A Comparative Study of Humanism in Sartre, Heidegger and Ponty
A Comparative Study of Humanism in Sartre, Heidegger and Ponty

In the third, fourth and fifth chapters, we have already delineate the existentialist philosophy of Sartre, Heidegger and Merleau-Ponty in details. In this chapter we would like to compare and contrast their philosophy with the contemporary philosophers like Simone de Beauvoir and Albert Camus.

Heidegger and Sartre had adopted Husserl’s phenomenological method, however they were criticized the Husserl's phenomenological method. In that respect their phenomenological method was somehow different from Husserl’s phenomenological method.

Heidegger accepts phenomenology as a method like Husserl. He was a student of Husserl, his programme of a return "to the data themselves". In the use of phenomenological method, Heidegger seeks to get back to the data of immediate experience, and describes these data as they show themselves in their primitive disclosure. Etymologically, the word phenomenology is derived from the root words ‘phainesthai’ and ‘logos’, which means that which shows itself or that which reveals itself and open to sight or lets something to be seen respectively. Thus, phenomenology, according to Heidegger, properly understood as the logos of the phenomenon, is the disciplined attempt to open the sight to that which shows itself, and to let it be seen as it is. In using phenomenological method, one...
must therefore discard all pre-conceived logical and epistemological constructions and seek to examine and describe the phenomena as they show themselves. It is the method of uncovering the hiding or interpretation, which Heidegger also calls the methodical meaning of the phenomenological description.¹

Heidegger does not accept Husserl's eidetic and phenomenological reduction, to the extent that the meaning of Being in which he is interested is not some general essence, but something fundamentally individualised, particularly in the case of human being. Phenomenological reduction makes our basic relationship to the world theoretical rather than practical, as we are born theoreticians and later learned about practice. Husserl’s student Martin Heidegger, on the contrary, insisted that we were originally ‘in the world’ instrumentally by means of our practical concerns and that philosophy should analyse this pre-theoretical awareness in order to gain access to being. Similarly, Sartre, as we saw, insisted that all knowledge was ‘committed’. and Merleau-Ponty spoke of a certain ‘operative intentionality’ of our lived bodies that interacted with the world prior to our reflective conceptualization. Even Husserl, in his later phase, seemed to acknowledge these claims by introducing the concept of the ‘life-world’ as the pre-theoretical basis of our theoretical reflection.

There is no doubt that Mearleau Ponty introduces phenomenology as the solution for the problem of behavior , which even ‘Gestalt psychology’ had not been able to solve. He speaks of phenomenon as something which has the function to express the relations between the objects and the subject and the presence of solid structures in both , which distinguish phenomenon from mere appearance.
The predominant problem of phenomenology for Heidegger, is the problem of Being, a problem that Husserl allegedly neglected through his employment of the epoche. According to Heidegger, epoche and the pre-suppositions, which support it, can only carry us to philosophical disaster. Heidegger insists that man's Being-in-the-world is ontologically primitive. There can be no Cartesian doubt, no Husserlian bracketing, and no separation of man (Dasein) from the world in which he lives. For Heidegger, eidetic and transcendental phenomenology are redundant.

The major existentialist objection is, however, that being itself is not an ‘essence’ subject to reduction and as Ponty famously phrased it, ‘a complete phenomenological reduction is impossible’ because you cannot ‘reduce’ the existing ‘reducer’. The existing individual is more than his or her ‘definition’ such as one might hope to capture in a theoretical concept. As Sartre argues that there are ‘phenomena of being’, for example our experience of nausea. It reveals that we are and we need not be our contingency. But such an experience is not cognitive. Rather it is a matter of feeling or emotional consciousness- the stuff of arresting description and novels.

Although Sartre rejects Husserl's transcendental ego, the essentialism and the epoche, his own existential phenomenology is a synthesis of Husserl’s and Heidegger’s thought. Sartre substitutes the Heideggerean structure of Being-in-the-world for the Husserlian epoche. He argues that the existence of the transcendental ego is inconsistent with the unity of consciousness. There is unity of consciousness, so there is transcendental ego. The very postulate of transcendental ego is phenomenologically illegitimate because phenomenology describes only what appears to consciousness Though Heidegger ‘eschews’ a
psychologistic vocabulary to engage in fundamental ontology, Sartre revives the Husserlian emphasis on consciousness but insists that consciousness is necessarily embedded in the world.

In the first part of “Being and Nothingness”, i.e. ‘The phenomenon’, Sartre claims that phenomenology’s reduction of what exists to the appearance of that which exists is progress, inasmuch as it overcomes some dualisms constitutive of philosophical problems: interior and exterior, appearance and reality, actual and potential, appearance and essence. In the second part, 'The Phenomenon of Being and the Being of the Phenomenon', Sartre argues that neither of these can be reduced to the other. The Husserlian phenomena and the Heideggerean disclosure of being require one another for a phenomenology that is adequate to our Being-in-the-world. In the third part, Sartre distinguishes his phenomenology from the Idealism of the Irish philosopher George Berkeley from whom he nevertheless takes the terminology of percipere. It was the slogan of Berkeley's philosophy that in the case of physical objects esse est percipi, is to be perceived.

According to Sartre, there is no distinction between the perceived and the imagined objects. This view is borrowed from Husserl's theory of things (noemata). As Sartre states, the difference between them is 'nothing'. This 'nothing' has a special significance for Sartre as for Heidegger, and nothing will turn out to be equivalent to the important concept of freedom. The difference between perception and imagination, we find is the difference between the freedom of imagination and the lack of freedom of perception. "I can say that the image includes a certain nothingness ... however lively, touching or strong an image may be, it gives its object as not being."\(^2\) It is obstructiveness. It is this obstructiveness, which makes a bracketing of existence impossible in the case of perception.
To understand the application of Sartre's phenomenology to imagination and emotion, one requires further clarification of intentionality and the distinction between reflexive and pre-reflexive consciousness. Simone de Beauvoir relates how Sartre turned pale with emotion when Raymond Aron described the doctrine of intentionality to him. Intentionality was first systematically formulated by the Thirteenth-century scholastic thinker St. Thomas Aquinas. Even though Sartre has taken Husserl’s intentionality for granted, he claims that Husserl betrays his own intentionality. Sartre makes a crucial break with the doctrines of Brentano and Husserl when he insists that intended objects of consciousness exist. Brentano had thought that they 'in-exist' as presented to consciousness, that is, neither exist nor not exist. Husserl suspended belief and disbelief in the existence of objects in the external world by his epoche in order to describe consciousness purely. Sartre regards these positions as confused. The result of the last reduction, as Sartre put it, “is that conscious act become like so many flies bumping their noses on the window without being able to clear the glass.” Sartre agrees with Heidegger that this initial distinction between ‘acts of consciousness’ and ‘objects of consciousness’ is not only philosophically disastrous but also even unfaithful to the phenomenological method itself.

Here Sartre clearly disagrees with Heidegger that there is a distinction between reflective and pre-reflective consciousness and a distinction between reflective self-knowledge (the Cartesian cogito) and reflective self-consciousness. Sartre begins with the Husserlian dictum, “all consciousness is consciousness of something” and both of them begin with the Cartesian doctrine that the existence of consciousness itself is known simply by virtue of its existence. The definition of consciousness focuses on the intentionality of consciousness. For Sartre this leads
to a distinction between the two different kinds of Being - the being of objects for consciousness (being-in-itself), and the being-for-itself of consciousness. Sartre introduces a convention of parenthesising the ‘of’ in the expression ‘consciousness of’ This is similar to Heidegger’s characterization of Being-in-the-world. Consciousness (of) object is thus to be taken as primitive for Sartre just as Being-in-the-world is primitive for Heidegger.

Heidegger had talked about the primitive or original importance of the practical pre-ontological aspects of human Existenzen, but these were not examined in detail. Sartre, on the other hand, through his study of emotions, of the pre-verbal aspects of our relationship with other people, introduces a distinction between two different source of consciousness (intentionality) positional and non-positional into his studies again from Heidegger’s “Being and Time”. Husserl, like Descartes and Kant, takes the Cogito to be purely reflective, and then interpreted consciousness itself as necessarily reflective. Heidegger, however, had pointed out that the many sorts of the encounters with the world (as equipment) were not reflective or conceptual at all. Heidegger had captured this difference in his distinction between ‘ontic and ontological’.5

Sartre distinguishes between pre-reflective and reflective consciousness or between a positional (thetic) and a non-positional (non-thetic) consciousness. The positional consciousness is the consciousness of selfless activity. According to Heidegger, this sort of consciousness is not self-conscious, but simply conscious of its immediate tasks and equipment.

Heidegger and Sartre discuss the fundamental phenomenological nature of the world. Heidegger has put forward the equipmental and sign-like character of
things in the world. Negativity in the world-fabric concerns Sartre. Both equipmental or sign-like character and negativity come to the world by human agency. Since they are the essential aspects of the world, then this world is indeed a human one. Although Sartre makes such Heideggerean remarks that "the world of tasks, in which the original relation between things is .. .instrumentality"; he contends that instrumentality is a function of a deeper, more pervasive dimension of reality. The link with Heidegger becomes clearer when Sartre refers us to a kind of negativity “the one which penetrates most deeply into being, which he calls lack.” Lack is nothingness, which appears as the essential condition of instrumentality.

Merleau-Ponty captured the realistic optimism of the existentialist position in the social arena when he extended Sartre’s humanistic mantra to the social realm; The human world is an open or unfinished system and the same radical contingency which threatens it with discord also rescues it from the inevitability of disorder and prevents us from despairing of it, providing only that one remembers its various machineries are actually men and tries to maintain and expand man’s relations to man.

Phenomenology become existential with the denial of this primacy of spectatorial knowledge, with Heidegger's insistence that human existence is indeed more than mere cognition in the usual spectator sense of knowledge and such knowledge presupposes existence. While Sartre says, that since "meaning came into the world only by the activity of man, practice superseded contemplation".

Sartre, Heidegger and Ponty brush aside Husserl's emphasis on essences. Heidegger has already told us that human being (Dasein) is structured as Existen -
and it can be characterized as other entities can be characterized. And Sartre has claimed in his slogan that ‘existence precedes essence’ and man makes himself and his less-known but more important characterization of human consciousness as nothingness. Ponty says that this approach to essences makes phenomenology actually subservient to the study of existent fact. It is an agreement with the shift of the essences to existence.

What are these things in themselves? It is clear that they are not to be distinguished from ‘things as experienced’ and so the traditional dualisms between phenomena and noumena, objects of experience and objects in themselves, appearance and reality find no place in existential philosophy. If there is no distinction between object and experience, reality and appearance then how are we to distinguish essences (things in themselves) from mere appearance or from aspects.

We may think on this account how it is possible for us to talk about ourselves as personalities at all. Sartre’s answer is that all such talk about personality is talk about the public ‘me’ and not about the ‘I’ of the Cogito at all. Secondly, the understanding of oneself as the ‘me’ is no longer a special phenomenological reflective activity, but it becomes the study of one or more objects in the world. We have seen that like Heidegger, Sartre destroys ego-subject in order to further destroy all traditional dualisms between subject and object. We shall also find, however, Sartre unlike Heidegger re-established a dualism very similar to traditional Cartesian dualism.

Merleau Ponty tells us that Descartes Cogito is merely a verbal Cogito, the pre-reflective Cogito is already familiar to us from Heidegger's discussion of Dasein's
primitive world of equipment. Merleau Ponty says we must stop defining consciousness by knowledge of self and introduces the notion of a life of consciousness, which goes beyond its explicit knowledge of itself.

The concepts of nothing and nothingness have been recurrent in our discussions of Heidegger and Sartre. The nothing came to occupy an increasingly important role in Heidegger’s later philosophy, and it is at the very heart of Sartre’s thought.

In Heidegger’s argument on negation and the experiment of nothingness, he does not tell us what this experience consists of Nothingness is experienced?, in the experiences of the absence of object, and as an object of experience, nothingness is itself a sort of Being. What is an act of nihiliation? We may simply characterise it by referring back to Heidegger's characterization of Dasein as ‘projection of possibilities’, an act of nihiliation is conscious not to say reflective act of going beyond the actuality of state of affairs. It is the attitude which is reflectively manifested in Husserl’s epoche Sartre stresses that the epoche can only arise through reflection and takes an extreme form in the general question of Being in Heidegger’s view ‘Why is there something rather than nothing?’ Sartre rejects this as unanswerable. It is an intentional act, which is performed, in every doubt, in every question, every question demands the possibility of a negative reply, in every hope, in every desire, in every expectation. Because we have seen that every conscious act involves expectations and act of nihiliation. Heidegger gives an example of an imagination of the presence of a person in a chair besides himself and his perception of the portrait of that person in front of him. Similarly, accompanied by an act of nihilation-by wondering whether any such man truly existed, his faint philosophical doubt that perhaps he has not yet awakened and maybe dreaming. These acts of nihilation involved in every conscious act and that
consequently the experience of nothingness is involved in every experience, is a thesis, which has been argued by Heidegger in "What is Metaphysics’’, where he tells us that every Being contains within it the possibility of non-being. Sartre dramatically accepts this and tells us “nothingness haunts being.”

Man reflects on himself and becomes aware that there is a gap between for-itself and in-itself. This gap is conceived as nothingness. By nature human reality is incomplete. We carry nothingness with us. “Man is the being by whom Nothingness comes into the world.” He writes, “Nothingness lies coiled in the heart of being-like a worm.” As ‘Being-in-itself is full of positivity it is not the origin of Nothingness. So Nothingness must come out of the Being. Sartre holds that Negatite is a type human activity, the task of which is to negate. It is the integral part of human being. Further nothingness is not pre-occupied but it ‘is made-to-be’. For Sartre there must be a being, the property of which is to nihilate nothingness.

Sartre tries to Improve on Heidegger’s famous, or infamous dictum in “What is Metaphysics” that 'nothingness nihilates' (Das Nichts selbst nichtet) by saying ‘Nothing does not nihilate itself. Nothingness ‘is nihilated’. Heidegger too is trying to avoid the charge of holding that nothing in some sense exists but Sartre thinks Heidegger makes a mistake in his formulation. It is a putative affirmation of nothing's non-being logically consistent with that of the Eleatic pre-Socratic philosopher Parmenides.

A.J.Ayer criticized Heidegger and Sartre together - Das nicht nichtet or Sartre's le Nenant est neantise. Ayer cannot but think that they are non-sensical. It is worth noticing that these two statements differ in one important respect:- Heidegger's
argument is active and Sartre's passive. Sartre criticizes Heidegger's notion of das nichts on the grounds that he makes it into some sort of object that surrounds the world and in a sense creates it.

In our discussion of Man, we are equating Heidegger's *Dasein* with Sartre's being-for-itself. It is because of this equivalence that Sartre is able to say that man is absolutely free and the radical existentialist theory of absolute responsibility follows from this. According to them, Man is both being and nothingness, both bound and free from his world. He can be viewed both as a free agent and as a victim of causal circumstance.

This ambiguous nature of man is not at all new in the history of philosophy. Kant’s two standpoints are equal in validity. Each standpoint as, man as object, man as agent was absolutely, correct and the ‘antinomy’ to which this dualism gave rise was tolerated by Kant because it was very central to his philosophy. Kierkegaard, on the other hand, stated only concrete subjective viewpoint and Husserl argues that the phenomenological viewpoint is the correct one and the natural standpoint must be derivative of it. But Sartre and Heidegger reject natural, objective and scientific standpoints and accept the phenomenological standpoint. Heidegger says, “I am not the outcome or the meeting point of the numerous causal agencies which determine my bodily or psychological makeup, I cannot conceive of myself as nothing but the bit of the world ... all my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge, is gained from my own particular point of view.”

There is no concept more central to existentialist thought than the concept of freedom. Heidegger interprets *Dasein* as freedom, and Sartre makes the concept of
freedom the defining structure of human consciousness. Freedom is also a key concept in the works of many non-existentialist thinkers, for example, Kant, Hegel and Husserl.

Although Sartre’s theory of human freedom is often interpreted in grossly implausible formulations which emphasize the concept of absolute freedom and ignore the restrictions of the situation to which this notion is tied. We may find a close similarity between Sartre's notion of freedom and a traditional conception of voluntary action. It is in this sense that Sartre insists that freedom makes no sense unless there are obstacles - to success, and it is because of the limited notion of ‘absolute freedom' that Sartre, Camus, Merleau Ponty, Simone de Beauvoir bizarrely maintain that a slave or a prisoner is as free as a master or ‘free’ man.

When we declare that the slave is as free in his chains as his master, we do not speak of a freedom, which would remain undetermined. The slave in chain is free to break them, and Sartre's absolute freedom thus, refers to choice, intention, trying and adopting a conduct. My freedom is my awareness “that ‘nothing’ can compel me to adopt that (particular) conduct.” It is the act of suicide, which Camus considers to be the ultimate choice. It is important to note that there is a fundamental difference in the choice between Camus and Sartre in spite of some similarities between them. For Camus, the feeling of the absurd is “given to us for it strikes us in the face” and suicide is a response to this feeling. This feeling of the absurd, however, is not brute existence or facticity but an interpretation of the world as non-satisfying, which in turn depends on a set of demands, which we have already placed before the world. What Camus does, therefore, is to take this interpretation of the world as something presented to us and does not allow for
the possibility of our conscious alteration of that interpretation. Sartre does not commit himself to ‘keeping the absurd’ alive with Camus, for he sees our absolute freedom to destroy the absurd.

We can refer to two parallel statements in Ponty and Sartre ‘we are condemned to meaning’ and ‘we are condemned to freedom’. It shows that though Ponty does not deny Sartre’s doctrine of freedom, he could not accept the latter’s absolute freedom. But more important to Ponty is the fact that our existence is full of significance. He does not accept the doctrine of a meaningless opaque Being-in-itself in a world whose meaning depends entirely on freedom. Meaning is not merely a matter of choice.

For Heidegger and Sartre, facticity is the fact that Dasein exists, and Dasein exists in a particular world. This notion of facticity is lifted by Sartre (from Heidegger) for whom it becomes the basic structures of being human. Dasein finds himself already in this situation. In Heidegger's famous phraseology, Dasein finds himself thrown into a particular world. Facticity is thus equivalent to what Heidegger calls 'thrownness'. For Heidegger (as for Sartre, who employs the same term) facticity is the set of all that 'givens which one must encounter in one's Existenz'.

Sartre is profoundly influenced by both Husserl’s and Heidegger’s phenomenology of time. Husserl adopts a methodological suspension of belief in objective time to explain its possibility as an object for consciousness. World time, real time, the time of nature, scientific and psychological time are all suspended and phenomenological time, or time as it is directly given to consciousness, is treated as an absolute, indubitable, datum. The objective temporality of an event is then explained as an achievement of consciousness. A melody, in Husserl’s
example, is apprehended as an objective event through retention and protention. The past course of melody is partly retained and the future course of melody is partly anticipated in the present apprehension of the melody. The melody is constituted as an objective temporal object for consciousness by this retentive and anticipatory 'reading into' the present. Knowledge of the objective time dealt with commonsensically measured by clocks and studied by science, presupposes phenomenological time.

As we have seen, however, towards the end of “Being and Time”, Heidegger comes close to answering the Seinsfrage by claiming a temporality that is primordial with regard to Being, a kind of time presupposed by Being. Sartre seeks to avoid a paradox, which vitiates the philosophy of time, the past does not exist because it is over. The future does not exist because it has not happened yet. The present does not exist because there is no time interval between the past and the future. Nevertheless, the appearance of all three. temporal essences as real is existentially compelling. Sartre’s solution, in “Being and Nothingness”, is to argue that past, present and future all exist, but as an 'original synthesis'. He means that past, present and future cannot exist in an abstraction from one another but only as a temporal whole. The past belongs to that fixed, inert and passive mode of being that Sartre calls being-in-itself. The present is the past of the spontaneous, free, subjective, conscious, manner of being called being-for-itself. The being of the future is neither being-in-itself nor being-for-itself. The future exists as a pure possibility. Sartre rejects Husserl's view that subjective time may be even methodologically separated from objective time. He endorses the Heidegger’s doctrine that our being is fundamentally Being-in-the-world.
Sartre makes an analysis of consciousness for the ontological clarification of human existence. Consciousness denotes human reality. It is the very being of man. Consciousness is not permanent. It is unstable, ephemeral, fickle and fleeting. It is like hollow tube which must be filled with air or something else. On the other hand matter is full, solid, and impenetrable like a glacier. Consciousness is more possibility whereas matter is actuality. Though there is a relation between the consciousness and the object, the two are separate and cannot be merged into one. According to Sartre there is a duality of soul and matter and the gap between the two cannot be bridged.

Following Husserl, Sartre holds that consciousness is intentional which means all consciousness is conscious of something. It always transcends itself and refers to a transcendent object other than itself. For Husserl intentionality is the characteristic of ‘empirical ego not of transcendental ego. Sartre outright rejects the notion of transcendental ego as it cannot be felt without reflection. Sartre actually wants to analyse only what is given in experience. He therefore rejects Husserl’s view of ‘bracketing the world.’ For him consciousness refers the object which is in the world. So, ‘ego’ is not in consciousness but in the world. Like world it is the object of consciousness. But it does not mean that ego is material. Only thing is ‘ego’ is that subject which does not direct or manipulate consciousness.

We have seen that for negative judgments Sartre sets himself apart from Heidegger. Man brings non-being into the world. Nothingness is somewhere in the world or beyond the world; rather it constitutes the inner structure of consciousness. Therefore when Sartre grants to Heidegger that anxiety is “the apprehension of nothingness”, their disagreement on the concept of nothingness
gives a totally divergent meaning to their definition. The apprehension of nothingness becomes for Sartre the apprehension of consciousness ‘as such’, in its nihiliating activity taken in itself without tending toward any exterior object. Now, in as much as spontaneous consciousness is inseparable from the consciousness of something, anxiety becomes a property of reflective consciousness taking as its object the very activity of spontaneous consciousness. Then there arises a question-why does this reflection cause anxiety?

Because consciousness discovers that nothing, no authority and power in the world, no safeguard and law, be it physical, moral or social, no previously made decision, can protect -it from its own power to deny and to itself. “I am anxiety-stricken to be what I am not, what I have to be. Thus I have decided this or that to go to see a friend, to write a book. I discover that decided that the continuity of this project is not guaranteed by anything unless it be by an act of consciousness, constantly to be renewed, which reconfirms it propels it at every moment out of inertia, laziness, or forgetfulness, into which all projects would lapse if left to themselves. As I reflect upon this emergence of my consciousness, which has no support and which itself is its own Nothingness, I am stricken with anxiety for my freedom: 'anxiety is then the reflective apprehension of freedom itself.'”

By contrast, Heidegger situates nothingness and anxiety outside the sphere of inner life, reflectiveness and subjectivity. Nothingness is described as an event that arises unexpectedly in the world; it is “a withdrawal of being in its totality.” Sartre has recognized this ‘objective dimension’ nothing that, ‘Heidegger makes of nothingness a sort of intentional correlate of transcendence.’ By applying Husserlian vocabulary to Heidegger, Sartre tries to suggest that he commits the error of projecting a phantasmal double of transcendental subjectivity, an error of
logic that amounts to “simply a denial to the predicate to a subject.”

This Heideggean claim about Dasein does not posit itself as an internal negation; it does not posit itself as not being the world. Being-in-the-world is the very unity and identity of Dasein, and cannot be split into two independent parts such as consciousness and world. When compared we find two inverse movements in their thinking, in Sartre the world falls on the side of the "I itself" (being-in-itself), in Heidegger the world constitutes a dimension of Dasein without being subjectified.

In anxiety, Heidegger says, “nothingness presents itself together with Being in totality” (Das nichts begegnet in der Angst in eins mit dem Seienden im Ganzen). Sartre also admits that nothingness can be no more than a modification of being, and it cannot be elsewhere, outside being. Anxiety is merely more clearly sighted, more sensitive to the fact that nothingness is always a dimension of being. “Nothingness does not form the concept antithetical to Being, but from the start, the essence of Being involves nothingness.”

For Sartre the concept of nothingness is consciousness and the concept of anxiety can be formulated with complete precision, it is freedom. That is, according to Sartre, freedom and nothingness are equivalent, he concludes, these two descriptions of anguish do not appear to us contradictory, on the contrary the one implied the other.

Heidegger is mainly concerned with the question of ‘Being’ (Sein). It is the essence, the very meaning of human existence. By ‘Being’ Heidegger means the lighting process by which beings are illumined. Like Indian concept of ‘Atman’ it is conceived as inner light through which we become conscious of our meaning, or of our existence, or existence itself. Being is self-manifested and in a sense it is free and spontaneous. Being is not the abstract concept but the most concrete presence. It is the underived genus, the highest universal. It encompasses all
beings. Being is not understood as self-consciousness or as God, or as ground of the world. Being is that which makes man what he is. But Being is not a being. It is the transcendental ground of Dasein. It is broader than all beings yet nearer to man than all beings.

The Sartrean theory of being-for others is once again developed with a refutation of the corresponding Heideggeran theory of "being-with-others". Here too, Sartre reproaches Heidegger for not making consciousness and negation intervene in the definition of one's relationship to other. The mere look of one makes the other an object. In being looked at "it is never the eyes which look at us, it I type other as subject."21

His second objection is that Heidegger does not understand that inter-subjective relationships are based not on co-existence but on struggle. “The essence of the relations between consciousness is not the Mitsein; it is conflict.”22 Sartre here takes up the Hegelian dialectics of the master and the slave, except that slavery becomes our permanent and instrument-like condition. “I am a slave to the degree that my being is dependent at the centre on a freedom which is not mine and which is the very condition of my being. This dependence is due to the fact that it is the other form that I take my objective being-my nature, my body and all my outwardness. I am a slave because I need the other to constitute me as a body in a world of which I am not a centre. But I am at the same time master, because I am able to turn the other's aggression against him and make of him in his turn an object. The master could not be satisfied unless he were recognised not by a slave but by another master, another subject. But he is never to meet one unless he himself becomes a slave, and so on in an endless play of exchanged roles. Thus the doctrine of Being-with (Mitsein) appears to Sartre as at once alienating.”23
This kind of alienation we can see in Simone de Beauvior's, explanation of a man woman relationship where the woman treats the man as her master, enslaving herself to him. “Woman must forget her own personality when she is in love. It is a law of nature. A woman is non-existent without a master. Without a master, she is a scattered bouquet. She will humble herself to nothingness before him.”

This violent exacerbation of the conflict from a Heideggeran standpoint is the result both of Sartre's reduction of other to a pure object and his interpretation of their out of the mode of instrumentality, . what Heidegger calls 'present at hand'. Sartre would seem to forget that, in . Heidegger's view, my possibilities are always at first (in Heidegger' words: “proximally and for the most part”(Zuzachst und Zumeist) those of the others: it is necessarily among possibilities not my own in the beginning that I choose those which I will appropriate.

However, it is with respect to the interpretation of death that Sartre is most vigorously and viscerally opposed to Heidegger, and to such a degree that he seems to run short of arguments very rapidly. Sartre declares flatly that death is "absurd". When he sums up Heidegger's position, he seems to understand well that being- unto -death means for Dasein "an anticipation and a project of its own death as the possibility of no longer realising presence in the world." Death is important in Heidegger’s system. For Heidegger there is no reality for an individual before birth or after death. The man who recognizes this fact, freely accepts its inevitability. He is no longer bound by fear of death or imaginary retributive punishment after death. He is able to choose his actions, thereby choosing his existence and ultimately his essence. This is man with dignity.

The possibility as what is most entirely its own, that which no one can assume in its place, permits Dasein to be free of the ‘They’ and to discover itself in itself in
its individual uniqueness. Sartre rejects these two points: that death may enter into project, and that it may be a possibility truly different from others. Sartre says “Death,’ cannot be awaited. To expect death is not wait for death. We can wait for only a determined event.”²⁷ For Heidegger, it is confrontation with the possibility of death, which insures the manifestation of angst even in the most rigidly inauthentic people. For Sartre, on the other hand, death plays little role in the recognition of freedom and the experience of anguish. Sartre is of the view that it is only at the time of death that human being is complete. Before death a brave person could become a coward or a coward could become brave. Only death brings an end to freedom.

We had already placed our objection to Heidegger regarding his concept of death. But earlier criticism of Sartre does not bear up, for its death is a project, that is to say a projecting of an extreme possibility from which the horizon of all one's possible is sketched, it could not be an event that Dasein awaits in the passive sense of the world.

Heidegger further argues that human existence is a being-in-the-world that means the very constitution of the individual is constituted by relation of self with others and with the world.

Like Heidegger, Sartre’s and existentialism is phenomenological. Marxism is a theory of history with the prescriptive prognoses for the future. Existentialism explores agency in a spontaneous present, which bestows only a derivative existence on past and future. Marxism is a social theory in which class is the subject and object of change. In existentialism individuals do things and things are done to the individual. Marxism has pretensions to be a science. Existentialism regards science as a part of the very problem of dehumanization and alienation.
Notes and References


4. Ibid, p.11

5. Ibid, p.28

6. Ibid, p.199

7. Ibid, p.86


10. Ibid, p.21

11. Ibid, p.26


16. Ibid, p.39


20. Ibid, p.35


22. Ibid, p. 429

23. Ibid, p.267


27. Ibid, p.534