CULTURE AND HUMAN PERSON

Chapter VI

Genesis:

The research about the genesis of the term person is very interesting, some scholars find it most probable to derive the term from the Greek ‘prosopon’ which means a mask, used by actors. Others find its origin in the phrase ‘peri soma,’ which means around the body. However, majority of researchers trace it to the Latin ‘personare,’ meaning to sound through. Again the reference is to the mask, which was so constructed with a large concave opening at the mouth that the voice of the actor might be thrown toward his audience with more force and volume. Therefore the persona of the Roman stage corresponds to the prosopon of the Greek stage. Hence an original and primitive notion of person refers to the assumption of a character or the carrying out of a role. This reference extended to the role an individual plays in the drama of real life. The person was not only one who could play a role but whose total reality consisted in playing that role. Thus with time this term came to mean the external appearance of an individual, or the part one plays in life, or the assemblage of qualities that fits a man for his work in life or the dignities or distinctions that he achieves. Hence the stoics found it convenient to refer to man as to play a part on the world stage as endowed by God. Stoics were the first among the Greek philosophers to conceive the Supreme Being and cause of universe clearly as providential God. The world was big stage, history a cosmic drama, providence the wise and powerful director who devolved role upon each being. Especially upon each human being, the irreplaceable part which he had to enact in harmonious connection with his fellow actors. Hence he naturally applied a technical stage term which had already extended its meaning from mask to character and part to signify human destiny as distributed by God and delineated in his fundamental gift to each one namely in the characteristic nature by which each individual is distinct from every other. This was a decisive passage from the realm of
external objects to the realm of the subject. This interpretation allowed the Roman law courts to call person a subject to legal rights and duties, i.e. a citizen as opposed to a slave. Thus persons are those human beings to whom the law attributes not only duties but also rights (hence a slave was not a person). Thus the term, now, also predicated of a being no longer of its nature only, but the being which enjoyed consciousness and freedom. Hence it could be the subject of attribution of duties and rights. The dignity thus conferred upon the term ‘person’ induced the Christians to adopt it, for it was able to translate adequately the truths of Revelation, especially the mystery of the holy trinity and of the human incarnation Christ. To quote St. Thomas Aquinas; “Person signifies what is noblest in nature, namely a complete substance of an intellectual kind, and therefore, with all due safeguards, the term should be applied to God, whose nature embraces every perfection.”

According to the Christian doctrine of the Holy Trinity God exists eternally in three persons or hypostases the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – with one substance, nature, or essence. The doctrine of Trinity has its ultimate background in the special religious experience of the Christians in the primitive communities. It consisted of the fact that God came to meet Christians in a three-fold figure:

(1) As creator, Lord of history of salvation, Father and Judge, who revealed himself in the Old Testament.

(2) As the Lord who, in the figure of Jesus Christ, lived among men and was present in their midst as the Resurrected one the Son and

(3) As the Holy Spirit, whom they experienced as the power of the new life, the miraculous potency of the kingdom of God.

The Old Testament emphasizes the oneness of God’s Being or nature and in the new Testament, the idea of Trinity is very clearly expressed as, for example, in the baptismal formula, “baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the son, and the Holy Ghost,” which uses “name” rather than “names” thus indicating one Being in three forms. The apostolic benediction of II Corinthians 13:14, “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God, and the communion of Holy Ghost be with you all,” is Trinitarian. Paul’s
description of salvation as given in Ephesians 1:3-14, involves the three persons of the Godhead and treats them as equally important.

In the general teaching of New Testament separate personality is ascribed to each, yet each is related to and dependent on the others: the father has sent the son in to the world and the spirit is sent by Father and the Son. Identity between persons is also asserted, for Jesus claimed to be one with the Father (John 10:30) Paul averred that “The God is that spirit” (II Cor 3.17-18). Such passages presuppose an inter relationship of three persons within the Being of God that can only be explained by the concept of the Trinity. According to the doctrine, therefore, there is only one true and living God though three persons.

As things subsisting in intellectual nature are usually called persons in Latin or hypostases in Greek, The Latin say that there are three persons in God, and the Greeks say the there are three hypostases, namely, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. According to the traditional understanding of the revelation the three persons are really distinct from one another, yet each person is identified with the one divine nature and therefore there is only one God. The first person called the Father, is said to have eternally begotten the second person, the Son of God. The son assumed a human nature in time and was called Jesus. The third person, called the Holy Spirit, is believed to proceed eternally, according to the Western theology the Holy Spirit proceeds from father alone. Christians believe that despite the eternal processions with in the divinity, there is no subordination; the three persons are equally divine, uncreated and uncaused, eternal and omnipotent. Similarly Christ is understood as being of two nature, one divine, uncreated, eternal and immortal; and the other human, created, temporal and mortal in one person. It is said of Christ that the Son of God is eternal, and that the Son of God was born of the Virgin. Likewise it is also said that Christ was born, died and was buried. Though intimately conjoined, these are in no way mixed in him. His divine nature remains absolutely transcendent, unchangeable, untainted by any finiteness, and his human nature is not absorbed in his divinity, which stands
perfect and complete. Still, this inner duality of natures did not detract at all from the absolute unity of his being.

Thus Christians generalized the term person to denote any single and complete subsistence endowed with intellect, and considered it as the ultimate subject of attribution of knowledge, free activity and rights. Applying this elaborate notion to the revealed mysteries they defined Christ as one divine person in two distinct natures, and God as a Trinity of persons, subsisting equally in the perfect unity of the one divine nature, and distinct only by virtue of their mutual relationships. Further, every human being including slaves, women and even infants, was to be considered and treated as a person. Angels also, i.e. bodiless but finite spirits, were rightly to be called persons.

Boethian Concept of Person:

Boethian Concept of Person:

The semantic evolution reached its height in Boethius, when he defined person as "Persona proprie diciture nature rationalis individua substantia" (The proper definition of 'person' is individual substance endowed with an intellectual nature). This definition remained classical during the whole middle ages. It has the following implications.

1) In the first place, person is a substance:
Substance refers to the underlying, supporting substratum of change and also the idea of individual subject of change. Aristotle pointed out that the term substance can be taken to refer to four different things: the essence, the universal, the genus and the subject. Since the primary referent to the term is that subject of prediction which can not be predicated of anything else, the four meanings can be grouped into two: first substance i.e. the subject of predication and second substance i.e. the other references all of which are general terms capable of representing first substance only incompletely. Substance means that which exist in itself, not in something else. It requires no support, thus it is distinguished from accident. Since substance underlies accident it is called as hypostasis. Substance is a subject of accident for it is a support for accident hence it is known as supposit i.e., that which is placed
under something else. Substance is also known as subsistence i.e., that which needs no support to live on and no subject to inhere in. The Latin subsistere means to stand firm against. So substance stands firm against interference from another, it is autonomous and requires none for its existence. Thus to say that a person is a substance implies that it is a hypostasis or support, that it is a supposit or subject; that it exists in itself and needs nothing to inhere in.

II) Secondly person is an individual substance:

Person is an individual substance. It is individual in itself and distinct from everything else; it is a unit. As an individual substance, person is a first order substance. While the second order substance denotes the generic nature in itself, the first order substance signifies that nature as individually subsistent. Person comes under the genus substance as defining a specific mode of existence and not as a species. It is a substance which neither inheres in nor affirms of any subject. The second order substance is an universal in the genus of substance but first order substance is an individual in the genus of substance when we say a person to be singular then we mean that its singularity is oneness and is real, i.e., it is not a unity due to any kind of grouping together. It is a thing undivided in itself and separate from all other things. It is not a part of any substance. Singularity is proper to subsistent being. To be singular means distinction not only from all other beings in general, but from all other species and all other individuals in its own species also. God is distinct from all finite beings due to his very nature. His singularity is absolutely perfect because he does not belong to any genus or species. In him the three divine persons (The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit) are distinct from each other in virtue of their mutual relations only. A person is a being complete in itself, i.e., part of nothing else; actually nothing that is by nature a part can be a person. Hence the human soul, though subsistent, is not a person. Thus the embodied soul and not disembodied soul is a person. This necessity of being complete is called incommunicability of the person. The individual substance is independent and distinct from all else due to being complete. Its existence is unique enough to establish the subject
as a being in itself, independent from all other. It is not being as self-sufficient or absolute rather as being with its own distinct individuality, which can not be absorbed or assimilated by another. Here emphasis is on self-identity and self-awareness against alienation or self denial.

III) Person is an individual substance of rational nature:

Man is a substance with an autonomous being. He is an individual with an undivided, self-inclusive, distinct, incommunicable being. All this is also possessed by other sublunary beings. Every Plant, animal and material is a substance and an individual, but not person. Man is a person since he owes something more. He is an individual substance endowed with reason. Thus persons are individual substances which stand for above the rest of material beings due to rationality and intelligence. From this follows man's privilege of self-determination in volition and action; thus making man a value in himself and an end in himself. The subsisting individuals are person only if they are rational beings which are self-conscious, self determinative, free and responsible.

St. Thomas Aquinas' Concept of Person:

The Boethian definition of person was accepted by Aquinas. He made some clarification to it by pointing out that when we say a person to be an individual substance. He implies three things: that it is a complete substance, that it subsist by itself, and that it is separate from all else. Now to say that a person is a complete substance is to affirm that it must have a complete nature; person can not be part of anything, neither actually nor potentially. A disembodied soul is not, strictly speaking, a person for a disembodied soul is no longer a complete human substance. Only a complete human substance is always and necessarily a person. Further to say person subsists by itself means it exists in and for itself. Hence as a person, man exists in his own rights. He is the ultimate possessor of his nature and responsible for all the operations of his nature. He is the ultimate subject of predication of all his attributes. He can not exist in another. Person signifies a certain nature with a certain mode of existence or a certain mode of subsistence. It is the function
of the mode of subsistence proper to person to prepare the nature to receive its own existence to render the nature incommunicable, and to make the nature terminated in itself. Subsistence, therefore, adds final determination to nature and thereby constitutes it a person. Some Thomists signify the whole explication by saying that the person is nothing more than the actual existence of an intellectual substance. Lastly to say that person is separate from else is to exclude the possibility of its being a second substance or a universal, for the second substance always rests on first substance and the very notion of universal includes its predictability of several subjects. From this explanation of Aquinas, it follows that person excludes three kinds of communicability: first, that of part to whole, since person is a complete substance, second that of assumption, since person subsists by it self only. The very concept of person excludes the idea of its being communicated to something else. Third, that of universal to singular, since person is a first substance, separate from all else. Thus Aquinas modified the Boethian definition as the person is a complete substance, subsisting by itself, separate from all else, and endowed with a rational nature.

**Cartesian Concept of Person:**

Thomas Aquinas had laid emphasis on the human substance consisting of rational soul and body, but influenced with Plato who believed that human beings were composed of two substances, a body and a soul of which the true self is the soul which lives on even after the death of the body. Descartes laid emphasis on the consciousness of the spiritual substance, the whole essence of which is to think. Descartes took self as a thing which thinks, i.e., a thing which doubts, understands, affirms, denies, wills, refuses, imagines and feels. Hence self identity depends on consciousness. “Thus, simply by knowing that I exist and seeing at the same time that absolutely nothing else belongs to my nature or essence except that I am a thinking thing. [or a substance whose whole essence or nature is to think]. It is true that I may have (or, to anticipate, that I certainly have) a body that is very closely joined to me. But nevertheless, on the one hand I have a clear and
distinct idea of my self, in so far as I am simply a thinking, non extended 
thing, and on the other hand I have a distinct idea of body, in so far as this is 
simply an extended, non thinking thing. And accordingly, it is certain that I 
am really distinct from my body and can exist without it."6 Thus for Descartes 
a human person is self conscious (thinking), non extended consciousness 
which is very intimately conjoined to an extended unthinking body, but can 
exist without it.

**Locke’s Concept of Person:**

Theory of person of Locke is an offshoot of Plato’s and Cartesian 
position. He took a metaphysical position in considerable agreement with that 
which Descartes had arranged in to a system. Locke stated that the world is 
made up of substances. Substances as the basis of characteristics and actions 
are of two types, bodies and souls. A body is a material substance whose 
qualities are extension, solidity or impenetrability and mobility or the power of 
being moved. In addition to material substances there exist spiritual 
substances or souls, which is a rational being with attributes of thinking or the 
power of insight and determination or the power of setting the body in 
motion. Thinking is not the essence but the action of the soul. The soul is an 
immortal or spiritual substance parallel to the physical substance. By putting 
together specific bodily attributes and supposing a support from them, we 
produce a perfection of a corporeal substance by support from them. We 
comprehend the soul substance by reflecting upon the working of our own 
mind, such a thinking, understanding, willing, knowing and power of 
beginning motion, and grouping these to a support or bearer. Locke said : "It 
is plain then that the idea of corporeal substance in matter is as remote from 
our conception and apprehensions as that of spiritual substance or spirit and 
therefore, from our not having any notion of the substance of spirit, we can 
no more conclude its non-existence than we can for the same reason deny 
the existence of body."7

Locke admits that in ordinary way of speaking, the ‘same person’ and 
the ‘same men’ stand for one and the same thing, yet both the expressions
have different denotation. Locke believes that person is not the body but the active soul which continues to exist even after death of the body. Unlike Aristotle who took rationality as the distinguishing feature separating men from other animals, Locke presumed not the idea of thinking or rational being alone that makes the idea of a man but also the idea of a body, so shaped, joined to it. Locke holds that man is an animal and is individuated like other living things. So 'man' refers to a living body of a particular shape. Thus man has to do simply with a certain physical shape. A man is a kind of living organism who’s identity depends on its biological organization. On the other hand Locke defined, ‘Person’ as "a thinking intelligent being, that has reason and reflection, and can consider itself as itself, the same thinking thing in different time and spaces; which it does only by that consciousness which is inseparable from thinking and it seems to me essential to it."8 From this Locke implies that a ‘rational parrot’ would will as a person though not as a man (human being). In this definition Locke specifies some elements which mark our concept of consciousness viz. thinking, intelligence, reason, reflection and ability of first person judgements. These features constitute Locke’s concept of person. For Locke rationality and the possession of reflection or self consciousness or awareness is that which marks off one person from other persons. Locke says that "Personal identity consists.......in the identity of consciousness."9 Consciousness always accompanies thinking, and it is that which makes everyone to be what he calls self, and thereby distinguishes himself from all other thinking things. By consciousness he means that something which can be "interrupted by forgetfulness,"10 and also something that can be ‘extended back’ to the thoughts or actions done by people long since dead and buried. For Locke the person who extends his consciousness back finds himself the same ‘person’ as the person who performed the actions.

John Locke was a Christian so the problem to identity a person as the same person is related for him with the problem of the resurrection. To resolves the problem of resurrection Locke, with the help of many puzzles, gave his theory of person identity. He distinguished men and person to make
it possible for the same person to show up in a different body at the time of resurrection. He sites example of prince and cobbler\textsuperscript{11} for his defense. For Locke it is the consciousness which is crucial for the reward or punishment which one will get at the Last Judgement. Unlike Descartes Locke differentiates between consciousness and the soul. Consciousness may be transferred from one soul to another and so will the personal identity. For Locke one can be the same person even if the thinking substance be changed and one can become a different person while the thinking substance remaining the same, i.e., while the soul being same the person becomes different. Thus the same soul or thinking substance is neither necessary nor sufficient for personal identity. Locke holds consciousness as essential for justice. One cannot be punished for something which one does not remember doing, i.e., memory of the act done is very crucial for justice. Locke chooses consciousness (memory and awareness) as the criteria of personal identity. For him neither body nor soul can furnish good ground for identifying one as the same person but it is memory along with self awareness that forms the criteria for personal identity. His concern for the problem is purely forensic. Hence Locke observed that 'Person' is a forensic term, actually the sameness of a person is intended by Locke to carry with it, legal and moral responsibility for actions. Thence it "belongs only to intelligent agents capable of law, and happiness and misery." \textsuperscript{12}

**Kant on Person:**

Persons were distinct from humans in general. Persons possessed self consciousness and were responsible and accountable beings. A similar idea was also implied by Kant. Kant defined person as

"that which is conscious of the numerical identity of itself at different times". \textsuperscript{13}

He took permanence, therefore substantiality and immortality as the presupposition of the person or soul. Subsistence, reality, unity (not plurality) and existence, though unconditioned in themselves are the conditions of the
possibility of a thinking being. According to Kant the soul knows in itself four kinds of unconditional unities viz:\(^{14}\):

1. the unconditioned unity of relation, i.e., that it itself is not inherent (in something else) but self-subsistent.
2. the unconditioned unity of quality, i.e., that it is not a real whole but simple.
3. the unconditioned unity in the plurality in time, i.e. that it is not numerically different at different times but one and the very same subject.
4. the unconditioned unity of existence in space, i.e. that it is not the consciousness of many things out side it, but the consciousness of the existence of itself only, and of the other things merely as its representations.

"Wherever there is action thence activity and force, there is also substance."\(^{15}\)

Action is sufficient empirical criterion to establish the substantially of a subject. Personality does not at once cease itself, if its activity is interrupted for a time. To be a rational and at the same time an accountable being\(^{16}\) is a predisposition to the personality. In order to be properly accountable a person must be a being both immortal and autonomous. Autonomous means that the moral agent has both freedom and moral responsibility.

Aristotle was the first to approach the question of moral responsibility yet he is as much alive as any modern thinker of our times. His views are quite important to understand the concept of freedom and responsibility. They can be summarized\(^{17}\) as: The moral excellence or virtue has to do with feelings and actions; and these may be voluntary and involuntary. It is only to the former that we assign praise or blame, though when the involuntary are concerned we may find ourselves ready to condone and on occasion to pity. Actions are commonly regarded as involuntary when they are performed (a) under compulsion, (b) as the result of ignorance. An act is done under compulsion when it originates in some external cause of such a nature that the agent or person subject to the compulsion contributes nothing to it. In other words an action is compulsory when it is caused by something external.
to itself that is not influenced by anything contributed by the person under compulsion. Then there are acts done through ignorance. Any act of this nature is other than voluntary, but it is involuntary only when it causes the doer subsequent pain and regret. A man who has been led into some action by ignorance and yet has no regrets can not be said to have been a voluntary agent for he did not know what he was doing, also he can not be said to have acted involuntarily, since he feels no compunction. Aristotle makes a division in acts done through ignorance as (a) Involuntary acts: When a man who has done something as the result of ignorance is sorry for it. (b) Non-voluntary acts: When a man who has done something as the result of ignorance is not sorry for it. An involuntary act being one performed under compulsion or as the result of ignorance, a voluntary act would seem to be one of which the origin or efficient cause lies in the agent, he knowing the particular circumstances in which he is acting. It may happen that actions, though, abstractly considered, involuntary are deliberately chosen at a given time and in given circumstances in preference to a given alternative. Their origin being in the agent and because they are preferred to their alternatives these actions must be called voluntary in the particular circumstances. Choice and the voluntary are not interchangeable expressions, the voluntary having a wider connotation. Thus children and animals are as capable of voluntary action as adult men. But they don't have the same capacity for deliberate choice. Also things done on the inspiration of the moment, though we may call them voluntary, are not said to be done of deliberate choice. Some identify it with desire, some with passion, others with wish, and others with belief or opinion of some kind. But none of these theories carries conviction because not everything that is voluntary is chosen. Therefore only an act of deliberate choice done with reasoning and reflection is clearly a voluntary act. People are punished, in some circumstance, for an offence committed out of ignorance because the offender is held responsible for his ignorance. People are punished for breaking the law through ignorance for it was their business to know and they could have known without much trouble. Any punishment follows also when the ignorance is thought to have been due to carelessness,
it being held that guilty party need not have shown this ignorance. He should have noticed what he was doing it was his duty. So an individual is responsible for his act if and only if the act done by him is a voluntary act in other words actions must be voluntarily done with a deliberate choice before the agent can be regarded as responsible.

It was autonomy in which Kant also found the basic condition of morality. Autonomy or freedom of will consist in the capacity to choose and act on the principles having the form of law. The autonomy of will makes a person a moral agent. It means that the motivation for enforcement of moral laws is not external to the rational being; but it is his own reason, which imposes the moral laws on him. So these are rationally self-imposed and not binding by virtue of some other end. Autonomy is freedom from the influence of subjective impulses, inclinations and personal desires. Kant called the concept of an objective principle, in so far as it is obligatory for a will, a command (of reason), and the formula of the command an imperative. If an action is good only as a means to something else, then the imperative is hypothetical. If an action is conceived as good in itself and consequently the principle of a will which of itself conforms to reason as being necessary, then it is categorical. The categorical imperative is that which represented an action as necessary of itself without reference to another end, i.e., as objectively necessary. It is the moral law that is imposed by conscience upon itself. Categorical imperative is an order that holds unconditionally and universally. Moral imperatives are a categorical, meaning that a person who acts according to them must be motivated autonomously. Hence moral laws must be self-imposed. The only restriction imposed by moral laws is to act in accordance with our autonomy. Hence the categorical imperative is the law of autonomy. This internal law of conscience or practical reason is the ultimate moral standard. Kant believed that only a good will and actions resulting from it have unconditional value. Good will is a will that is good without qualification. It is intrinsically good i.e. its value is wholly self-contained and utterly independent of its external relation. The moral principles are categorical imperatives hence express obligation rather
unconditional obligation to perform certain actions. An action can be necessarily unconditionally obligatory only if the maxim behind it is conceived as a law. This obligation is unconditional, that is it does not follow some particular law but is bound only by the idea of a universal law. For only that is law, which involves the conception of an unconditional and objective necessity, hence universally valid. Those commands are laws which must be obeyed, even in opposition to inclination. The moral life realizes self-determination because only the self-prescribed laws constitute moral obligation. Genuinely moral obligations or imperatives derive from a fundamental principle that is valid for all moral agents. They consist in laws that are universal and categorical. "For as the imperative contains, besides the law only the necessity that the maxims shall conform to this law, while the law contains no conditions restricting it, there remains nothing but the general statement that the maxim of the action should conform to a universal law and it is this conformity alone that the imperative properly represents as necessary. There is therefore but one categorical imperative, namely, this

\[ \text{Act only on a maxim which you can at the same time will to be a universal law.} \]

Hence an autonomous person acts according to those maxims only which are seen by him as universally accepted laws. All imperatives of morality can be deduced from this one imperative alone. Whatever is right is right universally i.e. not from subjective perspective but objectively i.e. for all. So a good will is good universally. Some end motivates every willed action. Kant took this end to be universalized i.e. entire humanity. He treated every human person equally valuable and dignified. "If then there is a supreme practical principle or, in respect of the human will, a categorical imperative, it must be one which, being drawn from the conception of that which is necessarily an end for everyone because it is an end in itself, constitutes an objective principle of will, and can therefore serve as a universal practical law. The foundation of this principle is: rational nature exists as an end in itself. Accordingly the practical imperative will be as follows: So act as to treat
This teaches us to respect the rational self-determination of others and to be inspired from that. Kant conferred the dignity not only upon oneself but all human persons. For him a person can never be a means for some other end but only an end in itself, and this is valid for all human persons. People who treat themselves as of extrinsic value and act as a means for some other end cannot be a person. Thus every human person is a value-loaded end in himself. The concept that every rational being must consider himself as giving in all the maxims of its will universal laws, and to judge himself and his actions from this point of view leads to another concept which is a kingdom of ends.

By a kingdom he understands the union of different rational beings in a system by common laws. The ends are determined as regards their universal validity by laws. One can be able to conceive all ends combined in a systematic whole that is to say a kingdom of ends, if he abstracts from the personal differences of rational beings, and likewise from all the content of the private ends. This law emphasizes upon the unique value of human life as deserving of our ultimate moral respect. From our own self-interest a generalized concern for all human beings is derived. Human dignity is combined with the principle of universalizability in the kingdom of ends which results in the third imperative:

"Act as a member of a kingdom of ends."

or

"A rational being belongs as a member to the kingdom of ends when, although giving universal laws in it, he is also himself subject to these laws. He belongs to it as sovereign when, while giving laws, he is not subject to the will of any other."

or

"A rational being must always regard himself as giving laws either as member or as sovereign in a kingdom of ends which is rendered possible by the freedom of will."
He affirms that it is certainly only an ideal. It emphasizes that all human persons are of equal intrinsic value and should be treated as a member of an ideal society. Everyone is a sovereign subject and never an object for some other end, since every human person has dignity. One must treat others and oneself always as ends and never as a means only, so together we make a kingdom of ends. “Now the legislation itself, which assigns the worth of everything, must for that very reason possess dignity that is an unconditional incomparable worth; and the word respect alone supplies a becoming expression for the esteem, which a rational being must have for it. Autonomy then is the basis of the dignity of human and of every rational nature.”

This last rule takes us back to the original concept of the will itself which is good without qualification. Such will is a necessary and sufficient condition of moral agency. Only those acts which are actually motivated by respect for such rational principles manifest one’s autonomy and thereby have moral worth. We are autonomous for we make our own laws and these laws make us respect others’ autonomy.

For Kant immortality of the soul, the existence of God and freedom of the will are the three postulates of morality. Freedom of the will is the fundamental postulate of morality i.e., it is necessary condition for the fulfillment of morality. ‘You ought’ means ‘you could’, the moral laws imply free will. Hence in the absence of free will morality becomes impossible. Actually rational moral laws presuppose free will. The moral imperatives ensure the freedom of will. Following of the moral laws secure freedom of will hence they are known as the laws of freedom. Human person is a dignified end in itself, due to the rational autonomy which makes us different from all other beings.

**Existential Conception of Person:**

It is in the existential philosophy that one finds a shift of emphasis from self-consciousness to freedom as the chief characteristic of personality.
According to Kierkegaard, a man becomes an “individual” by the exercise of his free choice, by freely giving form and direction to his life. According to Marcel, the characteristic of person is commitment: “I affirm myself as a person in the measure that I assume the responsibility of what I do and what I say. But before whom am I or before whom do I recognize myself as responsible?...both myself and before others; this conjunction is characteristic of personal commitment.” For Marcel, one becomes a person by transcending one’s self-enclosedness in love for other persons and in the free acceptance of a personal relationship to God. Copleston observes: “The existentialists depict man as existing in a literal sense, as standing out from the background of nature; and they emphasize the difference between the human person and the things of nature which man uses. For the existentialist, there is a sharp difference between the Umwelt, the world of things, or objects, and the Mitwelt or world of persons. Thus, in a manner rather reminiscent of Fichte; Heidegger represents the world of things as the field of action of the human person. Again Jaspers insists on the peculiar character of the human being, on his liberty or power of “self-transcendence”, which is the peculiar foundation of human personality.”

Heidegger accepted that there are certain boundaries or limitations within which the human life survives. These ‘boundary situations’ are not of our own choice but bound to overcome us sooner or later. Human being is thrown into this world and has no say in such situations. Among such situations are a great deal of guilt, suffering and death. These are inevitable, irresistible part of human reality. Here Heidegger differentiated between authentic existence and inauthentic existence. Authentic existence implies accepting the above-mentioned life situations and not trying to deny them or trying to evade them. Such authentic existence ensures that a man lives or exists at the level of potential human being or as an end and not as a means or as a thing. Heidegger argued that each person must accept to exist authentically rather than in authentically. To exist authentically implies to choose one’s own way of life and to live his life fully the way he or she wishes.

1 Copleston (p.106) says that contemporary thinkers would say “person”
to live it and at the same time, to accept complete responsibility for his choices. On the other hand, to live unauthentically implies surrendering oneself completely into the umwelt, or the world of things. In doing so one becomes an object, or a thing which can be used by others as a means for some other end. At the same time, one who chooses to exist unauthentically also uses other beings as a means. In such a situation, one loses his individuality and merges in the crowd where all are interchangeable. It is always easier to exist unauthentically rather authentically. It is because here one is satisfied without owing the responsibility of deciding.

Heidegger repudiated to exist at this level, as it is nothing but to live as a thing or an object. Heidegger suggests that each human being has the potential to live as a human rather than a thing, and, hence, he must choose to live authentically to realize his true nature. An authentic person or a conscious morally responsible agent faces up to the life situation and projects his life in the light of the meritability of his own death. He never denies the hard truth of death neither he tries to evade the full significance of death. He is ready to take up the responsibility to choose. He will never lose his particularity or his identity as an indivisible. He will become one day what he wants to be.

Sartre further elaborated Heidegger’s discussion on inauthentic existence. He gave a new term “bad faith”. When someone deceives another person by hiding the truth then it is called a lie; but when he hides truth from himself then it is called bad faith. Bad faith covers those misleading patterns of behaviour by which one seeks to avoid full responsibility of decision making. But one is in bad faith only if he has chosen it for himself. One is aware of the fact or truth, at least partially. Sartre believed that one cannot hide the truth from himself unless one is already aware of the truth. Bad faith cannot come from outside. Sartre illustrated bad faith with an example of a woman who goes out with a man who loves her. She is fully aware of his intention and knows that sooner or later she will have to make a decision. During the show when he caresses her hand there is an immediate need of decision making. There can be minimally two behaviour patterns, either she leaves her
hands or she withdraws it. If she leaves her hand then it will encourage his advances and if she withdraws it then it may deny any future relationship with the man. Instead of deciding if she seeks means for postponing the decision, then it is at this point that “Bad faith” comes into play. Not only she leaves her hand in his as if it does not belong to her but she also does not notice that she is doing so. She makes her hand “a thing”, which neither consents nor resists. She objectifies her body and ultimately herself, as in-itself, and thus prepares a ground for an escape from herself as for-itself. She looses her subjectivity, her freedom and her responsibility for decision. She exists in bad faith. The act of bad faith proves that we aim to evade our responsibility, but according to Sartre we are compelled to be responsible.

In ‘Being and Nothingness’ Sartre was concerned with understanding of the general structure of what he called human reality. The massive world with which an individual is confronted is called “being-in-itself”, while “being-for-itself” is the individual’s own consciousness

(i) **Being-in-itself (en-soi):**

When Being is considered purely in-itself i.e. even before human consciousness has named and classified, then it simply ‘is’. “Being is. Being is in-itself. Being is what it is.” All whatever can be said about the being-in-itself is that it is massive, undifferentiated, amorphous, and senseless existence. It is a plenum, completely filled lacking any potentiality. Nothing more can be said about it; Being simply is. It is everything except the human consciousness. When consciousness arrives upon the scene whatever is there to confront it is being-in-itself. To human consciousness, being-in-itself is disgusting nauseating, senseless and absurd. It can be contrasted against the other primal mode of being, being-for-itself.

(ii) **Being-for-itself (pour-soi):**

In comparison to the inert, unintelligible, and nothing other than what it is, i.e. the being-in-itself, being-for-itself never is, but continuously has to become. Being in-itself is already ‘is’ and has no becoming. One of the most important characteristics of being-for-itself is precisely the ability to stand apart from objects, i.e. to transcend them. Sartre stressed this capacity to
transcend itself, or to project states of affairs different from those now in existence, as one of the defining characteristics of being-for-itself. "I am not the self which I will be." One can never identify himself with his past achievements, nor with what he is doing in the present since being-for-itself is a continuous becoming. One always looks toward the future and projects what he wishes to do, how he wishes to change himself and what he wishes to become. Among all the beings in the universe only human being is characterized as a being-for-itself. Sartre claimed that there is no essence for man as a being-for-himself. Human being will become only what he makes of himself; he owes the credit and responsibility for that. Pure being-for-itself is a lack, an emptiness, a nothingness; since it lacks any potential. When Sartre considered the being-for-itself he said that "existence precedes essence", i.e. an individuals pre-reflective awareness necessarily exists prior to his nature or character. Man acquires his essence by the choices which he makes for himself, no one is born with it. Human being is always a combination in his person of both being-of-itself and being-in-itself. The values are in general conferred upon the world by the for-itself; and in particular the "human reality is that by which values arrive in the world." Sartre insisted that each human being creates his own values, even if these values of his happen to be those of the majority of the people in his culture.

Another form of bad faith is exhibited in those persons who constitute themselves completely as beings-for-others. These persons see themselves merely as what other people want them to be. One wants to become a doctor, engineer, civil servant etc. because his parents want him to be so. The responsibility of choosing one's own future can be escaped by allowing one's life to be run in the way in which others (parents, relatives, friends etc.) desire. Sartre believed that to live one's life towards his death is to live his life from the viewpoint of others. One will care about what others make of him after he is dead. This will make him to live in such a way that he shall be pleased with the image they will construct of him. But this is not to choose one's own existence for himself, but to again allow others to choose his being for him. Living a life from others point of view is escape from responsibility of
decision making, hence bad faith. Sartre observed that death is absurd since it is the end of all possibilities. Hence he did not accept Heidegger’s view that in an authentic existence one lives his life as a project toward his own death; since death is the end of life, it removes all meaning from life.

Since deciding for oneself is utmost important for Sartre, hence he believed that one can view himself as a person, a being-for-itself only when he understands himself as the being who is projecting what he wishes to become into the future. Though one is not already what he will become; but his decisions and acts reflect the image of himself that he is attempting to achieve in the world. Even when one adopts the conventional values of his group, he is the one who denotes them as values for himself: “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 flower bed or on the lawn, the one from whom the boss’s order borrows its urgency, the one who decides the interest of the book which he is writing, the one finally who makes the values exist in order to determine his action by their demands.”

It was in Jean-Paul Sartre that existentialism found its most powerful advocate of freedom. He gave a famous dictum: "Existence precedes essence", meaning that there is no pre-defined essence to humanity accept that which we make for ourselves. According to Sartre man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world and defines himself afterwards. Human being will be what he makes of himself; he is “condemned to be free”. Condemned because man has not created himself and did not have the choice of coming or not to this world; or he was “thrown into the world” to use Heideggerian phrase. But then-after he is responsible for living on and free in interpreting it. Sartre regarded responsibility as the necessary consequence of inalienable human freedom. Traditionally moral responsibility has been linked with God. God is the ultimate guarantor of values and sanctions. Sartre repudiated both components of the traditional view; he regarded God as an impediment of human freedom and responsibility.
Atheistic Sartre held that God did not exist and all the possibility of finding values in haven disappeared along with him. So man must exercise his freedom and take responsibility in creating values.

For Sartre the most significant characteristic of human person is freedom. If man is to choose the kind of person he is to become then it means that he must be free to make such choice and to act in such a way as to realize his choice. Sartre was convinced that human responsibility makes sense only if there is no God. Divine fore knowledge and predestination necessarily excludes the alternative options and hence responsibility. It is freedom which differentiates human person from all other beings. Freedom permits man to make his own essence: "Human freedom precedes essence in man and makes it possible; the essence of the human being is suspended in his freedom. What we call freedom is impossible to distinguish from the being of 'human reality'.”

He said, "I am condemned to be free. This means that no limits of my freedom can be found itself or, if you prefer, that we are not free to cease being free." This means that one must constantly choose each moment of life, by all his actions, thoughts, feelings and hopes the kind of person one want to become. Also one can blame neither his heredity, nor his environment for his personality. He is free and consequently responsible for his freedom. "Freedom is the freedom of choosing but not the freedom of not choosing. Not to choose is, in fact, to choose not to choose." Hence man is condemned to be free. He can not escape, although he may try by many ways to mask his freedom or to surrender it. Even in such disguised forms it is he who has chosen and he is responsible for it.

Choosing presupposes freedom and entails self evaluation. For Sartre freedom is the most fundamental value which renders possible all other values, the way our fundamental plan precedes and grounds our small choices. In that sense freedom is the source of all values. To say that freedom is the highest value means that human existence is the highest value, not some ideals, pleasures, power, happiness etc. In order to freely value anything one must value freedom in the first place. Hence, it is
existentially inconsistent to freely choose un-freedom and thus it is not possible to avoid free choosing. Human being is filled with anguish when he realizes that ultimately he is his own maker. One’s consciousness of his own ultimate freedom assures him that he alone sustains values in being, and that there is always the possibility for him to question the values he has so far adopted and to choose new ones in their place. This is not a realization over which he would ordinarily rejoice. In fact, Sartre maintained that most men would rather be born in to a world where values are predetermined, where they need not choose them. One is filled with anguish when he realizes that he creates his own values, because he can no longer say that God gave him a moral coré, nor even that his society has presented him with the ready-made values which he must adopt. The full realization of one’s responsibility for his values comes to him as a consequence of his freedom. “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, this or that particular scale of values.... I do not have nor can I have recourse to any value against the fact that it is I who sustain values in being. Nothing can ensure me against myself, cut off from the world and from my essence by this nothingness which I am. I have to realize the meaning of the world and of my essence; I made my decision concerning them – without justification and without excuse........In anguish I apprehend myself at once as totally free and as not being able to drive the meaning of the world except as coming from myself.”

Sartre described the commitment to freedom as the one absolute value; and absolute freedom means absolute responsibility: “For I declare that freedom, in respect of concrete circumstances, can have no other end and aim but itself; and when once a man has seen that values depend upon himself, in that state of forsakenness he can will only thing, and that is freedom as the foundation of all values.... We will freedom for freedom’s sake, in and through particular circumstances. And in thus willing freedom, we discover that it depends entirely upon the freedom of others and that the
freedom of others depends upon our own......I cannot make liberty my aim unless I make that of others equally my aim.34

**Humanistic Conception of Person:**

To be person requires, Rationality, Free will (Volition). Person is necessarily a part of human group, a community. There can be no personhood in a man who was born and lived in solitude say forest. What makes person a person is his role in his community. Rationality and volition, the two most important factors of personhood function only in a community. Without community rationality and volition will be of least use in human development. They may help a human in solitude to secure food water and shelter i.e. fulfill his bodily requirement, but add nothing to personhood.

In addition to rationality, volition and being a part of human group there is an evaluative capability or aspect of the human person. Evaluative is differentiated from factual; in other words human activity from natural. Whenever there is standard, there is measurement also. From measurement arises value. Value is not quality of the object e.g. we say price of something is Rs. 50. This cost is not its quality, which may be white, red, green etc. and soft, hard etc. Redness, harness etc. are its qualities but the cost (Rs. 50) is not its quality. This value is due to our implanted standard. Broadly speaking price is also a value. The idea of value originally came primarily from economics. But, actually value is prior to the price. We regard some things as valuable or important, because there are things which are essential for our requirement, say for social requirements or existential requirements e.g. food, clothes, water, shelter are essential for the life of human beings. Man converted this value into price by inventing money.

Apart from the quality that is present in that thing (the object) in the grass there is greenness, smoothness etc. value is not its quality. Value is implanted on the things by humans due to our requirements and way of living. The extension of this concept of value is also found in those dimensions of human life which are very essential for man to become human beings. So when this economic concept of value extends in man’s life then
that value enforces itself on second order (e.g.) which life is valuable to which we will call important in human life: quality of life, standard of living, virtue, education etc.

Evaluation or measurement is something that one do as human being. This is an inherent tendency as civilized human being, not necessarily educated. Because even those people who are not educated they are civilized for example jungle people, they are not very much educated still they evaluate. They have their own code of conduct stating something bad or wrong. They have certain values. Animals don't have values but man, whenever he is in community, though he may or may not be educated, always evaluate things. Tendency to evaluate is there in man, not because he is human being but because he lives in a society in a community. This does not mean that the concept of value is given to us by the society only. For if they are given by the society then they would have been anywhere even in the animals also, but it is not so. No animal of this world who even has language and live in a community has ideals.

The tendency to evaluate is due to living in a community and also due to the social future, i.e. the ideal of what one wants to be in the future. The realization of ideals is the journey for the search of the values. Though animals have a community life, they lack ideals. They have no ideals for attainment in the future. In human beings the conception of ideals is clear due to community life. But ideals are not given by community, had it been so feelings of ideals would be found in everything living in a community. But it is not so. It is not a necessary product of community, actually to evaluate, to have a standard or ideal is a human quality which is manifested only in a community. It is not found without community life; but this does not mean that conceptions of ideal are given solely by the society only. Had it been so it would have been found in animals also. Most of the animals are social creatures. They have some sort of language also. They even have an emotional life also but concept of ideals is not found in them. It is a unique human quality which sprouts in a community, outside community life it does not sprouts. Like seed getting earth but not water does not sprouts.
Community does not produce ideals, it only provides favourable environment for its facilitated manifestation. Human beings have many attributes like rationality, sensitivity etc. To be human person necessarily requires thinking capacity also, particularly evaluative thinking i.e. ideals. Evaluative thinking helps humans to plan for future, for what ought to be.
References:

2 Boethius: De Persona et Duabus Naturas: C.III
3 Aquinas, Thomas: Summa Theologica, p.I, q. 2, a. 2, reply to obj. 3.
4 Ibid, p.I, q.29, a.1, reply to obj.2
5 Plato: Phedo, Arguments from the immortality of soul.
6 Descarts, Rene: Meditation on Philosophy: sixth Meditation, trans. by Cottingham Stoothuff, and Muedoch.
7 Locke, John: Essay Concerning Human Understanding, Chapter XXIII.
8 Ibid, BK II, Chapter 27, p 448-49.
9 Ibid, p. 460
10 Ibid, p.450
18 Kant, Emmanuel: Metaphysics on Morals, p.31
19 Ibid, p.38
20 Ibid, p.46-47
21 Ibid, p.51-52
22 Ibid, p.54
23 Copleston: Contemporary Philosophy, p.117
24 Ibid, p. 108
26 Ibid., p.31
27 Ibid., p. 68
28 Ibid., p.93
29 Ibid., p.39
30 Ibid., p. 25
31 Ibid., p. 439
32 Ibid., p. 481
33 Ibid., pp.38,39,40.
34 Sartre, "Existentialism Is a Humanism" in Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre, pp.307-308.