is a relation between a human body and some other items. She seems to be saying that, for Sartre, a conscious entity is a body, i.e., a biological organism: predicates such as “is perceiving the tree,” “wants a piece of chocolate,” and “believes that the store is closed” name characteristics of a human body. She says that Sartre *claims* that the body is the subject of consciousness. McCulloch says that Sartre is not interested in any such claim.

Morris has Sartre saying that consciousness is a relation and the body is the subject of this relation. That consciousness for Sartre is a relation, not an entity, would be more acceptable to McCulloch than saying that, for Sartre, consciousness is an immaterial substance or a biological entity. We can rephrase this part of the claim in a way that would be still more acceptable to McCulloch: being conscious is *being related* to something that exists in the in-itself mode.<sup>15</sup> Since

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<sup>14</sup>Morris says, “Sartre, curiously enough, does not discuss the question” of whether animals are conscious (SCP, 23). This omission would indeed be curious if his interest in intentionality was as a criterion to distinguish conscious entities from nonconscious ones.

<sup>15</sup>This may seem inaccurate, since some forms or aspects of consciousness are relations to consciousness itself or to “psychic objects,” not to non-conscious being. However, Sartre says: “consciousness in its inmost nature is a relation to a transcendent being.... [T]o be conscious *of* something is to be confronted with a concrete and full presence which *is not* consciousness.... [C]onsciousness is born *supported by* a being which is not itself.... To say that consciousness is consciousness of something is to say that it must produce itself as a revealed-revelation of a being which is not it and which gives itself as already existing when consciousness reveals it” (21-24). The “mode of being” of the “being,” i.e., the entity, which “supports” consciousness is “being-in-itself.” On Sartre’s view for there to be consciousness, there needs to be something that exists in this mode. As we will see, when consciousness is consciousness *of* itself in

Sartre is not interested in the entities themselves, we leave open the possibility that whatever it is that exists nonconsciously may be in some sense the same thing that exists consciously. In other words, the relationship between being-for-itself and being-in-itself may be the relationship between two ways of being *of the same item*. (It is important for this possibility to remain open, because some things Sartre says seem to imply that consciousness is a relation that an item that exists in the non-conscious mode has to itself.) But it is difficult to see how we could transform the second half of Morris's claim, that the body is the subject of consciousness, so that it is not a claim about entities but rather about *the way of being of entities*. If being conscious is being related, or *relating*, to something non-conscious, how can what is doing the relating can be specified without specifying the entity? How can we make any claim about the subject of conscious relating that is not a claim about an entity.

Although it is a consequence of Sartre's view that persons have a way of being that material objects do not share, it is difficult to spell this out in a way that Sartre would find acceptable, because Sartre does not want to make consciousness into a quality. He seems to want to bar the question of *what* it is that exists consciously. This is not to say that we cannot talk about the relationship between the body and consciousness. The claim that being conscious is being related to something non-conscious is compatible with the claim that being conscious involves *being a body*.<sup>16</sup> And this latter statement does not talk about "what a conscious entity is," it talks about the way of being of a conscious entity. It could be restated in such a way that it is not at all tempting to see it as a claim about what a conscious entity is: *being conscious involves being embodied*.<sup>17</sup> That being conscious involves being embodied has one of the same consequences as

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reflection, this consciousness is "supported" by pre-reflective consciousness, i.e., by consciousness of something that exists in the in-itself mode.

<sup>16</sup>Sartre says: "It would be best to say, using 'exist' as a transitive verb -- that consciousness *exists* its body" (434).

<sup>17</sup>We will see that, insofar as it is involved in being conscious, "being embodied" should not be thought of

Morris's original claim -- that consciousness cannot exist separated from all bodies. But it is about consciousness's way of being whereas Morris's claim seems to be about *what* exists consciously.

Morris's question about the difference between a person and a material object leads her to think of persons as material objects with a special feature, consciousness or purposiveness. In a way this is fine: persons are material objects with a special feature. But much of B&N is devoted to the questions about the constitution of oneself and others as objects of consciousness. For example, how is consciousness, which according to Sartre originally apprehends itself as a spontaneous positing of objects, able to be apprehended as a feature or activity of a certain material object?

Sartre distinguishes between a person and a material object as two manners of existing: *being* a person and *being* a material object. He talks about these ways of being without ever attempting to indicate which things exist consciously and how one can tell whether a given object of consciousness does so. He does, however, attempt to explain what is involved in apprehending oneself and others as persons, i.e., as bodies having states of consciousness, character traits, and projects. This attempt involves an analysis of the ways in which one experiences one's own body and the bodies of others.

### ***1c. Ontological, epistemological, and phenomenological questions***

Morris's book discusses Sartre's replies to the "traditional questions of individuation and reidentification of persons" and how persons differ from other material objects. On this last question, in traditional ontology if we have figured out what characteristics a conscious entity has, so that it can be considered conscious, we have also figured out the characteristics that *another* conscious entity has, so *it* can be considered to be conscious. But Morris says "these questions can

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as being *located* in a physical body, but rather as having a certain "point of view," as having the "world" as a field of "instrument-objects" arranged around one in a specific way. (See Subsection 4a of this chapter and Chapter Five, Section Two.)

be asked from the point of view of the person himself or from the point of view of others who identify him” (SCP, 1). This suggests that the questions she has in mind are not the traditional ontological ones.

The ontological question of what it is to be a conscious entity can be followed by the epistemological question of how one can tell whether a given entity is conscious. This question changes depending on whether the would-be person is the questioner herself or somebody else.

According to Morris:

Sartre is... concerned... with establishing the differences between persons and material objects; that is, he asks how  $x$  can be identified as a person rather than, say, as a corpse or as a cleverly designed robot. (SCP, 1)

Although “establishing the differences between persons and material objects” sounds as if it may involve determining the criteria for personhood, taken as a whole this quote seems to be referring to an epistemological problem.

In the third part of B&N, “Being-for-others,” Sartre is definitely interested in determining what conditions  $x$  must satisfy for  $x$  to be *experienced as a person*, where  $x$  is an object of experience. But I would not call this “establishing the differences between persons and material objects,” since that implies that the differences to be discovered are between persons and material objects, not between *experiences of* persons and material objects (persons as they are experienced and material objects as they are experienced). Sartre’s discussion is about the difference between *experiencing* a material object and *experiencing* another person.

It is fine to say that Sartre is asking how  $x$  can be identified as a person, so long as this is not taken to mean that the problem he is discussing is epistemological. However, it would be better to say that Sartre is asking how some objects of consciousness are experienced *as experiencers themselves*. Although he believes that he has undermined solipsism, Sartre does not explain how to tell whether another would-be person is conscious. He talks about the difference

between the *experience of a person* and the *experience of an inanimate object that looks like a person*, but doesn't ask how we can know whether a given entity is a person. He seems to believe that we may be wrong anytime we judge a particular entity to be a person, but he doesn't seem to care. Apparently he believes that solipsism is undermined by the fact that there is a third way of being in addition to being non-consciously and being consciously, namely, being-other.<sup>18</sup>

What I have said about persons and material objects also goes for personal identity over time. It is one thing to ask what conditions two person-stages (p1 and p2) must meet for them to be parts of the same person. It is another thing to ask how one can tell whether p1 and p2 meet these conditions. It is a third thing to ask what conditions two experiences must meet for them to be (experienced as) experiences of the same object (in this case, a person), or what conditions two objects of consciousness must meet for them to be experienced as temporal parts of one object and temporal parts of *a person*.

That Morris refers to the problem of reidentification of persons, as opposed the problem of personal identity over time, is evidence that she has more than the traditional ontological question in mind. This explains why she says that this question can be asked from two different points of view. But the "problem of reidentification" would be a suitable name for either an epistemological or a phenomenological question. The former asks how we can tell if a given item is the same as an item that we experienced earlier, while the latter asks what is involved in experiencing the item as the same item.<sup>19</sup> Since Morris associates the problem with "locating persons responsible for

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<sup>18</sup>Thus, as we will see, the "evidence" that counts for us against solipsism is not found in the behavior of other persons. Rather it is found in the pre-reflective experience of oneself as an object for another consciousness.

<sup>19</sup>Schroeder's description of the Husserl's task in the *Cartesian Meditations* may be helpful here: "[Husserl] is seeking to show how one comes to be able to experience a certain kind of object *as such*. With regard to Others, he is not providing reasons for believing Others exist, but rather is trying to construct how it becomes possible (intelligible) to apprehend something as another (like oneself)... Husserl's results may be used to commence a more traditional epistemological reconstruction, but he sees himself as providing something more fundamental. The issue of whether one can legitimately believe that Other's exist cannot arise if one cannot even suppose something to be another conscious subject.... Husserl seeks to disclose the



actions and punishing guilty persons,” it is clear that she has the former problem in mind. How one can *know* whether the person one now sees is the person who committed a given crime is relevant to the project of punishing the right person. What is involved in experiencing the person as the same is not.<sup>20</sup>

## 2. Morris and the “Body-Subject”

I have tried to expose the danger of drawing conclusions from what Sartre says about the relationship between being consciously and being non-consciously to what he might say about the relationship between consciousness and non-conscious entities, I have begun to distinguish the questions that phenomenological ontology asks from those asked by traditional ontology and epistemology, and I have suggested that some commentators, including Morris, have reconstructed Sartre’s account, perhaps unwittingly, in such a way that he seems to be answering questions of the latter sorts.

According to Morris, Sartre makes certain claims about what the subject of consciousness is, what the criteria are for personal identity over time, and what the differences between persons and other material objects are. These are all related. She feels that, according to Sartre, the body is the subject of consciousness or the body is the subject-term of conscious relations. Since the body is the subject of consciousness, having the same body, according to her reconstruction, will

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preconditions and underlying components of a particular type of experience; the ways in which an experience assumes the meaning ‘experience of another conscious subject’” (Schoeder 25).

<sup>20</sup>I will eventually suggest that Sartre’s phenomenological ontology is more similar to Strawson’s descriptive metaphysics than it is to traditional ontology and epistemology. Both ask questions that can be seen as falling between the question of what a person is, or what criteria all persons meet, and the question of how we can tell whether a given item meets these criteria. As we will see, Strawson is conducting an analysis of the *concept* “person” (and other concepts), while Sartre is investigating the *object of consciousness* “person” (and other objects of consciousness). Both are interested in what might be called the constitution of meanings, although Strawson’s meanings are closer to the meanings of words and Sartre’s are closer to the meanings of objects and experiences. I will show that Morris does not pay sufficient attention to this important difference between traditional philosophical inquiries and the investigations of Sartre and Strawson.

be a necessary condition for being the same person.<sup>21</sup> Finally since the body, and not some immaterial entity, is the subject of consciousness, the difference between a person and a material object cannot be that a person is or has an immaterial mind. The difference, on Morris's reconstruction, is that a person is related to other objects and to other persons in a way that other material objects are not. "Having a mind," which is what makes persons different from other material objects, *consists in* being related to the world in this unique way.<sup>22</sup>

It is clear from the way that Morris proceeds that she does not mean anything very special when she speaks of the body. Quite unlike Sartre, for example, she doesn't talk about the three "ontological dimensions of the body"<sup>23</sup> or the "body-for-itself" or "body-for-others." She doesn't say anything about how the body is constituted as an object of consciousness. She doesn't mention Sartre's account of the Other until the chapter before the conclusion. Thus, when she says that the body is the subject of consciousness or the subject-term of conscious relations, she is not talking specifically about the body-for-itself, the body-for-others, or "the third ontological dimension of the body."<sup>24</sup> Nor is she saying that one constitutes one's own body as the subject of one's consciousness, or that one constitutes the body of another as the subject of her consciousness. She is saying that the body is what those qualities that imply consciousness are qualities *of*; wanting chocolate, hoping for rain, seeing a turtle, etc., are things that a *body* does.

According to Morris's reconstruction consciousness is a relation between a human body

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<sup>21</sup>However it will not be sufficient for being the same person, in the fullest sense, because if one changes one's "fundamental project" one becomes a different person. I discuss this in Chapter Six.

<sup>22</sup>McCullough agrees: "having a mind is to be understood as a way of being related to non-mental world or environment" (McCulloch 4). This may bring to mind the view called "externalism" in contemporary Anglo-American philosophy of mind. Indeed, Colin McGinn sees Sartre as "probably the most extreme externalist in philosophy." Colin McGinn, *Mental Content* (Cambridge: Blackwell, 1991): 22, n.31. McCulloch sees Sartre as an externalist as well (p. 106-11), and believes that McGinn's own externalism is "a watered-down version" (p.119, n.6).

<sup>23</sup>These are called the "body as being-for-itself," the "body-for-others," and the "third ontological dimension of the body." Regarding the third Sartre says, "I exist for myself as a body known by the other" (460).

<sup>24</sup>See previous note.

and something else. Being the subject of conscious relations -- of such relations as being aware of  $x$ , hoping for  $y$ , and desiring  $z$  -- sets human bodies apart from other material objects. To be a body related to something in these ways is to be a person. I agree with much of what Morris says about the details of the "something" to which the body is related, and the details of the conscious relation itself. I discuss these in the next chapter. For now I am interested in her notion of the "body-subject." I said that Morris doesn't mean anything unusual by "body". It is also fairly clear what she means by "body-subject." She is saying that while, for example, the mind is the subject of consciousness for Descartes, for Sartre the subject of consciousness is the body. Consciousness is a relation between two things, one of which must be a human body.

### ***2a. The body as the "subject term of conscious relations"***

I think Morris gets the idea that Sartre holds the body-subject view either from her attempt to derive a traditional ontological theory from what he says about *being conscious* or from actually mistaking some of Sartre's claims about bodily experience for traditional ontological claims. The fact that she says that *he claims* that the body is the subject of consciousness makes me think that it is the latter. Morris writes:

(M1) Sartre claims... that the human body is the subject term of conscious relations (BN, 305,316). (SCP, 30)

I take this to mean that such predicates as "is perceiving the tree," "wants a piece of chocolate," and "believes that the store is closed" name properties or characteristics of a human body. But the parts of B&N to which she refers say nothing of the sort.

On page 305 Sartre talks about the origin of the problem of inverted vision: "How can we set upright the objects which are painted upside down on our retinas?" His point is that the problem arises because we have confused two "incommunicable levels of being" of the body. The body is, on one hand, the point from which one acts upon and perceives the world, one's point of perceptual and instrumental contact with the world. This is what the body is for itself. But for

others the body is a special sort of *object* in the world. Thus the eye for the viewer herself is an invisible point which is indicated by the objects she sees around her. On this level it is not a physiological organ containing a retina and an upside-down image. It sees only the objects in the field of vision, and it is nothing but “the point toward which all the objective lines converge” (317). It is only for the physiologist -- i.e., for another -- that the eye has an image that is upside down. On this level, though, the eye does not *see*, in the sense of being present to an object.

According to Sartre, “the philosophers” are correct in saying that an “object is upright or inverted in relation to the rest of the universe. To perceive the whole universe inverted means nothing,” and thus that the viewer doesn’t have to turn the image right-side-up. But his point is that the problem would have never arisen in the first place if we didn’t try to identify the body-for-itself with the body-for-others. So that his analysis of the body does not make mistakes of this sort, he says that he will treat separately the body-for-itself -- i.e., the body insofar as it perceives and acts -- and the body-for-others, or body as an object that can be seen and acted upon:

[T]o the extent that my body indicates my possibilities in the world, seeing my body or touching it is to transform these possibilities of mine into dead-possibilities.... Of course, the discovery of my body as an object is indeed a revelation of its being. But the being which is thus revealed to me is its *being-for-others*. If we wish to reflect on the nature of the body, it is necessary to establish an order of our reflections which conforms to the order of being: we can not continue to confuse the two ontological levels, and we must in succession examine the body first as being-for-itself and then as being-for-others. And in order to avoid such absurdities as “inverted vision,” we must keep constantly in mind that these two aspects of the body are on different and incommunicable levels of being, they can not be reduced to one another. Being-for-itself must be wholly body and it must be wholly consciousness; it cannot be *united* with a body. Similarly being-for-others is wholly body; there are no “psychic phenomena” there to be united with the body. There is nothing *behind* the body. But the body is wholly “psychic.” (305)

Morris, it seems, takes the last lines of the above quotation as support for her view that the body is the subject-term of conscious relations. But perhaps she should follow this by saying something like what she says following her claim that “bodily identity is a necessary condition for personal identity over time”: the body serves as the subject-term of conscious relations “differently for

oneself and for others.” That others apprehend one’s body as a subject of conscious relations is supported by the last three sentences of this quotation. That one apprehends one’s own body as the subject term of conscious relations is supported by the sentence before these. The first three sentences of this quotation show that one also can apprehend one’s own body as the subject of conscious relations in the way that another does.

After this quotation Sartre says, “We must now proceed to study these two modes of being which we find for the body.” This concludes his brief introduction to the chapter on the body. It is followed by three sections that discuss the ontological dimensions of the body, corresponding to the body’s three ways of appearing mentioned in the above quotation. The third section, which is not promised by Sartre in the final sentence of the introduction, discusses the body’s appearing to oneself as it appears to another.

The first section of the chapter on the body is rather long, and focuses on one’s apprehension of one’s own body, not as an object but as, if you will, the subject of conscious relations. On page 316, the other page referred to by Morris for support, Sartre repeats some of the observations from page 305, saying that the eye cannot see itself, and that even if our bodies allowed us to look at one of our eyes with the other, in doing so we would be “assuming the point of view of the Other” and seeing that eye as a special sort of object. My point is that either these pages do not support the claim that Morris is making or this claim is misleading. She ought to have said that one’s own body and the bodies of others are *apprehended as* subjects of conscious relations. But, as I have said, it would be difficult to relate this to the traditional metaphysical issues that she says Sartre is addressing: the difference between persons and non-conscious objects, personal identity over time, and the problem of other minds.

Sartre, in this section, is talking about the ways in which we experience our own body. He could be said to be claiming that one’s body is *experienced as* the “subject term of conscious

relations” (depending on what is meant by this phrase). However, this is not what Morris holds, for she says that Sartre’s position is *not* that “we *experience* the body *qua* subject.” His view, she says, is the same one once held by Russell: “that experiencing is a relation, one term of which is the experienced object and the other term is the experiencer” (SCP, 31). According to Morris, the point Sartre wants to make is

not only that we do not directly experience the subject but also that the body is the subject of conscious relations.... Sartre’s central argument for saying the subject term of conscious relations is the body is that there is no need to posit the existence of an extra entity, an immaterial person-substance, as the subject (TE, 40). (SCP, 36)

Morris has Sartre arguing that, although we do not experience the subject directly, we ought to conclude that it is the body for parsimony’s sake. Sartre indeed says that there is no reason to posit a transcendental ego immanent to consciousness in addition to the empirical ego, which is a transcendent object of reflection. But his appeal to parsimony, as far as I can tell, has nothing to do with any claim about what the actual relata in conscious relations are. He is just trying to be a good phenomenologist, describing the ego as it is experienced -- as an object in reflective consciousness. He sees himself as correcting a mistake made by Husserl: assuming that this object of reflection is also present in unreflective consciousness.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>25</sup>It is strange that Morris appeals to TE here. There Sartre says, “nothing but consciousness can be the source of consciousness” (TE, 52). Also, I think that Morris’s implication that Sartre rejects an immaterial soul because there is no need for it, and to call this his central argument, is misleading. It could be said that the main conclusion of TE is that *neither* is the ego experienced in unreflective consciousness *nor* is it necessary to posit it. In another article, Morris speaks of two arguments in TE, one against Husserl and the other against Kant. Phyllis Sutton Morris, “Sartre on the Transcendence of the Ego,” *Sartre: An Investigation of Some Major Themes*, ed. Simon Glynn (Brookfield: Gower, 1987): 2. The conclusion of the latter argument is that there is no need to posit the transcendental ego. Naturally, if the transcendental ego were part of one’s experience, there would not be a *need* for such a need. Most importantly, however, the greater part of TE is devoted to giving an account of the constitution of one’s (transcendent) ego as an object of consciousness. I discuss this account in Chapter Three.

Incidentally, Morris later cites Spiegelberg as protesting Sartre’s use of Occam’s razor (SCP 151, n.4). Natanson lodges a similar complaint. Maurice Natanson, “Phenomenology and Existentialism: Husserl and Sartre on Intentionality,” *Phenomenology*, ed. Joseph J. Kockelmans (New York: Anchor, 1967): 343.

## ***2b. Is Morris's "body-subject" view metaphysical?***

The question Morris is answering is "What, for Sartre, is the subject-term of conscious relations?" and not, "What, for Sartre, is the body?" The latter question invites the discussion, of how certain objects of consciousness (i.e., "oneself as a psychophysical object" and "other persons") are constituted, that is the main topic of the chapter on the body in B&N. The former question can be taken in more than one way. If it is accepted that at times one experiences one's consciousness as depending on a subject, or as emanating from a source, one can inquire into that subject or source.<sup>26</sup> By contrast one can ask, straightforwardly, what is that thing without which there could not be consciousness? That the topic of the chapter in *Sartre's Concept of a Person* from which I have been quoting is whether it is possible for consciousness to exist separately from the body shows that Morris has this last question in mind. If the subject-term of conscious relations were an immaterial ego, the answer to this question might be "yes." Morris's position is that, for Sartre, non-bodily conscious experience is impossible because consciousness is a relation between the body and an object of experience. I object to Morris's inquiry into the subject of consciousness as I do to her claim that the body is this subject. Morris is looking for something to support the relation of consciousness as, for Descartes, the ego supports the attribute of thought.<sup>27</sup> On Sartre's view consciousness must be "embodied" in some sense, but to say that "*the* body is the subject-term of conscious relations" is misleading. Moreover, nothing in B&N supports the view that there needs to be anything like a human or even any animal body for there to be consciousness.

Saying that consciousness is a relation is different from saying that it is experienced as a

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<sup>26</sup> See previous note.

<sup>27</sup> As we will see in the next chapter, Morris claims that, although it is a relation, there can be consciousness even when its object is "nonexistent" because "the relation derives its reality from its source in the subject." Morris's body-subject plays the same role as Descartes's ego-subject.

relation. Which of these claims is Morris attributing to Sartre? It seems to me that in (SCP1)<sup>28</sup> she is attributing the former view to him (although the passages from B&N to which she points express the latter). That she is saying something about what consciousness is, as opposed to something about what it is like to be conscious, is supported by her saying, in the same paragraph, that Sartre also claims “that it is unnecessary to posit the existence of an additional immaterial subject” and voicing disagreement with the claim that Sartre has “unwittingly presupposed the existence of an immaterial ego as the subject term of conscious relations,” especially one which could exist separately from the body. These statements have nothing to do with the experience of being conscious or with the universal features of conscious experience. They have to do with what consciousness is and the necessary conditions for conscious experience. Morris is saying that consciousness is a relation between a subject term, which is conscious, and an object-term, of which the subject term is conscious, and that anything that is not such a relation is not consciousness, and that the subject term of all such relations is the human body. Thus, she concludes, there can be no instance of disembodied consciousness on Sartre’s view.

If she were saying that the experience of being conscious can be described as the experience of being related, in a bodily manner, to an object of consciousness, nothing would follow from this about whether one must actually be a body to be conscious. Similarly, any remark about what is not necessary for there to be conscious relations, such as the claim that no immaterial ego is necessary, would be irrelevant. If Morris were making a point about what it is like to have an experience, even if this were a universal feature of experience, as opposed to making a point about a condition that must be met for there to be consciousness, she would not have said in the same breath that no immaterial ego is necessary for consciousness, nor would she state this point in a context set by the question of whether consciousness can exist in a disembodied state.

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<sup>28</sup>See Section 2a, above.



On the other hand, in the paragraph following the one in which she compares Sartre's view of consciousness to Russell's view of experience, it is not clear that her claim that the body is the subject of consciousness is a metaphysical one. She says:

To say that the body is the subject of conscious acts, and to say also that we do not experience the body as the subject of conscious acts, is to claim that the body is only implicit in an analysis of our own conscious experience. This point is connected with Sartre's important distinction between reflective and unreflective level of consciousness. (SCP, 31)

This may suggest that Morris is not attributing a metaphysical claim to Sartre. If she is, why would she say we ought to treat the analysis of "our own conscious experience" separately from the analysis of another's? And why would the distinction between reflective consciousness and unreflective consciousness be relevant? One would think that, on Morris's reconstruction, whatever figures into "an analysis of our own conscious experience" would figure into an analysis of another's. Of course Sartre treats these analyses differently. But, since Morris's metaphysical claim says that any conscious relation is a relation between a subject term and an object term, it is difficult to tell why she thinks one's own consciousness ought to be analyzed differently from another's. One would also think that, for Morris, the body is the subject of unreflective and reflective consciousness alike, and that perhaps it is both the object and subject of reflective consciousness.

It is clear from the context that Morris thinks that what is only implicit in unreflective consciousness is one's awareness of her own body. Thus it seems that, in suggesting that in an analysis of unreflective consciousness the subject term is only implicit, Morris has moved from a metaphysical analysis to a phenomenological one. Otherwise the distinctions between implicit and explicit awareness and reflective and unreflective consciousness would be irrelevant. Morris goes on:

(M2) In our ordinary, unreflective relations with the world, says Sartre, the body is the center from which we intend objects, but it is not usually an additional object of

experience. (SCP, 31)

This certainly seems to be a claim about how we experience the world. Is Morris saying that the body is experienced as the center from which we intend objects or that it *is* this center? Is she saying that, just as the body is the subject of consciousness although it is not experienced as such, the body is “the center from which we intend objects,” regardless of whether it is experienced as such?

The only sense in which, for Sartre, the body is “the center from which we intend objects” is that it is experienced as this center, that this is what it means for the body to be such a center. Moreover I think that the above quotation, taken as a claim about how we experience our own bodies, does represent Sartre’s view. It might be restated:

(M2’) In one’s ordinary, unreflective relations with the world, one experiences one’s own body as the center from which she intends objects, but she does not usually experience her body as an object itself.

This is at least the sort of claim for which I would feel comfortable citing the chapter in B&N on the body. I would feel uncomfortable citing this chapter as support for any statement that begins “Sartre claims that the body is...” unless the next words were “...experienced as...” because the only claims Sartre is making in this chapter<sup>29</sup> are about the ways in which one experiences one’s own body and the ways in which one experiences the bodies of others.

The statement from page thirty-one of Morris’s book (M2) is so seemingly phenomenological that it hardly seems necessary to insert any extra words, but the sentence from

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<sup>29</sup>At times Sartre is careful to draw a line between phenomenological ontology, which examines “man-in-the world” (34) and from which we learn, according to Sartre, that “[c]onsciousness is *in fact* a project of founding itself” (789), and metaphysical speculation about why there is consciousness: “Nothing allows us to affirm on the ontological level that the nihilation of the in-itself in for-itself has for its meaning -- from the start and at the very heart of the in-itself -- the project of being its own self-cause.... Ontology will therefore limit itself to declaring that *everything takes place as if* the in-itself in a project to found itself gave itself the modification of the for-itself.... But metaphysics must nevertheless attempt to determine the nature and the meaning of this prehistoric process” (789-90). At other times, however, he slips into metaphysical speculation without warning: “the appearance of the for-itself or absolute event refers indeed to the effort of an in-itself to found itself; it corresponds to an attempt on the part of being to remove

page thirty (M1) seems to be an ontological claim. As I said, in explicating this claim, which is one of her main theses, Morris says that Sartre's position is not that "*we experience the body qua subject.*" What is she saying? What does it mean to say that the body is the subject of consciousness, although I don't experience it as this subject? It seems to me that Sartre's view is that we do experience the body-for-itself as the subject of consciousness, but to do so is to experience it in a way that we don't experience any object of consciousness. We do experience the body as the center from which we intend objects, and this precludes experiencing it as an object itself. This is what Morris seems to be expressing in the quotation about implicit awareness and unreflective consciousness. But these claims are about how we experience the world and our own bodies. Morris should have said that Sartre's position *is* that "*we experience the body qua subject,*"<sup>30</sup> and then gone on to explain the difference between experiencing the body as the subject of conscious relations and as an object of conscious relations. She should have said that all that her "body-subject" claim means is that we experience the body in a certain way. If her "body-subject" claim were intended to be about how we experience our own bodies it would make sense that she cites the first section in Sartre's chapter on the body, which comprises most of that chapter and is mainly an account of our experience of our own bodies as subjects. But then she could not conclude anything about whether or not consciousness actually could exist in a disembodied state.

The only coherent reading of Morris is the one that sees both (M1) and (M2) as making metaphysical claims. She can conclude that consciousness cannot exist without a body because she sees the body as the metaphysical subject and the actual center, not merely as the experiential center, of conscious relations. Similarly, with her claim that for Sartre consciousness is a relation,

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contingency from its being" (133).

<sup>30</sup>In the section on the body-for-itself Sartre says: "To be conscious is always to be conscious of the world, and the world and body are always present to my consciousness although in different ways" (439-40). Earlier in the same section, using the italicized "of" to indicate the type of relationship consciousness has to the objects it is directed at, Sartre says: "because the body is the point of view on which there can not be a

Morris does not mean to say that consciousness is experienced as a relation, that being conscious is experienced as being in a special sort of relation with the world. She is saying that consciousness really is such a relation.

When she speaks about “an analysis of our own conscious experience,” Morris is not talking about a phenomenological analysis of experience, but one that combines metaphysical considerations with phenomenological ones. The reason for distinguishing between one’s experience and another’s, and between reflective and unreflective levels of consciousness, is for the sake of the phenomenological supplement. The analysis of consciousness which Morris is proposing includes an account of what we experience, but only to show that the fact that we do not experience the body as the subject of unreflective consciousness is compatible with her metaphysical claims.

### **3. Monasterio on “The Body in *Being and Nothingness*”**

Morris’s account is important to me for several reasons: it centers around an account of the body; it is written by an analytic philosopher for analytic philosophers; it is long enough to be fairly comprehensive; and it addresses many important issues. What I find wrong with it is that it does not do justice to Sartre’s phenomenological side. In particular, Morris does not talk about how one’s body is constituted as an object of consciousness, and this is the topic of Sartre’s chapter on the body. The passages which Morris takes to support the claim that the body is the subject of consciousness and, as we will see later in this chapter, that bodily identity is a necessary condition for personal identity over time, I take to be examining how we apprehend our bodies prior to the apprehension of them as physical objects. Again, the question to be asked is how one apprehends one’s body both as a physical object and as the “center from which we intend objects” (SCP, 31). The claim that the body *is* both these things is irrelevant.

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point of view, there is on the level of the unreflective consciousness no consciousness *of* the body” (434).

### 3a. *Monasterio and the body-subject*

I will return to Morris's account later in this chapter. Now I turn to an article by Xavier Monasterio on Sartre's account of the body in B&N. I want to discuss it here because, like Morris, Monasterio both speaks of a "body-subject" and blurs together phenomenological claims and metaphysical ones in such a way that he ultimately misses the point of Sartre's chapter on the body. Because instead of merely attempting to explain Sartre's account and to draw out its consequences he tries to improve upon it, he gives himself the leeway not only to misunderstand the phenomenological side of Sartre's account but to undo it.

At first it appears that Monasterio clearly intends the term "body-subject" to mean "experiential center" as opposed to some kind of metaphysical support or substance. One thing that gives this impression is that he contrasts body-subject and body-object. Another is that he says that this is what he means:

I am not a pure Cartesian thinking substance, I am a body, a body-subject. For Sartre this means that I am in a situation as the center of the situation.<sup>31</sup>

Sartre means by *subject* a body that in a situational relationship functions as a center, a body in relation to which the rest is instrumentally oriented.<sup>32</sup>

It is not at all clear, however, that Monasterio is thinking of the body as center and not as substance. The fact that he contrasts being a body-subject with being "a pure Cartesian thinking substance" in the first of these quotations makes it look as if I am a body for Sartre in the sense that I am an ego for Descartes, i.e., that the body is a metaphysical subject, supporting such qualities or relations as "sees the tree" and "hopes for rain."

The second of these quotations can be taken in more than one way. I first took it to mean that the body is a subject only insofar as it is functioning as a center: that being a body-subject

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<sup>31</sup>Xavier O. Monasterio, "The Body in *Being and Nothingness*," *Jean-Paul Sartre: Contemporary Approaches to His Philosophy*, ed. Hugh J. Silverman and Frederick A. Elliston (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1980): 52.

<sup>32</sup>Monasterio 53.

consists in functioning as this center and that if a body were to cease functioning as such a center it would cease to be a body-subject. But this is not how it was intended, because it is part of a passage whose point is that, unlike human bodies:

*Things*, in Sartre's view, can be part of a situational relationship only as objects, not as centers, for their mode of being is not that of a body-subject. Things cannot have the world by which they are surrounded as *their* field of action.<sup>33</sup>

Monasterio's claim that because of a thing's mode of being it cannot be a center makes it clear that on Monasterio's interpretation being a body-subject is one thing and being a situational center is another.<sup>34</sup>

Monasterio seems to be saying that human bodies, *because of their mode of being*, can be either subjects or objects. This is precisely the interpretation of Sartre's phrase, "mode of being," that I want to say is incorrect. Being-for-itself, as I understand it, *is* being as a center in a situation. Being in this way does not *allow* one to be as a center. Nor does being-for-others *allow* one to be an object; being-for-others *is* being as an object.

In a footnote attached to the above quotation Monasterio says that, following Sartre, he is ignoring animals. He is doing so for the sake of simplicity and not because he considers them to be "mere things." Perhaps he thinks that Sartre believes that animals do not exist as body-subjects, that they cannot do so because they do not have the correct ontological make-up. In any case, being a body-subject is for Monasterio a mode of being in which one must exist first, in order for one to be a center of a field of action. Because a chair does not exist in this mode it cannot be such a center. Because a human being does, it can. Monasterio goes on:

[A] body that is a subject can also find him- or herself in a situational relationship as object, that is, as an instrument for *another* body-subject, who in the particular case

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<sup>33</sup>Monasterio 53.

<sup>34</sup>The unusual thing about this quotation is that Monasterio seems to be intentionally contrasting the words "thing" and "object," using the latter to indicate how an item is functioning and the former to indicate what it is, but he then goes on to use "body-subject" not as the opposite of "object," as one would expect, but as the opposite of "thing."

happens to function as the center of the situation.<sup>35</sup>

What he seems to be saying is that another person can function for one as the center of one's situation. Both bodies are body-subjects regardless of whether they happen to function as centers. Being a body-subject is one thing, and functioning as a center is another.

I don't think this is the view that Sartre means to be stating in B&N. On Sartre's view one's body is always a body-subject because it always functions as a center. This is the first ontological dimension of the body: there is no difference between being a subject and functioning as a center. Since other persons are also always functioning as centers, and since there are other persons, one is also always a body-object. This is the second ontological dimension of the body: these dimensions do not exclude each other. The first grounds the second. To be for-itself is to be a situational center and to be for-others is to be a "decentered" center.

### ***3b. Monasterio's "improvement" upon Sartre's account***

Monasterio believes that he has been following Sartre's analysis in his description of the body-subject and body-object and that he will add dimensions to the body that Sartre failed to recognize. One aspect he wants to add is that of the body-thing:

One aspect of our mode of being-in-the-world carefully avoided by Sartre in *Being and Nothingness* is our *passivity to things*.<sup>36</sup>

Characteristic of Sartre's reluctance to identify himself as body-thing are his reflections on "the thing 'leg'" in the introduction to the chapter on "the body."<sup>37</sup>

I don't think that Sartre is "reluctant to identify himself as body-thing." In fact he has set out to explain our ability to identify ourselves as body-things. Nor does he deliberately avoid the fact that one's body, as a thing, is subject to physical laws. Sartre's account of the body is phenomenological in exploring how the body is constituted in consciousness. It excavates the layers of meaning of the body. It is also methodical. He mentions repeatedly (297, 404, 470) that

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<sup>35</sup>Monasterio 53-4.

<sup>36</sup>Monasterio 54.

the order in which he examines the issues discussed in B&N is important. In particular he cannot examine the phenomenon of one's own body before he examines the phenomenon of another consciousness, because one's own body is constituted as an object for another consciousness.

In his account of the body-thing, Monasterio says, "The brutal power of the torrential river carries us downstream together with branches and rocks."<sup>38</sup> He is describing an object being seen from all sides at once. The body-thing, so described, occurs very late in the constitution game. According to Sartre, my own body as this body-thing would have to be constituted on the basis of the body-for-others, which, insofar as it is also *my* body, is in turn constituted on the basis of the body-for-itself. If Sartre were to speak about this body-thing he would do so only after speaking about the body for-itself and the body-for-others.

It is not fair to say that Sartre misses this dimension of the body, or even that he doesn't pay enough attention to it, given his approach. At one point he talks about cracking a walnut by holding it in the right hand and squeezing the right hand with the left (468), treating one's right hand as one would treat any other tool. On the same page he talks about apprehending one's body through the senses, e.g., seeing one's hands and smelling one's sweat. And in Monasterio's footnote, quoted above, he refers to a passage in which Sartre speaks of his leg as a thing. Although Sartre may disagree with the *subjectifying* language used to describe the torrential river when Monasterio says that "things sometimes take the initiative,"<sup>39</sup> Sartre doesn't deny the passive aspect of the body. His intention is to explain the relationships among the various aspects of the body as we experience it. Thus after discussing the body-for-itself and the body-for-others he goes on to discuss a third ontological dimension of the body: the body as it appears to us after having been mediated by the look of the Other.

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<sup>37</sup>Monasterio 54, n.5

<sup>38</sup>Monasterio 55.

<sup>39</sup>Monasterio 55.



I cannot say that Sartre has already taken into consideration the aspect of the body that Monasterio describes as the body-thing, because Monasterio's account of the body as a whole is so different from Sartre's. But Sartre's descriptions of the body-for-others and the third ontological dimension of the body leave the body-thing with no work to do in his own account. Monasterio says:

[O]ur passivity to things is far more significant than Sartre makes it sound, for it reveals the body as *thing among things*, not merely as subject among objects and object among subjects.<sup>40</sup>

But the body-for-others is already an object among objects for other subjects, and the third ontological dimension of the body is an object among objects for oneself:

In actuality I can see my hands, touch my back, smell the odor of my sweat. In this case my hand, for example, appears to me as one object among other objects. (468)

Monasterio may mean something more than "object among objects" by "thing among things," and it begins to look more and more as if he does as he describes the body-thing. But whatever this might be, it doesn't seem to have any place in Sartre's discussion.

Monasterio may not have understood the purpose and organization of Sartre's account.

Monasterio writes:

[I]n Sartre's analysis, the body does not really interact with things, it only acts on things....A sort of mysterious transcendence allows the Sartrean body to pursue its purposes by using things without itself being exposed to the actions of things, as if it acted on things from above.<sup>41</sup>

The only explanation I can find for this is that Monasterio is mistaking something that Sartre says about the body as being-for-itself, the body as a point of instrumental/perceptual contact with the world, for either his position on the body as an object of experience as a whole or, what is more likely, for a position on the body as it is in itself. Insofar as it is a mere point of view and point of departure for my actions, and insofar as it is not represented in terms that make use of "the Other,"

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<sup>40</sup>Monasterio 55.

my body is not acted on by things. The river carries an object downstream, not a point of contact with the world. Insofar as I am the point to which the world is revealed as an object of perception and place where I act, it makes no sense to say that I am moving or standing still -- I am the frame of reference. To talk about the rocks and sticks in the river or about my body, in abstraction from any project of my own or of another, one first needs to speak of these rocks and sticks or this body in respect to my projects and the projects of others. When I see a stick, I am aware of it as something I am currently seeing, that can be experienced by others. The description of it as a mere thing, as an object that is not part of, or getting in the way of, any particular project, and as an object that nobody in particular is aware of, already includes these meanings. Likewise the experience of my body as a thing is informed both by my experience of "existing my body" for myself and by my experience of being an object for another. To inquire into the meaning of any of these is to ask about the experiences through which they present themselves. The three ontological dimensions of the body are correlated to ways in which the body is experienced: as the subject of the field of perception and action, as an object in another's field of perception/action, and as an object in one's own field of perception/action.

At the outset, Monasterio had said: "What I propose is to offer an alternative analysis, which attempts to integrate what I find rich in Sartre's and explores certain dimensions that he disregarded."<sup>42</sup> But his outlook is so unphenomenological that to integrate the first new aspect that he proposes, the body-thing, would require giving up Sartre's approach and starting from the other end. Monasterio writes:

Our being body-things is *fundamental* in that it is the very condition of possibility of our being body-subjects and body-objects. Were we not body-things we would be mere objects-of-consciousness-for-the-other, part of his dreams.... Only bodies that weigh as things do, that fall as things do, that occupy a place as things do, can be used like

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<sup>41</sup>Monasterio 56.

<sup>42</sup>Monasterio 50.

instruments and, in their turn, use instruments.<sup>43</sup>

But Sartre is trying to describe how we are capable of seeing our own bodies as items “that weigh as things do, that fall as things do,” etc. One thing that is necessary for this, on his account, is that we see ourselves as “objects-of-consciousness-for-the-other.” In other words, the second ontological dimension of my body, my being as an object-of-consciousness-for-the-other is “the very condition of possibility” of my being as a body-thing.

Obviously Monasterio has a different sort of condition of possibility in mind, a much different notion of what is fundamental. This is because he is not trying to give a phenomenological account of the body. He is not asking how it is possible that we experience the body as we do, or how it is possible that there is something that we experience both as the center of the field of experience and as an object in this field, or how this object of consciousness is constituted. If he were doing a phenomenological inquiry, he would see that the causal claims he is making are irrelevant. What conditions my body, considered in abstraction from all experiences of it, must meet for it to cause changes in other objects -- these changes and these objects themselves being considered in abstraction from all experiences of them -- has very little, if anything, to do with what allows me to experience my body as I do. Monasterio is not talking about what conditions must be met in order for us to have the objects of experience that we do. The above quotation has no place in an inquiry into phenomenological ontology. The same goes for the body-thing as conceived by Monasterio.

When treating the appearance of one’s body to oneself through the senses, which is one aspect of the apprehension of the body’s third ontological dimension, Sartre reminds us that it was important to discuss things in the order that he has chosen. In particular, it was necessary to speak of one’s apprehension of one’s own body “as one object among other objects” in general, before

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<sup>43</sup>Monasterio 57.

discussing the specific case of sensing one's own body as an object. Since one is not an object among objects to oneself until one has conceived of oneself from the point of view of another's experience, the discussion of the body-for-others naturally had to precede the entire discussion of the third ontological dimension of the body. Seeing, feeling or smelling one's own body...

can be easily explained on condition that we put it *in its proper place* in the order of the appearances of the body; that is, on condition that we examine it last and as a "curiosity" of our constitution. This appearance of my hand means simply that in certain well-defined cases we can adopt with regard to our own body the Other's point of view or, if you like, that our own body can appear to us as the body of the Other. Scholars who have made this appearance serve as a basis for a general theory of the body have radically reversed the terms of the problem and have shown themselves up as understanding nothing about the question. (468)

Sartre's point is that if we start by thinking of the body as an ordinary sensed object, we will not be able to describe how it is also one's point of view on the world. *Instead of asking how it is possible that such a thing is also me, how an ordinary "instrument-object" with such qualities as size, shape, weight, and color, can also be a center from which objects are intended, we should ask how such a center can also be this instrument-object.* Sartre's chapter on the body is an attempt to answer to this latter question. Again:

[T]he perception of [the body] can not *by nature* be of the same type as that of inanimate objects. We must not understand by this that the perception is progressively enriched but that originally it is of another structure. (455)

#### **4. Morris's Body-Subject View and Personal Identity over Time**

The section of Sartre's chapter on the body, which Morris cites for support for her claim that the body is the subject of consciousness, discusses the way in which we experience our bodies prior to the apprehension of the body-for-others and, until the last few pages of this section, prior to reflection. Morris refers to the same section for support for another claim: "bodily identity is a necessary condition of personal identity through time." In this section, I discuss this latter claim and the (at times incomprehensible) portion of Sartre's text that is supposed to support it.

#### ***4a. The experience of the body-for-itself as an essential feature of consciousness***

I said that, on Sartre's view, one experiences one's own body as "the center from which objects are intended." This is misleading to the extent that it implies, for example, that I experience a certain hairy 160-pound object as this center. In a sense this is true, but to describe the body as hairy and 160 pounds, on the one hand, and to describe it as "the center from which objects are intended," on the other, is to describe it from radically different points of view. The first section of the chapter on the body, "The Body For-itself: Facticity" is about the experience of embodiment, not about the body in any ordinary sense. This is why Sartre is able to talk like this:

[T]o say that I have entered into the world, "come to the world," or that there is a world, or that I have a body is one and the same thing. In this sense my body is everywhere in the world; it is over there in the fact that the lamp-post hides the bush, as well in the fact that the roof up there is above the windows of the sixth floor or in the fact that a passing car swerves from right to left behind the truck or that the woman who is crossing the street appears smaller than the man who is sitting on the sidewalk in front of the cafe. My body is coextensive with the world, spread across all things, and at the same time it is condensed into this single point which all things indicate and which I am, without being able to know it. (419-20)

The last words of this quotation, incidentally, that I cannot know my own body as the center of the world, do not support Morris's claim that I do not experience my body as this center. Sartre's point is that my experience of the world is bodily, and all he means by this, so far, is that the objects of my experience are arranged around a point of view and that this point of view is not itself experienced as an object by me.

Morris's claim that "the body is the center from which we intend objects" could be taken to mean that I experience my body as the point of view from which I perceive and the point of departure from which I act. This is what (M2), read phenomenologically, or (M2') states. The claim that "the body is the subject of conscious relations" is vague enough to be taken to mean the same thing, especially because it is natural to call the body-for-itself and body-for-others "the body-as-subject" and "the body-as-object." Sartre, of course, would agree that one of the ways

that I experience my body, the fundamental way, is as the point of view and point of departure for action.

Taken this way, however, such claims are irrelevant to whether consciousness could or could not exist in a disembodied state. Even with another claim to which Sartre would no doubt agree, and that is more than a mere statement about how we experience the world -- the claim that consciousness must have some point of view -- nothing follows about which entities are conscious. It is part of Sartre's view that having a point of view or a point of departure for actions is a necessary phenomenal feature of consciousness, and that one's own body is this point of view and point of departure. But this is different from saying that it is one's body that is conscious or that one's body supports one's awareness of things. If it is Sartre's view that embodiment is a necessary phenomenal feature of consciousness, all that follows from this is that even a disembodied consciousness would experience itself as embodied. Nor does the fact that we must experience the world as if we are embodied say anything about which entities are and are not conscious. The fact that embodiment is a necessary phenomenal feature of consciousness is compatible with the claim that the metaphysical subject of consciousness is an immaterial ego, with the claim that only bodies with immaterial egos are conscious, and with the claim that both zombies and disembodied minds are metaphysically possible.

In saying that, on Sartre's view, one's body is one's point of view and point of departure for action, and a necessary feature of experience, I do not want to imply that this so-called body needs to have any of the other characteristics besides being this point of view, that we associate with human bodies, e.g., such characteristics as size, shape, color and weight, which we attribute both to human bodies and to material objects, and such characteristics as being hungry, tired, or fair-skinned, which we attribute only to living bodies or only to human bodies. Sartre has a special way to refer to the body insofar as it is only this point of contact. He calls it "the body as being-

for-itself” or “the body for me.” This first ontological dimension of the body is only one aspect of “the body” as this phrase is ordinarily understood (and as it is intended by Morris). While it makes sense to say that I am a certain height and weight, it makes no sense to attribute this height and weight to my point of view as such. Nor can my point of view be hairy, naked, or in the way. To Sartre, the first ontological dimension of the body is a necessary feature of consciousness: every act of consciousness must be embodied in having one point of view and not another. Sartre makes this point in the early section titled “Facticity,” and repeats it in the chapter on the body. Since both one’s point of view and the fact that one exists at all are contingent, but one must have a point of view, he refers to facticity as a “twofold contingency which embraces a necessity.”<sup>44</sup> That every act of consciousness must have one point of view on the world and that consciousness is always consciousness of something, are claims about necessary features of consciousness. According to Sartre, if there is an act of consciousness there must be an object of consciousness and a point of view to which that object is present.

#### ***4b. Morris and the bodily criterion of identity for persons***

In the next chapter I will discuss Morris’s account of Sartre’s view of intentionality, the relation that has, on her view, the body as the subject-term. I will also discuss her account of the object-term of this relation. We must be careful of her agenda. Morris says, “Two topics of interest to contemporary English-speaking philosophers provide the main focus: criteria of identity for persons and the question of the existence of other minds” (SCP, 1). In her attempt to establish how Sartre answer questions like what makes a person different from other material objects, what criteria determine whether a person is the same person who existed at an earlier time, and how we can know that there are other conscious entities, she is forced to interpret some things he says in ways that are at odds with his phenomenological approach. This agenda does not affect her

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<sup>44</sup>Pages 407-8. See Subsection 5b, below, for full quotation.

account of the conscious relation itself as much as it affects her account of the subject-term of this relation, which she takes to be the human body, because this is the term on which her questions focus. Most important for my purposes is that her attempt to determine Sartre's answers to these questions affects her reconstruction of Sartre's account of the body. Since Morris is concerned to show that the difference between human bodies and other material objects is that the human body is the subject of conscious relations, and that having the same body is a necessary condition for personal identity over time, she does not talk about how one's own body the bodies of others are constituted as objects of consciousness.

Morris's body-subject view maintains that: (1) consciousness is a relation and the body is its subject-term; (2) what makes a person different from a material object is that a person is the subject of conscious relations; (3) the judgment that someone other than oneself is a person amounts to judging that that body is the subject of conscious relations; (4) having the same body is a necessary condition for being the same person; and (5) one of the items to which the term "I" refers is the body qua subject of conscious relations. Morris contrasts the "body-subject" view with Descartes's view that the ego is the subject of consciousness, with Strawson's view that the person is the subject of consciousness, and with the "no-subject" view rejected by Strawson. The four views differ on the subject of conscious relations, the difference between a person and a material object, what it means to say that something is a person (or the same person), how such judgments are justified, and what it means to say that one is a person (or the same person), and how such judgments are justified.

There is no reason on any of these views why when one says that something is a person or the same person, what one is saying depends on whether one is talking about oneself. On the body-subject view one is saying that someone's body is the subject of conscious relations. What evidence justifies this statement may differ, but the meaning is the same in either case. The same



goes for personal identity. Under the body-subject view, to be the same person one must have the same body, regardless of whether the person is oneself or another. Again, how you might determine that you are the same person may vary depending on whether the person is you or another, but the meaning of the claim does not vary.

Thus it is strange that Morris says that the “body serves as a necessary condition of personal identity somewhat differently for the individual himself and for others” (SCP, 48). But as she goes on it begins to look as if, rather than focusing on phenomenological issues she is focusing on epistemological ones:

For oneself, one’s body is a continuing point of view on the world, the point from which perception originates and the center of action indicated by objects organized into an instrumental complex. For others, the human body can be reidentified by the same criteria that are applicable to other objects which have spatial characteristics. (SCP, 48)

The phenomenological question of what conditions something must meet to be apprehended as the same person varies depending on whether the person is oneself. The above quotation can give the impression that this is what Morris is asking, and that my criticism of her doesn’t fit. I don’t think that matters very much. The misreading of which I am accusing her is important even if she is not guilty of it, because it is natural that a commentator who doesn’t focus on Sartre’s phenomenological side will read him this way. In any case, I think the criticism does fit. Her interpretation gives her no reason for saying that the necessary conditions for personal identity would differ depending on whether the person is oneself, but her switching between metaphysical and epistemological concerns creates the illusion that she places due importance on the fact that Sartre’s approach is phenomenological.

Morris certainly seems to be attributing to Sartre the view that  $x$  and  $y$  are the same person only if they have the same body: “For Sartre, bodily identity is a necessary condition of personal identity through time (BN, 309)” (SCP, 48). However, the statement that having the same body is a necessary condition for being the same person in one way for oneself and in another way for

others is very confusing. What could it mean to say that I am the same person for myself, but not for others (or vice-versa)? Ordinarily one would say that there is a question of whether  $x$  and  $y$  are the same person. Whether  $x$  and  $y$  appear to be (or can be known to be) the same person is a separate question. On the view which I take to be Morris's, the only thing that will vary depending on whether the person is oneself is *how one can tell* whether she satisfies the necessary condition for being the same person, i.e., how one can tell that one has the same body: I recognize that I have the same body through the apprehension of my body as a point of view and point of departure for actions. I can tell that another person's body is the same by its spatial characteristics. This is what I take Morris to be saying when she writes that having the same body serves as a necessary condition differently in the two cases.

When later Morris says that bodily identity is not sufficient for personal identity (SCP, 82), she is saying that there could be cases in which  $x$  has the same body as  $y$  but is not the same person as  $y$ . This is because, according to Morris, one can become a different person by changing her "fundamental project." Morris's language throughout her discussion of personal identity through time is not about whether a person is *apprehended as* the same person. She doesn't say that a person might not be *apprehended as* the same person despite the fact that she has the same body. Her point is not that somebody who has changed her fundamental project apprehends herself as a different person, nor is it that others apprehend her as a different person. She says that after a change in one's fundamental project, she will not *be* the same person.

Morris's view may be that sameness of the body qua object in the world is a necessary condition of personal identity over time, and sameness of the body qua point of view is only important as evidence of the former -- i.e., that one determines that one has roughly the same spatial characteristics through the continuity of one's point of view -- and I interpret her in just this way. Her view is that the necessary but not sufficient condition for personal identity is identity of

the body qua physical object. But “body-subject” is ambiguous, allowing the interpretation that Morris usually gives – body qua subject-term of conscious relations -- and a more phenomenological reading, body qua point of view. Under the former interpretation, it may be the case, and I think that this is Morris’s view, that the physical body is the body-subject: when I say “I see the tree,” or “she sees the tree,” I am saying something about the *physical* body qua subject-term of conscious relations.<sup>45</sup>

Indeed, the simplest way to understand the bodily criterion of identity as it applies to the apprehension of oneself is to say that apprehending oneself as the same person necessarily includes apprehending oneself as the same body (qua object). We could go on to say that this can in turn be inferred on the basis of one’s apprehension of a continuous world: a world that, unlike a movie, presents itself with no abrupt “shot cuts.” In other words: apprehending oneself as the same person necessarily involves apprehending oneself as the same body (qua object), and the way in which one apprehends *oneself* as the same body (qua object) is by apprehending oneself as the same body qua point of view, and this is done via the apprehension of a continuous world.

The main reason that I don’t give Morris’s discussion of personal identity a more sympathetic reading is that she would have said something about how different Sartre’s approach is from the ones to which we are accustomed, had she not wanted us to take such statements as “bodily identity is a necessary condition for personal identity over time” in their ordinary sense. While saying that consciousness is a relation and the body is the subject-term of this relation, that what makes a person different from a material object is that human bodies are the subjects of conscious relations, and that having the same body is a necessary condition for personal identity through time, may facilitate comparison with the views of Anglo-American philosophers, this is an

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<sup>45</sup>As we will see in Chapter Seven, when Morris contrasts “Sartre’s body-subject view” with Strawson’s person-subject view, she says that such predicates as “sees the tree” attribute seeing the tree to the body, not, as Strawson would have it, to the person.

inadequate way to formulate the ideas that I see being expressed in B&N and *The Transcendence of the Ego*.<sup>46</sup> These ideas are about the features of certain objects of consciousness, and how these objects of consciousness are constituted in consciousness. If Morris interpreted Sartre as I do she would say that when one apprehends an object of consciousness as a person one apprehends it as a subject-term of conscious relations (as well as apprehending it as a physical object), instead of saying that the body *is* the subject term of such relations. All of Morris's claims ought thus to be converted to phenomenological claims about the apprehension of others and the apprehension of oneself. These claims would explain whether one apprehends other persons' bodies as the subjects of conscious relations, whether this is the difference between apprehending something as a person and apprehending it as a non-human object, and whether apprehending a present object of consciousness as the same person necessarily involves apprehending her as having the same body. They would also answer the questions of whether one apprehends one's own body as the subject of conscious relations (and, if so, whether one does this in the way that one apprehends another's body as a such a subject) and whether apprehending oneself as the same person involves apprehending oneself as being the same body (and, if so, whether one apprehends one's own body as the same in the way that one apprehends another's body as the same).

At least some of Sartre's questions are of this type. Whether he also is discussing the more traditional issues is a separate question. But since such questions seem to be at odds with the approach he claims to be taking, it is best to assume that he is not asking them except where (e.g., the conclusion to B&N) he explicitly says that he has left phenomenological ontology and entered the realm of metaphysical speculation, or where for some other reason the text forces this interpretation. The chapter on the body, to which Morris refers for support for the claims that the body is the subject of conscious relations and that having the same body is a necessary condition

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<sup>46</sup>Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Transcendence of the Ego*, trans. Forrest Williams and Robert Kirkpatrick (New

for being the same person, is in fact structured around questions about the ways in which one's own body and the bodies of others are apprehended, and thus it is perhaps the most overtly phenomenological chapter in B&N. As I pointed out above (Section 2a) Morris refers to the first section of this chapter for support for the claim that the body is the subject of conscious relations. She refers to the same section to support her claim that bodily identity is a necessary condition for personal identity over time. But again, this part of the text is concerned with the ways that one's body appears to oneself. Specifically, it is about the ways in which one's body appears to oneself "prior to" its apprehension as a *human body* in the usual sense--more specifically, prior to its apprehension as any sort of object for others.

### 5. Two Ways of Apprehending Oneself as the Same "Body"

As I have said, I believe that on Morris's reconstruction bodily identity is a necessary condition for personal identity over time, where "bodily identity" is taken to mean what it ordinarily does: the identity over time of a physical object as one ordinarily understands that notion. I take the mysterious phrase that the body "serves as a necessary condition somewhat differently for the individual himself and for others" to mean that *the way in which one tells* that a person has the same (physical) body may vary depending upon whether or not that person is oneself. This is in line with my interpretation of Morris's text in the first two sections of this chapter. As I have also said, in my view most of Sartre's claims in B&N and TE are claims about experiences and about objects-as-they-are-experienced.

In this section I consider the claim that *apprehending oneself as the same body is necessary for apprehending oneself as the same.*<sup>47</sup> We will see that if "body" in this statement is taken to mean either body-for-others or "body qua physical object" (again, not the same thing for

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York: Noonday, 1957). Hereafter, "TE."

<sup>47</sup> I am avoiding talk about apprehending oneself as the same *person* because the form of self-apprehension which we are most interested in here occurs below the level of the apprehension of oneself as a person.

Sartre), the section of B&N on the body-for-itself to which Morris refers for support cannot be used to support this claim any more than it can the metaphysical claim. If, on the other hand, “body” is taken to mean body-for-itself, some of the things Sartre says in this section do seem to support it. However, in this case it becomes unclear what it is to apprehend oneself as the “same” body-for-itself over time. Prior to the apprehension of the body-for-others, it looks as if there is no room to draw a distinction between apprehending oneself as the “same” body-for-itself and apprehending the body-for-itself in the first place. In fact, as we will see shortly, Sartre identifies the apprehension of the body-for-itself with the apprehension of the past. The body for itself *is* consciousness’s past: that which is “surpassed” in action and perception. Thus, it seems that Sartre can be saying no more than that apprehending oneself as *embodied* is necessary for apprehending oneself as the same. In light of the fact that Sartre believes that apprehending oneself as embodied is a necessary feature of consciousness in the first place, this isn’t saying much at all. As we will see, Sartre is in fact saying that consciousness’s pre-reflective awareness of its embodiment *is the same as* its pre-reflective awareness of “having a past.”

### ***5a. The Sartrean questions***

One question in which Sartre is interested is how we apprehend an item *as a person*. He is not interested in what criteria an item must satisfy for it to be a person (a traditional ontological question), nor is he interested in whether we can tell or how we can tell whether a given object meets these criteria (a traditional epistemological question) and one which can lead to the “problem of other minds,” depending, among other things, upon one’s view of what the criteria are for being a person). He is interested in what it is to apprehend an item as a person (or what it is for an item to be apprehended as a person):

I am in a public park. Not far away there is a lawn and at the edge of that lawn there are benches. A man passes by those benches. I see this man; I apprehend him as an object and at the same time as a man. What does this signify? What do I mean when I assert that this object *is a man*?

If I were to think of him as being only a puppet, I should apply to him the categories which I ordinarily use to group temporal-spatial “things.” That is, I should apprehend him as being “beside” the benches, two yards and twenty inches from the lawn, as exercising a certain pressure on the ground, etc. (342)

Note that the question which Sartre is concerned with here -- “What do I mean when I assert that this object is a man?” -- can be asked whether the man is *actually* a person, puppet, hallucination, or whatever. Again, it is a question about what it is to *apprehend* an item as a person (or about what it is for an item to be apprehended as a person), and thus it is enough that there is an object of consciousness that is apprehended as a person. Of course to apprehend something as a person is to apprehend it as something that is not a hallucination. It is to apprehend it as something that has many of the characteristics that the phenomenologists say that ordinary physical objects have. For example, when one sees a man one apprehends him as something that is not only visible but tangible as well, and as something that will present other “profiles,” or “adumbrations,” if one continues to look at him while moving around him. As we will see, however, there are other aspects of such apprehension, for Sartre, that cannot so readily be accommodated in terms of talk about certain sorts of “characteristics” that the thing in question is apprehended as having. What I have in mind here is that it is *for* the other person that one experiences oneself an object of consciousness.

By the end of my discussion of the constitution of oneself as an object of consciousness, it will be clear why “seeing me,” “hoping I come home soon,” etc., cannot be thought of as ordinary characteristics of the person seeing me. However I ought to make a bit clearer here what I take to be Sartre’s views on this matter. Observations that are stated in subject-predicate terms, such as “the desk is heavy,” “she sees me,” and “I am angry,” seem to be making reference to an object and pointing out one of its characteristics. We might even think of these observations as picking out the item named by the subject term *first*, and then *adding* the feature named by the predicate term. Thus in observing that the desk is heavy, one somehow refers to the desk--e.g., by looking at

it--and then thinks of it as heavy (perhaps in terms of an anticipation of the difficulty of moving it). In regard to observations about oneself and other persons, however, the act of reference is not so simple on Sartre's view.<sup>48</sup> In the case of other persons, reference is complicated by the fact that for Sartre when one is apprehending another as a person, rather than as a puppet, one does not first refer to the person through her physical characteristics: attributes that describe another's current conscious relation to the world are not added to an entity which one has already picked out.<sup>49</sup> Rather, as we will see in Chapter Five, the other person is originally apprehended as a "look," and such bodily characteristics as location in space are added afterwards. The case is the same when one picks *oneself* out and notices things about oneself, except that rather than as a "look" whose objective correlate is one's own consciousness, one first picks oneself out as a consciousness whose objective correlate is the world. The most important questions for Sartre are how one is able to apprehend *this consciousness* as the person, "oneself," and how one is able to apprehend *the "look"* as another person. In the quotation above, Sartre is beginning to set up this latter question. He will claim that the difference between the apprehension of a man and the apprehension of puppet is that in the former case the apprehension is grounded in the experience of receiving the "look." Of course what it is to apprehend an item as oneself (or what it is for an item to be apprehended as oneself) is in any case an altogether different matter, and in order to

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<sup>48</sup>Actually, as we will see, since the desk admits of levels of constitution, the topic of apprehending it is also complicated. One apprehends a desk differently, one "constitutes" it though different "meanings," depending upon whether one is deciding whether to buy it or is inadvertently resting one's elbow on it. If in the latter case one is "referring" to it only insofar as one is resting one's elbow on it, it will present itself in a very simple manner through a few simple qualities -- e.g., being hard, being cold, and being strong enough to support the weight easily. In the former case, however, the desk will present itself through many complex, interrelated qualities.

<sup>49</sup>Such ways of thinking use, as a model for what ought to be called the "constitution" of oneself and of other persons, the image of apprehending an already constituted object in a new way, or ascribing to such an object a new attribute; e.g., apprehending the book on the table as an overdue library book, when one has already apprehended it as a book on the table. It will become clear that this model is inappropriate for the fundamental stages of constitution of both oneself and of another person. As Sartre says in the passage quoted at the end of Section Three, the perception of a human body is *originally* of another structure than that of an inanimate object.



discuss it we would have to begin with a different example.

We are now primarily concerned with the ways in which one can “reidentify” oneself, or apprehend oneself as “the same” or as “having a past.” Talk about “reidentifying” oneself can evoke the image of apprehending a “subject” of consciousness, in one way or another, and apprehending it as the same subject that had been identified at an earlier time. If this is what is involving in reidentifying oneself, I don’t think that we can re-identify ourselves at the level of pre-reflective consciousness on Sartre’s view. However, we can apprehend ourselves, in some sense, as “having a past” at this level.

The part of B&N cited by Morris for support of her claim about personal identity is devoted to how one apprehends one’s embodiment prior to one’s constitution of oneself as a physical object. Thus, after the section of B&N referred to by Morris, Sartre says:

We have just described the being of my body *for-me*. On this ontological plane my body is such as we have described it and it *is only that*. It would be useless to look there for traces of a physiological organ, of an anatomical and spatial constitution. (445)

This is perhaps why Morris says that one’s body is, for oneself, a point of view on the world, and that the body “serves as a necessary condition of personal identity somewhat differently for the individual himself and for others.” I will now take these statements very seriously, and reinterpret Morris’s seemingly metaphysical claim in light of them.

If Morris’s claim that “bodily identity is a necessary condition for personal identity over time” were intended to mean something about the apprehension of oneself as identical through time, there would be three ways in which we might interpret it: (1) Apprehending oneself as the same person, one must be apprehending oneself as the same body qua point of view and center of action. (2) When one apprehends oneself as the same person, one must be apprehending oneself as the same body-for-others. (3) When one apprehends oneself as the same person, one must be apprehending oneself as the same body qua physical object. Only the first of these acknowledges

that apprehending *oneself* as the same is unique, and that one may apprehend oneself as related to one's past in a different way from that in which one apprehends others as related to their pasts. However, while it is easy to see what it means to say that an item with spatial characteristics is the same over time, it is difficult to see what it means when one says this about a point of view. The example that comes to mind is a film sequence in which the camera stands still or moves around, rather than one in which the shot cuts abruptly. In this case the point of view which is implicitly indicated by what one sees on the screen is at all times continuous with the previous point of view. Analogously, the continuity of one's body qua point of view is indicated by the continuity of the world as it is apprehended. To apprehend oneself as the same body qua point of view is to apprehend the world as presenting itself in a manner where there are no abrupt shot cuts. The claim, then, is that to apprehend oneself as the same person includes apprehending oneself as the same body qua point of view; better put, it includes apprehending the world as continuing to be organized around the same center.

In this case one is not identifying oneself with a body qua physical object. If one is taking a walk, it would be incorrect to think of one's prior point of view as having occupied a position on the path three steps back. This would be to import a characteristic of body qua physical object (namely, location in space) into the body qua point of view.<sup>50</sup> In the movie analogy, if we are thinking of the camera, an object in space, as that which is self-identical we are making the same mistake. We are supposed to think of the point of view itself, not the object that "has" that point of view, as identical through time. When one apprehends oneself as being the same body qua point of view, there are not two objects which one is identifying, nor a single object re-identified,

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<sup>50</sup>Alternatively, it could merely import a characteristic of the body-for-others: location in a perceptual field. In any case, without adopting *another* point of view one cannot locate one's own point of view among the objects in one's own perceptual field. Thus, in an example that I consider later in this chapter, in which Sartre describes reading while his eyes are hurting, he says: "It is impossible for me to distinguish the movement of my eyes from the synthetic progression of my states of consciousness without resorting to the

nor is one identifying an object -- one's past point of view -- with a non-object (one's current point of view): one is only recognizing that the world continues to be organized around the same center.

However, since one can apprehend oneself as a body-for-others, one can reidentify one's own body (like those of others) using "the same criteria that are applicable to other objects which have spatial characteristics." On this interpretation of Morris's view there would need to be two ways to reidentify one's own body: the way one reidentifies other objects which have spatial characteristics, and some other way (which should not be called "reidentifying" at all). This other way would not rely on one's apprehension of oneself as a being-for-others. Thus one does not need to apprehend oneself in the way in which one apprehends spatial objects in order to satisfy the bodily condition for apprehending oneself as the same.<sup>51</sup>

The claim that one can apprehend oneself as the same, and not simply as having a past, prior to the apprehension of the body-for-others is controversial. For example, in *Sartre and his Predecessors* William Schroeder says that for Sartre, "One cannot experience the self as the sort of thing that could be identical though time except under the gaze of Others."<sup>52</sup> If Schroeder is wrong, we must distinguish the sense in which one apprehends oneself as the same at the level of the apprehension of the body-for-itself, from the sense in which one apprehends oneself as the same at levels that include the apprehension of one's body-for-others. But it is not at all clear in what sense some past point of view could be the same as the current one, other than being the point of view of the same body (qua object). The telephone in front of me and the chair to my left indicate the same point of view. But what could it mean to say that the tree that I stopped to

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point of view of the Other" (437). (As we will see, for Sartre one's apprehension of oneself as a physical object is based upon one's apprehension of one's body-for-others.)

<sup>51</sup>It makes sense to say that reidentifying a person via spatial characteristics will work for any person, including oneself. So, perhaps one could substitute satisfying the bodily criterion that one ordinarily uses in the case of others for satisfying the bodily criterion one uses in the case of oneself. The price may be that one would then apprehend oneself as the same person without apprehending oneself as "oneself."

<sup>52</sup>Schroeder 235. If undergoing the Look is necessary to satisfy the other condition for identity over time Morris names, Schroeder's claim is of course compatible with this interpretation of Morris's view.

admire on the way to the office indicates the same point of view as the chair and the telephone? The tree is one that I could get to by leaving the building and retracing my steps, or by taking the scenic route instead, but this doesn't help link a past point of view to my present one. It is difficult to see how one could make this link without saying that that point of view is spatiotemporally continuous with this one, and thus apprehend it as the same in the exact sense that one apprehends the body qua object, or any other object, as the same.

Whether there is any sense in which one apprehends oneself as the same, prior to the apprehension of one's being-for-others, is a difficult question, complicated by the fact that it is not clear whether there is reflection prior to the apprehension of one's being-for-others. (I will argue that there is.) As we will see, at the end of the section devoted to the discussion of the body-for-itself, and in an earlier discussion devoted to the topic of reflection, Sartre seems to be talking about the constitution of oneself as an object for reflective consciousness prior to the apprehension of one's being-for-others. So, in addition to whether one apprehends oneself as the same prior to apprehending one's being-for-others, we can ask whether one apprehends oneself as the same prior to such forms of reflection. In any case, these are the sorts of questions that one needs to answer, if attempting to extract a view of personal identity from B&N without taking Sartre's claims out of context. They ask about the right sort of necessary condition: Is apprehending pain in a body qua object a necessary condition for apprehending it as lasting in time? Is apprehending pain as extended in what we will see Sartre calls "psychic time" a necessary condition for locating it in a body? Such questions are different from the question of personal identity through time as it is usually discussed. They are about what is involved in apprehending oneself or another present person as the same as a certain past person. The necessary conditions involved are different from those Monasterio invokes, saying that "our being body-things... is the very condition of possibility

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However, there is no reason to think that that is so.

of our being body-subjects and body-objects” (see Section 3b, above). They are also different from the sort of necessary condition Morris has in mind in saying that bodily identity is a necessary condition for personal identity over time.

Consciousness apprehends itself, pre-reflectively and prior to the apprehension of its being-for-others, as having a past -- the past of which it is a surpassing. However, this is very far from saying that consciousness apprehends itself as the same over time. As we will see in Chapter Three, in a form of reflection that does not require the apprehension of one’s being-for-others, one constitutes a glimpse of an ego and states of consciousness which are extended in psychic time. This will allow one to apprehend psychic states which one must endure, such as headaches and hatreds, rather than mere twinges of pain and surges of anger. We will eventually see how such reflection, when fortified by the experience of one’s body-for-others, allows one to apprehend oneself as a person -- a conscious body.

### **5b. Sartre on “the body-for-itself”**

It is difficult to see what Morris, referring to page 309 of B&N, takes to be support for her claim that “bodily identity is a necessary condition for personal identity over time (BN, 309)” (SCP, 48). Perhaps it is something about the way in which, although the for-itself “forever surpasses” its “facticity” or “twofold contingency,” this facticity or contingency “does not cease to haunt the for-itself.” On page 308 Sartre defines the “facticity of the for-itself”:

For human reality, to be is to-be-there; that is, “there in that chair,” “there at the table,” “there at the top of the mountain, with these dimensions, this orientation, etc.” It is an ontological necessity.... This necessity appears between two contingencies; on the one hand, while it is necessary that I be in the form of being there, still it is altogether contingent that I be, for I am not the foundation of my being; on the other hand, while it is necessary that I be engaged in this or that point of view, it is contingent that it should be precisely in this view to the exclusion of all others. This twofold contingency which embraces a necessity we have called the *facticity* of the for-itself. (407-8)<sup>53</sup>

He then goes on to say:

[T]he nihilated in-itself, engulfed in the absolute event which is the appearance of the foundation or the upsurge of the for-itself, remains at the heart of the for-itself as its original contingency.... The for-itself forever surpasses this contingency toward its own possibilities.... Yet facticity does not cease to haunt the for-itself, and it is facticity which causes me to apprehend myself simultaneously as totally responsible for my being and as totally unjustifiable.... [The body] is the in-itself which is surpassed by the nihilating for-itself and which reapprehends the for-itself in this very surpassing. (408-9)<sup>54</sup>

Admittedly, one reason it is difficult out what on page 309 Morris takes to be support for her claim is that it is difficult to figure out what Sartre is saying here. And one reason why I think this quotation captures the text to which Morris refers is that I have quoted the only parts where Sartre can be referring to time -- i.e., every instance of any form of the verb "to surpass" and the one instance of "remains." But, as I see it, what Sartre says here cannot support Morris's claim. In fact, Sartre cannot talk about bodily identity over time on the level of the body-for-itself at all, because, we will see, body qua facticity of the for-itself cannot be extended in time in the way that an object -- even a psychic object -- is.

Sartre is saying that one always apprehends oneself as embodied in a specific way, and this embodiment appears as the basis for consciousness. In consciousness's pre-reflective apprehension of itself, it is aware of itself as emerging from its facticity. As we will see, at this level consciousness cannot "turn back to face" this facticity (637). It can apprehend it only insofar as it apprehends itself as a surpassing of a particular bodily state such as pain or thirst or "an insipid taste... which accompanies me even in my efforts to get away from it" (444). Consciousness is always consciousness of the surpassing of this particular embodiment toward a particular possibility. Thirst, for example, might be the consciousness of surpassing a particular situation in which one is sitting in the sun toward another situation in which one is drinking a glass of water.

On the level of pre-reflective consciousness, Sartre identifies the apprehension of one's

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<sup>53</sup>Page 308 as cited by Morris.

facticity not only with the apprehension of one's embodiment, but also with the apprehension of one's past:

We are now able to define the body's *nature-for-us*.... [T]he body is perpetually the *surpassed*. The body as a sensible center of reference<sup>55</sup> is that *beyond which* I am in so far as I am immediately present to the glass or to the table or to the distant tree which I perceive.... Similarly as an instrumental center of instrumental complexes the body can only be the *surpassed*; it is that which I surpass toward a new combination of complexes and which I shall perpetually have to surpass whatever may be the instrumental combination at which I arrive.... Thus the body, since it is surpassed, is the Past.... In each project of the For-itself, in each perception the body is there; it is the immediate Past in so far as it still touches on the Present which flees it. (429)

Consciousness apprehends itself as a transcending of its bodily state, as a surpassing of its past, but at the same time as being "pursued" and "reapprehended" insofar as "the inexpressible which one wishes to flee is rediscovered at the heart of this very wrenching away":

[P]ain-consciousness is a project toward a further consciousness which would be empty of all pain.... In addition--and this is the unique character of corporal existence--the inexpressible which one wishes to flee [pain, in this case] is rediscovered at the heart of this very wrenching away; it is this which is going to constitute the consciousnesses which surpass it, it is the very being of the flight which wishes to flee it. (438-9, my gloss)

Like the passage on page 408-9, Sartre's remarks here are relevant to what it is to experience oneself as having a particular past or bodily state, but not to any ordinary claim about the criteria for personal identity over time. A few sentences earlier Sartre makes this clear. He is talking about reading when one's eyes hurt:

This pain... does not exist anywhere among the actual objects of the universe. It is not to the right or to the left of the book nor among the truths which are revealed through the book nor in my body-as-object (the body which the other sees and which I can always partially touch and partially see), nor in my body as point-of-view as the latter is implicitly indicated by the world.... Pain then is not in space. But neither does it belong to objective time; it temporalizes itself, and it is in and through this temporalization that the time of the world can appear. (438)<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>54</sup>Pages 308-9 as cited by Morris.

<sup>55</sup>In referring to the to the body-for-itself as "sensible," Sartre does not mean that one can apprehend it through the senses in the way that one does when one looks at one's hands. Sartre does not introduce this way of sensing one's body until after discussing the body-for-others, because it is one's hand for-others that one apprehends in this way. What he means is that one senses one's body when one feels pain or feels the cold of the air.

<sup>56</sup>Note that the distinction that Morris uses in her claim that the body "serves as a necessary condition of

The pain, insofar as it is apprehended pre-reflectively doesn't "belong to objective time."

This quotation ends with Sartre saying about pain what he says about consciousness in general, that it "temporalizes itself:" insofar as it is a form of consciousness, pain, like any other form of consciousness, cannot be extended in time the way an object is. However, consciousness for Sartre is a "transcending of facticity," and, as we will see, "pain" can also be used to refer to the facticity itself, i.e., that which is transcended in the act of consciousness. Sartre calls this "pure" pain, as opposed to pain-consciousness, and refers to this as "the inexpressible which one wishes to flee... the very being of the flight which wishes to flee it." Thirst can be thought of as what is to-be-overcome in the project of drinking (pure thirst), but also as the project of overcoming thirst (thirst-consciousness). (Thus, thirst, pain, or any other form of consciousness is a project of overcoming itself.) But pure pain or thirst, the facticity of which consciousness is a transcending, cannot be extended in time in the way an object is either. One's facticity is far from being anything that could be extended in time in the ordinary sense, because, as indicated by the above quotation, it is precisely the transcending of this facticity that constitutes "the time of the world" in which material objects are extended. Thus "pain" either refers to a type of consciousness, something that temporalizes itself, or to an "inexpressible" facticity. In either case it does not refer to anything that could be extended in time in the usual sense.

We will see that the bodily state that the act overcomes is connected to the act by a relationship that is closer than "preceding in time." Thirst of which the act of drinking is a surpassing doesn't merely precede the act; the act is somehow based on the thirst. As we have seen, the thirst is "the very being of the flight which wishes to flee it" (438-9). The facticity of the

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personal identity somewhat differently for the individual himself and for others" (SCP, 48), the distinction between one's body as a point of view and one's body as an object, is mentioned in the first part of the passage, where Sartre says that the pain is not located "in" either of these (although I don't see what it would mean to say that something is located *in* a point of view).



for-itself, the body qua point of view and point of departure for action on the world, is the very being of the for-itself.

One apprehends one's facticity as one's own, in that it is the facticity of which one's consciousness is a surpassing, prior to one's identifying it with one's body qua object. At this level one experiences one's facticity as "the in-itself which is surpassed by the nihilating for-itself," as "the immediate Past in so far as it still touches on the Present which flees it." "Pain *is precisely the eyes* as consciousness 'exists them.'" And:

when no pain, no specific satisfaction or dissatisfaction is "existed" by consciousness, the for-itself does not thereby cease to project itself beyond a contingency which is pure and so to speak unqualified. Consciousness does not cease "to have" a body. Coenesthetic affectivity is then a pure, non-positional apprehension of a contingency without color, a pure apprehension of the self as a factual existence. (444)

On the pre-reflective level, and prior to the apprehension of its being-for-others, consciousness always apprehends its facticity: always apprehends itself as embodied and as having a past which it projects itself beyond.

One's apprehension of oneself as a physical object (as the sort of thing that can be said to be extended in time) is based on the apprehension of one's facticity. However, it also requires that one's facticity be considered from a reflective point of view and be referred back to a body-for-others:

Pain *is precisely the eyes* as consciousness "exists them." To be sure pain *in the eyes* supposes a whole constitutive work which we shall have to describe. But at this stage in the argument there is not any reason to consider this, for it [the constitutive work] is not made. Pain is not considered from a reflective point of view; it is not referred back to a body-for-others. It is the eyes as pain or vision as pain; it is not distinguished from my way of apprehending transcendent words.... Pain in the eyes is distinguished from other possible pains inexpressibly and by its very being. (438, my gloss)

Toward the end of B&N, Sartre affirms that, while one is perpetually temporalizing oneself, one can also apprehend one's permanence as a degraded image of one's perseverance:

The For-itself is a temporalization. This means that it *is* not but that it "makes itself." It is the *situation* which must account for that *substantial permanence* which we readily

recognize in people... and which the person experiences empirically in most cases as being his own. The free perseverance in a single project does not imply any permanence; quite the contrary, it is a perpetual renewal of my engagement.... On the other hand, the realities enveloped and illuminated by a project which develops and confirms itself present the permanence of the in-itself; and to the extent that they refer our image to us, they support us with their everlastingness; in fact it frequently happens that we take their permanence for our own. In particular the permanence of place and environment, of the judgments passed on us by our fellowmen, of our past--all *shape* a degraded image of our *perseverance*. While I am temporalizing myself, I am always French, a civil servant or a proletarian *for others*. (705)

The apprehension of one's permanence requires more than the pre-reflective apprehension of the body-for-itself, which is the topic of the first section of the chapter on the body.

Aside from the question of whether anything in the section on the body-for-itself supports the view that bodily identity is a necessary condition for personal identity over time, these considerations lead to a more general problem: the headache I am presently experiencing is surely a pain that is experienced as taking time, and, it seems that one doesn't need to locate such feelings in one's body (qua object) in order to experience them as "taking time." Sartre acknowledges another type of time in addition to the time in which physical events are experienced as extended: psychic duration.

I can "feel the time which flows" and apprehend myself as a unity of succession. In this case I am conscious *of* enduring.... [T]he consciousness *of* duration is a consciousness of a consciousness which endures.... [A]ll the processes of psychic duration belong to the consciousness reflected-on. (211-12)

We will see that a headache can be apprehended as such a unity of succession -- a unity of succession of twinges of pain -- without being apprehended as a physical event located in the body-for-others. Sartre's point is that, in addition to apprehending a physical world and apprehending (one's) consciousness pre-reflectively as that to which the world is present, one can apprehend one's consciousness reflectively. In at least one form of reflection (impure reflection), the reflecting consciousness apprehends itself (qua reflected-on) as enduring pain or thirst.

Unlike the pain which, we have seen, is experienced as the very being of consciousness,

the headache that one endures is experienced as separate from the reflecting consciousness which apprehends it: “it is revealed through the pain and as the unity of all my pains of the same type” (443). It is not experienced as fully separate, as if the reflecting consciousness were an indifferent observer that could apprehend the reflected-on consciousness’s pain without feeling it itself, the way one apprehends somebody else’s headache. Sartre makes it clear that in order to attain this sort of cognitive distance one must apprehend oneself as a body-for-others (443). But one can apprehend one’s headache as something lasting, as something that one must endure, without apprehending it as a physical event. Thus, while the “whole constitutive work,” whose description Sartre has promised, is necessary for one’s apprehension of one’s headache as a physical event located in one’s head, one can apprehend one’s headache as a unity of succession, as an aching that one endures prior to identifying it with a physical object and apprehending it as extended in the time of the world.

Naturally, the pre-reflective apprehension of pain is the basis for the reflective apprehension of one’s headache. We will see that the pre-reflective apprehension of one’s facticity is also the basis for the pre-reflective apprehension of one’s body-for-others, which is another part of the constitutive work which culminates in one’s apprehension of oneself as a psychophysical object. The fact that, on the pre-reflective level, “I exist for myself as a body known by the Other” (460), is what enables me to apply the concepts that I apply to others (concepts that denote physical traits and character traits) to myself when I reflect.

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The way Morris first puts the point of intersection between Sartre’s work and analytic philosophy is promising. Although Morris says that Sartre is interested in “establishing the differences between persons and material objects,” she finishes this sentence by saying, “that is, he asks how X can be identified as a person rather than, say, a corpse or a cleverly devised robot”

(SCP, 1). How X can be identified as a person might lead one to discuss what the difference is between apprehending a person and a material object. This looks like the path Morris may take, because immediately after this, she says, regarding the difference between a person and individuation and reidentification of persons:

Each of these questions can be asked from the point of view of the person himself or from the point of view of others who identify him. At certain stages in the discussion, this difference in viewpoint becomes important for Sartre's position. (SCP, 1)

So it sounds as if Morris intends to discuss not only how one apprehends other persons and apprehends them as the same over time, but also how one apprehends oneself as a person and as the same over time. This would be an excellent place to start relating phenomenology to analytic philosophy of mind. However, attempting to find answers in B&N to the questions Anglo-American philosophers ask, Morris reads into Sartre's view the naturalism and metaphysical realism plaguing non-phenomenological philosophy, so baldly expressed by Monasterio.<sup>57</sup>

In any case, I find it appealing to say that much of the traditional discussion of the problem of personal identity over time and the mind-body problem, only addresses what it is for *another* person to be the same over time and the relation between *another* person's body and mind, because of a lack of phenomenological sophistication and naive naturalism that assumes that the questions don't change for one's own case. The first section of Sartre's chapter on the body is intended to correct one of the most serious effects of this lack of phenomenological sophistication: the misunderstanding of the body-for-itself.

The main question that I will be addressing is how it is that we apprehend ourselves as psychophysical objects. How is one able to apprehend oneself as a conscious body, as a person, and as oneself? What is involved? As we will see, there is a right and a wrong way to ask this question: we should ask how we apprehend ourselves as bodies (or indeed as ourselves), not how

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<sup>57</sup>See Section Three, above

we apprehend a certain body as our own (or as ourself).<sup>58</sup> Similarly, there is a right and a wrong way to ask how other persons are apprehended: we should ask how we apprehend a certain “look” as a person, rather than how we apprehend a certain physical object as conscious. These questions reflect the way in which the object in question, you or another person, are constituted -- i.e., what is most fundamental in the apprehension in each case.

As we explore Sartre’s view, it will become clear that Morris is correct to say that consciousness is a relation. When you refer to an act of consciousness as such, you are referring to nothing but a relation to an object of consciousness: the world. We will see that there is also something right about saying that a human body is the subject-term of this relation. The human body, as an object of consciousness, is apprehended as a subject of consciousness: the one to whom the world appears. The one to whom the world appears, however, appears prior to its constitution as a human body, and even prior to its constitution as a merely psychic object, whether the consciousness in question is constituted as oneself or another. Before its constitution as another person, this consciousness is “the Other” or “the look.” Before its constitution as oneself,<sup>59</sup> it is simply called “consciousness.” In both cases we need to be careful about thinking of consciousness as a “what” on levels prior to its constitution as a human body.

Finally, so as not to leave the topic of the apprehension of other persons on a misleading

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<sup>58</sup>Thus Zaner says that, for Sartre, “the decisive question question is how it is possible that consciousness can become an object, can experience itself as an object.” Richard M. Zaner, *The Problem of Embodiment: Some Contributions to a Phenomenology of the Body* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964): 73. And Anderson writes, “the self (*moi*) with its psychic and physical characteristics... is an *object* which transcendental consciousness constitutes by reflecting upon and uniting its acts into a single entity with which one, then, identifies his or her self. This object-I, often equated with the body, is, Sartre claims, essentially like all other worldly objects.... [T]his constituted psychophysical self.... bears far more resemblance to a concrete flesh and blood human being than does the web of contentless, intentional acts that comprise the transcendental consciousness that constitutes it.” Thomas C. Anderson, *Sartre’s Two Ethics* (Chicago: Open Court, 1993): 6.

<sup>59</sup>What I mean by “oneself” in this sentence is oneself as a person (in Strawson’s terms, as the subject of both M- and P-predicates). However, we will see that there are other ways in which one might be said to constitute oneself as “oneself” that do not include constituting oneself as a human body. For example, in impure reflection the ego can be constituted without any bodily features.

note until it re-emerges In Chapter Five, the apprehension of the Other, upon which the apprehension of other persons is based, is not the apprehension of anything like another person. The appearance of the Other as such, or the look, is actually the pre-reflective intuition of one's consciousness-of-the-world as an object. The Other as such is only the consciousness that apprehends that object. Thus, thinking of the Other as I suggested, as the one to whom the world appears, we must think of the world not as the object of one's consciousness, but as an alien world that mysteriously includes this object. A related point, which I also discuss in Chapter Five, is that the apprehension of the Other as such is included in that of the world as beyond one's current situation. Thus there is also a question about the world corresponding to those about oneself and about other persons: How is one's situation apprehended as the world in the first place? In Chapter Five we will see how the look is involved in this transition. The next four chapters begin to trace the constitution of oneself as an object of consciousness.

## Chapter Two: Intentionality and Temporality

### 1. Introduction

I indicated that there are several levels of constitution of oneself on Sartre's view. The topic of this chapter is the most basic level of self-constitution: consciousness's constitution of itself as a relation to an object of consciousness, and its apprehension of itself as such. We will see that on Sartre's view the apprehension of oneself on this lowest level is the apprehension of oneself as an internal relation to an object of consciousness, the world (which itself admits of various levels of constitution). This means, in part, that one apprehends oneself as other than that of which one is consciousness and that, in some sense at this level, one is characterized solely in terms of that object.<sup>60</sup> In addition, consciousness apprehends itself and its object as existing in two different modes of being, which Sartre calls being-for-itself and being-in-itself. That is, the object of consciousness is apprehended as self-sufficient,<sup>61</sup> as not needing consciousness. Consciousness, by contrast, exists only as a relation to something that exists in-itself, and apprehends itself as such.

Consciousness, on Sartre's view, is always aware of itself as not being its object. This presence to self is the basis of reflection. That consciousness is consciousness of something (intentionality) and aware of itself as such (translucency or pre-reflective presence to self) are two of its essential features. Another is its temporality: consciousness apprehends itself as a perpetually incomplete surpassing of itself. Indeed, on Sartre's view, tables and rocks are apprehended as extended in time only on the basis of consciousness's original temporality, or self-surpassing nature.<sup>62</sup> Prior to their appearance as intersubjectively apprehensible, and independent

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<sup>60</sup>Thus Sartre says: "It is by means of that of which it is conscious that consciousness distinguishes itself in its own eyes" (240).

<sup>61</sup>To say that the object of consciousness exists in the in-itself mode can be taken in more than one way. (See note 9 in Chapter One, above.)

<sup>62</sup>Thus Catalano notes "that man's lack of identity *is* temporality and that the temporality of man's being is

of any experience, objects are apprehended as part of a “circuit of selfness,” in which consciousness surpasses itself in an attempt to achieve self-identity, to become what it is.<sup>63</sup> Thus objects are related to consciousness, and instrumentally interrelated according to consciousness’s project of becoming itself, before being related to it and to each other externally -- e.g., causally and spatially.

I do not discuss the constitution of objects such as tables and rocks as intersubjective until Chapter Five. However, after a short discussion of original temporality I give a brief characterization of the ways in which objects of consciousness, including oneself, might be said to be in time for Sartre. Most notable are two senses in which one apprehends oneself as in time before apprehending oneself as a person externally related to other objects and persons, but beyond one’s apprehension of oneself as original temporality: (1) under the look, one has a sense of oneself as temporally extended in a field of consciousness whose defining feature that it is not one’s own. (2) In impure reflection, one experiences oneself as a merely psychic object extended in psychic temporality, and in a sense, from the outside, yet without acknowledging any such field of otherness.

We will see in later chapters that any constitution of oneself beyond consciousness’s self-constitution as other than its object -- e.g., the constitution of oneself as a merely psychic object, a subject of mental states, or as a psychophysical object -- is based upon the apprehension of oneself as consciousness. Thus the constitution of oneself as a person is the constitution of consciousness as a psychophysical object. We will also see that, for Sartre, the constitution of oneself as a merely psychic object is part of the process of constituting oneself as a person. At the end of this chapter, surveying several types of temporality in B&N, I give a brief introduction to the notion of a

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the origin of the world’s time” (Catalano 95).

<sup>63</sup>Catalano says, “Man is a flight from perfect identity with himself, but a flight that is always a search for unity and never an achievement of unity.... [F]or Sartre, *this flight from oneself is our very being* (Catalano



psychic object and the psychic temporality in which such objects are extended. This discussion continues in Chapter Three. For now our task is to understand pre-reflective consciousness.

## 2. Sartre and Husserl on Consciousness and its Objects

Husserl's conception of consciousness in the *Ideas* influenced Sartre heavily,<sup>64</sup> but there are aspects of it that troubled him. In the introduction to B&N, Sartre criticizes Husserl for admitting "opaque" elements into consciousness and for being an idealist, and begins to develop what he takes to be a more satisfactory conception of consciousness and its relation to its objects. He later says:

In the Introduction we encountered a problem and it is this problem which we have wished to resolve: what is the original relation of human reality to the being of phenomena or being-in-itself? In the Introduction indeed we were obliged to reject both the realist solution and the idealist solution. It appeared to us both that transcendent being could not act on consciousness and that consciousness could not "construct" the transcendent by objectivizing elements borrowed from its subjectivity. (238)

As Sartre sees it, in order for consciousness to be able to "construct the transcendent" it would have to have within itself opaque elements. To allow such elements into consciousness would be "to make consciousness a thing" (11). Thus consciousness can have nothing "inside" it: no representations of objects and no sense data, for example. Moreover, forms of consciousness such as pain, pleasure, thirst, belief, etc., cannot be in themselves even partially opaque. With respect to belief in particular, Sartre says:

*[N]othing* can separate the consciousness (of) belief from belief, since belief is *nothing other* than the consciousness (of) belief. To introduce into the unity of a pre-reflective *cogito* a qualified element external to this *cogito* would be to shatter its unity, to destroy its translucency. (125)

Pleasure, too, is perfectly translucent in the sense that pleasure and consciousness of pleasure are one item:

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<sup>64</sup>Edmund Husserl, *Ideas*, trans W. R. Boyce Gibson (London: Collier, 1962). See Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 2-5, for an account of Sartre's first exposure to, and initial enthusiasm for, Husserlian

There is no more first a consciousness which receives *subsequently* the affect “pleasure” like water which one stains than there is first a pleasure (unconscious or psychological) which receives subsequently the quality of “conscious” like a pencil of light rays. There is an indivisible indissoluble being.... Pleasure is the being of self-consciousness and this self-consciousness is the law of being of pleasure. (15)

This self-consciousness is pre-reflective in that, rather than requiring a second act of consciousness directed at the pleasure, pleasure is already awareness of pleasure. Pleasure is a form of self-consciousness:

This self-consciousness we ought to consider not as a new consciousness, but as *the only mode of existence which is possible for a consciousness of something*. Just as an extended object is compelled to exist according to three dimensions, so an intention, a pleasure, a grief can exist only as immediate self-consciousness.... Consciousness (of) pleasure is constitutive of the pleasure as the very mode of its own existence, as the material of which it is made, and not as a form which is imposed by a blow upon a hedonistic material. (14)

As in the above quotation, Sartre often indicates that the consciousness of pleasure (pain, thirst, grief, joy, etc) is pre-reflective by putting the word “of” in parentheses. By contrast, when “of” is used to indicate the positional relationship between consciousness and its object, he sometimes italicizes it. This is the sense of “of” in the principle of intentionality: “All consciousness is consciousness *of* something” (21). In any case, consciousness is always both consciousness *of* something and, because “every positional consciousness of an object is at the same time a non-positional consciousness of<sup>65</sup> itself” (13), consciousness (of) itself. Pleasure, pain, joy, grief, etc., all are translucent and posit a transcendent object. Pleasure is consciousness *of*, e.g., a (pleasing) hot fudge sundae, and is at the same time consciousness (of) pleasure. But the latter, pre-reflective self-consciousness, is not in any sense directed at the pleasure, i.e., at the consciousness *of* the sundae. As Sartre forcefully puts it, self-consciousness is the material of which the consciousness *of* the sundae is made.<sup>66</sup>

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phenomenology.

<sup>65</sup>Sartre begins putting the “of” of non-positional self-consciousness in parentheses on the next page. Otherwise this “of” should be in parentheses.

<sup>66</sup>Genuinely reflective consciousness is a consciousness directed at another consciousness. That is, it is

Sartre associates the intentionality and translucency of consciousness with each other, and with the idea that consciousness has no contents:

All consciousness, as Husserl has shown is consciousness *of* something. This means that there is no consciousness which is not a *positing* of a transcendent object, or if you prefer, that consciousness has no "content." We must renounce those neutral "givens" which, according to the system of reference chosen, find their place either "in the world" or "in the psyche." A table is not *in* consciousness—not even in the capacity of a representation. A table is *in* space, beside the window, *etc.* The existence of a table in fact is a center of opacity for consciousness; it would require an infinite process to inventory the total contents of a thing. To introduce this opacity into consciousness would be to refer to infinity the inventory which it can make of itself, to make consciousness a thing, and to deny the cogito. The first procedure of a philosophy ought to be to expel things from consciousness and to reestablish its true connection with the world, to know that consciousness is a positional consciousness *of* the world. (11)

While Sartre praises Husserl for recognizing the importance of the principle of intentionality, he accuses him of misunderstanding this principle by taking it to mean that "consciousness is constitutive of the being of its object" (17). Sartre says: "To say that consciousness is consciousness of something means that for consciousness there is no being outside of that precise obligation to be a revealing intuition of something -- *i.e.*, of a transcendent being" (23). That is, consciousness has no "subjective stuff" inside it and, far from being "constitutive of the being of its object... to be conscious *of* something is to be confronted with a concrete and full presence which *is not* consciousness" (21-2).

On Husserl's view the act of perception consists in the animation of sensuous material, or hyle, by intentional form.<sup>67</sup> The hyle are in some sense part of consciousness, color data, touch data, tone data, *etc.*<sup>68</sup> which, when taken up or interpreted by the act of consciousness, allow for

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consciousness *of* thirst, pleasure, *etc.* Naturally, it is also consciousness (of) itself as a reflective act. That every consciousness posits a transcendent object should not be taken to mean that each consciousness is directed toward a particular existent object. Some forms of consciousness (boredom, Sartre's "nausea," and perhaps depression and elation) are directed toward the world as a whole. Some forms of consciousness are focused upon imaginary or absent objects. It may be the case, however, that something like the "phenomenon of being" apprehended in "boredom, nausea, *etc.*" (7) provides a sort of background for any focal object.

<sup>67</sup>Husserl 226-7.

<sup>68</sup>Husserl 226.

the apprehension of sensory qualities in the object. Although Sartre is not referring to the hyle when he criticizes the introduction of opaque contents into consciousness in the above quotation he later says that, with the notion of the hyle, Husserl has made a similar mistake:

He has introduced in fact those neutral givens, the impossibility of which we have shown earlier. To be sure, these are not “contents” of consciousness, but they remain only so much the more unintelligible. The *hyle* in fact could not be consciousness, for it would disappear in translucency and could not offer that resisting basis of impressions which must be surpassed toward the object.... In giving to the *hyle* both the characteristics of a thing and the characteristics of consciousness, Husserl believed that he facilitated the passage from the one to the other, but he succeeded only in creating a hybrid being which consciousness rejects and which can not be a part of the world. (20)

For Husserl the hyle are not like a transcendent object (except for the fact, all-important for Sartre, that neither is an instance of object-directed-self-consciousness). Like a table or a representation of a table, however, they would take an infinite process to inventory, simply because they are not self-inventorying. If they were self-inventorying, they could not offer that resisting basis of impressions which must be surpassed toward the object. The only things that can give consciousness any resistance, according to Sartre, have a manner of existing different from that of consciousness. There are no impressions, if these are meant to be something in consciousness caused by the world. Consciousness reaches out to its object; nothing reaches into consciousness.

The very notion of something in consciousness which is not of the nature of consciousness (i.e., which is not both object-directed and self-conscious), whether it be a content which represents an external object or Husserl’s mysterious subjective material, is offensive to Sartre. Sartre’s problem with the hyle is that they are supposed to be part of consciousness, yet (even after they have been taken up in the intentional act) they do not have the translucency that is characteristic of consciousness. As we will see, in TE Sartre was critical of the transcendental ego for the same reason. Sartre believes that any such element in consciousness would “slide into every consciousness like an opaque blade” (TE, 40).

Sartre's view of the relationship between consciousness and its objects can be seen as a reaction to what he takes to be Husserl's unacceptable, idealistic view about the relationship between consciousness and its objects. As Sartre sees it, the notion of the hyle is a crucial part of this view. If there is a part of consciousness that is capable of providing a resisting basis of impressions consciousness, will not only cease to be translucent, it will be capable of supporting its objects. In thinking of consciousness as constructing its objects by objectivizing elements borrowed from its subjectivity, Husserl has done an injustice to the all-important principle of intentionality:<sup>69</sup>

Husserl for the length of his philosophical career was haunted by the idea of transcendence and surpassing. But the philosophical techniques at his disposal, in particular his idealist conception of existence, removed from him any way of accounting for that transcendence; his intentionality is only the caricature of it. Consciousness, as Husserl conceived it, can not in reality transcend itself either toward the world or toward the future or toward the past. (162)

Sartre insists that believing and perceiving, enjoying and suffering, hoping and fearing, and remembering and regretting are all relations to the world. While Sartre prefers Husserl's view to any view in which consciousness, trapped inside itself, is directed at *representations* of things, on Husserl's view consciousness still cannot fully transcend itself insofar as it constructs its objects. Sartre wants consciousness to reach an object that is truly outside of it, and the only way for this to happen, according to Sartre, is for consciousness to be empty and for all resistance to come from the world.

On Husserl's view the object of consciousness, constituted by the animation of hyle, is ideal: a mere correlate of the act of consciousness. Husserl calls this ideal object the noema and calls the act of consciousness, which consists in taking up the hyle and surpassing it toward the object, the noesis. As Sartre sees it, this amounts to basing the being of the object on the being of

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<sup>69</sup>Cf. Jean-Paul Sartre, "Intentionality: A Fundamental Idea in Husserl's Phenomenology," trans. Joseph P. Fell, *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 1 (1970): 4-5.

consciousness. Thus, according to Sartre, “he makes of the *noema* an unreal,” and is thus “totally unfaithful” to the principle of intentionality (23). This is why Sartre accuses him of being a phenomenalist, and compares him to Berkeley (9):<sup>70</sup>

[Husserl] never passed beyond the pure description of the appearance as such; he has shut himself up inside the cogito and deserves -- in spite of his denial -- to be called a phenomenalist rather than a phenomenologist. His phenomenism at every moment borders on Kantian idealism. (119)

Sartre explains how, adopting Husserl’s view, one is led to conclude that consciousness cannot posit a transcendent object. On Husserl’s view the perceptive act is said to be fulfilled insofar as it contains hyletic material. The presence of hyletic material distinguishes perceiving an object from merely thinking of one, and also distinguishes what is actually given in perception from what is only anticipated. For example, in seeing a die, up to three sides (depending upon one’s angle) are given as actually present. The perception of the sides not given is said to be empty. Sartre notes, however, that such empty intentions are necessary for the object to be apprehended as outside of consciousness:

For Husserl... the animation of the hyletic nucleus by the only intentions which can find their fulfillment (*Erfüllung*) in this *hyle* is not enough to bring us outside of subjectivity. The truly objectifying intentions are empty intentions, those which aim beyond the present subjective appearance at the infinite totality of the series of appearances. (22)

Without such empty intentions, consciousness would not be able to have a transcendent object.

That is, consciousness would not be able to apprehend the colored shape that it sees as one among many aspects of an object that exists outside of it:

[C]onsciousness is a real subjectivity and the impression is a subjective plenitude. But

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<sup>70</sup>The degree to which Sartre rejects Husserl’s phenomenological reduction has to do with its association with Berkelyan idealism: “Husserl and his followers... after having effected the phenomenological reduction... treat the noema as *unreal* and declare that its *esse* is *percipi*” (9). On Sartre’s view, the *being* of phenomena cannot be “put out of play.” Consciousness does not constitute the being of phenomena, but rather encounters it as a fundamentally alien mode of being. There is no way to apprehend, e.g., a physical object (or a quality of a physical object) without apprehending it as existing in this alien mode of being.

In Chapter Four, however, we will see that Sartre’s notion of pure reflection can be compared to the phenomenological reduction. While consciousness apprehends itself as already existing prior to the act of reflection, the ego is a product of reflection and can be apprehended as such.

this subjectivity can not go out of itself to posit a transcendent object in such a way as to endow it with a plenitude of impressions. (22)

As Sartre sees it, in making the being of the object depend upon the being of consciousness, Husserl has made the object into a sort of nothingness: "If being belongs to consciousness, the object is not consciousness, not to the extent that it is another being, but that it is non-being" (22). This is the sense in which Husserl treats the noema as unreal. For Sartre, by contrast:

It is true that things give themselves in profile; that is, simply by appearances. And it is true that each appearance refers to other appearances. But each of them is already in itself a *transcendent being*, not a subjective material of impressions -- a *plenitude of being*, not a lack -- a *presence*, not an absence. It is futile by a sleight of hand to attempt to found the *reality* of the object on the subjective plenitude of impressions and its *objectivity* on non-being. (23)

Husserl has misunderstood the essential character of intentionality (23). If Husserl's view were correct, consciousness could not even have the illusion of external objects:

To say that consciousness is consciousness of something means that for consciousness there is no being outside of that precise obligation to be a revealing intuition of something -- *i.e.*, of a transcendent being. Not only does pure subjectivity, if initially given fail to transcend itself to posit the objective; a "pure" subjectivity disappears. (23)

Husserl should be praised for recognizing the transphenomenal being of consciousness, *i.e.*, that consciousness cannot be reduced to its appearance to itself in reflection: "[I]f the noema is for him an unreal correlate of the noesis... the noesis, on the contrary, appears to him as *reality*, of which the principal characteristic is to give itself to the reflection which *knows* it as "having already been there before" (10). Sartre agrees that consciousness's existence is not reducible to its appearance to itself in *reflection*: the consciousness apprehended in reflection is apprehended as already existing when it becomes reflected upon. Reflection reveals a consciousness that does not need to be reflected upon in order to exist: a consciousness that exists beyond its reflective apprehension of itself. Just as a physical object is apprehended as existing independently of the act of perception, consciousness is apprehended as existing independently of the act of reflection.

“Consciousness is a plenum of existence” (16), always overflowing its apprehension of itself in reflection.

As we have seen, however, while consciousness does not need to appear to itself *reflectively* in order to exist, consciousness is always conscious of itself *pre-reflectively*. Thus, although the being of consciousness is transphenomenal in the sense just mentioned, consciousness’s existence and its appearance are tied together in a way in which the existence and appearance of a physical object are not. Consciousness exists only insofar as something appears to it: “there is no consciousness which is not a *positing* of a transcendent object” (11). And insofar as anything appears, consciousness apprehends itself pre-reflectively as a reflection of what appears. This is why Sartre is able to say, in TE, that the “absolute law” of consciousness is to exist only insofar as it appears (TE, 40, 63) and, in B&N, that, “Consciousness has nothing substantial, it is pure ‘appearance’ in the sense that it exists only to the degree to which it appears (17). And:

In order to be non-thetic self-consciousness, consciousness must be consciousness of something... [I]t is by means of that of which it is conscious that consciousness distinguishes itself in its own eyes and that it can be self-consciousness. (239-40)

So, for Sartre consciousness exists only as a sort of reflection of that of which it is conscious, and only insofar as it appears to itself pre-reflectively. It is radically dependent upon another mode of being: the transphenomenality of the being of consciousness “requires that of the being of the phenomenon” (21). Rather than the object of consciousness getting its sense of being from the being of consciousness, “consciousness is born *supported* by a being which is not itself” (23). As Sartre puts it in the conclusion to B&N:

If the *cogito* necessarily leads outside the self, if consciousness is a slippery slope on which one can not take one’s stand without immediately finding oneself tipped outside onto being-in-itself, this is because consciousness does not have by itself any sufficiency of being as an absolute subjectivity; from the start it refers to the thing. (786)

Thus:



the for-itself without the in-itself is a kind of abstraction; it could not exist any more than a color could exist without form or a sound without pitch and without timbre. A consciousness which would be consciousness *of* nothing would be an absolute nothing. (790)

Although Husserl's discovery of the transphenomenal being of consciousness is an important one, Sartre thinks Husserl got things backwards: he based the being of things on the being of consciousness. And although Husserl was right to emphasize the importance of intentionality, he misconstrued it in order to fit it into an idealist conception of the relation between consciousness and its objects. For Sartre, consciousness exists as a relation to something that necessarily exists in another manner.

### **3. Morris's Account of Intentionality: The Difference between a Person and a Material Object**

Even if Morris misrepresents Sartre's phenomenological ontology, and repeatedly attempts to force answers out of him to questions that his method prevents him from considering, her reconstruction is useful. In particular the details of her account of the intentional relation and its object, of reflection, and of the different items to which the word I might be used to refer, make good starting points for understanding the main issues, so long as one remembers to account for her bias toward traditional ontology and epistemology, and to disregard anything that she says that goes overboard in that direction. Her reconstruction is useful because it raises some of the most important issues and, unlike B&N itself, it is relatively easily comprehensible. In the next chapter I use her account of reflection as a starting point, in Chapter Six I examine her account of the ambiguity of "I," and in this chapter I make use of her account of intentionality.

Morris's claim that the body is the subject of conscious relations, if understood to mean that the body is apprehended as, or is constituted as, the subject of such relations -- that what makes one's body and the bodies of others objects of consciousness different from tables and rocks, is that at their core these bodies are apprehended as subjects of such relations -- becomes an

important part of an accurate representation of Sartre's view.<sup>71</sup> Sartre is interested in what is involved in regarding our bodies as such subjects. Or, as I have suggested, in what is involved in consciousness apprehending itself as a physical object. But it is crucial to understanding Sartre to understand why we might also put it this second way. And Morris's emphasis simply on what the subject of consciousness *is* makes this impossible. As I said in Chapter One, the context in which Morris discusses Sartre's view of intentionality is set by an attempt to understand the difference, for Sartre, between a person and a material object. Intentionality is going to be, on Morris's reconstruction, what distinguishes human bodies from mere material objects. But while this bypasses what is most central to Sartre's project, the portions of her inquiry that examine Sartre's interpretation of intentionality are nonetheless useful.

### ***3a. The act of consciousness***

According to Morris, Sartre denies that

...descriptions of mental phenomena can be reduced without remainder into statements about physical objects and physical processes.... In particular, he claims that one characteristic of conscious human experience and action serves to distinguish conscious phenomena from wholly physical phenomena, and that its description cannot be reduced to the description of material processes: intentionality.... [H]uman consciousness is intentional while nonconscious things are not intentional. (SCP,4-5)

Morris refers to the thesis which she claims Sartre to be denying as the reducibility thesis.

In the first chapter of her book, she reconstructs and defends Sartre's "argument against the reducibility thesis." In doing so she gives a good account of intentionality, the characteristic that distinguishes "human experience and action" from "wholly physical phenomena" and the characteristic that distinguishes conscious relations from physical relations.

Following Chisholm,<sup>72</sup> Morris distinguishes an ontological thesis and a psychological

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<sup>71</sup>As we will see more clearly in Chapter Five, these bodies are apprehended as the subjects of conscious relations in very different ways, one's own as either the perceptive and instrumental center of the world or as a decentered center, and the Other's as either a Look, a decentering of this center, or as a Look-as-object, a fixed Look, a decentered decentering.

<sup>72</sup>Roderick M. Chisholm, "Intentionality," *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. Paul Edwards (New York:

thesis. She says that Sartre rejects the ontological thesis, which claims that “there are intentional objects which are, in some sense, ‘included within’ mental phenomena” (SCP, 8). She notes that Sartre takes Husserl’s claim that consciousness is always consciousness of something “in part *as* an attack on the ontological thesis (SCP, 8). Thus, says Morris, Sartre rejects the view that there are objects in consciousness that “could have the same properties as real objects which are outside of or ‘transcendent’ to consciousness” (a position which Sartre associates with what he calls realism). She notes that he also rejects idealism, which “reduces physical objects to a certain combination and order of contents of consciousness.” This is the position he accuses Husserl of holding. Finally, Sartre rejects the view that there are “immanent objects which possess the contradictory qualities of both consciousness and physical objects,” a view under which “‘contents’ of consciousness become inert-living, exterior-interior, passive-active” (SCP, 10). We saw that, according to Sartre, Husserl’s hyle in order to provide a resisting basis of impressions must be conceived in a way that is at odds with its existing in the manner of consciousness. In any case, for Sartre, consciousness has no contents: no contents similar to objects in the world, no contents that are items to which physical objects can be reduced, and no contents that combine some of the qualities of objects in the world with some of the qualities of consciousness. But as we will see in the next chapter, although Sartre denies that consciousness has such contents, the notion of an object to which one attributes such contradictory qualities plays an important role in his view of what is going on in (impure) reflection and its constitution of psychic objects and, as we will see, thus plays a role in his view of the constitution of the body.

Morris says that, for Sartre, “an act of consciousness exists as a kind of pointing beyond itself,” to an “object” (SCP, 12). She comments that incompleteness, the need for an object, is for Sartre one of the defining characteristics of intentionality: “physical objects are complete;

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Macmillan & The Free Press, 1967; London: Collier-Macmillan, 1967), 4: 201.

consciousness, on the other hand, is in principle incomplete in the sense of requiring an object of some sort” (SCP, 13). But, she argues, incompleteness is “not a unique property of consciousness, but rather a unique property of relations” (SCP, 15-16). She says that the relation “is taller than” needs an object-term just as a consciousness relation (e.g., “is hoping for”) does. Her point is that “intentionality as reference” is not enough to distinguish conscious relations from nonconscious ones. She then considers “intentionality as purpose” and attempts to determine whether intentionality taken thus is the characteristic that “distinguishes physical relations from conscious relations” (SCP, 16). Eventually she will settle on intentionality as chosen purpose.<sup>73</sup> Guiding her reconstruction is the search for a criterion that will distinguish the relations *by virtue of which certain physical objects are persons* from other relations, and the belief that intentionality, as Sartre understands it (as “chosen purpose”), is able to serve as such a criterion.

According to Morris, since consciousness is a relation, it would in any case be more illuminating to compare consciousness to nonconscious relations instead of nonconscious things. But, she says, Sartre “typically contrasts consciousness to physical things rather than physical relations” (SCP, 16). I believe that Sartre is rather contrasting the *way of being* of consciousness and the *way of being* of physical things. Thus I object to her phrasing in the above quotation (from SCP, 13): Sartre’s point is not that “physical objects are complete” but that the way of being of physical objects, and all other objects of consciousness as such, is to be as complete. This leads to

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<sup>73</sup>It may seem bizarre to say that every act of consciousness is intentional in this sense, but I feel that saying this does capture an important part of Sartre’s view. The point is that what one perceives, thinks, hopes for, etc., are manifestations of one’s “fundamental project,” and that this fundamental project is always “a choice in the making.” For Sartre, what we apprehend and how we apprehend it, what is focused upon, and what is relegated to the background, depends upon what we are doing. This is not to say that we chose every element of our field of consciousness individually: “no matter how absorbed I am in my reading, I do not for all that cease making the world come into being. Better yet, my reading is an act which implies in its very nature the existence of the world as a necessary ground.... I do not lose sight of the colors, the movements which surround me, I do not cease to hear sounds; they are simply lost in the undifferentiated totality which serves as the background for my reading” (439). However, it is the act of reading, for example, that determines not only what is relegated to the background, but the meaning of that background, e.g., whether it is “conducive to reading,” whether items that emerge from the background are apprehended

the question of how the way of being of physical relations compares to the way of being of consciousness, and to the way of being of physical objects.

Physical relations at first seem to play a special role for Sartre, because the apprehension of a physical relation involves the apprehension of a *negativité* or “little pool of non-being” (53): the apprehension that the chair is next to, smaller than, or the same color as the table involves the apprehension that the chair *is not* the table. What is special about *negativités* is that being-in-itself, conceived as “full positivity” (56), does not contain them. The “negativity” in the *negativité* cannot come from anything that exists purely in the being-in-itself mode. Thus there must be another mode of being, one that can “secrete” the “nothingness” that is present in physical relations and in such objects of consciousness as distance (54), “absence,” “change,” and “otherness” (55). Sartre thus sees *negativités* as evidence of the “nihilating” power of being-for-itself. They “indicate immediately an essential relation of human reality to the world” (59). In any case, on his view the existence of physical relations is evidence for the existence of a mode of being entirely different from that of objects, their qualities, and external relations themselves. But since Morris’s discussion is motivated by a search for the difference between a person and a material object, and not by the Sartrean question of what the second mode of being (being-for-itself) must be like in order to account for certain phenomena, she has no reason to emphasize this point.

As it turns out, the perception of a physical object involves “nihilation” as well: “it is because the inkwell is not the table -- nor the pipe nor the glass -- that we can apprehend it as an inkwell” (256). Physical objects are apprehended as “figures” against a more or less undifferentiated background. The apprehension of such figures involves the nihilation of the background.<sup>74</sup> The apprehension of a *negativité*, such as a difference, distance, or absence, is thus

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as “welcome distractions” or unwelcome ones, etc.

<sup>74</sup>The only apprehension that would not involve such nihilation, it seems, would be that of a totally undifferentiated field of consciousness. However, Sartre indicates that there could be no such

special for Sartre only because the nihilation is more obvious. Particular differences, distances and absences exist in the same manner as tables and trees: they are “transcendent realities” (59). The absence of Pierre from the cafe where one expects to meet him, to use an example from Sartre, is apprehended as a self-same “object” in contrast to the fleeting consciousnesses directed at it. The same goes for the distance, or difference in size, between two objects. In this respect the way of being of physical relations is the same as that of physical objects. While according to Sartre the existence of *negativités* is the result of conscious activity, they nevertheless belong on the “being-in-itself” side of the main distinction. The difference between *negativités* and physical objects does not lie in their mode of being. It rather lies in their origin. A *negativité* is apprehended as no less real and no less present than a physical object: “distance, for example, is imposed on us as something which we have to take into account, which must be cleared with effort” (59).

### **3b. Consciousness as a relation**

Although consciousness is, according to Sartre, a special sort of relation, comparing it to a physical relation can be misleading. This is because such talk leads to the question of what the other term (besides the object of consciousness) is.<sup>75</sup> Morris says that it is the body. But this too can be misleading, because on Sartre’s view one must constitute one’s body *as* the subject-term of consciousness, and one apprehends oneself as consciousness prior to such constitution of oneself, e.g., as an act of perceiving, hoping, wanting, etc. This points to another, more important sense in which consciousness may be said to be incomplete, and to an important difference between conscious relations and physical relations that is not brought out by Morris’s body-subject view:

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apprehension: “The revelation of the *this* supposes that the ‘accent is put’ on a certain negation accompanied by the withdrawal of the others in the syncretic disappearance into the ground; that is, that *the For-itself can exist only as a negation which is constituted on the withdrawal into totality of the radical negativity* [my emphasis]. The For-itself is *not* the world, spatiality, permanence, matter, in short the in-itself in general, but its manner of not-being-them is to have to not-be this table, this glass, this room on the total ground of negativity” (253).

<sup>75</sup>Sartre most often speaks of consciousness as a sort of activity, as an “ontological act,” an “absolute act,” or an “absolute event” (126).

consciousness originally apprehends itself as a sort of relation whose subject-term (itself) is incomplete. Not only does consciousness need an object: even with the object it is still incomplete in that it must constitute itself as a relation to this object. An instance of a physical relation might be said to be completed once all its terms are in place. But consciousness is perpetually incomplete because its subject-term itself is never complete. In more Sartrean terms, to be for-itself is “not to be what one is,” to exist by “dissociating” or “disengaging” itself from being (58). Consciousness has a manner of existing altogether different from both physical objects and physical relations. It is anything but a transcendent reality.

For Sartre, consciousness is pre-reflectively aware both of its dependence upon its object, and of the incompleteness of its “subject-term.” “Incompleteness” and “completeness” can thus be rendered as *phenomenological* characteristics of the act and object of consciousness: consciousness *apprehends itself* as incomplete while it apprehends its object -- whether that be a material object, a quality of a material object, an abstract object, a physical relation, or whatever -- as complete, i.e., as an existing item that it (the act) only reveals.<sup>76</sup> An instance of a physical relation, to be sure, is “incomplete” in that it depends for its existence on its terms (or relata). Pointing out this similarity between consciousness and physical relations, however, may mask a more important difference between them. This difference is reflected by Sartre’s reference to consciousness as “internally” related to its object. Morris recognizes that, for Sartre, consciousness is an internal relation in that “the object essentially characterizes the particular act of consciousness” (SCP, 19). In more Sartrean language, consciousness is nothing but a relationship to its object. In the way I prefer to think about it, an act of consciousness can be

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<sup>76</sup>As we saw in the previous section, in (at least one form of) *reflection* consciousness is apprehended as “having been there already,” i.e., as an existing “act” (or “relation”) which reflection only reveals. Nevertheless, prior to such form(s) of reflection consciousness apprehends itself as incomplete, as nothing but a relation to, or act of positing, something. As we will see, this is true in both pre-reflective consciousness and “pure” reflection.

described exhaustively in terms of the object-as-it-is-apprehended: to describe consciousness is to describe the world as it appears. As noted, “it is by means of that of which it is conscious that consciousness distinguishes itself in its own eyes” (240). “physical relation, by contrast, is not specified merely by specifying its relata. There are many possible physical relations between any two physical objects. But the object as it is apprehended essentially characterizes the act of consciousness and there is thus only one possible conscious act for any such object.

It may seem strange to say that there is only one possible conscious act for any object. After all, can't a variety of different acts be directed at the same object? Aren't my acts of seeing my friend's car, hearing it, imagining it, wishing I owned it, seeing it again, etc., directed at the same object? If we want to maintain that an act of consciousness can be described exhaustively in terms of its object, we need to find differences between the “objects” in these cases. For this reason it is best to think of the object of consciousness in as rich a way as possible. We should include in the object what might otherwise be thought of as “subjective” qualities such as the frightening quality of the African mask, the “to-be-helped” quality of one's friend, and the “to-be-drunk” quality of the glass of water, to list a few examples that Sartre names. We should also include the object's background, that which one is aware of only marginally when focused upon, e.g., the car. I return to this point in the next subsection.

In any case, Morris acknowledges that consciousness is very different from other relations. Noting the possibility that the object-term of consciousness may be “nonexistent” (e.g., absent or imaginary), she calls consciousness a weak relation. She notes that Brentano qualified his use of the word “relation” as well, for the same reason: “Brentano qualified the term ‘relation’ because of the peculiar nature of the Terminus; he suggested that what we are dealing with is something *like* a relation” (SCP, 19). At this point Morris says nothing about the peculiar nature of the subject-term of consciousness. Later, when discussing “intentionality as chosen purpose,” she



emphasizes that according to Sartre, “there is no particular predetermined end or purpose for persons, as there is in the case of machines and animals.” She lists a person’s lack of predetermined purpose, along with the fact that consciousness “requires a second term” and the fact that this second term can be one’s “nonexistent end,” as “three major forms of ‘nothingness’” involved in Sartre’s notion of intentionality (SCP, 27). She appeals to this when arguing that intentionality as chosen purpose can serve as a criterion to distinguish persons from other material objects. But she never sees that there is a crucial question for Sartre: what is involved in consciousness apprehending itself as having any sort of subject-term at all, and in particular, a physical one? In fact, when defending the claim that consciousness is a relation, despite its non-existent object-term, she mentions that “the classical view, going back to Aristotle, states that the relation derives its reality from its source in the subject” (SCP, 19). Taking this as relevant to Sartre’s view of the relation between consciousness and the subject, it is clear that Morris does not see the central issue for Sartre: how the subject in question gets into the picture in the first place.

### ***3c. The object of consciousness***

We have considered several points about consciousness, all related to Sartre’s conception of consciousness as nothingness: that it has no contents, it is a relation whose object term need not exist, it is essentially characterized by the object of consciousness, and it is somehow responsible for the existence of negation. But Morris also comments on a passage from Brentano, in which she finds “two somewhat different ways of making the distinction between psychical and physical relations: the object of a psychical relation (a) need not exist and (b) must not exist.” She attributes to Chisholm the view that the object merely need not exist. She says that Sartre goes the other way: “This is what Sartre does when he includes purpose (i.e., reference to nonexisting possibilities and goals) in the concept of intentionality” (18). In this light she discusses Wittgenstein’s remark, “I can look for him when he is not there, but not hang him when he is not

there,” saying that this does not mean that while “looking for x” is a conscious relation “hanging x” isn’t:<sup>77</sup>

If... what is meant by “hang” is that the agent has some point in tying the rope around the man’s neck -- namely, that he intends to bring about a not-yet-existing state of affairs in which the now-living man is dead -- then the action is intentional. The existing man, in other words, is not the only object in this case; implicit reference is made to a further, non-existent object: the state of affairs that the act is intended to bring about... Sartre would describe conscious human action as intentional, even if it were concerned with an existing object, since a full description of that action would entail reference to a not-yet-existing state of affairs (BN, 433). (SCP, 21)

In any action that has a point to it -- and for Sartre all actions have a point to them, otherwise they would not be actions (559)<sup>78</sup> -- the object of consciousness includes not only the things acted upon (in this case the man’s neck and the rope) but the not-yet-existing state of affairs as well: “It is an oversimplification of [Sartre’s] position to say that he thinks consciousness is a dyadic relation” (SCP, 19, n.29); the subject-term is not related only to an existing object but also to a not-yet-existing state of affairs.

To say that, in this sense, the object of consciousness “must not exist” fails to bring out the full import of Sartre’s concern with nothingness on the side of the object. Sartre says that the field of consciousness always has negation in it, and he reasons from this that there must be another way of being, aside from the “full positivity” of being-in-itself. More specifically as regards purpose, negation is one of the essential conditions of instrumentality:

In order for the totality of being to order itself around us as instruments, in order for it to parcel itself into differentiated complexes which refer to one another and which can be *used*, it is necessary that negation rise up not as a thing among other things but as the rubric of a category which presides over the arrangement and the redistribution of great masses of being in things. Thus the rise of man in the midst of the being which ‘invests’ him causes a world to be discovered. But the essential and primordial moment of this rise is the negation. (59)

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<sup>77</sup>Morris is contrasting what she takes to be Sartre’s view with Chisholm’s: “Chisholm says that the first of these activities is intentional, since it may be the case its object does not exist. The second, however, requires the existence and presence of the object, and Chisholm says that it is ‘merely physical,’ presumably *because* the object exists” (SCP, 21).

<sup>78</sup>Page 433, as cited by Morris.

The world is apprehended as a field of instrumental-things. As well as being the field in which one acts, however, it is a field of perception, imagination, emotion, and judgment. And not only does every action bring nothingness into the world, so does every perceiving, imagining or thinking. Thus one of the most important roles of the negation is to separate figure from ground in perception:

[I]n perception there is always the construction of a figure on a ground.... When I enter this cafe to search for Pierre, there is formed a synthetic organization of all the objects in the cafe, on the ground of which Pierre is given as about to appear. This organization of the cafe as ground is an original nihilation. (41)

The object focused upon in perception is apprehended against a more or less undifferentiated background. All differentiation in the perceptual field comes from consciousness's activity of raising one item as a figure by "nihilating" the ground against which it stands. In this example, however, the figural item is a *negativité*.

[T]he original nihilation of all the figures which appear and are swallowed up in the total neutrality of a ground is the necessary condition for the appearance of the principle figure, which is here the person of Pierre. This nihilation is given to my intuition; I am witness to the successive disappearance of all the objects which I look at -- in particular of the faces, which detain me for an instant (Could this be Pierre?) and which as quickly decompose because they "are not" the face of Pierre. (41)

This example is important for several reasons. The main one is that it shows that an absence can be a genuine object of perception, thus setting up the question of the origin of the negativity necessary for the perception of an absence. Because in the situation Sartre describes no object will remain in the foreground, the example also helps to bring out forcefully the activity by which consciousness constitutes a perceptual field -- the nihilation of potential figures against a background. Finally, since that around which the field of perception is organized (the absence of Pierre) is figural not because it is directly in front of him, brightly colored, or particularly noisy, but due to the project of meeting Pierre, the example helps to show that the organization of the field of perception is not based on something about the objects themselves:

No one object, no group of objects is especially designed to be organized as specifically

either ground or figure; all depends on the direction of my attention. (41)

This allows for the possibility that the not-yet-existing state of affairs (meeting Pierre, in this case) is responsible for the present organization of the perceptual field, a point crucial to Sartre's notion of freedom.

In any case, Morris talks about the not-yet-existing state of affairs to show that Sartre's notion of intentionality includes not merely reference but also chosen purpose, so she can defend Sartre against an opponent who finds counterexamples to the claim that only living, human<sup>79</sup> bodies exhibit intentionality. But despite this aim (which consists in defending a claim that Sartre has no reason to make), Morris has brought out another important feature of Sartre's account: for Sartre self-given purpose is part of intentionality, and thus the ordinary sense of "intentional" used when we speak of somebody doing something intentionally is related, for Sartre, to the sense of "of or about something" found in Brentano and Husserl.

As for the object which essentially characterizes consciousness, it is, as already noted, probably best to think of this in as rich a way as possible. It is important not to confuse what we might call a focal object, which will not alone allow consciousness "to distinguish itself in its own eyes," with what Sartre sometimes calls the "perceptive field" (418), the "field of instrumentality" (426), or the "world" (417). Morris is talking about the former when she says that, while in some sense consciousness must have an object, a nonexistent object will do:

The weak sense [of "reference"], which is applicable to Sartre's position, will be used in the following cases: when there is an existing object, or an object that does not exist, or an object that may or may not exist. Weak reference is different from not referring at all; in the latter case, there is *no* object that can be mentioned, existing or otherwise. If there were no object at all, however, Sartre does not think we could speak of an act of consciousness (BN, 621). (SCP, 12)

It is true that consciousness must have an object. As Sartre says, "A consciousness which

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<sup>79</sup>Morris says, "It is simply unclear whether [Sartre] would deny that animals are conscious" (23). But she also speaks of "Sartre's claim that nonconscious (and presumably nonhuman) things lack intentionality" (24), saying that nest-building birds might be a counterexample to this claim if intentionality included only reference and purpose, but not chosen purpose.

would be consciousness *of* nothing would be an absolute nothing” (790).<sup>80</sup> However, if we are to say that this object “essentially characterizes” the act of consciousness, it is important (1) not to limit the object to what is intended focally or figurally, and (2) not to leave the projected (and so non-existent) state of affairs out of our characterization of this object. Recall that the absence of Pierre is apprehended against an undifferentiated background from which objects emerge and into which objects recede. The apprehension of such a background, according to Sartre, is a part of every act of consciousness. It is also arguably an important part of the phenomenological sense of being-in-itself.<sup>81</sup> Nonexistent and merely possible items are apprehended against the same sort of background. (A consciousness which doesn’t posit it, doesn’t exist; this is part of the meaning of the quotation from page 790.) In fact, when an item is apprehended as existent, nonexistent, or possibly existent, the sense of “existent” comes from the apprehension of this background. To apprehend something as existent is to apprehend it as having the same sort of being as the background; to apprehend it as non-existent (e.g., as hallucinated or hoped for) is to apprehend it as lacking this sort of being. It would thus be best to say that the full object of consciousness always contains both existent elements (including the background, an element so existent that we can never bracket its existence) and non-existent elements. It is the focal object which may be existent, nonexistent, or possibly existent.

#### **4. Consciousness and Temporality**

In order to understand how, on Sartre’s view, one comes to apprehend one’s body as the subject of consciousness, it will be necessary to consider the constitution of psychic objects, and how it is possible to apprehend a physical object as at the same time a psychic object. To understand what he says about psychic objects, it is necessary in turn to consider psychic

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<sup>80</sup>Page 621 as cited by Morris.

<sup>81</sup>When Sartre speaks of being-in-itself as “full positivity” and as “undifferentiated” he is speaking of this background, at least at times. Cf. McCulloch 115-116.

temporality, the sort of temporality occupied by psychic objects, and its relationship to the original temporality of consciousness and to the time of the world.

Sartre introduces original temporality in a chapter of B&N titled “The Origin of Negation.” He introduces it as one of two original nihilations that he will discuss in an attempt to explain how it is that there are “little pools of non-being” in the world. Having said that such “transcendent nothings” as the absence of Pierre must come into existence via a “being which is its own nothingness” (57-8) -- i.e., being-for-itself -- Sartre says that this needs to be understood in terms of consciousness’s disengagement from its motive and from its past and future:

[T]he nothingness which is the condition of all transcendent negation can be elucidated only in terms of two other original nihilations: (1) Consciousness *is not* its own motive inasmuch as it is *empty* of all content. This refers us to a nihilating structure of the pre-reflective *cogito*. (2) Consciousness confronts its past and its future as facing a self which it is in the mode of non-being. This refers us to a nihilating structure of temporality.... [T]he definitive explanation of negation can not be given without a description of self-consciousness and of temporality. (72)

Sartre will eventually explain, using the example of Clovis’s conversion to Christianity, that a motive is an apprehension of an instrumental structure in the world. To say that Clovis was motivated to convert by a desire for power is to say that Clovis apprehended his conversion as something that would enable him to gain power. Clovis can apprehend this motive as a part of his consciousness only by impure reflection, as a psychic object. It can be apprehended by another -- e.g., by a historian -- as a part of Clovis, because this is how we apprehend another person, as an agent in an instrumental world arranged around him. Pre-reflectively, however, Clovis apprehends his consciousness as empty of all content, i.e., he apprehends it as merely an apprehending of a certain world, a world arranged around his project of gaining power, one in which conversion would be beneficial to that project.

In the quotation Sartre is not interested in consciousness’s relationship to the psychic object. He is talking about pre-reflective consciousness. The “nihilating structures” he mentions

have to do with consciousness's relationship to itself prior to any consciousness of oneself as psychophysical, only psychic, or even merely as the quasi-object of what Sartre calls pure reflection. Describing this relationship Sartre says that while an object of consciousness "is what it is," there are two senses in which consciousness itself "is not what it is": it is present-to-itself and it surpasses itself in original temporality.

#### *4a. Presence to self*

Sartre returns to the topic of presence to self in Part Two of B&N. The section on presence-to-self contains an analysis of the relationship between belief and consciousness (of) belief. (The parentheses around "of" show that Sartre is not talking about a belief that is posited by reflective consciousness.) As we saw in section two of this chapter, mental acts or states -- belief, desire, thirst, pleasure, etc. -- include pre-reflective self-consciousness, i.e., pre-reflective consciousness of themselves. While we have pains and hopes which are not yet objects of reflective consciousness, these exist as forms of consciousness and are always pre-reflectively self-aware: it is neither the case that consciousness lights up some sort of otherwise unconscious feeling, nor that consciousness exists first and then becomes tinged with pain or thirst.

We saw that Sartre goes so far as to say that self-consciousness is the very material of which the act of consciousness is made. Consciousness (of) the act, however, is not identical with the act:

[T]he ontological judgment "belief is consciousness (of) belief" can under no circumstances be taken as a statement of identity; the subject and the attribute are radically different though still within the indissoluble unity of one and the same being. (121)

This quotation serves as well as any as an introduction to Sartre's sometimes unusual use of the verb "to be." Since there is more than one mode of being Sartre gives himself license to use "is" in different ways depending on whether he is talking about objects of consciousness or the acts which present these objects. Speaking in-itself existence he says: "A is A' means that A exists in

an infinite compression with infinite density” (120). In saying that something is identical to itself, one is saying something with content, something that is not true of everything, because on Sartre’s peculiar view there are things B acts of consciousness B which can be named and talked about that are not identical to themselves. Therefore in the section titled “Presence-to-self” Sartre says that judgments of the form “A is A” are not analytic (120). And elsewhere Sartre says that “the principle of identity, far from being a universal axiom universally applied, is only a synthetic principle enjoying a merely regional universality” (101).

Consciousness (of) belief, as the material of which belief is made, “exists in order to” be belief:

The consciousness (of) belief, while irreparably altering belief, does not distinguish itself from belief; it *exists in order to* perform the act of faith. (122)

The irreparable alteration that is the result of belief’s self-consciousness consists in belief’s never being able to be simple belief, always being troubled by its awareness of itself:

Of this table I can say only that it is purely and simply this table. But I can not limit myself to saying that that my belief is belief; my belief is the consciousness (of) belief... By the sole fact that my belief is apprehended as belief, it is *no longer only belief*; that is, it is already no longer belief, it is troubled belief. (121)

Sartre had defined belief as “the adherence of being to its object when the object is not given or is given indistinctly” (112). But since believing is an act of consciousness, an experience, it is present-to-itself; and since it is present to itself, it is not identical to itself in the way that an object is. This may remind one of Wittgenstein’s remarks about the use of the verb “to believe” in the first person singular,<sup>82</sup> but for Sartre it is not because of something about belief, it is not because my being conscious that I believe x includes being conscious that x “is not given or is given indistinctly,” that my belief is always troubled. All mental acts and states, since they are pre-reflectively self-conscious are troubled: “neither belief nor pleasure nor joy can exist *before*

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<sup>82</sup>Cf. Manser 61.



being conscious; consciousness is the measure of their being” (122). Thus:

The suffering which I experience... is never adequate suffering.... It escapes as suffering toward the consciousness of suffering. .... Its translucency removes from it all depth. (142)

“Depth” refers to the property that objects which present themselves in adumbrations have, and which consciousness lacks. Pure belief or pure suffering -- belief or suffering which was not prereflectively self-conscious -- would be infinite, inexhaustible, opaque, deep. But we never experience pure belief or pure suffering. The belief we experience is troubled by consciousness (of) belief. Likewise, our suffering is never quite complete; it is always present-to-itself, separate from itself:

My suffering suffers from being what it is not and from not being what it is. At the point of being made one with itself, it escapes, separated from itself by nothing. (142-3)

Sartre’s point is that suffering and belief, before they are apprehended as psychic objects in impure reflection, have a mode of being different from the mode of being of objects of consciousness. While a table is experienced as “a center of opacity for consciousness,” as something that consciousness could inventory infinitely, suffering and belief are translucent. They “bow to the absolute law of consciousness for which no distinction is possible between appearance and being” (TE, 63). The mistake of philosophers and psychologists that Sartre is most intent on correcting is treating suffering and belief as “transcendences in immanence” (22), i.e., as items that are both part of consciousness and are opaque. Attributing this opaqueness to acts of consciousness, viewing them as mental events or states is what allows the philosopher or psychologist to attribute causal powers to them, and allows for such notions as unconscious suffering: a suffering that exists -- i.e., that one feels -- but of which one is not aware; a suffering which one feels but doesn’t feel oneself feeling.

#### ***4b. Original temporality and the time of the world***

Immediately after the introduction to B&N Sartre says that he will proceed by investigating certain “conducts of man in the world.” One of these is questioning, an examination of which shows that the questioner is free and, by virtue of this freedom, brings “nothing” into the world:

What interests us at present is a temporal operation since questioning is, like doubt, a kind of behavior; it assumes that the human being reposes first in the depths of being and then detaches himself from it by a nihilating withdrawal. Thus we are envisaging the condition of the nihilation as a relation in the heart of the temporal process. We wish simply to show that by identifying consciousness with a causal sequence indefinitely continued, one transmutes it into a plenitude of being and thereby causes it to return into the unlimited totality of being.... If we consider the prior consciousness envisaged as motivation we see suddenly and evidently that *nothing* has just slipped in between that state and the present state.... What separates prior from subsequent is exactly *nothing*.... the prior consciousness is always *there* (though with the modification of “pastness”).... [T]he condition on which human reality can deny all or part of the world is that human reality carry nothingness within itself as the *nothing* which separates its present from all its past. (61-4)

Questioning is not special in this respect. Anything that one does intentionally involves bringing “nothing” into the world, apprehending what there is already (the past) in terms of a not-yet-existing state of affairs.

While each of us “carries nothingness” within ourselves, and we are at every moment separated from our pasts so that anything that might motivate us to act must be constituted as a motive, ordinarily we are only pre-reflectively conscious of the abyss that separates us from our pasts and our futures. We are not reflectively conscious of our freedom. In a sense we do not know that we are acting. We shall see in chapter four that it is in anguish that one becomes reflectively aware of oneself as freedom, i.e., as a perpetual surpassing of what one was toward what one is choosing to be. What is important now is this aspect of being-for-itself, which Sartre calls original temporality, and its relationship to time.

The first thing to note in this regard is that human reality, or being-for-itself, brings time into the world (i.e., into *its* world as the full object of consciousness), and does so because it is

perpetually surpassing itself:

Universal time comes into the world through the For-itself. The in-itself is not adapted to temporality precisely because it is in-itself and because temporality is the mode of unitary being in a being which is perpetually at a distance from itself for itself. The For-itself, on the contrary, is temporality, but it is not consciousness *of* temporality except when it produces itself in the relation “reflective-reflected-on.” In the unreflective mode the for-itself discovers temporality *on* being -- that is, outside. Universal temporality is *objective*. (279-80)

Sartre also calls universal temporality the time of the world. Here, by contrast, is how he describes original temporality, or the time of consciousness, which he again identifies with human reality:

[T]he time of consciousness is human reality which temporalizes itself as the totality which is to itself its own incompleteness.... This totality which runs after itself and refuses itself at the same time, which can find in itself no limit to its surpassing because it is its own surpassing and because it surpasses itself toward itself, can under no circumstance exist within the limits of an instant. There is never an instant at which we can assert that the for-itself *is*, because the for-itself never is. Temporality, on the contrary, temporalizes itself entirely as the refusal of the instant. (211)

The ordinary object of consciousness is apprehended as existing in the past and future as well as currently, and one apprehends oneself (non-positionally) as a presence to the past and future of the object as well as the object's current state. But the object is apprehended as thus extended in time only because of the self-surpassing nature of consciousness:

This in itself the moment I perceive it already exists in the three temporal dimensions. In so far as I apprehend it as permanence – i.e., as essence – it is already in the future although I am not present to it in my actual presence but as about-to-come-to-myself. By the same token, I can not apprehend it except as already having been there in the world inasmuch as I was already there myself as presence.... The For-itself directs the explosion of its temporality against the whole length of the revealed in-itself as though against the length of an immense and monotonous wall of which it can not see the end. I am that original negation which I have to be in the mode of *not-yet* and of *already*, beside the being which is what it is.... The “this” is revealed temporally... because it is revealed to a revelation of which the very being is temporalization. (280)

Being-for-itself is a surpassing of itself, and through this self-surpassing the time of the world is constituted. Sartre uses “facticity” to refer to what one is already, which is surpassed in consciousness's perpetual self-surpassing, identifying facticity with the past and the body of the for-itself. In fact, the first section of the chapter on the body is “The Body as Being-for-itself:

Facticity.” In this section Sartre identifies the body with the past:

The body is perpetually the *surpassed*.... [T]he body, since it is surpassed is the Past... In each project of the For-itself, in each perception the body is there; it is the immediate Past in so far as it still touches on the Present which flees it. this means that it is at once *a point of view and a point of departure* -- a point of view, a point of departure which I *am* and which at the same time I surpass toward what I have to be. (429-30)

Since the time of the world, in which ordinary objects are apprehended as extended, is constituted by the surpassing of body-for-itself, body-for-itself cannot serve as a criterion for personal identity over time in any straightforward manner. Insofar as Morris’s body-subject, or “body qua subject of conscious relations,” is meant to refer to the body-for-itself, it cannot be extended in the time of the world.<sup>83</sup>

#### ***4c. Three ekstases, three modes of being, and several types of temporality***

I have considered two sorts of temporality, the time of the world or universal temporality, and the time of consciousness or original temporality -- and noted that original temporality is an essential aspect of human reality, and the time of the world is the result of it: one experiences ordinary objects as extended in time because one is a surpassing of what-one-is-already. I quoted a passage in which Sartre said that universal temporality is objective. However it is important not to be misled by this. By objective Sartre means only that it is apprehended as part of the world, and some things he says later imply that the world he has in mind here is not yet even an intersubjective world. The quotation comes from a chapter, “Transcendence,” which precedes Part Three, where Sartre properly introduces the idea of other persons and admits that he previously had been considering the “for-itself in its isolation” (349). After introducing the notion of the Other, when talking about answering a question while a volunteer for an experiment, he says:

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<sup>83</sup>As we saw in Chapter One, however, Morris’s “body-subject” does not map cleanly onto Sartre’s body-for-itself. When Morris says that “the human body is the subject of conscious relations” (SCP, 30), it is likely that she is talking about the physical body. (On the other hand, when she says that “the body is the center from which we intend objects” (SCP, 31) she may be talking about the body-for-itself or the physical body.)

[T]he screen was *in my opinion* less illuminated. Since I actually apprehended the screen as less illuminated, the phrase “in my opinion” corresponded to nothing real except to an attempt not to confuse the objectivity of the world-for-me with a stricter objectivity, which is the result of experimental measures and of the agreement of minds with each other. (411)

Sartre treats any “quality of the object which is revealed to me” as an objective quality:

[T]he water *is* cold when I submerge my heated hand in it. A comparison of this objective quality of the water to equally objective information which the thermometer gives me simply reveals to me a contradiction. This contradiction motivates on my part a free choice of true objectivity. I shall give the name subjectivity to the objectivity which I have not chosen. (412)

These remarks make it clear that “objective” means only apprehended as part of the world (i.e., the full object of consciousness). If we are interested in the constitution of the world as an object of consciousness for others as well as for oneself (and as an object which is apprehended as existing independently of anybody’s perception of it), it would help to have two terms to refer to objective temporality, one of which would refer to a temporality that is more strictly objective in the sense mentioned by Sartre.<sup>84</sup> For lack of a better word, I will call the temporality of the more strictly objective variety “Cartesian.” This modifier is appropriate because Descartes, like Galileo and Newton, conceived of the material world as extended in “strictly objective” time and space, i.e., in a time and space indifferent to any particular perspective or project. It is perhaps helpful if the modifier is haunted by the phrase “Cartesian coordinates,” and gives us the picture of a giant graph of equally spaced points at which we and all the objects around us are located. While Sartre makes it clear that the Look is involved in the apprehension of a world that is more strictly objective than the world, or as we might prefer to say, field of unreflective consciousness, he says very little about it. I discuss what he does say in Chapter Five.

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<sup>84</sup> Although it may be the case that Sartre uses “universal temporality” to refer to this more strictly objective temporality and “the time of the world” to what could be called “the time of the field of unreflective consciousness,” as far as I can tell he uses these terms indiscriminatively. In the section titled “The Time of the World,” Sartre uses the phrases “universal temporality” and “universal time,” but does not use the phrase “the time of the world.”

The apprehension of the mutually independent objects of the Cartesian field, and the spatiotemporal and causal relations between them, is based on the apprehension of the field of unreflective consciousness, whose objects are bound together in terms of consciousness's surpassing itself. Not only are we interested actors in a world organized according to what we are trying to do long before we are detached observers of a world apprehended as indifferent to our projects, but the apprehension of the latter world is constituted on the basis of, and somehow includes, the apprehension of the former.<sup>85</sup> The apprehension of a glass of water as a part of a world of externally related physical objects is based on the apprehension of this same glass of water as a part of a network of objects organized according to thirst-consciousness's surpassing of itself. More importantly (and perhaps more accurately) the world as a whole, apprehended as a system of externally related physical objects, including one's body, is based on the apprehension of a field of instrument-objects organized according to what one is doing. Oneself, at this level, is apprehended as "*a point of view and point of departure... which I am and which at the same time I surpass toward what I have to be*" (429-30), rather than as a physical object related spatiotemporally and causally to the other physical objects. The apprehension of one's body as a physical object in the Cartesian field is based on the apprehension of consciousness's surpassing of itself, or transcending of facticity, and the accompanying apprehension of the world as a field of instrument-objects.

#### Two ekstases beyond original temporality

The claim that the time of the world, even at the world's lowest level of constitution (i.e.,

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<sup>85</sup>While Sartre agrees with Heidegger that the Cartesian world of externally related objects in space is constituted on the basis of a world that doesn't include such objects and is arranged according to one's projecting oneself into the future, and could probably accept Heidegger's analysis of the transition from ready-to-hand to unready to hand to present-at-hand, Sartre would want to mention the role of the Look in this transition. In Chapter Four we will see the importance of "anguish" in Sartre's account and its similarity to Heidegger's account of how angst "lights up" the instrument-network." But we must remember that on Sartre's view under the Look there occurs to a greater extent the same "standing back" which occurs in anguish.

as a field of instrument-objects), is due to consciousness's surpassing itself must be distinguished from the claim that the apprehension of the field of instrument-objects and of oneself as a transcending of facticity is the basis for the apprehension of the Cartesian world and of oneself as a physical object. The former claim is part of Sartre's argument that consciousness is the origin of negation, the source of all absence, change, instrumentality, potentiality, etc., in the object of consciousness. Because the world is apprehended by a being that is a transcending of facticity, it is apprehended as extended in time. The second claim, however, is more important for my purposes. Our apprehension of ourselves as a transcending of facticity and our apprehension of the field of instrument-objects occur together at the level of unreflective consciousness. What I am interested in is Sartre's account of the relation between this minimal apprehension of oneself and the world to an apprehension of a world in which one is a person among other persons and physical objects. The experience of the Look is part of this transition. This means that the experience of what Sartre calls an inapprehensible world, a world whose existence is glimpsed when one is aware of oneself as an object for another consciousness, is prior to the apprehension of the Cartesian world.<sup>86</sup>

What is in question here is a process of dissociation, whereby objects originally apprehended only as part of a network organized around a project come to be apprehended as objects related externally to each other and to oneself as an object. The experience of the Look is the second stage in this process. The first stage is pure reflection, whereby one experiences oneself as free consciousness and, e.g., the desirability of the glass of water, and the project of quenching one's thirst in general, is apprehended as one's own. This is the stage referred to in the

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<sup>86</sup>One experiences the field of consciousness of the Other, and the Other itself, only insofar as one experiences oneself as a potential instrument-object in a world oriented according to a project, also inapprehensible, that is not one's own. However, as we will see in Chapter Five, the experience of this inapprehensible world, consciousness and project, is the basis for the apprehension of the world, including oneself, as objective in the Cartesian sense.

passage in which Sartre says that consciousness “produces itself in the relation ‘reflective-reflected-on’” and becomes “consciousness *of* temporality,” rather than “discover[ing] temporality *on* being” (279-80). As is the case with most of what Sartre says about pure reflection, this remark doesn’t tell us much. I will have more to say about pure reflection in the next two chapters, and we will see that pure reflection is a modification of unreflective consciousness itself: on the unreflective level, an act of thirst-consciousness is a presence to a world that pre-reflectively presenting an aspect to it, indicative of its character, in presenting certain things rather than others as desirable (beer, for example, rather than pretzels). On Sartre’s view of pure reflection this aspect of the world is brought to a certain reflective level without the need for a second act directed at the first as opposed to being directed at the world. Thus without the introduction of a second act directed toward the original one, consciousness has nevertheless made a transition from a pre-reflective to a pure reflective consciousness of itself.

Sartre refers to pure reflection as the second of three ekstases, in which consciousness progressively stands back from itself, while at the same time maintaining its original directedness toward the world. The first is pre-reflective consciousness as such. Here consciousness is originally “separated” from itself insofar as it is consciousness of itself as well as its object, without the need for any further act of self-directed consciousness. In pure reflection consciousness separates even further from itself -- i.e., withdraws from the very withdrawal from being which it already is.

[The first ekstasis] represents the first fissure, the nihilation which the for-itself has to be, the wrenching away on the part of the for-itself from everything which it is, and this wrenching away is constitutive of its being. The second ekstasis or reflective ekstasis is the wrenching away from this very wrenching away. (395)

However, consciousness does not withdraw far enough from itself in order for the reflecting consciousness to achieve independence from the reflected-on consciousness. But in the Look, the third ekstasis, consciousness withdraws from itself still further, thereby enabling it to experience



itself as *another* consciousness (i.e., as a second consciousness in addition to the Other, a consciousness which is not apprehended in any other way except as the consciousness for whom one's own consciousness and its field are an object) (395-8). We will see that, even here, the object remains in a sense precisely the world that was there all along.

Although the two further ekstases will ultimately allow new objects of consciousness (i.e., objects other than those in the original field of unreflective consciousness) to be apprehended, and new features to be added to those items apprehensible in unreflective consciousness, these ekstases do not, by themselves, bring any new objects into the field of consciousness. In particular, it requires something beyond the Look in order for the Other to be apprehended as another person. Likewise, it requires more than pure reflection for one to apprehend one's mental states or ego. Pure reflection and the look provide only the intuitions upon which the apprehension of such new objects is based. For example, the Look is the intuition of consciousness as having an "outside" and of another subjectivity. This intuition can be used to constitute another person, and to constitute (one's) consciousness -- which one apprehends prior to the Look -- as a person, but neither other persons as psychophysical objects nor oneself as a psychophysical object are actually given in this original intuition.

Each of the three ekstases -- the original upsurge of consciousness, pure reflection, and the Look -- allows for the positing of an item to which belongs a new mode of being. The original upsurge of consciousness allows one to posit things, which exist in the in-itself mode. Pure reflection allows one to posit (one's own) consciousness, which exists in the for-itself mode.<sup>87</sup> The Look allows one to posit other persons and oneself as a "being-for-others." Things, oneself (as an ego), and persons, are constituted on the basis of the revelations of these three modes of being.

It might be best to think of the intuition provided by each of the two further ekstases as an

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<sup>87</sup> While the first ekstasis allows one to be "presented" with (one's) consciousness, one is aware of this

intuition of the envelopment of the field of unreflective consciousness into a larger field in which one may eventually apprehend oneself as an object. Sartre speaks of the body-for-itself as “the point of view on which I can take no point of view” (446), or in Jeanson’s words, “my fundamental point of view beyond which I cannot further retreat.”<sup>88</sup> Pure reflection and the Look, by contrast, are each a retreat beyond this point of view. Sartre expresses this in terms of a point of view behind one’s original point view. In the example in which Sartre introduces the look, a man is peering through a keyhole and hears footsteps behind him. He uses a similar image to elucidate pure reflection:

The reflected-on is profoundly altered by reflection in th[e] sense that it is self-consciousness as the consciousness reflected-on *of* this or that transcendent phenomenon. The reflected-on knows itself observed. It may best be compared -- to use a concrete example -- to a man who is writing, bent over a table, and who while writing knows that he is observed by somebody who stands behind him. (214)

### Types of temporality

It would be nice if the three sorts of temporality Sartre names -- original temporality, psychic temporality, and universal temporality -- somehow corresponded to the three ekstases and the three modes of being, but they don’t. Original temporality is consciousness’s surpassing itself, and the correlative instrument-object structure of the field of unreflective consciousness. Universal temporality, or the time of the world, is the time in which physical objects are apprehended as extended.<sup>89</sup> Psychic temporality, the time in which psychic objects such as the ego and one’s mental states, are apprehended as extended, is a strange mixture of the two. These three sorts of temporality are designed to accommodate consciousness itself, transcendent objects, and psychic objects, the last of which are apprehended paradoxically as both outside consciousness and

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consciousness only “non-positionally.”

<sup>88</sup>Francis Jeanson, *Sartre and the Problem of Morality*, trans. Robert V. Stone (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980): 164.

<sup>89</sup>As I have indicated physical objects are apprehended as being extended in the time of the world “before” being constituted as intersubjective objects. They are apprehended as “transcendent” in the sense of

as having the self-surpassing and intentional character of consciousness itself.

As I suggested above, we may want to draw a distinction between two types of time of the world: that in which objects are apprehended as extended when they are apprehended only insofar as they are organized according to what one is trying to do, and that in which these same objects are apprehended as extended when they are apprehended as indifferent to any such project. In addition to these, we may want to acknowledge a third type of time of the world: the time in which objects are apprehended as extended insofar as they are apprehended as part of the inapprehensible project of the Other. When discussing the look, Sartre speaks of an inapprehensible organization of the objects of the world, each of which “turns toward the Other a face which escapes [one]” (343). On the basis of the experience of this inapprehensible dimension of oneself and one’s surroundings one constitutes the field of consciousness as an intersubjective world, which one apprehends as perceived by others as well as oneself. The experience of oneself and one’s surroundings as extended in this inapprehensible *time of the Other’s world* is part of the apprehension of an intersubjective world. It is also part of the apprehension of the Cartesian world. The latter might then be called maximally intersubjective, insofar as it is apprehended as indifferent to any project whatsoever.

When it comes to apprehending oneself and one’s mental states, however, there is an intermediate stage, impure reflection, between the apprehension of oneself as original temporality, either pre-reflectively or in the experience of pure reflection, and the apprehension of oneself as another consciousness in the experience of the look. Psychic objects thereby are apprehended in a psychic temporality. I discuss psychic objects in detail in the next chapter.

Thus, in addition to the field of unreflective consciousness, we are interested in three different sorts of temporal field. The four fields are occupied by four different sorts of instrument-

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“overflowing” our immediate apprehension of them, as revealed in adumbrations, as things that we can find

object which interact according to four different sorts of instrumental or causal relations. The field of unreflective consciousness and its temporality are the direct result of the self-surpassing nature of consciousness. The original temporality of consciousness and the temporality of the field of unreflective consciousness form a pair. Consciousness apprehends its own original temporality insofar as it apprehends the instrument-object structure of the world of unreflective consciousness.<sup>90</sup> Next is the field of impure reflection, whose temporality is somehow self-contradictory and populated by psychic objects which partake of this self-contradictory temporality. The third temporality is that of the field of the Other, which as self-surpassing has an instrumental-perceptual space-time of its own. Since in this field one first acquires a spatiotemporal location as an object, understanding it is crucial to understanding the eventual apprehension of oneself as a body. I characterize it briefly below, and discuss it more substantially in Chapter Five. The last is the Cartesian field.

Insofar as they are apprehended as belonging to the Cartesian field, objects are apprehended as having genuine causal relations. On the other hand, as parts of the field of unreflective consciousness they are apprehended merely as instrumentally related. In contrasting instrumental and causal relations, I mean to bring out the difference between a network of instrument-objects that are oriented around a project and a causal network surveyed from no particular point of view. The spatial, temporal, and causal relations that the natural scientist is concerned with, for example, are by nature indifferent to any particular project or point of view. The spatial, temporal, and instrumental relations that a task-oriented actor is concerned with, however, are always oriented by a project around a current perceptual and instrumental center (the

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out more about, but not necessarily as objects that might simultaneously be appearing to another person.  
<sup>90</sup>The temporality of the field of unreflective consciousness, the upshot of the for-itself's original temporality (or "being-ahead-of-itself," to use Heidegger's more perspicuous term) is the most basic form of noematic temporality. It wouldn't be too bad to think of the Other's field as the negation of the field of unreflective consciousness, and the Cartesian field as a "mediation" of the two, but this mediation doesn't

body-for-itself) that is to be surpassed toward a new one.<sup>91</sup>

The Cartesian field could be said to be the opposite of the field of unreflective consciousness, since the latter is always given, perceptually and instrumentally, to a particular perspective and project. But it might be better to say that the opposite of the field of unreflective consciousness is the field of the Other, a field arranged according to a project and perspective that are precisely not one's own. In Sartre's system one can apprehend oneself as to the left of the table, as taking a long time to finish one's drink, and as in the way of somebody who is trying to get by, without first translating these qualities into qualities of an object that exists in the perspectiveless, projectless network of an indifferent world. One is located in a space-time oriented around another's project and perspective before being merely there in a world that is indifferent to any project or perspective. To apprehend oneself as actually to the left of -- and not to the right of, in front of, or behind -- the table, one needs to constitute a shared world and locate the Other and oneself in this world. But to apprehend oneself as an instrument-object in some unknown position in a network of instrument-objects oriented according to some unknown project and perspective, one needs to do no such thing.

The objects of the field of the Other, including one's body, are organized into an instrumental/perceptual structure according to a center of consciousness to which one never has access. The space-time in which these objects are extended is a system of organization which is inapprehensible to one, but as we will see, some sort of apprehension of this alien space-time is

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preserve the perspectives between which it mediates. It negates them just as strongly as the Other's field negates the field of unreflective consciousness.

<sup>91</sup>The distinction between the field of unreflective consciousness and the Cartesian field may remind the reader of Heidegger's distinction between the *zuhanden* and the *vorhanden*. Danto compares Sartre's being-in-itself to the *vorhanden*, and the *zuhanden* to the world of the for-itself. Arthur C. Danto, *Jean-Paul Sartre* (New York: Viking, 1975): 70-3. Sartre himself does not seem to acknowledge the *zuhanden/vorhanden* distinction: "The thing is not first a thing in order to be subsequently an instrument; neither is it first an instrument in order to be revealed subsequently as a thing. It is an instrumental thing" (274-5). In any case, on the whole the account outlined by Sartre of the constitution of the Cartesian world is different from Heidegger's. This is because it involves the Look.

part of one's apprehension of the objective world. Like the field of unreflective consciousness, the field of the Other is apprehended not as a uniform structure of objects with reciprocal relations between them but as a nexus of unidirectional actor/observer-centered relations. Thus the objects are organized spatially according to such relations as on-the-way-to, behind, and to-the-left-of. Similarly, the field is organized temporally in an actor/observer-centered manner, divided into a no-longer, a still, and a not-yet. Objects are spatially related to each other according to the Other's location and orientation, and temporally related to each other through the Other's present. However, since in the original experience of this space-time, the Other is inapprehensible, one experiences the space-time of the Other's world only as the unravelling of the fabric of one's field of consciousness. Each object, including oneself, "turns toward the Other a face which escapes [one]" (343).<sup>92</sup>

One's body is part of the Other's field of instrument-objects. So as not to be misleading, I should point out that, at the most basic level that includes the experience of the Other, one's body is here one's body as a point of view.<sup>93</sup> Or, better, as one might put it, it is one's point of view apprehended as a body. The way in which one's point of view is located in the field of consciousness of the Other is as a body -- not as a body qua physical object, but rather as a body qua conscious subject, as another body-for-itself or a body-for-others. Naturally, one's body-for-others is inapprehensible as well. While one cannot apprehend this body-for-others as an object,

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<sup>92</sup>In order to prevent a possible misconception from what I have said about the spatio-temporal field of the Other, it is necessary to point out that one is aware of this space-time only in two ways: under the Look, one is pre-reflectively aware of this space-time, and when one apprehends oneself as an intersubjectively accessible object, i.e., as a body that is also oneself, and apprehends the world as an intersubjectively accessible object, i.e., as a world that has aspects that are unknown to one, a world that is not only structured according one's project but also contains another dimension. In the former case one is aware of a space-time which is inaccessible to one, and thus aware that oneself and one's field of consciousness has an inaccessible dimension. In the latter case one makes use of this awareness to constitute a world (and a self) which contains an inaccessible dimension. In neither case does one apprehend this space-time itself, or apprehend *as objects* the world and oneself as they exist solely for the Other.

<sup>93</sup>Zaner makes a distinction between "objectivation" and "objectification" and criticizes Sartre for not making this distinction more explicit (Zaner, 90).

however, one can experience it. For instance, the experiences of shame and pride are experiences of this body. In any case, it is on the basis of the experience of one's inapprehensible body-for-others that one is eventually able to apprehend oneself as a psycho-physical object -- a person.

The apprehension of oneself as a psychophysical object is based both on the apprehension of oneself in the inapprehensible space-time of the Other's field, which is in turn based on the apprehension of the body-for-itself -- on the unreflective apprehension of the field of instrument-objects and the correlative pre-reflective consciousness of oneself as the center around which this field is organized -- and on the apprehension of oneself as a psychic object, and so on impure reflection.

I discuss impure reflection in the next chapter, pure reflection in Chapter Four, and the look in Chapter Five. But it is possible to get an overview of Sartre's account of the constitution of oneself and the world, and note the symmetry in Sartre's system. In the "first ekstasis" consciousness constitutes itself as a relation to the world and there comes to be a world for consciousness. At this level consciousness apprehends itself only pre-reflectively as that for which the world exists, and apprehends the world only in terms of its own project of surpassing itself. This original act of consciousness-of-the-world indicates two transphenomenal modes of being: the being of consciousness (being-for-itself) and the being of the object of consciousness (being-in-itself). Specific objects of consciousness are constituted on the basis of the revelation of being-in-itself. At this level, although the act of consciousness is pre-reflectively self-conscious, one cannot be constituted as an object of consciousness at all: pre-reflective self-consciousness is the act's awareness of itself as other than the object of consciousness, not a positing of itself.

In the second ekstasis, or pure reflection, consciousness wrenches away from itself, producing a reflecting consciousness and, though in some way still one with it, a reflected-on consciousness. For the first time consciousness, which exists in the mode of being-for-itself, is

posited.<sup>94</sup> On the basis of this revelation of being-for-itself, psychic objects can then be constituted in impure reflection: the reflected-on consciousness, posited in pure reflection, can be apprehended as an aspect of a psychic object. Since the reflective consciousness and the reflected-on consciousness are ultimately apprehended as aspects of the same consciousness, however, the psychic object is never apprehended as existing independently from the consciousness that apprehends it.<sup>95</sup> This, we shall see, gives it a certain sort of contradictory character.

In the third ekstasis the reflective and reflected-on separate further, becoming the Other and one's being-for-others. Finally, in a more robust form of impure reflection which depends on this third ekstasis, you can be constituted as an object that exists independently from the consciousness that apprehends you: your being-for-others, experienced in the look, can be apprehended as an aspect of a particular psychophysical object that is you. Likewise, the Other, experienced in the look as an inapprehensible subject, can finally be apprehended as an aspect of another person.

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<sup>94</sup>Sarte calls the presence to self of pre-reflective consciousness non-positional self-consciousness. The difference that he is trying to bring out between presence to self and pure reflection is not very clear. Neither pure reflection nor presence to self is enough to constitute oneself or one's qualities, even as merely psychic objects. As we will see in Chapter Five, Wider points out the problem of distinguishing self-consciousness at these two levels.

<sup>95</sup>Better, insofar as the psychic object is apprehended as independent, it is apprehended as self-contradictory.



## **Chapter Three: Impure Reflection and Psychic Objects**

### **1. Introduction**

There are various levels of “selfhood” crucial to Sartre’s view of the relationship between oneself and one’s body, and various levels of body to which one might relate oneself. Crucial to this, in turn, is the distinction between a selfhood to which one has privileged access and one to which one does not, and the connection of this to Sartre’s distinction between pure and impure reflection.

Sartre is claiming, I think accurately and importantly, that the selfhood to which one has privileged access has no causal efficacy. By contrast, psychic objects contain a contradiction: we are supposed to have privileged access to them, yet they have a causal efficacy Sartre associates with opacity.

Insofar one attributes to oneself, in such statements as “I am angry,” qualities that play a role in causal claims, one cannot be certain one has them. One can be certain of certain qualities in the world-as-it-is-experienced, which popular psychology might think of as not really in the world, but only in one’s perception of it: the unjustness of the world, the incompetence or insensitivity of people, and the cruelty or stupidity of the things they do. Understood in terms of its worldly correlate, if “I am angry” means nothing more than “I experience your actions as stupid and you as blameworthy,” it is incorrigible and transparent -- one cannot think that one is experiencing another this way and be wrong nor can one be unaware of experiencing another in this way.<sup>96</sup> It is all just part of one’s awareness of the world as it is experienced.

Showing that one does have this privileged access on Sartre’s view will require discussing

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<sup>96</sup>I use “be aware” here instead of “know” because there is an important difference, on Sartre’s view, between this awareness and knowledge. One might not “know,” in Sartre’s usage, the way in which one is experiencing an object, because such knowledge would involve taking a point of view on one’s consciousness, which one doesn’t do in unreflective consciousness or in pure reflection. Wider notes that Sartre waffles on whether pure reflection is knowledge (Wider, *Bodily Nature* 81-2).

pure reflection, the topic of our next chapter. The importance of this notion in Sartre is not always appreciated,<sup>97</sup> and Morris doesn't say very much about it. But she does acknowledge it:

Sartre definitely does not claim that our reflexive knowledge is incorrigible; he distinguishes between an area of certainty and a domain of doubtfulness in reflection (TE, 64). (SCP, 38)

This is the only reference to pure reflection in Morris's book, but her reconstruction leaves room for the distinction in connection with her claim that "T" has different meanings on Sartre's view. This claim is important in its own right, and I discuss it in Chapter Six. However, rather than say that "T" has several meanings, I think it is better to say that such statements as "I am angry" have more than one meaning, or to add to her original claim that many of the predicates that we assign to persons are ambiguous. "Anger" can refer to an aspect of the world as experienced, to a psychic state, or to a psycho-physical state: it can be used to refer to an experience of the world as a case of being-for-itself, to a state of the experiencer *qua* experiencer, or to a state of the experiencer *qua* body. The last of these has causal efficacy; one has privileged access to the first; the second, an object of impure reflection, is a psychic object and contains a contradiction.

Reflection and self-consciousness are extremely complicated and important notions for Sartre. Perhaps it is best to divide up acts of self-consciousness in terms of their objects. The object of special interest is what Sartre calls the body in its third ontological dimension. The reflection that has the third ontological dimension of the body as its object is the most complicated that Sartre discusses. It cannot be fully discussed without explaining the apprehension of psychic objects in impure reflection, the apprehension of the second ontological dimension of the body by way of the Look, and the connection between the body-for-itself and pre-reflective consciousness. However, it is useful to introduce it now.

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<sup>97</sup>Among commentators writing in English, Thomas Busch, Debra Bergoffen, and Kathleen Wider are notable exceptions. I discuss them in Chapter Four. For a discussion of the methodological role of pure reflection in Sartre's phenomenology, see also Yiwei Zheng, "On Pure Reflection in Sartre's *Being and*

Morris says that on Sartre's view there are two distinct ways for one to know one's body. This claim is epistemological: it assumes there are certain facts about one's body and discusses the ways one can know them. In particular, Morris claims that on Sartre's view there are facts about one's body known to oneself by reflection and to others by observation:

The body as the subject term of conscious relations can, on occasion, become reflexively aware of some of its states and conditions.... For example, we can know, even when our feet are out of sight, which foot is crossed on top of the other foot. (SCP, 37)

Thus one fact (e.g., that one's left foot is crossed over one's right foot) can be known in two ways: "in the way that one knows about the bodies of others" and by reflection. Since this is meant to be an example of a fact that can be known by another or in the same way that one knows about the body of another, it must be a fact about what Morris calls the physical body. Here is her other example:

[O]f course one must observe the grimaces of others and their swollen jaws to find out if they have a toothache, and of course one does not have to look in a mirror to know if one has a toothache oneself. But the suggestion that what one knows about bodies can be known only in the way that one knows about the bodies of others is wholly unwarranted, and there is no reason to deny that "I have a toothache" makes a reference to the body. (SCP, 36)

Again, one thing, the physical body with its decayed tooth, can be known in two ways.<sup>98</sup>

These two ways of knowing the body seem to be closest, respectively, to what might be called the essential form, and what Sartre calls an "aberrant" form, of reflective apprehension of the third ontological dimension of the body (468). In the aberrant form one knows about one's own body "in the way that one knows about the bodies of others," e.g., looking down at it, looking at it in the mirror, touching it, smelling it, etc. This is how you tell that someone has her feet crossed. However, Sartre's own account of the constitution of another person does not begin with

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*Nothingness*," *Sartre Studies International* 7 (2001): 19-42.

<sup>98</sup>In this passage, however, Morris mentions another thing that can be known in two ways, the "ache" which is known either directly (if it is one's own ache) or inferentially (if it is another's). This ache is a "psychic object."

this sort of perception. He believes that it is a mistake to begin an account of apprehending oneself or another this way: the constitution of one's body, culminating in the apprehension of oneself as a body in the world, cannot begin with its perception from the outside. If it did, the result would neither have the qualities of a living body nor be apprehended as oneself. One would only be able to see one's hands as Roquentin saw his in *Nausea*:

I see my hand spread out on the table.... It opens, the fingers open and point. It is lying on its back. It shows me its fat belly. It looks like an animal turned upside down. The fingers are the paws. I amuse myself by moving them very rapidly, like the claws of a crab which has fallen on its back.

The crab is dead: the claws draw up and close over the belly of my hand. I see the nails--the only part of me that doesn't live. And once more. My hand turns over, spreads out flat on its stomach, offering me the sight of its back. A silvery back, shining a little--like a fish except for the red hairs on the knuckles.<sup>99</sup>

The object thus apprehended is not being apprehended as part of one's body, or for that matter, as part of any living human body. Although he knows that he has control over the hand he sees,

Roquentin, like the infant Sartre describes in B&N, is not seeing the hand as his own:

[T]he child of two months does not see his hand as *his* hand. He looks at it, and if it is outside his visual field, he turns his head and seeks his hand with his eyes as if it did not depend on him to bring the hand back within his sight. It is by a series of psychological operations and syntheses of identification and recognition that the child will succeed in establishing tables of reference between the body-existed and the body-seen. (469)

Insofar as Roquentin and the child do not see their hands as their own, the apprehending acts in these cases are not reflective. In Morris's examples, the act of apprehending one's crossed feet and one's toothache are reflective acts. (Even the aberrant form of apprehension of the body in its third ontological dimension is a form of reflection.) If what Morris means by "the way that one knows about the bodies of others" includes using one's senses to perceive bodies, she is correct in saying that there is another way. This other way can best be mapped onto the essential apprehension of the third dimension. This is because Morris is saying that one can know the same fact in different ways when, in her example, one's feet are out of sight and when one can see them.

When one's feet are out of sight one derives facts about one's-body-from-the-outside (the "body-seen") from facts about one's-body-from-the-inside (the "body-existed"), i.e., from what it feels like to have one leg crossed over the other. One can do this once one has established "tables of reference."<sup>100</sup>

This is the complicated process by which the third dimension of the body is constituted. It involves both the constitution of what Sartre calls the ego in impure reflection, and a certain sort of fulfillment of the experience of this ego with the experience of the Look.<sup>101</sup> What Morris refers to as reflection is much closer to the apprehension of the third ontological dimension of the body than to the apprehension of the ego and its states, actions, and qualities. This is demonstrated when, attempting to show that "I have a toothache" refers to one's body, she says:

If it is a mind's tooth how can a physical dentist locate the cavity, say, and cure the toothache? In fact, however, Sartre would claim that "I have a toothache" does make reference to one's body, a body which is a conscious subject and can become reflexively aware of some of its own states. (37)

By contrast, as we will see in Section Five of this chapter, when Sartre describes the object of mere impure reflection, he describes it as a psychic object or the psychic body and says that it exists in psychic space.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>99</sup>Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea*, trans. Lloyd Alexander (New York: New Directions, 1964): 99.

<sup>100</sup>Sartre says that establishing such tables of reference depends on "practical knowledge" which the child gains through apprehending the body of another. While Sartre usually focuses on the constitutional priority of the body-for-itself over the body-for-others, and the latter over the third ontological dimension of the body, here Sartre says that the child must be exposed to the body-for-others (as the body of another person) before experiencing his own body as an object. Such a claim belongs to what Schroeder calls genetic, as opposed to constitutional, phenomenology. Schroeder 23-4.

<sup>101</sup>As we will see in Section Six, this is a strange case of constitution and fulfillment, because the ego cannot be properly constituted without the experience of the Look.

<sup>102</sup>In a review, J. Douglas Rabb criticizes Morris's book for misunderstanding Sartre's notion of reflection. I agree: I think Morris doesn't do justice to the variety of forms of reflection in B&N, or to the complexity of the form reflection which presents one with one's body-for-others. J. Douglas Rabb, Review of Sartre's Concept of a Person," *Philosophical Books*, 18 (1977): 135-37. I refer to Rabb's review, and to Morris's reply to it, in Chapter Six.

## 2. Pure and Impure Reflection

### 2a. Preliminary distinctions

Sartre most often uses “reflection,” in B&N and TE, to refer to an impure reflection -- more specifically to one whose object is merely psychic, not bodily.<sup>103</sup> Apprehending pain or thirst as an object, one ordinarily apprehends it as a state of one’s physical body, but on Sartre’s view one is also capable of apprehending these states without apprehending one’s physical body at all: one can apprehend one’s headache without locating it in one’s head (without apprehending one’s head at all), as some sort of object of consciousness.<sup>104</sup> We’re still talking about an *object*, as opposed to consciousness of it, and can undertake a phenomenology of it and its relations to other objects. If we do, bracketing any talk about events in a real head, we end up with a sense of structures of an inner space-time that has a contradictory quality. This quality is most evident in the fact that a headache is there only insofar as one feels it, yet is apprehended as lasting over time, and as existing even when one is distracted and doesn’t feel it at all.<sup>105</sup> According to Sartre, all psychic objects contain such contradictions. The psychological explanations which make use of them, prevalent in biographies, novels, and everyday speech, make sense for Sartre only by creating a world of magical quasi-objects<sup>106</sup> which combine qualities of genuine objects with the

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<sup>103</sup>As noted, Sartre calls the impure reflection whose object is the body “the (essential) apprehension of the body in its third ontological dimension.”

<sup>104</sup>I want to mention again that such pain-as-object has the peculiar feature of being able to be apprehended as an object of consciousness -- as “outside” of the consciousness of it -- only inconsistently. A headache, when it is not apprehended as a quality of an actual head, vacillates between being an object and being, e.g., a certain way of being (unreflectively) conscious of the book one is reading: “It is with more difficulty that the words are detached from the undifferentiated ground which they constitute; they may tremble, quiver, their meaning may be derived only with effort” (437).

<sup>105</sup>I don’t think that the reason that Sartre says that psychic objects are contradictory is that the only “genuine” objects are physical objects. A non-physical object -- such as a number or a Platonic form -- would not be self-contradictory, as long as it did not incorporate any of the qualities of consciousness. Such an object would be similar to a physical object in that it would be accessible to more than one possible act of consciousness, but, perhaps, unlike a physical object in that it is apprehended adequately in each act, as opposed to being revealed in “adumbrations.”

<sup>106</sup>As we will see in Section Six, Sartre is not consistent in his use of “object” and “quasi-object,” and of other terms that indicate the “distance” between various forms of consciousness and the “objects”

intentionality of consciousness.

Our ordinary apprehension of pains, thirst, and anger, involves something special about the objects of such consciousness. This is because apprehending them as states of one's body involves building upon self-contradictory psychic objects whose apprehension need not involve apprehending them as states of one's body. The ordinary apprehension of a headache as pain in one's head depends upon the apprehension of a psychic state which combines the intentionality of pain-consciousness with the depth, opaqueness, and completeness of a physical object, but not the physical characteristics.

In impure reflection the toothache, a psychic state, is apprehended through a pain, which is not a psychic state (or a genuine object of any sort) for the reflective consciousness. The object of the impure reflection is the toothache, the psychic state. The object of the pain is in the world as it is experienced by the person in question. Sartre usually doesn't use "pain" to refer to anything psychic. This is why he can say that, by contrast with anything psychic, pain obeys "the absolute law of consciousness for which no distinction is possible between appearance and being" (TE, 63).<sup>107</sup> Sartre also refers to the type of reflection whereby psychic objects are constituted as accessory reflection: "[I]f we restrict ourselves to what we have called an accessory reflection, reflection tends to make of pain something *psychic*" (440). Unlike that which obeys the absolute law of consciousness, such psychic objects are transcendent to consciousness itself: "The psychic object apprehended through pain is illness (*mal*). This object has all the characteristics of pain,

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apprehended by them. In the section on the body, he uses the term as I did here, to emphasize that psychic objects are not ordinary objects of consciousness, but contain some of the "qualities" of consciousness. In the section on reflection, he uses it to refer to something that is even less object-like--consciousness, in its undegraded form, when apprehended as the "object" of a *pure* reflective act. It seems that how he uses the term depends upon what he is contrasting: Compared to a psychophysical object (or state or event), a merely psychic object (or state or event) is only a "quasi-object." Compared to the fleeting reflected-on consciousness, however, the latter is an "object."

<sup>107</sup>The distinction between the items that do not bow to this law and the (non-)items that do (i.e., acts of consciousness) is of course extremely important. I refer to this distinction and this "law" several times in this and the following section.

but it is transcendent and passive” (441). Part of this transcendent character is that the corresponding psychic object can exist apart from consciousness of it:

A pain given in twinges followed by lulls is not apprehended by reflection as the pure alteration of painful and non-painful consciousness. For organizing reflection the brief respites *are a part* of the illness just as silences are a part of the melody. (441)

Sartre’s example is his eyes hurting while he is reading. Before reflection, the pain is apprehended

only through the world. For example, it is given in the way in which the book appears as “about to be read in a hurried jerky rhythm” where the words press against each other in an infernal, fixed round, where the whole universe is pierced with *anxiety*. (438)

Only in reflection can a psychic state be apprehended through pain, not to mention located in the body-as-object: “To be sure, the expression pain *in the eyes* supposes a whole constitutive work which we shall have to describe” (437).

The example comes from the end of the section on the body-for-itself, where Sartre is beginning to talk about the apprehension of the psychic body -- the body prior to any apprehension of the body-for-others. But apprehending one’s pain in one’s body-as-object includes the apprehension of the body-for-others (in the experience of the Look). Since the order of Sartre’s exposition in the chapter on the body “conforms to the order of being” (404), he will have to discuss the body-for-others (the topic of the second section of Sartre’s chapter) before continuing his discussion of the constitutive work involved in apprehending the pain as in one’s eyes. Here he will limit his discussion to the first movement of reflection: “The first movement of reflection is... to transcend the pure quality of consciousness in pain toward a pain-as-object” (440). Sartre will later describe how, in another movement, this psychic object (“pain-as-object”) will enter into the constitution of a still further object in a way that involves the experience of the Look<sup>108</sup> This grants the possibility of a fuller impure reflection, whose object, though still “psychic,” is also corporeal.

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<sup>108</sup>In some way, at least, this “further” object *is* the original psychic object, but with further qualities added



Sartre uses “pain” (*doleur*) to refer to pain-consciousness or to the facticity of this consciousness. It is used in the latter way in the following quotation:

[T]his pain can itself be *indicated* by objects of the world; i.e., by the book which I read. It is with more difficulty that the words are detached from the undifferentiated ground which they constitute; they may tremble, quiver, their meaning may be derived only with effort, the sentences which I have just read twice, three times may be given as “not understood,” as “to be re-read.” But these same indications may be lacking -- for example, in the case when my reading “absorbs me” and when I forget my pain (which does not mean that it has disappeared since if I happen to gain knowledge of it in a later *reflective* act, it will be given as having always been there). (437)

At the end of the quotation, when Sartre speaks of gaining knowledge of a forgotten pain in a later reflective act, the object of this act is what he calls an illness (*mal*), a psychic object constituted out of a series of twinges and lulls of pain. But, while the object of the reflective act is either psychic or psychophysical, the forgotten pain is still pain as facticity, and a few sentences later he says something that he would never say if he were thinking of pain as the reflected-on act of consciousness, and would be unlikely to say if he had a psychic object in mind: “pain is totally void of intentionality” (437).

On the next page he distinguishes “pain-consciousness” from “pure pain”: between the act of consciousness and the facticity which is transcended in that act. Pure pain is “simply the translucent matter of consciousness” (438):

Pure pain as the simple “lived” cannot be reached; it belongs to the category of indefinables and indescribables which are what they are. But pain-consciousness is a project toward a further consciousness which would be empty of all pain[.] (438)

Before making the distinction, when Sartre says, “Pain is *precisely the eyes* in so far as consciousness ‘exists them’” (437), “pain” refers to pure pain, or facticity. When he says, “pain in the eyes is *precisely my reading*” (441), “pain” refers to pain-consciousness.

For now, the crucial distinction is between impure reflection, on one hand, and pre-reflective consciousness (such as pain-consciousness) and pure reflection, on the other. The point

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to it. The notion of constitution is a slippery one, but is one that is central to the phenomenological project.

is consciousness first constitutes itself as a psychic object in impure reflection.

**2b. A suggestion regarding pure reflection**

I suggested that we characterize reflective acts in terms of their objects. The object of impure reflection is a psychic object. The quotation from page 441 (in the previous subsection) hints at what pure reflection might be. To the extent that the pain “given in twinges followed by lulls” is apprehended as “the pure alteration of painful and non-painful consciousness,” instead of being organized into a psychic object, we are dealing with pure reflection, “the simple presence of the reflective for-itself to the for-itself reflected-on” (218). However, it is difficult to characterize pure reflection in terms of its object because it doesn’t have an object in the sense that impure reflection and the apprehension of the third ontological dimension of the body do:

[T]he reflected-on [in the case of pure reflection] is not wholly an object but a quasi-object for reflection. Actually the consciousness reflected-on is not presented yet as something *outside* reflection—that is, as a being on which one can “take a point of view,” in relation to which one can realize a withdrawal, increase or diminish the distance which separates one from it. (218)

Since psychic and psychophysical objects are the closest thing to genuine objects for reflective consciousness, in that these are the only objects upon which the reflective consciousness can take a point of view, the question remains as to how to characterize pure reflection. I offer a suggestion here that I will discuss Chapter Four.

While properties such as color or shape are apprehended by unreflective consciousness, to say that something is repulsive, attractive, delightful, or useful (TE, 58), is to make an implicit reference to oneself, and to focus upon these qualities themselves seems to be a rudimentary form of reflection. In other words, while one can focus upon the color of a glass of beer without any reference to oneself, to focus upon its desirability is to implicitly refer to one’s thirst. This is not to say that one must reflect to be aware of the desirability of the beer:

[T]he character of unreflected desire is to transcend itself by apprehending on the subject [i.e., the object] the quality of desirability. Everything happens as if we lived in a world

whose objects, in addition to their qualities of warmth, odor, shape, etc., had the qualities of repulsive, attractive, delightful, useful, etc., and as if these qualities were forces having a certain power over us. In the case of reflection, and only in that case, affectivity is posited for itself, as desire, fear, etc. Only in the case of reflection can I think “I hate Peter,” “I pity Paul,” etc. (TE, 58 -- my gloss)

At the level of unreflected consciousness, “the desire is given to consciousness as centrifugal... and as impersonal” (TE, 56). It is centrifugal in that it transcends itself: desire is consciousness of the desirability of the object, of the object-as-desirable. It is impersonal in that “...there is no *me*<sup>109</sup>... there is an objective world of things and of actions, done or to be done, and the actions come to adhere as qualities to the things which call for them” (TE, 56).

In other words the desirability is apprehended by unreflected consciousness as part of the beer, just as its color is. One can focus upon any quality of the beer. One can focus upon the quality instead of the object. (This is what happens when somebody says, “Look at how perfectly ripe this tomato is,” or, “Look at its shape.”) Sartre’s view is that qualities of an object such as desirability, that seem to be “forces having a certain power over us,” when “posited for themselves” lose their power. One becomes aware that one is making the beer desirable. The awareness that one is responsible for the desirability of objects, and could as well not make them desirable (the awareness that one is free in this way), is anguish. I discuss this in the next chapter.

The reflection that allows one to think “I hate Peter” or “I pity Paul,” and to attribute states such as desire and fear to oneself, is impure reflection. But one does not need to go so far to be engaged in something that could be called reflection. After disengaging and focusing on the desirability of the beverage, but before attributing thirst to oneself, one is engaged in a rudimentary form of reflection as well. This, I will claim, is what Sartre thinks of as pure reflection. I will

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<sup>109</sup>As we will see in Chapter Four, Sartre says in B&N that although there is no “me” in the field of unreflective consciousness, this field is still “personal” insofar as it is arranged according to one’s “fundamental project” or “original possibility.” In Chapter Five we will see that under the Look “a self comes to haunt unreflective consciousness” insofar as one apprehends one’s being-for-others unreflectively. However, in order for one to apprehend this “self” as the person “oneself” impure reflection is required as

maintain that it is different from the self-consciousness that he claims is present in unreflected consciousness and the consciousness of psychic objects that one experiences in impure reflection.

Accordingly, the apprehension of the psychic object can be thought of as analogous to the apprehension of an object of perception. An object of perception is constituted when an aspect presented to one perceptually -- or what might eventually be regarded as an aspect -- is apprehended as an aspect of an object. The object is constituted through the aspect presented. Further perceptive acts add detail, and can motivate one to revise the original apprehension. On Sartre's view, the apprehension of mental states, and of the ego itself, works the same way. The mental state is constituted through an aspect directly presented -- not in perception, but in pure reflection. One constitutes a headache through a twinge of pain, or a jealous state through a pang of jealousy. As with the constitution of an object of perception, further reflective acts can add detail or motivate one to revise the original apprehension.

In TE Sartre argues that there is no transcendental ego, no ego in consciousness: the ego, which is apprehended in impure reflection, is a transcendent object. His point is that the ego is a transcendent object constituted in impure reflection, and not, as Husserl suggested in the *Ideas*, the source of consciousness, i.e., that which constitutes transcendent objects.

### **3. Impure Reflection, the Ego, and Psychic Objects**

In the accounts in both TE and B&N, Sartre names three types of psychic object other than the ego itself: states, actions, and qualities. All are constituted and apprehended<sup>110</sup> through a reflected-on consciousness. The ego is always at least twice-removed from the reflected-on consciousness in that it is not constituted and apprehended through this consciousness directly, but

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well.

<sup>110</sup>Although Sartre says that states, for example, are constituted *and* apprehended through the reflected-on consciousness, I'm not sure what the difference is between these. The psychic object is constituted by means of the reflected-on consciousness, in the sense that the reflecting consciousness uses, e.g., one's repulsion, to constitute one's hatred. Sartre says that the psychic object is apprehended "behind" the

via states and actions which are in turn constituted and apprehended through the reflected-on consciousness. The ego is thus a “unity of transcendent unities” (TE,61) -- actions, states and qualities -- with active and a passive aspects that Sartre calls the *I* and the *me*.

[The] ego, of which *I* and *me* are but two aspects [is] the ideal and indirect (noematic) unity of the infinite series of our reflected consciousnesses.... The *I* is the ego as the unity of actions. The *me* is the ego as the unity of states and of qualities. (TE, 60)

That the ego, as a psychic object, is a unity of an infinite series is important. Psychic objects do not “bow to the absolute law of consciousness for which no distinction is possible between appearance and being” (TE, 63). Because a psychic object is apprehended as the unity of an infinite series of consciousnesses, it is apprehended, paradoxically, as having the opacity or depth of an object as well as the translucency of consciousness.

### ***3a. A state is constituted and apprehended through a reflected-on consciousness***

What needs to be sorted out are the relations between the reflective consciousness, the consciousness reflected-on, and the objects constituted through the latter. It is also important to sort out the various aspects or parts of the ego, which include the *I*, the *me*, states, actions and qualities. Since such words as “anger” are flexible, it is impossible to say that anger is not a state. But Sartre uses this word, at least in one example, along with “repugnance” and “disgust” to refer to reflected-on consciousnesses behind which the state of hatred is apprehended (and by means of which it is constituted). States are apprehended behind reflected-on consciousnesses and constituted through them. What Sartre says of the ego, that it is “an object apprehended, but also an object *constituted* by reflective consciousness” (TE, 80), goes for the state as well.

This talk of constitution might strike the reader as strange. Sartre’s language and approach in TE and B&N, especially in the former, is largely Husserlian. In the quotation, for example, Sartre identifies the ego as an ideal unity of an infinite series and as a noema. He means

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reflected on consciousness, presumably in the sense that, once the hatred, e.g., has been constituted, the

that the ego is apprehended as the object of an infinite number of possible acts of consciousness. On the view Sartre adopts from Husserl, to be an object is to possibly be apprehended by indefinitely many acts of consciousness. The ego is ideal in being apprehended as the common object of an infinite series of possible acts, not an actual act or series of acts. In calling the ego a “noematic unity” or a “noema” Sartre is saying the same thing: it is the ideal object of an indefinite number of acts.

Because a psychic object is an ideal object, Sartre says it is apprehended *behind* a reflected-on consciousness. But he would say the same thing about a material object, which “always manifests itself through an infinity of aspects and is, at bottom, only the ideal unity of this infinity” (TE, 49). Perceiving a material object, one is presented with one of its aspects. One sees it from a certain angle, but as something that would present other aspects if looked at from another angle, or touched or smelled. One thus apprehends the object behind the aspect presented in the actual act. The material object, as an ideal unity of an infinite series of possible acts of perception, is *constituted* by the consciousness that apprehends it in that it is given in perception only through an aspect, yet is an object of indefinitely many aspects.

The constitution of the state in impure reflection is thus analogous to the constitution of a chair. Just as the chair is constituted and apprehended through an adumbration (or *Abschattung*), the state is constituted and apprehended through the consciousness reflected-on. Sartre first explains the difference between the apprehension of “the *I*” and the apprehension of the reflected-on consciousness (in what he will come to call pure reflection):

Husserl insists on the fact that the certitude of the reflective act comes from apprehending consciousness without facets, without profiles, completely (without *Abschattungen*). This is evidently so. On the contrary, the spatio-temporal object always manifests itself through an infinity of aspects and is, at bottom, only the ideal unity of this infinity. As for meanings, or eternal truths, they affirm their transcendence in that the moment they appear they are given as independent of time, whereas the consciousness which apprehends them

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repulsion is apprehended as one aspect of this hatred.

is, on the contrary, individuated through and through in duration.... [T]he *I* is not given as a concrete moment, a perishable structure of my actual consciousness. On the contrary, it affirms its permanence beyond this consciousness and all consciousnesses, and -- although it scarcely resembles a mathematical truth -- its type of existence comes much nearer to that of eternal truths than to that of consciousness. (TE, 49-50)

The most important distinction is that between, on one hand, a spatio-temporal object, its qualities, a meaning or mathematical truth, and a psychic object such as the *I*, and, on the other hand, a reflected-on consciousness. Everything in the former group is apprehended as existing outside the act of consciousness that apprehends them, and thus as capable of being apprehended by other acts. They do not “bow to the absolute law of consciousness”: there is a difference between their appearing and their existing.

Sartre later makes the same point about states, using hatred as an example. Hatred is apprehended through the experience (*Erlebnis*) of anger or repulsion, but is apprehended as a transcendent object that is not identical to this experience:

[M]y hatred appears to me at the same time as my experience of repugnance. But it appears *through* this experience. It is given precisely as not being limited to this experience.... Hatred... is a transcendent object. Each *Erlebnis* reveals it as a whole, but at the same time the *Erlebnis* is a profile, a projection (an *Abschattung*). Hatred is credit for an infinity of angry or repulsed consciousnesses in the past and in the future. It is the transcendent unity of this infinity of consciousnesses. (TE, 62-3)

Because hatred is apprehended through the experience of repugnance, instead of as identical to this experience, it is able to be apprehended as something whose existence does not consist in its being felt:

It effects by itself, moreover, a distinction between *to be* and *to appear*, since it gives itself as continuing *to be* even when I am absorbed in other occupations and no consciousness reveals it. (TE, 63)

That is, again, psychic objects do not bow to the absolute law of consciousness.

[T]o say “I hate” or “I love” on the occasion of a particular consciousness of attraction or repugnance is to effect a veritable passage to infinity, rather analogous to that which we effect when we perceive *an* inkstand, or *the blue* of the blotter. (TE, 63-4)

In other words, when one perceives a household item or a quality, one sees a transcendent

object with an infinite number of adumbrations through one of these adumbrations. The inkstand or the color of the blotter appears as something that continues to exist when not being perceived. When (in reflection) one apprehends one's state through a reflected-on consciousness, one is doing the same thing. The state, hatred, appears to exist independently of the repugnance, disgust, or anger through which it expresses itself. As Sartre puts it in B&N (see Section 2b, above), unlike a reflected-on consciousness, which "is not presented yet as something *outside* reflection -- that is, as a being on which one can 'take a point of view,' in relation to which one can realize a withdrawal, increase or diminish the distance which separates one from it" -- the psychic object is presented as something outside reflection. As we saw, Sartre, using a headache as an example of a psychic object, treats it exactly as he does the state of hatred: the twinges of pain are analogous to the adumbrations of hatred which exist only insofar as they are felt, while, "[f]or organizing reflection, the brief respites *are a part* of the [headache] as silences are a part of the melody." A headache, like hatred, "gives itself as continuing *to be* even when I am absorbed in other occupations and no consciousness reveals it."

One consequence of the transcendence of the state is that, like a material object and unlike a reflected-on consciousness, it is not something that one can apprehend adequately or apodictically. It reveals itself gradually through the consciousnesses reflected-on, and we cannot be certain that any given reflected-on consciousness is an expression or manifestation of the state. One can be certain of the repugnance (the reflected-on consciousness); one cannot be certain that this repugnance is an aspect of a hatred. The consciousness reflected-on is also apprehended adequately: unlike the hatred, the repugnance shows all of itself to the reflective consciousness.

### ***3b. The ego as a psychic object***

According to Sartre, the ego is (1) constituted and apprehended in the act of reflection; (2) a self-contradictory object, an impossible blend of the spontaneity of the act of consciousness itself



and the passive, inexhaustible quality of an object; and (3) the result of an attempt of consciousness to “flee from itself.” Only the act of consciousness has the spontaneity apprehended as a quality of the ego:

[T]he ego is an object apprehended, but also an object *constituted* by reflective consciousness. The ego is a virtual locus of unity, and consciousness constitutes it in a *direction contrary to* that actually taken by the production: *really*, consciousnesses are first; through these are constituted states; and then, through the latter, the ego is constituted. But, as the order is reversed by a consciousness which imprisons itself in the world in order to flee from itself, consciousnesses are given as emanating from states and states as produced by the ego. It follows that consciousness projects its own spontaneity into the ego-object in order to confer on the ego the creative power which is absolutely necessary to it. But this spontaneity, *represented* and *hypostatized* in an object, becomes a degraded and bastard spontaneity, which magically preserves its creative power even while becoming passive. Whence the profound irrationality of the notion of the ego. (TE, 80-1)

Sartre criticizes any conception of the psychic that attempts to cover up this “profound irrationality.” Psychic objects always have such qualities of consciousness as “activity” and “interiority” along with qualities of an object which contradict these. Thus, “Just as the ego is an irrational synthesis of activity and passivity, it is a synthesis of interiority and transcendence” (TE, 83). Sartre says:

To posit interiority before oneself... is necessarily to give it the load of an object. This transpires as if interiority closed in upon itself and proffered us only its outside; as if one had to “circle about” it in order to understand it. And this is just how the ego gives itself to reflection: as an interiority closed upon itself.... Naturally, we are dealing with a contradictory composite[.](TE, 84)

All psychic objects (e.g., the state of being angry, or the quality of being irritable) are self-contradictory in the same way, blending interiority and exteriority, activity and passivity. The states and qualities one attributes to oneself as possible causes of one’s behavior impossibly combine of the passivity and exteriority (or transcendence) of an object with the spontaneity of consciousness.

In apprehending one’s hatred for Pierre as a psychic object, one apprehends it as a state producing the hateful consciousness (e.g., disgust with Pierre) and other such consciousnesses

(e.g., anger at Pierre). This is “backwards” in that one must be performing, or have performed the act which apprehended in impure reflection as an act emanating from the state of hatred. All psychic objects are apprehended “backwards.” The state is constituted through this previously unreflected act. But impure reflection interprets the act as a product of the state. Likewise, as Sartre explains in the quotation from TE, 80-1, the ego, a “unity of transcendent unities” (TE, 61), is apprehended as an object that produces states and egoic acts, which in turn produce acts of consciousness.<sup>111</sup>

### *3c. The I-concept*

One does not apprehend the ego whenever one uses the word “I.” One can say “I am going to the store,” or “I was born in New Jersey,” without apprehending an adumbration of one’s consciousness in pure reflection or constituting one’s ego in impure reflection through such an adumbration. In this case, the word “I”

is no mere syntactical form.<sup>112</sup> It has a meaning; it is quite simply an empty concept which is destined to remain empty. Just as I can think of a chair in the absence of any chair merely by a concept, I can in the same way think of the *I* in the absence of the *I*. (TE, 89)

According to the account in TE, in order for the ego to be anything other than an empty concept, one must focus upon the experience one is having, and attend to this experience as an emanation from a psychic state: for example, attend to the experience of disgust with Pierre as an emanation from a hatred for Pierre. The ego will then appear in the background as the bearer of this state:

The ego never appears, in fact, except when one is not looking at it. The reflective gaze must be fixed on the *Erlebnis*, insofar as it emanates from the state. Then, behind the state, at the horizon, the ego appears. It is, therefore, never seen except “out of the corner

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<sup>111</sup>With the intuition of oneself as a being-for-others, this process of constitution can occur on another level: the psychophysical body is a transcendent unity of psychophysical states and acts. In TE, before he had discovered the Look, Sartre distinguished between “purely psychical actions like doubting, reasoning, meditating, making a hypothesis,” and actions that are “‘taken’ in the world of things” such as “‘playing the piano,’ ‘driving a car,’ ‘writing,’” only to say that the former, like the latter, “must be conceived as transcendences” (68-9). As we will see, with the concept of the Look Sartre is able to say more about the constitution of “transcendences” of the latter sort.

<sup>112</sup>The claim that the word “I” is no mere syntactic form is helpful in contrasting Sartre’s view with the “no-subject” view. See Chapter Seven.

of the eye.” As soon as I turn my gaze toward it and try to apprehend it without passing through the *Erlebnis* and the state, it vanishes. This is because in trying to apprehend the ego for itself and as a direct object of my consciousness, I fall back into the unreflected level, and the ego disappears along with the reflective act. (TE, 88-9)

Trying to look straight at the ego one loses sight of the state, act or quality through which it is apprehended when it is apprehended in a fulfilled manner, and one is left with the empty I-concept.

If the I-concept is empty, like the concept of a chair when one is not apprehending one, what could fill it in? Staying on the unreflective level and seeing a chair could fill in that concept. But on the unreflective level no intuition can fill-in the I-concept. This is why Sartre says that the I-concept is “destined to remain empty.”<sup>113</sup>

#### **4. The Ontological Status of the Psychic Object**

To talk about the ontological status of an item is to talk about the modes of being of which it partakes. As we have seen, consciousness, for Sartre, is the apprehension of an object of consciousness. This object has a mode of being revealed by the act of consciousness. The most basic mode is being-in-itself, the way of being of non-conscious entities as such. Since being-for-itself, the way of being of entities insofar as they are conscious, is itself a revelation of being-in-itself, conceiving of the conscious way of being, or of an entity that exists this way, includes conceiving of the non-conscious way of being.

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<sup>113</sup>As we will see in Section Six, according to the account in TE, my body as I see and feel it serves as the “illusory fulfillment” of the I-concept in unreflective consciousness. This is not far from the more sophisticated account of the reflective apprehension of the third ontological dimension of the body in B&N. In both accounts, the apprehension of one’s own body is an apprehension of an object-that-is-also-oneself. According to the account in TE the body “represents” the ego -- i.e., it “serves as a symbol” of this object of impure reflection. According to the account in B&N, the intuition of the “outside” of one’s consciousness, which is experienced pre-reflectively under the Look, can be used to modify the apprehension of psychic objects in such a way that physical characteristics can be attributed to them. According to this account, then, an intuition capable of fulfilling the I-concept is available to pre-reflective consciousness. However, at this level there is no I-concept available for fulfillment by this intuition.

Also, in B&N Sartre says that, without the Look, the states apprehended in impure reflection, rather than being “known,” are merely “affective objects,” that the reflection which apprehends them is “not yet cognitive” (443). Thus it may be misleading to call that which is fulfilled by mere impure reflection the

Of course one doesn't have to explicitly apprehend the way of being of non-conscious entities to apprehend an ordinary object of consciousness. But in apprehending the chair or the color of the inkstand, one apprehends them as partaking of this way of being: as things whose existence does not consist in their being apprehended. The most basic form of consciousness, in that any other form of consciousness is dependent on it, is the revelation of something whose existence does not consist in being apprehended: whose existing is distinguishable from its appearing. The apprehension (as such) of "something"<sup>114</sup> which "bows to the absolute law of consciousness," something whose existence is indistinguishable from its appearing, and thus from the implicit revelation of this way of being (being-for-itself), is dependent upon the apprehension of an entity whose existence *is* distinguishable from its appearing. Consciousness must have an object with a non-conscious way of being. This is how Sartre interprets the principle of intentionality:

To say that consciousness is consciousness of something is to say that it must produce itself as a revealed-revelation<sup>115</sup> of a being which is not it and which gives itself as already existing when consciousness reveals it. (24)

At its most basic level, then, consciousness is consciousness of an entity apprehended as independent of it and as having a different mode of being, and thus includes the revelation of this other way of being -- being-in-itself. Reflective consciousness, which Sartre refers to as "second degree consciousness" in TE and as the "second ekstasis" in B&N, is dependent on this original form of consciousness. It is thus dependent on the revelation of being-in-itself.<sup>116</sup> This second

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*I-concept.*

<sup>114</sup>I apologize for this way of speaking, which makes it sound as if the item in question is apprehended as an item with a special, unusual property, that of being identical to its appearing. Again, when consciousness apprehends itself pre-reflectively or in pure reflection, it doesn't apprehend itself as an item at all, but as the pure revealing of an item (and as the revealing of itself as nothing more than the act of revealing the item).

<sup>115</sup>To say that consciousness is a *revealed-revelation* seems to be Sartre's way of saying, in B&N, that consciousness exists only insofar as it appears ("the absolute law of consciousness"). Consciousness is "pure 'appearance' in the sense that it exists only to the degree to which it appears" (17).

<sup>116</sup>Being-for-others, which I discuss in Chapter Five, stands in the same relation to being-for-itself as the latter does to being-in-itself: it depends upon being-for-itself but is a new "metaphysical event" and thus the

degree consciousness is the apprehension of something that exists in a new mode and the revelation of this mode (being-for-itself). This is a sense in which being-for-itself is dependent on being-in-itself: for being-for-itself to be revealed, being-in-itself must be revealed.

In Sartre's ontology all modes of consciousness are ultimately based on the apprehension of an item as being-in-itself. The apprehension of a spatio-temporal object, or a color or smell,<sup>117</sup> is the revelation of a mode of being that does not depend on consciousness.

A psychic object combines aspects of being-for-itself and being-in-itself. Because these modes of being contradict each other (i.e., because to exist in the former mode is to exist as a "nihilation" of something that exists in the latter mode), any attempt to synthesize them will result in a self-contradictory mode. So Sartre says that psychic objects are self-contradictory, "participating simultaneously in the in-itself and for itself" (233).

He does not explain the ontological difference between a psychic object and a material object in TE, but he does in B&N. His example is very similar to the one from TE that I have been using: instead of apprehending his hatred through his anger, he apprehends his friendship through his sympathy. "Sympathy" thus refers to the act of consciousness reflected-on, and "friendship toward Pierre" to the state of the psyche. His language, though, is more ontological. He says that psychic objects are the shadows that the reflected-on consciousness casts onto the in-itself and thus contain degraded versions of this consciousness:

I can apprehend my friendship for Pierre, but it is *through* my sympathy, which at the moment has become the object reflected-on by a reflective consciousness. In short, the

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fact that one exists for-others does not follow from the fact that one exists for-itself (376). As noted in Chapter Two, Sartre refers to the revelations of these three modes of being as three "ekstases," presumably because consciousness "stands out from itself" one degree "further" in each. In her glossary to B&N, Barnes says that the "for-itself is separated from itself in three successive ekstases," which she refers to as "Temporality," Reflection" and "Being-for-others" (802).

<sup>117</sup>For example, in a passage from TE, quoted in Subsection 3a, above, Sartre says that to apprehend "the blue of the blotter" is "to effect a veritable passage to infinity." In B&N Sartre says, "The odor which I suddenly breathe in with my eyes closed, even before I have referred it to an odorous object, is already an odor-being and not a subjective impression.... As a being which is what it is, it can indeed *appear* to a subjectivity, but it can not be inserted in the woof of that subjectivity" (257).

only way to make-present these qualities, these states, or these acts is to apprehend them across a consciousness reflected-on of which they are the objectivation, the shadow cast onto the in-itself. (229)

Thus Sartre says, “we will rediscover in each psychic object the characteristics of the real reflected-on but degraded in the In-itself” (226).

As in TE, Pierre is an object of unreflective consciousness, and the friendship toward Pierre is a psychic state, an object of reflective consciousness. Thus “It is... impossible for me at the same time and on the same level to be conscious *of* Pierre and *of* my friendship for him” (228). This is because to be conscious of one’s friendship for Pierre, one must apprehend and peek behind a reflected-on consciousness. In apprehending the reflected-on consciousness (in this example, the sympathy), one must be on the reflective level. On the level of unreflective consciousness, the sympathy presents Pierre-needing-to-be-helped. Sartre’s view, I take it, is that the unreflective act ordinarily is used, as a presentation of Pierre-needing-to-be-helped, to constitute Pierre. On the other hand, the act can be apprehended in pure reflection (still as a presentation of Pierre-needing-to-be-helped) and used to constitute the state or quality, friendship for Pierre, in impure reflection.

Just as unreflective consciousness apprehends the chair through the adumbration it presents, reflective consciousness apprehends the psychic object through the consciousness reflected-on. The difference is that the consciousness reflected-on is not an adumbration of anything – the psychic object is purely “virtual”:

[T]he modifications to be imposed on the world are given... as objective potentialities which have to realize themselves by borrowing our body as the instrument of their realization. It is thus that the man who is angry sees on the face of his opponent the objective quality of asking for a punch in the nose.... Our body here is like a medium in a trance. Through it must be realized a certain potentiality of things (a beverage-about-to-be-drunk, aid-about-to-be-brought, dangerous-animal-about-to-be-killed, *etc.*), and reflection arising in the midst of all these apprehends the ontological relation of the For-itself to its possibilities but *as an object*. Thus the *act* rises as the virtual object of the reflective consciousness. (228)

It is possible in pure reflection, however, to apprehend the reflected-on “in its reality” -- i.e., not as an adumbration of a psychic state. In this case the sympathy would not be apprehended as coming from the state of friendship. The state of friendship would be recognized for what it is - something that it is possible to constitute out of the sympathy:

Only a *pure* reflective consciousness can discover the For-itself reflected-on in its reality. We use the term *Psyche* for the organized totality of these virtual and transcendent existents which form a permanent cortege for impure reflection and which are the natural object of *psychological* research. (228)

The objects of impure reflection are not abstract. They are not empty concepts, like the I-concept that remains after one ceases reflecting: “The objects although virtual are not abstract; the reflective does not aim at them in emptiness; they are given as the concrete in-itself which the reflective has to be beyond the reflected-on” (228-9).

Sartre supports the view that psychic objects are not abstract by saying that there are times when one can only “aim in emptiness” at, for example, a psychic state, and times when such apprehension is supported by an intuition. It depends on the consciousness reflected-on: if one is not feeling sympathy toward Pierre, or something else that can be construed as an adumbration of one’s friendship toward him, one can only aim emptily at this friendship. This friendship becomes an empty concept -- i.e., abstract -- just as the I-concept is when one is not reflecting at all. The friendship has no intuition to support it. (Of course *whenever* one reflects there is an intuition to support the *I*, since any consciousness reflected-on can support it.)

The ontological difference between a spatio-temporal object such as a chair and a psychic object such as a hatred is that, while both are apprehended as existing independently from their current manifestation, the psychic object, paradoxically, must at the same time be apprehended as existing only insofar as it appears. While there is a difference between the chair’s being and its appearing, there is no difference between the being and the appearing of a reflected-on consciousness and, since the psychic object is constituted out of this consciousness, it is dependent on it. One apprehends the chair as currently apprehended through a given adumbration, but as apprehensible through a different one. The same holds for a psychic object, but in this case one is

not only responsible for the existence of the adumbration through which the object is apprehended; one is responsible for its very being. This is why Sartre says in B&N that the chair *is* while the psychic object *is been*, or, in Barnes translation, is made-to-be:

The psychic... "is made to be." .....It is sustained in the face of the reflective by a sort of inertia.... Although the psychic is not on the same plane of being as the existents of the world, this inertia enables the psychic to be apprehended as related to these existents. A love is given as "aroused" by the loved object. (231-2)

Constituted from a reflected-on consciousness, whose being consists in its appearing, a psychic object "appears and disappears differently than spatial-temporal objects. If I no longer see the table, this is because I have turned my head, but if I no longer feel my illness [*mal*], it is because it 'has left'" (441). When such an object reappears, it may be apprehended as something that was there even when it wasn't being apprehended -- a point that I will return to in Section Six. In this way it neither follows the law of being of consciousness -- to exist only insofar as it appears -- nor shares the mode of being of the object of consciousness, which is apprehended as existing independently from, and as supporting the consciousness which apprehends it. While a psychic object is apprehended by impure reflection as an item that "would take an infinite process to inventory," just as a material object is apprehended by unreflective consciousness, one must simultaneously apprehend the psychic object as existing only insofar as it appears.<sup>118</sup>

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<sup>118</sup> There are other, related differences between the apprehension of physical objects and that of psychic objects. While at times further perceptual acts will motivate one to modify one's apprehension of a physical object, and at times will even motivate one to deny its existence, it is usually the case that later perceptual acts only add detail to one's original apprehension, filling in gaps that were left indeterminate by earlier perceptual acts. By contrast, as we have seen, a psychic object always contains some sort of contradiction. Thus, there is always a further reflective act that will cause one to deny the veridicality of the original apprehension of a psychic object. Not only is it possible, e.g., that the hatred for Pierre that was apprehended on the basis of a surge of anger, will be reapprehended as envy of Pierre on the basis of a later reflective act. It is also always possible that any psychic object will later be apprehended as illusory altogether, i.e., that surges of anger, twinges of pain, and pangs of jealousy will be apprehended as such, rather than as emanations from psychic states. That is, for any psychic object, there is always a reflective act that will motivate one to deny its existence altogether. This is why Sartre sometimes calls pure reflection "purifying reflection."

Perhaps the most important difference between psychic objects and physical objects, from Sartre's point of view, is that one constitutes a field of physical objects in the course of accomplishing one's various projects. By contrast, the psychic world is something that one constitutes and maintains in "bad faith" so as



When the psychic object (in addition to the reflected-on consciousness through which it is apprehended) is apprehended as appearing to others, one no longer needs to reflect to hold it in existence. In Section Six we will begin to see how the psychic object gains a new dimension of being when its apprehension is modified by the Look.

## **5. The Magical Relations between Psychic Objects and Physical Objects, and among Psychic Objects**

### ***5a. Psychic space-time***

B&N's main discussion of reflection occurs in Part Two, in a section entitled "Original Temporality and Psychic Temporality: Reflection." One of Sartre's main goals in this section is to explain how we apprehend our acts of consciousness as objects related in various ways to each other and to objects in the world. As we saw in Section Four, the psychic object "is sustained in the face of the reflective [consciousness] by a sort of inertia" which allows one to apprehend it as related to "the existents of the world."<sup>119</sup> Insofar as one's consciousness of the "streetcar to be caught" is thought of as nothing but a relation to a certain field of consciousness, it cannot be inserted into causal relations. We cannot say that it causes us to run. To insert it into an explanation of our running, we must convert it into a desire to catch the streetcar and locate it in ourselves. In so doing we constitute a psychic state on the basis of the apprehension of the consciousness of the streetcar to be caught.

We have seen that Sartre returns to impure reflection, a topic discussed at length in Part Two of B&N, in the section on the body-for-itself in Part Three. The latter account is particularly

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not to recognize the extent of one's freedom. One might constitute one's surroundings as a room with tables and chairs -- from the qualities presented in unreflective consciousness -- as a part of any of many possible projects. One constitutes the psychic object -- from the reflected-on consciousness presented in pure reflection -- always as a part of the project of limiting one's freedom. I discuss this form of bad faith in Chapter Six.

<sup>119</sup>This phrase ought to be taken to mean, those items that are "in-itself" in the sense of being apprehended as independent of the apprehending consciousness. Thus to be an "existent of the world," an item need not yet be constituted as an intersubjective object.

important because it is continued in “The Third Ontological Dimension of the Body,” where we are finally told how, with the help of the Look, the psychic object is constituted as psychophysical.

After discussing the Look in Part Three, Sartre begins talking more explicitly about consciousness’s embodiment. Although the consciousness which he had been talking about all along is embodied consciousness, prior to the discussion of the intuition of another consciousness in the experience of the Look it was not possible for him to talk about apprehending oneself as a body. But the last words of the section on reflection promise the account, given in the chapter on the body, of “how being-for-others *realizes* the suggestion” of the “outside” which consciousness gives to itself in impure reflection.

The focus on consciousness’s embodiment is accompanied by a shift in terminology. “Facticity” in Part Two is replaced by the “body-for-itself” or the “body-for-me.” Sartre also begins speaking of a “psychic body,” a psychic object closely resembling the “ego” or “psyche” of Part Two, and of a “psychic space”:

This space has neither high nor low, neither left nor right; it is without parts inasmuch as the magical cohesion of the psychic comes to combat its tendency toward a division in indifference. (444)

Psychic space thus exhibits the same tension between being-in-itself and being-for-itself that psychic objects do. It tends toward being able to be divided up into externally related parts, as does the space in which ordinary spatio-temporal objects are apprehended as extended. But it also tends to have the “ekstatic unity” of consciousness. Consciousness apprehends itself as aspatial in reference to a world apprehended as extended spatially. Psychic space is a hybrid between consciousness’s spatializing activity and the space in which objects are apprehended as extended.

Consciousness “spatializes,” “temporalizes,” and “possibilizes.” The object of consciousness is extended in space and time, and has possibilities (which Sartre sometimes calls

“probabilities” to distinguish them from the possibilities that consciousness creates for itself). The “psychic world,” which Sartre identifies with “the psyche” itself (237, see quotation below) is an uncomfortable mixture of the activity of consciousness and the qualities of its objects. Thus Sartre says the same sort of thing about psychic time that he says about psychic space:

The absolute unity of the psychic is indeed the projection of the ontological, ekstastic unity of the for-itself. But since this projection is made into the in-itself, the ekstastic unity parcels itself out in an infinity of “nows” which are what they are and which, precisely for this reason, tend to isolate themselves in self-identity. Thus participating simultaneously in the in-itself and the for-itself, psychic temporality conceals a contradiction which is never overcome. (233)

Like the points of psychic space, the “nows” of psychic time tend to be isolated -- i.e., related only externally -- insofar as the psychic object is apprehended as in-itself, but also tend to be part of an absolute unity insofar as the psychic object is apprehended as consciousness. In psychic time “the empty form before-after is hypostasized, and it orders the relations between objects equally past” (236). What he seems to be saying is that the form “before-after” applies properly to facticity and the transcending of that facticity, e.g., to already existing thirst and satisfied thirst that exists only in the future. However, when consciousness is “degraded into in-itself” and its self-surpassing nature is lost, this “before-after” structure becomes an “empty form.” Psychic objects are apprehended as entirely past, as in-itself, merely what they are, dead: “psychic time can be constituted only with the past, and the future can be only as a past which will come after the present past” (236). Psychic objects “all exist in the mode of ‘having been’ and... at a distance influence each other” (234).

Psychic space and time accommodate an object that “has all the characteristics of unity, interiority, and spontaneity which consciousness possesses -- but in degraded form” (441). The examples Sartre has in mind in the chapter on the body are headaches and stomach aches. For the impure reflection which apprehends it, such a psychic object “has its own duration because it is outside consciousness and possesses a past and future” (443). Considered as mere psychic objects,

headaches and toothaches have the same ontological status as desire and anger, provided that the latter are thought of as psychic states.<sup>120</sup> As mere psychic, as opposed to psychophysical objects, though, headaches and toothaches are not located in heads and teeth. To locate the pain in the eyes requires constitutive work that is not done on level of mere reflection.

“Psychic space” and “psychic time” are thus very different from the space and time in which ordinary objects are located. As noted, a psychic object “...appears and disappears differently from spatial-temporal objects. If I no longer see the table, this is because I have turned my head, but if I no longer feel my illness [*mal*], it is because it ‘has left’” (441). The table is given as existing independently, and is given as extended in the “time of the world.” As we have seen, even when one perceives a particular table for the first time one perceives it as having a past and a future, although the details of this past and this future are unknown. Consciousness apprehends itself, on the other hand, as consisting wholly in its appearance. For example, pain-consciousness, as opposed to pain considered as something which one is conscious *of*, consists in its being felt.

In one sense there is no middle ground between pain-consciousness, which exists only insofar as it appears, and a spatio-temporal object apprehended as indifferent to its appearing. But in another sense a psychic object occupies a middle ground. If my headache comes in the form of “twinges followed by lulls,” I experience these twinges and lulls as parts of the headache: “For organizing reflection the brief respites *are a part* of the illness [*mal*] just as silences are part of a melody” (441). In this sense the headache is like the table: it is apprehended as having been there in between the times when it was felt.

Like the psychic objects extended in it, psychic space and time are themselves self-

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<sup>120</sup>As we have seen, “desire” and “anger” might instead be used to refer to consciousness of a desired or irritating object, rather than to the state constituted on the basis of the reflective apprehension of such consciousness.

contradictory, and the “psychic causality” of states that “at a distance influence each other” is magical. Psychic space and time, therefore, are neither the space and time of the world in which ordinary spatio-temporal objects are extended,<sup>121</sup> nor are they the original temporality and spatializing nature of the act of consciousness. Rather, psychic time is “the objectivation in itself of original temporality” (237), or as in the above quotation from TE, “consciousness project[ing] its own spontaneity into the ego-object”:

This psychic temporality as a projection into the in-itself of original temporality is a virtual being whose phantom flow does not cease to accompany the ekstastic temporalization of the for-itself in so far as this is apprehended by reflection. But psychic temporality disappears completely if the for-itself remains on the unreflective level or if impure reflection purifies itself. (236)

If no psychic state or action is constituted -- i.e., if one is not reflecting or if one's reflection is pure -- there is no psychic space, psychic time, psychic causality, or psychic world.

However,

[a]s soon as we enter on the plane of impure reflection -- that is, of the reflection which seeks to determine the being which I am -- an entire world appears which peoples this [i.e., psychic] temporality. This world, a virtual presence, the probable object of my reflective intention, is the psychic world or the psyche. In one sense, its existence is purely ideal; in another it *is*, since it *is-made-to-be*, since it is revealed to consciousness.... [T]his phantom world exists as a *real situation* of the for-itself, for it can be that in terms of which the for-itself determines itself to be what it has to be. For example, I shall not go to this person's house “because of” the antipathy which I feel toward him.... Or I refuse to discuss politics because I know my quick temper and I can not risk becoming irritated. (237)

One's antipathy or quick temper, psychic objects, can be apprehended as a part of one's situation. Just as one leaves work early to avoid rush hour traffic or goes to the zoo to see the

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<sup>121</sup>Since objects admit of various levels of constitution, my phrase, “ordinary spatio-temporal objects,” and Sartre's “the existents of the world” are ambiguous. Prior to the Look, everyday objects are related to oneself (and thus interrelated) spatiotemporally. “Objects are revealed to us at the heart of a complex of instrumentality in which they occupy a determined *place*.... The package of tobacco *is on* the mantelpiece; this means that we must clear a distance of three yards if we want to go from the pipe to the tobacco” (423-4). However, they are not yet part of an intersubjective space. One may want to try to compare the world prior to the Look to Heidegger's *zuhanden* world (especially after reading this quotation), since it is “more primordial” -- i.e., that on the basis of which the world having “greater objectivity” is constituted. However, Heidegger's *zuhanden* world already contains others.

bears, one's states and dispositions can be apprehended as givens of the situation in which one acts, like rush hour traffic or bears. But to apprehend a merely psychic object -- something constituted merely on the basis of one's apprehension of one's consciousness -- as a given of the situation involves introducing into consciousness a resistance, a "coefficient of adversity" (428), that belongs only to the in-itself, and thus involves a "degradation" of the "for-itself" character of consciousness. The idea of acting one way or another because of a psychic state or psychic quality (such as hating Pierre) raises the topic of psychic causality -- of apprehending a merely psychic object as part of the network of instrument-objects which appears as the situation in which one acts.

### ***5b. Psychic causality***

On Sartre's view, of course, to say that one is leaving work early because of rush hour traffic is very different from saying that the window breaks because of the impact of the stone that hits it. That rush hour traffic begins at five does not *cause* one to leave work early: one chooses to leave work early in a situation that includes rush hour traffic's beginning at five. This only enters into one's choice insofar as one construes it as a reason to leave to work early: it is only one's projected future (e.g., getting home in time to make dinner for one's spouse) that makes the time that rush hour traffic begins a part of one's situation. Nevertheless, that one hates Pierre is a *psychic* fact: a fact of an order quite different from rush hour traffic's beginning at five, in that one must continue to hate Pierre for it to remain a fact. Apprehending this hatred as something causing one to act one way rather than another, requires one to apprehend it as an aspect of oneself that already exists.

One apprehends a psychic objects not only as a part of one's situation, but also as related to ordinary objects and other psychic objects. Thus Sartre says that love is apprehended as "aroused by the object":

Although the psychic is not on the same plane of being as the existents of the world, this inertia enables the psychic to be apprehended as related to these existents. A love is given as “aroused” by the loved object. (231-2)

In other examples Sartre speaks of a jealousy causing a desire to take the person one loves away from others, and of a prior state of humiliation causing a state of moodiness. Thus, like ordinary transcendent objects, mental states are apprehended as interrelated causally, and also as causally related to ordinary transcendent objects. However, Sartre calls these causal relations “magical” (232) to indicate that, unlike the causal relations between ordinary transcendent objects, the causal relations that are applied to psychic objects involve “action at a distance” (233), an “irrational bond” (236): “[Psychic] causality is a degradation of the ekstatic for-itself, which is its own being at a distance from itself” (236).

We saw in the last chapter what Sartre means when he says that the “ekstatic for-itself” is at a distance from itself: consciousness is a surpassing of its past toward a projected future (“original temporality”). And we saw that consciousness is present to an object of consciousness (“intentionality”), an object which always has some “negativity” in it, indicating consciousness’s project, and is pre-reflectively present to itself (“presence-to-self” or “transparency”). Sartre seems to be saying that the relationship between a psychic object and an ordinary transcendent object is a hybrid between the intentional relation and the causal relation. Like consciousness itself, mental states are apprehended as present to an object of consciousness, but neither as fully transparent nor as self-surpassing. Rather they are like transcendent objects, appearing to the reflecting consciousness as opaque, revealed only partially in the reflective act. Sartre thus thinks of a psychic object as a consciousness that has been degraded into an in-itself, and thinks of psychic causality as a degraded form of the self-surpassing nature of consciousness.

The psychic object is apprehended as “closed in upon itself,” “an in-itself,” and as intentionally directed toward something other than itself. This latter aspect is what makes it

psychic -- gives it its semblance of consciousness. Because of its “in-itself” aspect, on the other hand, it can be apprehended as causally related to ordinary objects of consciousness. One thus apprehends the psychic object, paradoxically, as related to ordinary objects both in the same way ordinary objects are interrelated, and also in the same way one’s consciousness, apprehended as such, is related to its object. In impure reflection the love that one feels is apprehended both as caused by the loved object and as *about* the loved object.

Because of their blend of in-itself and for-itself aspects, psychic objects are also apprehended as *related to each other* in unusual ways. Just as love can be apprehended as aroused by the loved one, a bad mood can be apprehended as motivated by a humiliation: “my humiliation of yesterday is the total motive for my mood this morning, etc” (234). The bad mood is apprehended as being about yesterday’s humiliation and as being caused by it.<sup>122</sup> Mental states, such as anger, joy, desire, and jealousy, are apprehended as separate items which can engage in causal relations. “Yesterday’s humiliation” is a psychic object apprehended both as *about* an event (e.g., one’s saying something one wishes one had not said) and as *caused by* this event. Naturally, on Sartre’s view the event can no more cause the humiliation than rush-hour traffic can cause one to leave work early. However, the event can be *experienced as* causing an accompanying humiliation. Likewise the humiliation can be experienced as caused by the event. But while it is not necessary to apprehend the event in any special way to apprehend it as one that

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<sup>122</sup>Again, one has privileged access to the content, but not to the cause of one’s mental state. One is fully aware of that which one’s bad mood is about. Or, in the more active-sounding language that Sartre prefers, one is fully aware of that which one is putting oneself in a bad mood over. On the other hand, it may be the case that one would be putting oneself in a bad mood over something else if not for yesterday’s humiliation. And, it may be the case that there is some other event -- e.g., eating the piece of cake that rapidly raised and then lowered one’s relative blood sugar, or an early childhood trauma -- such that if it hadn’t occurred, one wouldn’t be putting oneself in a bad mood over anything.

Some psychoanalytic views say that there are unconscious “about” relations which are also causal (sine qua non) relations. Thus one finds the psychoanalytically-minded theorist saying that the event that a person is putting herself in a bad mood over “represents” an earlier event. This earlier event is both one that the person is sad about, in the sense that it is represented by the event that is serving as the conscious content of the bad mood, and one that is causing the bad mood, in the sense that if this earlier event hadn’t



can cause something, it is necessary to apprehend the humiliation in a special way -- as a psychic object -- in order to apprehend it as one that can be caused by something.

In apprehending something as an event, we are apprehending it as causally related to other events. Rush-hour traffic, the arrival of the beloved, and the event that is apprehended as causing one's humiliation are apprehended as parts of causally interrelated chains. But in pre-reflective consciousness one does not apprehend one's humiliation as a worldly event,<sup>123</sup> but as an experience of something. The only way to apprehend it as an event is to degrade its intentional character -- to apprehend it as something which already is what it is. Once degraded, experiences can be related to transcendent objects and events, and can be interrelated magically, according to "irrational bonds." The spontaneity and intentionality of consciousness are apprehended as *qualities* of a psychic object:

Inasmuch as the psychic is the objectivation of the for-itself, it possesses a degraded spontaneity.... [This spontaneity] is apprehended only as one determination among others of a *given* existent.... We are not dealing here with being which *has to be* its future and its past, but only with successions of past, present, and future forms which all exist in the mode of "having been," and which at a distance influence one another. (234)

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occurred, the person would not be in a bad mood about anything.

<sup>123</sup>In the pre-reflective case it can be apprehended as caused by a certain event, such as something that one has just said. But in the pre-reflective case not only does one not focus upon the humiliation, it is not even an object for one. The object upon which one focuses is what one has just said, and one is humiliated only in that one experiences this object with certain characteristic qualities -- e.g., as something that one shouldn't have said, as something one hopes nobody heard, etc. The difference is in the degree to which the feeling is experienced as outside, as at a distance from the consciousness which apprehends it. Sartre would say that there is no such thing as humiliated consciousness; the closest thing to this is humiliation-consciousness [consciousness (of) humiliation]. As we have seen, consciousness cannot be qualified in such a way, although it can be consciousness *of* what one has just said as sounding stupid. But there is a difference between the latter and consciousness *of* humiliation, which is "thetic."

Consciousness *of* humiliation can itself take two forms. The difference in these forms is the humiliation or, correlatively, one's relationship to it. In the case of pure reflection the humiliation is simply the reflected-on consciousness, e.g., the consciousness of what one has just said as something that one wishes nobody had heard. In the case of impure reflection, on the other hand, the humiliation is a psychic object. One is more distant from the humiliation in the case of impure reflection -- one "adopts a point of view" (225) on it and can "increase or diminish the distance that separates one" (218) from it. Again, it is psychic objects, the objects of impure reflection that can be apprehended as causally related to or, as we will see in the next subsection, as interpenetrating each other. Thus, once the humiliation is apprehended as a psychic object it can be apprehended as the cause of the bad mood. But the bad mood must also be apprehended as a psychic object in order for it to be apprehended as caused by the humiliation.

Yesterday's humiliation and this morning's mood have the same ontological status: both are psychic objects, degraded experiences. As such they can be apprehended as causally related. I think of this in terms of one act whose object is one's humiliation yesterday, another whose object is one's mood this morning, and a third whose object is the objects of the former acts united by the causal relation. This third act requires that the humiliation and the mood be thought of as psychic objects.

### **5c. Interpenetration**

Sartre speaks of causation or motivation between psychic objects as action "from a distance of prior forms on posterior forms" (233). His point is that when consciousness is degraded into a psychic object, since this object is represented as having intentionality -- unlike consciousness which simply is intentionality -- this object is represented as being in magical relations with other such objects. Thus is constituted a sphere of psychic states and events magically affecting one another.

Sartre is critical of any account of psychic objects that either disregards or degrades their for-itself qualities. He analyzes a passage in which Proust writes: "[A]s soon as [Swann's] desire to take her away from everybody else was no longer added to his love by jealousy, that love became again a taste for the sensations which Odette's person gave him...." His intention is to bring out how such states are treated as elements and compounds in a "symbolic *chemistry*" (235).<sup>124</sup>

Sartre shows that mental states are conceived by Proust as causally interrelated in a law-like fashion in psychic time. Jealousy *causes* the desire to take Odette away. It is apprehended as creating the desire to take Odette away. Compare this to the way in which Sartre describes

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<sup>124</sup>In TE, Sartre had much the same complaint: "Are not the struggles of hatred against morality, censure, etc., represented as conflicts of *physical* forces to the point even that Balzac and most of the novelists (sometimes Proust himself) attribute to states the principle of independent forces? The whole psychology

unreflective jealousy, as the to-be-seen quality of what is taking place behind behind the door, in the keyhole example:

[B]ehind that door a spectacle is presented as “to be seen,” a conversation as “to be heard.” The door, the keyhole are at once both instruments and obstacles; they are presented as “to be handled with care”; the keyhole is given as “to be looked through close by and a little to one side,” *etc....* [T]here is a spectacle to be seen behind the door only because I am jealous, but my jealousy is nothing except the simple objective fact that *there is a sight to be seen* behind the door. (347-8)

Unreflectively, then, Swann’s jealousy *is* his apprehension of Odette as to be taken away, of other people as threats, as people who might take Odette away from him. But when he engages in impure reflection, he constitutes this jealousy as a psychic object -- one which spawns a second psychic object: the desire to take Odette away.

Some of the psychic objects Proust mentions, however, are apprehended as interrelated in a different way. Thus, in addition to “motivation,” or “psychic causation,” Sartre analyzes a second type of “irrational bond” between psychic objects: “interpenetration.” Not only can one state cause another state, two states can be added together to form a third:

This influence [of one psychic object upon another] will be manifested either by penetration or by motivation. If it is by penetration, the reflective apprehends as a single object two psychic objects which had at first been given separately. The result is a new psychic object... though this object is unintelligible in itself and gives itself simultaneously as all one and all the other without there being any alteration in either. In motivation, on the contrary, the two objects remain each at its own place.... The result is total action at a distance by means of magic influence of one on the other. For example, my humiliation of yesterday is the total motive for my mood this morning, *etc.* (234)

Psychic objects can thus be mixed together like colors: Sartre likes the metaphor of cream clouding coffee (233, 235). Thus, once jealousy causes the desire to take Odette away, this desire can be added to Swann’s love, a third psychic object, to create a fourth: a mixture of love and jealousy. This mixture is not, according to Sartre, two separate psychic objects: it “gives itself simultaneously as all one and all the other without there being any alteration in either.” When

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of states (and non-phenomenological psychology in general) is a psychology of the inert (TE, 66-7).

Swann introspects, he finds that he has a love-jealousy for Odette. Just as the twinges and lulls of a headache, the love and jealousy are apprehended as alternating aspects of one psychic object. Another example given by Sartre of a psychic object created by interpenetration, or “addition,” is the amorous friendship: “the amorous friendship is not given as a simple specification of the genus friendship.... [L]ove, inert and in-itself, is magically extended through all the friendship” (233).

Sartre’s criticisms of intellectualist accounts of the psychic, such as the one he points out in the passage from Proust, are particularly difficult because he is criticizing as incoherent an account of an object and mode of existence that he himself understands to be self-contradictory. His point is that if we want to explore the denizens of the psychic world, the world that is created when one engages in impure reflection, we must describe psychic objects as they present themselves to us. He wants an account that preserves the self-contradictory nature of the psychic object’s mode of existence:

It is necessary to give up trying to reduce the irrational element in psychic causality. This causality is a degradation of the ekstastic for-itself, which is its own being at a distance from itself, its degradation into magic [is a degradation] into an in-itself which is what it is at its own place. Magic action through influence at a distance is the necessary result of this relaxation of the bonds of being. The psychologist must describe these irrational bonds and take them as an original given of the psychic world. (236)

Any attempt “to remain on the level of the psychic and yet reduce<sup>125</sup> this action an intelligible causality,” that is, “to find bonds of rational causality between psychic states in the temporal succession of these states,” is futile (234). The relations between psychic objects are not simple and mechanical:

Proust can not keep from showing us almost human interrelations (to create, to manufacture, to add) between the estranged states, which would almost allow us to suppose that these psychic objects are animated agents. In his descriptions the intellectualistic analysis shows its limitations at every instant; it can effect its distinctions and its classifications only superficially and on the basis of a total irrationality. (236)

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<sup>125</sup>Barnes’s translation has “deduce,” a misprint. Cf. Jean-Paul Sartre, *L’être et le néant* (Paris: Gallimard, 1943): 203.

On Sartre's view, there are various types of objects of ordinary consciousness, and one way to classify them, and their ways of being as objects of consciousness, is in terms of the types of space-time that they occupy. This seems reasonable: a cup is apprehended in terms of different spatial characteristics depending on whether one is drinking from it or calculating its surface area. The numbers of which one is aware during the latter operation are apprehended as having no spatial characteristics at all. And one's hunger is apprehended differently depending on whether it is apprehended in terms of the enjoyment of eating, or in terms of how long one must wait for the soup, or as feelings in one's body as an object in space. It may seem unnecessary to include in this medley of fields which are allowed to be spatial and temporal in different ways, or not at all, one that is self-contradictory. But there is good reason for it: psychic objects are genuine phenomena and it is thus the job of phenomenological ontology to describe and find a place for them. Naturally, if no such objects ever appeared to us, and their analysis served no part in the analysis of the constitution of any object that does appear, it would not be necessary to describe them or the sort of space-time that they occupy. But they do appear to us (in introspection), and are a part of the constitution of our bodily states and of ourselves as bodies.

## **6. From Apprehending Psychic Objects to Apprehending One's Body and its Psychophysical States**

For my purposes, what is important in Sartre's discussion of psychic temporality, causality, and interpenetration, is that consciousness constitutes itself and its states as psychic objects, interrelated and related to physical objects in various ways, as part of its constitution of itself as a physical object with physical states. As I indicated in the previous chapter, there are different types of temporality, corresponding to the various levels of constitution of the field of consciousness. These types of temporality have to do with the ways in which the objects of consciousness at each level of constitution are interrelated. At the most basic level, objects are

organized according to consciousness's project of self-completion. The objective world -- objective at this level only in that it is apprehended as outside one's consciousness, as the objective pole of experience -- is apprehended as having a past, present, and future because of consciousness's self-surpassing nature. Consciousness apprehends its self-surpassing nature, or "original temporality," pre-reflectively through its apprehension of the system of instrument-objects as extended in time. As we will see in the next chapter, in pure reflection consciousness apprehends this self-surpassing nature through an anguished sense of its own possibilities. But at these levels consciousness cannot apprehend itself as extended in time, because original temporality is only the reflection of the world's arrangement in terms of a network of instrument-objects already present to consciousness, organized in terms of an end that is not yet realized.<sup>126</sup>

There are ways in which consciousness can apprehend itself as extended in time, however. Doing so consists in apprehending oneself as some sort of object, either as psychophysical person, a psychic ego, or an inapprehensible object in the inapprehensible space-time of the Other's field of consciousness. As we have seen in the preceding sections, prior to one's apprehension of one's states and qualities as psychophysical, one is able to apprehend them as parts of a world with a means-end structure, although thus far they can be related to ordinary transcendent objects, and to each other, only magically. As we will see more clearly in Chapter Five, the difference between apprehending oneself as a person and as a merely psychic object is that the former somehow incorporates the experience of the space-time of the Other's field of consciousness (which is inapprehensible as such). After discussing the Look and its noematic correlate, the body-for-others, Sartre explains, in a section titled "The Third Ontological Dimension of the Body," that receiving the Look helps one to add a new dimension to one's body. One thus experiences one's

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<sup>126</sup>It is even slightly misleading to say that *the world* is apprehended as "extended in time" at this level, because the means-end relations among objects have to do only with the current project. We will see in Chapter Five how the experience of the Look enables one to experience objects as extended in time in a

body (pre-reflectively) not only as that by means of which the world is presented, but also as “a body known by the Other” (466). This experience can be incorporated into one’s reflective apprehension of oneself, enabling one to recognize oneself as a psychophysical object with psychophysical states. In this way one apprehends oneself and one’s states as items that truly have an outside.

Sartre is never very clear about what he means in saying that something is apprehended as an object, rather than merely a quasi-object (218, 398, 464, 465, 468). The difference is related to the degree to which the item is apprehended as outside one’s consciousness of it. The object/quasi-object distinction is one of many Sartre uses to express this difference. Among them are distinctions between (1) positional and non-positional and (2)thetic and non-thetic consciousness, between (3) consciousness *of* and consciousness (of), between (4) consciousness’s “not being what it is not” and its “not being what it is,” and between (5) knowledge and consciousness. As far as I know, the second phrase in the first four of these pairs is used only to refer to pre-reflective consciousness’s presence to self. The first phrase in the first three is used to refer to consciousness of the reflected-on consciousness in pure reflection, the second most intimate relation, as well as consciousness of psychic objects (in impure reflection) and ordinary physical objects. Regarding the fourth, Sartre says the reflective consciousness is not far enough outside the reflected-on consciousness for us to say “that *it is not it*” (in the mode of not being what it is not), but that we can say this of the psychic object (226). He implies that one’s consciousness and the Other are far enough apart for us to say such things. He is unclear as to whether the reflective can be said to “know” the reflected-on. First he says that reflection “strongly resembles” knowledge (211). Then he says that there is “no doubt” that reflection is knowledge since the reflective posits the reflected-on. But one sentence later he says that “[t]o

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more “objective” way.

know is to *make oneself other*” and that “the reflective can not make itself wholly other than the reflective-on” (218). Much later, identifying “to know” with “to posit as an object” he says that one cannot know the Other (361-2). After this he says that the illness (*mal*), a psychic object “is not yet *known* in any way, for the reflection which seeks to apprehend the pain-consciousness is not yet cognitive.... In order to add cognitive structures to the body as it has been given to reflection, we will have to resort to the Other” (443). On the same page he says that prior to the “intervention of the for-others” reflective consciousness “apprehends the illness (*mal*) as an object but as an affective object.”

Some things are clear, however: (1) Consciousness is in some way outside itself, even in pre-reflective consciousness. (2) In pure reflection, the reflected-on consciousness is further outside the reflective consciousness than consciousness is outside itself in pre-reflective consciousness. (3) In the Look, the Other is still further outside (pre-reflective) consciousness. (4) In impure reflection, the psychic object is further outside the reflective consciousness than the reflected-on consciousness is.

It is not clear whether the “distance” (or “nothingness”) that separates the Other from pre-reflective consciousness is equal to that which separates the psychic object from reflective consciousness. Sartre makes it sound as if, before the Look, the psychic object stands in for one’s being-for-others:

[T]his more radical nihilation [i.e., impure reflection, as compared to pure reflection] is not a real, metaphysical event. The real event, the third process of nihilation is the *for-others*. Impure reflection is an abortive effort on the part of the for-itself *to be another while remaining itself*. The transcendent object which appeared behind the for-itself reflected-on is the only being of which the reflective can say...that *it is not it*. But it is a mere shadow of being. It is made-to-be and the reflective has to be it in order not to be it. (226, my gloss)

Like the illness (*mal*), the “affective object” (443) of reflection, in pre-reflective consciousness one’s being-for-others is apprehended only affectively, not cognitively. Fear,



shame, and pride, Sartre says, “are nothing more than our way of affectively experiencing our being-for-others” (383). As is indicated by the quotation from page 443 (above), both reflection and the Look are required for one to have a cognitive relationship to oneself and one’s states. It seems that the distance between one’s being-for-others and pre-reflective consciousness is no greater than that between the psychic object and reflective consciousness. The difference is that one’s being-for-others, rather than being a “mere shadow,” a by-product of reflection, is already present at the pre-reflective level. In any case, reflection and the pre-reflective intuition of one’s being for others must somehow be combined in order to achieve the distance from oneself required to know oneself.

**6a. *The psychic object as a “mere shadow of being”***

Although Sartre speaks of impure reflection as constituting and apprehending some sort of self-contradictory psychic objects, it may be better to think of it as an attempt to constitute an object that cannot properly be constituted without the experience of the Look. Sartre admits that without the Other we are incapable of “seeing ourselves as we are:” “the Other accomplishes for us a function of which we are incapable and which nevertheless is incumbent on us: *to see ourselves as we are*” (463). Indeed, as we have just seen, Sartre refers to impure reflection as “an abortive effort,” and to its product as “a mere shadow of being.” Without the experience of the Other -- the consciousness for which one’s consciousness is another consciousness -- the psychic object can never have any more than a suggestion of an outside, a virtual outside. Thus rather than thinking of the ego and other psychic objects as actually being produced in impure reflection, and then being filled in by information that comes from an alien point of view (in the way that a perceptual object is constituted on the basis of one perceptive act, and then is given more detail by further such acts), it would be better to think of impure reflection as an unsuccessful effort to constitute one’s consciousness as an object: the psychic object, apprehended without the

experience of the Look, is unlike a perceived physical object in that the latter is apprehended as merely lacking in detail. The psychic object, by contrast, is a “contradictory composite,” constituted on the basis of consciousness’s apprehension of itself, but paradoxically apprehended as existing outside consciousness. It is apprehended as having a “coefficient of adversity” and as taking part in causal relations, but also as having the translucency and self-surpassing nature of consciousness.

The apprehension of such an object of consciousness cannot be fulfilled by any intuition of one’s consciousness provided by mere reflection. Suppose, for example, that having constituted my hatred for Pierre through an experience of anger (i.e., through the apprehension of Pierre-as-frustrating), I now apprehend this “same” hatred through an experience of disgust (i.e., through the apprehension of Pierre-as-repulsive). At the same time that this intuition confirms and adds detail to my hatred (insofar as the hatred is manifested again, and as disgust rather than as anger), it shows it as something that lacks the translucency of my consciousness. That is, while the disgust leaves nothing hidden, the hatred is experienced as something with a hidden aspect. It is apprehended as something that is not exhausted by the experience of Pierre-as-repulsive: another aspect was revealed in the experience of Pierre-as-frustrating, and yet another will be revealed if I experience Pierre-as-annoying. By the same token the hatred is apprehended as something which I might have missed altogether: I might have had the experience of disgust without “noticing” that this disgust is a manifestation of a hatred. Finally, as well as being opaque, the hatred is experienced as being inert, a passive thing that I must take into consideration:

I shall not go to this or that person’s house “because of” the antipathy which I feel toward him. Or I decide on this or that action by taking into consideration my hate or my love. Or I refuse to discuss politics because I know my quick temper and I can not risk becoming irritated. (237)

Before the look, consciousness’s intuition of itself as a relation or activity cannot fulfill its apprehension of itself as either opaque or inert. This is why, prior to the Look, the object of

impure reflection is apprehended as both opaque and translucent, and as both self-surpassing and inert.<sup>127</sup>

With the intuition of one's consciousness *as another consciousness*, however, the apprehension of oneself as a transcendent object can be given some content. Rather than the half-transcendent object apprehended merely on the basis of the pre-reflective intuition of oneself as the one for whom there is a world, one apprehends a thoroughly transcendent object on the basis of a second pre-reflective intuition, that of oneself as another. By means of the latter, a psychic object is capable of acquiring a new ontological status. The price to be paid, however, is that this content is apprehended as inaccessible to oneself.<sup>128</sup> In any case, the experience of the Look somehow enables one to enrich the apprehension of the states, acts, qualities, and the psyche itself, which are constituted in impure reflection, such that one can apprehend them as psychophysical rather than merely as psychic.<sup>129</sup> Without the Look one is just spinning one's wheels in trying to apprehend oneself as something appearing to exist independently from the reflective act. All one can come up with are the objects of impure reflection, self-contradictory objects which have only the suggestion of an outside, and the quasi-object of pure reflection (218), which does not even appear to exist independently from the reflective act. In order to apprehend oneself as an entity whose existing is distinguishable from its appearing, one needs to have an intuition of an

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<sup>127</sup> Sartre says: "[I]n order to apprehend my transcendence, I should have to transcend it. But my own transcendence can only transcend. I *am* my own transcendence; I cannot make use of it so as to constitute it as a transcendence-transcended" (395).

<sup>128</sup> As we will see below in Subsection 6d, and again in Chapter Five, Sartre says that one can apprehend oneself-as-a- transcendent-object only "emptily," because the intuition provided by the Look is itself a "revelation in emptiness." This emptiness is different from the emptiness in the use of the I-concept when one isn't reflecting (or in the use of the concept "chair" when one isn't perceiving one). Under the Look one's being-for-others is "given," but it is given as a mysterious thing which one cannot get hold of.

<sup>129</sup> It may strike the reader as odd that, on Sartre's view, one can't constitute the pain of a cut on my finger, for example, as a psychophysical object simply by apprehending both the physical cut and the pain and synthesizing these two apprehensions. What is unique about Sartre's approach is that the problem, as he sees it, is not how "I" can relate two things together (in this case, a pain and a cut). Rather, as we might put it, on the most basic level the pain is what says "I." The reason that impure reflection and the Look are necessary is for this pain to be conscious of itself, at a higher level, as a psychophysical object.

independent point of view. That is, the apprehension of one's consciousness as something whose existing is different from its appearing must *include* the revelation of another point of view. This revelation is first provided in the experience of the Look.

Naturally, apprehending oneself as something whose existence and appearance are distinct does not exclude the possibility of apprehending oneself as a point of view. It merely requires that the other point of view be able to approach and withdraw (unlike the reflective consciousness with respect to the reflected-on consciousness). In this sense, the looked at consciousness is apprehended as really outside the looking consciousness, not just virtually outside it (as in reflection):

[T]he consciousness reflected-on is not presented yet as something *outside* reflection -- that is, as a being on which one can "take a point of view," in relation to which one can realize a withdrawal, increase or diminish the distance which separates one from it. In order for the consciousness reflected-on to be "viewed from without" and in order for reflection to be able to orient itself in relation to it, it would be necessary that the reflective should not be the reflected-on in the mode of not being what one is not: the scissiparity will be realized only in existence *for-others*. (218)

Thus, at the end of the section on reflection, Sartre says:

In... inner temporality we find the first outline of an "outside"; the for-itself sees itself almost as bestowing an outside on its own eyes, but this outside is purely virtual. We shall see later how being-for-others *realizes* the suggestion of this "outside." (237)

**6b. The ego as "a being of the world, like the ego of another"**

Since the ideal of impure reflection is to apprehend one's own consciousness as something that exists independently from one's consciousness of it, the apprehension of the psychic object is structurally similar to the apprehension of the consciousness of another person. The reflective consciousness that apprehends the psychic object does so non-apodictically and non-adequately through the reflected-on consciousness, which is thereby apprehended as an adumbration of the psychic object. The psychic object is apprehended as an item whose existence does not consist in its appearing. That is, the reflected-on consciousness through which the psychic object appears is

apprehended as a mere manifestation of it -- e.g., the disgust with Pierre is apprehended as a manifestation of a hatred of him -- and this psychic object appears as if it could have manifested itself in an infinite number of other ways, and as if it could even have existed without manifesting itself at all.

This is comparable to the way in which one's states are apprehended by another person. I apprehend your hatred of Pierre through your expression of disgust, which is apprehended as an adumbration of this hatred, as the way in which your hatred currently manifests itself. I do not apprehend your hatred adequately: your expression of disgust is apprehended as only one adumbration of it. Nor is it apprehended apodictically: it might be the case that you do not hate Pierre at all and that the expression is a manifestation of another state entirely. Finally, I apprehend your hatred as something that could exist without ever manifesting itself at all. This is a difference between my relationship to it and yours: you can hate him without this hatred manifesting itself to me in any way, but you cannot hate him without this hatred manifesting itself to you in any way. If you never apprehend Pierre as disgusting, frustrating, evil, etc., then you simply do not hate him. However, the ideal of impure reflection is to apprehend one's own state as another does -- as a state whose existence and manifestation are distinct.

In TE Sartre says that the ego is not "*in* consciousness: it is outside, *in the world*. It is a being of the world, like the ego of another" (TE, 31): one's own ego is not apprehended as internal to one's consciousness any more than another's is. However, when we take a close look at what Sartre says about the constitution of oneself and of others in B&N, we find that there are huge differences. Naturally, Sartre's point about the externality (or transcendence) of the ego still holds, but there are several ways in which one apprehends one's own ego, several levels of self-apprehension. One way to constitute one's ego is to go through the contortions described in TE and the section on reflection in B&N. One does not use any such reflective consciousness to

apprehend the ego of another. One apprehends the ego of another whenever one apprehends another's body as such. Again, "the body is wholly psychic" (404) in that "the Other's body is always 'a body-more-than-body' .... [T]he body -- whether it be as organism, as character, or as tool -- never appears to me without *surroundings*" (460). While such apprehension does depend on the experience of the Look and the correlative apprehension of oneself as a being-for-others, it does not require performing the juggling act of apprehending the ego as a being which exists independently from its appearance to reflective consciousness while at the same time constituting it from appearances one creates by reflecting. Unlike the reflected-on consciousness out of which one constitutes one's own ego, one does not have to *maintain* one's separation from another's consciousness.

In B&N, there are two other varieties of self-apprehension whose object might be called the ego. (Naturally Sartre would not call the consciousness apprehended in pre-reflective self-consciousness and pure-reflection by this name.) One is the variety of reflection whose object is psychophysical rather than merely psychic. The other is the pre-reflective consciousness of oneself as a being-for-others. Because prior to its entrance into the form of reflective consciousness just mentioned one's being-for-others is at most a quasi-object, I would not have thought to call it the ego. However, at one point Sartre does refer to it this way (349-50),<sup>130</sup> despite his saying in TE that the ego is always an object of reflective consciousness.

***6c. Impure reflection as the constitution of an outline for the body***

In impure reflection one attempts to apprehend one's consciousness as something that could exist without appearing. For Sartre, this is to know oneself as only another can know one, and reflection alone cannot show one oneself-for-others. Oneself-for-others, however, is part of what one is for oneself and one appeals to this dimension of one's being whenever one asks

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<sup>130</sup>See Subsection 6d for quotation.

oneself if one really hates Pierre, if one really is kind or cruel, hardworking or lazy, etc:

The *me* is given as an object. Therefore, the only method for knowing it is observation, approximation, anticipation, experience. But these procedures, which may be perfectly suited to any *non-intimate* transcendent, are not suitable here, because of the very intimacy of the *me*. It is too much present for one to succeed in taking a truly external viewpoint on it. If we step back for vantage the *me* accompanies us in this withdrawal. It is infinitely near, and I cannot circle around it. Am I an idler or a hard worker? I shall doubtless come to a decision if I consult those who know me and get their opinion. Or, again, if I can collect facts concerning myself and try to interpret them *as objectively as if it were a question about someone else*. But it would be useless to address myself directly to the *me*.... Thus “really to know oneself” is inevitably to take toward oneself the point of view of others[.] (TE, 86-7)<sup>131</sup>

In TE Sartre does not explain the difference between apprehending one’s own ego and that of another, and only hints at an account of the constitution of one’s own body and the bodies of others as objects of consciousness. These ideas are developed in B&N with the notion of being-for-others. The important point for my purposes is that the apprehension of the psychic object serves as a basis for the apprehension of the body in its third ontological dimension. In this respect, the apprehension of a merely psychic object can be fortified by the revelation of one’s being-for-others (i.e., by the Look). But by the same token, like the psychic objects constituted in impure reflection, which contain a “mere image” of spontaneity, “spontaneity, represented and hypostatized in an object... a degraded and bastard spontaneity” (TE, 81), the body-for-others is apprehended as a degraded consciousness. This is true of both the bodies of other persons and one’s own body-for-others when it is apprehended in reflection.

According to the account in TE, the “I-concept” cannot be fulfilled in unreflective consciousness because it takes a reflective act to apprehend the ego. One’s body, however, when one perceives it, serves as its “illusory fulfillment,” as a symbol for the “concrete *I*” apprehended in reflection:

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<sup>131</sup>Sartre finishes this sentence by saying “...that is to say, a point of view which is necessarily false.” In B&N, he might have said “necessarily degrading.” In any case, it is important to distinguish between the “me,” which is a (self-contradictory) psychic object, and oneself-for-others -- which is constituted (albeit

The body and bodily images... consummate the total degradation of the concrete *I* of reflection to the “*I*-concept” by functioning for the “*I*-concept” as its illusory fulfillment. I say: “‘*I*’ break the wood and I see and feel the object, ‘body,’ engaged in breaking the wood.” The body there serves as the visible and tangible symbol for the *I*. (TE, 90)

The “concrete *I* of reflection” is the ego as apprehended in the reflective act. It is concrete in that, so long as one reflects, one apprehends oneself through the reflected-on consciousness. When one ceases to reflect, however, the *I*-concept is left over as “the objective and empty support” -- an objective support with no fulfilling intuition -- of the act of breaking the wood. The *I*-concept is abstract. The concrete *I* is “degraded totally” when the role played in reflection by the reflected-on consciousness is instead played by the perception of one’s body as a physical object. At this point there is no intuition of anything remotely resembling consciousness.<sup>132</sup>

Sartre composed this explanation before he had fully explored what it is to “see and feel the object ‘body.’” His discovery of the Look as a revelation of one’s body-for-others, a dimension of one’s body that is “lived” in pre-reflective consciousness and that modifies the psychic objects of reflective consciousness, changes his account of what is going on when one sees oneself breaking wood. But the following quotation demonstrates that he already understood that one’s body is constituted by enriching the ego, the object of impure reflection, and that one can also apprehend this ego in its unfortified form in impure reflection:

The psycho-physical *me* is a synthetic enrichment of the psychic ego, which can very well... exist in a free state. It is certain, for example, that when we say “I am undecided,” we do not directly refer to the psycho-physical *me*. (TE, 72)

On this account the body is apprehended as an object of perception when one sees “the object ‘body’” breaking the wood. Sartre doesn’t explain what he means by feeling the body breaking the wood, but the impression the reader gets is that the body is apprehended as any other

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emptily) on the basis of the Look.

<sup>132</sup>In Chapter Seven I compare Sartre’s view of apprehending oneself to Strawson’s view of referring to oneself. We will see that Strawson, in his own way, recognizes that a mere perceptual object cannot fulfill the *I*-concept. (The upcoming quotation, however, will provide a point of contrast between their views.)



object might be, and then taken to represent the ego. If Sartre were trying to express the pre-reflective self-consciousness of the body-for-itself, he certainly would not have said anything like “I see and feel the object ‘body’ engaged in breaking the wood.”<sup>133</sup>

According to the account in B&N, the apprehension of the body apparently in question in TE is most like what Sartre calls an aberrant apprehension of the body in its third ontological dimension:

In actuality I can see my hands, touch my back, smell the odor of my sweat.... This appearance of my hand means simply that in certain well-defined cases we can adopt with regard to our own body the Other’s point of view or, if you like, that our own body can appear to us as the body of the Other. (468)

However it seems that at the time of TE Sartre did not understand seeing one’s body as an aberrant apprehension of something that is apprehended, essentially, in another way: apprehending one’s body-for-others via the Look does not rely on a “‘curiosity’ of our constitution” (468) -- that the location and operation of our sense organs allows us to sense our own bodies.

The explanation in B&N is more sophisticated. When one experiences the Look, “the self comes to haunt the unreflective consciousness” (349). The *I*-concept thus has a fulfilling intuition prior to reflection. When one remarks thoughtlessly, “I’m from New Jersey,” the *I* gets its sense from one’s pre-reflective apprehension of oneself as a body-for-others. Thus something very similar to the “object-’body’” fulfills the *I*-concept in unreflective consciousness. This fulfillment, however, is not an illusory one: one’s body-for-others is not a mere perceptual object that one uses to represent the *I* that one apprehends when reflecting. Rather, it is the inapprehensible subject of consciousness, the body-for-itself, experienced as the object of another consciousness.

The reason that the fulfillment of the *I*-concept in unreflective consciousness spoken of in TE, its fulfillment by one’s body, is illusory, is that the body Sartre has in mind is a simple perceptual object -- one whose perception does not involve reflection at all -- and Sartre thought

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<sup>133</sup>See Chapter Five, Section Four.

reflection to be the only sort of consciousness that could fulfill this concept. In B&N, however, Sartre realizes that the Look provides an intuition of oneself and that the *I*-concept can be fulfilled on a level that does not involve reflection.<sup>134</sup>

Armed with the pre-reflective intuition of one's body-for-others, one can finally apprehend oneself in reflection as a psychophysical object. Now when one reflects, one can constitute one's headache as a throbbing in one's head. Recall that without the look, one's headache is apprehended pre-reflectively in terms of the project of reading, for example, and is apprehended reflectively as an ache. But this ache is not located in the time and space which physical objects inhabit and in which physical events occur. Similarly, one's hunger is apprehended pre-reflectively insofar as the field of consciousness is organized according to the project of eating, and is apprehended reflectively as a desire for food existing in "psychic space." The pre-reflective experience of one's body-for-others allows one to reconstitute the psychic object as psychophysical. Now the psychic state can be located in oneself as a body-for-others and can ultimately be located in the same space and time as other physical objects and events.

Furthermore, according to the account in B&N, since perceiving one's body includes the experience of the Look, the *I*-concept can also be fulfilled, in a non-illusory manner, by perceiving one's body through the senses.<sup>135</sup> Thus the perception of the "object-'body,'" which in TE is taken to be the apprehension of a mere symbol of the *I*, is instead the apprehension of a genuine aspect of one's body-for-others. This is because seeing and smelling oneself are now considered

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<sup>134</sup>However, as we will see, this intuition is still "empty" in the sense that one does not appear to oneself when one is under the Look.

<sup>135</sup>In TE Sartre doesn't talk much about apprehending other persons. However, from the standpoint of B&N if he did so without the notion of the Look, he would have to say that another's body, as it is apprehended perceptually as a physical object, is an illusory fulfillment of the "you-concept," a mere symbol of "the you," since this perception fails to include the intuition of another consciousness. In other words, without the experience of the Look to fulfill it, reference to another person can only be reference to a purely physical object that merely represents a person. The "you-concept" is "destined to remain empty" so long as one fails to experience the Look. To experience the Look is to engage in something much like pure reflection, in that it is the (apodictic) apprehension of one adumbration of another consciousness (and,

to be forms of reflection. Apprehending one's body through the senses modifies the psychic object formed in impure reflection: seeing oneself in a mirror, or hearing one's own voice, is like being observed by another and having the acquired information instantly communicated to one and applied to oneself as an object of reflection.

**6d. *The apprehension of one's body-for-others as a "revelation in emptiness"***

While the fulfillment of the *I*-concept by the apprehension of one's body-for-others is not illusory, however, it is in a sense an "empty" fulfillment. This is so whether we are talking about the pre-reflective apprehension of the body-for-others or the reflective apprehension of the body-for-others in either of its forms (i.e., by modifying the apprehension of the psychic object through what others say, or through information acquired by directing one's senses upon one's body).<sup>136</sup>

While the Look is an pre-reflective experience of one's outside, what is presented in this experience is only *that there is* an outside to oneself. Oneself-as-seen-from-the-outside is in no way given to one in this intuition:

The unreflective consciousness does not apprehend the *person* directly or as *its* object; the person is presented to consciousness *in so far as the person is an object for the Other*. This means that all of a sudden I am conscious of myself as escaping myself.... I do not aim... at my *Ego* as an object for myself; I do not even direct an empty intention toward that *Ego* as toward an object presently out of my reach.... I do not aim at it as if it could someday be given [to] me but on the contrary in so far as it on principle flees me and will never belong to me.... [I]t is present to me as a self which I *am* without *knowing* it. (349-50)

This is why Sartre refers to the Look as "a revelation in emptiness:" "The shock of the encounter with the Other is for me a revelation in emptiness of the existence of my body outside as an in-itself for the Other" (461). The apprehension of my being-for-others "is the apprehension of

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correlatively, the apprehension of one adumbration of one's own consciousness as another consciousness).<sup>136</sup> Sartre doesn't say that the body-for-others is apprehended "emptily" when it is apprehended through the senses, but he does say that "the nature of *our body for us* entirely escapes us to the extent that we can take upon it the Other's point of view" (469). When first introducing perceiving one's body through the senses he says: "There is nothing in this new type of appearance which should disturb us or make us retract the preceding statements" (468).

myself as a nature although that very nature escapes me and is unknowable as such” (352).

It is through language that one comes to know one’s body-for-others:

[W]e attempt to learn our being through the revelations of language. Thus there appears a whole system of verbal correspondence by which we cause our body to be designated for us as it is for the Other by utilizing these designations to denote our body as it is for us.... [I]t is language which teaches me my body’s structures for the Other. (464)

In order to put to use what one learns from what others say, one must apply it to oneself as a psychic object:

Nevertheless it is necessary to realize that it is not on the unreflective plane that language with its meanings can slip in between my body and my consciousness which exists it.... In order that any knowledge which the Other has of my body and which he communicates to me by language may give to my body-for-me a structure of a particular type, it is necessary that this knowledge be applied to an object and that my body already be an object for me. (464)

Even in reflection, however, when one attempts to apprehend in oneself the characteristics that one has for the Other, one can do so only emptily:

Even when language has revealed that the Other considers me evil or jealous, I shall never have a concrete intuition of my evil or jealousy. These will never be more than fleeting notions whose very nature will be to escape me. I shall not apprehend my evil, but in relation to this or that particular act I shall escape myself, I shall feel my alienation or my flow toward... a being which I shall only be able to think emptily as evil and which nevertheless I shall *feel that I am*. (367, ellipsis in original)

One’s body-for-others is always apprehended as “escaping” one:

The illness (*mal*) which I suffer I can aim at in its In-itself; that is, precisely in its being-for-others. At this moment I *know* it; that is, I aim at it in its dimension of being which escapes me, at the face which it turns toward others, and my aim is impregnated with the wisdom which language has brought to me -- i.e., I utilize instrumental concepts which come to me from the Other, and which I should in no case have been able to form by myself or to think of directing upon *my* body. It is by means of the Other’s concepts that I *know* my body.... It is evident that the categories which I then apply to the *mal* constitute it *emptily*; that is, in a dimension which escapes me.... The body is this *mal* which escapes me toward new characteristics which I establish as limits and empty schemata of organization. (465)

*6e. The relationship between impure reflection, receiving the Look, and the apprehension of oneself as a psychophysical object*

The reflective apprehension of oneself as a psychophysical object depends on both the Look and impure reflection. These in turn depend on pre-reflective consciousness. I have been expressing the view that impure reflection constitutes the psychic object first, at least partially, and then uses the intuition of oneself as a body-for-others that comes with the Look in order to reconstitute this psychic object as psychophysical. This seems to me to be the best way to portray Sartre's view. For the first three hundred pages of B&N, he tries to consider the for-itself "in its isolation." These pages contain the only section devoted exclusively to reflection. As we have seen, this section makes several references to being-for-others, but says only that being-for-others is necessary to complete the "outline of an outside" that one "gives to oneself" in reflection. At no point does Sartre say that reflection could not occur without being-for-others, although he does say that it is an "abortive attempt" and that its product is a self-contradictory object: being-for-others is necessary for one to get far enough "outside" oneself so as to "know" oneself. Sartre speaks of the pure reflection upon which impure reflection is based as the second ekstasis, in which the "nothingness" separating consciousness from itself is greater than that in pre-reflective consciousness, but not as great as the schism between consciousness and one's being-for-others. The first section of the chapter on the body, where Sartre once again discusses the for-itself "before the intervention of the for-others," ends with a brief description of impure reflection as well. It is similar to the earlier discussion of reflection with its talk of psychic objects and their magical relations. Sartre again discusses reflection and its psychic objects without any mention of being-for-others, except to say that in order for the psychic body to be "known" rather than merely "suffered" he will have to speak of the body-for-others.

All this leads me to believe that impure reflection is possible without the Look. Most

important in this regard are Sartre's suggestions that the apprehension of one's being-for-others merely modifies the reflective apprehension of a psychic object:

On the reflective level where we are taking our position<sup>137</sup> -- i.e., before the intervention of the for-others -- the body is not explicitly and thematically given to consciousness. The reflective consciousness is consciousness *of* the illness (*mal*).... It is my body on a new plane of existence; that is, as the pure noematic correlate of a reflective consciousness. We shall call it a psychic body. It is not yet known in any way, for the reflection which seeks to apprehend the pain-consciousness is not yet cognitive.... In order to add cognitive structures to the body as it has been given to reflection, we will have to resort to the Other. We can not discuss this point at present, for it is necessary first to bring to light the structures of the body-for-others. (443)

The illness (*mal*), an "affective object," is apprehended by reflective consciousness prior to one's being for others, although "not explicitly and thematically." Apprehending one's being-for-others adds structures to the psychic body, which already "has been given to reflection."

The main way in which the apprehension of one's being-for-others "intervenes" and modifies the apprehension of oneself as a merely psychic object is through language. Sartre says very clearly that, in order for the knowledge that comes to one from others to be put to use for this purpose, "it is necessary that this knowledge be applied to an object and that my body already be an object for me" (464).

Overall, however, the picture that Sartre gives of the relationship between reflection and the Look is unclear. Some of the things Sartre says make it sound as if apprehending one's being-

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<sup>137</sup>Naturally Sartre has impure reflection and not pure reflection in mind here. This is clear from the context and stated explicitly on the bottom of page 440. If he were to speak of pure reflection the "of" in "consciousness of" would be italicized as it is here, since pure reflection is "thetic." Since pure reflection does not constitute a psychic object, however, it can only be consciousness *of* pain-consciousness, not consciousness *of* illness. (Incidentally the corresponding pre-reflective self-consciousness, pain-consciousness, would be written "consciousness (of) pain," with the parentheses indicating that the consciousness is non-thetic.) This passage comes from the end of the first section of the chapter on the body. This section is on the body-for-itself, the body as point of departure for action and as point of view, but on page 440 Sartre begins to talk about impure reflection and its object, which he now calls the "psychic body." His main example is a headache, which he calls an illness (*mal*), distinguishing it from the pain-consciousness (*douleur*) through which the headache is constituted. After discussing the body-for-others in the second section, Sartre returns to the example of an illness -- this time a stomachache -- in the final section of the chapter. When the illness is filled in by one's being-for-others and is thus able to be located in the stomach, he will call it a disease (*maladie*).

for-others is a necessary part of reflection:

If I am to be able to conceive of even one of my properties in the objective mode, then the Other is already given.... Thus this pure subject which by definition I am unable to know - - *i.e.*, to posit as an object -- is always *there* out of my reach and without distance whenever I try to grasp myself as object. (361-2)

The claim that the Other is already given whenever I even *try* to grasp myself as an object seems to contradict (forcefully) the claim that the body (or even the ego, for that matter) is already given as an object to reflective consciousness before the apprehension of one's being-for-others "intervenes" and "adds cognitive structures." Elsewhere Sartre says: "Being-for-others is a constant fact of my human reality, and I grasp it with its factual necessity in every thought, however slight, which I form concerning myself" (373). He also says that "a For-itself which would be wholly free from all For-others," if there were such a thing "would exist without even suspecting the possibility of being an object" (376), and that "even in reflection I assume the Other's point of view on my body" (465).

The only explanation I can come up with for these statements is to say that they occur in a context in which Sartre believes that it is clear that he is talking specifically about knowing, thinking about, or conceiving of oneself. These are to be contrasted with the notion living or existing one's body-for-itself, and with the notion of enduring or suffering one's psychic body. Similarly, Sartre may think that it is clear when he is talking about an "object" in the strong sense, namely, about a physical object or something else that one is distant enough from so as to know it, rather than merely about a quasi-object or an affective object.

In any case, we have seen that one or two quotations containing the words "reflection" and "object" will not settle anything. There are as many varieties of reflection in B&N as there are meanings for "object." There are several reasons why I prefer a reading that says that impure reflection is capable of constituting some sort of object, or at least an outline of an object, without the use of the Look. The main one is that the description of the constitution of psychic states that

does not rely on the apprehension of one's being-for-others -- the description given in TE and in the section of B&N on reflection -- is the one affirmed by Sartre most consistently throughout B&N. Sartre's references to being-for-others in the section on reflection show that he was at that point cognizant that this mode of being would play some role in the apprehension of oneself as an object, but he still maintained that some sort of apprehension of psychic objects occurs without the use of the Look. As we have seen, Sartre's remarks at the end of the section on the body-for-itself and in the section on the third ontological dimension of the body reinforce this claim. Sartre's view as a whole thus seems to fit together better under this reading: at crucial points Sartre says that being-for-others realizes the suggestion of an outside constituted in impure reflection, and that the apprehension of one's being-for-others intervenes, making the psychic body which is already an object for one into a knowable object. (In Chapter Six, we will see that one of the varieties of bad faith Sartre speaks about consists in constituting oneself as a merely psychic object.) When expressing that the Look affects one on two different levels, the reflective and the unreflective, Sartre seems to affirm that the psychic object has already been formed when the categories that come from the Other are applied to it:

The knowable structures of our psychic body... indicate its perpetual alienation. Instead of living this alienation we constitute it emptily by surpassing the lived facticity toward this quasi-object which is the psychic body and by once again surpassing this quasi-object which is *suffered* toward characters of being which on principle cannot be given to me and are simply signified.... [I]n the same way that a being-for-others haunts my facticity (which is non-thetically lived), so a being-an-object-for-others haunts -- as a dimension of escape from my psychic body -- the facticity constituted as a quasi-object for an accessory reflection.(465-8)

One's being-for-others, an invisible dimension of oneself, appears to pre-reflective consciousness in the experience of the Look. However, it is only by modifying the psychic object that one has constituted in mere impure reflection, that the Look is able to function in this latter way: impure reflection needs the help of the Look in order for the merely psychic object to be apprehended as psychophysical, and as independent of the reflective act. Likewise the Look needs



the help of impure reflection in order for one to apprehend one's body-for-others as an object in the midst of the world.

## **Chapter Four: Pure Reflection**

### **1. Introduction**

Of central importance to this dissertation is the relation between impure reflection and the apprehension of the third ontological dimension of the body, i.e., between the apprehension of oneself as a merely psychic object and of oneself as a psychophysical object among objects in the world. As we have seen, passages in Sartre suggest that the former grounds the latter. For Sartre the apprehension of the third ontological dimension of the body is grounded in receiving the Look, i.e., in the apprehension of another consciousness, qua consciousness, which is in turn equivalent to the apprehension of the second dimension of the body. If, as I suggested, the apprehension of the third dimension of the body is grounded both in this and in impure reflection, this leaves open the question of the relation between impure reflection and apprehending the Look. My view is that both of these are grounded in pure reflection, but are nevertheless independent of each other. That is, it is possible to receive the Look without impure reflection (in which case “an ‘I’ comes to inhabit unreflective consciousness”), and it is also possible to perform impure reflection (and thus possible to apprehend oneself, or one’s states, egoic acts or qualities as mere psychic objects) without being under the Look. But in both cases pure reflection also has a role to play.

I begin this chapter by mentioning a problem, raised by Kathleen Wider, with Sartre’s notion of pure reflection. Next I reconstruct Thomas Busch’s account of pure reflection, which emphasizes its more general importance in Sartre’s phenomenological ontology. Then I consider the relationships between pure reflection, anguish and nausea, and bad faith. After this, I discuss the revelation in pure reflection of three “immediate structures of the for-itself” – facticity, possibility and value – as opposed to their original, merely “haunting” presence in the field of pre-reflective consciousness.

## 2. Wider's Criticism of Sartre's Account of Pure Reflection

Wider distinguishes between four types of self-consciousness in B&N:

A profound difference exists between the self-consciousness of being-for-others and impure reflection, on the one hand, and the self-consciousness of pure reflection and pre-reflective consciousness, on the other. With being-for-others and impure reflection, self-consciousness involves the attempt to grasp the self as an object for consciousness. Although the nature of this attempt and the reason for its ultimate failure differ at each level, these levels are bound together by a common sense of self-consciousness as a consciousness of the self as an object. At the level of pure reflection and pre-reflective consciousness, self-consciousness no longer involves the attempt to grasp the self as an object. On these two levels the for-itself attempts to grasp itself as consciousness, and because consciousness just is, on Sartre's view, presence to the world, it is consciousness's attempt to be conscious of itself as consciousness of the world.<sup>138</sup>

Wider does not disagree with the part of Sartre's account which says that consciousness cannot succeed in its attempt to apprehend itself as an object. But after saying that Sartre acknowledges the failure of the attempts at self-consciousness in impure reflection and being-for-others, Wider talks about the *failure of Sartre's account* of pure reflection:

[T]he account of self-consciousness at the level of pure reflection fails because Sartre does not offer a characterization of reflective self-consciousness that keeps it distinct from the self-consciousness of pre-reflective consciousness, on the one hand, and from the attempt at self-consciousness on the level of impure reflection, on the other.<sup>139</sup>

Thus, according to Wider:

We are left either with an account of self-consciousness that is ambiguous because it fails to distinguish pure reflection from the self-consciousness of pre-reflective consciousness or with an account of self-consciousness that is unattainable because the self-consciousness of pure reflection would simply collapse into the failed attempt at self-consciousness on the level of impure reflection. Sartre's problem is that at the level of pure reflection he does not have a clear enough notion of a knowledge that isn't a subject/object relation or of a self-consciousness that isn't just pre-reflective to provide a clear account of the self-consciousness of pure reflection that distinguishes it from both pre-reflective consciousness and impure reflection.<sup>140</sup>

This is a serious problem.<sup>141</sup> The most obvious way of distinguishing between types of

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<sup>138</sup>Wider 72-3.

<sup>139</sup>Wider 73.

<sup>140</sup>Wider 85.

<sup>141</sup>Wider complains, rightfully, that when Sartre talks about the difference between pre-reflective

self-consciousness -- according to their objects -- may seem to be of no help in distinguishing pure reflection from the self-consciousness of pre-reflective consciousness, because consciousness -- presence to the world -- insofar as it is apprehended as such is not itself an object in either of these two forms of self-consciousness. I will suggest, however, that there is indeed a difference in one's field of consciousness in the two cases, without making consciousness, as such, an object in any sense that would be troublesome for Sartre.

As a side note, there is another way that Sartre would still be able to distinguish at least between the *concepts* of pre-reflective and pure reflective consciousness, even if it were not the case that two different sorts of mental acts were in question: "pure reflection" might simply be the term for the self-consciousness present in pre-reflective self-consciousness *insofar as it plays a role in impure reflection*. This could explain why there are different terms without requiring that Sartre have two versions of non-objectifying self-consciousness. The reason such a solution cannot work is that pure reflection, according to Sartre, is attained by a sort of katharsis with respect to impure reflection (218, 224). On the proposal just suggested, however, the most that could be attained by any sort of katharsis wouldn't be any sort of reflection at all. It would just be pre-reflective self-consciousness. It seems, therefore, that there must be a distinct act of pure reflection, an act that is somehow like one of impure reflection but lacking any psychic object. The problem is to say how the object of such an act is different from that of unreflected consciousness.

The solution has to do with those special qualities of objects I discussed in Chapter Three (Subsection 2b) -- "repulsive, attractive, delightful, useful, etc." -- of which Sartre says:

"Everything happens... as if these qualities were forces having a certain power over us." In pure

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consciousness and pure reflection he only makes obscure comments, saying such things as that "the reflective dissociation... is made by the deepening of the nothingness which separates the reflection from the reflecting" in unreflective consciousness (225). (Sartre is talking about impure reflection here,

reflection everything does *not* happen as if these qualities were forces having a certain power over us. This is the idea that I intend to pursue. As we will see, it turns out to fit nicely with what Sartre says about anguish.

Recall that Sartre goes on to say, in the passage just cited, that in “the case of reflection, and only in that case, affectivity is posited for itself, as desire, fear, etc. Only in the case of reflection can I think ‘I hate Peter,’ ‘I pity Paul,’ etc.” (TE, 58). But in the case of pure reflection, I do not think “I pity Paul.” As in unreflected consciousness, I apprehend Paul, for example, as “having-to-be-helped” (228). But this quality does not cling quite so tightly to him in pure reflection as in pre-reflective consciousness: I recognize that I am responsible for it. At the same time, on the other hand, I do not think that it is because I pity him that I apprehend him this way. That is what happens in impure reflection: one apprehends the state of pitying Paul as the source of one’s consciousness of Paul’s having-to-be-helped. In pure reflection, by contrast, one apprehends the consciousness reflected-on but does not constitute the pity through it. One apprehends one’s consciousness of Paul and of his having-to-be-helped without attributing any source whatsoever to it. It is just that this quality is now present to consciousness in a different way. In other words, the reflective quality of pure reflection consists in a certain sort of alteration of the field of consciousness. But just to that extent, it involves a certain sort of alteration in consciousness’s relation to itself.

Naturally this is only a sketch of a response to Wider’s challenge. A genuine response will require a description of the field of pre-reflective consciousness (with its correlative presence to self) and a description of the field of pure reflection. Unfortunately Sartre says very little directly about pure reflection in B&N and what he does say is extremely obscure. However, some of what says about anguish, earlier in B&N, can help us here. The reasons for thinking that what

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however.)

Sartre says about anguish is applicable to pure reflection come primarily from B&N. Sartre says that anguish is the “reflective apprehension of freedom by itself” (78) and distinguishes between a pure anguish, “born as a structure of the reflective consciousness” in “each instance of reflection” (78), and an anguish that is covered over by bad faith. Likewise, in the section on reflection Sartre says that impure reflection is a form of bad faith (225, 226) that “includes pure reflection as its original structure” (224). Already in TE, however, anguish and pure reflection are associated through the idea of Husserl’s *epoche*. As we will see in the next section, Thomas Busch compares pure reflection to the *epoche* while noting that, by contrast, Sartre thinks of this reflection not as “an erudite procedure” which one performs at will but as “an anxiety [*angoisse*<sup>142</sup>] which is imposed upon [one]” (TE, 103). Sartre’s discussion of anguish in B&N bears out this interpretation. Anguish, we are told, “arises from the negation of the appeals of the world.” It accompanies (or perhaps *is*) the movement from the “world of the immediate” or the “plane of action,” to the “plane of reflection” at which “[one’s] enterprise is held at a distance from [one],” a movement which involves “disengag[ing] oneself from the world” (78).

### 3. Busch and the Importance of Pure Reflection

In an article entitled “Sartre’s Use of the Reduction” and the first few chapters of his book, *The Power of Consciousness and the Force of Circumstance in Sartre’s Philosophy*, Thomas Busch pays close attention to Husserl’s influence on Sartre. In the article he says that “Sartre’s philosophy can be seen as an extension of Husserl’s programmatic,”<sup>143</sup> and accuses many commentators for “stressing his differences from Husserl or simply ignoring his phenomenology.”<sup>144</sup> In chapter one I criticized Morris and Monasterio for doing the latter.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>142</sup>This is the word Barnes translates as “anguish.”

<sup>143</sup>Busch, *Use of reduction* 18.

<sup>144</sup>Busch, *Use of reduction* 17.

<sup>145</sup>Maurice Natanson is a good example of the former, stressing the differences between Sartre and Husserl, in particular with regard to the phenomenological reduction. Natanson doesn’t mention pure reflection.

Busch's commentaries stand out among those written by Anglo-American philosophers because of the emphasis they place on "pure reflection," which Busch relates to Husserl's phenomenological reduction.

The article stresses the limited scope of B&N, that it is "a deliberately incomplete account of human activity."<sup>146</sup> In particular:

It is crucial to note that having introduced the reduction as a foundation of ethics, Sartre, in BN, does not proceed to discuss the recovery of responsibility or the constitution of values consequent upon reduction, but instead proceeds to discuss impure reflection.<sup>147</sup>

He notes that Sartre himself later referred to B&N as an "eidetic of Bad Faith."<sup>148</sup>

In another article, "Sartre: The Phenomenological Reduction and Human Relationships," Busch says that commentators misunderstand both B&N and *The Critique of Dialectical Reason* because "these books have not been read, as they should be, within the context of Sartre's interpretation of the phenomenological reduction."<sup>149</sup> Busch says: "Sartre's ontology resolves a question that was unresolved in TE: why does consciousness flee itself, identifying with the ego?"<sup>150</sup> This is consistent with his remark in "Sartre's Use of the Reduction." Impure reflection

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Maurice Natanson, *A Critique of Jean-Paul Sartre's Ontology* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Studies, 1951): 65-74. Zaner, after noting that Sartre rejects the reduction because it makes the intended object "a mere irreality" (see Section Two of Chapter Two, above), says nothing about pure reflection (Zaner 68). Debra Bergoffen has noted the relationship between pure reflection and the phenomenological reduction. Debra Bergoffen, "Sartre's Transcendence of the Ego: a Methodological Reading," *Philosophy Today* 22 (1978): 244-251. So has Jeanson (Jeanson 34), who also says, "To the extent one can separate Sartre's method of investigation from its object, he is furnished with the former by Husserl and with the latter by Heidegger" (Jeanson 82). Wider says only that "Sartre was profoundly influenced by Husserl in his phenomenological method," and that "his interpretation and use of this method differ from Husserl's in extremely important ways" (Wider 42).

<sup>146</sup>Busch, *Use of Reduction* 27.

<sup>147</sup>Thus Anderson notes that the "alternative to bad faith, which is called *authenticity*, is not spelled out" in B&N (*Ethics*, 16)

<sup>148</sup>Jean-Paul Sartre, "Merleau-Ponty," in *Situations*, trans. Benita Eisler (New York: Fawcett, 1965): 161.

<sup>149</sup>Busch, *Relationships* 55.

<sup>150</sup>Busch, *Relationships* 57. What about the nature of consciousness *allows* it to flee itself is undoubtedly an ontological question, and one of the main queries of B&N. We must be more careful with the question of what it is about the nature of consciousness that *motivates* it to flee itself. At one point, when speaking of the fact that the for-itself "surpasses its facticity... toward the in-itself which it would be if it were able to be its own foundation," Sartre says: "This may be translated into terms already psychological -- and hence inaccurate although perhaps clearer -- by saying that the for-itself attempts to escape its factual existence."

is the type of reflective activity in which consciousness “flees itself” and identifies with the ego, an activity based on bad faith.<sup>151</sup> It is contrasted with pure reflection, in which consciousness recovers responsibility. According to Busch, “The key to understanding Sartre’s unique, and consistent, philosophical viewpoint is his first philosophical work, *The Transcendence of the Ego*,”<sup>152</sup> since it is here that Sartre first talks about pure and impure reflection in depth.<sup>153</sup>

I think Busch is correct on all counts -- about the role that Sartre imagined pure reflection would have in grounding an ethics, about the focus of B&N, and about the similarity between pure reflection and Husserl’s phenomenological reduction:

Sartre distinguishes two opposed attitudes -- the attitude of impure reflection or flight, whereby consciousness attempts to identify itself with its constituted product (the Ego), and the attitude of pure reflection, whereby consciousness grasps itself as the constitutive source of the Ego. These attitudes roughly correspond to Husserl’s natural and phenomenological attitudes, although the irony of TE is that Husserl is accused of naively retaining the Ego within transcendental consciousness.<sup>154</sup>

Thus, according to Busch, Sartre’s view is that Husserl made the mistake of identifying the ego as the source of consciousness. Sartre says that “nothing can be the source of consciousness but consciousness itself” (TE, 52).

As we have seen, Sartre’s view is that impure reflection involves a degradation of consciousness. Busch compares that degradation to the adoption of the natural attitude:

As Husserl had depicted the natural attitude, it involved a *loss* of subjectivity, in the sense that consciousness, in lived experience, did not notice itself as constituting its objects.

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He continues: “But in order to lessen the danger of a psychological interpretation of the preceding remarks, let us note that the for-itself is not *first* in order to attempt *later* to attain being; in short we must not conceive of it as an existent which would be provided with tendencies as this glass is provided with certain particular qualities. The pursuing flight is not a given which is added on to the being of the for-itself. The for-itself *is* this very flight” (472). At times Sartre personifies consciousness.

<sup>151</sup> As we will soon see, according to Busch, Sartre believes there is a bad faith that exists at the level of unreflective consciousness, and that impure reflection is first based upon, and then reinforces, this bad faith. I disagree.

<sup>152</sup>Busch, *Relationships* 55.

<sup>153</sup>Sartre actually made the distinction in an earlier work, and even spoke of the “purifying reflection of the phenomenological reduction.” Jean-Paul Sartre, *The Emotions: Outline of a Theory*, trans. Bernard Frechtman (New York: The Wisdom Library, 1948): 91.

<sup>154</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 11.



The phenomenological reduction *restored* subjectivity to its constitutive function vis-a-vis the world. If, as Sartre has argued, the Ego is transcendent to consciousness, the belief that consciousness is identical to the Ego is itself a natural attitude belief. In terms of Sartre's position, this means that the natural attitude involves in some sense a *loss* of freedom.... This loss of freedom, or *self-alienation*, which is its true name, is not ontological. Transcendental consciousness, in its being remains thoroughly free, so that it must put itself into a state (natural attitude) in which it diminishes itself, or better, hides itself.<sup>155</sup>

Accordingly, pure reflection corresponds to Husserl's *epoche*, in which the assumptions of the natural attitude are bracketed. These concern the ontological status of various objects of consciousness: assumptions about the ontological status of the physical objects one encounters -- e.g., that they are part of a physical world which exists independently of one's apprehension of it -- are put out of play, allowing one to ask how these objects are constituted as objects of consciousness (*Ideas*, ). Similarly, to think of the ego as the source of consciousness is, as Busch puts it, "a natural attitude belief."

Sartre feels that the ego is a product maintained by reflective consciousness, and that pure reflection -- which is also called non-accessory reflection, because it doesn't add anything to unreflective consciousness, and purifying reflection because it removes the impurities (i.e., the ego and other psychic objects) added by accessory reflection -- shows us so:

It is possible for consciousness, through the *epoche*, to move itself from its alienation. Consciousness can "suddenly" produce itself "on the pure reflective level" where it sees itself "maintaining the ego outside itself by a continuous creation" (TE,101). The "pure reflective level" is equated with effecting a phenomenological reduction. For Sartre, effecting the *epoche* is equivalent to a veritable *conversion* (in B&N he will refer to it as a "radical conversion") of one's life. This is what he means toward the end of TE when he tells us that "the *epoche* is not simply an intellectual method, an erudite procedure: it is an anxiety which is imposed on us and which we cannot avoid" (TE,103). The *epoche*, experienced as anguish, is the grasp of consciousness by itself as excluding any pre-given contents, such as an Ego, which would restrict its activities.<sup>156</sup>

Although neither in pre-reflective consciousness nor in impure reflection does one recognize one's freedom, and both are thus comparable to Husserl's "natural attitude," prior to

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<sup>155</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 10.

reflection the field of consciousness does not contain any psychic objects. Thus the natural attitude belief about the ego, unlike the natural attitude belief about physical objects, is not present in pre-reflective consciousness, simply because the ego is not an object of such consciousness.<sup>157</sup>

On Busch's view there is bad faith on the level of pre-reflective consciousness, and pure reflection can change pre-reflective consciousness. The alienation Busch mentions occurs on this level. These passages do not mention pre-reflective consciousness, but Busch refers to it when raising a question about anguish and bad faith, noting that Sartre "consistently gives the pre-reflective ontological priority over the reflective, since the latter could not exist without the former."<sup>158</sup> Busch's question is about whether pure reflection is necessary to ground bad faith: "[H]ow do we come to know that we are 'totally free,' the requirement for flight behavior?"<sup>159</sup> Busch sees a tension here. While he believes that bad faith exists at the level of pre-reflective consciousness as "an immediate behavior with respect to freedom," it seems to him that bad faith would be impossible without pure reflection. Consciousness cannot attempt to hide from itself that of which it is not yet aware:

In *Being and Nothingness*, bad faith, as a flight from freedom, presupposes its knowledge. Thus, prior to discussing bad faith, Sartre speaks of an anguished grasp of oneself as "totally free" and the source of all meaning and value. Bad faith may well be the "immediate behavior with respect to freedom" (BN, 40), but it would appear that at least a momentary flash of pure reflection grounds its possibility.<sup>160</sup>

I see no reason not to say that pure reflection grounds the possibility of bad faith. As we

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<sup>156</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 11.

<sup>157</sup>This gives us a sense of Sartre's mixed feelings toward the phenomenological reduction. While we may be able to bracket the existence of a given physical object, we cannot bracket either of the senses of *being* presented to us by unreflective consciousness generally -- i.e., the sense of the being of the objects of unreflective consciousness and the sense of being of unreflective consciousness itself. On the other hand, we can bracket the sense of *being* that the ego and other psychic objects present to reflective consciousness. We can bracket the whole psychic world -- this is what pure reflection, or "purifying reflection," is. As we will see, in addition to being-in-itself and being-for-itself, our being-for-others also contains an unbracketable facticity (362-3).

<sup>158</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 36.

<sup>159</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 105, n.15.

<sup>160</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 36.

have seen, Busch identifies pure reflection with the *epoche* and quotes Sartre as saying that the latter is “an anxiety.” And as I mentioned at the end of the previous section, the discussion of anguish in B&N is reminiscent of Husserl’s discussion of the *epoche*.<sup>161</sup> It seems to me that anguish is in fact an aspect of pure reflection for Sartre, if not identical to it. However the quotation from B&N cited in the above passage says that bad faith is the immediate behavior with respect to freedom, rather than with respect to anguish. The problem is that, on my view, anguish, as the reflective apprehension of freedom is necessary to ground bad faith. But the passage to which Busch is referring is misquoted. It actually reads: “Everything takes place, in fact, as if our essential and immediate behavior with respect to *anguish* is flight” (78, my italics).<sup>162</sup>

The other option, Busch notes, would be that pre-reflective self-consciousness, the self-consciousness present in any act of unreflective consciousness, already gives one enough of a sense of one’s own freedom for one to be motivated to put oneself into bad faith. Busch seems to prefer this option, or is at least unwilling to give up the idea that there is bad faith on the pre-reflective level.<sup>163</sup> But Sartre’s discussion of anguish, which I examine in the following section,

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<sup>161</sup>Busch himself refers to this section when speaking of Sartre’s use of the *epoche* in B&N. See Busch, *Use of Reduction* 25.

<sup>162</sup>Page 40 as cited by Busch.

<sup>163</sup>Sartre’s confusing chapter on bad faith is no help. In it, Sartre says: “Have we not shown indeed that in bad faith human reality is constituted as a being which is what it is not and which is not what it is?” (107) This seems to support Busch’s reading. Anderson sides with Busch. He speaks of a “bad faith found at the heart of the primitive non-thetic project” to be God. And, like Busch, sees impure reflection as a “prolongation” of this bad faith (*Ethics*, 52). Similarly Jeanson says that “‘bad faith’ in the ontological sense of ‘non-coincidence of self with self’ is a disease of consciousness, if not its very mode of existence” (SPM, 135). But Sartre often says that this non-coincidence is *what makes bad faith possible*. For example, in the conclusion to the chapter on bad faith Sartre says: “If bad faith is possible, it is because it is an immediate permanent threat to every project of the human being; it is because consciousness conceals in its being a permanent risk of bad faith. The origin of this risk is the fact that consciousness simultaneously is to be what it is not and not to be what it is” (116). Also, Sartre says in a lecture: “the state of bad faith and poisoned consciousness is superior, *a priori*, to immediate consciousness.” Jean-Paul Sartre, “Consciousness of Self and Knowledge of Self,” trans. Mary Ellen and Nathaniel Lawrence, *Readings in Existential Phenomenology*, ed. Nathaniel Lawrence and Daniel O’Connor (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967): 141. I take it that bad faith is superior because it at least involves pure reflection. But in any case, if it is superior it is at least different. (Jeanson, by the way, said shortly before the remark quoted above that “Sartre characterizes [subjectivity] as inherently *susceptible* to bad faith [Jeanson 130, my emphasis].)

shows that anguish is one degree more reflective than pre-reflective consciousness, and suggests that this degree of reflection reveals what bad faith attempts to reconceal. The tension Busch sees is created by his insistence that there can be bad faith on the level of pre-reflective consciousness, a claim that ought to be rejected.

Questions about “grounding” and “ontological priority,” however, ought to be kept distinct from questions about motivation. The ontological questions are about what occurs at the most basic level of consciousness, and what requires the second and third degree consciousnesses based upon this most basic level. As we saw in the previous chapter (Subsection 6e), one topic of possible dispute is whether the Look (third degree consciousness) is required for the apprehension of psychic objects. The question here, whether bad faith requires pure reflection (second degree consciousness), is of the same sort.

It is clear that pre-reflective self-consciousness, the “presence to self” of unreflected consciousness, grounds the possibility of both pure reflection and bad faith. It is also clear that pure reflection, as a component of impure reflection, is ontologically prior to the latter. Busch notes this as well: “Sartre does claim that pure reflection is ‘the original form of reflection’ and ‘that on whose foundation impure reflection appears’”<sup>164</sup> And there is no doubt that impure reflection is a form of bad faith (225, 226). But this leaves open the question of whether there is a more basic form, which does not require pure reflection. Busch says there is, noting the tension this creates: doesn’t all bad faith require pure reflection’s apprehension of freedom to ground it? Busch seems to find a form of bad faith below pure reflection, in pre-reflective consciousness’s effort to ground itself:

Impure reflection arises out of the natural inclination of reflection as such to “recover itself”.... The “recovery” would be to gather itself together so as to found itself.... *Reflection is a second effort as, supposedly, bad faith is a first effort* [my italics]. The “recovery” aimed at in bad faith is the ontological self-foundation or project of being God

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<sup>164</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 105, n.15.

or necessary being.... Sartre establishes that, since the pre-reflective consciousness is present to self, it *lacks* identity with itself, and that it *desires* identity with itself. Human *action* thus is viewed as aiming at the ideal *value* of achieving the identity of self while being the self-conscious (and free) choice of self. This necessary being would both *be* a self and make itself be that self.... Under the desire to be necessary, the human existent can lie to itself about its ambiguous constitution of freedom/facticity, try to consider itself as a fixed, finished being, and avoid responsibility for its continuous self-definition.<sup>165</sup>

When Sartre himself speaks of reflection as a “second effort by the for-itself,” the first effort is consciousness’s “first fissure,” the first of the three ekstases in which consciousness stands out from its being (395). In regard to the first ekstasis, Sartre says that *the in-itself* is attempting to found itself (133), removing any implication that consciousness must already exist for the first effort to be made. The second ekstasis is pure reflection. The third is the look:

[R]eflection as the effort of a for-itself to recover a for-itself which it is in the mode of non-being is a stage of nihilation intermediate between the pure and simple existence of the for-itself and existence for-others; (217)

Sartre refers to the first effort as “the pure and simple existence of the for-itself.” As far as I know, Sartre never refers to this effort as a type of bad faith.

At the close of chapter one, when introducing the term “bad faith,” Sartre says:

[T]he flight from anguish is only a mode of becoming conscious of anguish.... Yet to flee anguish and to be anguish can not be exactly the same thing. If I am anguish in order to flee it, that presupposes that I can decenter myself in relation to what I am, that I can be anguish in the mode of “not being it,” that I can dispose of a nihilating power at the heart of anguish itself. This nihilating power nihilates anguish in so far as I flee it and nihilates itself in so far as *I am anguish in order to flee it*. This attitude is what we call *bad faith*. (83)

Bad faith is a flight from anguish, a flight from the reflective apprehension of freedom that occurs in what, later in B&N, is called pure reflection. The chapter on bad faith that follows, however, is difficult to interpret and can easily lead one to think that there is a form of bad faith below the level of any sort of reflective consciousness. I take the following quotation to provide further evidence that Busch believes there to be a form of bad faith that is prior to impure reflection:

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<sup>165</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 32.

“impure reflection and bad faith are tied together in a circular relation. As long as one is under the spell of the desire for necessity, reflection will be accomplice to this desire.”<sup>166</sup> In other words, the desire for necessity, which Busch associates with bad faith at the pre-reflective level, motivates one to reflect impurely. On my view, by contrast, pre-reflective consciousness is always “under the spell of the desire for necessity.”

Although what I am disputing is whether Sartre refers to pre-reflective consciousness’s desire to be its own foundation as a type of bad faith, the difference is not merely verbal. If I am incorrect pure reflection, in its “purifying role, involves changing the very nature of pre-reflective consciousness. Busch makes it sound as if after conversion he identifies with pure reflection, pre-reflective consciousness will cease to have “the ideal *value* of achieving the identity of self while being the self-conscious (and free) choice of self.”<sup>167</sup> I agree that pure reflection is a radical change in ordinary consciousness, delivering one from the natural attitude, at least with respect to psychic objects, but I do not think it changes pre-reflective consciousness. Pre-reflective consciousness remains a lack of being and a desire to be. It is just that, in pure reflection, one refuses to participate in pre-reflective consciousness’s urge: “It is on the reflective level only that we can attempt an *epoche*, a putting between parentheses, only there that we can refuse what Husserl calls the *mitmachen*” (122).<sup>168</sup> That is, only on the reflective level can consciousness refuse to take part in affirming the mind-independent character of various objects of consciousness (the relevant ones here being one’s own states). Naturally Busch agrees that the *epoche* begins on the reflective level: he says that pure reflection is Sartre’s version of the *epoche*. But, again, he seems to be suggesting that pure reflection can purify consciousness of a bad faith that already

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<sup>166</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 36-7.

<sup>167</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 32.

<sup>168</sup>Busch refers to this quotation when speaking of Sartre’s use of the *epoche* in B&N (Busch, *Use of Reduction* 25). In this article, however, he doesn’t say anything implying that bad faith exists at the level of pre-reflective consciousness, or that pure reflection can purify consciousness at this level.

exists in pre-reflective consciousness, thereby restoring a sense of freedom to pre-reflective consciousness and rescuing it from its alienation. This quotation, however, suggests that this *epoché* never reaches down to the pre-reflective level. On my view it does not need to: pre-reflective consciousness never loses its sense of freedom; alienation and self-degradation occur only on the basis of reflection in the first place.

After saying, “it would appear that at least a momentary flash of pure reflection grounds [bad faith’s] possibility,” Busch refers to Sartre’s *Notebooks for an Ethics*:

By the time he worked on the *Cahiers*, however, his mind was made up: “Reflection arises originally as accessory [*complice*]... Pure reflection is necessarily posterior to impure reflection” (C, 18). Sartre accompanies this by holding that bad faith necessarily arises before authenticity: “I do not deny that there is a nature, that is to say, one begins by flight and the inauthentic” (C, 13).<sup>169</sup> The uncharacteristic use of “nature” in this context refers to the desire to be necessary which haunts pre-reflective consciousness.<sup>170</sup>

But this does not necessarily contradict the idea that pure reflection is the inner structure of impure reflection and thus in a sense “precedes” it. For it is arguable that in the quotation from the *Notebooks* “pure reflection” refers to what one might rather call *pure* pure reflection, i.e., pure reflection that is not functioning as part of impure reflection.<sup>171</sup> This seems to be just what he says in B&N: “Pure reflection... is that on whose foundation impure reflection appears, it is that also which is never first *given*; and it is that which must be won by a sort of katharsis” (218). It may be the case, however, that until he began writing the section on reflection, over one hundred pages

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<sup>169</sup>Heidegger, by the way, recognizes an “undifferentiated mode” prior to the distinction between inauthentic and authentic. I take pre-reflective consciousness to be in this undifferentiated mode while Busch seems inclined to say that it is in bad faith. In B&N Sartre says: “It is not... through unauthenticity that human reality loses itself in the world. For human reality, being-in-the-world means radically to lose oneself in the world through the very revelation which causes there to be a world -- that is, to be referred without respite, without even a possibility of “a purpose for which” from instrument to instrument with no recourse save the reflective revolution” (275). I take Sartre’s position in both works to be the same: consciousness is “lost in the world” (but not in bad faith) prior to reflection, and impure reflection occurs before pure reflection.

<sup>170</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 36.

<sup>171</sup>It would be nice if the terms “pure reflection” and “purifying reflection” could be made to correspond to different things -- e.g., if “pure reflection” were used only to refer to the portion of impure reflection which provides the initial intuition which serves as the basis for the constitution of the psychic object, and “purifying reflection” were used whenever Sartre wanted to refer to *pure* pure reflection. But I don’t think

after he had discussed anguish and bad faith, Sartre hadn't decided that impure reflection occurs before (pure) pure reflection. In any case, Busch goes on:

If pure reflection is subsequent to impure, there remains the question of how consciousness is aware that it is totally free, which is the necessary condition for flight behavior. One possible explanation is to push the issue on to the pre-reflective consciousness.<sup>172</sup>

It is true that the question of what motivates impure reflection has not been answered. But to say that pure reflection is ontologically prior to impure reflection is one thing; to say that pure reflection is the motivation behind impure reflection is another. Sartre has made it clear that pre-reflective consciousness is ontologically prior to pure reflection, which is in turn ontologically prior to impure reflection. It is also clear that reflection of neither sort would occur if pre-reflective consciousness were ontologically successful in the "effort" constituting its original upsurge, i.e., if it were able to ground its being. Further, we have established that pure reflection does not occur first and motivate impure reflection as a response: consciousness does not first apprehend its freedom in pure reflection, and then respond by putting itself into bad faith. It is true that pure reflection reveals something that bad faith wants to conceal, to keep concealed, or to reconceal -- that consciousness is not its own foundation. But pre-reflective consciousness's motivation for reflection in general is its desire to be its own foundation. The question why impure reflection occurs first -- i.e., why pure reflection first appears as a part of impure reflection -- may be one that Sartre just doesn't answer.<sup>173</sup>

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The crucial questions for examining the problems raised by Busch and Wider are about

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Sartre is very careful with the former term.

<sup>172</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 37.

<sup>173</sup>That pure reflection occurs at all seems to be a mystery to Sartre. In TE, immediately after saying that pure reflection (or the *epoche*) is "an anxiety [*angoisse*] which is imposed on us and which we cannot avoid," Sartre says: "it is both a pure event of transcendental origin and an ever possible accident of our daily life" (TE, 103).



the difference between the object of pre-reflective consciousness and the object of pure reflection.

The puzzle regarding the latter is that it contains no psychic objects, yet it is in some sense reflective. The puzzle of pre-reflective self-consciousness is the same: in what sense can it be self-consciousness if it is not consciousness of the ego or of one's states or qualities? I began to suggest an answer in Chapter Three. The first part of that answer is the recognition that in any concrete instance, the object of consciousness for Sartre is a whole field of objects. Indeed, the object of consciousness is, in a way, the world itself. The second part is that the objects in these fields are apprehended as having consciousness-implying qualities. For example, not only does one apprehend the apple as red and round, unusually large, or sweet and juicy, but also as seen, felt, smelled, tasted, as existing independently of the act of perceiving it, as to be eaten, to be looked at, to be cut up or baked, to be appreciated for its beauty, to be looked at with curiosity, or to be examined so as to discover whether it is real or made of wax. All these latter qualities refer not only to the apple but also to ways of apprehending or dealing with it. Sartre's discussion of anguish will help us to discover the way in which consciousness-implying qualities are apprehended differently in "the world of the immediate" and on "the reflective plane."<sup>174</sup>

#### **4. Anguish, Nausea, and Pure Reflection**

The remark at the end of *The Transcendence of the Ego*, emphasized by Busch and Bergoffen, describes pure reflection as an anxiety imposed upon one, rather than an intellectual procedure performed at will: pure reflection, the second ekstasis, occurs spontaneously, like the original occurrence of consciousness upon which it depends. There is no reason for it: it happens

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<sup>174</sup>Sartre tends to use more act-oriented (or "noetic") language in this section, speaking of an anguished *apprehending* of possibilities rather than of a transformation whereby one's *world*, and *its* possibilities, somehow take on a new character. I do not see this aspect of the discussion as a problem: as long as we do not think of apprehending the possibility of eating the apple as including an apprehension of oneself or one's intentions as psychic or psychophysical objects, it is the same as apprehending the apple as possibly to be eaten. The difference in one's attitude toward one's possibilities, depending upon whether one is in the world of the immediate or on the reflective plane, can be described either in noetic or noematic (object-oriented) terms. Ordinarily Sartre's language reflects his preference for noematic analysis. But this is not

to being-for-itself just as consciousness, the first ekstasis, happens to being.<sup>175</sup>

As we have seen, impure reflection is already a step beyond this “original form of reflection,” which is very similar, if not identical, to what Sartre calls anguish, the For-itself’s reflective apprehension of its freedom -- its activity of bringing nonbeing into the world: “In freedom the human being *is* his own past (as also his own future) in the form of nihilation.... [I]t is in anguish that man gets the consciousness of his freedom” (65).

Sartre identifies human being, consciousness, and freedom, so he sometimes says that anguish is freedom’s apprehension of itself, rather than one’s awareness of one’s freedom: “Anguish... is the reflective apprehension of freedom by itself” (78). He also says that “we *are* anguish” (82). In any case, since to be for-itself is to transcend facticity, it may seem that anguish is the name for one’s apprehension of oneself as transcending activity. However, anguish is a concrete revelation of one’s mode of being, not an abstract aspect of ordinary experience. It may be best to think of it as a feeling which inevitably accompanies pure reflection, or even as pure reflection itself.<sup>176</sup>

Reflection is originally the apprehension of oneself as a surpassing of facticity, and, in bad faith, one identifies with one of these aspects on the basis of this original (pure) reflection. “[Impure] reflection is in bad faith” (225), it “includes pure reflection but surpasses it and makes further claims” (218). Thus it is not surprising that long before referring to pure and impure reflection by name, Sartre distinguishes between “pure” and “impure” anguish:

We should not... conclude that being brought on to the reflective plane and envisaging one’s distant or immediate possibilities suffice to apprehend oneself in *pure* anguish. In each instance of reflection anguish is born as a structure of the reflective consciousness in

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so in the discussion of anguish.

<sup>175</sup>The “third ekstasis,” the upsurge of the Other, also occurs spontaneously, simply happening to one without cause or reason.

<sup>176</sup>Similar remarks apply to the term “nausea,” the apprehension of one’s facticity. However, while Sartre uses “anguish” to refer to a reflective apprehension, “nausea” is most often used to refer to a pre-reflective one.

so far as the latter considers consciousness as an object of reflection; but it still remains possible for me to maintain various types of conduct with respect to my own anguish -- in particular, patterns of flight. Everything takes place, in fact, as if our essential and immediate behavior with respect to anguish is flight. (78)

He goes on to relate what might be called “impure anguish” to the attitude of the psychological determinist:

Psychological determinism, before being a theoretical conception, is first an attitude of excuse, or if you prefer, the basis of all attitudes of excuse. It is reflective conduct with respect to anguish; it asserts that there are within us antagonistic forces whose type of existence is comparable to that of things. (78)

This “basis of all attitudes of excuse” is the type of bad faith that Sartre emphasizes, and the type to which impure reflection belongs.<sup>177</sup> It consists in treating one’s activity of surpassing as a part of what one already is, treating this activity as a part of the facticity of which it is a surpassing.<sup>178</sup>

Pure reflection, however, recognizes the true nature (or lack thereof) of the reflected-on consciousness -- i.e., that its present is a “lack,” that it is a fleeing of the past toward the future, and that its possibilities are “possible *presences to the world* beyond the given state of the world” (228, my italics). As we saw in Chapter Two, the reflected-on consciousness is an emptiness, an emptiness between the past and the future, and nothing but a presence to the world which is always becoming a presence to a different world. Pure reflection apprehends the reflected-on consciousness as such. Impure reflection, on the other hand, “...apprehends the ontological relation of the For-itself to its possibilities, but *as an object*. Thus the *act* rises as the virtual object of the reflective consciousness” (228).

The “ontological relation” is consciousness’s ever-changing relation to the world -- an emptiness becoming an always different emptiness. But in impure reflection the reflected-on

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<sup>177</sup>Since the term “impure reflection” is not introduced until much later in the book, and since Sartre isn’t careful with his terms, it is difficult to tell whether the other main form of bad faith, which is similar to “denial” in the psychoanalytic sense, also falls under the category of impure reflection.

<sup>178</sup>In Chapter Six I suggest that there are two species of the form of bad faith in which one degrades one’s transcending activity. One of these is what I referred to in Chapter Three as a more robust form of impure

consciousness to which the reflective consciousness is presence, is apprehended as *something* changing. For instance, impure reflection, one of the “types of conduct with respect to... anguish” mentioned above, apprehends thirst as a state, increasing or diminishing depending on whether one finds something to drink.

“Anguish” and “nausea” have special meanings for Sartre: “empirical nauseas” caused by the smell of spoiled meat or excrement are contrasted with some sort of nonempirical nausea, the latter being the basis for the former (445). This is what leads Manser to think of anguish and nausea as logical categories: “Anguish, like nausea, is a logical category, not an empirical one; it is not a contingent element of the psyche.”<sup>179</sup>

Nausea “accompanies me even in my efforts to get away from it,” and “it is on the foundation of this nausea that all concrete and empirical nauseas... are produced” (445). If anguish is similar to nausea in these respects, it too will follow one when one attempts to flee it (in bad faith), and will be the basis for the empirical anguish one experiences as the feeling that something important is in one’s own hands. The logical anguish, upon which empirical anguish is based, is an awareness of the perpetual choice of what is important: what is important is necessarily in one’s hands, because significance is assigned on the basis of what is in one’s hands. Logical anguish is indeed ever-present: “It is certain that we cannot overcome anguish, for we *are* anguish” (82).

Based on what Sartre says about non-empirical nausea, this anguish will be “a perpetual apprehension on the part of my for-itself” (444), presumably the apprehension of freedom. If this account is correct, even when one is getting a massage, experiencing physical pleasure and mental peace, one apprehends facticity and freedom in non-empirical nausea and anguish. In any case, physical pleasure and pain, if not forms of nausea, are like nausea in that they manifest facticity:

A dull and inescapable nausea perpetually reveals my body to my consciousness.

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reflection.

<sup>179</sup>Manser 57.

Sometimes we look for the pleasant or for physical pain to free ourselves from this nausea; but as soon as the pain and the pleasure are existed by consciousness, they in turn manifest its facticity and its contingency; and it is on the ground of this nausea that they are revealed. (445)

In the following passage, from an earlier section, Sartre compares the consciousness of facticity to the consciousness of freedom that occurs in anguish. But it is unclear whether he means to say that this consciousness of facticity also occurs in anguish:

I can not doubt that I am. But in so far as this for-itself as such could also not be, it has all the contingency of fact. Just as my nihilating freedom is apprehended in anguish, so the for-itself is conscious of its facticity. It has the feeling of its complete gratuity; it apprehends itself as being there *for nothing*, as being *de trop*. (132)

Although it is easy to see that Sartre is talking about what he elsewhere refers to as “nausea,” he does not use this word in the section from which this quotation is taken.

It is probably best to resist the temptation to search for the precise meanings of “nausea” and “anguish.” It is not necessary to determine whether Sartre thinks of pain and pleasure as types of nausea, i.e., whether (nonempirical) “nausea” is used to refer to any instance of apprehension by consciousness of its facticity. Likewise, it would be best to forego the attempt to figure out whether anguish and pure reflection are identical,<sup>180</sup> or if the one just inevitably accompanies the other. Undoubtedly, the notions are related to the revelation of oneself as facticity and as freedom.<sup>181</sup> What is most important is that both facticity and freedom are always manifested in some way in one’s experience, and that they can come to one’s explicit attention in certain other experiences.

Anguish and physical pain are examples of “privileged experiences” in which freedom and facticity come to the fore. Thus in regard to facticity, Sartre talks about “the very texture of

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<sup>180</sup>That these are identical is perhaps suggested by the first of the two consecutive quotations from p. 78, above, and the statement that “we are anguish.”

<sup>181</sup>Bergoffen seems to identify the *epoche*, nausea, and anguish: “Sartre asserts that the *epoche* which reveals the non-egological being of consciousness is a spontaneous non-egological mood, anxiety (later to be described as the nausea), not an egological, consciously chosen attitude (Bergoffen 246).”

consciousness,” “pure affective qualities” such as “pure grief,” “the pure agreeable,” “the pure disagreeable” (436). He says:

This “coenesthesia” rarely appears without being surpassed toward the world...; as such it can only with difficulty be studied in isolation. Yet there exist some privileged experiences in which it can be apprehended in its purity, in particular what we call “physical’ pain. (436)

Likewise, regarding anguish:

[T]he most common situations of our life, those in which we apprehend our possibilities as such by means of actively realizing them, do not manifest themselves to us through anguish because their very structure excludes anguished apprehension. Anguish in fact is the recognition of a possibility as *my* possibility; that is, it is constituted when consciousness sees itself cut from its essence by nothingness or separated from the future by its very freedom. (73)

We understand ourselves to be cut off from our futures when we move from the “plane of action” to the “plane of reflection.” Prior to this, we are aware of our futures only non-positionally. However, our situations and actions get their meaning through their reference to the future, and this vague awareness is sufficient to allow for them to be meaningful. Thus Sartre says: “In the act of tracing the letter which I am writing, the whole sentence, still unachieved, is revealed as a passive exigency to be written. It is the very meaning of the letters which I form” (74). But in unreflective consciousness the future situation at which we aim is not in clear view. We do not realize fully or explicitly that this future is one we are choosing. This is not because we think that it is necessary we pursue it, but because we are not asking whether or not it is necessary.<sup>182</sup> Sartre’s example is writing a book:

So long as I remain on the plane of action, the book to be written is only the distant and presupposed meaning of the act which reveals my possibilities to me. The book is only the implication of the action; it is not made an object and posited for itself; it does not “raise the question”; it is conceived neither as necessary nor contingent. It is only the permanent, remote meaning in terms of which I can understand what I am writing in the present. (75)

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<sup>182</sup> Again, the case of bad faith, “a reflective defense against anguish,” is different. As we have seen, Sartre refers to psychological determinism, according to which one must act as one does, as “the basis of all attitudes of excuse.”

On the plane of reflection, on the contrary, one actually “recognizes” one’s relationship to the past, present and future of one’s project, and the contingency of the project’s present and future. Sartre describes this recognition as a discovery of a certain “nothingness” that occurs when one moves to the plane of reflection:

In order for my freedom to be anguished in connection with the book which I am writing, this book must appear in its relation with me.... I must discover the nothingness which separates me from what I shall be: I discover that the permanent possibility of abandoning the book is the very condition of the possibility of writing it and the very meaning of my freedom. It is necessary that in the very constitution of the book as my possibility, I apprehend my freedom as being the possible destroyer in the present and in the future of what I am. That is, I must place myself on the plane of reflection. (75)

In this example, the value of writing the book is called into question. In general, when one discovers “the nothingness which separates [one] from what [one will] be,” all values are called into question:

My freedom is anguished at being the foundation of values while itself without foundation. It is anguished at the same time because values, due to the fact that they are essentially revealed to a freedom, can not disclose themselves without at the same time being “put into question,” for the possibility of overturning the scale of values appears complementarily as *my* possibility. (76)

In anguish one recognizes oneself to be cut off from the past as well as the future. Sartre’s example of “anguish in the face of the past” involves a compulsive gambler who has made a vow to quit, but

who, when he approaches the gaming table, suddenly sees all his resolutions melt away.... The earlier resolution of “not playing anymore” is always *there*, and in the majority of cases the gambler when in the presence of the gaming table, turns toward it as if to ask it for help.... But what he apprehends then in anguish is the total inefficacy of the past resolution. (70)

The notion of moving from the plane of action to the plane of reflection is reminiscent of Husserl’s idea of changing from the natural attitude to the phenomenological attitude. The correlate of the plane of action is the “world of the immediate”:

[I]n what we shall call the world of the immediate, which delivers itself to our unreflective

consciousness, we do not first appear to ourselves to be thrown subsequently into enterprises. Our being is immediately “in situation”; that is, it arises in enterprises and knows itself first in so far as it is reflected<sup>183</sup> in those enterprises. (77)<sup>184</sup>

Anguish, on the other hand, is “mediation,” in a sense that will be explained shortly. Sounding like Husserl describing the *epoche*, Sartre says that “it arises from the negation of the appeals of the world,” when one “disengages [one]self from the world”:

Anguish... is the reflective apprehension of freedom by itself. In this sense it is mediation, for although it is immediate consciousness of itself, it arises from the negation of the appeals of the world. It appears at the moment that I disengage myself from the world where I had been engaged -- in order to apprehend myself as a consciousness which possesses a pre-ontological comprehension of its essence and a pre-judicative sense of its possibilities. (78)

In contrast to this “secondary and mediated phenomenon,” ordinarily one does not recognize that it is one’s freedom that sustains one’s possibility and values:

Ordinarily... my attitude with respect to values is eminently reassuring. In fact I am engaged in a world of values. The anguished apperception of values as sustained in being by my freedom is a secondary and mediated phenomenon. (76)

In this discussion, which occurs in Part One of B&N, before the detailed analysis of being-for-itself in Part Two and long before the first detailed discussion of reflection, Sartre does not distinguish between the world of the immediate and the world we ordinarily experience. While the structures introduced by impure reflection -- e.g., headaches and desires -- are perfectly ordinary objects of experience, they are not part of the world of the immediate if this phrase is used, as it ought to be, to refer to the field of pre-reflective consciousness. However, at this point Sartre is

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<sup>183</sup>This “reflection of one’s being” in one’s enterprises is pre-reflective self-consciousness. Thus Sartre is using “knows” here simply as “apprehends,” not in the stricter sense in which he sometimes uses the word, as when, e.g., he says that pure reflection is only a quasi-knowledge because the reflecting and reflected-on consciousnesses are too tightly entwined for them to be in a genuine subject-object relationship.

<sup>184</sup>That one appears to oneself as already “thrown” into one’s situation is reminiscent of Heidegger’s notion of “thrownness.” Sartre says, “at each instant we are thrust into the world and engaged there” (75). There are obvious similarities between Sartre’s “immediate structures of the for-itself” and Heidegger’s essential features of Dasein. The most important of these are “thrownness,” “being-ahead-of-itself,” “fallenness,” and “care,” which correspond roughly to facticity, transcending, being-in-the-midst-of-the-world, and the circuit of selfness. In this early section Heidegger’s influence is apparent in Sartre’s metaphors. He speaks of one’s “projection of [one]self toward an original possibility” (76).



not concerned with the difference between the field of impure reflection and the field of pre-reflective consciousness, which includes no psychic objects.<sup>185</sup> In neither of these fields are one's values and possibilities apprehended as necessarily groundless and permanently in question, and that is all he cares about at this point. This is because he is devoting his attention to attacking one of his main enemies -- the attitude toward values and possibilities of those who are not anguished (or whose anguish is buried as the inner structure of impure reflection) -- and to working out some ideas, informed by the experience of anguish, about the relationship that one has to one's "original possibility" and to "value":

[Value] can be revealed only to an active freedom which makes it exist as value by the sole fact of recognizing it as such. It follows that my freedom is the unique foundation of values and that *nothing*, absolutely nothing, justifies me in adopting this or that particular value, or this or that particular scale of values. As a being by whom values exist, I am unjustifiable. (76)... Commonplace, everyday values, derive their meaning from an original projection of myself which stands as my choice of myself in a world. But to be exact, this projection of myself toward an original possibility, which causes the existence of values, appeals, expectations, and in general a world, appears to me only beyond the world as the meaning and the abstract, logical signification of my enterprises. For the rest, there exist concretely alarm clocks, signboards, tax forms, policemen, so many guard rails against anguish. But as soon as the enterprise is held at a distance from me, as soon as I am referred to myself because I must await myself in the future, then I discover myself suddenly as the one who gives its meaning to the alarm clock, the one who by a signboard forbids himself to walk on a flowerbed. (76-7)

Sartre is most concerned to distinguish the anguished apprehension of value in pure reflection from its "eminently reassuring" apprehension in either pre-reflective consciousness or impure reflection. On page seventy-eight (in the passage in which he speaks of *pure* anguish, quoted above) he first notes that there is a difference between what he will come to call pure and impure reflection. Until he does this, distinguishing between pre-reflective consciousness and impure reflection would get in the way of the more important distinction.

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<sup>185</sup>This is the distinction which, in Section Three of this chapter, I criticized Busch for failing to make.

## 5. Selfness in the World of the Immediate

### 5a. *Immediate Structures of the For-itself*

In the first chapter of Part Two, “Immediate Structures of the For-itself,” Sartre discusses the essential features of the world of unreflective experience. By “immediate structures” I take him to mean that he wants to limit the discussion to experience unmediated by reflective consciousness or by the Other. He will talk only about what is in experience prior to reflection and the Look. The chapter is divided into five sections. The first, “Presence to Self,” is about the translucency of the act of consciousness. The last, “The Self and the Circuit of Selfness,” is about how the field of unreflective consciousness reflects the consciousness apprehending it. The middle three sections -- “Facticity,” “Value,” and “Possibility” -- form a group, corresponding to three other universal structures of experience: the “existing” (or “lack”), the “lacked,” and the “lacking.”

All five structures are part of every experience. In unreflective consciousness, they are not themselves experienced in the way that the objects, persons, and events *in* the field of instrument-objects are. The immediate structures are structures *of* the field of unreflective experience. The structures can be spoken of as structures of what is experienced or as structures of the experience itself. So long as we are talking about consciousness, being-for-itself, experience, every structure can be spoken of either (noematically) as a structure of the world or (noetically) as a structure of the experience of a world.

Prior to the Look and on the pre-reflective level, objects, in a sense, point back at one, indicating one as a transcending of facticity. To emphasize the way in which they indicate one as facticity, we can talk about their shape, size, location and texture, for example, and how these qualities indicate one as a point of view. On the other hand, if we want to emphasize the ways in which they indicate one as a transcending of this facticity, we can talk about the way in which they

appear in light of a not-yet-existing state of affairs, about the way in which the dishes in the sink appear as ones that ought to be washed, etc: the situation “reflects to me both my facticity and my freedom; on the occasion of a certain objective structure in the world which surrounds me, it refers my freedom to me in the form of tasks to be freely done” (348).

Although in unreflective consciousness one is not explicitly aware of the immediate structures of experience, they inform the object of awareness. It might be better to say that the general structure of experience informs that of which one is aware, and the description of each particular structure helps to understand this general structure. Although one is not explicitly aware of the general structure, one is aware of it at least to the extent that it structures the field of consciousness. “Presence-to-self” refers to one’s pre-reflective awareness of this general structure.

At the end of Part Two, “Being-for-itself,” of which “Immediate Structures of the For-itself” is the first chapter, Sartre says that it may seem strange to the reader that as yet he hasn’t said anything about the body and the senses. He explains that since “it is important observe strict order in discussion,” and since the body “appears first as the *known*” and, in particular, as known by the Other, it is important to discuss being-for-others before talking about the body and the senses. So the first chapter of Part Three, “Being-for-others,” is on “The Existence of Others.” However, the first section of the following chapter -- the chapter titled “The Body” -- is called “The Body as Being-for-itself: Facticity.” And in it Sartre talks extensively about the field of consciousness as it appears prior to the look.<sup>186</sup> As it turns out he has been, in effect, talking about bodily existence all along.

Many of the ideas in this section are very similar to those in Part Two, especially its final chapter’s discussion of apprehending objects in the world. However, in addition to using such words as “apprehension” and “consciousness,” he speaks of “perception” and “action,” giving us

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<sup>186</sup>Partially because this section occurs after the section on the Look, Zaner concludes that, on Sartre’s view,

the feel that the apprehender is finally embodied. Sartre refers to the field of consciousness as “a complex of instrumentality” (423) in which objects appear, a “field of instrumentality” (426) and an “instrumental field” (427). He also refers repeatedly to a “perceptive field” which he identifies with “the world” (417, see below). The perceptive and instrumental fields are not meant to be separate; they are one field, a field of instrumental things: “reality is presented to us neither as a *thing* nor as an *instrument* but as an instrumental thing” (422).

The appearance of the perceptive/instrumental field is a necessary condition for the appearance of a particular physical object:

The object appears on the ground of the world and manifests itself in a relation of exteriority with other “*thises*” which have just appeared. Thus its revelation implies the complimentary constitution of an undifferentiated ground which is the total perceptive field or the world. The formal structure of this relation of the figure to the ground is therefore necessary. (417)

On Sartre’s view the figure-ground structure is a necessary feature of the world of unreflective consciousness. As we saw in Chapter Two (Section 2b), Sartre makes the same point in connection with the notion of a *negatite*. But what does it mean to say that a given item does or does not exist in the world of unreflective consciousness? What does Sartre mean when he says, for example, that there is no ego in the world of unreflective consciousness?

We have seen that another phrase for the world of unreflective consciousness is “the world of the immediate,” that in it we always find ourselves already in a given situation, and that there is a distinction between the world of the immediate and that of “ethical anguish,” in which values are apprehended as “sustained in being by [one’s] freedom” (76). The point is that we do not ordinarily question our values or realize that we freely choose them; and that we do freely choose them and can question them. Thus he says, in regard to his act of writing, that

in every act of this kind [i.e., every unreflective act], there remains the possibility of putting this act into question -- in so far as it refers to more distant, more essential ends --

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the apprehension of the body-for-itself depends on the experience of the Look (Zaner 59). I disagree.

as to its ultimate meanings and my essential possibilities. (74, my gloss)

In fact, as we have seen, once one has put oneself into ethical anguish, values “cannot disclose themselves without being at the same time “put into question” (76).

The world of unreflective consciousness, however, is just the opposite. In it everything appears with a value attached to it.<sup>187</sup> Again, the “projection of [one]self toward an original possibility” is what causes there to be a field of consciousness. Thus, some objects are useful or desirable, others are harmful or undesirable; some people are admirable or beautiful, others are base or ugly; some states of affairs are goals to be sought, others are pitfalls to be avoided. Most importantly, it does not seem that it is up to me.

Thus there are values in the world of the immediate, i.e., they appear in this world. However, they do not appear separately: in the world of unreflective consciousness value does not appear apart from valued items. Rather it appears as an aspect of the very structure of the world, as an aspect of reality as an “instrumental thing.” Only in reflective consciousness does one attend to this structure, the “circuit of selfness.” Apprehension of the circuit of selfness as a whole is a degree of separation from it, and this separation marks the difference between the presence-to-self of pre-reflective consciousness and pure reflection. However items do appear as (positively or negatively) valued, and this is enough to say that there are values in the world of the immediate.

Now what about the ego? Why does Sartre say that it does not appear to unreflective consciousness? Recall that he says that “our being... arises in enterprises and knows itself first insofar as it is reflected in those enterprises” (77). In unreflective experience one is aware of one’s activities, but this does not count as the appearance of the ego. The ego, when it does appear in introspection, appears as the source of one’s activities or as the subject of one’s mental states. For

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<sup>187</sup>This is not to say that no item appears as meaningless or absurd, only that this is itself a meaning: an object appears absurd in reference to a life or a situation which, in unreflective consciousness, appears non-positionally as a background of meaning. In pure reflection, on the other hand, the world as a whole can

the ego to appear it must appear as separable from the situation, as an item that can be said to be the subject of one's mental states or the source of one's activities. No such item appears in the world of the immediate. Nevertheless, just as the world of the immediate is haunted by value it is haunted by "selfness:" the seed which, if nourished by bad faith, grows into the ego, the object of impure reflection. Anguish reveals freedom, the "obligation" to perpetually remake oneself. The "self" is that which one is making:

[F]reedom, which manifests itself through anguish, is characterized by a constantly renewed obligation to remake the *Self* which designates the free being.... Anguish as the manifestation of freedom in the face of self means that man is always separated by a nothingness from his essence. (72)

As we have seen, the for-itself is different from anything that exists as being-in-itself, from any object of consciousness, in that objects of consciousness simply are themselves while consciousness has to *be* itself, to constantly make itself. The self, on the level of unreflective consciousness, is an ideal which haunts each consciousness as its ideal future. Unreflective consciousness involves

a temporal form where I await myself in the future, where I "make an appointment with myself on the other side of that hour, of that day, or of that month." Anguish is the fear of not finding myself at that appointment, of no longer even wishing to bring myself there. (73)

In "The Self and the Circuit of Selfness," the self is described as "an ideal, a limit" and as the reason for consciousness's self-reference:

[T]he *self* on principle cannot inhabit consciousness. It is, if you like, *the reason* for the infinite movement by which the reflection refers to the reflecting and this again to the reflection; by definition it is an ideal, a limit. (156)

Apprehended in and threatened by anguish, an ideal which is never achieved, the self is thus beginning to sound awfully similar to value. But apparently Sartre doesn't see this as a problem: "Now we can ascertain more exactly what is the being of the self: it is value. .... [T]he being of

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seem absurd. Cf. Sartre, *Nausea* 124-135.

value qua value is the being of what does not have being.” (143)

While pure reflection is necessary to achieve the distance necessary to apprehend selfness as a whole and put it into question, it is important to note that one is separated from one’s “essence” to some degree even in pre-reflective consciousness, prior to any form of reflection: “Man continually carries with him a pre-judicative comprehension of his essence, but due to this very fact he is separated from it by a nothingness” (72). This comprehension, also known as “presence-to-self” or “pre-reflective self-consciousness,” is a universal structure of experience in that every experience is present to itself. However, presence-to-self is not part of the triad “existing, lacking, lacked” in which facticity, possibility, and value are internally related. Also, unlike these, it is not possible to talk separately about the presence-to-self of experience and the presence-to-self of what is experienced. While we can speak of facticity, value, and possibility both noetically (as structures of experience) or noematically (as structures of what is experienced), presence-to-self seems to have more to do with the relationship between act and field. It may be best to think of it as the act’s various aspects’ haunting the field and the field’s indicating, or reflecting, these aspects of the act.

Each of the elements of the triad of existing/lacking/lacked -- facticity, possibility, and value -- must be understood with reference to the other two. They are most easily understood in terms of what is experienced (i.e., noematically). Any object of consciousness is always experienced as part of an encompassing field, and the object plays a role in that field. Every field has a certain structure. This structure includes, as partial structures, what there is (facticity), what there ought to be (value), and what it is missing (possibility). The glass of beer on the table, considered apart from what is missing (my drinking from the glass), and considered apart from what there ought to be (a perpetually unachieved synthesis between what there is and what is

missing),<sup>188</sup> is an abstraction. All three structures haunt experience, and experience indicates all three structures.

This needs no argument. There is a page of words in front of you, and you are in the middle of a sentence. You have read part of it (facticity), the reason you have read part is to understand the meaning of the whole sentence (value), and there is another part still to be read (possibility). Now that you finished the sentence, all three structures are instantiated differently: the existing is the meaning of the sentence you just read, the lacked is the meaning of the paragraph, and the lacking is the meaning of what remains.

In Chapter Two we saw that consciousness constitutes itself as “original temporality” in terms of a world it apprehends as spread out in time. It can also be said that consciousness constitutes itself by giving itself a purpose, and in so doing constitutes what is experienced with its tripartite structure. Sartre is not saying that without consciousness there would be only facticity: that the brute there-ness lurking behind what is experienced would exist without consciousness, and that this is all that would exist.<sup>189</sup> Facticity is part of the structure of experience, and as such it is on a par with possibility and value. The three cannot exist without each other, or without consciousness, its presence-to-self, and its object.

Some of the things that Sartre says can give the impression that facticity is special in the way that I have just claimed it is not, i.e., that consciousness takes a mass of brute facticity and makes it into a world with the three structures being considered. The first thing to note in this regard is that it would be better to interpret differently anything that Sartre says that can be interpreted this way, because any statement about how the world came to be or how there came to

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<sup>188</sup>The reason this synthesis is not achieved when one begins drinking, for example, is that there is then a new state of affairs, haunted by a new value: the triad of structures manifests itself differently.

<sup>189</sup>McCulloch calls this view the “porridge” view, and cites Hammond, et al., and Sprigge as attributing it to Sartre (McCulloch 120n.10). As McCulloch notes, Sartre’s statements about being-in-itself in the Introduction to B&N make it easy to attribute this view to him (McCulloch 114-116).



be consciousness is clearly what Sartre would call metaphysics, which he claims he is not doing. He is strictly interested in the structure of human experience. Thus to say that consciousness brings value and possibility into the world is misleading because it implies that there is a world without value and possibility before consciousness comes along. In the following passage Sartre describes the relationship, in the world of the immediate, between the existing for-itself, the lacking for itself (its “possible”) and the self as value:

I am the lacking for-itself in the mode of having to be the for-itself which I am not, in order to identify myself with it in the unity of the self. Thus the original transcendent relation of the for-itself to the self perpetually outlines a project of identification of the for-itself with an absent for-itself which it *is* and which it *lacks*. What is given as the *peculiar lack* of each for-itself and what is strictly defined as lacking to precisely this for-itself and no other is the possibility of the for-itself. The possible rises on the ground of the for-itself. It is not conceived thematically *afterwards* as a means of reuniting the self. Rather the upsurge of the for-itself as the nihilation of the in-itself and the decompression of being causes possibility to arise as one of the aspects of this decompression of being; that is, as a way of being what one is -- at a distance from the self. Thus the for-itself cannot appear without being haunted by value and projected toward its own possibles. (147)

When Sartre talks about the paradox of freedom (629), he explains that it is both the case that there is only freedom in a situation and that the situation is defined by freedom.<sup>190</sup> Since the situation is defined by one’s freedom, the facticity in a given experience is what one chooses it to be. This is not to say that one might choose an experience with no facticity whatsoever but only that, for any element of one’s experience, one can choose whether to accept it as a given. One must accept something as a given, for without facticity there would be no situation and no experience. Experience, and what is experienced, must have all three structures. But nothing is forcing one to treat any particular element as a given. If one is at home and wants a cigarette, that one has none, and that the nearest store that sells them is closed, are facts of one’s situation. If one wants to quit smoking, one’s situation has a different factual element. In this case the most salient

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<sup>190</sup>Cf. Wider, *Bodily Nature* 66-8.

fact may be the freezer full of ice cream one uses to subdue these cravings.<sup>191</sup>

None of this is meant to imply that value and possibility are chosen prior to facticity, and facticity is chosen on the basis of these. In this example I have been speaking about how freedom defines the situation, but the other half of the paradox is that freedom is always freedom within a situation. The desire for a cigarette, or the desire to quit smoking that determines which elements of my situation are factual, occurs within a given situation. It is in this situation that one wants a cigarette. The source of the paradox is that experience is haunted by both facticity and value, interdependent structures coexisting in an uneasy tension.

### ***Sb. Presence-to-self and the circuit of selfness***

In *The Transcendence of the Ego* Sartre had named three consequences of denying the existence of the transcendental ego:

First, the transcendental field becomes impersonal; or, if you like, “pre-personal,” *without an I*. Second the I appears only at the level of humanity and is only one aspect of the me, the active aspect. Third, the *I think* can accompany our representations because it appears on a foundation of unity which it did not help to create; rather this prior unity makes the *I think* possible. (TE, 36)

The first consequence he takes back in the section on the circuit of selfness,<sup>192</sup> saying that the field of unreflective consciousness is not impersonal (or pre-personal). Rather, it is already personal in the sense that it is always one’s own. It is neither the transcendent ego, a by-product of reflection, nor the transcendental ego, a by-product of bad phenomenology, that makes the field

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<sup>191</sup>As we will see in the next chapter, when talking about facticity and freedom in Part Four of B&N, Sartre says: “What-is... takes on its meaning only when it is *surpassed* toward the future. Therefore what-is is the past. We see how the past as “that which is to be changed” is indispensable to the choice of the future... but we can see too how the *very nature* of the past comes to the past from the original choice of a future... There is an unchangeable element in the past... and an element which is eminently variable... But since... the meaning of the past fact penetrates it through and through... it is finally impossible for me to distinguish the unchangeable brute existence from the variable meaning which it includes” (638-9).

<sup>192</sup>This is one of two points from TE that Sartre mentions and explicitly takes back in B&N (155-6). The other, that the refutation of the transcendental ego is enough to prevent solipsism, occurs in part three (318). In regard to the former, Sartre restates B&N’s position in a lecture: “if [consciousness] does not have an ego at the level of immediacy and non-reflexivity, it is nonetheless personal. It is personal because it is a return, in spite of everything, to itself” (Sartre, “Self-Consciousness” 123). Cf. Phyllis Berdt Kenevan, “Self-Consciousness and the Ego in the Philosophy of Sartre,” *The Philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre*, ed.

personal. The field personal in that it is arranged around one's "original possibility," or "possible:" the specific difference between one's brute existence and one's self as value, "the being of what does not have being" (143). Thus in the section on the circuit of selfness, after explaining that the ego is not "*of the nature of consciousness*," he says:

Yet we need not conclude that the for-itself is a pure and simple "impersonal" contemplation. But the Ego is far from being the personalizing pole of consciousness which without it would remain in the impersonal stage; on the contrary, it is consciousness in its fundamental selfness which under certain conditions allows the appearance of the Ego as the transcendent phenomenon of that selfness.... [F]rom its first arising, consciousness by the pure nihilating movement of reflection makes itself personal; for what confers personal existence on a being is not the possession of an Ego... but it is the fact that the being exists for itself as a presence to itself. (156-7)

Note that the third consequence of the repudiation of the transcendental ego, that the transcendent ego is made possible by a prior unity, is repeated here. The unity is that of the field of unreflective consciousness, and is provided by "consciousness in its fundamental selfness."

In TE, this answered a question Sartre had asked two pages earlier:

[I]s the *I* that we encounter in our consciousness made possible by the synthetic unity of our representations, or is it the *I* which in fact unites the representations to each other?

The correct alternative is the former: the prior unity of our representations, their unity as the field of unreflective consciousness is what makes the apprehension of the ego possible. In B&N, what unifies the field of unreflective consciousness is that it is arranged around one's specific possible, that it is flanked on one side by brute existence and on the other by value, by what one is already and what one would be if one were complete. This is also what gives the field its quality of belonging to oneself. The reflection required to constitute a transcendent ego is made possible only because the structure of the field of unreflective consciousness is a reflection of one's possibilities.

These observations about the world of the immediate and the world of anguish tell us

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Paul A. Schilpp (La Salle, Illinois: Open Court, 1981): 200.

about the difference between unreflective consciousness and pure reflection. Unlike pre-reflective consciousness, pure reflection recognizes that the world is structured around one's "original possibility" (or "possible"). In pure reflection, nonetheless, there is still not yet an "I" inhabiting the field of consciousness. One is not confronted with a self, but only "selfness:"

Now this first reflective movement [i.e., the presence-to-self of unreflective consciousness] involves in addition a second or selfness.... Selfness represents a degree of nihilation carried further than the pure presence to itself of the pre-reflective *cogito* -- in the sense that the possible which I am is not pure presence to the for-itself as reflection to reflecting, but that it is *absent-presence*. Due to this fact the existence of *reference* as a structure of being in the for-itself is still more clearly marked. (157, my gloss)

Selfness is not added to the world by pure reflection. It was already there, but it was not posited:

Without the world there is no selfness, no person; without selfness, without the person, there is no world. But the world's belonging to the *person* is never posited on the level of the pre-reflective *cogito*. It would be absurd to say that the world as it is known is known as mine. Yet this quality of my-ness in the world is a fugitive structure, always present, a structure which I *live*. The world is mine because it is haunted by possibles... it is these possibles which give the world its unity and its meaning as the world. (157-8)

Thus no new item is posited in pure reflection. What is posited is "the world's belonging to the *person*." However, the field of consciousness is modified: the quality of being one's own, of being structured around one's possible -- a quality present in the field of unreflective consciousness only "as a fugitive structure" -- is posited in pure reflection. It was lived in unreflective consciousness; it is known<sup>193</sup> in pure reflection.

Sartre's famous keyhole example can be used to illustrate this point. The field of unreflective consciousness is the keyhole to-be-looked-through, the event in the room to-be-seen, the door to-be-listened-through, the dark hallway to-be-hid-in (347-9). What unifies the field is one's possible, what one is lacking -- pleasure, knowledge, or whatever. This unity is necessary for reflection (and for the Look, for that matter). The possible is reflected by the field of unreflective consciousness (making the consciousness of this field pre-reflectively self-conscious)

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<sup>193</sup>At least according to the previous quotation. As we have seen, Sartre is unclear as to whether pure

and posited in pure reflection. And it is this pure reflection that is finally the basis for impure reflection (and for the Look).

Every item in the field -- the event in the room, the keyhole, the door -- refers to every other, and the whole network refers to what one is lacking. No matter which item one starts with, understanding its meaning reveals what is lacking. One has a "pre-judicative comprehension" of the field as a whole, which gives each item within the field its meaning. All you have to do is ask yourself what you are doing and the world answers. You see how the world is arranged around you, that the event in the room, in this example, is to-be-seen, and what about it makes it a spectacle. This is all one needs to see to know that one is jealous, curious, voyeuristic, or whatever. Because the field of consciousness belongs to the man at the keyhole, in that it is arranged according to his possible, it reflects this possible back to him. He could thus have attributed the quality of jealousy to himself in impure reflection, prior to apprehending the Look. But the recognition of the field's structure in pure reflection requires neither the constitution of any psychic object, nor the apprehension of oneself as a psychophysical object among objects in the world. For that one will need not only to constitute one's states, and ultimately oneself, as psychic objects, but also to use the Look in order to constitute these states and this self as psychophysical.

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reflection counts as knowledge.

## **Chapter Five: The Three Ontological Dimensions of the Body and the Role of the Look**

### **1. Introduction**

We are trying to understand how, on Sartre's view, consciousness comes to apprehend itself as something that exists independently of its self-apprehension, and ultimately as a physical object. In Chapter Two we saw that, for Sartre, consciousness apprehends itself pre-reflectively as a transcending of facticity, a surpassing of itself toward a nonexistent state of affairs. On this level, consciousness's existence (as consciousness of something) and its pre-reflective apprehension of itself are inseparable. In Chapters Three and Four we saw that in reflection consciousness becomes aware of itself in a new way, and "attempts" to apprehend itself as something that exists independently of the reflective act: analogous to the way in which the object of perception is apprehended as existing independently of the consciousness of it, in reflection consciousness attempts to apprehend itself, qua object of reflection, as existing independently of itself qua reflective act. However, consciousness cannot simply stand back and apprehend itself as if it were another consciousness. Its attempt to do so results in the constitution of a psychic object: a self-contradictory quasi-object which is apprehended as being both identical to and independent of the act that apprehends it. Paradoxically, it appears to have the mind-independence of an ordinary perceptual object, yet the translucent and intentional character of an act of consciousness.

While pre-reflective self-consciousness and reflection cannot provide the intuition of oneself as an independently existing consciousness, the Look can. The two modes of being Sartre discusses before being-for-others (being-in-itself and being-for-itself) allow consciousness to apprehend itself as a relation to an object, which is in turn apprehended as independent, as overflowing the act of consciousness. Thus far there is nothing that consciousness can do to apprehend itself as independent of its self-apprehension: failing to bring any new mode of being to

the consciousness reflected-on, the reflecting consciousness cannot distinguish itself from it. We are likely to miss this point if we think of the consciousness reflected-on as consciousness *of* the chair, and the reflecting consciousness as consciousness *of* consciousness of it. This makes it seem as if the reflective apprehends the reflected-on, and the reflected-on apprehends the object. Having different objects of consciousness, the two are thus different. To prevent this interpretation, Sartre stresses that the reflective does not come to the reflected-on from the outside, that reflection is rather an “intra-structural modification” (215), and that neither the reflective nor the reflected-on is self-sufficient (214-15).

While the reflective modification does not provide an intuition of oneself as another consciousness, i.e., a reflected-on independent of the reflecting, the modification that occurs with the Look does. This is made possible by an increased “distance” within consciousness: the reflected-on knows what it is for the reflective, but under the Look the looked-at does not yet know what it is for the Other. The latter will require a further reflective act directed at the looked-at, a consciousness that overflows the reflective act. Naturally, this consciousness is now apprehended as inapprehensible, as escaping one.

The description of the way in which one uses the Look to apprehend oneself as a person occurs in Sartre’s chapter on the body. B&N’s exposition of the body is well-structured. The chapter follows a section in which Sartre develops the concept of the Look, which he will need in order to explain the transformation of the apprehension of oneself as merely psychic object into the apprehension of oneself as a full-fledged person. In the first section of the chapter, which comprises over half of it, Sartre discusses first the body-for-itself prior to its modification by impure reflection, and then the psychic body.<sup>194</sup> Next he explores the body-for-others -- i.e., another’s body or one’s own as it is apprehended by another. In the final section, he describes

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<sup>194</sup>See Chapter Three, Subsections 2a and 6e, above.

one's existence *as another for oneself*, the body in its third ontological dimension. Beginning with what he considers to be the proper way one apprehends oneself as another, through the other's language and gestures, he goes on to discuss looking at, touching, or smelling oneself. This second method of self-apprehension is aberrant in that it is made possible by the "absolutely contingent" arrangement of our sense-organs (468), rather than by the mere fact that we exist for others: if our bodies were such that we couldn't apprehend ourselves through the senses, this would not be ontologically significant, but if we couldn't apprehend ourselves through the language or gestures of another, we would not be-for-others at all.

I have already begun to discuss some of the unusual things that Sartre says in the first section of his chapter on the body, "The Body as Being-For-Itself: Facticity." In chapter one I criticized Morris's reading of this section, and we saw that Sartre associates the body at this level with one's facticity, and identifies it with the past, with one's point of view, and the arrangement of instrument-objects. The term "facticity," however, covers more than the body in its first ontological dimension, because one's facticity is extended into an inapprehensible dimension under the Look.<sup>195</sup> If we don't consider this extension, one's facticity consists in (1) "lived" pain, thirst, nausea, etc., and (2) this same, pain, etc., as "indicated" or "reflected" by "the instrument-objects of the world" (445); it exists only insofar as it is "lived" and "indicated." (Again, for a consciousness trying to apprehend itself as existing independently of its self-apprehension, this is a problem.)

One's facticity on this level, the body in its first ontological dimension, is what might be called the body of the act of consciousness. However, it is important to remember not to identify the act of consciousness, at this level or any other, with what we might call the mere focal portion of that act. Thus, the pain in one's eyes that is both "lived" and "indicated" by the words one is

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<sup>195</sup>Prior to this extension, (one's) facticity is already in another sense "inapprehensible" (432-3, 434). It is



reading (to return to the example I cited in Chapter Three) is only part of the “body” of this act. Sartre makes this clear when he is talking about the way in which a pain in one’s finger is experienced in the “body as ground” when one is reading: “the *eyes* appear as figure on the ground of the corporal totality” (439). This corporal totality is indicated by the world on this level, and is lived in Nausea. Pain and thirst are apprehended against a background of Nausea.

In any case, the act of consciousness apprehends its “body” at this level through its apprehension of the arrangement of the objects of the world and through pain, thirst, etc.<sup>196</sup> “Pure” pain and thirst, however, are perpetually surpassed (438): thirst, eventually to be located in one’s mouth and throat, is apprehended in terms of a dry, dusty road leading to an inn which serves beer in frosted mugs. Pain, eventually to be located in one’s tired legs and sore feet, is apprehended in terms of the inclination of the road and the hardness of the pavement. The arrangement of the objects of the world is, in this way, a reflection of the facticity of which one, qua transcendence, is a surpassing.

The question, then, is how the “body” of the act of consciousness is apprehended as one’s body -- a physical object in the world. It is crucial, according to Sartre, that this question be answered in these terms. If we don’t take this sort of approach we will have “irremediably driven the body out of consciousness” (405). The pain and thirst which one apprehends pre-reflectively and in reflection will be considered as “signs,” as “affections of consciousness occasioned by the body,” and “no bond will ever be able to reunite this body, which is already a body-for-others, with the consciousness which, it is claimed, makes the body manifest” (405). If we think of our pain as an effect of a cut or bruise, if we think of the bruise as objective, as part of the world, and the pain as subjective, as part of consciousness, the concept of the person will inevitably be the concept of a nonphysical mind plus a physical object. This is why, on Sartre view, the self-

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inapprehensible at least insofar as it is not apprehended in the way that any focal object of consciousness is.

reference already in the act of consciousness at its bottommost level (i.e., the “presence to self” discussed in Chapter Two) must somehow be converted into the person’s reference to herself. Sartre’s alternative is thus to think of the bruise, and for that matter, the whole body, as the way in which consciousness represents itself to itself.

In Chapter Three, in anticipation of this chapter, I mentioned that one’s being-for-others somehow enhances the “suggestion” of the “outside” that consciousness gives to itself in impure or “accessory” reflection (237). A quotation I pointed out sums up the effect of the Look, comparing its role in the pre-reflective constitution of oneself as a being-for-others with its role in the constitution of oneself as an object available to some kind of reflection:

[I]n the same way that a being-for-others haunts my facticity (which is non-thetically lived), so a being-an-object-for-others haunts -- as a dimension of escape from my psychic body -- the facticity constituted as a quasi-object for an accessory reflection. (467-8)

In both cases one’s facticity is modified, but in the case of constitution of oneself as being-an-object-for-others the facticity that is modified by the Look is also modified by impure reflection. Under the Look one experiences one’s being-for-others, but it is in the further constitution of one’s existence as an-object-for-others that one apprehends oneself as a person -- an object for oneself.

The main purpose of this chapter is to describe the way in which the Look helps consciousness to constitute itself as something that exists independently of its self-apprehension, i.e., as a person. However, as consciousness comes to apprehend itself as a person, it also is coming to apprehend other persons and an intersubjective world. The Look plays a role in both these apprehensions as well, and in order to understand it, it is necessary to understand these other aspects of the transformation it brings. And in the context of discussing the apprehension of others, it is possible to say something about the extent to which Sartre’s approach is compatible with Cartesianism and traditional behaviorism. Indeed, in both the sections of B&N that explore

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<sup>196</sup>See Chapter One, Subsection 5b.

the apprehension of others (“The Look” and “The Body-for-Others”), Sartre speaks somewhat approvingly of behaviorism and explains how he would amend its claims. However, as we have seen, the questions Sartre asks are different from the epistemological and metaphysical questions considered by those interested in traditional problems about the relationship between the mind and the body and the existence of other minds.

In this chapter I first discuss one’s embodiment prior to the Look, i.e., the “facticity which is non-thetically lived.” Then, after noting that apprehending oneself as a person, and apprehending others as persons, requires more than the experience of the Look, I begin to describe how this experience is involved in apprehending others. In Section Three I discuss how Sartre’s view relates to behaviorism and Cartesianism. In Section Four I discuss the role of the Look in more depth, first in relation to the apprehension of the world, then in relation to the apprehension of others (again), and finally in relation to the apprehension of oneself.

## **2. The Body-For-Itself, the Body-For-Others, and the Look**

Sartre calls the first ontological dimension of the body “the facticity of the for-itself.”

When first discussing facticity, in the chapter on “Immediate Structures of the For-itself,” he says:

The for-itself *is*, in so far as it appears in a condition which it has not chosen... it *is* in so far as it is thrown into a world and abandoned in a “situation”; it *is* as pure contingency inasmuch as for it... the original question can be posited: “Why is this being exactly such and not otherwise?” It *is* in so far as there is in it something of which it is not the foundation -- its *presence to the world*. (127)

In the section on the first ontological dimension of the body, Sartre refers back to the earlier section:

For human reality to be is to-be-there; that is, “there in that chair,” “there at the table,”... [T]his necessity appears between two contingencies: on the one hand, while it is necessary that I be in the form of being-there, still it is altogether contingent that I be... on the other hand, while it is necessary that I be engaged in this or that point of view, it is contingent that it be in this view to the exclusion of all others. This twofold contingency which embraces a necessity we have called the *facticity* of the for-itself. (407)

Facticity, on this level, consists in the fact that consciousness exists and that there are facts about

oneself qua point of view.

This first dimension of the body is ontologically prior to the other dimensions. One's body-for-others is one's facticity -- one's presence to the world -- for the Other, and is thus ontologically dependent on this first dimension. The way in which we are most accustomed to thinking about our bodies, in their third dimension, is based on the apprehension of the body-for-others: the person one apprehends when looking in the mirror is one's presence to the world as mediated by the Look.

Sartre also calls the first dimension of the body the body-for-itself. It is better to think of one's body on this level as one's embodiedness:

[T]o say that I have entered into the world, "come to the world," or that there is a world, or that I have a body is one and the same thing. In this sense my body is everywhere in the world; it is over there in the fact that the lamp-post hides the bush which grows along the path, as well as the fact that the roof up there is above the windows of the sixth floor or in the fact that a passing car swerves from right to left behind the truck or that woman who is crossing the street appears smaller than the man who is sitting on the sidewalk in front of the cafe. (419-20)

Sartre identifies the body-for-itself with the arrangement of objects in the world: "It is absolutely necessary that the world appear to me *in order*. And in this sense this order *is me*....

[T]his order is the body as it is on the level of the for-itself' (408). He also identifies the body on this level with an unknowable center, a point which cannot be an object for oneself:

[T]he perceptive field refers to a center objectively defined by that reference and located *in the very field* which is oriented around it. Only we do not *see* this center as the structure of the perceptive field considered; *we are the center*. Thus the order of the objects in the world perpetually refers to us the image of an object that cannot be an object *for us* since it is what we have to be.... My body is coextensive with the world, spread across all things, and at the same time it is condensed into this single point which all things indicate and which I am, without being able to know it. (419-20)

It may seem strange to say that the body-for-itself is both the arrangement of objects in the world and the point around which these objects are arranged. Sartre talks this way to draw our attention to a fact about our existence that he associates with our embodiedness: that the world is

experienced from a point of view. This point of view is not anything which exists in addition to the arrangement of objects; it is just the point according to which the objects are arranged.

Since the field of objects is not merely a perceptual field but also one in which we act, since “reality is presented to us neither as a *thing* nor as an *instrument* but as an instrumental-thing” (422), the center of this field is not only an unknowable perceiver but also an unknowable actor:

Objects are revealed to us at the heart of a complex of instrumentality in which they occupy a determined *place*. This place is not defined by pure spatial coordinates but in relation to axes of practical reference.... [W]hile each instrument refers to another instrument and this to another, all end up by indicating an instrument which stands as the key for all.... [T]he key is never *given* to me but only indicated by a sort of gap.<sup>197</sup> (423-5)

If, on this level, one were conscious of one’s body in the way one is conscious of objects, the body would be a sort of screen through which we apprehended these objects, an object that indicates objects. But it is the other way around:

Far from our body being first *for us* and revealing things to us, it is the instrumental-things which in their original appearance indicate our body to us. The body is not a screen between things and ourselves; it manifests only the individuality and the contingency of our original relation to instrumental-things. (428-9)

All in all, the body-for-itself

...is the instrument which I can not use in the way I use any other instrument, the point of view on which I can no longer take a point of view....[T]he body can not be *for me* transcendent and known.... [B]ecause the body is the point of view on which there can not be a point of view, there is on the level of the unreflective consciousness no consciousness of the body. The body belongs then to the structures of the non-thetic self-consciousness. (433-4)

Naturally “body,” at this point, does not designate anything like what we would ordinarily call a body; it is merely the perspective that consciousness takes with respect to the world.

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<sup>197</sup>This passage shows some of Heidegger’s influence. In the section on the Look Sartre says that “human reality” (Dasein) is the “gap” which is indicated by -- and the “key” to -- the network of instruments: “[T]he place of a material *object* or of an instrument... does not derive from the nature of the object or instrument.... it is through me that the *place* of an instrument is realized. Human-reality is the being which causes a *place* to come to objects” (370). However, Sartre doesn’t privilege the *zuhanden* over the

Part Four of B&N contains a section titled “Freedom and Facticity: The Situation.” Much of what is to be found in this section is a clearer version of what Sartre has been saying about facticity all along. He says that the facticity of the for-itself, which he now calls “the facticity of freedom,” gets its meaning from the way in which it is being transcended: “What we have called the facticity of freedom is the given which it has to *be* and which it illuminates by its project” (629). Again:

What-is... takes on its meaning only when it is *surpassed* toward the future. Therefore what-is is the past. We see how the past as “that which is to be changed” is indispensable to the choice of the future... but we can see too how the very *nature* of the past comes to the past from the original choice of a future. (638)

Sartre says the same thing about having a past that he does about having facticity: “It is possible for me not to exist; but if I exist, I cannot lack having a past” (638). As we have seen, he had already identified the body-for-itself, the facticity of the for-itself, and the for-itself’s situation in the first section of the chapter on the body. In that section he also identifies the body-for-itself with the past:

[A]s an instrumental center of instrumental complexes the body can be only *surpassed*; it is that which I surpass toward a new combination of complexes.... [T]he body, since it is surpassed, is the Past. It is the immediate presence to the For-itself of “sensible” things in so far as this presence indicates a center of reference and is *already surpassed* either toward the appearance of a new *this* or toward a new combination of instrumental-things.... [I]t is the immediate Past in so far as it still touches on the Present which flees it. This means that it is at once *a point of view and a point of departure* -- a point of view, a point of departure which I *am* and which at the same time I surpass toward what I have to be. (429-30)

Perhaps the clearest description of facticity occurs in the subsection devoted to the discussion of the past. In the following two quotations, “the past” can be replaced with “facticity,” “what is,” “the given,” or “the situation”:

[T]he past is that which is out of reach and which haunts us at a distance without our even being able to turn back to face it in order to consider it.... Every action designed to wrench

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*vorhanden* as Heidegger does: on the level of pre-reflective consciousness, reality presents itself as an “instrumental-thing.”

me away from my past must first be conceived in terms of my particular past. (637)

There is an unchangeable element in the past... and an element which is eminently variable... But since... the meaning of the past fact penetrates it through and through... it is finally impossible for me to distinguish the unchangeable brute existence from the variable meaning which it includes. (639)

At the point in the book from which the last two passages are taken, however, facticity, regardless of whether it is thought of as situation, past, or what-have-you, has been transformed by the Other, and the situation and the past of the for-itself can now finally be thought of as one's own situation and one's own past:

This given is manifested in several ways although within the absolute unity of a single illumination It is *my place, my past, my position* in so far as it is already determined by the indications of Others, finally my *fundamental relation to the Other*. (629)

Although the situation is permeated by the Other, it is possible to sort out which aspects of one's facticity exist prior to its transformation. For example, Sartre talks about two types of resistance: the "coefficient of adversity" of a rock that is difficult to climb, and that of a door which is used as an exit rather than an entrance. They differ in that only the latter is Other-dependent. Similarly, in regard to the ontological dimensions of the body, to say that you are too short to reach the top shelf is different from saying that you are too short to find a date. Apprehending oneself as short occurs on two different levels: minimally, being short means not being able to reach the cookie jar, not having to duck one's head in the attic, and not being able to get an unobstructed view of the stage. But it can also include not obstructing the view of the person seated behind one: just as "[n]obody can be vulgar all alone" (302), there is one way in which one cannot even be short alone.

The apprehension of the body's third dimension is grounded in the apprehension of the body-for-others. The body-for-others is discussed by Sartre in the section entitled (appropriately) "The Body-For-Others." What distinguishes it from Sartre's discussion in the following section, "The Third Ontological Dimension of the Body," is precisely that it fails to provide a sufficient

basis for an apprehension of any object as one's own body. In any case, like the body-for-itself, the body-for-others should be thought of as embodiedness rather than as an object: "The object-state of my body for the Other is not an object for me and can not constitute my body as an object; it is experienced as the flight of the body which I exist" (464). What is for me a new, inapprehensible aspect of my embodiedness is, for the Other, an aspect of my objectivity. It is something of which I am in some way aware; but I am not aware of the object that I am for the Other.

The Look is the act in which one apprehends one's embodiedness-for-the-Other and, correlatively, the Other as such (i.e., as what Sartre calls in the following passage "pure subject"). The fact that what is in question is apprehension of one's own embodiedness -- distinct from the body-for-itself previously discussed and from any particular body as an object -- is captured in Sartre's use of the expression "unrevealed object-ness" for the objectivity that one gets from the Other as such:

[T]he Other is first the being for whom I am an object; that is, the being *through whom* I gain my object-ness.... He is given not as a being of my universe but as a pure subject.... In experiencing the look, in experiencing myself as an unrevealed object-ness, I experience the inapprehensible subjectivity of the Other directly and with my very being. (361-2)

In this experience, one does not apprehend the Other as a particular person, "I do not aim at the Other as an object" (349) but rather as the point of view from which the world is perceived, and as the point of departure for action. In this experience "the Other's freedom is revealed to me across the uneasy indetermination of the being which I am for him" (351). The apprehension of another as a person is based on this experience. But it requires more.

The apprehension of oneself as a person also requires more than the apprehension of the Other as such, and the correlative apprehension of one's embodiedness-for-the-Other. Under the Look:



I do not aim... at my *Ego* as an object for myself; I do not even direct an empty intention toward that *Ego* as toward an object presently out of my reach.... [O]n principle it exists for the *Other*. Therefore I do not aim at it as if it could someday be given to me but on the contrary in so far as it on principle flees from me and will never belong to me. (349)

Despite the fact that the object revealed to one in the Look is not an object for oneself, one still experiences it as oneself:

Nevertheless I *am that Ego*; I do not reject it as a strange image, but it is present to me as a self which I *am* without *knowing* it; for I discover it in shame and, in other instances, in pride. It is shame or pride which reveals to me the Other's look and myself at the end of that look. It is shame or pride which makes me *live*, not *know* the situation of being looked at. (349-50)

The ego presented to one in the Look is different from the object of impure reflection.

The former "exists on the level of objects in the world," not as an item that is twice-removed<sup>198</sup> from anything worldly as the ego of impure reflection is. However, this worldly object is only there for the Other. Under the Look:

essential modifications appear in my structure... I now exist as *myself* for my unreflective consciousness.... So long as we considered the for-itself in its isolation, we were able to maintain that the unreflective consciousness can not be inhabited by a self; the self was given in the form of an object and only for the reflective consciousness. But here the self comes to haunt the unreflective consciousness.<sup>199</sup> Now the unreflective consciousness is consciousness *of* the world. Therefore for the unreflective consciousness the self exists on the level of objects in the world... The unreflective consciousness does not apprehend the *person* directly or as *its* object; the person is presented to consciousness *in so far as the person is an object for the Other*. (349)

With the help of impure reflection, however, the Look allows one to apprehend one's body in its third ontological dimension: oneself as a body known by the Other.

The Look not only grounds one's apprehension of oneself as a person and other persons but is also the basis for an important structural change in the apprehension of the world as a whole.

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<sup>198</sup>See Chapter Three, Subsection 3b.

<sup>199</sup>As we have seen in connection with the notion of "value," a certain selfness "haunts" unreflective consciousness prior to the Look, but haunts it in a different way. This selfness is the what the for-itself will be when it achieves identity with itself. The similarity between these apprehensions, such that Sartre uses "haunt" in both cases, is simply that the apprehending consciousness is not able to posit the selfness in question.

Through the Look, the world, like oneself, gains a degree of objectivity. However, it will be easiest to discuss the look in connection with the apprehension of another person first.

Recall, from Chapter One (Subsection 5b), Sartre's description of the difference between seeing a man and seeing an ordinary material object:

If I were to think of him as being only a puppet, I should apply to him the categories which I ordinarily use to group temporal-spatial "things." That is, I should apprehend him as being "beside" the benches, two yards and twenty inches from the lawn, as exercising a certain pressure on the ground, *etc.* (342)

But since he is seen as a person the distances between him and the things around him are seen differently:

Instead of the two terms of the distance being indifferent, interchangeable and in a reciprocal relation, the distance *is unfolded starting from* the man whom I see and *extending up to* the lawn...(343)

People appear as related to their surroundings in a way that tables and benches do not.

While non-conscious objects are merely externally related to the objects surrounding them, other persons are apprehended in terms of their surroundings. Put differently, I always perceive another "from what is outside of him, in space and time." (455) I always see another as a "body in situation." I don't see another as an unsituated body first, then situate that body:

The perception of [the body] can not *by nature* be of the same type as that of inanimate objects. We must not understand by this that the perception is progressively enriched but that originally it is of another structure. (455)

Of course, we are able to apprehend others as externally related to their surroundings as well, e.g., when we choose the least obstructed path through a room crowded with people and furniture. But even in this case the people are apprehended as internally related to their surroundings in addition to being in reciprocal, distance relations. This is the difference between the people and the furniture.

Seeing the man in the park is the first of three main examples used to explain the apprehension of another person. Sartre describes the man as introducing a "drain hole" into one's

field of experience: “[I]t appears that the world has a kind of drain hole in the middle of its being and that it is perpetually flowing off through this hole” (343). In the second example a man is reading. Since in this case the man’s field of experience is apprehended as very small -- he is aware only of the book directly in front of him -- the “hemorrhaging” created by the appearance of the man is well-contained: It is “simply a little particular crack in my universe” (344). The second example allows us to see that in the first case the hemorrhaging was fairly well-contained as well, that “the disintegration of my universe is contained within the limits of this same universe” (343). Neither of these is an example of experiencing the Other as such.

That experience is demonstrated in the third example in which, while peering through a keyhole, one is shocked by the sound of a footstep from behind. Now the hemorrhaging is not contained at all: the Other’s field of experience engulfs one’s own. Here is the resulting description of the Other as such:

The Other is the hidden death of my possibilities... The connection between my possibility and the instrument is no more than between two instruments which are adjusted to each other outside in view of an end which escapes me.... Thus in the shock which seizes me when I apprehend the Other’s look... suddenly I experience a subtle alienation of all my possibilities.... [M]y possibility becomes a *probability* that is outside me. (354)

The conversion of one’s possibilities into mere probabilities is a very significant change. Sartre speaks of such events as tomorrow’s rain as being probable or improbable, reserving “possibility” for actions, which involve the projecting of an end on the part of the actor. (These ends are called “possibles.”) The conversion of one’s possibilities into mere probabilities is related to one’s being part of a network of interrelated instruments, rather than being the “instrument which stands as the *key* for all.” Under the look, “my possibility is at once an obstacle and a means, as all instruments are” (354).

As in the case of seeing the man in the park, however, the experience of another person ordinarily disguises the basic experience of otherness that makes it possible:

From the moment that the Other appears to me as an object, his subjectivity becomes the simple property of the object considered. It is degraded and it is defined as “an ensemble of objective properties which on principle elude me.” The Other-as-object “has” a subjectivity as this hollow box has “an inside”.... [T]he consciousness which he has of me, since it is consciousness-as-an-object, appears to me as pure interiority without efficacy. It is just one property among others of that “inside”.... [His knowledge of my being] remains in the subject-as-object... It no longer *touches* me. (384-5)

The apprehension of the Other-as-object is discussed in the section titled “The Body-For-Others.”<sup>200</sup> It is the same as the apprehension of somebody’s *character* or, depending upon the way in which one is considering her, her bodily “temperament”:

[C]haracter has distinct existence only in the capacity of an object of knowledge for the Other. Consciousness does not know its own character -- unless in determining itself reflectively from the standpoint of another’s point of view.... But if character is essentially *for others*, it can not be distinguished from the body as we have described it. To suppose, for example that temperament is the *cause* of character, that the “sanguine temperament” is the *cause* of irascibility is to posit character as a psychic entity presenting all the aspects of objectivity and yet subjective and *suffered* by the subject. Actually the Other’s irascibility is known from the outside.... In this sense it is not to be distinguished from the “sanguine temperament.” In both instances we apprehend the same apoplectic redness.... We shall be dealing with *temperament* if we consider this redness as the manifestation of the *body-as-ground*; that is, by cutting all that binds it to the situation. If we try to understand it *in terms of the corpse*, we shall be able to conduct a physical and medical study of it. If on the contrary, we consider it by approaching it in terms of the global situation, it will be anger itself or again a promise of anger, or rather an anger in promise -- that is, a permanent relation with instrumental-things, a potentiality. Between temperament and character there is therefore only a difference of principle, and character is identical with the body. (457-9)

Sartre is saying that if we mistakenly think of character as something caused by temperament, we make the former into a psychic object, one of those strange hybrids which combine the transcendent quality of an object with the spontaneity and accessibility of consciousness. But there is an acceptable way of understanding character according to which it is

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<sup>200</sup>Sartre speaks of “the Other-as-object” when referring to another consciousness as an object (for [one’s own] consciousness). “Being-for-others” refers to the mode of being of the Other-as-object, which is the same as that of (one’s own) consciousness as an object for the Other (445). To the extent that he is careful to distinguish between a “transcended transcendence” (see Subsection 3a, below, for the meaning of this phrase) and the facticity of that (transcended) transcendence he uses “the body-for-others” and “the Other’s body” to refer to the latter (460).

not caused by temperament: each belongs to a different way of thinking about another person.<sup>201</sup>

We apprehend someone's temperament when apprehending her body in abstraction from the holistic structure that Sartre calls the Other-as-object. We apprehend her character when apprehending her body, and thus her behavior, precisely *in* the situation. In both cases we are apprehending her from the outside, but we are doing so in different ways.<sup>202</sup>

### 3. Sartre and Two Traditional Approaches to the Mind-Body Problem

#### 3a. Sartre and behaviorism

When it comes to apprehending others, Sartre's view is thus somewhat similar to that of Ryle, who says that "mind" and "body" refer to two different "logical types," and thus that it is nonsensical to say, in the same sense, that one "has" or "is" both a mind and a body, and that neither of these can act on the other. When talking about the perception of another person, Sartre sounds very much like a behaviorist:

[E]motional manifestation or, more generally, the phenomena erroneously called the phenomena of *expression*, by no means *indicate* to us a hidden affection lived by some psychism which would be the immaterial object of the research of the psychologist. These frowns, this redness, this stammering, this slight trembling of the hands, these downcast looks which seem at once timid and threatening -- these do not *express* anger; they *are* the anger.... [A man's act of clenching his fist] refers to nothing other than actions in the world (to strike, insult, *etc.*). (454-5)

Again,

[T]he anger of the Other-as-object as it is manifested to me across his cries, his stamping, and his threatening gestures is not the *sign* of a subjective and hidden anger; it refers to nothing except to other gestures and to other cries. It defines the Other, it is the Other. To be sure, I can be mistaken and take for true anger what is only a pretended irritation. But it is only in relation to other gestures and to other objectively apprehensible acts that I can be mistaken. (391)

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<sup>201</sup>This topic will come up again in Chapter Six, since character is one of the four meanings of "I" discussed by Morris.

<sup>202</sup>Ordinarily, when one refers to another's "behavior" one could be referring to either of these. That is, one might be talking about something describable in purely "physical" terms, in abstraction from the holistic structure apprehended with the Other-as-object, or one might be talking about something apprehended precisely *in* that structure.

Sartre talks behavioristically about the relationship between the body and mind, or the temperament and character of another person: the relationship between another person's bodily state and her mental state, or between her behavior and her subjectivity, as one experiences them. In either case what is apprehended is the Other-as-object: it is a mistake to split the original phenomenon into two parts, a perceived physical part and an inferred mental part, and then to ask how the subject of the mental part connects with the subject of the physical part.

After giving the above account of what anger is, and concluding that "the 'psychic object' is entirely released to perception and is inconceivable outside corporeal structures," Sartre says that the behaviorists who have expressed this view "have not very well understood what they wanted to say and have shocked the world with their pronouncements" because "people too readily believe that all perceptions are of the same kind." They do not understand that "a new structure of perception corresponds to each type of reality," and another person's body, since it is not an ordinary material object but "a transcended transcendence" is of a "type of reality" different from that of a table. Again: "If we consider that the body is a transcended transcendence, then the perception of it can not *by nature* be of the same type as that of inanimate objects" (455).

In the section on the Look (from which the second of the above quotations is taken), Sartre says the same thing, that the behaviorists "have lost sight of [man's] characteristic principle, which is transcendence-transcended" (391). He says that another person is indeed comparable to a machine, but this is because machines, like persons, are understood through their functions:

In fact if the Other is the object which can not be limited to himself, he is also the object which is understood only in terms of his end. Of course the hammer and the saw are not understood any differently. Both are apprehended through their function; that is, through their end. But this is exactly because they are already human. I can understand them only in so far as they refer me to an instrumental-organization in which the Other is the center, only in so far as they form a part of a complex transcended toward an end which I in turn transcend. If then we can compare the Other to a machine, this is because the machine as a human fact presents already the trace of a transcendence-transcended, just as the looms in the mill are explained only by the fabrics which they produce. (391)

To understand another person according to his goal is to apprehend him in terms of a “total organization of the world”: “the Other can be defined only by a total organization of the world and... he is the key to this organization” (391). In apprehending the actions of another as genuinely human actions, one apprehends them in terms of an end, i.e., as a transcending of what is given toward a projected end.<sup>203</sup> This is what standard behaviorism misses about persons: the behaviorist is correct in saying that the anger which I perceive through the person’s behavior is not some subjective state, and that if I am incorrect in my judgment that he is angry, I am incorrect about his future behavior, not about such a state. But she misses the fact that action is the transcending of what is given, as opposed to, e.g, a response to a stimulus.<sup>204</sup>

One thing that Sartre is trying to capture with the phrase “transcendence-transcended” is that another person, apprehended as such, is somebody whose behavior needs to be looked at as action, which involves the “nihilation” of what is given in terms of a projected -- i.e., nonexistent - - state of affairs. You transcend this transcending insofar as you apprehend it as a part of what is given, i.e., as a part of the facticity of which you are a transcending: you apprehend another’s action, complete with its nihilation and projection, as something which “is what it is,” as part of the given of which you are a nihilation and a going-beyond: “insofar as I transcend the Other’s transcendence, I fix it. It is no longer a resource against facticity; quite the contrary, it participates in turn in facticity” (450).

To understand the way in which another is a transcended transcendence, it must be clear that the sensing of the other person’s body, like the sensing of any physical object, is a part of your

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<sup>203</sup>Thus Schroeder says: “Although [Sartre’s] theory shares with behaviorism the effort to comprehend the Other by studying his observable actions, it differs insofar as it strives to see the Other as a goal-directed being rather than one who responds mechanically to antecedent conditions” (SP, 238).

<sup>204</sup>Naturally, this criticism is much different from the criticism of psychological determinism considered in Chapter Four (Section Four), which has to do with apprehending *oneself*. To constitute *oneself* as a transcendence-transcended, it seems, is a form of bad faith, in that this would be to constitute oneself as a thing, albeit a thing belonging to a “type of reality” different from a material object. One consciousness apprehends another as a transcendence-transcended, but to apprehend oneself as a transcendence-

facticity: "This body of the Other is given to me as the pure in-itself of his being -- an in-itself among in-itselfs and one which I surpass toward my possibilities" (450). The other person is a part of the situation in which you act. If you mistake her for a pile of clothes on the bed, she is not apprehended as a *transcendence* transcended. But ordinarily the other person as transcendence makes up a part of your facticity. This transcendence is manifested in the fact that "in order to perceive [the Other's body] we always move to it from what is outside of it, in space and time" (453-4), i.e., in terms of a situation structured around a goal.

The phrase "transcendence-transcended" is intended to capture some sort of fusion of subjectivity and objectivity: the Other as a transcendence (of facticity) is transcended and thereby apprehended in a transcendent object. Rather than trying to fuse together two different types of thing, however, the problem for Sartre's phenomenological ontology is to combine two modes of apprehension, one which apprehends another consciousness as such and one which apprehends objects and their qualities. What needs to be explained is how one apprehends as an object the Other as such -- i.e., the pure subject from whom one gains one's objectivity. This means that two radically distinct modes of apprehension -- one which apprehends the Other as such (by apprehending *oneself* as an object for a pure subject) and one which apprehends the physical characteristics of the other person -- need somehow to be united in the single experience of another person as an object-that-apprehends.

The consciousness which is ultimately apprehended as the Other-as-object is the Other as such, experienced originally in the Look as the inapprehensible subject for whom (one's) consciousness is an object. What needs to be explained is the connection between this experience and the apprehension of another person's physical features. The crucial part the explanation is that these features are originally apprehended as modifications of the Other as such.

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transcended is a free attempt to deny one's freedom.



At this stage, one's self-consciousness is not any sort of subject-object relation. One's consciousness as such (i.e., oneself as a transcending of facticity) is apprehended under the Look, and it is apprehended merely as an "unrevealed object-ness" (362). The look is just the realization that one's consciousness as such is an object. Thus, although it is a modification of the field of consciousness, one apprehends neither the object-term (oneself), nor the subject-term (the Other) as actual objects within that field. Nevertheless, the Look makes it possible to apprehend two new objects: other persons and one's own person. When size, shape, and color, are apprehended as qualities of another person, they are apprehended as modifications of the Other as such, which, before such modifications, is apprehended only as the subject for which (one's) consciousness is an "unrevealed object-ness."

It is not the case that we apprehend a body with human physical features, which we also apprehend as a person rather than as a mannequin. Naturally there are cases in which we mistake an inanimate object for a person. There are also cases in which we mistake a person for an inanimate object. For example, a prankster stood waiting, very still, among three realistic wax figures at an art exhibition. When an unsuspecting patron began to scrutinize the details of these remarkable figures, the prankster turned his head, shocking the patron. This is a case in which an object apprehended as nonconscious is re-apprehended as conscious. According to philosophers who take the problem of other minds seriously, this is not so different from what happens when we ordinarily apprehend a person: an item apprehended as a physical object, is also (whether subsequently in time or not) judged to be a person.

Behaviorism, according to Sartre, is right to reject such a picture and to ridicule the problems that result from it. However, it is wrong to view apprehending another person according to the model of apprehending an inanimate object in the first place: it is no better to say that the apprehension of another person begins and ends with the apprehension of a physical object than

that, beginning this way, it ends with an inference about a mental state. The behaviorist is right to say that when we are mistaken about another's anger, we are mistaken only about the person's behavior. But we should not think of behavior as a mere series of physical movements. As

Strawson puts it:

[W]e understand [the movements of the bodies of other persons], we interpret them, only by seeing them as elements in just such plans or schemes of action as those of which we know the present course and future development without observation of the relevant present movements [namely, our own plans or schemes of action]. But this is to say that we see such movements (the observed movements of others) as *actions*, that we interpret them in terms of intention.<sup>205</sup>

According to Sartre, apprehending another person is different from apprehending a replica of a person from the very beginning. In the case in which one mistakes a mannequin for a person, or in the rare case in which one mistakes an actual person for a wax replica, realizing the mistake consists in dismantling the whole field of perception and rebuilding it according to a different plan. The readjustment does not consist in simply adding or subtracting some such quality as "being a wax replica" to one's apprehension of some object, leaving it and the world otherwise intact. The unsuspecting patron suddenly felt her own "object-ness" as she was forced to re-apprehend the physical features that she was examining as features of a person rather than an artwork. Note how much less drastic the change in her world would have been if instead her discovery was that the figure she was examining was made of plaster rather than wax. Similarly, if she had only discovered that one of the wax figures was equipped with a motor and moving parts, without ever apprehending it as an actual person, the re-adjustment would not need to be so global (unless the figure's movement momentarily convinced her that the figure was an actual person).

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<sup>205</sup>Strawson, "Persons" 149 (my glosses). Strawson emphasizes the difference between the apprehension of qualities specific to persons and the apprehension of qualities that one attributes to inanimate objects as well, and says that persons are a basic part of our conceptual scheme. This is reason to compare Sartre's view to Strawson's, which on this point comes closer to Sartre's view than to that of the behaviorist. Chapter seven is devoted to such a comparison. As we shall see, however, Strawson's analysis, because of its emphasis on our *conceptual* scheme, and on the *predicates* which we apply to "things" whose existence is considered to be unproblematic, differs from Sartre's.

This global transformation is the apprehension of the Other-as-subject. Even if the patron discovered that there was no fourth figure at all, that there was an illusion somehow created with a mirror and one of the other figures, the re-adjustment would remain on the side of the objects. The Look's global restructuring would not be necessary.

The examples of re-apprehending a would-be person as a mannequin, and a would-be wax figure as a person, give some indication of what it means to say that the apprehension of the Other-as-object is based on the apprehension of the Other-as-subject. The drastic restructuring of the field of consciousness involved in such re-apprehension explains why Sartre would say that the perception of another person's body "can not *by nature* be of the same type as that of inanimate objects" (455).

### ***3b. Sartre and Cartesianism***

One of the bodies in one's field of consciousness is oneself. It goes without saying that "being oneself," for Sartre, is not a feature that can simply be added to something already apprehended as an object having certain physical features. Nor is apprehending oneself grounded either in the apprehension of an object of consciousness already apprehended as another person or in the apprehension of a person somehow not yet identified as either another or oneself. Just as "being conscious," a feature<sup>206</sup> of others provided by the experience of the Look, needs to enter into the apprehension of another person at the very beginning, as a feature of oneself provided by experience in general, it needs to enter into the apprehension of one's own person at the very beginning. "What is involved in apprehending oneself as a person?" and, "What is involved in apprehending others?" are similar questions. Crucial to understanding Sartre is seeing that what needs to be explained is *not how one experiences some physical object as conscious*, but rather

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<sup>206</sup>We should be cautious when speaking of consciousness as a feature of persons: when apprehended originally, in the Look as well as in the pre-reflective self-consciousness, consciousness does not appear as feature of anything at all; it appears as nothing but a relation to an object of consciousness.

*how one experiences consciousness*, the point of view to which the world appears, as itself a physical object.

Once again, we are dealing with a form of perception which is essentially different from that of an inanimate object, and it confronts us again with the question: how does a mode of apprehension whose object is a perceptual field, namely, the field of unreflective consciousness, combine with a mode of apprehension whose object is one's own physical features, such that one can experience oneself as a physical-object-that-apprehends? Sartre's answer to this question is similar to his answer to the other one: just as, when first apprehending another's physical features, you apprehend them as features of another's consciousness, when first apprehending your own physical features, you apprehends them as features of your consciousness. This is why I have been stressing that the proper question, regarding the apprehension of one's own body, is how one apprehends consciousness as a body, rather than how one apprehends some particular body as conscious. As we saw back in Chapter One, Sartre states explicitly that the opposite approach is a mistake:

[I]n certain well-defined cases we can adopt with regard to our own body the Other's point of view or, if you like, that our own body can appear to us as the body of the Other. Scholars who have made this appearance serve as a basis for a general theory of the body have radically reversed the terms of the problem and have shown themselves up as understanding nothing about the question. (468)

To apprehend one's own hand as an object or instrument, e.g., to look down at it or "to hold an almond in my left fist and pound it with my right hand" (468), is to apprehend it as the body of the Other, and it is a mistake to base a theory of the appearance of one's own body on such instances. The theorist is thus given the opportunity to make an error analogous to that of believing that the Other is first given as a body, rather than as the Look.

In any case, the Look is involved in apprehending oneself as a physical object. However, it is used differently here: rather than giving meaning to the way in which another person is a

transcendence, it is used to give meaning to the way in which one is transcended, and thus a transcendent object. While the merely psychic object is not even consistently transcendent, not to mention physical, impure reflection, when fortified by the Look, can present one with a psychophysical ego. Pursuing this point will allow us to see how Sartre's view is in some way comparable to Descartes's, but also radically different in others.

It may come as a surprise that Sartre says, in the chapter on the body, that "the body is the psychic object *par excellence* -- the only psychic object" (455). One may wonder what has happened to the ego, and its states, acts, and qualities, of which Sartre spoke extensively in the section on reflection in Part Two of B&N, and of which he carefully described the constitution in TE. Similarly, the statement that "the 'psychic object' is entirely released to perception and is inconceivable outside corporeal structures" (455), may appear to contradict almost everything he said. In the first place, this is the first time we have heard that another person can be a psychic object. And, isn't the psychic object the object which is apprehended in impure reflection, i.e., not in perception at all? Aren't psychic states, psychic acts, psychic qualities, the "I," the "Me," and the ego precisely incorporeal items that are synthesized by impure reflection? Are there now two sorts of things that are called psychic objects -- one's own psyche (and its states, dispositions, etc.) and the bodies of others? No: we are now told that the body is "the only psychic object." What has happened to impure reflection and its objects?

Although Sartre is talking specifically about the apprehension of another person, he has not forgotten what he had said about impure reflection. The body is the psychic object, the mysterious object of impure reflection. That is, when one apprehends one's body (e.g., in the mirror), one isn't apprehending a second item, in addition to the ego that one apprehends in impure reflection. One is apprehending this same ego, but now as a body. The reason we are first informed of this here, over two hundred pages after the detailed description of psychic objects and

psychic temporality, is because this is the first time Sartre has talked about the apprehension of others. Prior to the Look, the objects of mere impure reflection were the only such objects. With the Look, however, a new kind of psychic object becomes possible: the psychophysical object. However, oneself as a psychophysical object is not really a new psychic object -- it is the same as the object of mere impure reflection, except now it has physical characteristics.

Moreover, a human body is a psychic object in exactly the same sense that the ego is: (1) it is apprehended as an object, i.e., as something that "is what it is" and can be the object-pole of an indefinite number of possible acts, and (2) it is apprehended as psychic, i.e., it is apprehended as consciousness, albeit in "degraded" form.<sup>207</sup> Apprehension of an embodied person is not apprehension of something physical that is also conscious. It is apprehension of something physical that is also consciousness. That is precisely what is unique about Sartre's approach to the question.

As we saw in Chapter Four, the pre-reflective apprehension of oneself as a transcending of facticity, as embodied freedom, is the basis for reflection. As object of impure reflection, any psychic state -- anger and joy no less than pain and thirst -- is apprehended on the basis of the body-for-itself. But the apprehension of a headache in (mere) impure reflection is in turn part of (and by no means identical to) the apprehension of one's aching head: more constitutive work needs to be done before one locates one's headache in one's head and apprehends it as a physical state. Conversely, consider the Cartesian Meditator who has suspended belief in the physical

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<sup>207</sup>Should we then say that the ego apprehended in (mere) impure reflection is really an *abstraction from* one's body? It would be better to say that one is constituting it without the use of any experience that would give it bodily characteristics, that one is constituting it merely in terms of the objects of one's own experience. (The italicized phrase has the connotation that one constitutes an embodied object and then constitutes the disembodied ego based upon this.)

Here Sartre is a hair closer to Descartes as compared to Strawson. Strawson takes the concept of the person to be primitive, and the concept of an ego (and a zombie) to be derived from it. Sartre says that the apprehension of one's own person is constituted on the basis of the ego, and the apprehension of another person is based on the apprehension of the Other-as-subject in the Look. (Regarding zombies, Sartre would say that the apprehension of a mannequin as such is based on the apprehension of another person.)

world. Such suspension does not prevent one, however, from apprehending “physical” pain. One now feels what was one’s head simply as pain. The question is how one constitutes this pain as part of a “nine inch hairy ball with various holes in it,”<sup>208</sup> not how one is able to apprehend the ball as somehow containing the pain. When looked at this way, it becomes obvious that, despite the role of the Look in both cases, one’s own head is constituted much differently from another’s.

The fusion of subjectivity and objectivity described by Sartre is different from that sought by Descartes. The traditional mind-body problem is not about the relationship between objects of consciousness of two radically different sorts or two radically different modes of apprehension. It is about things. Sartre’s questions, by contrast, are not about the relationship between different items, or different aspects of one item, but about the relationship between modes of apprehension and the objects constituted precisely as objects of consciousness in them. Once this change has been made, it becomes clear that the relationship between the apprehension of oneself qua consciousness and the apprehension of oneself qua physical object is very different from the relationship between the apprehension of the Other qua consciousness and the Other qua physical object.

Sartre’s question is still roughly similar to Descartes’s, but there are some important differences. First, the Cartesian ego, according to Sartre, is a psychic object, an object of impure reflection. Descartes has mistaken it for the subject of consciousness. Second, Sartre is not engaged in an attempt to connect or to relate the psychic object with the physical body. Rather, the fact to be explained is how consciousness is able to experience *itself* as a physical object in the world. The Cartesian mind has altogether been removed from the question.<sup>209</sup> Of course, the

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<sup>208</sup>This phrase comes from D. E. Harding’s “On Having No Head,” which briefly gives a phenomenological account of the body that is similar to Sartre’s at least in that Harding recognizes an asymmetry in one’s apprehension of one’s own body and those of others.

<sup>209</sup>The “body”-term is the same in both versions of the problem. It is a physical object -- one’s own or another’s -- considered as such. This term was never the problematic one, according to Sartre, although he

problematic term, “consciousness,” remains. But it does not refer to a theoretical, immaterial entity. It refers to what Descartes called “thinking, perceiving, etc.,” rather than to the theoretical entity which he supposed does this thinking and perceiving. Finally, the Cartesian question of the relation between the mind and body is the same regardless of whose mind and body are being related, while the discussion of the constitution of persons will differ if the person being constituted is oneself.

#### **4. The Role of the Look in Apprehending Other Persons, the Objective World, and Oneself**

We have seen that the Look is involved in apprehending oneself and others. I have also indicated that it is involved in the apprehension of the objective world. In this section I say more about the Look and these roles, and give more textual evidence that the experience of the Look indeed grounds the apprehension of others, the objective world, and oneself. I have divided the section into three subsections, corresponding to the three roles. However, these topics are not neatly separated by Sartre. In particular, he does not devote a separate section to the Look’s role in the constitution of the objective world.

##### ***4a. The role of the Look in apprehending the objective world***

How is one’s world -- i.e., the field of instrument-objects organized according to one’s project -- apprehended as a world that is indifferent to one’s projects and location? On Sartre’s view, the objective world is constituted on the basis of one’s own world. One does not apprehend an indifferent world and then relate oneself to it. Thus we do not want to ask how one relates such a world to one’s projects, so that things can be apprehended as useful or in the way, or the world can be apprehended as cooperating with or resisting one’s projects. Rather we want to ask how the

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thinks of a physical object as the “principle of the series” of its appearances -- one which doesn’t exist as something over and above the series itself, whereas Descartes thought of physical objects as fully experience-independent. The “mind”-term, naturally, is more problematic. For Descartes it is the *res cogitans*, an immaterial substance whose metaphysical status is the same in oneself and others, the difference in these cases being the sort of access that one has to it.



network of instrument-objects is constituted as an indifferent world.<sup>210</sup>

The experience of the Look gives one the sense that, in addition to the network of instrument-objects structured according to one's project, there is "another world which is *the same* world and yet lacks all communication with it:" "[The Other-as-object] is the concrete pole... of the flow of the world toward another world which is *the same* world and yet lacks all communication with it" (360). However, it is not necessary to constitute the Other as an object in order to constitute the objective world. In fact, it is the other way around. The apprehension of the inapprehensible objective world behind one's situation, grounds the apprehension of the Other-as-object: "the Other-as-object is defined in connection with the world as the object which sees what I see" (345).

As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, the apprehension of the body-for-itself consists in the pre-reflective apprehension of one's embodiedness. Sartre says that without one's body having to appear within the world, one apprehends it insofar as one is present to the world as a perceptual object or as a complex of instruments indicating one's location or one's role as an agent. Likewise, apprehension of another's body rests on apprehension of the arrangement of objects according to another point of view: "the Other's body is everywhere present in the very indication which instrumental-things give of it since they are revealed as utilized by him and as known by him" (448). The apprehension of an alien world -- "another world which is *the same* world and yet lacks all communication with it" -- grounds the apprehension of the Other-as-object. The original form<sup>211</sup> of apprehension of such an alien world is given in the experience of the

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<sup>210</sup>While Husserl saw the role that others play in the constitution of the world (316), Sartre differs from Husserl in his view on the constitution of other persons. Once the Other as such, the inapprehensible subject of the Look, is distinguished from, and shown to be more basic than, the Other-as-object, it can be shown that it is the apprehension of the Other as such, not the apprehension of the Other-as-object, that plays a role in the constitution of the world. Cf. Michael Theunissen, *The Other: Studies in the Social Ontology of Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, and Buber*, trans. Christopher McCann (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986): 201, 212-13.

<sup>211</sup>I say the "original form" because on the basis of the Look, one can constitute a multiplicity of alien

Look, and described by Sartre in the example of the voyeur:

[T]he look alienates [my possibilities] from me. Hitherto I grasped these possibilities... in the world in the form of the potentialities of instruments: the dark corner in the hallway referred to me the possibility of hiding -- as a simple potential quality of its shadow, as the invitation of its darkness.... But with the Other's look a new organization of complexes comes to superimpose itself upon the first.... [T]he alienation of myself, which is the act of being-looked-at, involves the alienation of the world which I organize... [I]t escapes me so as to organize itself into a new and differently oriented complex -- with other relations and other distances in the midst of other objects which similarly have for me a secret face. (352-3)

The transformation that occurs under the Look, which allows for the appearance of other persons and of oneself as a person, can only constitute itself as a transformation of the world:<sup>212</sup>

“the alienation of myself, which is the act of being-looked-at, involves the alienation of the world which I organize” (353). Again:

[T]he *Other's look*... is the destruction of all objectivity for me. The Other's look... is not only a transformation of myself but a total metamorphosis of the *world*. I am looked-at in a world which is looked-at. In particular the Other's look... denies my distances from objects and unfolds its own distances. (360)

This transformation brings with it a transition from a world that is objective only in the sense that it is apprehended as an object of consciousness, to one that is objective in a stronger sense. Prior to that, the

quality or instrumentality of the object belonged to it alone and was given as an objective, ideal property marking its belonging to that complex which we have called *situation*. But with the Other's look a new organization of complexes comes to superimpose itself on the first. (352-3)

And, as Sartre states in the quotation from page 360, under the Look this first world is, in a way, destroyed. Again: “my relation to an object or the potentiality of an object decomposes under the Other's look” (353). But it is important to understand that it is through the destruction of one's

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worlds, e.g., those of particular people and groups.

<sup>212</sup>The reason that I don't say “one's world,” here, is that it is only on basis of the Look that there can be something which we might want to call “one's world” -- i.e., a field of consciousness that is thought of as not being coextensive with *the* world.

situation occurring with the Look that the world takes on its more fully objective flavor.<sup>213</sup> Before this, objects cannot be experienced as having meanings independent of one's current project and the situation that is its upshot. An object that is currently in the way cannot be experienced as one which is useful in another situation or, for that matter, one that is in the way in another situation as well.

On the other hand, the experience of the situation, the complex of instrumental-things as such, is included in the experience of the more objective world that destroys it: "there is a total space which is grouped around the Other, and this space is made *with my space*" (343). For example, the possibility of an ordinary experience like maneuvering around a tree with a lawnmower -- an experience in which the tree is not just an object in the way, but also simply there, in various spatial relations to other objects (clumps of earth, stretches of grass, rocks on the ground, sky above) -- is grounded in the possibility of a more basic experience in which the tree is *not* presented as one among many items in the world indifferent to the particular project: an experience of the tree as only in the way. In the ordinary experience the tree comes to one's attention through this aspect, but it is also apprehended as providing shade on sunny days, blossoming in the spring, called a dogwood, and sometimes obstructing games of catch. Apprehending the tree as something that has all these perceptual and instrumental qualities *and* is currently in the way is based on the apprehension of the tree as only in the way. More globally, the world is apprehended first as the correlate of a project: the apprehension of an indifferent world includes this apprehension. For the world to be more than the mere correlate of the project, for it to be a world that is also indifferent to this project, there needs to be a "regrouping... of all the objects which people my universe" (343). Prior to this, "my body... is over there in the fact that the lamppost hides the bush that is growing along the path" (419-20), and the lamppost is

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<sup>213</sup>Cf. Theunissen, 228

there insofar as it hides the bush.

Sartre speaks of the “space which is grouped around the Other,” and the “regrouping of all the objects which people my universe,” in the context of his example of seeing a man in the park.

The Other in question here is thus the Other-as-object. But the Other-as-object is itself apprehended in terms of the apprehension of an intersubjective world:

[T]he Other [as-object] is defined...by the absence of the world I perceive, an absence discovered at the very heart of my perception of this world. On this level the Other is an object in the world, an object which can be defined by the world. (344, my gloss)

It would be putting things backwards to say that the Other-as-object allows us to apprehend the world as intersubjective. Rather, the apprehension of the intersubjective world is what allows for the apprehension of the Other-as-object. The Look -- experiencing oneself as “an unrevealed object-ness” -- grounds the experience of the Other-as-object by making possible the experience of an intersubjective world: the experience of having one’s possibilities fixed as “probabilities” is accompanied by the apprehension of a world as a complex of instrumental-things for alien projects, and this apprehension is the basis for the apprehension of the Other-as-object, who “has’ a subjectivity as this hollow box has ‘an inside’” (384). Thus, just before the keyhole example, Sartre says:

[I]f the Other-as-object is defined in connection with the world as the object which sees what I see, then my fundamental connection with the Other-as-subject must be able to be referred back to my permanent possibility of *being seen* by the Other.... This revelation [i.e., the revelation of my being-as-object for the Other] can not derive from the fact that *my universe is an object for the Other-as-object, as if* the Other’s look after having wandered all over the lawn and the surrounding objects came following a definite path to place itself on me.... I can not consider the look which the Other directs on me as one of the possible manifestations of his objective being; the Other can not look at *me* as he looks at the grass. Furthermore my objectivity can not itself derive *for me* from the objectivity of the world since I am precisely the one by whom *there is* a world[.] (345, my gloss)

The relationship of the Other to the grass is a “manifestation of his objective being” because the Other-as-object is related to the various items in the world. This is not to say that he is related to these items merely externally. However, these items already exist as a part of one’s

situation prior to the Look, and he is constituted on the basis of one's apprehension of such items.

By contrast, one's own objectivity depends upon the Look. This is why the Other "can not look at *me* as he looks at the grass:" unlike the grass, which is already there when the Other is apprehended, the Other's Look is involved in constituting oneself as a worldly object.

#### **4b. The role of the Look in apprehending another person**

All in all, the theorist who thinks that one first finds a material object, then infers it is conscious, then figures out it can be consciously related to oneself has got it backwards:<sup>214</sup>

We do not *discover* in and through the Other's body the possibility which the Other has of knowing us. This is revealed fundamentally in and through my *being-as-object for the Other*; that is, it is the essential structure of our original relation with the Other. (447)

The "hemorrhaging of one's world" described in the example of seeing the man in the park, and present in any situation in which one apprehends another person as such, depends upon the Look. This is what allows one to be presented with another person. That is, the Look grounds the experience of another person.<sup>215</sup> One's apprehension of another person "includes the comprehension" of the possibility of the Look (393).

Understanding the Look requires distinguishing between the Other and another person, and forgetting about the ordinary experience of being looked at by another person. The Other is not an object in the world, and the Look does not come from anywhere in the world:

The Other looks at me not as he is "in the midst of" *my* world but as he comes toward the world and toward me from all his transcendence; when he looks at me, he is separated from me by no distance, by no object in the world -- whether real or ideal -- by no body in

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<sup>214</sup>Naturally this is not to say that, having acquired the concept of another consciousness, we never wonder whether we ought to apply it to a new object. Nor is it to deny that we sometimes try to figure out, e.g., whether a deer can sense us based on our knowledge of deer. It is only to say that the concept "other conscious being" is not originally acquired in this way.

<sup>215</sup>Cf. Theunissen, 216, 232. Schroeder, by contrast, doesn't seem to recognize this. He acknowledges that the Other-as-subject is fundamental in one sense: "The Other-as-subject is the primordial modality; the effort to make the other into an object is a defensive measure against the Other-as-subject" (239). But he says: "The two modes of the Other are simply distinct; they have no relationship to one another, except exclusion.... Each mode of the Other conceals the other mode" (238). By contrast, I would say that the experience of the Other-as-object "conceals" the experience of the Other-as-subject, in the sense that the latter experience is somehow *included* in the former.

the world,<sup>216</sup> but by the sole fact of his nature as Other.... An omnipresent and inapprehensible transcendence, posited upon me without intermediary as I am my being-unrevealed, a transcendence separated from me by the infinity of being, as I am plunged by this look into the heart of a world complete with its distances and its instruments -- such is the Other's look when I first experience it as a look. (361)

The Other as such, unlike an object in the world, "is not given in the form of plurality any more than as unity (save in its concrete relation to one particular Other-as-object)" (374-5). Thus Sartre refers to the Other as "prenumerical" (375). The experience of this prenumerical Other, the Look, grounds not only the experience of being looked at by another person, but also the experience of being looked at by a group of others, or by God. Each of these involves some sort of response to the Look:

[A]s soon as I look at those who are looking at me, the other consciousnesses are isolated in multiplicity. On the other hand if I turn away from the look... and seek to think emptily of the infinite indistinction of the human presence and to unify it under the concept of the infinite subject which is never an object, then I obtain... the notion of God as the omnipresent, infinite subject for whom I exist. (375)

While the prenumerical presence of the Other is a "concrete evident presence" (362) -- in that there is no doubt that one is experiencing oneself as an object and correlatively experiencing the unobjectivated subject for whom one exists<sup>217</sup> -- both the one divine consciousness and the many consciousnesses of other persons "lack proved reality:"

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<sup>216</sup>That is, neither by my body nor by another body. Sartre points out that on Descartes's view there are two bodies between one's soul and another's. For example when somebody sees me looking for my keys, this is what is happening: My desire to find my keys is causing my body to move in various ways. These movements affect her eyes, which in turn affects her mind such that she believes that I want to find my keys. On Sartre's view, by contrast, the Other as a Look is "directly upon" one -- and not only upon one as a body in the world but, more directly, upon one as facticity, i.e., as presence to the world.

<sup>217</sup>Sartre's view seems to be that just as one can be certain that "there is consciousness of the chair," one can be certain that "there is shame-consciousness," i.e., there is consciousness of oneself as shameful: "shame is a unitary apprehension with three dimensions: 'I am ashamed of myself before the Other'" (385). Thus the Other-as-such and oneself-as-object are presented with the same sort of certainty as oneself-as-consciousness and the chair-as-object are. Thus Sartre says: "[T]he Other is given to me as a concrete evident presence which I can in no way derive from myself and which can in no way be placed in doubt nor made the object of a phenomenological reduction or of any other *epoche*" (362-3).

Naturally Sartre admits that there are times when one is mistaken about whether something which one sees is a person. But in such a case one is not mistaken about the existence of the Other, but only about "the contingent connection between the Other and an object-being in *my* world" (370).

[T]hese two objectivations, the concrete, enumerating objectivation and the unifying, abstract objectivation, both lack proved reality -- that is, the prenumerical presence of the Other. (375)

I take it this means we can be certain neither that there exists an “omnipresent, infinite subject” nor that any particular appearing object is a consciousness.

It is by looking back at the Other (i.e., by constituting another person on the basis of the apprehension of one’s “unrevealed object-ness”) that one is then able to experience others, and this is what one is doing whenever one sees another person (as such):

I must apprehend the Other first as the one for whom I exist as an object; the reapprehension of my selfness causes the Other to appear as an object in a second moment of prehistoric historization. (445-6)

In other words, the experience of being an object for the prenumerical Other is part of, and indeed foundational for, the experience of seeing another person:

The Other-as-object is only an object, but my apprehension of him includes the comprehension of the fact that I could always and on principle produce from him another *experience* by placing myself on another plane of being.... [T]he Other-as-object is an explosive instrument which I handle with care because I foresee around him the permanent possibility that it will be made to explode and that with this explosion I shall suddenly experience the alienation of my being. (393-4, translation altered)<sup>218</sup>

We have seen that the reverse is not the case. The apprehension of the Other-as-object is not included in the Look. One can experience the Look without looking back. This is what one does, for instance, when one “seeks to think emptily” of the prenumerical Other, and comes up with the notion of God. We have paid a lot of attention to another response to the Look: using the intuition of oneself as a worldly object, in combination with the apprehension of the ego qua object of impure reflection, so as to constitute oneself as a body in the field of consciousness. Not responding in any manner to the experience of one’s objecthood is yet another possibility.<sup>219</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Barnes’s translation reads: “...the permanent possibility that *they* are going to make it explode...”

<sup>219</sup>This would be difficult due to the For-itself’s attempt to ground its being. The chapter on “Concrete Relations with Others” discusses two fundamental responses to the Look, both of which are parts of an attempt to “be oneself in the mode of being what one is.” In a footnote to this section Sartre suggests that

Sartre refers to the relation to the Other which is experienced under the Look as an “irreducible fact,” and says the meaning of the Other-as-object is dependent on this relation:

[T]his relation which I call “being-seen-by-another”... represents an irreducible fact.... [I]f the concept of the Other-as-object is to have any meaning, this can only be as a result of the conversion and the degradation of that original relation. In a word, my apprehension of the other as *probably being* a man refers to my permanent possibility of my *being-seen-by-him*. (345)

The relation in question is the “internal relation” which the Other has to oneself (339). We saw what is involved in an internal relation when discussing the relationship between consciousness and its object: consciousness can only be described in terms of its object because it exists by not-being its object. Likewise, the Other exists by not-being one’s consciousness. This is the reason for the seemingly paranoid claim that “the only consciousness that exists without apprehending me is my own” (379).<sup>220</sup> The prenumerical Other, the consciousness from which any other consciousness is derived, constitutes itself on the basis of one’s consciousness just as one’s consciousness constitutes itself on the basis of its object. The prenumerical Other exists by apprehending one’s consciousness: before being anything else, it is not oneself.

It should be clear that the object in terms of which the Other constitutes itself is merely consciousness of the world -- that relationship to the world that is one’s consciousness -- as an object. It is not anything like a physical object:

I grasp the Other’s look at the very center of my *act* as the solidification and alienation of my own possibilities.... The Other as a look is only... my transcendence transcended.... The look does not carve me out in the universe; it comes to search for me at the heart of my situation and grasps me only in irresolvable relations with instruments. (352-3)

Thus the Look is an internal relation to something that is itself an internal relation. Just as,

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after a “radical conversion” things might be different (534, n.13).

<sup>220</sup>This statement is misleading in making it sound as if there are many consciousnesses other than one’s own, and that all of them have oneself as an object. At one level of description the only consciousness other than one’s own is that of the pre-numerical Other. This consciousness does indeed have oneself as its object. The pre-numerical Other is consciousness of oneself as another. Other persons are apprehended on the basis of this consciousness of oneself as another. But this is not to say that everybody else is thinking about oneself all the time.



on the most basic level, one exists by not-being one's object, the Other on its most basic level -- the Look -- exists by not-being its object: one's consciousness. Recall that consciousness constitutes itself by withdrawing from "Being," and in so doing constitutes its field. The items in the field of consciousness are in-itself in that they are experienced as independent of consciousness, whereas consciousness experiences itself as nothing but an apprehending of them, so that any individuating feature of an act of consciousness is found in its field. Similarly, the Other constitutes itself by withdrawing from consciousness, and in so doing constitutes consciousness as another, independently existing consciousness: "The Other has to make my being-for-him *be* in so far as he has to be his being" (351). Thus any individuating feature in a given instance of the Look is found in the consciousness of which it is a consciousness.

Since the Look is only one's transcendence transcended -- since it is only the "solidification and alienation" of one's possibilities, as opposed to, say, a particular other person's apprehension of oneself -- it follows that there is exactly one such transformation possible for any act of consciousness.<sup>221</sup> That is, corresponding to a given field of unreflected, solipsistic consciousness is exactly one encompassing field in which the possibilities structuring the former field are solidified. It is only by apprehending this transformed field that one can eventually apprehend various features of the third dimension of one's body (e.g., its being seen from a particular place, its playing a role in a particular instrumental complex and not another, its playing a particular role in this complex, etc.).<sup>222</sup>

In order to apprehend another person both as other than oneself and as conscious, it is

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<sup>221</sup>Theunissen says aptly that one's being-for-others is "the reverse side of internality itself" (Theunissen 237).

<sup>222</sup>(One's) consciousness is thus, in a sense, perfectly transparent to the Other, and this is apparent in the experience of shame. It is only in one's response to the Look that one constitutes oneself as opaque, that one can say to oneself, for instance, "the person who's looking at me doesn't *know* that I'm spying -- I might only be fixing the lock." It is by "looking back" in this way that one is able to constitute particular others. But the Look necessarily precedes this response as its basis: "the Other exists for me first and I apprehend him in his body *subsequently*" (446).

necessary to apprehend one's consciousness as a potential object of consciousness: if the other person were not conscious, she would not be a person, and if one's consciousness were not potentially an object she would not be another: "The only consciousness that exists without apprehending me... is my own" (379). It is important to appreciate this point. What makes the field of consciousness of another person different from one's own is that one's consciousness, if it is to appear at all, must appear as an object in this field. The fact that the field of consciousness of another person is based on the field of consciousness of the Other is what allows for this. Prior to the apprehension of other persons, the field of consciousness of the prenumerical Other is arranged according to a point of view that is alien in that one's consciousness is the object for this point of view. One apprehends a particular other person, and her field of consciousness, on the basis of a field of consciousness whose defining characteristic is that one's consciousness is its object.

This is the reason that one's consciousness is *the* object for the Other-as-such, and not just one of many potential objects. For the Other to exist, if it is not to exist as part of that object (in which case one would be internally related to it in a non-reciprocal<sup>223</sup> manner, and one would constitute oneself in terms of it as one constitutes oneself in terms of any other part of one's situation), the Other must constitute itself in terms of one's own consciousness. That is, one's consciousness must play the role for the Other that the world plays for one's consciousness: just as consciousness constitutes itself by distancing itself from the world and constituting the world as an object, the Other constitutes itself by distancing itself from one's consciousness and constituting this consciousness as an object.

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<sup>223</sup>I think that it is acceptable to describe the relation between unreflected consciousness and its object as "nonreciprocal." Although just before the section on the Look Sartre says that an internal relation is "a synthetic, active connection of the two terms, each one of which constitutes itself by denying that it is the other" (339), this is because he has in mind the internal relation between two consciousnesses, rather than the internal relation between consciousness and its object. Earlier, with the latter relation in mind, Sartre says: "By an internal negation we understand such a relation between two beings that the one which is denied to the other qualifies the other at the heart of its essence -- by absence. The negation becomes then a bond of essential being since *at least one* of the beings on which it depends is such that it points toward the

#### **4c. The role of the Look in apprehending oneself in one's third bodily dimension**

Thus far in this section we have considered two functions of the Look: it allows for the apprehension of a world that is more than merely the correlate of one's project and, based on this apprehension, it also allows for the apprehension of another person: "the object which sees what I see." As noted, the Look also allows one to apprehend oneself in a new way. It is the revelation of one's consciousness as an "unrevealed object-ness." But one also apprehends oneself as a person: an object with both physical and mental characteristics. Now we must consider the role played by the Look in one's apprehension of oneself as a person.

As we have seen, impure reflection provides a "suggestion" of an "outside" of consciousness, a suggestion which is somehow completed by the experience of the Look. We have seen that Sartre promises an account of this at the end of the section on reflection:

In inner temporality we find the first outline of an "outside"; the for-itself sees itself almost as bestowing an outside on its own eyes, but this outside is purely virtual. We shall see later how being-for-others *realizes* the suggestion of this "outside." (237)<sup>224</sup>

He fulfills this promise in the section on the Look and in the chapter on the body, in particular, in the section on the third ontological dimension of the body. We are told there that there is an "extension" of one's facticity relative to any form of reflection that does not involve the Look (464).<sup>225</sup> Although the Look is not itself a reflective phenomenon, there is a particular sort of reflection in which one uses this extended facticity in order to assist in making oneself into an object for oneself. Reflection in general is an attempt on the part of consciousness to become "the

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other, that it carries the other in its heart as an absence" (243, my italics).

<sup>224</sup>Sartre says the same things elsewhere in the section on reflection: "The reflected-on has... in a way, already a consciousness (of) itself as having an *outside* or rather the suggestion of an *outside*" (214). However: "Reflection... is a stage of nihilation intermediate between between the pure and simple existence of the for-itself and existence *for others*.... In order for the consciousness reflected-on to be 'viewed from without'... it would be necessary that the reflective should not be the reflected-on in the mode of not being what it is not; the scissiparity will be realized only in existence *for-others*" (217-18).

<sup>225</sup>Theunissen places due emphasis on Sartre's description of the Look as an extension of one's facticity: "In a certain respect, the enormous change that takes place in me through my objectification stands for nothing other than the lapse of the facticity of being-for-itself into the facticity of the present at hand" (Theunissen

foundation for its own being” by becoming an object for itself. But, as we have seen, both pure and (mere) impure reflective consciousness cannot succeed in this attempt because the reflective consciousness is dependent upon the consciousness reflected-on. The necessary independence is finally achieved in the relationship between consciousness and the Other. One’s consciousness is truly an object for the Other. This is reflected in the fact that, just as the object of ordinary unreflective consciousness (e.g., the table that one perceives) is apprehended as “infinite and inexhaustible,” so is the consciousness which is an object for the Other:

[T]he appearance of the look is apprehended by me as the upsurge of an ekstatic relation of being, of which one term is the “me” as for-itself... and of which the other term is still the “me” but outside my reach, outside my action, outside my knowledge. This term, since it is directly connected with the infinite possibilities of a free Other, is itself an infinite and inexhaustible synthesis of unrevealed possibilities. (359)

Because of one’s inexhaustibility for the Other, one can have genuine characteristics as a being-for-others -- one can actually have them as opposed to at most continually giving them to oneself by means of either the reflective act or the reflected-on act upon which it is dependent. One must maintain the hatred for Pierre, that one attributes to oneself in mere impure reflection, while one apprehends it. One must apprehend it through one’s consciousness of Pierre’s stubbornness, the consciousness upon which the reflective act is dependent. For the Other, however, one can have the quality of hating Pierre, or the quality of being angry or irascible, “as the table is round or square, or as the wall coloring is blue or gray.”

In the “The Third Ontological Dimension of the Body” Sartre says that one doesn’t “know,” but only “suffers,” one’s body as a merely psychic object (465, 466). This distinction between suffering one’s psychic body and knowing one’s body in its third ontological dimension demonstrates the insubstantial quality of the object of any sort of reflection that does not involve the Look. The opening words in the section on reflection had already suggested that pure

reflection, at least,<sup>226</sup> is more akin to “feeling the flow of time” than to apprehending of oneself as any sort of item:

The for-itself endures in the form of a non-thetic consciousness (of) enduring. But I can “feel the time which flows” and apprehend myself as a unity of enduring. In this case I am conscious *of* enduring. (211)

Note that, while Sartre mentions apprehending oneself as a “unity of enduring,” the object of the italicized “of” is enduring itself. Apprehending oneself as a “unity of enduring” is not meant to refer to an act of consciousness that is directed at some enduring item. Pure reflective consciousness, at least, is not consciousness of such an item, but consciousness of enduring itself. The difference between “consciousness of enduring” or “suffering one’s being” and “knowing” oneself is that, in anything Sartre is comfortable calling knowledge, the object of knowledge is apprehended as existing independently of the act of knowing. Sartre will illustrate this difference by saying that on the reflective level one suffers one’s stomach ache or headache before apprehending it as “pain in the stomach” (466) or “pain in the eyes” (438). Yet this suffering occurs on a higher level than the original, unreflective pain-consciousness, which is just a painful apprehension of the world.

The difference is most easily grasped by noting that while on Sartre’s view reflection is necessary for anguish or boredom, one does not in such states need to apprehend oneself as an object fully independent of the reflective consciousness. To apprehend a stomachache or headache as pain that is located in one’s body, on the other hand, requires that one apprehend an object that, while unmistakably one’s own, is independent of one’s consciousness of it. On Sartre’s view, prior to its location in one’s head, but beyond the mere painful apprehension of the world, one

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<sup>226</sup>This passage occurs prior to B&N’s distinction between pure and impure reflection, so I expect what I am saying here applies only to the former. In particular, impure reflection, as we saw in Chapter Three, is directed at an *item* that is, albeit in a self-contradictory manner, apprehended as enduring. However the important claim that, for Sartre any object of mere reflection can be only “suffered” and not “known” applies to object of impure reflection as well as the reflected-on consciousness.

suffers a headache in the same way that one suffers boredom.

When Sartre later distinguishes pure from impure reflection, we discover that he may have been describing pure reflection in the quotation from page 211: impure reflection may be a hair closer to actual consciousness of an item. However, it is no more than a hair closer since, as we saw in Chapter Three, the attempt to see the merely psychic object as a distinct thing, as one that can be known rather than merely suffered, always results in attributing self-contradictory characteristics to it. Despite the fact that impure reflection “surpasses [pure reflection] and makes further claims” (218), the psychic object apprehended in impure reflection cannot, in any non-contradictory manner, be apprehended as distinct from the reflecting consciousness. Thus it is still very far from being anything one can pick out and conceptualize. In impure reflection one is attempting to apprehend as independent a quasi-object which is nothing other than the reflected-on consciousness misconceived:

[T]hree forms exist in impure reflection: the reflective, the reflected-on, and an in-itself which the reflective has to be insofar as this in-itself would be the reflected-on.... [This in-itself's] being is not to be but to be-made-to-be, like nothingness.... As soon as [reflection] posits itself as *not being* the reflected-on, and as soon as it determines what the reflected-on *is*, then reflection effects the appearance of an in-itself capable of being determined, qualified, behind the reflected-on.... This in-itself is the necessary object of all reflection. In order that it may arise, it is enough that reflection confront the reflected-on as object.... [Impure reflection] appears to cut the bond which unites the reflected-on to the reflective, and it seems to declare that the reflective *is not* the reflected-on in the mode of not being what one is not, at a time when in the original reflective upsurge, the reflective is not the reflected-on in the mode of not being what one is.... [T]his more radical nihilation [i.e., impure reflection] is not a real metaphysical event. The real event, the third process of nihilation is the *for-others*. Impure reflection is an abortive effort on the part of the for-itself *to be another* which *remaining itself*. The transcendent object which appeared behind the for-itself-reflected-on is the only being of which the reflective can say -- in this sense -- that *it is not it*. But it is a mere shadow of being. (224-6)

Thus three forms exist in impure reflection: the reflective and the reflected-on, which depend upon each other for their existence, and the reflected-on misconceived as something which does not depend upon the act of reflection.

For consciousness to have the sort of relationship to itself that it has to a table, for it to be

truly an object for itself, “the reflective should not be the reflected-on in the mode of not being what it is not.”<sup>227</sup> But “the reflective *is* the reflected-on”:

Evidently the reflective *is* the reflected-on.... [T]he reflected-on is not wholly an object but a quasi-object for reflection. Actually the consciousness reflected-on is not presented yet as something *outside* reflection -- that is, as a being on which one can realize a withdrawal, increase or diminish the distance which separates one from it. In order for the consciousness reflected-on to be “viewed from without” and in order for reflection to be able to orient itself in relation to it, it would be necessary that the reflective should not be the reflected-on in the mode of not being what it is not: the scissiparity will be realized only in existence *for-others*. (218)

The consciousness reflected-on is apprehended as independent only when it is apprehended as existing for others, and not when it is apprehended as a merely psychic object in impure reflection.

As we will see, the psychic object can indeed be constituted as an independent (psychophysical) object by means of the concepts that one learns to apply to oneself through one’s relations with others. At that point it is no longer a self-contradictory object, and the relations between its states are no longer magical. Thus, when the discussion of the body-for-others begins, talk of magical relations and self-contradictory objects disappears. In any case, as the object-“me” (mentioned in the quotation from page 359) gains its independence from the consciousness which apprehends it, it will come to occupy a place and time in a world of objects which, as we have seen, have themselves attained a “greater objectivity” with the advent of the Look. One’s consciousness, “the one by whom *there is* a world,” thus comes to occupy a place and time in the world undergoing a kind of alienating destruction by virtue of that very Look.

Before describing its embodiment, Sartre describes a certain sort of spatialization and temporalization of one’s consciousness:

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<sup>227</sup>Not being itself “in the mode of not being what it is,” will not do. As we have seen, even in pre-reflective consciousness, consciousness “is not what it is.” Indeed, it is difficult to see what the difference is between consciousness’s relationship to itself in pre-reflective consciousness and in pure reflection, since all Sartre says is that in pure reflection one is a quasi-object for oneself (218) and that the nothingness within consciousness is greater than it is in pre-reflective consciousness (214). Wider rightfully complains that such talk doesn’t help (Wider, *Bodily Nature* 82-3).

The Other's look confers spatiality upon me. To apprehend oneself as looked-at is to apprehend oneself as a spatializing-spatialized.... But the Other's look is not only apprehended as spatializing; it is also *temporalizing*.... The *Other's look* in so far as I apprehend it comes to give to *my* time a new dimension. My presence, in so far as it is a present grasped by another as *my* present, has an outside; this presence which makes-itself-present *for me* is alienated for me in a present to which the Other makes himself present. I am thrown into the universal present in so far as the Other makes himself be a presence to me. But the universal present in which I come to take my place is a pure alienation of my universal present. (357)

The "me" in question here is still oneself as consciousness. Thus the spatialization is not yet that of a physical object which takes up space. One is spatialized in the sense that the point of view to which the world appears is now located in the midst of the world. But here this means only that the point of view which one is, is apprehended as a point of view upon which a point of view can be taken, rather than as the absolute center around which any instrument-object must be ordered for it to be part of the world.<sup>228</sup> Similarly, as Sartre says here, rather than merely being the gap in time which separates the past from the future, with the Look one's consciousness can be located at a point in time. It can be located before or after other points in time, but being in the midst of the world, temporally and spatially, here means only being located in space and time, and not being apprehended as something that takes time or takes up space.

The experience of the Look nevertheless provides the foundation for the eventual apprehension of oneself as a body extended in time and space. It does so by enabling a modification of the experience of oneself as a merely psychic object. Thus, as we saw at the end of Chapter Three, Sartre says that a stomach ache "escapes me toward new characteristics which I establish as limits and empty schemata of organization. It is thus, for example, that my illness, suffered as psychic, will appear to me reflectively as sickness *in my stomach*" (465). The presence of this new item in the field of consciousness, oneself as a psychophysical object -- a physical

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<sup>228</sup>It may seem that there is something wrong with saying that one's point of view is at a location prior to saying that it takes up space, but this isn't so. Just as a point of view, the point on the lamp which is nearest to the wall has a location but no extension.



object that is also oneself -- is made possible by a new dimension of one's facticity in this field:

To the extent that the Other's omnipresence is a fundamental fact, the objectivity of my being-there is a constant dimension of my facticity.... My body is there not only as a point of view which I am but again as a point of view on which there are actually brought to bear points of view which I could never take; my body escapes me on all sides. (461)

As Sartre continues, he explains this in terms of the two aspects of the body-for-itself which he had described in the first section of the chapter on the body, the body-as-senses and the body-as-instrument. Most importantly, he confirms that while "the contingency of [one's] facticity" is increased with the Look, this extension of one's facticity, while perpetually haunting one's unreflective experience, is so far only manifested emptily, always escapes one, and is inapprehensible:

This means first that the ensemble of *senses*, which themselves cannot be apprehended, is given as apprehended elsewhere and by others. This apprehension which is thus emptily manifested does not have the character of an ontological necessity; its existence cannot be derived even from my facticity, but it is an evident and absolute fact. It has the character of a factual necessity. Since my facticity is pure contingency and is revealed to me non-thetically as a factual necessity, the being-for-others of this facticity comes to increase the contingency of this facticity, which is lost and flees me in an infinity of contingency which escapes me. Thus at the very moment when I *live* my senses... their being-for-others haunts me: they *are*. For the Other, my senses are as this table or this tree is for me. They are in the midst of *a world*... Thus the relativity of my senses... is... perpetually made present to me through the Other's existence; but it is a pure and inapprehensible appresentation.... My body as alienated escapes me toward a being-a-tool-among-tools, toward a being-a-sense-organ-among-sense-organs[.] (461-2)

It nevertheless becomes clear that the inapprehensible encapsulation of one's world in that of the Other will eventually be involved in the apprehension of oneself as an object which exists independently of one's consciousness:

My body as alienated escapes me toward a being-a-tool-among-tools, toward a being-a-sense-organ-apprehended-by-sense-organs, and this is accompanied by an alienating destruction and a concrete collapse of *my* world which flows toward the Other and which the Other will apprehend in *his* world. (462)

We can think of one's facticity being extended, or "the contingency of this facticity" being increased, in the following way. Prior to the look, one is radically contingent in the sense that the

world, to which consciousness is a relation, simply happens to have certain qualities and not others. The instrument-objects that make up the world are ordered in one particular way, rather than any of the other ways in which they might have been ordered: “the glass is to the left of the decanter and a little behind it” (405), “the table leg hides the designs of the rug from my sight” (405), “the lamp-post hides the bush which grows along the path” (420), “we must clear a distance of three yards if we want to go from the pipe to the tobacco” (424), etc. Prior to the Look, being here means only that *these* objects are the ones within reach of my body-as-senses and -as-instrument, that *this* is where the center of the network of instrument-objects is, that if the world is explored it will unfold in a certain order: that first the rest of this room will appear, then an adjacent one, etc., and that first the instruments closest will be affected by my actions, and then those further away. However the existence of another consciousness brings with it a new sense in which I can be said to be “here:” now not only are certain objects and not others being perceived, or within reach. I am able to be *behind* the keyhole, or *at* the table, and I am able to say that “the glass is to the left of the decanter *because* I am here rather than somewhere else.” “Here” is no longer just a point of reference; it has become a location as well.

We have seen that one’s facticity is never, as such, apprehended as a distinct object. It is apprehended in the way in which one experiences the world, and it is “impossible for me to distinguish the unchangeable brute existence from the variable meaning which [the world] includes” (639, my gloss). This is not changed by the fact that with the Look “my body escapes me on all sides,” by the fact that “the contingency of my facticity” is increased by the existence of the Other. Thus, as we saw at the end of Chapter Three, by itself, the extension of one’s facticity which occurs under the Look is not sufficient for one to constitute oneself as a physical object. One must reflect in order to put this material to use for that purpose:

[I]t is not on the unreflective plane that language with its meanings can slip in between my body and my consciousness which exists it. On this plane the alienation of the body

toward the Other and its third dimension of being can only be experienced emptyly; they are only an extension of lived facticity. (464)

If not for this “extension of lived facticity,” however, one would not be able to apprehend oneself as a physical object in the midst of an objective world.

We should not allow the last sentence of this quotation to mislead us into believing that, with the help of reflection, one will finally be able to experience oneself as an object in a wholly fulfilled way. Sartre always describes one’s apprehension of oneself as an object as, in a way, empty, as the apprehension of something that “on principle escapes [one].” He does this regardless of whether the mode of apprehension in question is mere impure reflection, the Look, or even, as we will see shortly, the more robust form of reflection which combines impure reflection with the experience of the Look. In any case, the Look, with its accompanying “extension of lived facticity,” is necessary for one to apprehend oneself as an object fully exterior to one’s consciousness, an object in the midst of an objective world.

We have seen how Sartre describes pain in terms of features in the world before the pain is located in one’s eyes, for example, by virtue of the fact that the words one is reading are read with difficulty. We have also seen how he describes jealousy prior to the Look, as apprehending the scene in the room as a scene to-be-watched-carefully. With these descriptions we can see how the brute facts of one’s being jealous or in pain are experienced as facts about the world. But they are of course equally descriptions of how one “lives” (or “exists”) one’s world. However, there are also facts about oneself that one is capable of apprehending that are not equally facts about how one lives or exists one’s world. This is because they come into existence only with other consciousnesses. For example, being a “Jew, Aryan, ugly, handsome, kind, a civil servant, untouchable, etc.” (675) are qualities of oneself that come from the fact that there are others. One apprehends oneself as having such qualities only emptyly, although they are part of what one is as an object in the world.

It is not only the apprehension of such obviously social characteristics as those listed above that depends on the Look. Without the Look, there would be no basis for the distinction between the distance to the store being too far to walk and my being out of shape. That is, there would be no way of introducing a second set of possible differences into my experience -- other ways that I could be -- in addition to other ways that the world could be. Every way in which my experience could be different would be apprehended in terms of the contingency of the world. Put differently, without the apprehension of an outside of oneself, there would be no way of introducing determinations into oneself.

Of particular relevance here are the remarks about the respective contributions of freedom and facticity to one's situation in Part Four of B&N. In a section devoted to the elements in one's situation that derive from the fact that one lives in an inhabited world, Sartre repeats and fleshes out some of the things he says in the sections on the body-for-others and the third ontological dimension of body: that the existence of the Other (and thus one's being-for-others) is an additional, contingent fact that cannot be derived from one's being-for-itself; that the existence of others contributes to one's facticity; that others give an "outside" to consciousness; that the part of one's facticity coming to one from the Other can only be apprehended emptily; and that this part of one's facticity is discovered through the language of others. The first two of these points are expressed in this quotation:

There is no doubt that my belonging to an inhabited world has the value of a fact. It refers to the original fact of the Other's presence in the world, a fact which, as we have seen, can not be deduced from the ontological structure of the for-itself. And although this fact only makes our facticity more deep-rooted, it does not evolve from our facticity in so far as the latter expresses the necessity of the contingency of the for-itself. Rather we must say: the for-itself exists in fact; that is, its existence can not be identical with a reality engendered in conformity to a law, nor can it be identical with a free choice. And among the factual characteristics of this "facticity" -- i.e., among those which can neither be deduced nor proven but which simply "let themselves be seen" -- there is one of these which we call existence-in-the-world-in-the-presence-of-others. (656-7)

We are told that living in a world with others contributes to our facticity in two major

ways. First, techniques for apprehending and dealing with the world have already been established, techniques which we inherit rather than invent:

[A]lthough my belonging to a particular class or nation does not derive from my facticity as an ontological structure of my for-itself, my factual existence -- i.e., my birth and my place -- involves my apprehension of the world and of myself through certain techniques. Now these techniques which I have not chosen confer on the world its meanings. (659)

Second, what is most important for our purposes, there are determinations that come to one from others -- e.g., whether one is a "Jew, Aryan, ugly, handsome, kind, a civil servant, untouchable, etc." (675). These qualities, which arise with the existence of the Other, are qualities of oneself.

Thus Sartre says that "something of *myself*.. exists in the manner of the *given*":

[T]he Other's existence brings a factual limit to my freedom. This is because of the fact that by means of the upsurge of the Other there appear determinations which I *am* without having chosen them. Here I am -- Jew or Aryan, handsome or ugly, one-armed, etc.... As soon as a freedom other than mine arises confronting me, I begin to exist in a new dimension of being; and this time it is not a question of conferring a meaning on brute existents or of accepting responsibility on my own account for the meaning which Others have conferred on certain objects. It is I myself who see a meaning conferred upon me and I do not have the recourse of accepting the responsibility of this meaning which I have since it cannot be given to me except in the form of an empty indication. Thus something of myself -- according to this new dimension -- exists in the manner of the *given*; at least *for me*, since this being which I am *is suffered*, it *is* without *being existed*. I learn of it and suffer it in and through the relations which I enter into with others, in and through their conduct with regard to me. I encounter this being at the origin of a thousand prohibitions and a thousand resistances which I bump up against at each instant: Because I am a *minor* I shall not have this or that privilege. Because *I am a Jew* I shall be deprived -- in certain societies -- of certain possibilities, etc. Yet I am unable *in any way* to feel myself as a Jew or a minor or as a Pariah. (671)<sup>229</sup>

Note that Sartre contrasts "suffering one's being" with "existing one's being." He does this in order to distinguish elements of one's situation that can be felt from those that cannot.

Although one encounters one's being-for-others at the origin of certain ways in which one is treated, one cannot feel Jewish or Aryan, handsome or ugly, etc. To this extent, at least, one can

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<sup>229</sup>Naturally, part of being one-armed is "existed" (or "lived"). This part consists in having a certain sort of relation to the instrument-objects around one -- e.g., having to put down one's coffee before picking up one's briefcase. But this is not what Sartre is talking about here, of course. The difference between this sort of limit and the sort imposed upon one by others -- e.g., not being able to buy liquor because one is a

only apprehend the meaning that comes to one from the Other empty:

Speech alone will inform me of what I am; again this will never be except as the object of an empty intention; any intuition of it is forever denied me. (671) If I am told that I am vulgar, for example, I have often grasped by intuition as regards others the nature of vulgarity; thus I can apply the word “vulgar” to my person. But I can not join the meaning of this word to my person. (675)

The question that remains is how the “increase of the contingency of [one’s] facticity” that comes with the Look assists one in “realizing the suggestion” of the “outside” of consciousness apprehended in impure reflection, in such a way as finally to make it possible to “suffer” oneself as Jewish or Aryan, or handsome or ugly. What does the experience of the Look, the experience of one’s being-for-others, do to impure reflection’s apprehension of a suggestion of an “outside” of consciousness? We are dealing with two different modes of apprehension, impure reflection and the mode of apprehension employed in the experience of the Look. Both are employed in the experience in which one apprehends oneself as a psychophysical object. How does their combination enable one to apprehend oneself as a psychophysical object?

Returning to the section on the third ontological dimension of the body, note that the quotation from page 464 suggests that language is somehow able to “slip in between” reflective consciousness and one’s psychic body, allowing one to apprehend the latter as a psycho-physical object. We rely on the language of others to inform us of what we are:

[W]e in fact attribute as much reality to the body-for-the-Other as to the body-for-us. Better yet, the body-for-the-Other *is* the body-for-us, but inapprehensible and alienated. It appears to us then that the Other accomplishes for us a function of which we are incapable and which nevertheless is incumbent on us: *to see ourselves as we are*. Language, by revealing to us abstractly the principle structures of our body-for-others (even though the existed body is ineffable) impels us to place our alleged mission wholly in the hands of the Other. We resign ourselves to seeing ourselves through the Other’s eyes; this means that we attempt to learn our being through the revelations of language. Thus there appears a whole system of verbal correspondence by which we cause our body to be designated for us as it is for the Other by utilizing these designations to denote our body as it is for us. (463-4)

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minor -- is obvious.

As noted, Sartre does not take the case of looking down at one's legs, arms, and torso, or smelling one's own sweat, to be counterexamples to the claim that, in our attempt "*to see ourselves as we are....* [w]e resign ourselves to seeing ourselves through the Other's eyes" or that "we attempt to learn our being through the revelations of language." In this case we are still "seeing ourselves through the Other's eyes" because the sensing organ takes a point of view on the sensed portion of the body. Our ability to do this is based on our relation with other persons. When seeing or smelling our own body, we apprehend it "as it would never be for us by itself": "I utilize instrumental concepts which come to me from the Other, and which I should in no case have been able to form by myself<sup>230</sup> or to think of directing upon *my* body" (465). As well as being "vulgar" or "admirable," being "tall and thin," or "smelling like sweat," are examples of such concepts. The fact that we may apprehend these qualities by seeing, touching or smelling our own bodies makes them no less part of the "conceptual stratum" that we learn to apply to ourselves through our interactions with others. As we saw in chapter three, Sartre even says that our ability to be the Other for ourselves develops "*chronologically* after the perception of the body of the Other" (470, my emphasis):

Frequent observation has shown that the child of two months does not see his hand as *his* hand. He looks at it, and if it is outside his visual field, he turns his head and seeks his hand with his eyes as if it did not depend on him to bring the hand back within his sight. It is by a series of psychological operations and of syntheses of identification and recognition that the child will succeed in establishing tables of reference between the body-existed and the body-seen. Again it is necessary that the child begin the learning process with the Other's body. (469)

The following passage, finally, makes it clear that the knowledge gained by communication with others, insofar as it is of any use in helping one to constitute oneself as a psychophysical object, serves this purpose *by modifying the experience of impure reflection.*

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<sup>230</sup>Of course in one sense all concepts are dependent upon our interactions with others. What's special about the concepts in question, I take it, is that the experience of another consciousness is somehow built into them. Sartre doesn't tell us his view on the development and application of concepts in general. So, it

Sartre contrasts one's existing -- or living -- one's facticity, one's suffering one's psychic body, and one's knowing one's body in its third, finally psychophysical, ontological dimension. Without impure reflection one can only live one's facticity (including one's increased facticity, which one lives when first experiencing the Look); one cannot know oneself as a body. As for what is needed for that:

In order that any knowledge which the Other has of my body and which he communicates to me by language may give to my body-for-me a structure of a particular type, it is necessary that this knowledge be applied to an object and that my body already be an object for me. It is therefore on the level of reflective consciousness that the Other's knowledge can be brought into play; it will not qualify facticity as the pure *existed* of the non-thetic consciousness but rather facticity as the quasi-object apprehended by reflection. It is this conceptual stratum which by inserting itself between the quasi-object and the reflective consciousness will succeed in making an object of the psychic quasi-body. Reflection, as we have seen, apprehends facticity and surpasses it toward an unreal whose *esse* is a pure *percipi* and which we have named *psychic*. This psychic is constituted. The conceptual pieces of knowledge which we acquire in our history and which all come from our commerce with the Other are going to produce a stratum constitutive of the psychic body. In short, so far as we suffer our body reflectively we constitute it as a quasi-object by means of an accessory reflection -- thus observation comes from ourselves. But as soon as we *know* the body -- i.e., as soon as we apprehend it in a purely cognitive intuition -- we constitute it by that very intuition with the Other's knowledge (i.e., as it would never be for us by itself). (464-5)

Even when the psychic body is filled in with knowledge that comes from the Other, Sartre still says that it is constituted emptily, despite the fact that when one directs one's attention to it one's "aim is impregnated with the wisdom which language has brought":

The knowable structures of our psychic body therefore simply indicate emptily its perpetual alienation. Instead of living this alienation we constitute it emptily by surpassing the lived facticity toward this quasi-object which is the psychic body and by once again surpassing this quasi-object which is *suffered* toward characters of being which on principle can not be given to me and are simply signified. The illness [*mal*] which I suffer I can aim at in its In-itself; that is, precisely in its being-for-others. At this moment I *know* it; that is, I aim at it in its dimension of being which escapes me, at the face which it turns toward others, and my aim is impregnated with the wisdom which language has brought to me -- i.e., I utilize instrumental concepts which come to me from the Other, and which I should in no case have been able to form by myself or to think of directing upon *my* body. It is by means of the Other's concepts that I *know* my body. But it follows that even in reflection I assume the Other's point of view on my body; I try to apprehend it as

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is difficult to tell how the concepts in question are special in this regard.



if I were the Other in relation to it. It is evident that the categories which I then apply to my body constitute it *emptily*; that is, in [a] dimension which escapes me. (465)

Sartre says that the only reason that he refers to an *intuition* of one's own body-as-object is that "the body which is suffered serves as a nucleus, as matter for the alienating means which surpass it" (465). This is relevant because the apprehension of "the body which is suffered" (the psychic body) is in turn based upon the apprehension of the body-for-itself. Thus a couple of pages later, when using the example of the apprehension of one's gastralgia, through suffering a stomach ache, Sartre says that the apprehension of the body-for-itself (in this case, as pain) "supports" the "suffered" psychic body:

[T]his object [the disease (*maladie*)] which comes to me through others preserves the characteristics of a degraded spontaneity from the fact that I apprehend it through my Illness [*Mal*].... [I]n the disease itself the body is a given: by the very fact that it was the support of the Illness [*Mal*], it is at present the substance of the disease.(467)

Thus, although being-for-others "realizes the suggestion" of the "outside" which consciousness gives to itself in (mere) impure reflection, even with the help of the Other's language, one still grasps oneself as an object only emptily. One can learn to apply the terms "vulgar" or "admirable," "thief" or "waiter," "French" or "bourgeois," to oneself, but one can never experience oneself in these ways. One lives or exists the body-for-itself. One also lives one's alienation in the Look, prior to the apprehension of oneself as an object. But in impure reflection, whether modified by the look or not, one apprehends oneself emptily.

Sartre uses the example of apprehending one's ulcerated stomach to illustrate what he has said about living one's body-for-itself, suffering oneself as a psychic body, and knowing one's body in its third ontological dimension. When what is ultimately constituted is one's stomach ulcer, the lived facticity is the pain (*doleur*). Through it is constituted an illness (*mal*), the psychic object which is suffered. The latter is in turn is known as a disease (*maladie*) when it is apprehended through the "conceptual stratum" of the Other's language. Sartre begins in the

following by talking about lived facticity and the suffered psychic object:

Let us understand, of course, that pain [*doleur*] “in the stomach” is the stomach itself as painfully lived.... Gastralgia is the stomach present to consciousness as the pure quality of pain. As we have seen, the Illness [*Mal*] as such is distinguished from all other pain and from any other illness [*mal*] -- and by itself without an intellectual operation of identification or discrimination. At this level, however, “the stomach” is an inexpressible; it can neither be named nor thought. It is only this suffered figure which is raised on the ground of the body-existed. (465-6)

Note again that consciousness’s relation to the psychic body is not knowledge. At this level the stomach “can neither be named nor thought.” Sartre then moves on to the “stomach for-others”:

Objectivating empirical knowledge, which presently surpasses the Illness [*Mal*] suffered toward the *stomach* named, is the knowing of a certain objective nature possessed by the stomach. I know that it has the shape of a bagpipe, that it is a sack, that it produces juices and enzymes, that it is enclosed by a muscular tunica with smooth fibres, etc. I can also know -- because a physician has told me -- that the stomach has an ulcer, and again I can more or less picture the ulcer to myself. I can imagine it as a redness, a slight internal putrescence; I can conceive of it by means of analogy with abscesses, fever blisters, pus, canker sores, etc. All this on principle stems from bits of knowledge which I have acquired from Others or from such knowledge as Others have of me. In any case all this can constitute my Illness [*Mal*], not as I enjoy possession of it, but as it escapes me. The stomach and ulcer become directions of flight, perspectives of alienation from the object which I possess.... At this point a new layer of existence appears: we have surpassed the lived pain toward the suffered illness [*mal*]; now we surpass the illness [*mal*] toward the *Disease* [*Maladie*]. (466)

It is crucial to be clear that what Sartre calls the “Disease” is still psychic in that it is apprehended through the illness [*mal*] -- in this case, through the stomach ache. But it exists now for-others:

The Disease [*Maladie*] as *psychic* is of course very different from the disease known and described by the physician; it is a state. There is no question here of bacteria or of lesions in tissue, but of a synthetic form of destruction. This form *on principle escapes me*; at times it is revealed to the Other by the “twinges” of pain, by the “crises” of my Illness [*Mal*], but the rest of the time it remains out of reach without disappearing. It is then objectively discernible *for Others*. Others have informed me of it. Others can diagnose it; it is present for Others even though I am not conscious of it. Its true nature is therefore a pure and simple *being-for-others*. (466-7)

We are finally dealing with a psychophysical object.

The apprehension of oneself as a psychophysical object is thus not, as Morris appears to hold, the apprehension of some object that it is possible to regard in purely physical terms, and at a distance, simply also as a term of various psychophysical relations. Only neglect of the role of the Look as somehow adding something to a *psychic* object could lead to this mistaken picture.

## Chapter Six: Bad Faith, Ambiguity, and the Ambiguity of “I”

### 1. Varieties of Self-Apprehension and the Senses of “I”

In the next two chapters I consider topics that are related to what might be called the sense-ambiguity of “I” on Sartre’s view: the view that one may refer to oneself through a variety of senses or aspects. Before doing this, it will be useful to review the different sorts of self-apprehension discussed in B&N that I have considered in previous chapters.

The various forms of self-consciousness, for Sartre, can be said to apprehend different “things”: (a) the act of consciousness itself -- the quasi-object apprehended in pre-reflective self-consciousness and pure reflection -- along with the “selfness” that haunts it, (b) an ego qua object of impure reflection and other psychic objects of various sorts, (c) oneself as one exists as an unrevealed object-ness for-others under the Look, and (d) oneself as an intersubjectively accessible person.<sup>231</sup> The scare quotes around “things” here are important for two reasons. Most importantly, consciousness is not a thing, so much so that it cannot even be made to be an object of consciousness without being degraded. But also, I do not want to assume that (a), (b), and (c) are items to which one can refer in a conversation, that one can draw another’s attention to, or that both oneself and another person can pick out in the way that one can a physical object, a quality, a class of objects, a number, an abstract concept, etc. Even if we think of the redness of the tomato and the number four as things, we still shouldn’t think of (a), (b), and (c) as things.

Ordinarily, we talk of referring to a thing only if it is something that others can identify.

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<sup>231</sup>In Chapter Four I mentioned that Wider named four forms of self-consciousness -- prereflective self-consciousness, pure reflection, impure reflection, and a self-consciousness involving being-for-others. These acts present one with three different objects: those I have listed as (a) and (b), and one other. Wider is not as clear as I would like to be about this last form. As I have pointed out, impure reflection as well as the Look is involved in the self-consciousness that allows one to know oneself as a being-for-others, rather than merely to be presented with one’s being-for-others as an unknowable aspect of one’s being. There are thus two varieties of self-consciousness that involve one’s being-for-others. (Naturally Wider’s view is an improvement upon that of those commentators – e.g., Zaner and perhaps Morris -- who conflate the [mere] impure reflection which presents one with merely psychic objects with the more robust form which allows one to apprehend oneself as a psychophysical object.)

(As we will see in the next chapter, Strawson calls such reference “identifying reference.”) It would thus be misleading to call (a), (b), and (c) alternative referents of “I.” It might, however, be acceptable to think of the apprehension of (a), (b) and (c) as the bases for three alternative senses through which one may refer to oneself – i.e., to (d) a person with states of consciousness, character traits, and physical properties. In this case we might say that “I” is sense-ambiguous rather than reference-ambiguous (i.e., ambiguous in the ordinary way): instead of referring to more than one item, “I” might be said to refer to one item in more than one way. Thus “I” might be said to have more than one meaning in the way in which “the morning star” and “the evening star” have different meanings: while referring to just one item, it might refer to it in a variety of ways, through a variety of senses.

Just as it is not trivial to say that the morning star is the evening star, neither is it trivial to say that the point of view to which the world is revealed (and which is apprehended pre-reflectively as such) is the same as the physical object that one apprehends when, for instance, one looks in the mirror.<sup>232</sup> However, in the case of “I” one of these senses is grounded in the other:<sup>233</sup> one apprehends oneself as a point of view before one apprehends oneself as a psychophysical object. Without this pre-reflective apprehension of oneself, the physical object would not be apprehended as one’s body. This is why it is important to distinguish carefully between the various levels of reflection on Sartre’s view. In Chapter Three I suggested that, while certain sorts of reflection provide direct access to one’s consciousness, we have no privileged access to a self or to its qualities that have causal efficacy, and that the sort of reflection most appropriate to Morris’s central examples is the reflective apprehension of the body in its third ontological dimension. The

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<sup>232</sup>That is, as Nagel would put it, it is not trivial to say “I am Thomas Nagel.” Thomas Nagel, *The View From Nowhere* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986): 54-66.

<sup>233</sup>It is thus important to note that these items are not simple alternatives but that apprehension of and reference to oneself as (d) is grounded in an apprehension of both (b) and (c), each of which is in turn dependent upon an apprehension of (a).

object of this sort of reflection is oneself as an object for another consciousness.

According to Sartre, to ascribe qualities to the body qua physical object, one needs to apprehend oneself as another, and the observations that one can make about this object are neither apodictic nor adequate. However, there are other ways for one to apprehend one's consciousness: one does not need to use the experience of the Look to apprehend oneself as angry or as in a bad mood. The self referred to in such reflections does not need to be a being-for-others: one's bad mood is reflected back to one by the world's apparent ugliness. This pre-reflective self-consciousness allows one to apprehend consciousness as consciousness *of* the world and as consciousness (of) itself as such. And, in pure reflection "the existence of *reference* as a structure of being in the for-itself is still more clearly marked" (157): one is more clearly aware of the structure of the field of consciousness as a reflection of oneself as a transcending of facticity. For example, the glass of water and its desirability are recognized as an indication of thirst and the quest to quench it.

As apprehended in pre-reflective self-consciousness and in pure reflection, you are merely consciousness of the world and not "capable of being determined" or "qualified" (225). However, you can also apprehend yourself and your qualities as merely psychic objects in impure reflection without apprehending yourself as a being-for-others. At this point, you can also apprehend your states and qualities. Unlike the consciousness apprehended pre-reflectively and in pure reflection, these are apprehended as not showing themselves all at once, as not exhausted by their reference to their objects, but as containing other potentially apprehensible facets. For example, one's hatred of Pierre is apprehended as existing beyond one's current apprehension of him as repulsive or frustrating -- as a transcendent unity of such consciousnesses. Such psychic objects are apprehended through a facet presented in pure reflection. This is analogous to what happens when one looks at a chair, and sees it as having other facets that could be presented in other perceptive

acts. As we have seen, however, merely psychic objects are self-contradictory. In addition to psychic states and qualities, the ego itself, prior to its apprehension under the Look as a psychophysical object, is such an object.

Psychic objects are merely “affective objects” and, prior to the Look, cannot be known, but only endured or suffered. However, since a psychic state is apprehended as a transcendent unity, one can misapprehend it. The evidence that one is in a bad mood might be that one does not feel like doing anything: the thought of an upcoming camping trip or visit from a friend is accompanied by a drab, burdened feeling, rather than a light and excited one. This evidence is, at least in part, about the world apprehended, as opposed to being about any self as object, physical, psychophysical, or merely psychic. However, one’s bad mood, apprehended as a psychic object, implies something that goes beyond the immediate object of pre-reflective self-consciousness. The quasi-judgment<sup>234</sup> “I am in a bad mood” means more than that the world currently appears ugly or lacking possibility. These are the data of pure reflection, the facets through which one apprehends one’s bad mood. But “Impure reflection...surpasses [pure reflection] and makes further claims.” (218)

That the anticipated camping trip appears as a chore rather than an adventure is beyond doubt, but one’s bad mood, a psychic state that outlasts and colors one’s current experience is not. Counterevidence might always be forthcoming: you notice the gentle ballad on the radio and realize that you are not in a bad mood -- you are just tired, and this is why the anticipated camping trip seems a chore. Because psychic states outlast acts of consciousness,<sup>235</sup> there is no problem in

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<sup>234</sup>Naturally if one is to *say*, e.g., that one is in a bad mood, and expects to be understood, one must be referring to a publicly accessible object (and attributing a quality to it that others are capable of comprehending). Thus the quasi-judgments of which I am speaking should not be thought of as the sort of thing that one might say, or might consider saying, to another person, despite the quotation marks around it. Think of them, rather, as a *feeling about oneself* with a content that is roughly similar to the corresponding assertion.

<sup>235</sup>It is unusual to talk about something “outlasting” an act of consciousness, because acts of consciousness, considered as such, don’t “take time” at all -- not even “psychic time.” In order to make the comparison

saying that you apprehended yourself as in a bad mood, but were really just tired. By contrast, it would be absurd to say that you apprehended the anticipated trip as an adventure, but actually were anticipating the trip as a chore. Similarly, seeing the famous duck-rabbit figure as a rabbit, having a (momentary) itch in one's arm (more obviously so if it is a phantom limb), apprehending an event as remembered, rather than perceived or anticipated, apprehending an object as being of a certain shape and color, and as being desirable, repulsive, useful, etc., are not things that one can be mistaken about.

"I am in a bad mood," as expressive of an immediate apprehension of one's psychic state, is a quasi-judgment that allows the question, "What makes you think so?" Although one rarely asks oneself how one is aware that one is in a bad mood, the question makes sense. One has evidence: the camping trip is anticipated as a chore, the music one usually enjoys one now finds boring and slightly annoying. However, there are some quasi-judgments that are not intended in this way. Generally, observations about how one is currently experiencing something do not invite the question, "What makes you think so?" In this context, the question does not make sense. Thus one might make the quasi-judgments "I am finding this music annoying" or "I am enjoying this beer" without apprehending something as solid as a psychic state, or as the "I" which one apprehends when one apprehends oneself as being in a bad mood. Such an observation would not be about oneself as a psychic or psychophysical object, but only about an act of consciousness, which can be distinguished from other acts of consciousness only in terms of its object.

What is unusual about the apprehension of oneself as a merely psychic object, is that one can misjudge and correct one's prior misconceptions of oneself as a psychic object without any

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between the "original temporality" of the act and the "psychic temporality" of the state, the act of consciousness must be considered to be located according to psychic time. However, it cannot be said to be *extended* in psychic time. The act of consciousness is to the state of consciousness as a point is to a line. A point is not a very short line, nor is an act a very short state. A line is a rule explaining where the points appear. Similarly a psychic state is a rule explaining acts of consciousness. One can be correct about the



appeal to another consciousness. Whether one is in a bad mood is not something one could ask another for help in deciding: it turns on such evidence as one's apprehending the trip to the woods as a chore or an adventure, apprehending the music as beautiful or unsatisfying, etc. Nonetheless, unlike acts of consciousness, the psychic object apprehended through them is something that one can be mistaken about. Thus, as we have seen, the merely psychic object is apprehended as having a self-contradictory nature: as both transparent and opaque.

There is, however, another way one can apprehend oneself as in a bad mood: the apprehension can be about oneself as a psychophysical object. Thus, even though such judgments or quasi-judgments as "I am in a bad mood," "I hate Pierre," or "I am irascible" should not be taken to express incorrigible facts about one's current experience, they can still mean two different sorts of thing. If they are quasi-judgments about merely psychic states, they are made on the basis of an act of mere impure reflection and can be substantiated or falsified by similar acts. On the other hand, they could be judgments about psychophysical states, in which case they are made on the basis of an act that involves the Look and require the same for substantiation or falsification.<sup>236</sup> Examples include hearing things that others say, imagining or thinking about what another might see when perceiving one, looking in the mirror, and hearing one's own voice. Since in both cases we are dealing with transcendent qualities, in neither case is the quality presented adequately (i.e., "in one stroke"), nor can the attribution ever be conclusively verified or falsified. But a difference between these transcendent qualities is reflected in the different sorts of act that can substantiate or falsify them: if further reflection on one's anger toward Pierre can show one that the intentional object in question is just temporary frustration as opposed to an adumbration of continuous hatred,

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location of a point, but wrong about the rule. Analogously, although one cannot be wrong about an apparent act of consciousness, one can be mistaken about the psychic state that explains this act.

<sup>236</sup>In the next chapter (in Section Three) I consider Strawson's view, which includes the claim that many self-ascriptive statements, e.g., what Strawson calls "assessments of character or capability," are made and/or corrected on the same basis that ascriptions to others are made. This is compatible with Sartre's

this is because this anger is merely an object of impure reflection, not an aspect of one's being-for-others. In such cases, an outsider's perspective will seem irrelevant to the question of whether one hates Pierre. On the other hand, if mere reflection is deemed insufficient, this shows that the anger is not a mere psychic object but a characteristic of a higher ontological dignity, a characteristic of one's being-for-others. In both cases one might observe that one feels hatred toward Pierre but cannot tell whether one really hates him; and in both cases, really hating him means that this hatred could appear in other ways. The difference is that in the latter case these other ways appeal to a consciousness other than one's consciousness of Pierre -- they appeal to an alien consciousness of oneself.

The difference between qualities of oneself that are constituted on the basis of the Look and those that are not is reflected in Sartre's reservation of the term "character" for the former.<sup>237</sup> As we will see, Sartre most often uses the term "character" to refer to an aspect of the body-for-others.<sup>238</sup> Thus one's character is always the product of an outsider's perspective. But he uses "ego" and "qualities" of the ego, which are similar to character traits in that they are relatively long-term dispositions, to refer to objects of impure reflection. Qualities are dispositions to states and acts<sup>239</sup> that are merely psychic. Thus there are two different things which might ordinarily be called a character trait such as cowardliness or irascibility. One of these (the quality) is apprehended in mere impure reflection. The other (the genuine character trait), in addition to

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claim that one makes use of the Look when constituting one's character. However, Sartre also speaks of "qualities" of the ego, which are constituted in mere impure reflection.

<sup>237</sup>See previous note.

<sup>238</sup>As we will see, an exception occurs on page 226, before Sartre examines being-for-others. Sartre later says that character is "essentially *for others*" (458).

<sup>239</sup>Sartre's examples, when describing the "psychic acts" that are apprehended in impure reflection, include the training of the boxer and the research of the scientist. These are not clear examples of merely psychic acts as, e.g., doubting or adding or hating Pierre would have been. We need to think of the boxer and the scientist as apprehending their respective activities prior to any apprehension of the Other. This would be easier to do in those cases where it is more difficult for *another* to verify that one is performing the acts in question. Sartre's point here is not to distinguish the merely psychic from the psychophysical, but rather to give examples of "acts" that one attributes to oneself in impure reflection, and to distinguish them from

being apprehended by others, is apprehended by oneself in reflection upon one's being-for-others. In both cases one is attributing a disposition to oneself, but while the character trait is a disposition to behave in certain ways, the quality is a disposition only to have certain experiences. In impure reflection one apprehends irascibility through anger at Pierre, and apprehends this anger through Pierre's appearance as repulsive or annoying. One attempts to take a point of view on the consciousness of him, to apprehend repulsiveness in him, but to locate its source in oneself qua ego: one feels one sees him in this way due to one's state of anger, and that one is in this state because of one's quality of irascibility. Moreover, one does this without appeal to a point of view that is fully outside one's consciousness. The disposition one attributes to oneself is merely a disposition to apprehend others as annoying, etc. One needs to be far enough outside consciousness to quasi-attribute such dispositions to oneself, but not so far as to think of oneself as a being-for-others, whose anger and irascibility are manifested in intersubjectively accessible grimaces and a disposition to grimace. Apprehending irascibility as a characteristic of oneself as being-for-others, by contrast, includes an appeal to a genuine other consciousness. The apprehension of one's character traits starts out in the same way as the apprehension of one's qualities, e.g., with the apprehension of Pierre's repulsiveness. But in this case the consciousness of this repulsiveness, that through which the character trait is constituted, is apprehended as being noticeable by another consciousness, one genuinely outside the consciousness of Pierre's repulsiveness.

Apprehending one's qualities and ego in mere impure reflection, and one's character and being-for-others in the more developed form that uses material from the Look, can be contrasted with apprehending oneself and oneself-for-others in a way that does not depend on, but serves as the basis for, these forms of impure reflection. The more fundamental forms of apprehension

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"states" and "qualities."

present one only with one's being-for-itself as a reflection of a field of instrument-objects, and one's being-for-others as indicated by an inapprehensible dimension of this field. In any case, self-apprehensions regarding anything beyond the field of pre-reflective consciousness, whether about one's states, qualities, or character, can be mistaken. And the fact that one's bad mood, hatred of Pierre, and general irascibility, are objects of belief, in that "the object is not given or is given indistinctly" (112), allows one not only to be mistaken about them, but also to deceive oneself about them in bad faith.

I turn to bad faith in the next section. I examine four "duplicities" which Sartre says can be used as "instruments of bad faith" (99). Focusing on the transcendence/facticity duplicity, I attempt to coordinate what Sartre says in the chapter titled "Bad Faith" with what he says later in B&N, in particular with his statements about the Look as consisting in an "extension of lived facticity." After this I consider Morris's attempt to elucidate Sartre's account of bad faith by delimiting different senses of "I." Then I return to Chapter One's discussion of Morris's views on personal identity, in light of the discussion of the senses of "I" in the earlier sections of the present chapter.

## **2. Bad Faith**

Sartre believes we ought to "observe strict order in discussion" (297). He has a plan for B&N according to which he will first discuss "the for-itself in isolation" (349), beginning with unreflective consciousness and then moving on to forms of reflection that do not involve being-for-others. Only after this will he talk about being-for-others and the sorts of self-consciousness which depend upon it. As he says with regard to the exposition of the "ontological dimensions" of the body, "it is necessary to establish an order of our reflections which conforms to the order of being" (404). This is his general strategy in the book as a whole: to discuss more complex forms of consciousness only after examining the more fundamental forms upon which they are based.

If Sartre were to stick to this strategy too strictly, he could not discuss persons as psychophysical objects until very late in the book. But since his exposition relies on the description and analysis of examples that involve persons, at times he is forced to analyze examples before he has developed the necessary conceptual apparatus to do so. This is the case in the chapter titled “Bad Faith,” which contains the first, but by no means the most edifying, discussion of what he will come to call impure reflection.

Bad faith can be said to have three distinct roles in B&N. One is apologetic: bad faith is used to explain why anguish is a relatively rare phenomenon even though the freedom of which it is the revelation is a fundamental characteristic of being-for-itself. Next, like questioning,<sup>240</sup> it is one of the sorts of conduct that Sartre examines in his exploration of the nature of human reality as a kind of “non-being.” Finally, as that which distinguishes pure from impure reflection, it is a crucial part of the latter, and thus an important part of one’s constitution of one’s body as an object. The reason that Sartre discusses bad faith so early in B&N has to do with the first two of these roles. He has just finished discussing anxiety as the revelation of our perpetual freedom and, in this context, has begun to discuss fleeing one’s anxiety as an explanation for why we are not constantly anxious. He is also in the midst of convincing the reader that certain forms of conduct reveal that there is something peculiar about consciousness, something having to do with its peculiar mode of being -- i.e., that consciousness “is what it is not and is not what it is” (100).<sup>241</sup> Sartre believes that consciousness’s ability to put itself into bad faith is evidence of this. The exploration of the various forms of bad faith is then supposed to help to reveal something about the duplicitous composition of our being that makes it possible.

The chapter contains insightful examples described in a compelling manner. However,

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<sup>240</sup>See Section 3b of Chapter Two, above.

<sup>241</sup>Manser notes that the last sentence of the chapter on bad faith, which is also the last sentence of Part One, indicates that Sartre is giving an account not of persons, but only of their “instantaneous nucleus.”

because it occurs in Part One, before Sartre has worked out the structures of being-for-itself in Part Two and of being-for-others in Part Three, the analysis is premature. The account of the duplicitous structures of consciousness that make bad faith possible should be looked at as a first stab at something to which he will devote much more attention. The earlier analyses need to be adjusted to fit the later ones.

In the chapter on bad faith Sartre underestimates the importance of the idea of consciousness as a transcending of facticity. He says that while the “concept of ‘transcendence-facticity’ is one of the most basic instruments of bad-faith, it is not the only one of its kind” (100). Then, after listing three more “instruments of bad faith,” he says: “In all these concepts... we find again the same structure. We have to deal with human reality as a being which is what it is not and which is not what it is” (100). So at this point he seems to think of the transcendence/facticity duplicity as a manifestation of something more fundamental, namely, this unusual fact about consciousness. However, as he later develops the concept of facticity, he finds that everything that he wants to say with that obscure “is what it is not” talk, can be captured by talk about transcending facticity. Indeed, as we will see, the other three duplicities are closely related to transcendence/facticity. If the chapter had not appeared before all of Sartre’s discussions of the various facets of facticity, he would not have said that this duplicity is merely “one of the most basic.” He would have explained the other three in terms of it, or at least have said something about the relationship between it and the other three.

### ***2a. Reifying one’s transcendence and denying one’s transcendence***

Before describing the other three duplicities, Sartre describes the way in which consciousness uses, as an instrument of bad faith, its ambiguous composition of transcendence and facticity:

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However, he discusses examples in which persons are interacting.

These two aspects of human reality are and ought to be capable of a valid coordination. But bad faith does not wish either to coordinate them or to surmount them in a synthesis.... It must affirm facticity as *being* transcendence and transcendence as *being* facticity, in such a way that at the instant when a person apprehends the one, he can find himself abruptly faced with the other.... If I were only what I *am*, I could, for example, seriously consider an adverse criticism which someone makes of me, question myself scrupulously, and perhaps be compelled to recognize the truth in it. But thanks to transcendence, I am not subject to all that I am. I do not even have to discuss the justice of the reproach.... I am on a plane where no reproach can touch me since what I really am is my transcendence. I flee from myself, I escape myself, I leave my tattered garment in the hands of the fault-finder. But the ambiguity necessary for bad faith comes from the fact that I affirm here that I *am* my transcendence in the mode of being of a thing. It is only thus, in fact, that I can feel that I escape all reproaches.... But inversely "I Am Too Great for Myself,"<sup>242</sup> while showing our transcendence changed into facticity, is the source of an infinity of excuses for our failures or our weaknesses. (98-9)

Since one is "at once a *facticity* and a *transcendence*" (98) one is always able to downplay or to emphasize the significance of, e.g., one's actual behavior, depending on which of two strategies one adopts in order to avoid criticism: dissociating oneself from this behavior, or regarding it as flowing from a factor that one did not choose. One can always believe either that it is too soon to judge, or that it is too late to change. Like the paederast in one of Sartre's examples, one can acknowledge "all the facts which are imputed to him" but refuse "to draw from them the conclusion which they impose" because:

His case is always 'different,' peculiar; there enters into it something of a game, of chance, of bad luck; the mistakes are always in the past;... we should see in them the results of a restless search, rather than the manifestations of a deeply rooted tendency, *etc. etc.*" (107).

This is the first form of bad faith mentioned in Sartre's analysis. Recognizing that his past actions do not account for all he is, that these are merely the facticity of which he is a transcending, the paederast says that he is not a paederast. But in saying this:

he slides surreptitiously toward a different connotation of the word "being." He understands "not being" in the sense of "not-being-in-itself." He lays claim to "not being a paederast" in the sense in which this table *is not* an inkwell. (108)

As Sartre puts it, he affirms that he is his transcendence "in the mode of being of a thing."

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<sup>242</sup>This is the title of a play. Sartre sees the transcendence/facticity duality in the title: I (qua

The waiter, in another of Sartre's examples, demonstrates the other form of bad faith. He recognizes what he "is," but does not acknowledge that what he thus recognizes is only a pattern of past actions, of which he is a present transcending. In the passage quoted at the beginning of this section, Sartre puts this by saying that he changes his transcendence into facticity. I do not find this helpful. Sartre's point is that pure reflection reveals one as a transcending of a certain facticity. This ambiguity allows one to deny responsibility in two distinct ways: by reifying one's transcendence, one can dissociate oneself from one's facticity (as the paederast does); conversely, by ignoring that this facticity is only the background for one's free choice, one can act as if one's current actions follow from what one already is. It is the latter that Sartre calls changing our transcendence into facticity. Manser describes the two forms of bad faith clearly: "One way of escaping responsibility and the consequent anguish is to switch between these two, to claim, as it were, that one is one's transcendence in the way a thing is a thing. The other is to deny it, to think of oneself as a thing."<sup>243</sup> I will refer to the two forms of bad faith as reifying and denying one's transcendence. In any case, speaking from the waiter's point of view, Sartre says:

What I attempt to realize is a being-in-itself of the café waiter, as if it were not just in my power to confer their value and their urgency upon the duties and the rights of my position, as if it were not my free choice to get up each morning at five o'clock or to remain in bed, even though it meant getting fired. As if from the fact that I sustain this role in existence I did not transcend it on every side, as if I did not constitute myself as one *beyond* my condition. (103)

As Sartre goes on, it becomes clear that the person in bad faith has glimpsed part of the truth of the human condition. The waiter recognizes that there is something that he is:

Yet there is no doubt that I *am* in a sense a café waiter -- otherwise could I not just as well call myself a diplomat or a reporter? But if I am one, this can not be in the mode of being in-itself. I am a waiter in the mode of *being what I am not*. (103)

And the paederast recognizes that "the psychic duration by itself... constitutes for him an

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transcendence) am beyond what I am (my facticity).

<sup>243</sup>Manser 59.



undetermined future, causes him to be born anew”:

He has an obscure but strong feeling that a homosexual is not a homosexual as this table is a table or as this red-haired man is red-haired.... Is he wrong? Does he not recognize in himself the peculiar, irreducible character of human reality? His attitude includes then an undeniable comprehension of truth.... He would be right actually if he understood the phrase “I am not a paederast” in the sense of “I am not what I am.” That is, if he declared to himself, “To the extent that a pattern of conduct is defined as the conduct of a paederast and to the extent that I have adopted this conduct, I am a paederast. But to the extent that human reality can not be finally defined by patterns of conduct, I am not one.” (107-8)

Bad faith is always possible because for each unreflective act, for each transcending of facticity, there is a possible act of pure reflection in which one apprehends oneself as “at once a *facticity* and a *transcendence*” (98). Each act of pure reflection provides two opportunities for bad faith: one can attempt to identify with or to dissociate from the facticity it discloses. One attempts to identify with the facticity by attempting to apprehend oneself as merely this facticity -- by attempting to deny that one is a transcendence of it. One attempts to dissociate oneself from it by attempting to apprehend oneself merely as a transcendence, to the point at which one can feel that the facticity’s details are irrelevant. At the end of the chapter on bad faith, after Sartre has come to identify sincerity, or “good faith,”<sup>244</sup> as a form of bad faith (107, 112), Sartre says:

In truth, the two immediate attitudes which we can take in the face of our being are conditioned by the very nature of this being and its immediate relation with the in-itself. Good faith seeks to flee the inner disintegration of my being in the direction of the in-itself which it should be and is not. Bad faith seeks to flee the in-itself by means of the inner disintegration of my being. (116)<sup>245</sup>

In other words, good faith is the attempt to be no more than what one already is (as the waiter does), and bad faith (in a now narrower sense) is the attempt to not-be what one already is “in the sense in which this table *is not* an inkwell” (108), as the paederast does. Good faith is the attempt to identify wholly with one’s facticity by denying one’s transcendence. Bad faith is the attempt to

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<sup>244</sup>There may be a subtle difference between sincerity and good faith, but this difference is not important for our purposes.

<sup>245</sup>If the reader has an outstanding memory, she may recognize that these two attitudes correspond to the two fundamental attitudes that Sartre says one may take with regard to one’s being-for-others, over three

deny one's facticity by reifying one's transcendence. But both are forms of bad faith more broadly conceived.

The two forms of bad faith actually are not very different. Each is equally opposed to "pure anguish" (66), to the "authenticity" Sartre mentions in a footnote (116, n.9), and to the (pure) pure reflection<sup>246</sup> that Sartre says "must be won by a sort of katharsis" (218). Each is a technique for fleeing anguish, made possible by the "inner disintegration of [one's] being" apprehended in anguish. Both involve impure reflection. In each case consciousness constitutes itself as a psychic object, as "the in-itself which it should be and is not." The difference is that the facticity which one apprehends pre-reflectively, and which comes to the fore in pure reflection, is denied in the one case and affirmed in the other. When Sartre asks how consciousness can deny the facticity of which it is aware of at all times, his answer is that consciousness is equally aware that it cannot be anything and that this awareness of one's transcendence always accompanies the awareness of one's facticity.

It is easy to relate what Sartre says about impure reflection to what he says about bad faith. Recall the example of hating Pierre. Pierre's repulsiveness is given in unreflective (and pure reflective) consciousness, while one's hatred is not. One can focus upon the fact that the hatred is not given and must be constituted, allowing one to deny that one hates Pierre. When denying this hatred in bad faith, one believes that one does not hate Pierre "in the sense in which this table is *not* an inkwell:" rather than understanding oneself as something that cannot have states and qualities, one believes that hating Pierre is not among those that one has. On the other hand, one can focus upon the fact that Pierre's repulsiveness is given, and mistake this givenness for the givenness of hatred. This allows one to excuse oneself for hating Pierre. In both cases, based on the reflective apprehension of oneself as a transcending of facticity, one constitutes oneself as

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hundred fifty pages later.

something which can be known as a separate object, rather than the sort of thing which one is always in the process of creating.

Impure reflection consists in forming a “degraded image” of consciousness, a psychic object causally related to physical objects. One’s states and qualities, including the hatred of Pierre that one admits in good faith, and those one assumes one has when denying one’s hatred, can thus be apprehended as caused by a given series of events and as causing one to act in certain ways.

### **2b. The four duplicities**

Of the three other duplicities spoken of by Sartre in the chapter on bad faith, the last is most similar to the transcendence/facticity. One’s past is not what one is, but merely what one was: that to which one’s present choice gives meaning. At the same time, however, one’s past is all that one is:

Let us note finally the confusing syntheses which play on the nihilating ambiguity of [the] temporal ekstases, affirming at once that I am what I have been (the man who *arrests himself* at one period of his life and refuses to take into consideration the later changes) and that I am not what I have been (the man who in the face of reproaches or rancor dissociates himself from his past by insisting on his freedom and on his perpetual re-creation). (100)

As we saw in Chapter Five, Sartre identifies the transcending of facticity with the surpassing of the past.<sup>247</sup> In fact, Sartre’s clearest explication of the mysterious claim that being-for-itself “is what it is not and is not what it is” is that oneself as a complete being is perpetually in the future, and that one is not what one already is. When first discussing the transcendence/facticity structure, Sartre says: “We will discover this structure again in the famous

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<sup>246</sup>See my discussion in Chapter Four, Section Three.

<sup>247</sup>As we saw in Chapter Five (Section Two), Sartre thinks of the past, the situation, and the body-for-itself as various aspects of facticity, and says that this facticity is “extended” in the experience of the Look. It should be noted that both the last section of the chapter on temporality and the last chapter of the part of the book called “Being-for-others” are devoted to subjects intimately related to bad faith. With each development in his discussion of facticity comes a renewed discussion of a type of bad faith.

sentence: 'He has become what he was' or in its no less famous opposite: 'Eternity at last changes each man into himself'" (98-99). He is already on the verge of identifying the fourth duplicity with the first.

For the most part, however, Sartre is unable to express the relationships between the four duplicities at this early point in the book, either because he has not yet seen them, or because he could not hope for the reader to understand them. Consider, for example, the duplicity "my being-for-others and my being-for-myself," the second one Sartre describes:

[A]lthough this *metastable* concept of "transcendence-facticity" is one of the most basic instruments of bad faith, it is not the only one of its kind. We can equally well use another kind of duplicity derived from human reality which we will express roughly by saying that its being-for-itself implies complementarily a being-for-others.... The equal dignity of being, possessed by my being-for-others and my being-for-myself, permits a perpetually disintegrating synthesis and a perpetual game of escape from the for-itself to the for-others and from the for-others to the for-itself. (99-100)

Seeing the close connection between this and transcendence/facticity requires understanding that being-for-others is an "extension of lived facticity" (464), or an "increase" in the "contingency of this facticity" (461), a point that Sartre does not make until much later.

To some extent Sartre incorporated his analysis of being-for-others into his analysis of bad faith in the chapter titled "Concrete Relations with Others." Having explained that the experience of the Look consists in an extension of facticity, he speaks of the various ways that one has of dealing with the fact that one exists as a being-for-others. There are two basic strategies, corresponding to the two basic forms of bad faith. What Sartre calls in the later chapter the "second attitude toward others" is an attempt to dissociate oneself from the aspect of facticity that comes with the experience of the Look, an attempt to prevent the Look from touching one. One refuses to acknowledge the Other's transcendence, by apprehending him, e.g., with desire or indifference, as a thing. The woman on a date, in Sartre's first example of bad faith, chooses indifference:

[S]he does not apprehend [the man's] conduct as an attempt to achieve what we call "the first approach"; that is, she does not want to see possibilities of temporal development which his conduct presents. She restricts this behavior to what is in the present.... The man who is speaking to her appears to her sincere and respectful as the table is round or square, as the wall coloring is blue or gray....She has disarmed the actions of her companion by reducing them to being only what they are; that is, to existing in the mode of the in-itself. (96-8)

The woman's attitude toward the man is similar to the attitude of the paederast's friend, "his most severe critic":

The critic asks only one thing -- and perhaps then he will show himself indulgent: that the guilty one recognize himself as guilty, that the homosexual declare frankly whether humbly or boastfully matters little -- "I am a paederast.".... The critic demands of the guilty one that he constitute himself as a thing.... Who cannot see how offensive to the Other and how reassuring for me is a statement such as, "He's just a paederast," which removes a disturbing freedom from a trait and which aims at henceforth constituting all the acts of the Other as consequences following strictly from his essence. (107-8)

Since this attitude consists in ignoring the Other's transcendence, Sartre thinks of it as engaging in "a sort of factual solipsism" (495).

The "first attitude toward others," the analogue of what Sartre calls good faith in the quotation from page 116, is an attempt to be absorbed by one's being-for-others: to become nothing more than what one is for-others by engaging in "the dance of the grocer, of the tailor, of the auctioneer, by which they try to persuade their clientele that they are nothing but a grocer, an auctioneer, a tailor" (102). This is what the waiter<sup>248</sup> does: "He applies himself to chaining his movements as if they were mechanisms... his gestures and even his voice seem to be mechanisms.... [H]e is playing at *being* a waiter in a café" (101-2).

The "perpetual game of escape from the for-itself to the for-others and from the for-others to the for-itself" (100) might better be described as alternatively attempting to identify with and to

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<sup>248</sup>Manser notes that Sartre never says that the waiter is in bad faith (Manser 66), and it is important to note that the attitude of the waiter is different from, and even in some sense the "opposite" of, those of the paederast and the woman on the date. However, whether one considers what Sartre calls "good faith" to be one of two fundamental forms of bad faith as I do, or uses "bad faith" more restrictively, doesn't make much difference. As noted, both are techniques for fleeing "pure anguish."

dissociate from oneself as a being-for-others. To escape from the for-others to the for-itself is to dissociate oneself from the facticity that is experienced when one is under the Look; to escape from the for-itself to the for-others is to identify oneself with it. And:

concrete relations with the Other... are wholly governed by my attitudes with respect to the object which I am for the Other. ...[T]he Other's existence... will motivate two opposed attitudes.... I can attempt to deny that being which is conferred on me from the outside.... But, on the other hand, in so far as the Other as freedom is the foundation of my being-in-itself, I can seek to recover that freedom and to possess it without removing from it its character as freedom.... To transcend the Other's transcendence, or, on the contrary, to incorporate that transcendence within me without removing from it its character as transcendence... such are the two primitive attitudes which I assume confronting the Other. (473-4)

That "being-for-itself implies a complementary being-for-others" and that these have an "equal dignity of being" (100) can, however, easily be misunderstood. It is true that being-for-others is a genuine dimension of human reality. But this dimension is grounded in being-for-itself. Thus the two are not complementary in the way that, e.g., transcendence and facticity, one's project and one's situation, or one's future and one's past, are. Sartre says: "the Other's presence in the world is an absolute and self-evident fact, but a contingent fact -- that is, a fact impossible to deduce from the ontological structures of the for-itself" (474). However, the two fundamental attitudes that one can take toward one's being-for-others are complementary. These exist at the same level of constitution as alternative responses to one's being-for-others.

The third duplicity described by Sartre -- that of being-in-the-world and being-in-the-midst-of-the-world -- is also formulated in terms of the example of the woman on the date, who is trying to enjoy "the desire she inspires" without fully recognizing this desire. This project is threatened when the man takes her hand:

To leave the hand there is to consent in herself to flirt, to engage herself. To withdraw it is to break the troubled and unstable harmony which gives the hour its charm.... We know what happens next; the young woman leaves her hand there, but she *does not notice* that she is leaving it. She does not notice because it happens that she is at this moment all intellect. She draws her companion up to the most lofty regions of sentimental speculation; she speaks of Life, of her life, she shows herself in her essential aspect--a

personality, a consciousness. And during this time the divorce of the body from the soul is accomplished; the hand rests inert between the warm hands of her companion--neither consenting nor resisting--a thing. (97)

As Sartre then comments:

We have seen also the use that our young lady made of our being-in-the-midst-of-the-world--i.e., of our inert presence as a passive object among other objects--in order to relieve herself suddenly from the functions of her being in the world--that is, from the being which causes there to be a world by projecting itself beyond the world toward its own possibilities.(100)

While Sartre consistently contrasts one's being-in-the-midst-of-the-world with one's being-in-the-world, however, elsewhere he seems to use the former term to talk about different things. In the section on the body-for-itself, it refers to one's facticity insofar as it is indicated by the arrangement of things:

The object which the things of the world indicate and which they include in their radius is for itself and on principle a non-object. But the upsurge of my being, by unfolding distances *in terms of a center*, by the very act of this unfolding determines an object which is itself in so far as it causes itself to be indicated by the world; and I could have no indication of it as an object because I am it.... Thus my being-in-the-world, by the sole fact that it *realizes* a world, causes itself to be indicated to itself as a being-in-the-midst-of-the-world by the world which it realizes. (419)

There is no mention of the Other: the world's arrangement around oneself is what indicates one's being in its midst. In the section on the third ontological dimension of the body, however, the term refers to one's being in the midst of a field of instrument-objects to be used and perceived by another consciousness:

[T]o the extent that I am conscious of existing for the Other I apprehend my own facticity, not only in its non-thetic nihilation, not only in *the existent*, but in its flight toward a being-in-the-midst of the world. The shock of the encounter with the Other is thus a revelation in emptiness of the existence of my body outside as an in-itself for the Other. (461)

Although it would be nice if Sartre used his terms more consistently, there is more than one level of constitution at which he wants to talk about the contrast between oneself as what one already is and oneself as beyond what one is. In the chapter on bad faith, like the section on the

third ontological dimension of the body, being-in-the-midst-of-the-world must be taken to refer to something existing on a level that includes being-for-others, since Sartre describes it as “our inert presence as a passive object among other objects.” It is contrasted with “the being which causes there to be a world by projecting itself beyond the world toward its own possibilities.” This phrase is ambiguous as well. It could be used to refer to consciousness itself. But here, for the sake of symmetry, it ought to be taken to refer to the person as a conscious being.

### *2c. Two levels of bad faith*

Sartre could have given a much clearer analysis of the examples he uses in the chapter on bad faith after working out the structures of consciousness in Part Two, and the details of the constitution of oneself as a being-for-others in Part Three. He then might have said that transcendence/facticity structure is the single most important duplicity, and that the other duplicities are based on it, or even are merely other aspects of it. Nevertheless, an important distinction can be drawn between the transcendence/facticity duplicity and the “nihilitating ambiguity of the temporal ekstases,” on the one hand, and the being-for-itself/being-for-others and being-in-the-world/being-in-the-midst-of-the-world duplicities on the other. The distinction, of course, has to do with the fact that the latter duplicities require the Look. In this respect it can be said that there are two levels of bad faith.<sup>249</sup>

Consider Sartre’s description of one’s pre-reflective awareness of jealousy as it is apprehended in the structure of the field of consciousness prior to the Look. Before hearing a footstep behind him and sensing the Look, the jealousy of the man looking through the keyhole consists in the fact that the field of consciousness is organized in a particular way around the scene in the room and its to-be-watched quality: “there is a spectacle to be seen behind the door only

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<sup>249</sup>Schroeder says: “People sometimes deceive themselves into believing that they have provided themselves a foundation; they do this by interpreting their transcendent aspects as aspects of their facticity or vice versa. Other people offer a whole new arena in which this sort of self-deception may occur, for Others



because I am jealous, but my jealousy is nothing but the simple objective fact that *there is* a sight *to be seen* behind the door” (348).

When consciousness is immersed the “world of the immediate” it does not explicitly recognize itself as freedom or as the source of values. At this level, “Everything happens as if we lived in a world whose objects, in addition to their qualities of warmth, odor, shape, etc., had the qualities of repulsive, attractive, delightful, useful, etc., and as if these qualities were forces having a certain power over us” (TE, 58). Prior to reflection, one apprehends the to-be-watched quality of the scene in the room, the to-be-drunk quality of the glass of water, or the to-be-avoided quality of the stranger with a knife, as simple facts of the matter, and this is the only way in which one apprehends one’s jealousy, thirst and fear. If pure reflection occurs, revealing one’s freedom, one can cover it up in various ways. One can constitute one’s transcendence as a psychic object: jealousy, thirst and fear, can be apprehended as qualities that one simply has, rather than freely adopted projects of spying, drinking, or running away. One thereby conceals precisely what pure reflection or anguish reveals: that these qualities are the upshot of one’s choices. This is probably what Busch means when he says, “As long as one is under the spell of the desire for necessity, reflection will be accomplice to this desire.”<sup>250</sup>

In Chapter Four I criticized Busch for identifying the first ekstasis with bad faith and saying that reflection can purify pre-reflective consciousness of a bad faith that already exists at that level. Consciousness cannot jettison its attempt to be in-itself-for-itself on the level of the first ekstasis: it is this attempt. However, the relation between levels of bad faith described by Busch exists at a higher level. As we have seen, impure reflection can occur prior to the look and constitute merely psychic objects, but can also make use of the Look, constituting oneself as a psychophysical object. If engaged in bad faith prior to the intuition of one’s being-for-others, one

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create one of the dimensions of one’s facticity: one’s being-for-Others” (Schroeder 176).

will use this intuition, as Busch says, to help “to consider itself as a fixed, finished being and avoid responsibility for its continuous self-definition.”<sup>251</sup> That is, if one is already reifying one’s transcendence, the extension of facticity that occurs with the look will appear to one only as more of what one is not, “in the sense that this table *is not* an inkwell.” It will appear “as if I were to myself the truth of myself and as if the Other possessed only a deformed image of me” (100). This is what Sartre’s paederast does. Likewise, if one is intent on denying one’s transcendence, the extension of facticity will help one in this effort: in addition to having certain physical surroundings imbued with meaning, one will now have a certain social role in which to lose oneself. We have seen how the waiter makes use of this.

To fix oneself in a role is different from fixing oneself as jealous or as thirsty (these qualities being apprehended pre-reflectively as the to-be-watched quality of the scene or the to-be-drunk quality of the water). Fixing oneself in a role requires apprehending oneself as an object for others. Fixing oneself as jealous is simply adopting the project of jealousy in such a way that one apprehends oneself not as adopting this project, but as if one is jealous beyond any choice of what to be. The to-be-watched quality of the scene and to-be-looked-through quality of the keyhole appear as ordinary, non-project-dependent qualities, as if it is not one’s freely adopted project of jealousy that makes the scene in the room an object of special interest. Fixing oneself in a role includes adopting this sort of attitude toward one’s surroundings. When one fixes oneself as a waiter, one adopts the project of taking drink orders, bringing the customers food, making money through tips, etc., as if it were in one’s being to do these things. This requires apprehending drinks and food as to-be-brought-out, customers as to-be-served, etc., again, as if nothing one is doing is causing the situation to be as it is. Thus at the same time that the solicitous manner and mechanical movements of the waiter are signs of his denial that his role as waiter is one that he

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<sup>250</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 37.

must actively realize, they are signs of his denial that the to-be-brought-to-the-tables quality of the food and the to-be-served quality of the customers are products of his choice.

There is indeed interplay between the two levels of bad faith. The waiter uses his role, which involves apprehending himself as a being-for-others, in order to apprehend his actions as following from his essence. "From within" he does not question whether he ought to take food orders and bring the customers their drinks. In fact, beyond the simple, unquestioning attitude characteristic of the pre-reflective level, he adopts an attitude that precludes, or at least impedes, such questioning. If he were to question his actions, he could remind himself that he is a waiter "from without." Thus after comparing the waiter's behavior to "the dance of the grocer, of the tailor, of the auctioneer, by which they try to persuade their clientele that they are nothing but a grocer an auctioneer, a tailor," Sartre says:

In a parallel situation, from within, the waiter in the cafe can not be immediately a cafe waiter in the sense that this inkwell is an inkwell, or the glass is a glass.... What I attempt to realize is a being-in-itself of the cafe waiter, as if it were not just in my power to confer their value and their urgency upon the duties and the rights of my position, as if it were not my free choice to get up each morning at five o'clock or to remain in bed, even though it meant getting fired. (102-3)

In a characteristic passage from the section on anguish, Sartre had already spoken about living as if one was not choosing freely the possibility of getting up:

[W]e act before positing our possibilities and... these possibilities which are disclosed as realized or in process of being realized refer to meanings which necessitate special acts in order to be put into question.... [T]o apprehend the summons of the alarm as a summons is to get up.... In short, to the extent that I apprehend the meaning of the ringing I am already up at its summons; this apprehension guarantees me against the anguished intuition that it is I who confer on the alarm clock its exigency--I and I alone. (75-6)

The sound of the alarm is apprehended not as something that one must interpret as summoning one to get up, but as a sound that simply has this meaning. In this case, however, Sartre is not thinking of somebody who is using his unquestioned role, but only his unquestioned goal of writing a book,

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<sup>251</sup>Busch, *Power of Consciousness* 32.

to reinforce the meaning of the sound of the alarm.

Thus, after the example of the waiter, Sartre shows that the duplicity that allows for bad faith exists prior to the upsurge of one's being-for-others:

[W]e are dealing with more than mere social positions; I am never any one of my attitudes, any one of my actions.... I can not say either that I *am* here or that I *am* not here, in the sense that we say "that box of matches *is* on the table"; this would be to confuse my "being-in-the-world" with a "being-in-the-midst-of-the-world." Nor that I *am* standing, nor that I *am* seated; this would be to confuse my body with the idiosyncratic totality of which it is only one of the structures.... But take a mode of being which concerns only myself: I am sad.... [T]he being-sad is not a ready-made being which I give to myself as I can give this book to my friend.... If I make myself sad, I must make myself sad from beginning to end. I cannot treat my sadness as an impulse finally achieved and put it on file without re-creating it, nor can I carry it in the manner of an inert body which continues its movement after the initial shock. (103-4)

As we have seen, to treat one's sadness as "a ready-made being" is to constitute it as a psychic state in impure reflection.

### 3. Morris's Account of the Ambiguity of "I"

Morris closes the introduction to her book with the announcement that she will focus on two "fundamental mainsprings" of Sartre's notion of a person: the concept of intentionality and the claim that "I" is ambiguous. Morris believes that this concept and this claim allow Sartre to talk about the person as an "accountable moral agent" without resorting to a dualistic ontology (SCP, 148). That the body is the subject of consciousness is related to both the concept of intentionality and the claim about the ambiguity of "I," because it is the intentional relation that the body is supposedly the subject of, and the body-subject is one of the four senses of "I" delimited by Morris.

It is two "nonbodily senses" of "I," "character" and "the self I am trying to be," that are most important for moral discourse, according to Morris. These nonbodily senses are aspects of "the pattern or system of conscious relations" that the body-subject "has with objects and with others through time" (SCP, 81). Thus they are in a way no less bodily than the body-subject itself.

I began discussing Morris's account of the body-subject in Chapter One in connection with the issue of the constitution of one's body, the constitution of the bodies of others, and personal identity over time. I will discuss the body-subject again later in this chapter, as one of Morris's four senses of "I." But first I want to make some general points about Morris's account of the ambiguity of "I." In particular, I want to talk about several purposes of the account. I hope to show that while the claim that "T" is reference-ambiguous does not help to serve these purposes, it is helpful either to say that "T" is sense-ambiguous or to claim that the object to which "T" refers is itself somehow ambiguous. I will then suggest that, despite initial appearances, Morris may not have meant that "T" is reference-ambiguous.

***3a. The purposes of the claim that "I" is ambiguous in Morris's reconstruction of Sartre's account***

The claim that "T" is ambiguous can be used in elucidating the notion of bad faith, and plays a central role in Morris's account of this phenomenon. Most other writers commenting on bad faith also make use of some notion of ambiguity and, as we have seen, Sartre says that it is a duplicity in oneself that makes bad faith possible.<sup>252</sup> Morris also uses the claim to contrast Sartre's

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<sup>252</sup>The topic of ambiguity is intimately related to that of bad faith. Most commentators note that bad faith is made possible by a duplicity between oneself as facticity and oneself as a transcending of that facticity. Most, including Morris and Manser, have noted that a duplicity between oneself as being-for-itself and oneself as being-for-others, may also be involved. However, to my knowledge none, aside from Schroeder (see note 249, above) has pointed out the Look as an increase in one's facticity in connection with the topic of bad faith. This point, it seems to me, can be used to clarify much possible muddle. It allows for a view in which all bad faith involves playing upon the main duplicity--that between oneself as facticity and oneself as transcending of that facticity--but in which there is still room for four varieties of bad faith. Two of these can be called varieties of impure reflection, in which one identifies with one's facticity to the point of ignoring that one "is not what one is," i.e., to the point of ignoring that one is a transcending of that facticity. The difference between these two varieties is that in one case, one is identifying with the body-for-itself, while in the other, one is identifying with one's body as an object in the midst of the world. The other two varieties might be called varieties of denial. One might be exemplified by the woman on the date who no longer feels "the warm hands of her companion." The other is exemplified by the paederast who insists that his past has nothing to do with what he is now.

Bad faith consists either in identifying with one's facticity to the point of ignoring that one is a transcending of this facticity (denying that *one is not* what one is) or in identifying with this transcending to the point of denying the facticity of which it is a transcending (denying that *one is* what one is not). Put differently, it consists either in insisting that one is determined by one's past or one's situation, or in

concept of a person with Strawson's, saying that for the latter, and not for Sartre, "I" refers unambiguously to the person. It also plays a role in Morris's interpretation of what Sartre would say about personal identity over time, another point of contrast between Sartre and Strawson for Morris. That "I" has several different meanings is also important because it is related to the crucial point that one has no privileged access to a self or its causal qualities. We saw that Morris acknowledges that there is "an area of certainty and a domain of doubtfulness in reflection." She does not mention, however, that the consciousness apprehended pre-reflectively and in pure reflection is not apprehended as causally efficacious.

To say that a word is ambiguous means it is standardly used in more than one way when communicating with others. But it is possible that one cannot use "I" to refer to the selfhood to which one has privileged access and expect to be understood.<sup>253</sup> If this is the case, and I believe that it is, then the ambiguity of "I" is not a good way to allow that there are different aspects of oneself, some to which one has privileged access, and others which have causal efficacy. Also, anything that can rightfully be called the ambiguity of "I" cannot do the job that needs to be done with regard to bad faith, which requires distinguishing between various levels of selfhood and examining those below one's being-for-others. This is where the duplicity which ultimately makes bad faith possible, that between consciousness as facticity and consciousness as transcendence, is found.<sup>254</sup> Finally, it is also because of his account of the various levels of selfness that Sartre's

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insisting that one has no past or situation. To avoid bad faith, each element of one's facticity--each fact about oneself--must be recognized as an element of one's facticity, i.e., as a part of what one is a transcending. Some of these elements are parts of one's being-for-others, e.g., whether or not one is a waiter. Other elements precede one's being-for-others, e.g., whether one is in pain.

I'm not going to develop such an account of bad faith here. I'm thus interested in Morris's account only insofar as it helps to elucidate her claim about the ambiguity of "I," in particular, insofar as it helps to elucidate each of the four senses of "I."

<sup>253</sup>In a related example, one cannot say "I" in conversation and mean a Husserlian transcendental ego, a Kantian transcendental unity of apperception, or a Wittgensteinian "limit to the world." There is no use of "I" in which "I" doesn't refer to the person who is speaking, and in which the item referred to by "I" cannot be referred to by somebody else using "you" or "he."

<sup>254</sup>In a footnote Morris says that other commentators, such as Naess and Bergmann, say that, rather than the

analysis differs most sharply from the one offered by Strawson. A good way to put this may be to say that when one uses the word “I,” one may be referring to oneself through various senses or aspects. But in saying that “I” is ambiguous for Sartre, it is not at all clear that this is what Morris means. Moreover, if this is what she has in mind, saying that the word “I” is ambiguous is not a good way to express the view.

### **3b. Morris’s account of the ambiguity of “I”**

Morris makes it sound as if “I” can refer to three different items, and that one of these items -- the body -- can be referred to in two different ways, as a physical object and as a conscious subject:

[O]ne use of “I” is to refer to the body.... In many cases “I” really refers quite strictly to the body... In this case “I” refers to the body *qua* physical object; I can also refer to the body *qua* conscious subject, as in “I see the tree”.... [Sartre] does not deny that the nonbodily uses of “I” make a reference.... One of the nonbodily uses of “I” [is] to refer to character.... For Sartre the most important application of this use of “I” is to our moral discourse. Here we definitely want to talk about something other than the physical characteristics of the body, such as its being six feet tall, and also wish to speak of something other than particular acts of the conscious body-subject. We use “I” when we want to speak of certain characteristic patterns of action.... There is at least one other morally important use of “I,” according to Sartre... This use refers to the self I am trying to be. (SCP, 90-1)

Note that “the nonbodily uses of ‘I’ make a reference.” In saying this, Morris is contrasting Sartre’s view with the no-subject view considered and rejected by Strawson, a view that states that “I” is ambiguous in that it has a referring use (i.e., to the body) and a non-referring

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term “I,” it is other elements in statements about oneself, such as the verb “to be” or the “moral predicate,” that are being used ambiguously (SCP, 91, n.21). McCullough associates bad faith with a play on the ambiguity of the verb “to be,” as well (McCulloch 57ff.). It makes sense to say something of this sort, since one type of bad faith consists of thinking of oneself as *being* a coward in the same sense that the table *is* round or square and wall coloring *is* blue or gray.

It is important, however, not to think of bad faith as a linguistic phenomenon. Note that if the “ambiguity of ‘I’” were responsible for bad faith, then language would be essential to bad faith, rather than merely assisting one in it at times. It is misleading even to say that bad faith consists in one *thinking of* oneself in a certain way. It would be better to say that it consists in the way in which one experiences oneself and one’s qualities.

use.<sup>255</sup> Morris says that although “I” is ambiguous for Sartre, it is neither for this reason nor because “I” refers ambiguously to either the body or a Cartesian ego:

The point of maintaining the nonbodily uses of “I,” for Sartre, is not for either of the reasons suggested by Strawson. Sartre does not want to use “I” either to refer to an immaterial thinking substance or to deny that there is a subject of experiences. For Sartre, the important nonbodily uses of “I” are connected with our moral discourse. (SCP, 92)

Unlike the no-subject theorist, according to Morris, Sartre believes that there is a subject of experiences. Thus the reason “I” is ambiguous is not that it has a non-referring use in addition to its referring use. Nor is it that the word refers to an immaterial thinking subject: on Morris’s reconstruction, when “I” is used to refer to the subject of experiences, it is referring to the body-subject. Thus, before discussing the nonbodily uses of “I” Morris writes: “Sartre claims that the human body can be the subject of conscious relations as well as the possessor of physical properties.”

On the whole, it seems Morris is saying that the word can be used to refer to three different things. In both “I see the tree” and “I weigh one seventy” it is used to refer to the body. But in “I am a thief” and “I am a Christian” (Morris’s examples), it is used to refer to something else. Although it depends on the context of the remark, it is likely that the former refers to a pattern of one’s past actions and the latter to a self one is trying to be: the former is a confession while the latter is more akin to a vow or the reaffirmation of a vow.<sup>256</sup>

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<sup>255</sup>This is one way in which one might talk about “I” being ambiguous. Instead of referring to two different items, it is said to have one referring use and one non-referring use. As we will see in the next chapter (in Section 3a), Strawson states that the no-subject view and the ego-subject views are similar for this reason. But the above quotation makes it appear that Morris feels that there are at least three unique references for “I.”

As noted (in Chapter Three), Morris explains the body-subject by contrasting what she takes to be Sartre’s view with Strawson’s “person-subject” view and the “ego-subject” and “no-subject” views which are criticized by Strawson. Basically, Strawson feels that the two latter views are similar in their judgment that “I” has two different meanings. While the Cartesian thinks that the non-bodily sense of “I” refers to the mind, the “no-subject” theorist thinks that the non-bodily sense of “I” does not refer at all. Both are mistaken, Strawson says.

<sup>256</sup>As we will see, however, Sartre eventually says that *character* is a vow: “character is a vow.... In this sense there is no character; there is only a project of oneself” (705).



It is easy to imagine how such ambiguity might be exploited by bad faith.<sup>257</sup> However, it seems strange to say that “T” refers to a pattern or system of relations rather than to a person who is in these relations, that “T” refers to past acts rather than to the person who performed them, or that “T” refers to character rather than the person who has this character. Similarly, it seems strange to say that “T” refers to the self one is trying to be, rather than to the one who is trying to be that self. But Morris speaks this way more than once: “‘I’ can refer ambiguously to character or past acts and to a future self” (SCP, 106); “If I correctly say of myself, now, that ‘I am a coward,’ I am referring to a series of past actions that have taken place within certain kinds of circumstances.”<sup>258</sup>

It may be, however, that she does not mean that there are three different referents for “I.” One sentence before the last quotation she says only that “T” is used in the context of summarizing one’s past actions:

The body as possessor of spatio-temporal qualities, and as subject of present consciousness, is only one of the structures of the total self.... In addition, Sartre notes that we use the term *I* in the context of summarizing certain patterns of past actions and utterances in relation to objects and to other people. If I correctly say of myself, now, that “I am a coward,” I am referring to a series of past actions that have taken place within certain kinds of circumstances.<sup>259</sup>

Also, at times she talks about what I have been taking to be alternative referents of ‘T’ as alternative senses:

Sartre claims that “T” is ambiguous. In one sense the person is a body *qua* conscious subject. In another sense a person is the pattern or system of conscious relations that this body has with objects and with others through time. (SCP, 81)

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<sup>257</sup>For example, the newly reformed gambler who says “I am not a gambler” falls into self-deception if she believes this statement to accurately describe her character in such a way that she places herself in the same group of people as, say, those who could wait for three hours by a slot machine with a pocket full of silver dollars and not even be tempted. Sartre mentions the act of reaffirming a vow in the context of this example (69-70). Likewise, the person who makes a self-ascriptive statement based on her past actions, and believes that this statement names a quality that in some way compels her to act presently in one way or another, is exploiting the ambiguity of “T” to assist her in bad faith of the most notorious type. Thus Morris says, aptly, “...even the upright bank president..”

<sup>258</sup>Phyllis Sutton Morris, “Self-Deception: Sartre’s Resolution of the Paradox, *Jean-Paul Sartre: Contemporary Approaches to His Philosophy*, ed. Hugh J. Silverman and Frederick A. Elliston (Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1980): 35.

<sup>259</sup>Morris, *Self-Deception* 35.

I cannot understand what it means to say that a series of past actions is sometimes the referent of word “I.” (A series of actions is a coward?) A possible explanation is that by “referring to” Morris means only that one has in mind these past actions and that, strictly speaking, one is referring to a person.<sup>260</sup> Morris’s use of “referring” would then be like that in, “When the speaker mentioned ‘Winston Smith’ he was referring to a book by Orwell,” rather than in, “When the speaker said ‘1984’ he was referring to a book by Orwell.” Such usage of the verb is fairly common, and there is nothing wrong with it. However, if Morris is using it in this way, she is saying only that “I” may, on different occasions, bring to mind one’s past, what one is trying to become, one’s physical body, or one’s current perceptions or actions. This is quite different from saying that “I” has more than one referent.

This would help explain why at one point she says that the concept of a person, rather than the word “I,” is ambiguous for Sartre (SCP, 151). In the later article as well, she speaks of “the ambiguity that Sartre claims is implicit in the concept of a person.”<sup>261</sup> Just as a word may bring more than one thing to mind, so may a concept. The suggestion would help to explain why Morris speaks indifferently of “I” and the concept of a person’s being ambiguous, and seems not to distinguish the claim that “I” refers to one’s past actions from the claim that these actions are one sense of “I.”

In the quotation from page 81, however, Morris says that the person has two senses. While this may be taken to mean that one sometimes thinks of a person as a conscious body and

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<sup>260</sup>In another article, “Sartre on the Self-deceiver’s Translucent Consciousness,” in which Morris argues that bad faith is compatible with the translucency of consciousness, she says, “when we use the word ‘I’ we may mean one of several aspects of ourselves” (108). Once again, she could be saying that these aspects are possible referents for “I,” but she may intend something else by “mean.” If not, this seems to me to be a very strange thing to say: a particular tomato’s color, shape, and flavor are various *aspects* of it, but the expression, “the tomato,” certainly doesn’t refer to any of these. In general, if an item is said to have several aspects, an expression that refers to this item refers to what it is that has these aspects, not to the aspects themselves.

<sup>261</sup>Morris, *Self-Deception* 36.

other times as the subject of a “system of conscious relations,” it may also lead us to consider another possible type of ambiguity: an expression might be said to be ambiguous if it were to refer univocally to an object which is itself ambiguous (assuming we can make sense of the idea of an ambiguous object).<sup>262</sup> Now we have come even further from anything that can reasonably be called the ambiguity of “I,” however. If this is Morris’s view, to say that “T” is ambiguous, or that “T” can be used to refer to one’s body, one’s character, or the self one is trying to be, is a misleading way to express it. (It misled me, at least.)

I have mentioned four things that one might mean in claiming that “T” is ambiguous: (1) that “T” can be used to refer to more than one item, i.e., that “T” has more than one referent; (2) that “T” has one referring use and at least one non-referring use; (3) that “T” is used only to refer to one item, but in a variety of ways, or through a variety of senses, or that the use of the word might

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<sup>262</sup>Some such notion of ambiguity is undoubtedly an important feature of Sartre’s view. Both Francis Jeanson and Simone de Beauvoir call Sartre’s existentialism a “philosophy of ambiguity.” Jeanson says this in a book praised by Sartre, and goes on to attribute ambiguity to “subjectivity” (Jeanson 130), consciousness, human reality, “the human mode of being” (p.15), and “being” (p.89). But he certainly doesn’t say anything about any *words* being ambiguous.

Note also that in a passage I quoted in Chapter Five, Busch speaks of “[the human existent’s] ambiguous constitution of freedom/facticity” (*Power of Consciousness* 32). In an article which compares Sartre’s views to Nagel’s, Wider calls our attention to a similar ambiguity and notes its importance in B&N, but she doesn’t refer to it as “ambiguity.” Wider says that both philosophers agree that “neither the objective nor the subjective view of reality captures all that there is to reality,” and continues: “We must maintain both views despite the tension that creates for us as creatures that are both subjects and objects: beings in the world with a point of view on the world.” Kathleen Wider, “The Desire to be God: Subjective and Objective in Nagel’s ‘The View from Nowhere’ and Sartre’s ‘Being and Nothingness,’” *Journal of Philosophical Research* 17 (1992): 444. Later, when discussing the body-for-itself and the body-for-others, she says: “For Sartre, there is no resolution of this tension between the two aspects of one’s bodily existence” (Wider, *Desire* 450). (As we saw in the first section of this chapter, that one exists both as a being-for-itself and as a being-for-others is one of the “duplicities” mentioned by Sartre in the chapter on bad faith. The first “tension” corresponds to the being-in-the-world/being-in-the-midst-of-the-world duplicity: “beings in the world with a point of view on the world” are, in the language used by Sartre at that point “beings in the midst of the world who are also being-in-the-world.”) Oneself, on Sartre’s view, is somehow multi-faceted or duplicitous. However, it is important to distinguish the acknowledgment of this fact from the claim that the word “I” is ambiguous. Thus Katherine Morris says (in a reply to McCulloch’s account of bad faith): “we talk about ambiguous facial expressions, ambiguous pictures, ambiguous relationships and so on, and the French phenomenologists regularly exploit something like this sense of the term ‘ambiguity.’ We might coin the expression ‘existential ambiguity’ to distinguish this type of ambiguity from the various kinds of linguistic ambiguity.” Katherine J. Morris, “Ambiguity and Bad Faith,” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 70 (1996): 472.

bring to mind several different aspects of the one item to which it does refer; and (4) that “I” is used only to refer to one item, but this item is itself ambiguous. To say that “I” refers univocally to an ambiguous object, to say that “I” is sense-ambiguous, and to say, more loosely, that “I” may bring to mind more than one possible context, are all claims that, if properly explained, might reasonably be attributed to Sartre. It is not important to choose between them. What is important is to get a clear view of what the different senses of the word “I,” or of the object of consciousness “oneself,” are, to determine the relationships between them, and to integrate this analysis with an analysis of the varieties of self-apprehension. This latter analysis will include those forms of self-apprehension that Sartre refers to as “patterns of bad faith.” The phrasing most amenable to this project occurs when she says, in a later article, “when we use the word ‘I’ we may mean one of several aspects of ourselves.” The senses of “I” could be taken to be various aspects through which we refer to ourselves. Patterns of bad faith, then, would be attempts to avoid apprehending certain aspects of oneself by apprehending oneself only through other aspects.

#### **4. Morris on Bad Faith and the Ambiguity of “I”**

The primary aim of Morris’s account of the various senses of “I” is to show that Sartre can allow for talk about the person as “an accountable moral agent” without resorting to a dualistic ontology (148). This is why the four senses are initially grouped into two bodily and two non-bodily ones. The non-bodily senses allow for moral discourse. However, this grouping indicates that insufficient attention is being paid to whether these senses of oneself are apprehended pre-reflectively, as reflections of the structure of the field of consciousness, or are apprehended in impure reflection (and are consciousness-degrading according to Sartre). This can be shown by an examination of Morris’s account of the body-subject and the “self I am trying to be.” When taken to correspond to Sartre’s body-for-itself and fundamental project, these are elements of pre-reflective consciousness. However, Morris most often uses these terms to refer to intersubjectively

apprehensible aspects of persons, where the form of reflection in which they are apprehended is the reflective apprehension of one's being-for-others. In any case, the most important thing to make clear is the interrelation between the different senses of "I," in particular, which senses are constituted on the basis of which. Simply saying that "I" has different senses, without talking about the constitution of these senses, misses the most important part of Sartre's account of the person: how one constitutes oneself as an object of consciousness.

Busch's characterization of what I see as the two main senses of "I" -- one in which it refers to an item with objective properties that can be causally related to objective events, and another in which it refers to subjectivity or "the existential self" -- clarifies the most important distinction:

[Sartre] contends that objective psychology identifies the self as an object, reducing it to a world of analytic, causal discourse which is immune to the existential self.... All attempts to objectify [the existential] self create a realm of discourse which does not contain subjectivity.... Sartre notes that the *I* appears upon reflection, when consciousness makes an object out of itself. It is constituted through objectification and belongs to that realm of discourse, not the discourse of intentional self-awareness.<sup>263</sup>

However, while the two sorts of selfness to which Busch here draws our attention, the existential self and the self as an object, are the main senses of "I," we must be wary of the possibility of mischaracterizing the second of these. Busch says, "All attempts to objectify [the existential] self create a realm of discourse that does not contain subjectivity." Although it is true that the psychic object of impure reflection and oneself-qua-psychophysical-object fall on the same side of the main division as tables and rocks -- in that they belong to the "world of analytic, causal discourse" -- they do contain subjectivity, albeit in a degraded way. In these cases, one's self-

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<sup>263</sup>*Power of Consciousness* 7-8. The line drawn by Busch is between two sorts of talk: talk about something that stands in causal relations with objects in the world and talk about subjectivity itself. Again, I don't think anything that Sartre says commits him to saying that there can be *discourse* about intentional self-awareness, and think it would be best for Sartre not to say such things, because discourse about an item requires that two persons be able to refer to this item, and this is not the case with the selfness apprehended in pre-reflective self-consciousness and in pure reflection. Sartre in fact only talks about language in regard to being-for-others, and at one point he identifies language with the body-for-others.

apprehension is similar to one's apprehension of the Other-as-object, whom one apprehends as an object-with-subjectivity, as a "subject-as-object" who "'has' a subjectivity as this hollow box has 'an inside'" (384). Thus what needs to be talked about is precisely the way in which the self-as-an-object contains subjectivity: the ways in which the apprehension of the merely psychic ego and of the body in its third ontological dimension are based on the pre-reflective apprehension of the body-for-itself and of oneself-for-others.

We can still maintain that "I" is ambiguous for Sartre: we might say that it has different meanings in different realms of discourse. This is what Morris seems to be saying when she says that "the important nonbodily uses of 'I' are connected with our moral discourse" (SCP, 92), a realm into which terms referring to oneself as a purely physical object do not fit. This is why Morris says that Sartre's view is non-reductionist, and that his non-reductionist concept of a person will allow one to make sense of moral judgments whereas a reductionist one will not. That one can refer to oneself in other ways than as physical object, that one can refer to oneself through one's apprehension of one's character or one's fundamental project, for example, may allow for talk about oneself as a moral agent. However, how one can apprehend oneself in a way that allows for talk about oneself as a moral agent is only partially answered by saying that there is more than one sense of "I." It is crucial to discuss how the senses of "I" that allow for such discourse are constituted.

#### ***4a. The relationship of Morris's senses of "I" to Sartre's account of the four duplicities***

The four senses of "I" delimited by Morris map fairly neatly onto two of the duplicities that Sartre says can be exploited by bad faith. Recall Sartre's account of how one can either dissociate herself from her past, thinking of it as merely what she was, or identify with it, believing that her future actions will necessarily conform to the pattern she has already set for herself. The two senses of "I" that Morris speaks of as non-bodily and as important to moral discourse,

character and the “self I am trying to be,” relate to this distinction. Thus, in a later article Morris says:

Some forms of self-deception involve primarily the temporal aspects of the self. Sartre uses the example of someone who is urged by a friend to admit that he *is* a homosexual. The man might admit isolated past acts, might even remember them with transparent clarity, but refuse to take note of the total pattern of homosexuality. Another, perhaps subtler, form of self-deception would be to admit with hypersincerity, “yes, I *am* a homosexual!”... The self-deceptiveness in this case would be found in the attempt to identify solely with the past self, giving the impression that present choice and future action are as closed and finished as what one has done in the past.... Another example of temporally oriented self-deception is total identification with one’s future, ideal self. The character Garcin in *No Exit* provides an excellent example of this form of self-deception. Garcin’s earliest efforts to reflect on his past are self-deceptive in that he focused solely on his future goal, to be a hero. His ideal self was not realised in the cowardly actions he had performed, so he attempted to discount their significance and instead to assess himself in terms of his heroic intentions.<sup>264</sup>

While Garcin and the homosexual in Sartre’s example play down the importance of what they have actually done by focusing on their ideal future selves, the “hypersincere” person would be guilty of:

the attempt solely to identify solely with the past self, pretending thereby that present choice and one’s future self are somehow as closed and finished as what one has done in the past. The drunkard, the coward, perhaps even the upright bank president may all enjoy the comforting self-deception that once they have begun in a certain direction, they can’t avoid going in that direction in the future.<sup>265</sup>

By apprehending oneself through one’s character or through one’s attempt to be an ideal future self, one is able to avoid recognizing the extent of one’s freedom or the significance of one’s past, respectively.

We might regard the other two of Morris’s senses, body-subject and physical body, as intended to correspond to one’s being-in-the-world and being-in-the-midst-of-the-world. Recall

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<sup>264</sup>Morris, *Translucent* 111. I take the homosexual in the original example to be guilty of the same sort of bad faith as Garcin. Both feel that their pasts misrepresent them, and thus each refuses to acknowledge the pattern of his past actions as anything other than a series of accidents. Regarding the homosexual, Sartre says: “[H]e struggles with all his strength against the crushing view that his mistakes constitute for him a destiny.... It seems to him that he has escaped from each mistake as soon as he has posited it and recognized it; he feels even that the psychic duration by itself cleanses him from each misdeed, constitutes for him an undetermined future, causes him to be born anew” (107-8).

that Sartre uses this duplicity to analyze the bad faith of the woman on the date. In “Sartre on the Self-deceiver’s Translucent Consciousness,” Morris does the same with the ambiguity between the person as body-subject and the person as a physical body:

The body exhibits a complex structure in that it is the subject of both material and conscious properties, states, relations, etc. (BN, p.305).... Sartre’s famous example of the self-deceptive woman who leaves her hand limply in the hand of a potential lover as if her hand were solely a material object is based in part on this double aspect of the body.<sup>266</sup>

According to Morris, by focusing on herself as a “subject of conscious properties” the woman is able to ignore herself as a “subject of material properties.”<sup>267</sup>

In the same article Morris mentions a third ambiguity, that between oneself as a being-for-itself and oneself as a being-for-others.<sup>268</sup> She appropriately applies the bad faith that plays upon this ambiguity not only to the example of the waiter, but also to Estelle and Garcin in *No Exit*. Estelle, like the waiter, identifies totally with her being-for-others, while Garcin must make every effort to ignore this aspect of his being in order to see his actions as anything other than those of a

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<sup>265</sup>Morris, *Self-Deception* 37.

<sup>266</sup>Morris, *Translucent* 109.

<sup>267</sup>I feel that this isn’t the best way to deal with this example, even within Morris’s system. Keeping in mind what Sartre later says in the section on the body-for-itself, we can see that it is best to say that the “body” from which the woman in question has divorced herself is the body-for-itself (or body-qua-facticity) rather than the body-qua-physical object. When Sartre says that the woman doesn’t notice that she is leaving her hand there, resting “inert between the warm hands of her companion” he ought to be taken to mean that she is systematically ignoring the body qua point of view and point of departure for action. The woman has “divorced her soul from her body” in the sense that she ignores her facticity.

To notice that she is leaving her hand there would not require that she recognize that her hand qua physical object is touching her companion’s hands (nor would this be sufficient if she didn’t recognize the hand as herself). To notice that she is leaving her hand there would be to feel the man’s hands. It would be to “exist” her hand as a point of contact with the world, and the way that one does this on the pre-reflective level is to apprehend the relevant portion of the world. Thus, the woman is in bad faith in that she is apprehending the world through her hand--she is in some sense aware of the man’s hands--yet she has cut herself off from this portion of her field of consciousness. She is in bad faith in that she is choosing to be ignorant of a certain portion of her field of consciousness and, perhaps most importantly, choosing to be ignorant of this choice. On Sartre’s view this separation from herself must be *maintained*. She is not identifying with the “body qua subject of conscious relations” in order to ignore the “body qua physical object.” Rather, she is identifying with herself qua character or qua ideal self so as to ignore her facticity.<sup>268</sup> Thus the only “duplicity” discussed by Sartre in the chapter on bad faith without a corresponding “ambiguity” in Morris’s article is “transcendence-facticity.” And, as I have said, rather than being unique, this duplicity is best seen as the basis for, or the same as, “the nihilating ambiguity of [the] temporal ekstases.”



coward.

Like Sartre himself in the chapter on bad faith, however, Morris fails to show the connections between the various duplicities and between the various contradictory senses of oneself which form them. Is one's being-for-others something different from one's character? As we saw in Chapter Five, in the section of B&N titled "The Body-For-Others" Sartre says that character "is essentially for others" and "has distinct existence only in the capacity of an object of knowledge for the Other" (457), "what we call a person's temperament or character... is nothing but his free project in so far as it is-for-the-Other" (705). But insofar as Morris opposes "the self I am trying to be" to one's character, and identifies the former with one's fundamental project, we might conclude that this duplicity is the same, on her reading, as the being-for-others/being-for-itself duplicity.

Sartre also says that one's character is the same as one's *body*-for-others: "[I]f character is essentially *for others*, it can not be distinguished from the body as we have described it... [C]haracter is identical with the body" (457-9). Are one's character, one's body, and one's being-for-others all the same thing? And what about the ego (or psyche) constituted in impure reflection? As we saw in chapter three, the "psychic time" which the ego inhabits is "constituted only with the past" (236). The acts of consciousness, such as anger at Pierre, on the basis of which the ego is constituted "all exist in the mode of 'having been'" (234). This may suggest that we identify one's ego with one's character.<sup>269</sup> And one's character, at least as described by Morris, fits Sartre's description of the ego as a virtual object constituted in bad faith:

Character... does not produce actions since it is nothing more than past acts themselves under a certain description. There is no need for an extra force or entity (character) which could exist apart from all acts... and which could be conceived as the producer of new

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<sup>269</sup>As we saw in Chapter Three, Sartre says in TE that the ego "is a being of the world, like the ego of another." This comparison may give us reason to think that the ego is, like one's character, a being-for-others. As I said, however, we would be mistaken if we made too much of this comparison. Sartre's point is only that the ego is an object of consciousness, not a part of it.

acts. (SCP, 92)

Indeed, while Morris (perhaps illicitly) distinguishes between one's body and one's character, she says that Sartre does not distinguish between the character and the ego:

The person is, in addition to the body, a system of conscious relations that the body-subject develops through time to objects and to other persons. Character is the past element of this system of relations, as known primarily by others; insofar as we are able to take a semi-spectator stance on ourselves in reflection, we can apply character predicates to ourselves (BN, 552). Sartre does not make a further distinction between character and, say, personality; he uses the terms "psyche," "ego," "self," as well as the term "character," to refer to the system of conscious relations (BN, 103, 162). (SCP, 85)

We know that Sartre also identifies the body with the past. Although he is talking about the body-for-itself, which is surpassed in the intentional relation to the world, the body-for-others is constituted on the basis of the body-for-itself, and thus on the basis of one's past. If we do not want one's character, ego, body, past, and being-for-others, all to end up being the same thing, we need to say something about their differences and interrelations.

Unfortunately, what Morris says about Sartre's use of the terms "self," "psyche," "ego," and "character," can be supported. But this is because Sartre is inconsistent in his use of these terms, not because he never distinguishes between them. In TE and in Part Two of B&N, one's ego is an object of reflective consciousness, constituted in bad faith. In Part Three, the ego is oneself as an object for the Other. In Part Two, the self, apparently something different, is that value aimed at but never reached by one's actions, the perpetually unachieved unity with oneself:

[T]he *self* on principle cannot inhabit consciousness. It is if you like, *the reason* for the infinite movement by which the reflection refers to the reflecting and this again to the reflection; by definition it is an ideal, a limit. (156)

We have seen that the ego cannot inhabit consciousness either. However, while the self is the "reason" for reflection, an ideal that reflection is an attempt to achieve, the ego is the product of reflection.

In the following passage, the ego exists as in-itself, and appears "behind the reflected-on."

The self is “the *value* of the reflected-on:”<sup>270</sup>

Reflection, as we have seen, is a type of being in which the for-itself *is* in order to be to itself what it is. Reflection is not then a capricious upsurge into the pure indifference of being, but it arises in the perspective of a *for*.... [R]eflection effects the appearance of an in-itself capable of being determined, qualified behind the reflected-on.... Yet this in-itself should not be confused with the *value* of the reflected-on, which is given in a total, undifferentiated intuition -- nor with the *value* which haunts the reflective as a non-thetic absence and as the *For* of reflective consciousness in so far as it is non-positional self-consciousness. (224-5)

In Part Three, however, Sartre uses “self” as he had been using “ego:” “So long as we considered the for-itself in its isolation, we were able to maintain that the unreflective consciousness can not be inhabited by a self; the self was given in the form of an object and only for the reflective consciousness” (349). He says that, with the experience of the Look, “the self exists on the level of objects in the world,” and goes on to call this self “the *Ego*” (349). He later calls it the “Self-as-object,” and says that it “is precisely my being-for-others” (381).

“Psyche” and “psychic object” are used fairly consistently by Sartre to refer to the object of reflective consciousness. Stipulating how he will use the term “psyche,” Sartre says that he will use it to refer to a totality of *virtual* objects:

In the case of the reflective upsurge the for-itself is surpassed toward the virtual object which the reflective has to be.... We use the term *Psyche* for the organized totality of these virtual and transcendent existents which form a permanent cortege for impure reflection and which are the natural object of *psychological* research. (228)

The “reflective upsurge” is the second ekstasis, that of pure reflection, and this passage occurs long before Sartre talks about the Look (the third ekstasis) or the body-for-others. In Part Three, however, Sartre says that the body-for-others is “the psychic object *par excellence* -- *the only psychic object*” (455). Here a psychic object is an object (or “quasi-object” or “affective object”) apprehended as a consciousness; it need not be merely virtual.

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<sup>270</sup>The reflective consciousness and the reflected-on consciousness each have their own “self.” The self is the value of any act of consciousness: “Now we can ascertain more exactly what is the being of the self: it is value.” (143) It is given non-positionally prior to reflection.

“Character” almost always refers to a being-for-others. On one of the pages Morris cites, however, the word seems to refer to the object of reflective consciousness:

The qualities of the Ego represent the ensemble of virtues, latent traits, potentialities which constitute our character and our habits (in the sense of the Greek *hexis*). The Ego is a “quality” of being angry, industrious, jealous, ambitious, sensual, etc. (226-7)

The preceding paragraphs show only that Sartre is not very careful using “psyche,” “self,” “ego,” and “character.” Distinctions he seems intent on drawing in some parts of the text are blurred elsewhere. This makes it difficult to figure out what he is trying to say. But we must distinguish between apprehending one’s character, which requires apprehending oneself as a being-for-others, and constituting one’s ego and qualities in impure reflection without the help of the Look. Morris says that applying a character predicate to oneself requires adopting a “semi-spectator stance” (SCP, 85). But impure reflection is also a semi-spectator stance. The difference is that apprehending one’s character traits makes use of the Look. We have seen how different the constitution of the ego is from the apprehension of one’s character: one’s body, temperament, character, and being-for-others, exist below the level of reflective consciousness, and their constitution as objects of reflective consciousness requires the pre-reflective experience of the Look. When one is aware of one’s character, one is aware of something that exists prior to one’s awareness of it. By contrast, the ego, as it is described in TE and in the section on reflection, is an object of reflective consciousness only. That is why Sartre says that it has only the suggestion of an outside (237).

#### ***4b. Character traits, states and qualities of the ego, and pre-reflective consciousness***

Recognizing the distinctions Sartre intends to draw between the facets though which one apprehends oneself requires attending to the difference between one’s being-for-itself and being-for-others on both the pre-reflective and reflective levels. It is thus necessary to distinguish between (1) genuine character traits, (2) states and qualities ascribable to oneself without the pre-

reflective apprehension of one's being-for-others, and (3) aspects of consciousness itself. Recall the insider's description of jealousy from the example of the man at the keyhole:

[B]ehind that door a spectacle is presented as "to be seen," a conversation as "to be heard." The door, the keyhole are at once both instruments and obstacles; they are presented as "to be handled with care"; the keyhole is given as "to be looked through close by and a little to one side," *etc....* [T]here is a spectacle to be seen behind the door only because I am jealous, but my jealousy is nothing except the simple objective fact that *there is a sight to be seen* behind the door. (347-8)

"I am jealous" can be taken as saying something about the structure of my world -- that the keyhole is to-be-looked-through, that the conversation in the room is to-be-heard, etc. -- or something about me from the outside, connected with the fact that I am looking through the keyhole, want to hear the conversation, and so on. But of course the latter statements are ambiguous in the same way. "I want to hear the conversation" may mean, on the one hand, that other sounds are experienced either as background sounds to be ignored, or as too loud, as adverse to my project. On the other hand, it may mean something more "objective,"<sup>271</sup> for example, that I am holding my ear to the door, or that I would be if I did not fear being found out.<sup>272</sup>

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<sup>271</sup>Note that Sartre uses "objective" in the above quotation to mean only that what is in question is experienced as part of the world. As we have seen, after introducing being-for-others, Sartre talks about a "stricter objectivity, which is the result of experimental measures and of the agreement of minds with each other" (411).

<sup>272</sup>It could be said that Sartre's view is analogous to that expressed by Strawson when the latter suggests that certain predicates are ambiguous.

[W]e must not think of "I" or "Smith" as suffering from type-ambiguity. (If we want to locate type-ambiguity somewhere, we would do better to locate it in certain predicates like "is in the drawing room", "was hit by a stone", etc., and say that they mean one thing when applied to material objects and another when applied to persons.) (Strawson, "Persons" 142.)

The property of being jealous can be applied at several different levels of selfhood. It means one thing when it is predicated of a person, "I" or "Smith." But it can be self-applied at lower levels to mean only something about the structure of the field of consciousness, at the lowest level, or to mean something about the ego qua object of impure reflection.

When predicated of a person, "Smith is (or I am) jealous" says something about Smith's (or my) field of consciousness. But the field now in question is a field encapsulated in a larger field, namely, that of the Other. At the lower level, by contrast, there is no question of such a nesting of fields, because the jealous consciousness has not yet constituted itself as an object. At this lowest level, however, talk of "predication" is inappropriate, since there is no item that is being picked out, to which one could apply, e.g., the predicate "is jealous."

Naturally any talk about either one's character or one's states and qualities belongs to the realm of discourse which, according to Busch, is "immune to talk about the existential self." In saying "I am jealous," to mean something about myself from the outside, I might be saying something about any of these. For example, I might be saying something about a quality of my ego:

The qualities of the Ego represent the ensemble of virtues, latent traits, potentialities which constitute our character and our habits (in the sense of the Greek *hexis*). The Ego is a "quality" of being angry, industrious, jealous, ambitious, sensual, etc. But we must recognize also qualities of another sort which have their origin in our history and which we call *acquired traits*: I can be "*showing my age*," *tired*, *bitter*, *declining*, *progressing*; I can appear as "having acquired assurance as the result of a success" or on the contrary as "having little by little contracted the tastes, the habits, the sexuality of an invalid" (following a long illness). (226-7)

The state of jealousy, by contrast, is a feeling one notices when reflecting during the experience, constituted out of pangs analogous to the twinges of pain discussed in the last chapter: "States -- in contrast with qualities which exist 'potentially' -- give themselves as actually existing. Hate, love, jealousy are states" (227). The fact that Sartre here lists jealousy as an example of a state, when a moment earlier it was listed as an example of a quality should not bother us.<sup>273</sup> For one thing, the words that we use to describe our mental states and qualities in ordinary language do not have fixed meanings. A person prone to jealousy, as well as a person who is currently feeling jealous is called a jealous person. For another, Sartre admits that there are "intermediates between states and qualities" (227).<sup>274</sup>

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<sup>273</sup>What *should* bother us is Sartre's next sentence: "An illness (*mal*), in so far as it is apprehended by the patient as a psycho-physiological reality, is a state" (227). One thing that is so frustrating about B&N is that distinctions that Sartre appears to be making carefully in one place are blurred in others. In the section on the body, as we have seen, Sartre uses *mal*, in contrast to *maladie*, to refer to something merely psychic, rather than psychophysical. My explanation is that he hadn't yet worked out this distinction, in a section so many pages before Part Three ("Being-for-others"), much of which is merely a restatement of the analysis of the psyche in TE. Similar considerations could explain why, in the passage quoted above (from 226-7), Sartre says that one's *character* is composed of qualities, when he later identifies character with the body-for-others.

<sup>274</sup>Sartre informs us of the difference between states and qualities on the same page:

What are ordinarily called character traits are very similar to what Sartre calls qualities when he is discussing the psychic object in this early section on reflection in B&N and in TE, and there is a shift in meaning in some of the terms Sartre uses to describe psychic states when he is no longer talking about “the For-itself in its isolation” (349), and begins talking about being-for-others. In particular, while the qualities, character, and habits, mentioned in the early section on reflection, are merely psychic objects, character is later identified with the body-for-others. In any case, Morris’s account of character, as the pattern of one’s past actions, fits with Sartre’s remarks about qualities of the ego, as well as what he later says about character and temperament. Morris’s main point about character is that it does not cause one to act in a certain way:

Character... does not produce actions since it is nothing more than past acts themselves under a certain description. There is no need for an extra force or entity (character) which could exist apart from all acts... and which could be conceived as the producer of new acts. (SCP, 92)

She is bringing out that being a jealous person, for instance, does not cause one to act jealously. Nor does it cause one to experience jealousy. Being a jealous person, whether considered as a merely psychic quality or as a psychophysical character trait, is a transcendent unity of jealous acts and states. While impure reflection may constitute an “extra force or entity” that is apprehended as magically related to other such forces or entities, these are figments of impure reflection, constituted in bad faith as part of an attempt to disguise one’s freedom.

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We can see what distinguishes the quality from the state: After my anger yesterday, my “irascibility” survives as a simple latent disposition to become angry. On the contrary, after Pierre’s action and the resentment which I felt because of it, my hate survives as an *actual* reality although my thought may be currently occupied with another object. A quality furthermore is an innate or acquired disposition which contributes to *qualify* my personality. The state, on the contrary, is much more accidental and contingent; it is *something which happens to me*. (227)

The difference between a quality and a state is most easily understood, and the two can be most sharply distinguished, however, if we think about how the two are constituted in impure reflection. A state, recall, is a “transcendent unity” of experiences, apprehended *through* a given experience. This is why one can be wrong about the state that one is in without being wrong about the experience one is having. A quality, on the other hand, is a transcendent unity of states (or egoic “acts”). Thus one can be correct about one’s state (e.g., anger), but incorrect about the quality that one is attributing to oneself (e.g., irascibility).

As I pointed out in Subsection 2c, a distinction can be drawn between two levels of bad faith, corresponding to the distinction between one's character and one's qualities or states. Appealing to any of these as a cause is to engage in a form of bad faith. However, in these two instances one is engaging in bad faith at different levels. At the bottommost level, jealousy consists in having a field of consciousness of a certain sort, a field where certain objects and qualities are focused-on (e.g., a telephone conversation, a facial expression, a tone of voice). At this level, bad faith is not possible: to think that one's jealousy causes one to focus on these objects requires constituting a state of jealousy on the basis of apprehending a certain field of consciousness. The subject apprehended as having this field, the psychic ego, is not apprehended as a physical object or as a being-for-others. To believe that one's jealous character (as opposed to a state) causes one to behave in certain ways (e.g., to crouch by the door and peer through the keyhole) is also bad faith. But here one's actions are apprehended as public events: physical behavior. They are not apprehended as movements of a non-conscious object, but are no less physical.

Appreciating the subtleties in Sartre's account of bad faith, and tracing the process of constitution whose product can be thought of as a moral agent, requires attending to the all the forms of self-apprehension that Sartre discusses. In a review of Morris's book, J. Douglas Rabb criticizes her for claiming...

that Sartre's concept of reflection or self-awareness can be accounted for only in terms of seeing ourselves as others see us. Here she seems to miss the point of Sartre's reflexive awareness (*la reflexion*). This is, indeed, unfortunate for the difficulty runs throughout the book.... She stresses unduly the relationship between reflection and seeing ourselves as objects for others' awareness.<sup>275</sup>

In her reply, Morris emphasizes the distinction between pre-reflective self-consciousness and reflection, and affirms that the latter is crucially related to the Other:

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<sup>275</sup>Rabb, 135-6.



Sartre distinguishes clearly and repeatedly between (a) self-consciousness or *conscience (de) soi*, which is nonpositional awareness of present activities, states of the body, etc., and (b) reflection -- *reflexion* or *connaissance de soi* -- which is positional consciousness of prior acts or states. In the case of reflective consciousness, we take our own prior acts and patterns of action (or "essence") as the direct object of our concern.... Reflection is a learned skill which can be performed well or badly, self-deceptively or authentically; in this context, the role of the other as mediator and teacher is, as Sartre claimed, absolutely crucial.<sup>276</sup>

Thus, according to Morris, reflection (in contrast to pre-reflective self-consciousness) is a learned skill. This is definitely true for some sorts of reflection, and is supported by Sartre's statement about a child needing to establish "tables of reference between the body-existed and the body-seen." Knowing that one's left foot is crossed over one's right foot without looking down at one's feet is a good example. Knowing one's character is another example, and this is undoubtedly what Morris has in mind when she says that reflection can be done "self-deceptively or authentically." As we have seen she accuses Garcin in *No Exit* of reflecting self-deceptively when he apprehends his past actions as heroic. But quite generally, according to Morris:

If my primary concern had been present self-awareness in the non-positional sense, then Rabb would be quite correct in saying that my emphasis on the important role of others is beside the point, for all conscious activities are self-aware in this sense. But my central concern was reflection (*reflexion*), not *conscience (de) soi*."<sup>277</sup>

This restricted area of interest allows Morris to ignore what I take to be the most important aspect of B&N and TE: the account of the constitution of oneself as an object of consciousness. And the simple dichotomy Morris refers to does not do justice to the complexity of Sartre's account of reflection. It misses the important distinction between the reflection whose object is a being-for-others and that whose objects are merely psychic. And it misses the correlative distinction within pre-reflective self-consciousness between a consciousness whose selfness is a perpetually unachieved ideal of unity and a consciousness which, under the Look, is haunted by an alien self-for-others. Finally, it ignores pure reflection, which is a positional consciousness yet

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<sup>276</sup>Phyllis Sutton Morris, "Further Reflections on Reflection," *Philosophical Books*, 19 (1978): 56-7.

directed toward one's present activity.

#### **4c. *The body-subject***

It is never quite clear whether Morris's body-subject is supposed to be a metaphysical subject of conscious relations or something more like Sartre's body-for-itself, i.e., a point of view of which one is perpetually aware, but which is never an object in unreflective consciousness. When Morris speaks of the body-subject, comparing the mind as subject in Descartes to the body as subject in Sartre, she seems to be thinking of the physical body. This can be compared to what Sartre calls the body in its third ontological dimension, the object of consciousness to which we attribute both psychological states and physical characteristics in reflection.

Thinking of the body-subject in this way, it is understandable that Morris says the concept of a body-subject is able to do the same work as Strawson's concept of a person: "It is unnecessary to suppose that some additional entity, the person, exists. Sartre has argued that both consciousness and physical characteristics can be ascribed to the human body itself" (SCP, 47). But what is most important about Sartre's account of the pre-reflective apprehension of the body in its third ontological dimension is the way in which it is grounded in the pre-reflective apprehension of both the body-for-itself and the body-for-others. And what is most important about the reflective apprehension of oneself as a body-for-others is that it depends on the constitution of oneself as a merely psychic object. None of this is mentioned in Morris's account.

In any case, if we think of the apprehension of the body-subject as what Sartre calls the reflective apprehension of the body-for-others, any subjectivity it contains is degraded: it is apprehended as a quality of something existing in the in-itself mode. And the sort of privileged access that Morris wants to say we have to the body-subject is different from that which consciousness has to the body-for-itself. Morris says: "The body-subject has privileged access to

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<sup>277</sup>Morris, *Reflection* 57.

many of its own states, physical positions and acts” (SCP, 148). For example, “the body-subject can directly know the spatial position his right foot occupies in relation to his left foot, even if he cannot observe either foot” (SCP, 129). As I noted in Chapter Three, Morris is suggesting that one can apprehend one’s feet in two different ways: by looking at them and without looking at them. These two ways of apprehending one’s feet are closest to what Sartre thinks of as two forms of reflective apprehension of the body in its third ontological dimension, the first of which Sartre thinks of as aberrant. For lack of a better word, I have called other form “essential.” However, unlike the apprehension of the body-for-itself as a point of view indicated by the field of consciousness, this is a convoluted operation akin to what Sartre says is “incorrectly called ‘endoscopy:’” since the body-for-others is constituted on the basis of the body-for-itself, tactile and proprioceptive sensations, in combination with acquired knowledge, can tell one about the body-for-others. Recall what Sartre says about the pain in his stomach:

In reality the pain itself tells me nothing about my stomach... But in and by means of my pain, my practical knowledge of it constitutes a stomach-for-others, which appears to me as a concrete and definite absence with exactly those objective characteristics which I have been able to know in it. But on principle the object thus defined stands as a pole of alienation of my pain (467).

The body-subject apprehended in this way is the body-for-others. But this body-subject is apprehended on the basis of something else which might also be called the body-subject: the body-for-itself, the point of view to which physical objects appear, and which is thus indicated by the field of perception and action. Morris acknowledges this latter, constitutionally prior, body-subject, and calls it by this name, noting that one is aware of the objects that one encounters “from a particular vantage point:” it is “the central point from which perception takes place.” But, she goes on, this, “is what Sartre means by saying that the body is the subject of conscious relations to objects... not ordinarily an additional object of experience” (SCP, 32). And she identifies the body-subject with “the experiencer... who *is* the first term in the [perceptual] relation” (SCP, 32).

In all this, the distinction between constitutionally prior, subjective senses of “I,” and derived, objective senses, is blurred in the notion of the body-subject itself.

Most importantly, while we may have privileged access to the body in its third ontological dimension, in that, beside the aberrant way of apprehending it comparable to that used by others, there is another way unavailable to them, this latter way is based on a more privileged access to the body-for-itself. Only this more privileged form of apprehension (which tells us only about the body-for-itself) can be said to be apodictic and adequate. It is thus important not to confuse the forms of reflection that present one with the body-for-itself (pre-reflective self-consciousness and pure reflection) with the reflective apprehension of the body in its third ontological dimension. If the body-subject is intended to be the body-for-itself, i.e., “the point of view on which I can take no point of view,” it is misleading to categorize it, along with the physical body, as one of two bodily senses of “I.” This is because these are “bodily” in radically different ways. If, on the other hand, the body-subject is also supposed to be for-others, as is implied by the suggestion that the same fact can be known either by looking down at one’s feet, or by means of the body-subject’s privileged access to its own states (via the essential form of reflective apprehension of the body in its third ontological dimension), then it is difficult to see what the difference is between the body-subject and the body in its third ontological dimension. Morris’s body-subject combines aspects of two concepts that must be kept separate for an accurate reconstruction of Sartre’s account of self-constitution.

#### ***4d. The self I am trying to be***

Like Morris’s body-subject, the “self I am trying to be,” can be taken to refer to an aspect of one’s consciousness that can be apprehended pre-reflectively or to something apprehended reflectively on the basis of the Look. The field of pre-reflective consciousness is apprehended as haunted by what one is to-be: the self Sartre speaks of as the reason for reflection (156) and

identifies with value (143).<sup>278</sup> The fundamental project, or attempt to be this ideal self, is connected with the transcending of facticity that is consciousness, and of which one is at all times aware, at least non-positionally. It is not constituted in reflection on the basis of the pre-reflective apprehension of one's being-for-others, as character is, but is rather an aspect of pre-reflective consciousness. It thus belongs on the "subjective," and constitutionally fundamental, side of the main distinction.

To some extent, Morris is thinking of this self when she speaks of the "self I am trying to be," or "ideal self:"

It is by reference to a particular nonexistent state of affairs, an ideal self or fundamental project, that the body-subject organizes its thoughts and actions through time. It is by reference to this particular non-thing, this future end, that the body-subject perceives objects within an instrumental framework. (SCP, 106)<sup>279</sup>

She acknowledges that one's "fundamental project or goal" is "typically given only non-positionally"<sup>280</sup> and says that, although one's acts display the coherence sufficient to show that one has a fundamental project, one may not know this project. She notes that the purpose of existential psychoanalysis is to make one aware of it:

[U]nless we are reflectively aware of the *pattern* formed by our particular actions, it would be entirely possible not to know that we had chosen a fundamental project. Sartre insists that this would not mean that we were unconscious of this choice (BN, 570). But our awareness of it in such a case is prereflective; we are conscious of the fundamental project in the sense that we live it in our everyday actions and utterances (BN, 471). Others, who see our actions from the outside, may be able to see the total pattern more clearly than we can; and an existential psychoanalysis would enable us to take a semi-outside stance on our past acts to see where they were leading. (SCP, 113-14)

Morris is right to point out the difference between merely being conscious of one's fundamental project and knowing it, and to say that the goal of existential psychoanalysis is

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<sup>278</sup>See Chapter Four, Subsection 5a.

<sup>279</sup>It is the "non-thing" in the second sentence of this quotation, that according to which *objects* are organized, that is "given only non-positionally." The talk in the first sentence, of the body-subject organizing its own "thoughts and actions through time" might be taken to refer to the reflective apprehension of oneself as a being-for-others.

knowledge, as opposed to the consciousness of the fundamental project that one already has at all times. Recalling what he had said about pure reflection, Sartre says:

[Reflection] grasps everything, all at once, without shading, without relief, without connections of *grandeur* -- not that these shades, these values, these reliefs exist somewhere and are hidden from it, but rather because they must be established by another human attitude and because they can exist only *by means of* and *for* knowledge. Reflection, unable to serve as the basis for existential psychoanalysis, will then simply furnish us with the brute materials toward which the psychoanalyst must take an objective attitude. Thus only will he be able to *know* what he already *understands*.<sup>[281]</sup> The result is that complexes uprooted from the depths of the unconscious, like projects revealed by existential psychoanalysis, will be apprehended *from the point of view of the Other*. Consequently the *object* thus brought into the light will be articulated according to the structures of the transcended-transcendence; that is, its being will be the *being-for-others* even if the psychoanalyst and the subject of the psychoanalysis are actually the same person. Thus the project which is brought to light by either kind of psychoanalysis can be only the totality of the individual human being, the irreducible element of the transcendence with the structure of being-for-others. What always escapes these methods of investigation is the project as it is for itself. This project-for-itself can be experienced only as a living possession; there is an incompatibility between existence for-itself and objective existence. (729-30)<sup>282</sup>

The brute data of reflection present one with the project-for-itself which is only lived, not known. One needs to take the point of view of the Other in order to convert the “pre-ontological comprehension of the fundamental project” (729) into knowledge. It is necessary to adopt this point of view in order to compare one’s actions so as to see what they “all express in a different way” (727). Neither<sup>3</sup> pre-reflective consciousness nor pure reflection has “the instruments and techniques necessary to isolate the choice symbolized, to fix it by concepts, and to bring it forth into the full light of day” (729).

The object of existential psychoanalysis is a being-for-others, like the object apprehended when one knows one’s feet are in a certain position based on proprioceptive and tactile sensations. The fundamental project, like one’s body, is both an aspect of pre-reflective consciousness indicated by its field, and a being-for-others which one can be mistaken about if one misinterprets

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<sup>280</sup>Morris, *Translucent* 109.

<sup>281</sup>Sartre is supposing here that the psychoanalyst and the subject are the same person.

the data of reflection.<sup>283</sup> The reflective apprehension incorporating material from the Look and the more basic pre-reflective apprehension are not two ways of apprehending the same thing: the object of the reflective apprehension is more complex. But they certainly do not apprehend entirely different things: the one is constituted on the basis of the other and includes it as its inner structure.

On the level of pre-reflective consciousness, the fundamental project is simply reflected by the field insofar as, e.g., in Garcin's case, the train to Mexico is to-be-caught and the guards at the border are to-be-avoided. This is the evidence available to Garcin. Comparing this evidence with the values presented in other acts will enlighten him as to the fundamental project (for others) manifested in all his acts. At this point he will have not only an understanding of the project-for-itself, "deprived of the means which would ordinarily permit *analysis* and *conceptualization*" (729), but also knowledge of himself as a transcendence-transcended. As we have seen, however, this is knowledge of what Sartre calls one's character, and rests on a wholly different level of being:

[W]hat we call a person's temperament or character but which is nothing but his free project in so far as it is-for-the-Other, appears also for the For-itself as an invariable unrealizable.... [F]or the Other who apprehends me as the Other-as-object I *am* ill-tempered, frank, cowardly or courageous. This aspect is referred to me by the Other's look; by the experience of the look, this character, which was a free project lived and self-conscious, becomes an unrealizable *ne varietur* to be assumed. (705)

As we saw in Chapter Five, the pre-reflective apprehension of oneself as a "transcendence-transcended" under the Look, can be used to modify one's reflective apprehension of oneself as a merely psychic object. It is this which finally allows one to apprehend oneself as

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<sup>282</sup>570-1 as referred to by Morris.

<sup>283</sup>To misinterpret the data of reflection, or to interpret it correctly, is to apprehend oneself as a being-for-others. Perhaps with the help of an existential psychoanalyst, Garcin would have recognized that his fundamental project (for others) was staying alive rather than being a hero. Perhaps if he were able to compare his actions and decipher a pattern, he would have seen that the meaning of his fleeing for the border was the choice of a safe place to sleep over the constant threat of death, rather than the choice of starting a pacifist newspaper over fighting.

*being* “ill-tempered, frank, cowardly or courageous,” to apprehend the merely psychic object as an aspect of one’s being-for-others, something existing prior to reflection which one can attempt to “recover” on the reflective level:

So long as I let myself be fascinated by the Other’s look, my character will figure in my own eyes as an unrealizable *ne varietur*, the substantial permanence of my being -- the kind of thing expressed in such ordinary everyday remarks as “I am forty-five years old, and I’m not going to start changing myself today.” The Character often is what the For-itself tries to recover in order to become the In-itself-for-itself which it projects being. (706)

Naturally, one cannot ever really recover one’s being-for-others. Beyond living with this unrealizable aspect of one’s being, one can use it in an attempt to deny one’s transcendence, mistaking one’s choice to pursue a particular goal for an emanation of one’s character.<sup>284</sup> This is a part of the attempt (begun in impure reflection’s constitution of oneself as a merely psychic object) to apprehend one’s values -- which cannot be reflected upon without being called into question -- as givens, as part of what one already is. The “free perseverance in a single project” which is apprehended pre-reflectively as requiring a “perpetual renewal of my engagement” (705) is apprehended in bad faith as a project one already has. By focusing upon one’s project-for-others, one’s character, or one’s being as a transcendence-transcended, one is able to ignore the *transcending* of facticity that one is.

In any case, Morris’s body-subject and self one is trying to be, taken one way, may be regarded as equivalent to Sartre’s facticity and the value toward which this facticity is transcended: one’s embodiment and the goal of the pre-reflective project of oneself. These are the two sides of oneself as being-for-itself, and this is the most basic duplicity exploited by bad faith. Morris’s body *qua* physical object and character (or project-for-others) can be categorized as objective, outsider’s senses of “I,” and the body-subject and self I am trying to be as the insider’s senses discussed in Chapter Four as the facticity and value of the act of consciousness.



When one apprehends oneself as having certain physical characteristics or character traits, one does so by apprehending oneself as a being-for-others, which includes apprehending oneself as a being-for-itself: one's apprehension of oneself as a certain physical object having a certain character occurs on the basis of one's apprehension of oneself as a transcending of facticity. The forms of bad faith that make use of the apprehension of oneself as a being-for-others are advanced strategies, based upon more basic strategies that make use of the transcendence/facticity duplicity as it is apprehended in mere impure reflection, a form of introspection that does not make use of the Look.

### 5. The Ambiguity of "I" and Personal Identity over Time

Aside from her claim that for Sartre, unlike for Strawson, the word "I" turns out to be ambiguous,<sup>285</sup> Morris points out another difference between what she takes to be Sartre's (body-subject) view and Strawson's (person-subject) view: for Sartre, but not Strawson, bodily identity over time is a necessary condition for personal identity over time. Both differences result from the fact that the body, rather than the Strawsonian person, is the subject of both mental and physical states on Morris's reconstruction of Sartre's view.

The difference between Strawson's view, Sartre's view according to Morris, and Sartre's view as I understand it, can be put as follows. For Strawson, reference to a person is reference to an object with both physical and mental properties: "neither an animated body nor an embodied anima."<sup>286</sup> For Morris's Sartre, reference to a person is reference to an animated body, involving

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<sup>284</sup>We have also seen that one can attempt to deny the reality of one's being-for-others.

<sup>285</sup>I have tried to show that Morris may not mean that "I" refers to more than one item. Aside from the first two quotations in Subsection 3a, where she seems clearly to be endorsing this claim, Morris's view seems to be compatible with Strawson's. I should point out that I would take it to be a possible criticism of Sartre's view if the things that he says commit him to the view that the word "I" has more than one referent. Naturally, if Sartre is not committed to this sort of ambiguity of "I," there is no difference between his view and Strawson's in this respect. However, as we will see in the next chapter, there is an important difference between Strawson's view and Sartre's in regard to the constitution of the object to which "I" refers.

<sup>286</sup>Strawson, "Persons" 140. We will see why Strawson says this, and what it means for him, in Section Three of the next chapter.

some sort of enrichment of reference to a physical object whereby we come to refer to it also as a subject of conscious relations. As I understand Sartre, reference to oneself is reference to an embodied anima, in that reference to oneself as a subject of conscious relations first provides one with the capacity for reference to oneself as a physical object.<sup>287</sup>

The capacity for reference to other persons as physical objects has a different basis for Sartre. Reference to another person is based on the Look, the experience of one's consciousness as another consciousness. This is why I insist that questions about the apprehension of persons as identical over time, as well as any other question about the apprehension of persons, be treated differently depending upon whether the person in question is oneself.<sup>288</sup> Because Morris treats reference either to oneself or to another as an enrichment of reference to a physical object, she mentions only briefly that bodily identity "serves as a necessary condition of identity over time differently" in the two cases, rather than sharply distinguishing them in a discussion about the levels of bodily existence and the constitution of one's consciousness and the Other as persons.<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>287</sup>The apprehension of oneself, or of (one's) current consciousness, as continuous with a certain past person, or with a certain past point of view, is similar to the apprehension of oneself, or of (one's) consciousness, as being in a given state or as having a given quality. As we have seen, such an apprehension might be made on a variety of different *levels*. That is, one might constitute oneself as the same, or as having some other property, in several different ways, and constituting oneself as having the property in question in some of these ways *depends upon* constituting oneself as having that property in other ways.

When I return to this issue next chapter, we will see that several of these levels are below any level at which it makes sense to say that one is *ascribing a property* to oneself (and below any level at which it is perspicuous to say that one is *making a judgment* about oneself). I will claim that what might be called Sartre's laying bare of our *perceptual* structure -- i.e., his examination of the levels of constitution of the field of consciousness -- ought to be a part of Strawson's project of "lay[ing] bare the most general features of our conceptual structure." Strawson's linguistic/conceptual approach prevents him from tracing the constitution of the object of consciousness "oneself" and the object of consciousness "another person." This is because his method consists in starting with the set of *concepts* we employ, and trying to derive the more basic concepts on which they are based, rather than starting with *experiences* that we have, or with *objects of consciousness* that appear to us, and trying to derive the experiences/appearances on which they are based.

<sup>288</sup>For Strawson, on the other hand, there is no need to consider one's own case separately when discussing criteria of personal identity over time. His interest is in our *concept* of a person, a concept that of course covers both oneself and others. However, I feel that Morris must misinterpret Strawson (as well as Sartre) to find a point of contrast between their views. I discuss this in Section Two of the next chapter.

<sup>289</sup>Morris is probably right to claim that, on Sartre's view, judgments of identity over time about persons

### *5a. Apprehending oneself as the same*

It is well known that Sartre wants to account for our sense of self-unity and self-continuity, and even our sense of permanence or identity through time, without recourse to any ego in consciousness. This is one of the main points of TE: that the ego is a product of reflective consciousness and thus cannot be responsible for any sense of unity, continuity, or identity over time in pre-reflective consciousness. However, Sartre believes that there is a sense of unity, continuity, and at least some kind of identity in pre-reflective consciousness: before reflection one is to some degree aware of oneself as one consciousness and the same consciousness over time. In B&N Sartre attempts to account for this sense of unity and continuity in terms of one's consciousness of a temporally extended world, constituted as the same world by a perpetual renewal of one's project (705).

As we saw in Chapter Two, any act of consciousness is aware of itself as other than the object of consciousness, and as a perpetually incomplete surpassing of itself, haunted by a projected self. To this extent, consciousness can apprehend itself as unified and as having a past. This alone, however, can provide only an extremely thin sense of self-unity and self-continuity. Perhaps the act which apprehends the darkened sky, feels the cold air, feels the hard ground, anticipates rain, hopes for no more than a light drizzle, etc., can be unified without any recourse to impure reflection or the Look.<sup>290</sup> Perhaps, without such recourse, the consciousness that

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and about non-conscious material objects are similar in that in either case the judgment entails that a physical object occupies continuous portions of space-time. On this level--i.e., on the level at which we speak of persons--the criterion of spatio-temporal continuity applies both to oneself and others. Once one is constituted as a person, any criterion of sameness that applies to others also applies to oneself. This is because once one is constituted as a person, one is constituted as another.

<sup>290</sup>I am thinking of these acts, in this example, as concurrent from the point of view of an observing consciousness and concurrent in Cartesian time. (There is no question of their being concurrent in "original temporality," as each act has its own temporality. One act can be "part of" another, however, as may be the case with seeing the sky and anticipating rain. To say that the former is part of the latter is not to say that these acts occur at the same time. It is to say that the latter includes the former, in the way that seeing a stop sign includes seeing a red octagon.)

apprehends the sky can also sense its continuity with a prior consciousness.<sup>291</sup> Even so, much of the sense of sameness that one ordinarily experiences requires that one apprehend oneself as a being-for-others. Thus, in a passage quoted in the previous section, Sartre says that the apprehension of “the substantial permanence of my being -- the kind of thing expressed in such ordinary everyday remarks as ‘I am forty-five years old, and I’m not going to start changing myself today,’” requires that “I let myself be fascinated by the look.”

***5b. The self one is trying to be, and apprehending oneself as the same***

As I indicated in Chapter One, I feel that Morris does not pay sufficient attention to the difference between apprehending oneself as in some way the same on the pre-reflective level, and apprehending oneself as the same person. We saw that, on the pages Morris cites in support of her claim that bodily identity is a necessary condition for personal identity over time, Sartre is talking only about one’s pre-reflective apprehension of the body-for-itself. Yet, aside from a statement that the body “serves as a necessary condition of personal identity somewhat differently for the person himself and for others,” Morris does not treat the two cases differently. Her view seems to be that one merely has a special way of telling that one’s own body is the same. This view, while reasonable, is, as far as I can tell, not supported by anything that Sartre says.

In any case, according to Morris, while bodily identity is necessary for personal identity over time, it is not sufficient. Identity of the nonbodily senses of oneself is also necessary (SCP, 105-6). Thus Morris’s distinction between various senses of “I” comes into play in her discussion of personal identity over time. Morris approves of this view (which she takes to be Sartre’s) because it is in line with the common sense view that somebody who undergoes a radical transformation, such as religious conversion, is somehow not the same person.<sup>292</sup> Sartre says:

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<sup>291</sup>In TE Sartre distinguishes between a pre-reflective memory of a past object and a “reflection in memory” in which one is (thetically) conscious of oneself as, e.g, having seen a given object.

<sup>292</sup>Some would say that these changes are merely qualitative, and thus have nothing to do with personal

[W]hen after a war, after a long exile one finds a particular mountain landscape unchanged, it would be in vain to hope to found upon the inertia and apparent permanence of these stones the hope for a renaissance of the past. This landscape reveals its permanence only across a persevering project. These mountains have a *meaning* inside my situation; in one way or another they shape my belonging to a nation which is at peace, her own mistress, one who holds a certain rank in the international hierarchy. Let me find them again after a defeat and during the occupation of a part of the national territory, and they can not offer me the same countenance. This is because I myself have other projects, because I am engaged differently in the world. (706)

Thus one's pre-reflective sense of self-continuity is endangered by a change in one's project. As we saw in Chapter Four, pure reflection includes an anguished sense of the possibility of such a change. As Sartre later puts it: "The free perseverance in a single project does not imply any permanence; quite the contrary, it is a perpetual renewal of my engagement" (705). In pure reflection one is aware that it is one's free choice to renew engagement.

Sartre says, "While I am temporalizing myself, I am *always* French, a civil servant or a proletarian *for others*" (705). However, although under the Look one is pre-reflectively aware of one's being-for-others, one must "let [oneself] be fascinated" by this look in order to get any sense of permanence from it:

It is true that for the Other who apprehends me as the Other-as-object, I *am* ill-tempered, hypocritical or frank, cowardly or courageous. This aspect is referred to me by the Other's look: by the experience of the look, this character, which was a free project lived and self-conscious, becomes an unrealizable *ne varietur* to be assumed. It depends then not only on the Other but on the position which I have taken with respect to the Other and on my perseverance in maintaining this position. So long as I let myself be fascinated by the Other's look, my character will figure in my own eyes as an unrealizable *ne varietur*, the substantial permanence of my being -- the kind of thing expressed in such ordinary everyday remarks as "I am forty-five years old, and I'm not going to start changing myself today." The Character often is what the For-itself tries to recover in order to become the In-itself-for-itself which it projects being. Nevertheless, it should be noted that this permanence of the past, of the environment, and of character are not given qualities; they are revealed on things only in correlation with the continuity of my project. (705-6)

These quotations give some indication of why Morris says that the continuity of the self

one is trying to be is a necessary condition for personal identity over time. With a change in one's fundamental project, one's surroundings and social position change their meaning, and no longer

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identity.

give one a sense of continuity.

If this claim is intended to explain what criteria a person must satisfy to be the same person, rather than what is involved in apprehending a person as the same, however, it lies outside the realm of phenomenological ontology, and is one that Sartre simply does not make. On the other hand, if the question is converted into one about what is involved in being apprehended as the same person, it must be asked from two different points of view: that of the person herself and that of another. The quotations tell us about what is involved in apprehending oneself as the same on various levels of self-constitution. And Sartre does indeed talk about the necessity of having the same “project of oneself” (705), for apprehending oneself as the same, even at the most basic level of self-constitution.

Of course there is often agreement between one’s own apprehension of oneself and that of others: after undergoing a radical change, one is usually apprehended as, in some way, a different person, by oneself and the people who know one. However, on the most basic level, oneself and others have different ways of apprehending the self one is trying to be, or one’s attempt to be that self. The reformed alcoholic may apprehend her attempt not to drink in terms of the call of the liquor bottle: the desire to drink haunts her situation as a desire to be overcome. Others will perhaps apprehend her as more reserved, more serious, or more ambitious. Thus, as we saw at the end of the previous section, it is probably best to say that it is one’s character that others apprehend when they apprehend one’s project. When they say that one is a different person, they are apprehending a change of character. But the project of oneself, and the self one is trying to be, are apprehended pre-reflectively and independently from the apprehension of one’s being-for-others, in terms of the values that haunt one’s actions. One’s apprehension of one’s character, on the other hand, is a form of reflective apprehension of oneself as a being-for-others.

One is always pre-reflectively aware of the value that haunts one’s acts, and is able to

bring this value to the forefront of one's awareness in pure reflection. Knowing one's own character through the way in which the field of consciousness is structured by one's project is analogous to knowing that one's right foot is crossed over one's left foot through one's bodily feelings. In both cases an intersubjectively accessible state of affairs is reflected by the structure of one's field of consciousness, to which one has privileged access. Providing one has learned to convert pre-reflective awareness of the body-for-itself to knowledge of one's body-for-others, one does not need to look down at one's feet to know their position. Similarly, one does not need to take stock of one's actions to know that one is trying to give up drinking: the project is reflected by the way in which the field of consciousness is structured. The pre-reflective apprehension of this structure grounds one's knowledge of oneself as a being-for-others, in both its bodily and nonbodily aspects. It grounds one's knowledge of one's physical body and character.

Thus we can say about the "system of conscious relations" what Morris says, but with apparently insufficient appreciation, about the "body:" it "serves as a necessary condition of identity over time differently" depending on whether we are thinking about one's own identity or another's. One apprehends oneself as a different person by apprehending a change in the project of oneself, as reflected by a change in the structure of the field of consciousness. By contrast, one apprehends another as a different person by a change in her character. But because one is capable of apprehending oneself as another, one can also apprehend oneself as a different person in the same way that one apprehends another as a different person: by taking stock of one's actions. One then might say, "A few months ago, I wouldn't have left here until I drank that whole bottle, but lately I haven't been drinking."

We can still accept the view that apprehending a person as the same requires apprehending her as the same in both the bodily and nonbodily senses. The apprehension of another as having a different character is sufficient for apprehending her as, in some sense, a different person. As

regards oneself, on the pre-reflective level a world structured by a fundamentally different project is apprehended as a fundamentally different situation, and so cannot support the sense of continuity one receives from apprehending the same situation.

### *5c. Levels of apprehension of oneself as the same*

One's project of oneself, the project of becoming "the In-itself-for-itself which [the For-itself] projects being," can be apprehended on two levels. It can be apprehended pre-reflectively, and independently of the apprehension of one's being-for-others, as the value that haunts consciousness. This in-itself-for-itself, perpetually out of reach, is necessary for our most basic sense of unity and self-continuity. But with the help of the Look, one's project can also be apprehended as one's character. In order fully to appreciate what Sartre is saying about apprehending oneself as the same over time, it is thus necessary to consider his account of the constitution of oneself. When we consider this account, however, we see that there are different ways in which one might be said to be extended in time, because corresponding to different levels of self-constitution, there are different aspects of oneself and different sorts of temporality.

In Chapter One I mentioned the possibility that apprehending oneself as a physical object may be required in order to apprehend oneself as the same over time. If this is the case, then being the same body-for-itself, as indicated by certain sorts of continuity in the perceptual field, is relevant to the apprehension of oneself as the same only insofar as it in turn indicates that one is the same physical object. I considered this as a more phenomenological version of Morris's view, and suggested that her statement that bodily identity "serves as a necessary condition of identity over time differently," depending upon whether we are talking about one's own identity or another's, may mean that one can apprehend oneself as the same physical body through one's apprehension of a continuous world. But if this is Sartre's view, apprehending oneself as the same person over time also involves apprehending oneself as a being-for-others. This is because one's



being-for-others is necessary to ground one's appearance as a physical object.

Awareness of one's being-for-others, however, does not entail apprehending oneself as a physical object, or as any item to which both oneself and another can refer. For prior to my apprehension of myself as an item to which both I and another can refer, as an item extended in a time that we both can know, I experience myself, through my being-for-others, as an unknowable item extended in an inapprehensible dimension of time: "The *Other's look*... comes to give to my time a new dimension" (357) prior to my apprehension of myself as a physical object. Thus, even if, as Schroeder says, "one cannot experience the self as the sort of thing that could be identical through time except under the gaze of Others,"<sup>293</sup> it still may not be the case that one needs to go so far as to apprehend oneself as a physical object in order to apprehend oneself as identical through time.

This is because there is a type of self-apprehension in which one experiences oneself as an object for others, but cannot yet apprehend that object as one's physical body. This "shame or pride makes me *live*, not *know* the situation of being looked at" (349-50). Under the Look one experiences oneself as an unknowable object extended in an unimaginable dimension of time, prior to apprehension of oneself, based on the Look, as a physical object extended in intersubjectively accessible time.

Schroeder's claim is correct in its implication that the selfness of any *unreflective* consciousness not involving the Look cannot be experienced as extended in time. On the other hand, the merely psychic object is not a being-for-others. As a unity of psychic states, what Sartre calls the ego may be said to be apprehended as extended in time -- psychic time -- independently of the Look.<sup>294</sup> Without involving the Look, one experiences one's headache, for example, as a

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<sup>293</sup>Schroeder 235.

<sup>294</sup>On the other hand, since Sartre admits that both psychic temporality and psychic objects are apprehended as self contradictory, one might simply adjust Schroeder's claim thus: "Except under the gaze of others,

“unity of succession” in impure reflection.

A discussion of what Sartre would say about apprehending oneself as the same is thus complicated by the multiplicity of senses of oneself and types of temporality he acknowledges. This is a complicated topic, and must be considered separately from what is involved in apprehending another person as the same over time, issues Morris and Schroeder fail sufficiently to appreciate.

#### ***5d. Levels of apprehension of another as the same***

When we consider that other persons are apprehended on the basis of a pre-reflective apprehension of the prenumerical Other,<sup>295</sup> we see that the question of how one apprehends other persons as extended in time is also complicated. Naturally, one does not experience the prenumerical Other as extended in time. As we have seen, one does not experience this Other as a worldly entity at all: apprehending the Other is apprehending *oneself* as part of an inapprehensible network of instrument-objects. However, the Other is thus apprehended as an inapprehensible project that “comes to give *my* time a new dimension” (357). Apprehending the fundamental project of another person is based on an apprehension of the existence of an inapprehensible project of which one is an inapprehensible part. When another person is apprehended as a *psychophysical* object, i.e., as a *transcendence*-transcended, this is based on an apprehension of the Other as such, i.e., on an apprehension of oneself as part of an inapprehensible project.

Similar complications arise with respect of the facticity of other persons. The facticity the Other’s project is transcending is one’s own, apprehended pre-reflectively “as known by the Other” (460). This is the “extension of lived facticity” I discussed in Chapter Five. The third or

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one cannot experience the self as the sort of thing that could be identical through time *in a consistent manner.*” As noted in the previous paragraph, one might want to add that the experience of the Look must be supplemented by impure reflection in order for one to apprehend oneself as a physical object located in the same temporal scheme, and causally related to, the other physical objects that one apprehends.

<sup>295</sup>“The Other” might be said to be a special “sense” of “you.” Of course “the Other” cannot be said to be

pain one apprehends as the past of which one's consciousness is a surpassing, is also apprehended as the past of the Other. So in the same way that one apprehends oneself as having a past, prior to apprehending oneself as a person occupying the time of the world, one apprehends the Other as having a past, prior to the apprehension of any other person. This is not to say that the Other is thereby apprehended as extended in time. But apprehending the Other's past, i.e., one's own extended facticity, is what makes it possible to apprehend other persons as extended in time. This point too is obscured in the picture we get from Morris.

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an additional *referent* of "you" any more than consciousness can be said to be an additional referent of "I."  
(The only things that personal pronouns can refer to are persons.)

## Chapter Seven: Sartre and Strawson

### 1. Introduction

One reason for comparing Sartre and Strawson is the similarity in their conceptions of what they are trying to do and what philosophy ought to do: the similarity between phenomenological ontology and descriptive metaphysics. There are already similarities between Sartre's phenomenological approach and analytic philosophy in general: both focus on meanings in some form as their object of study, and both attempt to side-step the problems caused by the Cartesian system.<sup>296</sup> Within the analytic tradition, Strawson's view is particularly apt for comparison with Sartre's because the meanings that he intends to analyze are so very basic that he feels that he "must abandon his only sure guide," namely, the actual use of words:

Aiming to lay bare the most general features of our conceptual structure, [descriptive metaphysics] can take far less for granted than a more limited and partial conceptual inquiry. Hence, also, a certain difference in method. Up to a point, the reliance upon a close examination of the actual use of words is the best, and indeed the only sure, way in philosophy. But the discriminations we can make, and the connexions we can establish, in this way, are not general enough and not far-reaching enough to meet the full metaphysical demand for understanding.<sup>297</sup>

While the object of Strawson's study is still our conceptual scheme, rather than, as for Sartre, our field of experience, the object in question still lies submerged below the surface of ordinary language.

In addition, an entire chapter of *Individuals* is devoted to the concept of a person and the ascription of states of consciousness and other properties to persons. And there are at least superficial similarities between Strawson's view and Sartre's in this area. Some of these come from the rejection of the Cartesian ego. However, Strawson also considers and rejects what he calls the no-subject view, according to which the "I" in first-person ascriptions (or at least apparent ascriptions) of states of consciousness does not refer to anything at all. Unlike the proponent of

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<sup>296</sup>Cf. Schroeder 10-15.

the no-subject view, Strawson believes that in saying, "I am in pain," one is genuinely ascribing a state of consciousness to oneself. Furthermore, Strawson believes that one is doing so by a method different from that which one uses to ascribe states of consciousness to others. Thus in both respects they agree, with the qualification that the no-subject view and Strawson's person-subject view are about the use of the word "I" and, while Sartre says a lot about the variety of ways in which one apprehends oneself as having certain qualities, he says very little about the use of words.

Another reason to compare Sartre and Strawson is that Morris compares them, explaining the claim that "I" is ambiguous for Sartre with reference to what Strawson says on the topic. Saying that "I" has more than one referent is not the best way to interpret Sartre. It would be better to say that there is more than one sense through which one can refer to oneself. Morris herself sometimes seems to be putting forth a sense-ambiguity view rather than claiming that "I" has more than one referent. In any case, it is only if Sartre believes that "I" can refer to more than one thing (or if he believes that the word has a referring use and a non-referring one), that, as Morris supposes, his view differs on this point from Strawson's.

Morris also feels that Strawson and Sartre differ on whether bodily continuity is a necessary condition for personal identity over time. In Section Two I criticize Morris's reconstruction of Strawson's view with regard to personal identity over time. I show that Morris misrepresents Strawson by taking him to be presenting a metaphysical view about persons, rather than a thesis about our concept of person. In Section Three I discuss Strawson's claim that "I" is not ambiguous, the relationship of this claim to his idea that the concept of a person is basic to our conceptual scheme, and his disagreement with both the Cartesian ego-subject theory and the no-subject theory. In Section Four I discuss the extent to which what Strawson says about the concept

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<sup>297</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* xiii-xiv.

“person” is compatible with what Sartre says about the objects of consciousness “oneself” and “another person.”

## **2. Descriptive and Revisionary Metaphysics: What Strawson is Not Interested in**

In regard to personal identity over time, Morris contrasts Sartre’s view with Strawson’s, which includes the claim that “we might, in unusual circumstances, be prepared to speak of two persons alternately sharing a body, or of person’s changing bodies, &c.”<sup>298</sup> But Morris’s language makes Strawson’s view sound more metaphysical than this. She says that on Strawson’s view there exists an “additional entity” besides the body. On Morris’s reading, Strawson’s claims appear to be about what it is possible for a person to do without ceasing to be the same person, not about what it is possible for our conception of a person to accommodate without ceasing to be the same conception. She says that on Strawson’s view it is logically possible for a person to change bodies. This is true, so long as it is taken to mean that there would be no contradiction in saying that a person who once occupied one body now occupies another. While our concept of a person cannot accommodate the idea of an eternally bodiless person, according to Strawson, it can accommodate the idea of somebody who no longer has a body, somebody who has more than one body in the course of her life, or somebody whose body is also part of another person. His reason for saying that a bodiless person is not conceivable is that it would be impossible to individuate and reidentify a person to which we cannot apply the sort of predicates which we apply to material objects. It would, on the other hand, be possible to individuate and reidentify a person who has changed bodies. One way of doing this is to refer to the person who has changed bodies by reference to the series of bodies she has occupied. Similarly we can refer to a presently disembodied person by reference to the body that she used to “occupy.”

To say that it is logically possible for a person to change bodies could be taken to mean

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<sup>298</sup> Strawson, *Individuals* 132-3.

that there exists something called a person which, while needing to have a body to exist, can move from one body to another. Along the same lines, to say that a bodiless person is logically impossible could be taken to mean that it is impossible for a bodiless entity to think about triangles and wonder if it will rain. But this cannot be what Strawson is saying, for such claims would clearly belong to what he calls revisionary metaphysics. Nor, for the same reason, could he be stating whether it is possible for a cluster of properties such as remembering x, hoping for y, and liking z, to move from one body to another. As we will see, however, this is the sort of thing that Morris takes him to be saying.

Strawson says that while descriptive metaphysics is “content to describe the actual structure of our thought about the world, revisionary metaphysics is concerned to produce a better structure.”<sup>299</sup> Regarding the subject matter of descriptive metaphysics:

[T]here are categories and concepts which, in their most general features, change not at all. Obviously these are not the specialities of the most refined thinking. They are the commonalities of the least refined thinking; and are yet the indispensable core of the conceptual equipment of the most sophisticated human beings. It is with these, their interconnexions, and the structure that they form, that a descriptive metaphysics will be concerned.<sup>300</sup>

The object of study is our “conceptual equipment.” There is no question here of whether there are or could be disembodied minds. Nor is Strawson concerned with the problem of other minds, if this is stated epistemologically as: “How can one know, or what evidence is available on the basis of observation, that what we ordinarily take to be other persons are conscious?” He says that this problem cannot even be stated coherently.<sup>301</sup>

Strawson is trying to “lay bare the most general features of our conceptual structure.”<sup>302</sup>

That the person is a basic particular means that this concept is more fundamental than those of a

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<sup>299</sup> Strawson, *Individuals* xiii.

<sup>300</sup> Strawson, *Individuals* xiv.

<sup>301</sup> Strawson, “Persons” 149.

<sup>302</sup> Strawson, *Individuals* xiii.

disembodied mind and a zombie, that these latter concepts are grounded in the former. He believes the first half of his book demonstrates...

the central position which material bodies and persons occupy among particulars in general. It shows that, in our conceptual scheme as it is, particulars of these two categories are the basic or fundamental particulars, that the concepts of other types of particular must be seen as secondary in relation to the concepts of these.<sup>303</sup>

At first Morris seems to recognize that Strawson's approach has to do with the relationships between the concepts we use, with the structure of our conceptual scheme:

Strawson's reason for saying that "I" cannot be used to refer to a "pure individual consciousness" is that this is a secondary concept which can only be analyzed in terms of the person-concept. Strawson claims that for states of consciousness to be ascribed at all, it is necessary that they be ascribed to the same things as corporeal properties; and both are ascribed to persons, he says. (SCP, 46)

But she goes on:

This suggests the central point of disagreement between Sartre and Strawson on the question whether persons could conceivably exist apart from the original body. Sartre could certainly agree with the Strawsonian point that a necessary condition of conscious relations' being ascribed is that they be ascribed to the same things as physical characteristics.... Sartre would argue, however, that Strawson's next point does not follow at all. It is unnecessary to suppose that some additional entity, the person, exists. Sartre has argued that both consciousness and physical characteristics can be ascribed to the human body itself. Both Sartre and Strawson deny that persons could exist apart from bodies in general. But since Strawson thinks persons, rather than bodies, must be owners of both conscious and physical attributes, he allows for the possibility that two persons could share the same body in alternation, or that a person could change to another body. (SCP, 46-7)

What would Strawson mean if he were to assert that "some additional entity, the person, exists"? He would be saying that, in addition to ordinary material objects, there are things to which we ascribe "P-predicates," which "imply the possession of consciousness on the part of that to which they are ascribed,"<sup>304</sup> in addition to "M-predicates" which we are comfortable ascribing to any material object. But such things exist on Morris's view as well: human bodies. Morris also says that Sartre's view can be contrasted with Strawson's in that, according to Sartre, states of

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<sup>303</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* xv-xvi.



consciousness and corporeal characteristics alike “can be ascribed to the human body itself.” But this is no different from Strawson’s view: the item to which states of consciousness are ascribed is picked out and reidentified on the basis of its material properties.<sup>305</sup> Finally she says that on Strawson’s view “two persons could share the same body in alternation,” but Morris seems to allow for this herself, in claiming that bodily identity is not sufficient for personal identity. She says, for example, that Malcolm X became a different person. If the best way to describe another’s long-term behavior is to say that the person in question has two fundamental projects, and two summaries of past behavior corresponding to these projects, Morris’s would also have us say that two persons share the same body:

There might be more than one person per body, in the sense that a particular body-subject might develop a wholly new pattern of relations to the world and to the people around him, as in radical conversion. Sartre could describe multiple personalities as alternating patterns of relationships. (SCP, 81)

Strawson says very little about personal identity over time, and never strays from the program of descriptive metaphysics. All his questions and answers are about our concept of a person. Thus he admits:

[W]hen all the theses I have argued for have been granted, there remain philosophical questions about the criteria of reidentification for persons: what exactly these criteria are, what their relative weights are, how we might adjust or further determine our concept in extraordinary cases.<sup>306</sup>

He declares that he has only one thing to say about these criteria:

The criteria of personal identity are certainly multiple. In saying that a personal body gives us a necessary point of application for these criteria, I am not saying that the criteria for reidentifying persons are the same as the criteria for reidentifying material bodies. I am not denying that we might, in unusual circumstances, be prepared to speak of two persons alternately sharing a body, or of person’s changing bodies &c.<sup>307</sup>

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<sup>304</sup>Strawson, “Persons” 142.

<sup>305</sup>On the Cartesian view states of consciousness are ascribed to the ego, which has no material properties. On Strawson’s view states of consciousness are ascribed to the person which has material properties as well. The subject of mental states has both “mental” properties and physical ones both on Strawson’s view and on Morris’s reconstruction of Sartre’s view.

<sup>306</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 131.

<sup>307</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 131-2.

Perhaps in an extreme case of multiple personality disorder we would want to say that two persons are alternately sharing a body. It is more difficult to come up with a case in which we would want to say that two different bodies comprise successive parts of the same person. Suppose somebody changes radically, entirely forgetting her former life, and at the same time another person does the same. The second person, however, remembers the life of the first and speaks in the first person about the things that the first did. In addition, she suddenly acquires the same skills and tastes as the first, which continue to develop as they might normally have. She tries to do many of the things that the first had always wanted to do. Most of the first's old friends adjust and accept her, after a series of strange conversations, and when some do not she feels disappointed and angry. She tries to acquire any of the first's possessions that have sentimental or practical value for her. She has interest in the possessions that belong to her new body only if useful, or because she is curious about her body's former life. She has strange interactions with her new body's former friends, and they eventually stop calling her.

What would Morris say about this case? "The pattern or system of relations with objects and others through time" begun by the first is, in a way, continued by the second. Thus the second has, in a way, both the same fundamental project (for-itself) and the same character (or project-for-others). This pattern and project can only be somewhat similar, however, because when Morris talks about the pattern of relations, it is the pattern of relations had by the body-subject, which is only the same body-subject if it is also the same physical body. For Morris, bodily continuity is thus included in continuity of oneself in the nonbodily senses, and continuity of oneself in the non-bodily senses is thus sufficient for personal identity. In any case, the second is not the same person as the first for Morris, because the two do not have the same body in either of her senses.

I constructed this example because I think it is one in which Strawson and Morris may disagree on whether the person in question is the same. But Morris provides her own case of what

might be a change of body, one in which a huge, bearded wrestler, Albert, might be supposed to change to the body of a four year old girl, Mary Jane. This seems to be a case in which, on Strawson's view, the four year-old's memories of the wrestler's former actions would not be enough to outweigh other considerations. We would say that Mary Jane has acquired memories of Albert's actions and has acquired some of Albert's character traits, not that Albert at one time and Mary Jane at a later time are two stages of the same person. When introducing this example, Morris says that "there seems to be no reason why, if persons could change bodies, they could not change to bodies of a different size, sex, and shape" (SCP, 48). However, there are reasons why we would not be prepared to speak of a person changing bodies in this case: too much of what allows us to pick out Albert would be lost.

It is in any case important not to think of changing bodies as an ability of some entity, the person. A person having a series of bodies, rather than just one, is just a way in which we might be willing to describe a certain sequence of events. For Strawson the person cannot be thought of as something separate from the bodies, something that moves from one to the other. But what Morris says shows that, unlike Strawson, she is discussing whether "some additional entity, the person, exists" and can move from body to body.

Assuming that Albert has come to occupy Mary Jane's body, Morris asks what has happened to Mary Jane's person: "There is the problem of where MJ-P [Mary Jane's person] has gone. Has she been forced to enter A-B [Albert's body], or is she now disembodied, or has she inhabited a still different body?" (SCP, 49). This question seems very easy to answer: we would need to have very good reason to say anything other than that Mary Jane has ceased to exist. Granting for now that this is a case in which we would say that Albert's body at one time and Mary Jane's at a later time are two temporal parts of the same person, if Mary Jane's body now seems to have two separate coherent personalities, we might say that Mary Jane and Albert now

share Mary Jane's body.<sup>308</sup> Or, if somebody else has an appropriate sudden personality shift, we might say that this body is the successor of Mary Jane's former body. But, short of any such eventualities, there is no reason to say that Mary Jane still exists at all. That is, there is nobody who now comes close to fitting the description, which includes M- and P-predicates, of Mary Jane.

This is not a problem for Strawson. "Mary Jane's person" is not something which, having been ousted from Albert's body, now needs someplace to go. All Strawson has said is that "we might, in unusual circumstances, *be prepared to speak of* two persons alternately sharing a body, or of person's changing bodies &c."<sup>309</sup> Morris, by contrast, talks about Mary Jane's person as some additional entity aside from the body, which might be forced to enter a new body or intentionally leave its old one. In Morris's scenario Albert's person leaves his body in order to escape detection because he is wanted for murder. Introducing the problem of what has happened to Mary Jane's person, she says, "Let us suppose that A-P is now the sole inhabitant of MJ-B" (SCP, 49), as opposed to saying, "Let us suppose that this is a case in which we would be prepared to speak of Albert as having taken over Mary Jane's body."

In general, there are two ways to make sense of the question of what happens to Mary Jane's person. One is to treat it as an awkward way of asking what happened to Mary Jane. This question I answered already. The other way to treat it is as the question of what has happened to the cluster of properties named by the P-predicates, but not the M-predicates, that used to describe Mary Jane. This seems to be the question that Morris wants to ask. But the answer is the same:

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<sup>308</sup>Morris says: "Since the point of Strawson's analysis is to make individuation possible, it must not be supposed that MJ-P and A-P can occupy MJ-B simultaneously." (SCP, 49) Strawson says that in unusual circumstances we might want to say that two persons alternately share a body. In this case we might identify Albert as the one who has the properties named by the M-predicates in question (female, three feet tall, smooth-skinned) and talks about wrestling. We would identify Mary Jane as the one who talks about cartoon characters. Morris might ask what happens to Mary Jane's person when the shared body is talking about wrestling. But on Strawson's account there are no souls fighting for control of a body. If the body behaves enough like Albert, we might want to say that it is Albert. But, as I said, in this case we probably wouldn't say that.

<sup>309</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 132.

this set of predicates no longer describes anybody.

Morris has switched from the language of descriptive metaphysics to that of traditional ontology. In saying that on Strawson's view there exists an additional entity besides the body, she means that *there are persons*, not merely that persons (i.e., entities which have both corporeal characteristics and states of consciousness) are a basic part of our conceptual scheme. Had she not translated the views of Sartre and Strawson into traditional ontology (i.e., revisionary metaphysics), she would not have found any substantial disagreement between them. They agree that our conceptual scheme has basic entities of two sorts, items to which only corporeal characteristics are ascribed and items to which both states of consciousness and corporeal characteristics are ascribed, and that P-predicates and M-predicates are ascribed to the same thing.

Neither Strawson nor Sartre wants to talk about whether or not a person "could conceivably exist apart from the original body," unless the question is taken to be about the conditions for the possibility of ascribing P-predicates (i.e., about our conceptual scheme) or about other-persons-as-objects-of-consciousness (i.e., about our perceptual scheme), and not about the possibility of some entity changing bodies. Whether a person could change to another body and whether "some additional entity, the person, exists," is outside the scope of both Strawson's descriptive metaphysics and Sartre's phenomenological ontology.

### **3. Strawson's Claim that "I" is Univocal and its Role in his Descriptive Metaphysics of Persons**

It is difficult to compare Sartre's analysis of apprehending oneself and others to Strawson's view and the no-subject view, because the latter are primarily views about the use of the word "I." However, Strawson's bases for the ascription of predicates are related to the ways of apprehending oneself and others that we find in Sartre. I discuss this after Strawson's view.

### 3a. Strawson's disagreement with the Cartesian and the no-subject theorist

Strawson's claim that "I" refers univocally to a person is closely related to his disagreement with both the Cartesian's ego-subject view and what he calls the no-ownership or no-subject view.<sup>310</sup> Strawson believes the mistake of the no-subject theorist is comparable to that of the ego-subject theorist. For both there are two very different (basic)<sup>311</sup> uses of "I": the "I" in "I weigh one hundred seventy pounds" refers to something to which the "I" in "I am in pain" does not. The difference between the views has to do with the use of "I" in sentences of the latter type: while the Cartesian believes that the "I" in such sentences refers to the ego, the no-subject theorist believes that it does not refer at all. Thus, while the Cartesian claims that "I" can be used to refer to one's mind or body, the no-subject theorist claims that "I" has a referring use and a non-referring use. But both deny that "I am in pain" picks out the same thing as "I weigh one hundred seventy pounds."

Strawson says that until we have answered two questions -- "Why are one's states of consciousness ascribed to anything at all?" and "Why are they ascribed to the *very same things* as certain corporeal characteristics, a certain physical situation, &c.?"<sup>312</sup> -- we do not understand "the concept we have of a person" and "the use that we make of the word 'I.'" By denying that states of consciousness and corporeal characteristics are ascribed to the same thing, the Cartesian in fact makes it impossible to explain how the former are ascribed to anything at all:

[W]hen we ask ourselves how we come to frame, to get a use for, the concept of this compound of two subjects, the picture -- if we are honest and careful -- is apt to change from the picture of two subjects to the picture of one subject and one non-subject. For it becomes impossible to see how we could come by the idea of different, distinguishable, identifiable subjects of experiences -- different consciousnesses -- *if this idea is thought of as logically primitive*, as a logical ingredient in the compound-idea of a person, the latter

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<sup>310</sup>Strawson is hesitant to attribute the no-subject view to any actual philosopher, but feels there is evidence that it may have been held, at some point, by both Wittgenstein and Schlick (Strawson, *Individuals* 90n.2).

<sup>311</sup>Naturally, according to the ego-subject theorist, there is a third, derived use of "I," which refers to a complex comprising both the ego and the body.

<sup>312</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 84.

being composed of two subjects. For there could never be any question of assigning an experience, as such, to any subject other than oneself; and therefore never any question of assigning it to oneself either, never any question of ascribing it to a subject at all.<sup>313</sup>

The Cartesian view that the subject of physical properties is different from that of mental properties thus leads to the no-subject theorist's claim that, in saying "I am in pain," one is not picking out a subject and ascribing a property to it at all. According to Strawson, however, no-subject theorists "seem needlessly to flout the conceptual scheme we actually employ."<sup>314</sup>

Strawson's account of the concept of the person is an attempt to answer both questions, rather than to insist that one or the other of them is somehow illegitimate.

The questions are connected because "a necessary condition of states of consciousness being ascribed at all is that they be ascribed to the very same things as certain corporeal characteristics, a certain physical situation, &c."<sup>315</sup> Thus Strawson asks how one's body is conceived of as the subject of one's experiences, rather than merely a special object of one's consciousness, unique both causally (e.g., in that damage to one's own eyes affects one's experience of the world in a way that damage to another's doesn't) and "as an object" (e.g., in that -- unlike any other physical object of comparable size -- one can always find one's body). Having noted that "for each person there is one body which occupies a unique *causal* position in relation to that person's perceptual experience" and that "this body is also unique for him as an *object* of the various kinds of perceptual experience which he has," Strawson says:

[T]he facts in question explain why a subject of experience should pick out one body from others, give it, perhaps, an honored name and ascribe to it whatever characteristics it has;

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<sup>313</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 98. Strawson says that we can ascribe a predicate to something only if we can ascribe it ("significantly, though not necessarily truly") to a range of distinguishable individuals (95, n.3). Thus, while it may be the case that there are predicates that can be *truly* affirmed of only one thing, in ascribing a predicate we are assuming that there is a range of *distinguishable* things to which it would be meaningful to ascribe it. Thus, if I ascribe, e.g., a given sensation or thought to my mind, I must assume that there are other distinguishable things to which it would be meaningful to ascribe this sensation or thought. If these are other minds, then they must be distinguishable (and, again, they will not be distinguishable if they are pure, bodiless minds).

<sup>314</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 133.

<sup>315</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 98.

but they do not explain why the experiences should be ascribed to any subject at all; and they do not explain why, if the experiences are to be ascribed to something, they *and* the corporeal characteristics which might be truly ascribed to the favored body, should be ascribed to the same thing. So the facts in question do not explain the use that we make of the word "I", or how any word has the use that word has. They do not explain the concept we have of a person.<sup>316</sup>

Strawson explains the genesis of the no-subject view as follows. The theorist recognizes that a certain body plays a unique causal role in one's experiences, so one might say that this body has or owns these experiences, although this is a misleading way to express the "unique causal position" of the body. According to the no-subject theorist:

to ascribe a particular state of consciousness to this body, this individual thing, would at least be to say something that might have been false; for the experience in question might have been causally dependent on the state of some other body; in the present admissible, though infelicitous, sense of the word, it might have 'belonged' to some other thing. But now, the theorist suggests, one becomes confused: one slides from the admissible sense in which one's experiences may be said to belong to, or be possessed by, some particular thing, to a wholly inadmissible and empty sense of these expressions, in which the particular thing is not thought of as a body, but as something else, say an Ego, whose sole function is to provide an owner for experiences.<sup>317</sup>

While the claim that a certain body plays a unique causal role in one's experiences is a contingent truth, the claim that a certain ego "owns" one's experiences would be a necessary (and empty) truth. Thus, the no-subject theorist concludes:

Since the whole function of E [the ego] was to own experiences, in a logically non-transferable sense of 'own', and since experiences are not owned by anything in this sense, for there is no such sense of 'own', E must be eliminated from the picture altogether. It only came in because of a confusion.<sup>318</sup>

The no-subject view arises as a response to genuine problems in the ego-subject view.

According to Strawson, however, the no-subject view is itself incoherent:

[O]ne who holds it is forced to make use of that sense of possession of which he denies the existence, in presenting his case for the denial. When he tries to state the contingent fact, which he thinks gives rise to the illusion of the 'ego', he has to state it in some such form as 'All *my* experiences are had by (i.e., uniquely dependent on the state of) body B'.

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<sup>316</sup>Strawson, "Persons" 129-30.

<sup>317</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 91.

<sup>318</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 91, my gloss.



For any attempt to eliminate the 'my', or any expression with a similar possessive force, would yield something that was not a contingent fact at all. The proposition that *all* experiences are causally dependent on the state of a single body B is just plain false.<sup>319</sup>

He says, "This internal incoherence is a serious matter when it is a question of denying what *prima facie* is the case: that is, that one does genuinely ascribe one's states of consciousness to something, viz. oneself."<sup>320</sup> Neither view can account for the fact that we ascribe states of consciousness to persons, because both claim that "I" is ambiguous.

Both misunderstand our concept of a person, the predicates which we ascribe to persons, and the process of learning to ascribe them. Strawson will ultimately claim that the person is a basic concept in our conceptual scheme, and that an important set of the predicates that we ascribe to persons have the unique property of being able to be ascribed, in a logically adequate manner, both to others on the basis of observation of their behavior, and to oneself on some other basis (i.e., on the basis of some sort of reflection).

### **3b. P-predicates**

Strawson is aware of how varied the properties we attribute to persons are, and that these attributions are made on different bases. Mentioning actions, intentions, sensations, thoughts, feelings, perceptions, memories, physical location, and physical position,<sup>321</sup> he divides predicates into two classes: person-predicates (P-predicates), which "imply the possession of consciousness on the part of that to which they are ascribed," and material predicates (M-predicates), which do not.

Many P-predicates are ascribed to oneself and others on different bases. There are:

many cases in which one has an entirely adequate basis for ascribing a P-predicate to oneself, and yet in which this basis is quite distinct from those on which one ascribes the predicate to another. Thus one says, reporting a present state of mind or feeling: 'I feel

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<sup>319</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 92.

<sup>320</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 92.

<sup>321</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 83.

tired, am depressed, am in pain'.<sup>322</sup>

In addition to those properties that one attributes to others on the basis of observation but ascribes to oneself on some other basis, there are other properties that one ascribes on the basis of observation both to others and to oneself. Thus Strawson says that “assessments of character or capability... when self-ascribed, are in general ascribed on the same kind of basis as that on which they are ascribed to others.” Being able to play a piano sonata or to run two miles in ten minutes, and, perhaps more controversially, being brave or prone to jealousy, are properties that one ascribes to oneself on the basis of observation. It may seem at first that any M-predicate will fall into the second category as well, but this is not so. For example, being half submerged in water, being on a bed of hot coals, and being over 98.6 degrees Fahrenheit, are all properties which we might ascribe to non-conscious objects, but which one might ascribe to oneself not on the basis of observation (of oneself).<sup>323</sup>

One’s self-ascription of those P-predicates in the first group, while originally made on the basis of some form of reflection, may be corrected on the basis of observation:

Even of those P-predicates of which it is true that one does not generally ascribe them to oneself on the basis of the criteria on the strength of which one ascribes them to others, there are many of which it is true that their ascription is liable to correction by the self-ascriber on this basis.<sup>324</sup>

Having one’s left foot crossed over one’s right foot, a property one does not normally ascribe to oneself on the basis of observation, might be corrected when one looks down at one’s feet.

There is an important distinction to be drawn, for Strawson’s purposes, between two types of P-predicates within the group that one ascribes to oneself and to others on different bases.

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<sup>322</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 103.

<sup>323</sup>Naturally, on Sartre’s view, receiving the Look is necessary for apprehending oneself as having the property named by any M-predicate. While one can apprehend oneself as half submerged in water *on the basis of* one’s bodily feelings, prior to the Look such apprehension consists in no more than one’s having these feelings.

<sup>324</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 103.

“Thinking about monkeys,” and “wondering if one’s meeting will be cancelled,” name properties that have no characteristic behaviors associated with them. If you want to know whether somebody is thinking about monkeys, you have to ask or to infer. Cartesian and no-subject theorists think of this as typical P-predicate ascription. Doing so allows the problem of other minds to get underway, thus allowing the no-subject theorist’s reply to it to be taken seriously. Many P-predicates that one ascribes to oneself and others on different bases, however, are ascribed to others non-inferentially. For example, while one would not say that a non-conscious object is smiling or taking a walk, it seems strange to say that one must infer that another person is doing such things. One simply observes this. Crucial to Strawson’s approach is his removal of properties like “thinking about monkeys” from center stage to make room for ones like “smiling.” These have a behavioral component, yet “when one ascribes them to oneself, one does not do so on the strength of observation of those behavior criteria on the strength of which one ascribes them to others.”<sup>325</sup> They are important because they:

release us from the idea that the only things we can know about without observation, or inference, or both, are private experiences;<sup>326</sup> we can know also know, without telling by either of these means, about the present and future movements of a body. Yet bodily movements are certainly also things we can know about by observation and inference.<sup>327</sup>

One does not need to look in the mirror to tell whether one is smiling. Other people, however, can tell whether you are smiling by looking at you.

Once we have understood that “is smiling” is normally ascribed in a logically adequate manner in two different ways, depending on whether it is ascribed to oneself or another, more “mental” P-predicates can be seen to fall into the same category, as long as they have characteristic behaviors associated with them:

We speak of behaving in a depressed way (or depressed behavior) and we also speak of

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<sup>325</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* .

<sup>326</sup>As we will see in Subsection 4a, Morris makes a similar point in regard to Sartre’s view.

<sup>327</sup>Strawson, “Persons” 149.

feeling depressed (of a feeling of depression). One is inclined to argue that feelings can be felt but not observed, and behavior can be observed but not felt, and that therefore there must be room here to drive in a logical wedge. But the concept of depression spans the place where one wants to drive it in.... X's depression *is* something, one and the same thing, which is felt, but not observed, by X, and observed, but not felt, by others than X.<sup>328</sup>

Another's behavior may serve as a "logically adequate criterion" for saying that she is smiling or depressed, despite the fact that this is ascribing to her more than one would be if one were only to describe the movements of her body. Strawson argues that this must be true of at least some P-predicates, otherwise we could not have the concept of a person that we do. There may be P-predicates for the ascription of which there is no logically adequate behavioral criterion, but they depend on P-predicates of the former type, not vice-versa.

Taking "thinking about monkeys" as a paradigm case, philosophers have confused themselves into thinking that writing a letter is doing two things at once, one purely mental and the other observable, and that M-predicates, used ordinarily, can express the second. By contrast, after saying that "T" is not ambiguous, Strawson says "if one is to locate type-ambiguity somewhere, it would be better to locate it in such predicates as 'is in the drawing room' or 'was hit by a stone,' and say that they mean one thing when attributed to an inanimate object and another when attributed to a person."<sup>329</sup> When ascribed to a person, "is in the drawing room" is being used as a P-predicate, and does not merely state the location of a body, although the observation of the location of this body is logically adequate for making this statement.<sup>330</sup>

On Strawson's view, in saying that somebody is writing a letter, we are not ascribing features of two different sorts. That we sometimes ascribe strictly material features to persons, e.g., size and weight, does not mean that when we ascribe features that are not strictly material, we are ascribing properties of two kinds, one by observation and one by inference. This skewed view

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<sup>328</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 105.

<sup>329</sup>Strawson, "Persons" 142.

<sup>330</sup>In Subsection 4a I will mention a similarity between Sartre and Strawson on the ambiguity of such

of ascribing properties to persons accompanies the mistaken conception of a person as a mind plus a body.

### ***3c. The concept of the person***

In stating that the concept of a person is logically primitive,<sup>331</sup> Strawson is saying that it is not to be analyzed into a mindless body and a bodiless mind. Being in pain and weighing one hundred seventy pounds need to be thought of as being ascribed to the same subject. If not, we will not be able to explain how we ascribe pain to anything:

[I]f we try to think of that to which one's states of consciousness are ascribed as something utterly different from that to which certain corporeal characteristics are ascribed, then indeed it becomes difficult to see why states of consciousness should be ascribed to, thought of as belonging to, anything at all.<sup>332</sup>

Without corporeal features, there is no way to pick somebody out and ascribe a state of consciousness to her, because there is no way to tell whether she is in that state, and:

clearly there is no sense in talking of identifiable individuals of a special type, namely that they possess both M-predicates and P-predicates, unless there is in principle some way of telling, with regard to any individual of that type and any P-predicate, whether that individual possesses that P-predicate.<sup>333</sup>

Seeing one's own case as an exception is a mistake. The Cartesian thinks of persons as having mental and physical properties, and theorizes that we judge another to have a given mental property on the basis of the physical properties we perceive: the physical properties are "*signs* of the presence, in the individual concerned, of this different thing, viz. the state of consciousness."<sup>334</sup>

On this view, however, one knows that a given physical property is a sign of a given mental property based on the correlation of the two in oneself, because only in this case does one know that the person has the mental property. But, according to Strawson, we can ascribe a predicate to

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predicates.

<sup>331</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 100.

<sup>332</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 93.

<sup>333</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 102.

<sup>334</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 102. As we saw in Chapter Five, Sartre criticizes the Cartesian on this point, and

something only if we can ascribe it (“significantly, though not necessarily truly”) to a range of distinguishable individuals.<sup>335</sup> Thus, while it may be the case that there are predicates that can be truly affirmed of only one thing, in ascribing a predicate we are assuming that there is a range of distinguishable things to which it would be meaningful to ascribe it:

[T]here is no sense in the idea of ascribing states of consciousness to oneself, or at all, unless the ascriber already knows how to ascribe at least some states of consciousness to others. So he cannot argue in general ‘from his own case’ to conclusions about how to do this; for unless he already knows how to do this, he has no conception of *his own case*, or any *case*, i.e. any subject of experiences. Instead, he just has evidence that pain &c. may be expected when a certain body is affected in certain ways and not when others are.<sup>336</sup>

The inability to ascribe states of consciousness to others non-inferentially thus infects one’s own case as well. For it makes no sense to say that one is ascribing a quality to something if it is impossible to do so with other things of the same “logical type.” Therefore, because it is impossible for us to have subjects of mental properties at all if we always ascribe P-predicates on the basis of an inference, “in the case of at least some P-predicates, the ways of telling [whether an individual possesses it] must constitute in some sense logically adequate kinds of criteria for the ascription of the P-predicate.”<sup>337</sup>

If all the predicates we ascribed to persons expressed either purely mental or purely physical properties, we would not have the concept of a person that we do: we would ascribe the physical properties to a body, but we could not ascribe the mental properties at all. Thus, the ascribing of a mental property that can only be attributed to others via an inference from observed physical properties must be treated as a special case of ascribing, one that depends on the ability to ascribe P-predicates in normal cases -- i.e., cases in which the predicate can be non-inferentially ascribed in a logically adequate manner to others on the basis of observation. The ability to

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compliments the behaviorist for not making the same mistakes.

<sup>335</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 95, n.3.

<sup>336</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 102.

<sup>337</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 102.

attribute purely mental properties to other persons is based on the ability to attribute properties with both a mental and a physical aspect.

What Strawson means, I take it, in saying that the criteria are logically adequate, is that they are not merely signs of something else, something to be inferred on their basis. Depressed behavior is not merely a sign of depression, a state of consciousness that in principle can be ascribed only to oneself in a logically adequate manner. Rather, this behavior is an observable *aspect* of depression, and so of a quality that can be ascribed either to others on the basis of observation or to oneself on some other basis (i.e., reflection).

### ***3d. The use of the word "I"***

According to the no-subject theorist such statements as "I am in pain" do not pick out and ascribe a property to somebody: whenever "I" doesn't refer to a certain physical object, it doesn't refer to anything at all. Since "I am in pain" is grammatically similar to sentences that do pick out an item and ascribe a property to it (e.g., "I am six feet tall"), we are misled into believing that they function in the same way. But they cannot. The no-subject theorist thus "assimilates first person ascriptions of states of consciousness to those other forms of behaviour which constitute criteria on the basis of which one person ascribes P-predicates to another."<sup>338</sup> Saying "I am in pain" functions in the same way that saying "ouch" or grimacing does.

This is just one more way to misunderstand the concept of a person and the character of P-predicates. While the Cartesian favors first-person ascriptions of P-predicates and is wary of third-person ascriptions, the no-subject theorist trusts only third-person ascriptions:

Suppose we write 'Px' as the general form of the propositional function of such a predicate. Then, according to the first picture, the expression which primarily replaces 'x' in this form is 'I', the first person singular pronoun: its uses with other replacements are secondary, derivative and shaky. According to the second picture, on the other hand, the primary replacements of 'x' in this form are 'he', 'that person', &c., and its use with 'I' is secondary, peculiar, not a true ascriptive use. But it is essential to the character of these

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<sup>338</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 104.

predicates that they have both first- and third-person ascriptive uses, that they are both self-ascriptible on the basis of observation of the subject of them, and other-ascriptible on the basis of behaviour criteria. To learn their use is to learn both aspects of their use.<sup>339</sup>

Both the Cartesian and the no-subject theorist have misunderstood the unique character of P-predicates and the concept we have of the person as the bearer of such predicates.

[B]oth the Cartesian and the no-ownership theorists are profoundly wrong in holding, as each must, that there are two uses of 'I', in one of which it denotes something which it does not denote in the other.<sup>340</sup>

Thus Strawson says that "I" refers univocally to oneself, the person, the same thing that one's name refers to: "It is needlessly paradoxical to deny... that when M says 'N has a pain' and N says 'I have a pain', they are talking about the same entity and saying the same thing about it."<sup>341</sup> Naturally this remark is directed at the no-subject theorist, who believes that "I am in pain" means the same thing as a cry of pain, in which one is not picking out an item and ascribing a quality to it, while "Smith is in pain" says something about the physical state, behavior, or possible future behavior of Smith's body. "I am in pain" is very different from a genuine self-ascriptio such as "I am a banker."

A Cartesian would agree with Strawson's remark about M's claim and N's claim picking out the same item and ascribing the same property to it, and would add (1) that, depending on whether the person is oneself or another, one has different ways of knowing whether somebody has a consciousness-implying quality, i.e., a quality that is applicable to conscious entities only; (2) that when one believes another to have a consciousness-implying quality, this belief is based on observation of qualities of another sort, and such observation is thus never logically adequate for the ascription of the consciousness-implying quality, in that one never has a way of telling whether the conditions of satisfaction for ascription of the quality have been met; and (3) that on the most

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<sup>339</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 104-5.

<sup>340</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 93.

<sup>341</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 133.



basic level one would be picking out a different entity if one were ascribing a weight or a height, rather than a consciousness-implying property, to the person in question. As we have seen, Strawson accepts (1) but rejects (2) and (3).<sup>342</sup>

Regarding (3), while the Cartesian believes that the proper subject of physical properties is the body and that the proper subject of mental qualities is the mind or soul or ego, Strawson's view is that both physical qualities and consciousness-implying qualities have the same subject: the person. Thus, although Strawson agrees with (1), it means something different for him than it does for the Cartesian. For the Cartesian, pain has only one aspect -- it is something felt -- and one knows that another is in pain on the basis of something that is inessential to it: certain behaviors. For Strawson, most consciousness-implying qualities have two equally essential aspects. The predicates that name consciousness-implying qualities, "P-predicates," can be ascribed to a subject on the basis of either aspect. In ascribing a "P-predicate," one is saying that the subject has a quality with both aspects. Thus, regarding (2), Strawson's view is that when one believes another to have a given consciousness-implying quality, in most instances one is not basing this belief on the apprehension of a quality of another sort, but on the apprehension of an essential aspect of the quality in question. Again, "X's depression *is* something, one and the same thing, which is felt, but not observed, by X, and observed, but not felt, by others than X."<sup>343</sup> To say otherwise is "to refuse to accept the *structure* of the language in which we talk about depression,"<sup>344</sup> to refuse "to acknowledge the unique logical character of the predicates concerned."<sup>345</sup>

Strawson believes that the Cartesian and the no-subject theorist have made the same error:

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<sup>342</sup>Sartre accepts (1) and rejects (2) and (3) as well. But, as I have been interpreting him, he would want to add that, at a level at which it makes no sense to talk of picking out items and ascribing qualities to them, there is a sense in which the sorts of experience that serve as a basis for the eventual ascription of some consciousness-implying properties (e.g., is thirsty) precede the sorts of experience that serve as a basis for the eventual ascription of any non-consciousness-implying property.

<sup>343</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 105.

<sup>344</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 105.

<sup>345</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 104.

they have misunderstood P-predicates and the subject to which they are ascribed. The Cartesian believes that feeling depressed and behaving in a depressed manner are two different qualities, each ascribable to only one of two different entities, the mind and the body. The word "I" can be used to refer to either of these entities (or to a complex comprising both of them). The no-subject theorist believes that the only referential use of "I" picks out a certain body, and the only ascriptive use of predicates attached to "I" ascribe either "certain corporeal characteristics, a certain physical situation, &c.," which can also be ascribed to non-conscious entities, or observable behaviors: when one thinks one is ascribing a state of consciousness, one is either ascribing observable behavior to a body, or failing to identify a subject, a necessary condition for ascribing anything to anything. But according to Strawson, if "I" were ambiguous, as both the Cartesian and the no-subject theorist say, we could not have predicates for mental properties, because we would not have a range of individuals to which they could be meaningfully ascribed.

### ***3e. The concept of the ego***

Since the ability to ascribe properties ascribable only to oneself in logically adequate manner is dependent upon the ability to ascribe properties ascribable either to oneself or to others in a logically adequate manner, the concept of the ego depends on the concept of a person:

[T]he concept of the pure individual consciousness -- the pure ego -- is a concept that cannot exist; or, at least, cannot exist as a primary concept in terms of which the concept of a person can be explained or analysed. It can exist only, if at all, as a secondary, non-primitive concept, which itself is to be explained, analysed, in terms of the concept of a person.<sup>346</sup>

One may be able to form a new concept -- the ego -- based on the concept of the person, and can define the object corresponding to that concept as the subject of a certain, restricted group of qualities. But the new concept is dependent upon the concept of the person, in that one could not use the former concept without being able to apply the latter: in Strawsonian terms, one can

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<sup>346</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 98-9.

make identifying reference to egos only on the basis of one's ability to make identifying reference to persons. Thus, while for the Cartesian the concept of a person is to be analyzed in terms of the more basic concept of a mind, a person being a physical object with a mind, for Strawson the concept of a person is more basic. Again, if the concept of the person were not basic, we wouldn't be able to ascribe states of consciousness to the same thing to which we ascribe physical properties, and if we couldn't ascribe both physical properties and states of consciousness to the same thing, we couldn't ascribe the latter at all. Thus, if "I" was ambiguous as the Cartesian says that it is, we couldn't ascribe states of consciousness to persons. The proper understanding of the concept of a person, according to Strawson, will thus undercut the problem of other minds by showing that this concept is the concept of a subject of P-predicates, predicates which can be ascribed to others on the basis of their behavior and to oneself either on the basis of one's own behavior or, as is more often the case, on some other basis.

#### **4. Sartre and Strawson: Considerations on the Senses and Reference of "I"**

Nothing that Sartre says in B&N or TE strictly commits him to the view that "I" has more than one referent. This is a thesis about the use of "I," however, and Sartre says very little about that directly. Here is what Sartre says:

[T]he I and the me are only one. We are going to try to show that this ego of which the I and me are but two aspects, constitutes [i.e., is] the ideal and indirect (noematic) unity of the infinite series of our reflected consciousnesses.... The I is the unity of actions the me is the unity of states and qualities. (TE, 60, my gloss)

If one were to understand this passage to be about the use of the words "I" and "me," the result would be that "I" and "me" refer to one item, a particular ego, in different ways. While it seems reasonable to think that, when referring to oneself as "me," one sometimes thinks of oneself differently than when using "I" (e.g., that when one refers to oneself as "me" one often is thinking of oneself as somebody to whom things happen, rather than as somebody who does things, as a "unity of states and qualities" rather than as a "unity of actions"), it would be absurd to say that

one is referring to two different things. However, even the view that I take to be absurd has some relevance to Sartre's view: one constitutes the ego as an object of consciousness by constituting as objects of consciousness "oneself as the transcendent unity of one's states" ("the me") and "oneself as a transcendent unity of one's actions" ("the I"). But this is not to say that the words "I" and "me" are used to refer to two different things.

The constitution of the ego is related to the ability to refer to yourself publicly using "I" and "me," and to the ability to understand others' references to you as "you," "she" or "he," and by one's name. The constitution of this ego for Sartre is a part of the constitution of oneself as a person to which one can make identifying reference. The variation within one's ways of referring to oneself, within what I have called the senses of "I," on Sartre's view, thus has to do with the ways in which one may apprehend oneself prior to constitution of oneself as a person: one constitutes oneself as a public object (which can be picked out by both speaker and listener) in stages, and on the way to becoming this public object, the meaning of oneself as an object of consciousness expands incrementally. The meaning of the object of consciousness that one eventually refers to, publicly, as "I" gradually takes on the various meanings that this word has. For example, the various senses of "I" that I spoke of in connection with the topic of bad faith are meanings that the object of consciousness, oneself, takes on, on the way to becoming an object to which oneself and others can make identifying reference.<sup>347</sup>

Sartre is talking about the constitution of the ego as an object of consciousness, not the use of "I" and "me." Occasionally, however, Sartre does make offhand comments about the use of the word "I." In the following quotation, Sartre begins by saying that the ego that he has been speaking of is merely psychic, rather than psychophysical, and that the psychophysical ego is a

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<sup>347</sup>This taking on of meaning need not be looked at as a temporal process. At times, however, Sartre implies that his view is supported by evidence from developmental psychology (469) -- see the quotation in Chapter Five, Subsection 4c.

synthetic enrichment of the psychic ego, which exists in a free state when apprehended in (mere) impure reflection. Then he says that in certain cases in which one says “I,” one is not referring directly to the psychophysical me:

[T]he ego which we are considering is psychic, not psycho-physical. It is not by abstraction that we separate these two aspects of the ego. The psycho-physical me is a synthetic enrichment of the psychic ego, which can very well... exist in a free state. It is certain, for example, when I say “I am undecided,” we do not directly refer to the psycho-physical me. (TE, 72)

I take him to mean, however, that in such cases one is referring indirectly to the psychophysical me, through the psychic ego. By contrast, when one says, e.g., “I’m in the kitchen,” or “I’m chopping wood,” one is referring to the psychophysical me directly.<sup>348</sup>

I have called attention to this passage here only because it is one of the few places in which Sartre actually talks about the use of “I.”<sup>349</sup> However, this quotation is important for several reasons. The claim that the psycho-physical me is a synthetic enrichment of the psychic ego, I have argued, is developed in B&N into an account of the apprehension of one’s body. That this ego can exist in a free state and is not separated from the physical aspect of the ego by abstraction may help to contrast Sartre’s view with Strawson’s. In saying that the psychic ego can exist in a free state, Sartre is saying that it can be constituted in reflective consciousness without any bodily features. That its psychic aspect is not separated from its physical aspect by abstraction, means that a psychophysical ego does not need to be constituted before a merely psychic one: one does not need to constitute something with both physical and psychic properties in order to constitute a merely psychic ego.

There is at least an apparent contrast between this view and the one expressed by

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<sup>348</sup>As we have seen, the view in B&N is more complicated. In light of this view, Sartre might not want to say that one refers “directly” to oneself in these instances. This is because the psychophysical states, through which the psychophysical “me” is apprehended, are in fact constituted on the basis of the apprehension of states that are merely psychic. Again, I take it that, when writing TE, Sartre simply hadn’t thought about all that is involved in perceiving one’s own body (or that of another) as a person.

Strawson, which claims that the concept of a merely psychic ego is dependent upon the concept of a person. The concept of an ego, for Strawson, is created by abstraction: one takes a subject of a set of predicates that contains both bodily and non-bodily predicates, and abstracts from the bodily ones to create the concept of a disembodied person. However, since Sartre is not talking about how it is that we have certain concepts, but rather about how it is that we have certain objects of consciousness, it is difficult to see whether this apparent contrast is a genuine disagreement, or merely reveals that the authors are asking different questions. There is no clear contradiction between their views: Strawson does not say that one's ego, as an object of reflective consciousness, is constituted on the basis of the apprehension of oneself as a person having both physical and mental attributes, and Sartre does not say that the concept of a person is based upon a more fundamental concept. While Sartre rarely talks about the word "I" or the predicates used to attribute various features to oneself or another person, Strawson's claims are most frequently put in these terms. They are about our concept of a person, and Strawson identifies understanding this concept with understanding our use of the terms which pick out and ascribe properties to persons. I return to these considerations in Section 4b.

#### ***4a. Sartre and Strawson on apprehending the states of consciousness of oneself and others***

Aside from the fact that both Sartre and Strawson reject the Cartesian scheme, and the resulting formulations of the mind-body problem and problem of other minds that make these problems insoluble, there are more specific similarities in the things they say. One has to do with the fact that experiences of persons, for Sartre, and statements about persons, for Strawson, have different meanings from similar experiences of, or statements about, inanimate objects. We have seen Strawson suggesting that such predicates as "is in the drawing room" are ambiguous in that "they mean one thing when attributed to an inanimate object and another when attributed to a

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<sup>349</sup>Another is at TE, 89-90, where Sartre says that making assertions about what we are doing does not

person.” We already know that, for Sartre, one cannot be thirsty or angry, or hate Pierre or be a waiter, as a table is round or square. Sartre also says, “I can not say either that I *am* here or that I *am* not here, in the sense that we say ‘that box of matches *is* on the table’” (103). Thus the duplicity Sartre speaks of in connection with the notion of bad faith<sup>350</sup> is not unrecognized by Strawson.

This similarity results from a shared rejection of reductionistic views about the subject to which states of consciousness are ascribed. The subject of conscious states is not an immaterial ego, but ascribing states of consciousness is different from ascribing physical characteristics. While another’s depression is not something inferred on the basis of physical characteristics, originally apprehended in the same way that the characteristics of an inanimate object are apprehended (as for Descartes), the apprehension of another as depressed is not reducible to a set of apprehensions of physical characteristics (as for the behaviorist). The movements of other persons are apprehended differently from the movements of inanimate objects.

They also share the belief that we have more than one way of knowing about ourselves, reflection and observation, and that our reflective access to a property does not mean it is “private” or “mental.” One reason Strawson focuses on P-predicates such as “is smiling” is that they:

release us from the idea that the only things we can know about without observation, or inference, or both, are private experiences; we can know also, without telling by either of these means, about the present and future movements of a body. Yet bodily movements are certainly also things we can know about by observation and inference.<sup>351</sup>

The Sartrean equivalents of these two ways of knowing about oneself are the essential and the aberrant forms of apprehension of the body in its third ontological dimension. As Morris says:

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necessarily “transport us to the level of reflection.”

<sup>350</sup>Morris herself notes that other commentators locate “the ambiguity which underlies Sartre’s analysis of bad faith” in moral predicates (Bergmann), or in the word “is” (Naess), rather than in the word “I” as she does (SCP, 91, n.21). McCulloch locates the ambiguity in “is” as well (McCulloch 57). If one is to locate the ambiguity in a word, this seems to me to be the most natural one to choose, considering all Sartre’s talk about different “modes of being.”

<sup>351</sup>Strawson, “Persons” 149.

Sartre would deny the commonly accepted view that privacy of sensation implies a mental phenomenon. For example, the body-subject can directly know the spatial position his right foot occupies in relation to his left foot, even if he cannot observe either foot. (SCP, 129, n.2)

As we have seen, however, the “essential” form of apprehension of the third ontological dimension of the body is not the most direct form of (self-)apprehension for Sartre. The most direct forms are pre-reflective self-consciousness and pure reflection, neither of which can provide information about one’s body as a physical object or one’s character.

A third similarity between Sartre and Strawson is that they both acknowledge a difference between knowing one’s character and knowing, e.g., that one is in pain. They agree that knowing one’s character requires something other than the most direct form of self-apprehension. Strawson says, in regard to “assessments of character or capability” that “[t]hese, when self-ascribed, are in general ascribed on the same kind of basis as that on which they are ascribed to others.” For Sartre, while one’s pain is apprehended pre-reflectively as “reflected” by the structure of the field of consciousness, “character is essentially *for others*” (458), and requires the revelation of the existence of oneself as an object for others under the Look.

#### ***4b. The importance of private facts***

According to Strawson, one can use observation to correct first-person ascriptions of predicates one originally ascribes to oneself reflectively. Like Morris, Strawson believes one has two ways of knowing that one’s left foot is crossed over one’s right foot, and only one way of knowing that another’s is (aside from asking). They agree that the fact that one can determine that one has a given property by some form of reflection does not imply that this property is private, i.e., a property that one can only know about oneself. However, for Sartre, private facts, e.g., the feeling of having one’s left foot crossed over one’s right foot, are important, and apprehending them does not involve any sort of ascription at all.

Strawson is right to say that one can use observation to correct the ascription of some of



the P-predicates one ascribes to oneself in reflection. However, if we accept that in saying “I have the feeling that I ordinarily have when my right foot is crossed over my left foot,” I am ascribing a P-predicate to myself, there are some P-predicates whose self-ascription cannot be corrected on the basis of observation. (Strawson doesn’t deny this.) It is arguable that, for every public fact that can be established about oneself on a non-observational basis, there is a private fact – one that cannot be corrected by observation. Sartre’s phenomenological ontology begins with such facts: Pierre appears as repulsive, the water appears as to be drunk, the keyhole appears as to be looked through, etc. And it is not the case that “their ascription is liable to correction by the self-ascriber” on the basis of observation.

One can make corrections in the self-ascription of the public facts by self-observation, e.g., by looking down at one’s feet. One can also correct one’s ability to ascribe public facts to oneself without self-observation by revising one’s “tables of reference between the body-existed and the body-seen” (469). The feeling that one ordinarily has when one’s right foot is crossed over one’s left foot will then come to imply something different about the “body-seen.” It will be apprehended as the feeling that one used to have when one’s legs were crossed but now, e.g., implies nothing at all because one has lost one’s legs in an accident. The feeling itself, however, is not liable to correction on the basis of observation, simply because there is no way to observe it, and no sense in saying that it is correct or incorrect.

Apprehending such private facts in pre-reflective consciousness, and focusing on them in pure reflection, is essential to Sartre’s phenomenological ontology, and does not involve any sort of ascription of mental predicates to a subject:

The Cogito affirms too much. The certain content of the pseudo-“Cogito” is not “I have consciousness of this chair,” but “There is consciousness of this chair.” This content is sufficient to constitute an infinite and absolute field of investigation for phenomenology. (TE, 53-4)

This brings us to a potential similarity between Sartre’s view and that of the no-subject

theorist: Sartre recognizes a difference between the apprehension of the states of consciousness of oneself and others, and the no-subject theorist acknowledges a difference between first- and third-person ascriptions of states of consciousness. According to Sartre, while it is not necessary to apprehend oneself as a psychophysical object in order to apprehend one's own pain, thirst, or anger, it is necessary to apprehend another as a psychophysical object to apprehend her pain, thirst or anger: one can apprehend one's own thirst without apprehending it as belonging to anybody, while apprehending another's thirst includes apprehending another person.

Strawson has shown that we would not be able to ascribe states of consciousness to anybody if the no-subject theorist were right. But we ascribe conscious states to ourselves and to others, and the statement, "I am in pain," made by M picks out the same object and ascribes the same quality to it as "M is in pain," when stated by N. The no-subject theorist cannot be right. Strawson's alternative, that there is a unique set of P-predicates which can be ascribed in two different ways, is much better. But similar reasoning cannot be used to show that we could not feel our own pain and apprehend others as in pain, if not for some special form of apprehension which allows us to apprehend the same pain in two different ways.

#### ***4c. Two types of reference-dependence***

The Strawsonian question of "why states of consciousness are ascribed to the very same things as certain corporeal characteristics, a certain physical situation, &c.," is closely related to the Sartrean question of what goes into apprehending oneself and others as persons -- i.e., as physical objects that have experiences. But there is a difference between apprehending or experiencing a person in a given way, and making identifying reference and ascribing a predicate to her.

When Strawson talks about referring to an item, he is talking about making identifying reference to it, which involves a speaker's referring to the item in such a way that a listener could

pick it out as well. When the speaker succeeds in getting the listener to pick out the intended item, Strawson says that the speaker has successfully identified the item.<sup>352</sup> This is the notion of reference appropriate to his inquiry into our basic concepts. This is because the notion of reference-dependence appropriate to his inquiry is identifiability-dependence. The concept of a mind is dependent on the concept of a person in that one can make identifying reference to minds only if one is able to make identifying reference to persons, and not vice versa. Another example of identifiability-dependence that Strawson mentions is the dependence of being able to identify “theoretical constructs” on being able to identify “observable particulars:” identifying subatomic particles requires being able to identify “medium sized dry goods,” and being able to identify “strikes and lockouts” requires being able to identify “men, tools, and factories.”<sup>353</sup>

The notion of reference-dependence appropriate to Sartre’s inquiry is different. To say that one must be able to apprehend one’s consciousness in order to apprehend oneself as a person does not mean that one must be able to make identifying reference to one’s consciousness in order to make identifying reference to oneself as a person. Similarly, to say that one must experience the Look in order to apprehend another as a person is not to say that one must be able to make identifying reference to another’s consciousness in order to make identifying reference to another person. As they are originally apprehended, pre-reflective consciousness and the Other are not the sort of things to which one can make identifying reference. The experience of the Look is a pre-condition for the constitution of the world as an intersubjective reality, and thus for the possibility of any identifying reference.

Similarly, the ego and its states, as merely psychic objects, having only the suggestion of an outside, are not the sort of things to which one can make identifying reference. Prior to the Look, one cannot apply concepts to the psychic object; it is only an “affective object.” Any talk of

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<sup>352</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 3.

identifying something and ascribing predicates to it is out of place. One reason is that the merely psychic ego and its states occupy merely psychic time. One cannot make identifying reference to them with such phrases as “my state at time t1” not only because one has not yet constituted oneself as an intersubjective object, but also because time t1 has not yet been located in an intersubjective temporal scheme. To say that the apprehension of the psychophysical ego occurs on the basis of the apprehension of the psychic ego does not mean that identifying reference to the former occurs on the basis of identifying reference to the latter.

It is thus possible for Sartre to agree with Strawson that identifying reference to the ego is based upon a more fundamental identifying reference to the psychophysical person, while holding that a sort of private reference to oneself as a psychophysical object is based upon a more fundamental private reference to one’s ego (and so to one’s consciousness). This will perhaps turn out to be a central difference in the respective upshots of Strawson’s descriptive metaphysics and Sartre’s phenomenological ontology, with the Sartrean insisting that a speaker’s attempt to refer identifyingly to any item is based on her ability to refer privately<sup>354</sup> to that item, i.e., to have the item as an object of consciousness.

As we have seen, Strawson says that “the idea of a predicate is correlative with that of a *range* of distinguishable individuals of which the predicate can be significantly, though not necessarily truly, affirmed.”<sup>355</sup> Thus, if Sartre is right, one is able to constitute and apprehend one’s ego and its states as objects of consciousness before being able to apply the words “ego” and “person” to anything. Prior to the Look, reflection is “deprived of the means which would ordinarily permit analysis and conceptualization” (729): this reflection “is not yet cognitive” (443).

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<sup>353</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 34.

<sup>354</sup>By the way, Sartre does use the term “reference” to speak of having an object of consciousness. He speaks of the body-for-itself as a “being of reference” (469). Cf. p. 216, where Sartre uses “reference” as he usually uses “consciousness.”

<sup>355</sup>Strawson, *Individuals* 95, n.3.

Sartre's work begins where Strawson's leaves off.

#### ***4d. Phenomenological ontology and descriptive metaphysics***

The differences between Sartre's and Strawson's analyses have to do with descriptive metaphysics' affiliation with ordinary language philosophy and conceptual analysis: Strawson is asking what we are thinking or saying when we think or say that  $x$  is a person and Sartre is asking what it is to apprehend, experience, or perceive  $x$  as a person. Strawson is analyzing a person, a thing, etc., insofar as they play a role in our conceptual scheme, while Sartre is analyzing these items insofar as they play a role in our experience.

This difference comes with a difference in the notion of ontological priority. For Strawson,  $x$  is ontologically prior to  $y$  if identifying reference to  $y$  depends upon identifying reference to  $x$ . For Sartre,  $x$  is ontologically prior to  $y$  if the experience of  $y$  is dependent upon the experience of  $x$ . One result is that, on Strawson's view, since identifying reference to oneself as an "individual consciousness" depends upon one's reference to oneself as a person, oneself as a person has ontological priority. By contrast, on Sartre's view, since one's experience of oneself as a person depends upon one's experience of oneself as consciousness, oneself as consciousness has ontological priority. For Strawson, "The concept of a person is logically<sup>356</sup> prior to that of an individual consciousness. The concept of a person is not to be analyzed as that of an animated body or of an embodied anima:"<sup>357</sup> we could not have the concept of an individual consciousness that we do without the concept that we have of a person.

On Sartre's view, the person as an object of consciousness is to be analyzed precisely as an embodied anima. One constitutes oneself on the basis of the constitution of a purely psychic ego, and so ultimately on the basis of the apprehension of one's consciousness. One constitutes

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<sup>356</sup>In *Individuals*, Strawson calls a type of item whose identification is a necessary for the identification of another type (where the reverse is not the case) "ontologically prior" to that type. (Strawson, *Individuals* 4)

<sup>357</sup>Strawson, "Persons" 140.

another on the basis of the apprehension of the Look, a consciousness of some sort of radical alienation of oneself.

There is also an asymmetry in one's apprehension of oneself as being-for-itself and as being-for-others that Strawson's ascription-talk misses: one's ability to apprehend oneself as, for example, depressed pre-reflectively (and in pure reflection) is the basis for one's ability to apprehend oneself as depressed by observation, but not vice-versa. In order to apprehend oneself as depressed pre-reflectively (or in pure reflection), one needs only to apprehend a world that, for example, offers no interesting possibilities. One doesn't need to be able to ascribe depression to anybody. By contrast, in order to apprehend oneself as depressed by observation (e.g., of one's behavior), one needs to know what depressed behavior looks like -- i.e., what it looks like to another.

Although he distinguishes ascription on the basis of observation and inference from ascription on other bases (i.e., on the basis of what I have been calling various forms of reflection), in another way Strawson treats all ascription as the same. He does not recognize that some of what he calls states of consciousness can also be quasi-ascribed to the ego in impure reflection, and other such states can be quasi-ascribed to the body-for-itself and to the body-for-others (i.e., to the body-for-others-only). A fortiori, Strawson is unable to acknowledge that these types of (quasi-) ascription form the basis for the type of ascription in which he is interested.

The biggest difference between Strawson's analysis and Sartre's is that Strawson treats the object to which the properties are ascribed the same way, regardless of the type of property and basis upon which it is ascribed. He doesn't recognize that the objects are constituted by way of the relevant sorts of ascription (or quasi-ascription). Nor does he recognize that some properties need to be ascribed before others, rather than being merely logically necessary conditions for others. According to Sartre, any property ascribed to oneself on the basis of observation is necessarily

ascribed at a late stage of the constitution process. One can ascribe weighing 170 pounds to oneself only after receiving the Look, while the property of being thirsty, insofar as it is reflected by a world structured by the project of obtaining something to drink, is apprehended prior to the Look.<sup>358</sup>

Sartre's analysis thus allows us to explain the process by which one's experiences and corporeal characteristics are ascribed to the same thing: the psychophysical person. Put in more Sartrean terms, this is how the subject of one's experiences is constituted as a corporeal thing in the first place. The difference reflected in this way of putting it, as opposed to Strawson's formulations in terms of our concepts, corresponds to a crucial difference, despite significant similarities, between the Strawsonian and the Sartrean concept of a person. Once again, the Sartrean person can indeed be said to be an embodied anima. It is just important to remember that, in saying this, we are not saying that the Sartrean person is some sort of composite of two distinct objects of reference: a body and something like a Cartesian anima. It is rather a matter, for Sartre, of constitutive work whereby consciousness comes to apprehend itself as a body among bodies in the world.

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<sup>358</sup> Again, this need not be seen as a point about chronology. The idea is that the experience of oneself as a psychophysical object somehow includes the Look, as well as pre-reflective consciousness and impure reflection, among its "layers."

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356  
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