CHAPTER THREE

THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL BASIS OF LITERATURE
Literature, according to Sartre, has the philosophic task of illuminating man's social situation and also the idea that he has of himself. The task of the writer is deduced by Sartre from his philosophical theory regarding the nature of literature. It is to save the world from contingency and in doing so to make the best possible use of his freedom. Literature, according to Sartre, is the expression and embodiment of man's reality as an ontological being, a being who is in the world. It is the self-affirmation of man's unique status as a creative and aesthetic being.

Art and literature are continuously unfolding a fundamental concern for man, and the novels and plays of Sartre are only explications of some of the metaphysical speculations regarding life and death. Thus, the work of literature always has an imposing human seal in all its multi-faceted concerns for man. Literature, however, can have meaning only in a society where men are socially and politically free. If the condition of freedom is not fulfilled, then the world cannot be reclaimed by being revealed. In that case, the final aim of literature will not be fulfilled.
It is evident from the above passages that Sartre seeks to locate his philosophical theory of what is literature in the anthropological considerations regarding the nature and reality of man. Sartre looked for the revelations with regard to such questions as: why does man live, and what does he live for. These questions have been answered, however, sceptically and even negatively, in his novels, plays and stories.

As such, our immediate concern in this chapter is to make an attempt to explore this relationship between man and literature and to see to what extent literature has a rootedness in the anthropological perspective. We must therefore explore the possibility of having access to the ontological/metaphysical dimensions of man's existence. Speaking about the nature and the reality of man, Sartre says:

As such...I am necessarily a consciousness (of) freedom since nothing exists in consciousness except as the non-thetic consciousness of existing. Thus my freedom is perpetually in question in my being...it is very exactly the stuff of my being.

Sartre says that the true meaning of human behaviour, therefore, transcends egoism, altruism and disinterest as man seeks to become his own foundation. He cannot
torn himself away from the world unless he tears himself
away from himself. Man is condemned to be free and
therefore to bear the weight of the whole world on his
shoulders. Consequently, human reality itself is
conceived by Sartre as the expression of freedom.

Every act is an expression of our freedom to the extent
that it manifests itself as effluence of the original
choice which we ourselves are. He says further:

the will, far from being the unique or at least
the privileged manifestation of freedom,
actually-like every event of the for-itself-
must presuppose the foundation of an original
freedom in order to be able to constitute itself
as will. The will in fact is posited as a reflect-
tive decision in relation to certain ends.”

(italics mine)

Man’s being has the dual characteristic of having
facticity and transcendence. He calls intention the
fundamental structure of human reality. This means
that we go beyond the given towards a result to be
achieved. The intentional choice of the end reveals the
world not as it is but as it is ought to be. Consequently,
it is in the light of the non-being that being itself
is illuminated. Negation comes into the world through
human reality, which can realize a nihilating rapture
with the world and with himself. The permanent possibility
of this capture is the same as freedom. Freedom is nothing but the existence of our will or of our passions in so far as this existence is the annihilation of facticity.\footnote{5}

The freedom which man becomes conscious of is anguish and is the sole source of value for it reveals the nothingness through which the world exists. Choice with respect to these possibilities is guided by the value conferred on them by freedom or by the ideal presence of the ultimate being - the final even though unattainable human goal.\footnote{6}

The above philosophical position brings reminiscences of Michelangelo who said "I acknowledge no rival and accept no judge."\footnote{7} This statement describes the attitude of Cézanne which enabled him to give bizarre, pessimistic, perverse, and bewildering appraisals of the human situation. He is profoundly and self-consciously individualistic in his interpretation of the human situation. However, he exploits the analytical tools of the Marxists and embraces their concern for action, though he discards their qualities.

The work of art is gratuitous because it is an absolute end and it proposes itself to the spectator
as a categorical imperative. However, this categorical imperative would be fulfilled if literature enables the reader to realize the situation fully and to take the call of the work to respond to the responsibility. Sartre calls such a literature a "Literature of desperate situations." It is clear that freedom becomes freedom by suspending and negating the real. Therefore, freedom can only be possible through freedom. Sartre rejects the possibility of gloomy literature and says, "However dark may be the colours in which the writer paints the world, he paints it only so that free men may feel their freedom as they face it." According to Sartre, there are only good and bad novels. The bad novels aim to please by flattering, whereas the good novel is a demand and an act of faith.

Sartre's theory of literature demystifies the escapist illusions and plunges us into the real world of morality, desire and politics. The ugliness of the reality is accepted and sanctioned as an ontological given. His conception of freedom seems to function as an ideology superimposed on extreme splits and contradictions in terms of a logic of mastery and repression. In the opinion of La Capra, literature
has been treated by Sartre as aesthetic "modification" of human project, which offers a general theory of communication in the light of phenomenological ontology. 14

Sartre identifies man with the intentionality of the writer, for the writer through his literary writings tries to reconstruct the individual on the other side of the universe. 15 If he writes about Godot, it is in order to hear himself as another; when he writes, it is in order to read himself. The writer through the medium of literature seeks to break the antinomy between the individual and the collective which was a dilemma even to Sartre himself. In the theoretical domain, language becomes a form of life and intersects the historical and political realities which threaten to define man's existence. 16

Literature, thus, represents a definitive commitment to the most radical class doctrines and to the general theory of praxis. It no longer remains a question of unreflecting reflection on the relation of ends and means, but becomes active support of any means to the revolutionary end. Therefore, the philosophical writer or a literary philosopher has the responsibility not to slip
into mis-leading literary expressions or allusions which defy the human ends and go contrary to our perceptions of what is to be human.\textsuperscript{17}

Sartre had also defined and outlined the contours of what is literature in the sense of its relationship to a man who is "brutally integrated in history and... driven to make a literature of historicity".\textsuperscript{18} In fact Sartre emerged most fully through his literary and philosophical call to revolt.\textsuperscript{19}

He reinforced his theoretical concern for social action by pleading for substitution of dogmatic dialectic by critical dialectic for a proper understanding of human history and human actions.\textsuperscript{20} The individual, for Sartre, is the basis of the historical dialectic. The social actions are the result of human praxis which is manifested in a series of intelligible dialectical processes.

Sartre traces the development of groups in order to arrive at "an understanding of a concrete individual being - the historical man"\textsuperscript{21} through a social dialectic which is discovered in individual praxis. Sartre seeks to have an access to 'Truth' for he says "praxis is the
measure of man and the foundation of truth". 22

Hence, the individual cannot escape history since he already exists within historical totalities. In social experience there is a nexus towards totalization which always tends towards praxis or action. It is never merely an act of contemplation. 23 It is for this reason that even though the good for the universal mankind was endemic to Sartre's organic existence he had rejected metaphysics of dialectical materialism which according to him cannot account for the free creative practice of man. 24 Consequently, Sartre asserted that the "only practical and dialectical reality is individual action". 25

Sartre thus speaks of man in the context of consciousness and praxis and maintains that the cogito must be our point of departure. Human reality is being in so far as within its being...it is the unique foundation of nothingness at the heart of being. 26 (Italics mine).

He, thus, returns to the plane of pre-reflective cogito as the primary consciousness. The very nature of this consciousness is such that for it 'to be' and 'to know itself' are one and the same. Sartre calls it non-
positional 'self consciousness'.

In his *The Transcendence of Ego*, Sartre lays down two fundamental principles concerning the pre-reflective consciousness which are basic in his later works. Firstly, he follows Husserl in holding that all consciousness is consciousness of something i.e., consciousness is intentional and directive, pointing to a transcendent object other than itself. This constitutes the nucleus for Sartre's later view of man's being in the world. Secondly, the pre-reflective cogito is non-personal. Sartre also makes sharp distinction between the individual consciousness in its purity, and the psychic qualities of the personality. He holds that the ego stands as the ideal unity of all of one's states, qualities and actions. It is the "flux of consciousness constituting itself as the unity of itself". Thus the ego is a synthesis of interiority and transcendence.

Ego stands in the same relation to all the psychic objects of consciousness as the unity called the world stands in relation to the physical objects of consciousness. Both world and ego are transcendent objects — in reality, ideal unities. They only differ, however,
in that the psychic is dependent on consciousness and in one sense has been constituted by it whereas objects in the world are not created by consciousness.

According to Sartre, consciousness infinitely overflows the 'I' which ordinarily serves to unify it. This becomes the foundation for his view of anguish - the germ of his doctrine of bad faith and the basis for his belief in the absolute freedom of consciousness. He says "consciousness is afraid of its own spontaneity because it feels itself to be beyond freedom."\footnote{31} In other words, we feel anguish before our recognition that nothing in our own pasts is discernible. Personality ensures our following any of the usual patterns of conduct, and consciousness can make a wholly new choice of its way of being.

In his \textit{Psychology of Imagination}, Sartre constitutes a basis for his later presentation of nothingness. He draws a basic distinction between imagination and perception and rejects the opinion that imagination is a vague and faded perception. He says that the objects of both are the same, but what distinguishes the two is the conscious attitude towards the object.\footnote{32}
His conclusions lead to questions of wider significance. The two questions which arise in this context are:

1) Is the imaginary function a contingent and metaphysical specification of the essence of consciousness or should it be described as a constitutive structure of that essence?

2) Are the necessary conditions for realizing an imaginative consciousness the same or different from the conditions of possibility of consciousness in general?

Sartre stresses the fact that in imagination object is posited either as absent, non-existent, existing else-where or neutralized. In order to effect such a positing, the consciousness must exercise its peculiar power of nihilation which means that an object, to be posited as absent or not existing, must presuppose the ability to constitute emptiness or nothingness with respect to it. Sartre goes further than this and says that in every act of imagination there is really a double nihilation. In this context, he makes an important distinction between being in the world and being in the midst of the world.
In his theory of emotions, Sartre discusses the constitution and organisation of the world by the consciousness in a different way. He rejects the idea that emotions are forces which can sweep over one and determine consciousness and its actions. Sartre defines emotion as simply a way by which consciousness chooses to live its relationship to the world. Our perception constitutes the world in terms of demands.\(^{33}\) In addition to this, Sartre discusses the notion of 'facticity' or our being there in the world. He says that emotion is:

> a transformation of the world when the past traced out becomes too difficult or when we see no path and we can no longer live in so urgent and difficult a world. All the ways are barred. However, we must act, so we try to change the world, i.e. to live as if the connection between things and their potentialities were not ruled by deterministic processes, but by magic.\(^{34}\)

As such, according to Sartre, emotion is a magical transformation which is achieved by annihilating the world, by nullifying our connection with it. Emotion is a personal relation of the consciousness to the world. It may be temporarily satisfying, but it is fundamentally ineffective and transient with no direct power to affect the environment.
Sartre shows concern with the living persons and their concrete emotions of anguish, despair, nausea and the like. This existentialist concern of his is expressed largely in his purely literary works. Of all his novels, *La Nausée*, written in 1937 is the richest in philosophical content. In fact one might truthfully say that the full exposition of its meaning would imply interpretation of the full text of *Being and Nothingness*.

There is the realization on the part of the hero of *La Nausée*, Roquentin, that being in general and he himself in particular are undergoing a kind of existence which is contingent, gratuitous, and unjustifiable. It is absurd in the sense that there is no reason for it, no outside purpose to give it meaning, and no direction. Being is there and outside of it is nothing. Sartre developed the theory of the transphenomenality of being. Roquentin realizes that since he is an existent, he cannot escape this original contingency.

we were a heap of existents inconvenience, embarrassed, vaguely ill at ease, felt superficial in relation to the others. Superficial: that was the only connexion I could establish between those trees, those gates, those pebbles. It was in vain that I tried to count the chestnut trees, to situate them in relation to the Vellads... isolated itself, overflowed...they no longer had any grip on things. Superficial, the chestnut
tree, over there, opposite me, a little to the left. Superfluous. The Velleda...35 (italics in original)

The second important theme in the novel is the concept of nausea itself. Nausea is the taste of my facticity, the revelation of my body to me and of the fact/my inescapable connection with being in itself. In the novel, Sartre is primarily concerned with the sensations which accompany Rouquelin’s perceptions that through possessing a body he partakes in the existence of things.

I exist. It’s sweet, so sweet, so slow. And light; you’d swear that it floats in the air all by itself. It moves. Little brushing movements everywhere which melt and disappear gently, gently. There is some frothy water in my mouth. I swallow it; it slides down my throat, it caresses me...unassuming – touching my tongue. And this pool is me too. And the tongue. And the throat is me.36

The above quotation finds a direct reference in Sartre’s Being and Nothingness wherein he says

This is what consciousness expresses in anthropomorphic terms by saying that being is superfluous (de trop) – that is, that consciousness absolutely cannot derive being from anything, either from another being, or from a possibility, or from a necessary law, uncreated, without reason for being, without any connection with another being, being-in-itself is de trop for eternity.37 (italics in original)
La Nausea, thus, truly symbolises the ideal form of an existential novel. Cast in the form of the diary of Antoine Roquentin, each sequence of events in this work turns upon, embodies or illustrates one or the other of Sartre's philosophical ideas. Roquentin is awakened to his full self as a free being not by logic but by things. He is indeed a remarkably free man with no job, no family and none of the so-called ties to bind him down. He can do what he wants and live where he chooses.

However, Sartre is making an attempt to depict that in spite of his tremendous desire to be free, Roquentin is not really free. He is degage or uncommitted. It is one of the central beliefs of Sartre that degagement is only a mockery of freedom. It literally amounts to, in his opinion, a form of running away from freedom.

Manifestly, Roquentin is not happy either. He has no friends. His only conversation is with casual acquaintances that he makes. His one time mistress Anny had also forsaken him and lived in Paris. His time is spent mostly in a kind of dull depression with intermittent spasm of nausea, vertigo and acute anxiety which in the opinion of Sartre are intimations of meta-
physical reality. Roquentin is tall but not handsome. Looking into the mirror he finds that he can understand nothing of his face. "Other people's faces have some significance. Not mine. I cannot even decide whether it is handsome or ugly. I think it is ugly, because I have been told so." 38

Roquentin attributes the fact of not being able to understand his face to the fact that he is alone and if he were living in the midst of other people, he could have seen his image through the mirror of others. Therefore, we find Sartre giving a lot of importance to the role played by other people in determining one's nature and indeed one's very being.

The core of Roquentin's trouble is that he is alienated from reality itself. Yet, the awareness of the world encompasses him. He feels the impact of this awareness on his inner psychical self and it sickens him and gives him nausea. He feels his freedom slipping away from him. The external world becomes more and more unbearable, and the sensation of nausea becomes chronic.

Roquentin writes "It calls me...nausea is not inside me...I'm the one who is within it." Speaking
about himself he says "And I - weak, languid, obscene, digesting, tossing about dismal thoughts - I too was superfluous." Roquentin expresses his loneliness in the following words:

I felt such utter loneliness that I thought of committing suicide. What held me back was the idea that nobody, absolutely nobody would be moved by my death, that I would be even more alone in death than in life.

The above position regarding objects, people and the self being de trop reveals how the concept of absurdity is taking roots in the mind of Roquentin. Just a gane at the black root of a chestnut tree makes him plunge into an intensely horrible ecstasy and it is just then that he understands what nausea signifies and what existence is. He cannot give expression to this experience, but it strikes him that the crucial point here is contingency. He says that one cannot define existence as necessity. To exist is simply to be there.

So this is Nausea: this blinding revelation? ...Now I know: I exist - the world exists and I know that the world exists. That's all. But I don't care.

Roquentin is the kind of person to whom the questions of metaphysics are those of life and death. In a universe where the laws are contingent, he finds no
solace and no security. This is a predicament which seems central to the thought structure of Sartre. In the universe one is forced to contemplate, imagine, and visualize, possibilities not governed by necessary laws. It was like the experience of anguish in the lonely sinner separated from God for whom without God, there is darkness. Roquentin cannot get reconciled to the fact that he is living in a universe which has no rigid and predictable system moving according to inexorable laws; and this is a terrifying thought for him.

It seems that being an atheist, Sartre who understands men’s thirst for God, wishes to teach men that we must learn to live with our thirst forever unsatisfied. It is the consciousness of the unpredictability of the universe that gives rise to a feeling of dread. Roquentin passes from his dread to the cause of it, and in so doing, he discovers new truths. If the universe is contingent it is also free, because contingency is itself the only absolute. Freedom is not something to be found in running away from commitment. It is already there in the universe in his own conscious being.
Another theme which Sartre seeks to highlight through this work of fiction is that if a man is free, he is also responsible for everything. He is not a cog in the machine, a creature of circumstances and destiny, a puppet or a robot. Man is what he makes of himself, and for what he makes himself he alone is answerable. Responsibility is not an easy thing to bear, for it is accompanied by the most tormenting of all afflictions, namely, guilt.

Roquentin indulges in an unending process of self-deception. He thinks that in evading responsibilities and in pursuing an uncommitted way of life, he can escape guilt and uneasiness, but there is no getting away from one's responsibility. It is part of the nature of things and a necessary consequence of man's free being. However, self-deception, according to Sartre, is a very common thing. Many people live out their whole lives in mauvaise foi - bad faith. The diary of Roquentin is that of a man passing from self-deception to at least the beginnings of self-knowledge.

Most of the characters in the novel are seeking for justifications for the great question "Why live?"
Even Roquentin's mistress, Amy, is subjected to the same tormenting experience, even though she lives with another man - an Egyptian. Consequently, she is desperate and does not know what to do with her life. Roquentin sees emptiness in her life and tells himself "I can do nothing for her. She is as solitary as I." Therefore, the essence of the whole thematic structure of La Nausée can be symbolised by the maxim "There are no reasons for living," for the world has given them nothing to live for. Roquentin had only sought to escape from the problem but he could not, for the problem forced itself upon his awareness.

Perhaps, the decisive illumination comes to Roquentin towards the end of the novel which becomes the moment of his conversion also. By listening to a favourite record of American Jazz music he imagines the composer - a Jewish musician in his apartment in New York - finding a reason for living, by creating this simple little song. So he thinks to himself, behind the existence which falls from one present to the next, without a past, without a future, behind these sounds which decompose from day to day, peels away and slips towards death, the melody stays the same, young and firm.42
A new awareness and a new possibility dawns upon Roquentin. He asks himself "If, him, why not I?" Why should he, Antoine Roquentin not make a reason for living, give a meaning to life by doing something creative? However what he creates should not be just a mere biography or history about something that has existed, for one existent can never justify the existence of another. Consequently, Roquentin decides to write a novel. The experience is reminiscent of an earlier passage from *La Nausée*

> Nothing has changed and yet everything exists in a different way. I can't describe it; it's like the Nausea and yet it's just the opposite: at last an adventure is happening to me and when I question myself I see that it happens that I am myself and that I am here; it is I who am piercing the darkness.43 (Italics in original)

Sartre works out with impeccable logic the problems in this beautiful novel. Each stage of his enlightenment follows rationally from the other. Perhaps it implied that Sartre pleaded for salvation through art in this novel.

Within the larger notion of the human condition, Sartre considers such concrete problems as love, hate, sex, the crisis of anguish and the trap of bad faith.
He also sketches the approach by which we can ascertain the original choice of being by which real individuals have made themselves what they are. He discards any possibility of their being a noumenal world behind the phenomenal and indicates the supremacy of the trans-phenomenality of being.

Sartre makes a distinction between being in-itself, that is, the unconscious being and being-for-itself, ie conscious being. This raises the question as to how the two can be reconciled. Man poses these questions about himself because of the presence of nothingness in him.

That non-being is the condition of transcendence towards being is revealed through the analysis of the concept of nothingness. However, it is amazing how man can be his own nothingness and also be responsible for the upsurge of nothingness into the world.

Sartre seems to suggest here that nothingness is revealed to us most fully in anguish and that man tries to escape this anguish — by means of bad faith. The study of bad faith reveals to us that whereas being-in-itself simply is, a man is the being who "is what he is not and who is not what he is." The above sentence means that a man continuously makes himself. He is not
what at any moment we might want to say that he is and he is that towards which he projects himself, but which he is not yet. This ambiguity provides the possibility for bad faith. The 'is' of his being is evanescent. Instead of being, he has to be, i.e. his present being has meaning only in the light of the future towards which he projects himself.

This for-itself is the realm of nothingness and as such identical with a future project. It is therefore a pursuit of being in the name of self-realisation. For-itself as such becomes negation of being-in-itself and involves the questions of possibility, value, temporality. What then is the bridge between being-in-itself and being for-itself, Sartre seems to suggest that this bridge is self awareness.

In the context of the discussion regarding the nature of in-it-self, Sartre brings forth two fundamental points of use. First, how can we be in the midst of in-it-self without losing freedom? He gives the details of his ideas of freedom and facticity. Second, our relation to being can be realised through our desire to appropriate it through action.
Literature and truth are the notions bound up in the abstract and negative movement of becoming self-conscious. A writer chooses to write in order to escape oppression. After writing he feels that he has escaped from his milieu and class. He attains to higher levels of the truth through the mediation of reflective and critical awareness. As such the writer discovers in himself the timeless and the universal mind, in short, a universal man.

Literature which delivered him is then seen as an abstract function and an a priori power of human nature. It becomes a force whereby man can free himself from history. In short, it is the exercise of his freedom. This indicates very clearly that Sartre had located the origins and criteria of literature in anthropological foundations i.e. in the nature and reality of man.

In his book What is Literature? Sartre is examining the art of writing without prejudice. He raises such questions as, What is writing? Why does one write? For whom? He considers literature as transformation of language into imaginary objects. What is valid for the elements of the artistic creation is valid for literature
too. The painter does not want to draw signs on his canvas, he wants to create a thing. The composition is inhabited by a soul. Therefore, the objects created in this manner reflect the deepest tendencies. Nevertheless they do not express his anger, his anguish or his joy in the same manner in which the words or the expressions of the face do.

Comparing melody with a novel, Sartre says that unlike ideas, there is nothing outside melody which can be rendered in diverse ways. This is so because its passions which were the springs of the invented theme have undergone transmutation; whereas in the case of a novel the writer can guide you and if he describes a novel, he would make it seem the symbol of social injustice and can even provoke indignation.

The difference between a writer and the painter is that the former deals with meanings and his quest for truth takes place in and through language conceived as a certain type of instrument. Sartre does not see a poet using words as instruments; he puts it on par with paintings, sculpture and music. For a poet words are things and not signs. In the case of a painter, Sartre
says he is mute, for his novel or his attic window
will never be the symbol of misery. In order to be
communicative, Sartre feels that only signs can be
instrumental and not things. On a canvas, all thoughts
and feelings are there in a state of profound undiff-
erentiation.46

The meaning gives to words their verbal unity.
Without it they are frittered away into sounds and
strokes of the pen. It is no longer the goal which is
always out of reach and which human transcendence is
always aiming at, but rather a property of each text.
Meanings having flowed into the words, having been
absorbed by its sonority, become uncreated and eternal.

The language for the poet is a structure of the
external world. The speaker is in a situation in
language. He is invested with words. They are a pro-
longation of his meanings. He manoeuvres them from
within. The poet as such is outside language. He sees
words inside out as if he did not share the human condi-
tion. The poet first establishes the silent contact
with things instead of knowing them. He picks the word
because of its luminosity, and its particular affinity
with the earth and the sky and the other creative things. Instead of using the words as a sign, as an aspect of the world, he sees in the world the image of one of these aspects. Word for him is a trap to catch fleeing reality. In short, all language for the poet is the mirror of the world.

Speaking on the goal of literature, Sartre concludes that the writer has chosen to reveal the world "particularly to reveal man to other men, so that the latter may assume full responsibility." The function of the writer is to act in such a way that nobody can be ignorant of the world and nobody may say that he is innocent of what is happening around. He commits himself to the universe of language and enters the domain of meanings.

The question "What is your aim in writing?" cannot be answered by saying that pure contemplation is the end. The end of language is to communicate, and this means either reference to the system of transcendental values or to act through revelation. Thus by speaking I reveal the situation by my very intention of changing it. I reveal it to myself and to others. This means involvement and going beyond it to future. We may call this
action as "one of disclosure." The committed writers know that words are actions. They know that to reveal is to change and that one can reveal only by planning to change.

For the writer, man is the being towards whom no being can be impartial. Therefore, the impossible dream of giving an all impartial picture of society and the human condition has to be given up. Situations reveal the necessary relationships within which man finds himself and seeks to change the situation. In hate, in anger, in fear, in joy, in love, in indignation, in admiration, in hope, in despair, man and the world stand revealed in their truth.

Linked with the question of communication is the notion of message. It is contended by some that the writer of today should not occupy himself with temporal affairs, nor seek beauty of phrase or imagery. His function is to deliver messages to his readers. It seems then that writing is an enterprise which seeks justification of itself through commitment depicting the resolve will and the choice.

In another section of his book *What is Literature?*
Sartre takes up the problem of 'Why write?' Is it for escape, or for conquest? What is the choice which impels a writer to write? What is that self-commitment, the fulfilment of which he craves for through his writings? In this section, Sartre seems to maintain that the writer neither foresees nor conjectures; he 'projects'. It often happens that he awaits, as they say, the inspiration...He knows that the future is not made, that he himself is going to make it.49 (Italics in original). The future, then, is a blank page. The writer meets everywhere only his knowledge, his will, his plans; in short, himself. He touches only his own subjectivity.

The creative act, however, is a synthesis of perception and creation. As such, it presupposes the essentiality of both the subject and the object. The object is essential because it is strictly transcendent and imposes its own structures. But the subject is also essential because it is required not only to disclose the object but also so that this object might exist absolutely. In a word, the reader is conscious of disclosure through creativity and of creativity through disclosure.
Sartre introduces the conceptual significance of meaning through silence which is obtained beyond words through a synthetic form. Even though, the literary object is realized through language, it is never given in language. On the contrary, it is by nature a silence which could be called an operation of re-invention or discovery. Or it can be called undifferentiated and lived silence of inspiration which the word particularizes. Sartre calls this kind of reading as directed creation. The landmarks set up by the author to guide the reader are separated by a void. The reader performs the function of uniting by going beyond them.

Sartre calls each word as a part of transcendence which shapes our feelings, names them and attributes them to an imaginary personage, who takes it upon himself to live them for us and who has no other substance than these borrowed passions. He confers perspectives and horizons upon them. Sartre calls all literary work as an appeal to the consciousness of the reader. The writer as such entrusts to another the job of carrying what he has become through his communicative awareness. To write is to make the reader aware about the objective
existence which the writer undertook by means of the language. The question as to what the writer is appealing is linked with the directed creation made possible by the freedom of the reader, by the purest elements of that freedom.

The work of literature thus produced, constitutes itself into an aesthetic object, presents the appearance of finality and is limited to soliciting the free and ordered play of imagination. It forgets that the imagination of the spectator has not only regulative function but a constitutive one, in so far that it is also called upon to recompose the beautiful objects beyond the traces left by the artist. Imagination does not reveal; it is engaged in an enterprise. By defining the beautiful in this way, one can liken the beauty of art to natural beauty.

According to Sartre, the writer should not seek to overwhelm; otherwise he is in contradiction with himself. If he wishes to make demands, he must propose the task to be fulfilled. Therefore, the character of pure presentation is essential to the work of art. The writer creates the aesthetic objects with feelings; if
it is touching, it arouses fears, if it is comic, it will be recognized by laughter. These feelings even though of a particular kind have their origin and their end in freedom. Freedom resolutely puts itself into a state to obtain a certain transcendent effect. The reader renders himself credulous and yet is conscious of being free.

However, Sartre is convinced that the characteristic of aesthetic consciousness is obtained by means of commitment, by oath, a belief sustained by fidelity to one’s own self and to the author. He considers all feelings which are derived from the imaginary belief as particular modulations of his freedom.

Sartre places so much emphasis on freedom that he defines the very essence of being human in terms of freedom. The purpose of writing relates to the reader’s freedom. He does not accept the Kantian expression, ‘finality’ without end. He seems to believe that a work of art does not have an end. The beauty of nature is not comparable to that kind of art.

Sartre does not accept the Kantian account for the appeal which resounds at the basis of each painting,
each statue, each book. Kant believed that the work of art first exists as a fact, then it is seen. But Sartre seems to believe that it exists only if one looks at it. It presents itself as a task to be discharged. From the very beginning it places itself on the level of the categorical imperative. This imperative is transcendent, yet acquiesced. Freedom is seen as a creative act required by the imperative. Sartre defines value as that to which freedom adopts itself. Work of art is a value because it is an appeal of this kind.

According to Sartre art is a ceremony of the gift. This gift alone brings about the metamorphosis of the being. In this process, I first capture the illusion in flight; then disentangle it and rethink it. As such it becomes intensional.

Sartre calls reading as induction, interpolation and extra-polation, the basis of which vests in the reader's will. Though we do not fathom artists' intentions easily, yet they constitute, the objects of conjectures for the reader. Though ultimately it is the finality which is the profound reality to be enquired into and explored by the reader. The ends and causes get related somewhere in the creation of the
aesthetic object which nevertheless has its source always in human freedom.

Sartre answers the question "why does one write?" and "what is writing?" by saying that the author and the reader enter into a pact of generosity, of trust, of expectation, and of certain demands from each other. It is placing confidence in each other that neither shall misuse the freedom. Both of them make free decisions and yet there is an intimate dialectical relationship established between the two. The freedom of each is manifested and revealed in this relationship. The freedom of one reveals the freedom of the other.

To conclude, the writer seeks the recovery of the totality of his being in and through his creative act and through the aesthetic object that he creates. It is a total renewal of the world through his perception. Each presents this totality to the freedom of the reader. This is the final goal for all art and for all writing, i.e. "To recover this world by giving it to be seen as it is, but as if it had its source in human freedom."51

It is, in other words, the writer's choice to appeal to the freedom of other men and re-adapt the
totality of being by the reciprocal implications of their demands. It is enclosing the whole of universe within man. The joy which the creator has, becomes joy of the aesthetic consciousness with the spectator. Sartre calls this as "Aesthetic modification of the human project." He further says that through such a creation, the world appears as the horizon of our situations. It is described as the totality of the given and as the undifferentiated whole of obstacles and impediments. The given is transformed into an imperative and a fact into a value. The world becomes my task which is an essential and freely accepted function of my freedom.

Sartre seems to suggest that the author's whole art is located in obliging me to create what he discloses. The writer who considers himself to be an essential part of the universe is simultaneously a part of the injustice which this universe perpetuates. If he creates and keeps alive an unjust world, he and the reader cannot help making themselves responsible for it. Therefore it is a universe supported by the responsibility and the effort of our two freedoms.
As such, though literature is different from morality, yet at the heart of the aesthetic imperative we indeed identify the moral imperative, for writing is a certain way of wanting and defending freedom. Once you start writing, you are bound to be committed to act like a guardian of ideal values. It is the concrete freedoms which have protested in our political and social struggles.

Sartre continues to defend his assertion that all literature is rooted in anthropological basis; in its manifest form it is a derivation from this basis and its status is sanctified by reference to it. The question for whom one writes has apparently been answered by saying that one writes for the universal reader. However it is dangerous, according to Sartre, to speak of eternal values, because these would have a fleshless character. There is no given freedom. What gives form to freedom is the set of circumstances which give rise to it.

The writer is involved in history. He has a definite stock of knowledge which varies from moment to moment and which enables him to reveal the historical dimensions of situations as well as of characters. He cannot seek
the realization of pure timeless freedom nor can he soar above history. Therefore, any attempt on his part to leap into eternity is misconceived and self-deceptive.

Sartre links the concept of liberation with that of a particular kind of alienation. Alienation would necessarily imply reference to institutions, customs, certain forms of oppression and conflicts. It has implicit relationship with hopes, fears, forms of sensibility, imagination, perception and values which have been handed down to us within the traditional framework.

It is the vibrating impulses of such a world which the writer seeks to penetrate into with his freedom. He aims at the possibilities of concrete liberation within the given context of alienation, social situation and history.

In this context Sartre says that the purpose of writing is to free oneself from the relationships of alienation with family, property, inheritance and conventional morality. The writer is a product of his milieu which exercises determinative influence on the writer. The writer is faced with questions of his freedom and aspires to fill in the emptiness for the other. Sartre
says that a writer is committed when he tries to achieve the most lucid and the most complete consciousness of being embarked. In other words he is truly committed when he causes the commitment of immediate spontaneity. His work is constructed on the given facts, on the basis of imperious or sly demands, or the refusals and flights of his imagination.\(^{54}\)

Does such a writer address his writings to the universal man? If the essential characteristic of the notion of the universal man is that he is not involved in any particular historical age, then would such a man be more moved by negroes of a particular place than by the Roman slaves in the time of Spartacus?\(^{55}\)

According to Sartre, the universal man can think of nothing but universal values. He is a pure and an abstract affirmation of the inalienable rights of man just as eternal freedom may be conceived at the horizon of the historical and the concrete freedom.

In a classless society, one whose internal structure would be permanent revolution, the writer might be a mediator for all. Literature produced under such conditions would be one of self-criticism and highly
liberated, indeed. It would represent negativity in so far as it is a necessary moment in reconstruction.

Sartre discusses two kinds of truths, the pragmatic and the revealed. He describes the church literature as empty apologetics, a fist holding on to dogmas. It addressed itself to respect, fear and self-interest. Since it ceased to be free appeal to free men, it was ceasing to be literature. The writer is expected to breathe freedom into a wilting ideology so as to enliven it.

Let this freedom manifest itself in our novels, our essays and our plays. And if our characters do not yet enjoy it, if they live in our time, let us at least be able to show what it costs them not to have it... we must take up a position in literature.56 (Italics mine)

The writer makes an attempt to free himself from the conditionings of a milieu, nation or a class. He chooses to write to indicate his unclassing which he assumed and is transformed into a solitude. Hence literature had only a conservative and purifying function in an integrated society. Being placed between the confused aspirations of bourgeoisie, the court and the church, literature suddenly asserted its
independence. It identified itself with the permanent power of forming and criticizing ideas.

Self-awareness in the writer implies a moment of negativity i.e., doubt, refusal, criticism and opposition become assimilated in his way of thinking. Against the ossified spirituality of the church, the rights of new spirituality emerge. Truth which was only a very crude and very concrete quality of the ideology disentangled itself from all concrete and particular philosophies and became a regulative idea of literature.

The object of literary prose, according to the later thinking of Sartre, is to bring author and the reader together to the experience of the concrete universal. The episode and the event of the literary work is particular and unique. However, its detachment from real space and time and its shared character lends it universality.\textsuperscript{57} If there is sufficient community of language and experience, then this universal is "where really the deepest part of literary communication can take this."\textsuperscript{58}
Sartre deems it essential to have intersection of aesthetic considerations with the historical and the political realities of the moment. The importance of such an approach presupposes the fact that the writer constitutes man as what he is historically, socially and politically at each moment, through his literary creation.

Sartre seems to maintain this position consistently, right from his *What is Literature?* to his *Critique of Dialectical Reason*. He brings in the general theory of *praxis* when he speaks of literature and language:

Language as the practical relation of one man to another is *praxis*. . . . for an individual to discover his isolation, his alienation, for him to suffer from silence or, for that matter, to become integrated into some collective undertaking, his relation to others, as manifested in and by the materiality of language, must constitute him in his own reality. (Italics in original)

Sartre assigns a positive function to literature through his explicitly manifested theory of *praxis*. He says, "literature had a liberating function, though one which remained veiled and implicit." Through language and literature, the consciousness of absolute freedom dawns upon men. Sartre makes it very clear
that the writer has constantly to keep in view the
demands of universal human nature which he can do only
by transcending his class. He also conceives literature
as a permanent practice of magnanimity. He breaks his
links with the class of origin and speaks to his
readers from above about universal human nature. The
appeals he makes are dictated by pure generosity - which
spells out his relationships with other men. The goal
and dignity of a human life lies in seeking the means
for the end that one has passed by - silently.

Sartre also analyses the role of the writer in the
context of a critic of institutions, traditions and the
ideologies of the past. On the basis of a critical
stance he protests against injustices and denounced the
institutions and destroys the traditions. He liberates
himself from the confinement of pure contemplation of
the eternal ideas of freedom or equality which he found
were nothing else save a degraded descendance of anti-
guity.

Literature for Sartre, thus becomes a zanification
of a form of life and he seems not far from the position
of Wittgenstein. The consideration of literature from the point of view of history, critical evaluation, commitment, communication and transformation make him spell the position of the writer and his literature as one deeply rooted in the realities and possibilities of human nature. He describes human progress as the vast movement of assimilation. He says, "At the end of this immense digestive process thought would find its unification and society its total integration". This assimilation of ideas by each other and of all ideas by the mind would necessarily have men at the basis of all thinking and all writing, as such - making anthropological considerations as the basis for all literature. Only then can a writer be called a 'liberator of humanity'. 
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