PHENOMENOLOGY AND EXISTENTIALISM

(PHL1 C04)

I SEMESTER

CORE COURSE

M.A. PHILOSOPHY

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UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

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Study Material

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PHENOMENOLOGY AND
EXISTENTIALISM

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Phenomenology

Introduction

Phenomenology and existentialism are two of the most influential movements in Twentieth-century philosophy. Phenomenology covers all magnitudes of life. Phenomenology explores how consciousness contributes to the cultural, social, historical constitution of the world and how it establishes itself as a whole. It emphasizes the practical aspect of philosophy, though comprehends it not as the refusal of any theories, but as responsibility for theories and their critical consideration taking into account application potentials. It rejects the naivety of school philosophy and sciences used to hypothesize the self-existence of the objective world forgetting its place in this world.

Phenomenology is a radical, anti-traditional mode of reasoning, which highlights the effort to get to the truth of matters, to describe phenomena, in the extensive sense as whatever appears in the manner in which it looks like, that is as it manifests itself to consciousness, to the experiencer. Most of the founding figures of phenomenology emphasized the need for a renewal of philosophy as radical inquiry not bound to any religious or cultural traditions; and they encouraged a dismissal of all dogmatisms, a suspicion of a priori metaphysical premises, and earlier interpretations of the nature of knowledge, and a steady directing of attention to the things themselves. Phenomenology is the study of consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view.
Phenomenalism” can be generally described as the doctrine that objects can be reduced to (and reconstructed out of) sensory experiences, which is associated in the twentieth century with such thinkers as A. J. Ayer and C. I. Lewis. Etymologically, phenomenology (Gr. phaenomenon + logos) is literally the science of phenomena.

Its domain is the whole arena of conscious experience including perception, imagination, thought, reasoning, desire, emotion, as well as temporal consciousness, the consciousness of self and personal identity, the consciousness of others, and everyday and social action. Its focus is on the structure of conscious mental states, or experiences, especially intentionality, that is, how mental states represent or are directed towards various things.

The background of Phenomenology

The term ‘phenomenology’ first arose to appear in philosophy in the eighteenth century. The first precise reference to 'phenomenology' may be traced to Johann Heinrich Lambert (1728-1777); the fourth section of whose Novus Organ on bears the title ‘Phenomenology of transcendental Optic.

phenomenologists deny at least three central Platonic beliefs: (1) there is a transcendent real; (2) the transcendent real cannot be known through mere appearance, or phenomena; (3) the transcendent real can be directly grasped by at least some individuals some of the time. For phenomenologists, on the contrary, study of phenomena, of what appears, provides access to what is, hence to the real and the true. (Rockmore Tom, In Kant’s Wake Philosophy in the Twentieth Century, page 101, Blackwell.)
Kant used the term in his mature treatises and in his *Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science* he has a complete section categorized “Phenomenology”, dealing with the area of motion or rest in relation to their appearances to our external senses. Kant considered Phenomenology as a branch of science that deals with things in their method of appearing to us, for example, relative motion, or color, properties that are reliant on the human observer. Kant argues that while we can perceive the empirical or phenomenal world only as a realm of depending existences entirely governed by causal laws of nature, we can at least logically consider that the realm of things in themselves lying behind the appearances of the empirical world not only covers a necessary being but, more important, covers free and not only determined actions. Thus, Kant claims, the critique of traditional metaphysics at least leaves open the opportunity of freedom. He illustrious the world on the Form and Principles of the Sensible and the Intelligible World, where he distinguished sensible and intelligible “worlds,” the first being has known via sensory cognition of things as they appear “phenomena”, the second via intellectual cognition of things as they are in themselves “noumena”.

The term “phenomenology” has been in common use in philosophy since Hegel’s monumental work, *The Phenomenology of Mind*. During the nineteenth century, the term implied a descriptive as different from a hypothetical–theoretical or analytic method to a problem. Hegel reveals the magnitudes of infinity within the experience, identifying the distinctive way in which he demonstrates experience to be innately characterized by a conflict of infinities, most especially the conflict of the infinity of substance and the infinity of subjectivity. Investigating the infinity of subjectivity will allow us to see that the phenomenological method demands that one be a participant and not simply an observer and that this, in turn, demands that one’s. The one must
oneself have that experience in front of one, and so, to begin, the reader must him - or herself attends to experiencing simply this moment, now. The now is itself not practiced as an isolated instant, but is experienced as a passage: it is experienced as coming into being and passing away in a chronological flow. But the notion of “passage” is more complex than the notion of “is” – it is becoming, a motion-defined as “from … to,” and not just an unqualified immediacy of being. He openness the effort to describe the experience without introducing a dominant interpretation and lets objects to disclosing themselves to us in such a way that it demonstrates the insufficiency of our own initial approach to it, demonstrating that it is becoming and not simply being as our initial apprehension implies. The object as becoming goes hand in hand with a transformation of perspective, a transformation in one is prepared to recognize now it is only through its realization that the real meaning of the originating intention can be determined. The object, demands individuals be active in certain ways in order to receive it, in order to be passive. This passivity, however, is not a relinquishment of intelligence, effort, or learning, but is rather a passivity enabled by the most rigorous engagement.

Phenomenology initiated as a recognizable movement with Edmund Husserl’s proclamation that philosophy takes as its fundamental task the description of the structures of experience as they present themselves to consciousness. This description was meant to be carried out on the axis of what the “things themselves” required, without assuming or implementing the theoretical outlines, norms, or terminologies established in the study of other domains. Husserl articulated the basic theory of intentionality that is essential to phenomenology. Husserl and Heidegger assumed that the real philosophical problem in the traditional skeptical reluctance about the existence of the external world was not essential to find rational grounds to justify our natural belief in this
world, but rather to clarify how this kind of concern could have ascended in the first place.

**Philosophy as a Rigorous Science**

Franz Brentano, who first employed the term ‘phenomenology’ in 1889, succeeding his teacher Aristotle, Brentano’s methodology was problem-oriented rather than historical, Brentano considered Aristotle as the first empiricist, whose investigations had more in common with the empiricist tradition of Hume and Mill than with the decadent tradition of German metaphysics. Brentano’s understanding of philosophy as a rigorous science is comparatively defined by his view of the frequent progress of philosophy. From his initial times, Brentano dispersed the concept that philosophy progressed in four stages, including alternating segments of abundance and different stages of weakening, to regain its nature he advocates a renewal of philosophy as rigorous science. According to him all great periods of growth in philosophy are characterized by the majority of the purely theoretical interest and develop a system appropriate to the subject matter. In the upshot of the collapse of speculative German idealism, Brentano wanted to reawaken the theoretical boldness of scientific philosophy associated with the first phase. He observed German idealism as a kind of hypothetical mysticism, irrationalism.

Brentano had proposed to reconstruct philosophy based on psychology and powerfully claimed that the nature of psychic acts had been misconstrued by ample contemporary philosophy. For him, the domain of psychical phenomena influenced ‘actual existence’ whereas the purely physical world had merely phenomenal existence: “Our mental phenomena are the things which are most our own”. Brentano’s perspective on philosophy as a rigorous science places him in a different school of thought than those attentive to metaphysical speculation. His work aimed for
precision in the description of consciousness via the human sciences. Brentano and Husserl part with one another on the nature of truth and intentionality. For Brentano, intentionality leads to the judgment that renders truth.

Brentano envisaged his new science of descriptive psychology as provided the theoretical foundation for the humanities (Geisteswissenschaften), which is all the sciences that employ mental acts in their formulations, for example, the law, politics, economics, sociology, aesthetics, religion, etc. Descriptive psychology will provide clear, evident truth about the mental acts employed in these sciences. This became Brentano’s overall project of philosophy as a rigorous science.

Husserl preserves a generally Kantian view of rigorous philosophy. In the Prolegomena, Kant purposes toward the imminent, as yet unrealized, metaphysics. This normative Kantian view now persists in Husserl’s assertion for a philosophy that is nothing less than science and indispensable “to teach us how to carry on the eternal work of humanity.” Philosophy entitlements to be rigorous science, however, in a way that can only be fulfilled in the future. He says; “I do not say that philosophy is an imperfect science; I say simply that it is not yet a science at all, that as the science it has not yet begun.” Husserl develops a conception of logic as a pure, a priori science of perfect meanings, and as a pure theory of science, or science of science. He proposes a traditional view of philosophy as the source of apodictic knowledge in endorsing phenomenology as the only acceptable form of philosophy in the rigorous, or scientific, sense.

This way of looking at it makes it seems as if, once again, a fresh, purely theoretical attention, a new 'science with a new specialized method, is to be established, carried on either as an intellectualistic
game with very ideal pretensions or as a higher-level intellectual method in the service of the positive sciences

“Is it not the case that what we have presented here is something rather inappropriate to our time, an attempt to rescue the honor of rationalism, of "enlightenment," of an intellectualism which loses itself in theories alienated from the world . . . ? Does this not mean that we are being led again into the fateful error of believing that science makes men wise, that it is destined to create a genuine and contented humanity that is master of its fate? Who would still take such notions seriously today? his emphasis on values, on the practical aspects of existence, on 'life,” (Husserl Edmund, The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology page 26, Northwestern University Press.)

In the Prague congress of 1934, he articulates that; "force which has transformed mere internationality through power into a completely new sort of internationality, and sustains it, namely a solidarity [Verbundenheit] through the spirit of autonomy." But the spirit of philosophy is hindered, he goes on, by skepticism and specialization.

“To this, we must add the influence of great fateful events [Schicksale]that completely upset the international community insofar as, through them, the general faith in the idea and the practical ideal of Europe, that of a harmonious unity of the life of nations with its sources in the rational spirit, has been undermined. At present we are faced with the imminent danger of the extinction of philosophy in this sense, and with it necessarily the extinction of a Europe founded on the spirit of truth”. (Ibid page 27)

Husserl’s article ’philosophy as Rigorous Science," criticizing the current division in philosophy he often began his lecture courses with a historical account of views on the problem to be taken up,
showing that earlier philosophers were unable to resolve the problems he would continue to solve through phenomenology.

“Philosophy as Rigorous Science,” like most of Husserl’s writings, is a meditation on the problem and the difficulty of finally making a precise, or radical, beginning of philosophy as science once and for all. The view of phenomenology that develops from his reflection on this problem is centrally concerned with the boundless task of direct intuition of essences. Husserl writes, “is to recognize that with the philosophical intuition in the correct sense [that is, direct intuition], the phenomenological grasp of essences, a limitless field of work opens out. ...” Philosophy will become a rigorous science - not in that it imitates other rigorous sciences, but rather in that it senses the fact that its problems require a peculiar procedure, the working out of which is the task of the centuries.
Husserl’s Phenomenological Method.

Phenomenology, as the movement inaugurated by Edmund Husserl It was one of several strong currents in philosophy prominent at the outset of the twentieth century, phenomenology, as a new manner of doing philosophy, was first properly pronounced by Edmund Husserl in the Introduction to the Second Volume of the First Edition of his Logical Investigations. Husserl began using the term in the 1890s in his lectures. Franz Brentano had a vital influence on Husserl’s development of phenomenology owing to Brentano’s own descriptive method to the study of psychic phenomena, and also through his influences regarding the structure of consciousness. Phenomenology is a return to ‘phenomena’. Husserl recognizes phenomenon as ‘what appears as such’; in other words, everything that appears, including everything meant or thought, in the manner of its appearing, in the ‘how’ (Wie) of its appearance.

Husserl started with the impulse of a scientist and a mathematician and transformed it into philosophy. He was intent on philosophy as a rigorous science. A new kind of exactness is introduced. Phenomenology is a science in a way different from the sciences of the natural attitude, and the whole argument associated with transcendental reduction is supposed to help us see what the new sense is.
His phenomenology also initiated to concentrate more and more on the assumed framework of human experience, and he pioneered the description of the ‘environment’ (Umwelt) and the conception of a human world that received expression in his notion of Lebenswelt or ‘life-world’. The relation between being and thinking leads Husserl to a thorough investigation of the secret of subjectivity and the query of the constitution of objectivity; that is, how does consciousness achieve to objective knowledge. Husserl’s vital insight was that consciousness was the condition of all experience, indeed it constituted the world, but in such a way that the part of consciousness itself is concealed and not easy to isolate and describe. Husserl therefore continuously pursued to explain how to overcome prejudices that stood in the way of the recognition of the domain of pure consciousness, leading to a new beginning in philosophy.

Husserl is not the first to use the term. Immanuel Kant (1724–1804), Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770–1831), and Ernest Mach (1838–1916) stress phenomenology; however, it is Husserl who makes the study of phenomenology as an elaborated method for thinking and knowing during experience and perception. For Husserl, transcendental subjectivity requires commencing perception under presuppositionless terms void of theory, metaphysical claims, and common-sense assumptions about an object. The major theme repeated in phenomenology is “back to the things themselves” with stress on intuition.

To avoid imposing ideas and meaning upon the world, Husserl outlined the practice of bracketing, which worked to temper the natural attitude of everyday looking. For Husserl, the value of bracketing is a public reduction of one’s focus of attention. What one brackets makes manifest the thing itself; if two persons observe a given experience and bracket different elements of everyday perception, the description offered by each will be
different—the reason for the variance is that each person attends to a different thing itself. Bracketing assumes that everyday assumptions fade as one becomes increasingly attentive to the object claiming one’s focus of attention. Multiple offshoots from phenomenology emerge from Husserl with the notion of consciousness of a focus of attention as the central contributor to further developments.

**Different phases of Husserl’s Phenomenology**

Husserl’s associate, Eugen Fink, has presented a suitable method of approaching Husserl’s progress, suggesting three stages: the first he labels psychologism (1887–1901), though, more precisely, it characterizes Husserl’s fights with psychologism; the second label descriptive phenomenology (1901–1913); and the third phase, transcendental phenomenology (1913–1938) it also illustrious on the base of his working spaces Husserl’s phenomenology divided into three phases, the first stage of phenomenology related to the University of Halle. The second stage is related to the University of Göttingen is the third stage is related to the University of Freiburg.

**I PHASE**

Phenomenology begins as a criticism of psychologism illustrated in the first volume of Logical Investigations. Psychologism” is the term initially used in Germany in the first half of the nineteenth century to designate the philosophical trend defended by Jakob Friedrich Fries and by Friedrich Eduard Beneke contradictory to the leading Hegelianism. Fries and Beneke encouraged a philosophical place created totally on psychology. They apprehended that the only instrument philosophical inquiry has at its disposal is self-observation and that there is no way to create any truth other than by reducing it to the subjective elements of
self-observation. Thus, Psychology becomes, from this point of view, the fundamental philosophical discipline. Psychologism sought to explain the science and scientific activities by psychological analysis. It was apprehended that the cognition of psychological laws would allow explaining the mechanism of the appearance of truth, and the disclosure of the actual-psychological structure of the subject would resolve all issues of cognition. Such concepts naturalized concepts of consciousness and a person. Psychologism naturalized processes of consciousness. It is a collection of positions, all of which claim that because the laws of logic are laws of thinking they must ultimately derive from psychological facts and the progression of human thought processes. Husserl harshly criticized such an attitude by showing that psychologism inevitably leads to relativism and skepticism. Assuming that all scientific truths are a product of one or another mental structure, the contingency of truths would have to be recognized. In this case, different mental subjects could have different truths, different laws of logic, and mathematics.

For Husserl Psychologism produces relativism, since logical rightfulness is taken to depend on the liable psychic make-up of the human being, such that miscellaneous creations would produce different laws. And it yields skepticism since, by repudiating logic unconditional validity, it renders every truth claim undecidable. Husserl wants to sharply distinguish psychological from purely logical laws. Psychology is a factual, empirical science of consciousness assume or and it is quite vague, being merely generalizations from experience laws limited by other things equals, expressible only as probabilities, at best mere approximations to the ideal laws. The laws of logic, on the other hand, are precise, universal, and ideal. Moreover, logic is a priori science, and hence it cannot be founded on the science of fact. Logic makes no assumptions about the existence or nature of
mental states emphasizes knows nothing of presentations or judgments. Logical laws are not about the “facticities of mental life” logic states necessary relations between propositions

Husserl’s anti-psychologism can be opposed to phenomenological psychology, anti-historicism to the unfolding of inter-subjective historical worlds, the idea of phenomenology as strict science to criticism of science from the perspective of transcendental self-experience, though by looking for contradictions, we will see only distinct features of phenomenology and will not notice the general structure of phenomenology the first volume of Logical Investigations criticizing psychologism and naturalism, Husserl justifies the existence of idealness independent of the contingent subject. Husserl’s critique of psychologism was, in fact, clearer and more complete than that of Frege and his followers, for he exhibited how propositions are grounded in cognitive intuitions without thereby being reduced to purely subjective phenomena. By criticizing psychologism and naturalism, Husserl justifies the existence of idealness independent of the contingent subject. Husserl presented phenomenology as a pure, presuppositions science of consciousness. The entitlement, as we have seen, means first of all that phenomenology cannot assume or utilize the results of any other science in its inquiries. It cannot even take for granted the idea of the scientific project itself, or any specific meaning of the concept of philosophy. Husserl made more and more radical claims about the nature of this freedom from presuppositions.

**II PHASE**

Husserl considered the studies of conscious acts in the Logical Investigations were comparatively static and did not take into account their progressive nature and their underlying basis in the harmony of individual consciousness. Consequently, he was obliged to rethink the nature of the pure ego which he had excised
from the Logical Investigations, where he had pursued a more Humean (David Hume) approach to the self. Husserl was, at this stage, beginning to see phenomenology not just as a new method for clarifying logic and epistemology, but as a whole new approach to the sciences as such. In this phase, he describes Phenomenology as an act of consciousness and objects of consciousness correlated with these acts. For answering the queries like whose consciousness is it? Husserl articulates the impression of transcendental subjectivity directly related to the concept of reduction and epoche. Reduction, as a return to the transcendental subject. It makes clear that the subject of science cannot be a random subject instituted by psychological structures and historical circumstances the path of not rational structures but of practical self-realization.

Therefore, the reduction becomes the symbol of openness of practical-theoretical transcendental subjectivity. The act of reduction is allied with epoché, the phenomenological description must exclude the objective perspective and focus on subjective is the primary meaning of epoché. He adopted the method of the epoch—the bracketing of presuppositions—in a manner equivalent, as he pointed out, to the symbol of doubt. This would lead to pure consciousness as the one absolute and helps to inspect the essence of diverse phenomena as they appear to consciousness. He advocates the drive of transcendental reduction is the change in attitudes. For him, the epoché and reduction must be applied to the natural attitude. When the epoché concerning the natural attitude, the affirmation of the objective world is parenthesized.

### III PHASE

The third of Husserl’s thinking phase is termed ‘transcendental’ by Fink; where Husserl began to offer his version of the themes of historicity and the finitude of human understanding and began to
emphasize how human consciousness is always caught within the context of the ‘life-world’ (Lebenswelt). Hence, he called for Returning to the life-world means to return to experience before such objectification and idealizations. Husserl’s concept of the life-world distributes a new understanding of historicism and cultural diversity from the perspective of transcendental philosophy. The term is roughly corresponding to the ‘natural concept of the world’. The life world is not just a collection of physical objects but includes such things as cultural and historical artifacts and social institutions. Husserl equivocates about whether there are many life worlds, or only one, and about whether the term refers to the intrinsic subjective content of our consciousness of the world or to the cultural world itself in its transcendence.

The concept of the world was arrived at by Husserl through his application of the reduction. The life-world is a world as a phenomenon, as a correlative of our intentional experiences, In Ideas II, Husserl describes the life-world as a layer to be inserted between the world of nature and the world of culture/spirit. The life-world is the world of pre-theoretical experience which allows us to interact with nature and to mature our cultural forms. Husserl saw the life-world as the universal framework of human endeavor—including our scientific endeavors. It is the decisive prospect of all human achievement.

The life-world is the general structure that permits objectivity and thinghood to arise in the different ways in which they do appear in different cultures. Even though diverse societies have different outlooks and different ways of understanding nature, Husserl believed that a more basic interrogation of these cultural differences exposed the invariant structure of the life-world. It is clear that there is not one single life-world for Husserl, but a set of intersecting or overlapping worlds, beginning from the world
which is the ‘homeworld’ (Heimwelt) and encompassing to other worlds which are farther away, ‘the worlds of other cultures, etc.

Husserl occasionally draws a difference between the lifeworld and the world as described by the sciences, he considered Sciences are founded on theoretical attitudes, one of detached playfulness and curiosity. However, if the objects produced in this realm are then uncritically asserted to be the real objects of our experience in the life-world, then serious problems will arise, as has happened in modernity; the scientific worldview has predominated. For Husserl, that is, scientific theories acquire meaning and justification only by referring back to the world as it is given to us in ordinary experience. All theoretical outcomes have the character of legitimacies for the life-world, Husserl writes. “The concrete life-world, then, is the grounding soil of the “scientifically true” world”. We can perceive the lifeworld in different epitomes such as; the life-world is understood through the opposition to the scientific world. In another aspect, the lifeworld is understood in the framework of the phenomenological reduction as the everyday world of direct experience, and the life-world is analyzed as the expression of intersubjective relations and a priori of historical and cultural differences of life-worlds. Scientists generally embrace the naive metaphysical belief that theories established by them are the direct replication of the objective reality. However, a more cautious look at natural sciences reveals that they are based on assumptions that are not considered in those sciences and which are nothing more than the obviousness of experience of the living world. Husserl considered that one of the reasons for the crisis of European culture is exactly this prominence given to the objectivity of natural sciences.

In the Crisis, Husserl was predominantly concerned with one significant aspect of the life-world, namely how scientific consciousness with its supervisory norm of rationality emerges out
of ordinary non-theoretical methods of everyday lived consciousness and its practices. He emphasizes that the scientific world ‘belongs’ (gehört) to the life-world.

For Husserl’s the conception of the constitution, the role of the ego, and the problem of intersubjectivity culminating in his last reflections on the nature of the life-world

**Basic Features of Husserl’s Phenomenology**

Husserl develops a conception of logic as a pure, a priori science of perfect meanings, and as a pure theory of science, or science of science. He proposes a traditional view of philosophy as the source of apodictic knowledge in endorsing phenomenology as the only acceptable form of philosophy in the rigorous, or scientific, sense. Husserl articulated the basic theory of intentionality that is essential to phenomenology. Husserl and Heidegger assumed that the real philosophical problem in the traditional skeptical reluctance about the existence of the external world was not essential to find rational grounds to justify our natural belief in this world, but rather to clarify how this kind of concern could have ascended in the first place.

**Husserl’s Doctrine of Essences**

Husserl's notion of phenomenology is not just as the epistemological explaining of logic and mathematics, or even as the a priori science of the essential structures of consciousness, but rather as pure eidetic science, a ‘science of essences’ which would also deliver the vital instruction for all scientific knowledge. He considered it as a science of the essences of consciousness and the ideal essences of the objective correlates of conscious acts, the phenomenological means such; as epoche and the phenomenological and eidetic reductions will generate the route to reach the pure essence. In the Investigations, of course, Husserl is
mainly concerned with analyzing our ‘logical experiences’ and phenomenology is the disciplined effort to describe and illuminate their crucial nature and structure. He defines that phenomenology could contribute not just to the region of conscious experiences, but to all material regions of being, every field of ‘material essences’ from geometry to morality, and considered Phenomenology, similarly, is to be a science of pure essences.

This method includes ‘bracketing’ or ‘suspending’ all our natural attitudes towards the objects in the world and our psychological acts, suspending all our concepts about these matters, and leading back our consideration to these pure essences of consciousness these essences are not created in our thinking but are grasped, ‘framed’, in our acts of thinking. phenomenology, therefore, bring to pure expression, must pronounce in terms of their essential concepts and their governing formulae of the essence, the essences which directly make themselves known in intuition, and the acquaintances which have their roots purely in such essences. through articulating the notion of essence Husserl emphasized the importance of moving from the merely factual to the level of essential truths, of universal laws, of essences and saw phenomenology as the viewing of essences and “fixing” them conceptually and then linguistically. The important step in the eidetic reduction is to realize that what is given in seeing a red patch as red, is not an individual datum, but a grasp of the essence itself.

the reduction allows us access to a transcendental domain of experience. Only constant employment of the reduction allows us to access the transcendental field of pure experience and prevents us from lapsing back into psychologism and naturalism about the psychic. This Pure phenomenology brings pure expression and it describes in terms of their essential concepts and their governing formulae of the essence, the essences which directly make
themselves known in intuition, and the connections which have
their roots purely in such essences. In these scenario essences is an
a priori statement in the highest sense of the word. For Husserl
“pure consciousness”, will be considered as the site of the a priori,
and the structures phenomenology is understood as contemplation
of pure essences based on exemplary individual intuitions of
experience Husserl believed such essential forms could be intuited
through imaginative variation and rotation of possibilities in
consciousness. This would eventually lead to him advocating a
form of transcendental idealism where all meanings and essences
are already embedded somehow in the transcendental ego.

Phenomenology is a ‘viewing of essences’ which scrutinizes the
essence of perception, judging, feeling, as such, not as in this or
that animal organism. Moreover, Husserl believed such essential
forms could be intuited through imaginative variation and rotation
of possibilities in consciousness. This would eventually lead to him
advocating a form of transcendental idealism where all meanings
and essences are already embedded somehow in the transcendental
go. Husserl’s ‘things themselves’ are the pure a priori essences of
the acts constituting ideal Objectivities. Husserl wants
phenomenology to discourse the given, the phenomena, the things
themselves, in the sense of whatever immediately seems to
consciousness in the manner that it so appears. The ‘things
themselves’ immediately intuited essential elements of
consciousness, observed in terms of their essential natures as
meaning intentions and their interconnected meaning fulfillment,
essential structures involved in all understanding.

**Intentionality**

Husserl instigated to explore Brentano’s notion of “intentionality”
Husserl took the basic structure of intentionality and, having
uncovered it of its metaphysical apparatus and presented it as the
basic idea that all conscious experiences (Erlebnisse) are characterized by ‘aboutness’. For him, every act of seeing is a seeing of something. His thought of phenomenological consciousness is founded on the value of correlation. every act of consciousness we perform, every experience that we have, is intentional: it is essentially "consciousness of" or an "experience of" something or other.

Husserl perceives consciousness phenomenologically and discards naturalistic and substantialistic concepts of consciousness. He considered Consciousness not as a substance, but as an activity and self-realization and discards the notion of empirical consciousness according to which consciousness is like a clean table with outward objects leaving their marks by affecting our senses. He also rejects the rationalist notion of consciousness as a hollow pot that can be filled with many imageries. For him consciousness is always consciousness-about, then when describing the life of consciousness, he should describe not consciousness as it is in itself, but consciousness as it is directed towards certain things.

The intentionality of consciousness described that all the acts and experiences of consciousness are focused on certain objects, and these objects, in their turn, are connected to the performance of experiences establishing or supporting them. Consciousness cannot be bare or about nothing, as in this case there would merely be no consciousness or it would be unconscious. Thus, the life portrayal of consciousness infers the explanation of not only acts of consciousness, but also things given in these acts. The intentionality of consciousness means that consciousness must be analyzed abstaining from metaphysical ideas of the nature of consciousness. It is more significant not to illuminate the nature of consciousness or localize where precisely it is, but to define how consciousness is experienced and how various objects are demonstrated in its experiences.
It allows overcoming the hostility between consciousness and the world. Real, imagined, ideal objects will be defined only to the level they are given or demonstrated in consciousness. Consequently, phenomenology must pronounce the intentional life of consciousness or, in other words, phenomena, and the principle of the intentionality of consciousness is the most important principle of phenomenology. The intentionality of consciousness can be described only from the experience of experiences themselves and their mutual relationship. It describes that understanding words and sentences means understanding what it tells you. Thus, reading as an intentional act will be engaged to certain meanings which will be telling you something as their reader, though they are written by others.

**Phenomenological Reduction**

The philosophy of Phenomenology absorbed the reduction as a way of moving from the psychological to the actual epistemological domain. In his philosophy, Husserl tries to articulate the nature of the breakthrough afforded by the phenomenological reduction and what he also termed ‘eidetic’ and ‘transcendental’ reductions. Like Brentano, Husserl thought that a particular experience, properly regarded, could produce evident insight and universal truth. Husserl claims that universal is understood in the individual. The move from the individual intuition to the grasp of the universe is a move to grasp the essence; this is what Husserl terms phenomenological intuition. The route from the individual to the universal is installed in our conscious act itself. He calls it ‘seeing essence’ or ‘essential seeing. Not only do we need to put to one side all naturalistic and hypothetical theories about consciousness, but also, we need to change attention from the empirical and factual to the essential, necessary features of experience. This is attained by what Husserl terms the ‘phenomenological’ reduction. The significant step in the
phenomenological reduction is to realize that what is given in seeing a red patch as red, is not an individual datum, but a grasp of the essence itself. Husserl always observed his formulation of the reductions as the real discovery of his philosophy and as necessary to reveal non psychologically the essence of intentional consciousness and subjectivity as such. To experience the reduction is to experience the enrichment of one's subjective life—it opens infinitely before one. The initial ‘phenomenological’ reduction aims to individuate correctly the domain of pure consciousness as the domain of meaning-constitution.

The ‘phenomenological reduction ‘assists to relate these essential meaning-structures to their source in the pure ego in the Göttingen period, entitled The Idea of Phenomenology, Husserl introduces a ‘phenomenological reduction’ to exclude everything postulated as transcendentally existing, but he goes on to speak of an ‘epistemological reduction’ as necessary to focus on the pure phenomena of conscious acts as cogitationes and to avoid misleading assumptions about the nature and existence of the sum cogitans. The change of orientation brings about a ‘return’ to a transcendental standpoint, to uncover a new transcendental domain of experience. The epoche then is part of the reduction. Besides, Husserl often emphasizes that the suspension of the natural attitude, like the hilarious of the Cartesian method of doubt, is based on a free act of the mind; one can freely choose to alter our standpoint. He took his term epoche from the Sceptics where it means a ‘cessation’ Husserl endorses his ‘phenomenological’ epoche to suspend the thesis of the natural standpoint. We need to bracket certain vital structures to allow more basic objectifying acts of consciousness to become visible in themselves. One need not be drawn by the assumption that there certainly exists a world independent of us, nor do we assume anything about the configuration of that world, or about the relationship between mind
and world. Through the phenomenological reduction we strip away the actual character of the experience and grasp it as a pure phenomenon:

From a natural standpoint, we believe that things are genuinely present in space and we are conscious of time passing and of ourselves as in some sort of permanency with the world. When one upshot the phenomenological bracketing, all that disappears and, according to Husserl, we are left with a residuum of pure consciousness, consciousness as absolute existence, whose objects are always correlated with consciousness. Consciousness contains here of the acts of the ego, what Husserl calls cogitationes, and the correlates of those acts, the unities that are thought, the cogitate, whether these denote to the adumbrations of physical objects or to ideal objectivities and states of affairs. Though the real emphasis is not the individual parts of consciousness, the ideal intentional structures, and essences required by conscious processes to be knowledge yielding. The reduction uncovers our psychic “stream of pure lived understandings with both their real and ideal contents

The true implication of the method of phenomenological ‘bracketing’ (Einklammerung) does not lie undeniably in the rejection of all transcendent knowledge and objects of knowledge but in the denial of all naively dogmatic knowledge in favour of the knowledge that is alone in the long run justified from the phenomenological point of view of the essence. The key to this universal scope lies in the phenomenological reduction, that is Husserl introduces as a form of the cartesian strategy of the first-person reflection and methodological doubt Husserl’s goal was to generate a new philosophical science as the radical evaluation of the possibility of experience, a science that did not take the prospect of cognition for granted.
The philosophy of transcendental subjectivity which the methodological technique of phenomenological reduction. the distinguishing characteristic of phenomenological reduction is that it withholds involvement in the positing of the existence of objects and the general validity of experience that characterizes one’s natural experience a positing Husserl personifies as the overall notion of the natural attitude. In suspending one’s involvement in the affirmation characteristic of ordinary experience, the objects given inexperience are not lost to reflection but are instead measured only as presumed existents. They remain available for reflection just insofar as they are experienced; the index attributing to them, however, has changed, and their status as objects of experience has been modified so that they are now viewed exclusively in their being as objects of that experience in which they are originally posited. Real transcendental subjectivity embraces its object as proposed without reducing that object to an immanent, psychological content.

The reduction is a transformation in attitude that leads our attention back to the subjective accomplishments in which the objects as experienced are disclosed in a determinate manner and to the attainments in which we apprehend the evidence appropriate to confirming or disconfirming their natural experiences. The reduction, in other words, leads our consideration to the intentional correlation itself, and Husserl’s discussions of intentionality and the reduction are inseparable. The subjective attainments, insofar as they are the standard of access to objects as experienced, have a certain kind of priority over the object that they disclose, but Husserl does not believe that all intelligibility derives from these achievements.

The analysis of intentional accomplishments discloses the facts that how it is that one come to experience objects in determinate behaviors, including those matters that are always already there for
us as inspiring subjects before thinking becomes active in the world; how our diverse experiences are associated to one another, and, therefore; how the different classes and heights of objectivity are related; and, finally; how our experience confirms or disconfirms in rewarding intentions what was emptily or mistakenly intended. Natural straightforward experience is directed to objects in their significance for us. However, it is possible to adjust how we attend to the object, and when doing so we emphasize attention, not on the object as such but its significance for us, its noematic sense. It is simply to refocus attention from the significant object to the significance of the object as the object of an intending act. Husserl distinguishes this one-sided sense in the perception from the ‘full noema’ which consists of a ‘complex of noematic moments’ around a ‘central core’ (Kern). There is a certain noematic meaning which anchors the object so that it remains the same through different intentional acts about it, but there is also a varying element in the noema, what Husserl terms the ‘mode of givenness’.

The methodological point picks out that is, we essentially focus our attention on both the subjective and objective circumstances of meaning by focusing on the essential features of the correlation between the noetic and noematic dimensions of the experiences in which objects are disclosed determinate ways. To turn our attention to this correlation is to perform the phenomenological reduction. Husserl felt that the nature of consciousness could only be appropriately grasped if determined naturalistic distortions can be removed. These distortions are produced not just by theories about the nature of the world but also by the very object positing the theoretic structure of consciousness itself. Thus, Husserl wanted to ‘put out of action’ the ‘natural attitude’, bracket it, to purify consciousness of all interference from “objective actualities” —including “the actuality of all material nature” and
of in the. The initial ‘phenomenological’ reduction intends to individuate appropriately the domain of pure consciousness as the domain of meaning-constitution. Phenomenological reductions eventually led Husserl to locate the source of all meaning in transcendental subjectivity, leading to a commitment to a form of transcendental idealism. Husserl understood phenomenology essentially as ‘egology’, the study of the ego and its ‘self-experience’.
The Methodological Questions of Existentialism

The term “existentialism” has often been taken to denote the thought of the Danish religious writer Soren Kierkegaard. In its philosophical context, “existentialism” entitles the series of philosophers in the post-Hegelian tradition of European philosophy. Kierkegaard is frequently referred to as the founder of this movement, and the term “existentialism” itself originates from his uses of the words “existence,” “the existential” and their cognates, which he dissimilarities to the abstract or purely theoretical. Other nineteenth-century philosophers such as Dostoevsky and Nietzsche are frequently counted as forerunners of the existentialist movement, if not as existentialists in their own right. In the twentieth century, existentialism was denoted to the German school of phenomenology which was instituted by Edmund Husserl and continued and transformed by Martin Heidegger. Existentialism relished its furthermore popular phase in the French school whose chief exponents were Albert Camus, Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, and Simone de Beauvoir.

The Background of Existentialism

The first phase of existentialism took place in Germany after World War I, when in the 1920s and 1930s an original “philosophy of existence” was developed by the philosophers Karl Jaspers and Martin Heidegger. A parallel change in religious thought was started by the Jewish religious thinker Martin Buber and by the Protestant theologians Rudolph Bultmann and Paul Tillich. The
second phase of existentialism occurred when the thought of Heidegger and Jaspers, along with the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl, the dialectical philosophy of G. W. F. Hegel, and the radical subjectivism of Soren Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche, was absorbed into French intellectual life during the 1930s and 1940s.

In the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, existentialism was exported to countries around the world. Existentialist ideas were developed in disciplines as diverse as psychiatry, psychotherapy, theology, literary theory, and race and gender theory. Existentialists by words like “anxiety,” “absurdity,” and “the meaning/meaninglessness of life” crept into everyday language. However, as existentialism entered popular culture, it became increasingly diffuse and ill-defined. Existentialism fell out of favour in the 1970s, when it was replaced by an interest in more recent philosophical trends from Europe, in particular French poststructuralism and postmodernism. A new breed of French philosophers trained in the 1950s and 1960s, postmodernists, such as Michel Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Gilles Deleuze, rejected phenomenology and existentialism as naive “philosophies of the subject,” which, they held, uncritically accepted the centrality of human experience in the constitution of the world.

Chief Features of Existentialism

Existentialists characteristically deny the validity of supposedly overarching, objective, or pre-existing structures that might offer antecedent meaning to the human experience. that is, to the exclusively self-conscious and self-determining character of human life as it is lived, enjoyed, and suffered in the first person rather than described or explained from an ostensibly neutral third-person perspective. Since methodical moralities and organized religions are viewed by existentialists as the most malicious
obstacles in the way of an authentic realization of human freedom, aside from these purely philosophical concerns, several historical factors explain the rise of the set of ethical concerns that existentialism attempts to address. Existentialism is often associated with fundamental questions of the finitude of human existence such as death, alienation, suffering, anxiety, and similar concerns. By contrast, the rapid changes in human life since the nineteenth century, accompanied by the violent upheavals above all in the twentieth century, have made the need to return to these questions much more urgent. For example, it is no accident that French existentialism was born and flourished in the context of the Second World War and the German occupation of France.

Existentialism is also characterized by a focus on the individual, which can be seen as a natural reaction to the rise of mass culture and the anonymity of modern society. The transfer from traditional forms of communal life to modern mass society has in countless ways relegated the individual to a marginal position. Out of this situation, existentialism appears as an attempt to speak for the individual and the power of free self-determination, when everything in the world appears to negate even the very possibility of this. Existentialists usually refute the validity of supposedly overarching, objective, or pre-existing structures that might lend antecedent meaning to the human experience.

This movement is also associated with existentialism, originally a reaction against the superrationalism of Hegel and, therefore, to some extent a form of irrationalism. Existentialists have added little to epistemology; they tend to take for granted the existence of an objective world, aiming only to present a picture of it and man’s place in it. Those existentialists who derive something from Husserl for example, Jean-Paul Sartre and Maurice Merleau-Ponty are concerned mainly with the description of forms of consciousness, with phenomenology as descriptive psychology.
Unit IV

Soren Kierkegaard

It is usually recognized that if existentialism is a “movement “at all, Kierkegaard is its prime mover. Referring to himself as “that Individual,” he leads his sarcastic wit and irony against the most prevailing institutions of his day—the Church, the press, and Hegel’s philosophy. Kierkegaard thought about the problem of existence as the problem the individual faces in relation to his existence and sees certain possible ways in which this may be conceived and resolved by the individual. The problem of existence Kierkegaard deals with is one faced by the individual in relation to his existence. The views on personal, individual responsibility and freedom of choice as well as his consciousness of the absurd, paradoxical nature of existence are fundamental to existential philosophy, and it is extensively acknowledged that Kierkegaard ‘set the stage’ and provided the conceptual tools for much of twentieth-century existentialist thinking, which employs numerous Kierkegaardian themes, though divorced from their original religious setting and used in an atheistic sense. Consequently, in the middle of the last century, he became known as the ‘father of existentialism’

In his initial thinking, Kierkegaard was under the influence of Hegelianism. In Kierkegaard’s assessment, Hegel’s system was comprised of a catena of bloodless concepts that effectively effaced individuals. It safeguarded a pantheism that
engrossed everything into the “Absolute Spirit.” Kierkegaard argued that Hegel’s theory that all transitions are necessary dialectical movements removed human freedom and justified whatever happens in the world. Certainly, Hegel had held that “The history of the world is the judgment of the world.” In Philosophical Fragments, Kierkegaard highlighted the non-necessity or contingency of every transition from possibility to actuality. He sticks with Socrates’ perspective of subjective individuality. It was from Socrates ‘critical analyses that Kierkegaard assembled support for his doubts about objective certainty. he recalled individuals to a sense of their value and the importance of their ethical existence. In his insistent defenses of ethical responsibility and religious faith, Kierkegaard highlighted “the intensification of subjectivity,” the cultivation of “inwardness.

**Kierkegaard’s notion of Existence**

Kierkegaard himself saw philosophical inquiry neither as the construction of systems nor as to the inspection of notions, but as the appearance of individual existence. “That individual.” From his point of view, any judgment on his thought can only be the expression of the critic’s existence, not a critical valuation that could stand or fall according to some objective, impersonal standard. In his works *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* and *Stages on life's Way*, Kierkegaard’s pseudonyms define humans as living on one or more of three different planes of existence, each of which corresponds to a different lifestyle – ‘the aesthetic’, followed by ‘the ethical’ and finally ‘the religious’. Kierkegaard sometimes calls these ‘the stages on life’s way’ and at other times he refers to them as ‘spheres of existence’. later he reduces these three main stages to the ‘aesthetic’ and the ‘religious’, with the latter now including ethics (with God). Each different mode of existence has its basis in a corresponding state of consciousness that fixes the precise outlook or ‘world view’ responsible for the
standards, ideals, inspirations, and behaviour of that manner of existence. As a person continues to evolve in consciousness there tends to be a progression from the aesthetic to the ethical and then ahead to the religious stage. There is also a hierarchical arrangement within each sphere.

In *Either/Or* we are told that human existence is a choice. *Either/Or* encompasses different characteristics of lifestyles or “spheres of existence, “the aesthetic life of pleasure, self-indulgence, and personal taste and the ethical life of moral principle and duty, Kierkegaard’s existentialism presupposes that there is no “rational resolution of such choices; the crucial thing is rather choice itself because it is through choice that humans discover and create themselves. Yet Kierkegaard believes that by making choices. Kierkegaard’s own choice of existence is a “leap” to the religious; that is, the Christian way of life. Our consciousness of the opportunity of this leap and our need for it are exemplified for Kierkegaard in the psychological category of *Angst, or anxiety*, from the notion of Anxiety, Kierkegaard claims that anxiety is essential to human selfhood because it is our consciousness of our radical freedom and our intimation of eternity. Kierkegaard strengthened his doctrine of the will with his view of the ultimacy. He considered Christianity is not a stage in the entire progress of man’s religious and moral thoughts; it is a matter of selecting to accept or to reject God’s Word. But the choice is not restricted to this supreme decision; it is the core of all human existence. For Kierkegaard, Human existence is irremediably finite; its standpoint is incorrigibly partial and limited. To suppose otherwise is to yield to a temptation to pride; it is to attempt to put oneself in the place of God. In his first key published work, *Either/Or*, Kierkegaard depicted a purely aesthetic, amoral, hedonistic way of life. This “stage of life” is the most common because its aim is the maximum enjoyment of life, the pursuit of pleasure as the sole goal.
of life. In *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, Socrates’s individual existential ethics of subjectivity is presented as a transition to a “leap of faith” beyond the limits of reason. Kierkegaard describes two forms of religious life: a natural, immanent religiousness and religion of transcendence such as Christianity that embraces the paradox of the God-man, Christ, and requires a passionate faith “beyond reason” in what is “objectively uncertain.”

In *Either/Or: A Fragment of Life* the policy of choice is put to work concerning a difference between two ways of life, the ethical and the aesthetic. The aesthetic point of view is that of a sophisticated and romantic hedonism. By contrast, the ethical constitutes the sphere of duty, of universal rules, of unconditional demands and tasks. For the man in the ethical stage “the chief thing is, not whether one can count on one’s fingers how many duties one has, but that a man has once felt the intensity of duty in such a way that the consciousness of it is for him the assurance of the eternal validity of his being”. He defines that one may achieve self-fulfillment by entering a succession of stages: the aesthetics stage, where individual indulge in the senses; the ethical stage, where individual conform to absolute principles; and the highest, the religious stage, where individual become an authentic, spiritual being standing alone before God.

**The Aesthetic sphere of life**

The aesthetic life-view contains numerous levels of consciousness and sophistication that span society. The most immature aesthetic lifestyle is defined by a coarse, instinct-driven pursuit of individual pleasure. In sharp contrast is refined aestheticism, inhabited by cultured individuals who enjoy sophisticated intellectual and artistic forms of pleasure. The aesthetic person’s life is based upon external contingencies of reality – purely worldly morals that are
at the mercy of the changes of time, and because of this, when things go wrong with his external world he can feel as if deprived of everything that makes life worth living. Kierkegaard, however, mostly discusses the ‘refined aesthete’ who lives through the most evolved form of immediacy. He/she lives in ‘immediacy’ and does not subject their lifestyle, given characteristics and behavior to critical reflection; their existence and level of contentment are determined and governed entirely by factors not of his choice and not under his control. Typical of all forms of ‘immediacy’ is the failure to reflect seriously upon the nature of one’s way of living. The person whose relation to existence is defined by immediacy is seldom deeply committed to anything in life, for when they lose interest in something or see a more attractive alternative, they simply change direction. Consequently, their life lacks continuity, stability, and genuine focus. Instead, existence is viewed in terms of possibilities that can be contemplated or briefly ‘tasted’, rather than in terms of long-term projects or ideals that are to be fulfilled.

Immature aestheticism happens in unrefined immediacy, characterized by a craving for immediate desire-satisfaction through pleasures that demand neither personal cultivation nor effort – drugs, alcohol, one-night stands, sunbathing on the beach, and so on. The person who exists in unrefined immediacy is usually socially unselective set to admit passively the company even of those to whom he feels indifferent. Although the sophisticated aesthete’s relation to life is also characterized by immediacy, instead of an unreflective pursuit of desire-satisfaction, this type contemplates and calculates how best to relish life rather than mindlessly ‘latching on’ to whatever opportunity for pleasure might cross his path, his enjoyments are the products of cultivation.

As with unrefined immediacy, however, one still lacks the detachment required for critical reflection upon his attitudes and
behavior. He does not deeply question the legitimacy of his existence and his devotion to enjoyment. His search for enjoyment is purely a more developed derivative of the primitive just like those living in the state of unrefined immediacy, the refined aesthete unreflectively accepts the essential given circumstances of life as determining his existence, thus he, too, rejects responsibility for the fundamental direction of his life. Consequently, whether conscious of the fact or not, all individuals in the aesthetic sphere of existence are controlled by the pleasure principle and thus they lack any real inner life or solid sense of self – happiness is sought chiefly through externals, so life is at the mercy of uncontrollable and unpredictable factors.

To overcome his boredom, one of Kierkegaard’s decidedly eccentric sophisticated aesthetes develops ‘the Rotation Method’, which permits one to generate one’s personalized world of pleasure. Finally, Kierkegaard perceives that between the aesthetic mode of living, in which the given self is the essential cause of one’s way of life.

The Ethical sphere of life

Ethics necessitates a person to take a livelier part in the shaping of his self and manner of living. Kierkegaard labels this as choosing oneself. In the ethical existence, the individual’s inner world becomes of better importance than his outer existence. He or she seeks self-knowledge fights to become a better human being – an ideal self. The essential distinction Kierkegaard makes between the aesthetic and ethical ways of life is that the earlier is ‘outer’, contingent, inconsistent, and self-dissipating; the latter is ‘inner’, necessary, consistent, and self-creating.

At this phase, one will be in a situation consciously to pick himself. He/she now understands and accepts responsibility for all their past
actions and behavior. All persons assume responsibility as well as moral accountability for all the ‘given’ aspects of their self, and present circumstances, whilst realizing that these features do not determine their existence or limit his/her capacity for expressing the freedom of choice; for his/her sense of self is now no longer identified with the ‘given’ self. The individual takes full accountability for his imminent prospects by treating his existing life situation – character, inclinations, position in life – as the raw material that must be used to form his existence according to his ideal conception of self that he has freely preferred.

So, the ethical self-springs its sense of meaning not from the consequence or result of life, but through the full exercise of freedom of choice in terms of how a person wills his life. strives to embody in his existence enduring universal values such as freedom, justice, love, and peace. This helps to detach and free him from the impulse to satisfy his immediate interests. To achieve this aim, his personality becomes the ‘absolute’ and is ‘its end and purpose’. In other words, the ethical person is his own goal, his task.

Unlike the aestheticist who is preoccupied with ‘externals’, the ethicist’s attention is focused on his inner being, which he can acquire to control and cultivate. Contrasting the aestheticist who treats his personality attributes as unalterable facts of his nature to which he must submit, the ethical individual sees his character as a challenge. Consequently, ethicists construct a conception of his ‘ideal self’ derived from a realistic grasp of inner abilities that are not dependent upon external contingencies, subject to unpredictable forces of change. His sense of accomplishment or failure is therefore not dependent upon the success or failure of his worldly endeavors; instead, he judges his accomplishments by how he carries out these tasks, in terms of his integrity, strength of spirit, and personal obligation. Judge William of Either/or
advocates that the power of human freedom lies in an individual’s spirit, and is expressed through the freedom to choose one’s self. It means becoming the person which ‘the rational ordering of things’ within the society has determined that one should be, and one must adopt this role in the spirit of complete self-acceptance.

The religious sphere of life

According to Kierkegaard, when someone truly acknowledges the truth of their ethical stance towards existence, they realize the contradiction between the way they exist in their innermost soul and their failure to express this outwardly, and this leads to a state of ethical despair, which if intense enough can precipitate a leap to faith, resulting in the religious outlook on existence. Kierkegaard discloses a fundamentally important limitation of the ethical viewpoint which is evidenced in situations where the demands of religious faith and ethical duty collide. The religious way of life is considered by awareness in which the individual realizes the impossibility of truly fulfilling the ideals of ethical existence. In Concluding Unscientific Postscript, Kierkegaard distinguishes between two kinds of religious life: a natural’ religiosity in which the individual strives to relate to God and resolve the problem of guilt by relying exclusively upon one’s natural ‘immanent’ idea of God; and Christianity/ religiousness, which admits that God is incarnated as a human being to establish a relationship with humans. Religiousness / Christianity can only be truly acknowledged via a ‘leap to faith’, for it is a transcendent religion based upon revelation rather than an immanent religion.

The leap to faith is vital because the truth of the revelation that forms the basis of Religiousness / Christianity cannot be rationally demonstrated. After all, the incarnation of an infinite God in the finite form of man is a paradox that transcends all human reason. A religious person is someone who has utterly understood that the
relative principles from our finite worldly existence should never become our life’s purpose, for worldly ambition guarantees an inner sense of bareness. The religious person has mastered the ‘balancing act ’ of maintaining, simultaneously, an absolute relation to the Eternal or Absolute and a relative relation to worldly life. The aim in the religious sphere of consciousness is not to deny worldly life but to put in its rightful place.

Ultimately, what this leads to is a life based upon and rooted in faith. Kierkegaard considered that the significant mark of the religious state of consciousness is the consciousness of total obligation to the eternal that we owe ourselves to and are truly owned by the eternal. The double-mindedness/two wills of humans influence his decision one that desires the world and the other which one tries to ignore that desires the infinite. Nevertheless, limpidness of the heart is to will one thing to have one goal, which in this case is the Eternal. According to Kierkegaard, Eternity is an ‘either/or choice. This means that all human relations, even those of family, are subsidiary to the Eternal. One interacts with the world as an individual, inwardly divorced from the crowd, always conscious of one’s primary responsibility to the Eternal as an individual who stands alone before the Eternal. This will have a consequence upon one’s choice of career, for one could not live in this consciousness and work at something which was not a ‘calling’. The ‘means’ rather than the ‘end’ are now of essential importance in all activities. As Kierkegaard states, man is not ‘eternally responsible ‘for his achievements or failures, ‘But without exception, he is eternally responsible for the kind of means he uses.

Kierkegaard considered that the moral behaviour of a religious person is not due to self-disciplined obedience to social morality, rather it is the natural consequence of their moral character, which derives from their inwardness as an individual conscious of the
Eternal. He asserts that consciousness of sin makes clear the ‘infinite qualitative difference ‘between man and the Eternal. The religious life, the ‘call of the infinite’, acts as a constant reminder that the laws and customs of any people are finite. Worldly values are one-dimensional, but humans are not.

Kierkegaard is convinced that this eternal aspect of one’s being should become the central and only focus for one's existence, and then worldly values will have only a relative status in life and the fact of their presence or absence will no longer deeply concern one. Kierkegaard strengthened his doctrine of the will with his view of the ultimacy of undetermined choice and upheld that the individual establishes himself as the individual he is through his choice of one mode of existence rather than another. But the reader is not stated who is right and must choose for himself or herself, with no external “result” to authorize the rightness of the choice. So, it appears that Kierkegaard thinks this choice must be a radical, “criterionless” choice

**Subjective Truth**

Modern western philosophy has been dominated by a certain epistemological representation that is today labeled “classical foundationalism. Classical foundationalism, makes two entitlements. First, genuine knowledge must be founded based on truths that are recognized with a high degree of certainty. The second claim made by the classical foundationalist is that the only way to obtain such certainty is to become completely objective, setting aside all emotions and other “subjective” attitudes, which are understood as causes of bias and distortion. Kierkegaard’s perspective is intensely different. For although Kierkegaard seldom formally discusses epistemological issues, his whole outlook is a challenge to this classical foundationalist picture.
Kierkegaardian view, uncertainty is simply part of the human condition, and the aspirations of the classical foundationalist are aspirations to transcend that condition. It follows the fact that neither the ethicist nor the aesthete can create a logical proof or demonstration that makes his or her viewpoint objectively certain is not a reason to despair. The classical foundationalist typically sees human emotions as distorting filters and biases; the epistemological task is to somehow put these aside and become purely “rational” and objective. Kierkegaard sees “subjectivity” and “inwardness” as lying at the heart of human existence. Without desires, hopes fears, and loves human life would be impossible because human choice and action would be impossible.

Kierkegaard regards subjective truth as the highest truth obtainable to mankind, and he makes it clear that by ‘subjective truth’ he does not mean that a belief is true simply because one believes it to be true. Instead, he is referring to the subjective experience of being, or living, within truth – of immersing oneself in the subjective, inward activity of experientially exploring and discovering the truth of one’s self in the progression of existing, which is the process of becoming, direct personal involvement in the living moment-by-moment process of an unfolding reality. Unlike subjective truth objective truth cannot deal with human values such as the nature of freedom and moral or spiritual insight. Kierkegaard therefore strongly criticizes all systematic, rational philosophies for their futile attempts to know life via theories and through the assimilation of objective knowledge about reality. Thus, subjective truth is sometimes called existential truth because it is essentially related to one's actual existence.

*When the question about truth is asked objectively, truth is reflected upon objectively as an object to which the knower relates himself. There is no reflection on the relation but that what he relates himself to is the truth, the truth. When that which he relates...*
himself to is the truth, the true, then the subject is in the truth. When the question about truth is asked subjectively, the individual’s relation is reflected upon subjectively. If only the how of this relation is in truth, then the individual is in truth, even if he were thereby to relate himself to untruth. (Westphal Merold, Becoming a Self: A Reading of Kierkegaard's Concluding Unscientific Postscript, page 211, Purdue University Press)

From a Kierkegaardian standpoint, the person who chooses pure objectivity misses the truth both in life and in belief; At best, this can only yield ‘truths’ that provide a severely narrowed outlook on life that has little to do with one’s real experience of reality. The person who selects subjectivity has a chance at the truth in both areas. For objective reflection, the truth becomes something objective, an object, and the thing is to disregard the subject. For subjective reflection, the truth becomes appropriation, inwardness, subjectivity, and the precise thing, in existing, to deepen oneself in subjectivity. The path of objective reflection makes the subject accidental, and existence thereby into something indifferent, vanishing. Away from the subject the path of reflection leads to the objective truth, and while the subject and his subjectivity become indifferent, the truth becomes that too, and just this is its objective validity; because the interest, just like the decision, is rooted in subjectivity.

Subjective reflection turns in towards subjectivity, wanting in this inner absorption to be truth’s reflection, and in such a way that, as in the above, where objectivity was brought forward and subjectivity disappeared, so here subjectivity itself is what has left and objectivity what disappears. It is not for a single moment forgotten here that the subject is existing and that existing is becoming, and that the notion of truth as the identity of thought and being is a fantasy of abstraction, and truly only a longing on the part of creation, not because the truth is not so, but because the
knower is one who exists and thus, as long as he exists, the truth cannot be so for him. Subjective reflection’s seeking back inwardly in inwardness. Inwardness at its peak in an existing subject is passion; to passion there corresponds truth as a paradox; and the fact that truth becomes the paradox is grounded precisely in its relation to an existing subject. This is how one corresponds to the other. Through forgetting that one is an existing subject, passion dies out and the truth in return no longer becomes something paradoxical, but the knowing subject, from being a human being, becomes a fantastic something, and truth a fantastic object for its knowing.

*When truth is asked about objectively, reflection is directed objectively at truth as an object to which the knower relates. Reflection is not on the relation but on it being the truth, the true that he is relating to. If only this, to which he relates, is the truth, the true, then the subject is in the truth. If the truth is asked about subjectively, reflection is directed subjectively on the individual’s relation; if only the how of this relation is in truth, then the individual is in truth, even if he related in this way to untruth. (Robert C. Solomon, *From Hegel to Existentialism*, page 74, Oxford University press)*

All essential knowing apprehensions existence, or only such knowing as has an essential relation to existence is essential, is essential knowing. Knowing that does not concern existence, inwardly in the reflection of inwardness, is from an essential point of view accidental knowing, its degree, and possibility from an essential point of view indifferent. That essential knowing essentially relates to existence does not, though, signify that abstract identity stated above, between thought and being; nor, objectively, does it mean that the knowledge corresponds to something that is there as its object. It means that the knowledge relates to the knower, who is essentially someone existing, and that
for this reason all essential knowledge essentially relates to existence and existing. Therefore, only ethical and ethico-religious knowing is essential knowing. But all and ethico-religious knowing is essentially relating to the fact that the knower is existing.

Objectively the question is simply about categories of thought, subjectively about inwardness. This ‘how’ at its supreme is the passion of the infinite, and the passion of the infinite is itself the truth. Only in subjectivity is there decision, while wishing to become objective is untruth. It is the passion of the infinite and not its decisive content; for its content is just what it is itself. This is how the subjective ‘how’ and subjectivity is truth. When subjectivity is truth, the description of truth must contain an appearance of the antithesis to objectivity, a memory of that fork on the road, and this expression will at the same time serve as an indication of the tension of inwardness. \textit{The objective uncertainty maintained through an appropriation in the most passionate inwardness is truth}, the highest truth there is for someone existing.

According to Kierkegaard, subjective truth must be communicated indirectly because if spoken directly it will be only ‘intellectually’ or objectively grasped. He illustrated that One person is praying to ‘the true conception of God’. but he is praying in ‘a false spirit’. The other one is praying to his pagan, primitive idol, but with ‘an entire passion for the infinite’ In Kierkegaard’s view, it is only the latter who is experiencing subjective truth, because he is praying ‘in truth’ with passionate inward commitment – his beliefs have been appropriated and have transformed his state of consciousness. He also emphasizes that it is only through subjective understanding that one can achieve a true relationship with reality. Our morals and values are an inherent part of our sense of our individual identity. All our picks or decisions are created on such values that are totally rooted in subjective reality. Even when we think our
choices or actions are based on the facts of a situation, this is not true, for how someone responds to the particular facts facing them depends upon their values.

**Freedom and Subjectivity**

**Freedom**

Kierkegaard considered the ironist's freedom is just "negative": it is a freedom from the restrictions of immediacy, but not the positive freedom that would consist in realizing a life that is honestly his own, a life shaped under a substantive ideal that he embraces in freedom, as contrasted with an ideal has merely given over to him in virtue of his immediacy. A commitment to human freedom, freedom of choice, and what might be called "true" freedom, over against fatalistic doctrines of irresistible grace or an overly rationalized account of moral and religious commitment. Kierkegaard discards all narrow doctrines of election and any metaphysical account that would claims compatibility between determinism and freedom of the will.

Kierkegaard rejects this idealist-compatibilist account of freedom, Kierkegaard points out that “freedom alone can account for a person in his totality." in Either/Or, the freedom which equally well chooses the good or the evil is nothing but an abrogation of freedom and despair of any explanation of it. Freedom means to be capable; Freedom really is freedom only when, in the same moment, the same second, it rushes with infinite speed to bind itself. Freedom is the choice whose truth is that there can be no question of any choice.at the freedom of choice instead of choosing, we lose both freedom and freedom of choice. The most tremendous thing given to a human being is – choice, freedom. He also emphasized that If the sight of what is given to you tempts you if you surrender to the temptation and look with selfish craving at
the freedom of choice, then you lose your freedom. He considered the individual as a responsible self, who in freedom gives account for one’s choices or failures to decide. One’s true self is constituted by the choices one makes. Finally, to be an individual is to exist as an exclusive self that possesses a dignity above the race, the crowd

Truth is the work of freedom and in such a way that freedom continuously brings forth the truth. Truth has always had many loud proclaimers, but the question is whether a person will in the genuine sense acknowledge the truth, allow it to permeate his whole being, accept all its consequences, and not have an emergency hiding place for himself and a Judas kiss for the consequence. When inwardness and appropriation are lacking, the individual is unfree concerning the truth, even though he otherwise “possesses” the whole truth. He is unfree because there is something that makes him anxious, namely, the good. The freedom which equally well chooses the good or the evil is nothing but an abrogation of freedom and despair of any explanation of it. Freedom means to be capable

Aesthetic freedom is dependent on passions and as such leads a person to the edge of despair. By contrast, ethical freedom is the enjoyment and fulfillment of doing one’s duty. The person who lives at this level tries to realize in his life what is of eternal, universal value. The key to the ethical sphere is freedom. A “bad choice,” therefore, is better than no choice at all. The aesthetic person drifts along with the currents around him. The person who lives ethically, however, determines these very currents. It is not enough to just do one’s duty

He recognized that the mood of anxiety can potentially help people to discover personal freedom. Kierkegaard often emphasizes that ‘Anxiety is the possibility of, freedom but this is an only half side of it, once a person understands that they have this possibility of
freedom they simultaneously understand that they are free; ‘freedom is never possible, as soon as it is, it is actual’. Freedom only remains a potential or possibility, whilst a person is unaware of its existence, but in the same instant that a person recognizes this possibility of their freedom, the possibility is changed into a ‘fact’. Since the transformation is instant, and the person recognizes is not the possibility, but the fact of their freedom. Kierkegaard differentiates between fear and anxiety fear takes on a definite object; anxiety has no proper object. As such, it is an anxiety of nothing, yet it creates a positive and essential step toward self-fulfillment. Since self-fulfillment always contains a personal, spiritual renovation, anxiety is understood as a condition unique to conscious humans. Central to Kierkegaard’s view is his understanding of anxiety in light of the Christian principle of sin and redemption. For him, anxiety is a means of salvation in conjunction with faith. It is not a psychological state to be diagnosed but a spiritual state to be revealed through inward reflection. He confers a positive value on anxiety as that which compels individuals to lift themselves from their everyday existence to confront his/her most infinite possibility: one's commitment to God where individuals freely choose faith over sin. Kierkegaard also asserts that ‘Anxiety is entangled freedom, where freedom is not free in itself but entangled, not by necessity, but in itself.’

**Subjectivity**

Through his writings, Kierkegaard criticized the systematic ‘objective’ philosophy and persistence on the subjectivity of truth. In *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, he discusses the vital features of the subjective nature of experience and his philosophy of subjectivity. For him, subjectivity means turning away from the objective realm of facts that can be learned by detached observation and abstract thinking and immersing oneself in the
subjective, inward activity of discovering truth for oneself. In subjective reflection, the truth becomes an individual hypothesis, a life, inwardness, and the idea are to immerse oneself in this subjectivity. True inwardness in an existing subject involves passion, and truth as an irony resembles passion. In forgetting that one is a prevailing subject, one drops passion, and in turn, truth ceases to be a paradox. If truth is coherent, the knowing subject shifts from being human to being an abstract thinker, and truth becomes an abstract, comprehensible object for his knowing. In Concluding Unscientific Postscript, we perceive Kierkegaard’s pseudonymous assertion that ‘truth is subjectivity. The definition of this subjective truth is ‘an objective uncertainty, held fast through an appropriation with the most passionate inwardness’, and it is the ‘highest truth there is for an existing person. In place of the search for science and objectivity that had inspired Kant and Hegel, Kierkegaard substitutes “subjective truth,” choice, personality, and passion turning our attention back to the individual and away from the “collective idea” and philosophical systems.

Kierkegaard often uses subjectivity broadly to refer to the subject-forming activities of interests, attitudes, and compulsions in contrast to the objectifying activities of employing objective reason in abstract philosophical reflection. Kierkegaard employs his concept of ‘subjectivity’ in two discrete ways. One remark on the nature and constitution of the human subject as an individual. Subjectivity in this first sense is a state which may be described; it is something we are or can be and refers to humans as they are in so far as they are subjects, termed as constitutional subjectivity. Kierkegaard often uses subjectivity broadly to refer to the subject-forming activities of interests, attitudes, and compulsions in contrast to the objectifying activities of employing objective reason in abstract philosophical reflection. Objectively, one always
speaks only to the matter at issue; subjectively one. Constitutional subjectivity is primarily considered by the literal sense of ‘being-between’ definite states which in turn creates a teleological or intentional ‘being-toward’ that expresses the interested consciousness of subjectivity.

In another way Kierkegaard denotes subjectivity as an activity humans must do; he describes it to be subjective, to exercise inwardness, to have passion. Could name this element of Kierkegaard’s subjectivity as reflexive subjectivity. Kierkegaard used the terms ‘subjectivity’, ‘inwardness’, and ‘passion’ to denote the one activity of becoming subjective. Reflexive subjectivity is established upon the type of interesting reflection that is suitable to the human person as an existing subject and is most often referred to by Kierkegaard as inwardness.

Kierkegaard’s Reflexive subjectivity analyzed the duplexity of human existence. In Concluding _Unscientific Postscript_, Kierkegaard defines the double-reflection of the subjective thinker who is aware of the duplexity of existence. This ‘reflection of inwardness’ is distinguished from the objective thinker’s disinterestedness to the particularities of the thinking subject. In double reflection, the thinker is essentially concerned with the certainty of her/his existence, its sequential situatedness, and how she/he is to negotiate the necessities which come from being in the world. Inwardness in this sense is a ‘double-reflection’ because it not only abstracts notions from concrete reality as does objective reflection, but it thinks these again concerning the actuality of the thinker’s existence in order both to apply them to and realize them in it.

*speaks of the subject and subjectivity – and then, what do you know, subjectivity is the matter at issue! It has constantly to be*
stressed that the subjective problem is nothing about the matter at issue, it is the subjectivity itself. (Kierkegaard Søren, (Edited Hannay Alastair), Kierkegaard: Concluding Unscientific Postscript, page 107, Cambridge University Press)

when the query about truth is enquired subjectively, the individual’s relation to the truth is what matters. If only the how of this relation is in truth, then the individual is in truth, even if he in this way were to relate himself to untruth. Approached subjectively, however, truth is about inwardness, at its maximum, the how of inwardness is the passion of the infinite, and the passion of the infinite is the essential truth. The decision occurs only in subjectivity, thus, the passion of the infinite, not its content, is the deciding factor. In the way of subjectivity, however, the individual relates to God in such a way that this relation is in truth a God-relation. God is a subject to be related to, not an object to be studied or meditated on. He exists only for subjective inwardness and understands that to know God means to resort to God, not under objective deliberation, but by the infinite passion of inwardness.
Jean-Paul Sartre is one of the greatest French thinkers. A polemical and witty essayist, a metaphysician of subjectivity, a political activist, a revolutionary political theorist, a humanistic novelist, a didactic playwright, his genius lies in his powers of philosophical synthesis and the genre breaching breadth of his imagination.

The ‘existential phenomenology of Being and Nothingness is a synthesis of existentialism and phenomenology. Sartre acknowledged the descriptive phenomenology that Husserl proposed but joined Heidegger, and others in declining the "transcendental ego" as the subjective remainder of the phenomenological reduction. The notion of a transcendental ego, the so-called "subject that cannot be an object," Sartre rejects the phenomenological epoché because it entails that conscious states may be coherently studied in abstraction from their real objects in the world Sartre’s existential phenomenology is a synthesis of Husserl’s and Heidegger’s thought. Sartre substitutes the Heideggerian structure being-in-the-world for the Husserlian epoché. Sartre revives the Husserlian emphasis on consciousness but insists that consciousness is necessarily embedded in the world. It cannot be useful or coherently abstracted from its objects. He advocated a non-egological conception of consciousness: "transcendental consciousness is an impersonal spontaneity".
Sartre's primary concern was to observe and attempt to resolve the tensions between human self-consciousness and our situated existence. Significantly, however, Sartre's understandings were to change markedly from his early phenomenological approach in *The Transcendence of the Ego* [1937] to the existentialism of *Being and Nothingness* [1943] and finally to his post-war Marxism which he attempted to express in the *Critique of Dialectical Reason* [1960]. To understand, Sartre’s existentialism requires understanding his thoughts on the relationship between existence and essence, and these are most evidently presented in the 1938 novel *Nausea*. The character Roquentin puts it: ‘To exist is simply to be there; what exists appears, lets itself be encountered, but you can never deduce it.’ Not only is existence contingent for Roquentin but the essence is contingent also. It is a contingent fact about the things that are that they are what they are. Everything could be other than what it is. In *Nausea*, then, Sartre presents some of the essential themes of Existentialism. Existence is inherently meaningless but brutally and oppressively present. Existence is contingent. There might as easily have been nothing as something and, in particular, one’s existence is innately meaningless and contingent. Only particulars exist and things being what they depend on the fragile contingencies of human language and faces the unsolved problem of induction. The effect of this Existentialist vision on those who experience it is the most profound sickness and anxiety.

In *Existentialism and Humanism* Sartre clarifies and partly revises his view of existence and essence. He divides the things that exist into three kinds: human beings, artifacts, and naturally occurring objects. In the case of human beings *existence precedes essence*. In the case of artifacts *essence precedes existence* and in the case of naturally occurring objects *existence and essence coincide*. In the case of human beings, in contrast with both of these, existence
comes before essence. Sartre means there is no predetermined human essence and there is no human nature fixed in advance of human existence. Human beings first of all exist and subsequently make themselves what they are by their actions. When we are born, we have no essence as human beings. Only the totality of choices we make in life makes us the people who we are. In this sense, we are profoundly free.

**Ontology**

Ontology is the most general science or study of Being, Existence, or Reality. Informal use of the term signifies what, in general terms, a philosopher considers the world to contain. He used the descriptive method to lay the foundations for a new philosophy that would respect the irreducible difference between consciousness and the world, the mental and the non-mental, without falling into a two-substance ontology of minds and things that have overwhelmed philosophy since Descartes. A similar use of the phenomenological methodology to support a specific ontological characterization of consciousness – in terms of freedom – is also apparent in other early works. In *Being and Nothingness* Sartre announces that his project is “phenomenological ontology”, and argues that an adequate ontology must take account of nothingness, “alongside” being.

Sartre's existentialism is a transition from the ontological to the humanistic levels of philosophy. Sartre’s formal ontology in *Being and Nothingness* will follow from the descriptive analysis of that phenomenon of the being of things. Against idealism, against those who succumb to the illusion of immanence, Sartre insists on the trans phenomenal character of being, that is, its irreducibility to appearances. He begins his ontological analysis with a discussion of nothingness and thinks that negation occupies an important place in human life. In Sartre’s existential ontology, the ontological
structures of the For-itself have to do triple duty; they have to account for the phenomenologically determined structures of consciousness, of freedom, and of (experienced) time. This triplicity of tasks proves to demand too much from Sartre’s basic ontology of the nihilating of the In-itself, even with its two-fold nature to appearances.

Sartre instigates his study with the being for whom Being is a problem, namely, human reality. Sartre, too, is concerned with gaining contact with being to define its fundamental manners. Utilizing the phenomenological framework of descriptive analysis, Sartre discovers three irreducible manners of being, namely, being-in-itself, or the inert; being-for-itself, or the spontaneous/consciousness; and being-for others, or the interpersonal. Though he claims that the for-others are as essential as the for-itself, it is clear that being-for-others is unthinkable without the other two, which are conceivable without it. So having distinguished between being and the phenomena, Sartre’s descriptive analysis now reveals two radically different regions of being: the transphenomenal being of the pre-reflective cogito on the one hand, and the transphenomenal being of the objects of consciousness, revealed in the experiences of nausea, boredom and the like, on the other.

**Bad Faith**

Sartre asserts that the certainty of our freedom is so agonizing that humans refuse to face it. Instead of understanding his/her identities as free conscious subjects, they pretend to themselves that we are mechanistic, determined objects. Refusing to freely make ourselves what we are, we pretend as fixed essences by the adoption of hypocritical social roles and inert value systems. This denial of freedom is called by Sartre ‘bad faith’.

Anguish cause human to admit bad faith, this means that the intentional aim of anguish and a flight from anguish toward
reassuring myths must all be given in the unity of the same consciousness. In a word, one flees in order not to know, but he cannot avoid knowing that he is fleeing, and the flight from anguish is only a mode of becoming conscious of anguish. Thus anguish, properly speaking, can be neither hidden nor avoided. The kinds of behaviour which can be classified under this heading are too diverse; we risk retaining only the abstract form of them. It is best to choose and to examine one determined attitude which is essential to human reality and which is such that consciousness instead of directing its negation outward turns it toward itself. This attitude, seems to Sartre as bad faith. To be sure, the one who practices bad faith is hiding a displeasing truth or presenting as truth a pleasing untruth. Bad faith then has in appearance the structure of falsehood. Only what changes everything is the fact that in bad faith it is from oneself that he/she hiding the truth. Thus, the duality of the deceiver and the deceived does not exist here. Bad faith, on the contrary, implies, in essence, the unity of a single consciousness.

It is depicted in detail in *Being and Nothingness*:

Sartre describes a café waiter. Several kinds of bad faith are displayed by the waiter. He behaves mechanically as though he were a thing rather than a person. He is acting a role, playing a part. His relationship to himself is as false as that of an actor to his part in a play. His behavior is a display before others, a set of routines that make him comfortable in his own eyes and the eyes of others. In another of Sartre’s examples, a woman on a date with a certain man for the first time is presented with the moment of choice. The man takes her hand. For her to leave her hand in his is to choose a sexual direction for the relationship. To withdraw it is to reject this possibility. Instead of choosing, instead of exercising her real choice, she refuses to face it, leaving her hand to rest, neither accepting nor rejecting: a thing.
In bad faith, people regard themselves as the actor of drama. We are all actors. An actor knows he is an actor but in so far as she performs, she is not her real self. In bad faith, individuals know they are free but adopt a role that masks their freedom. Bad faith is a representation of others and myself. Paradoxically, human reality is what it is not and is not what it is. Sartre states that individuals are known they are free and cable of making choices, However, I mask this capacity from myself by the adoption of everyday roles, by conforming to the fixed image others have of me, by pretending to be a mechanism or a thing and fully possessed of the propositional knowledge of their capacity to act freely but behave rigidly to prevent the realization of that capacity and pretend I am(humans) not free.

Sartre differentiates between two classes of people in bad faith. One kind he calls ‘cowards’. They hide from their freedom in a facade of solemnity or with deterministic excuses. Those who deny not only their freedom but that of others Sartre calls ‘swine. ‘Freedom brings with it a heavy and terrible responsibility Bad faith is also, therefore, an evasion of responsibility.

**Being-for-itself, Being-in-itself**

**Being-for-itself**

For Sartre, human beings unlike the objects around them (such as rocks and trees, or tables and chairs) are not characterized simply by physical possessions such as size, weight, or dimensions. Human beings possess a consciousness of self and hence can create and re-create themselves. Sartre expresses this difference by mentioning self-consciousness as existing for-itself or being-for-itself. The for-itself happens however in the core of the in-itself, the world of objects and things which are whole and self-sustaining but which lack self-consciousness and
freedom. Being-for-itself entails the existence of consciousness, and consciousness of itself. It is that the current center of conscious awareness that each of us finds him or herself to be. It is being in the intelligence of being someone, the kind of being of which it makes sense to say ‘I am it’. Because being-for-itself entails consciousness, it entails that directedness towards the world is called ‘intentionality’ which consciousness entails. Being-for-itself is partially created by presence to being-in-itself. It is what it is over and against the world. Being-for-itself is the kind of being that pertains to one’s existence.

Being-for-itself possesses three existential structures: facticity, temporality, and transcendence. Facticity is the unchosen condition or situation of the for-itself in which freedom is exercised. Temporality is the totality of past, present, future, and transcendence is the controversial fact about being-for-itself: that it is what it is not and is not what it is. Sartre means that I am, in a sense, constantly projected towards the future in my free self-definition. In Sartre’s existential ontology, the ontological structures of the For-itself have to do triple duty; they have to account for the phenomenologically determined structures of consciousness, of freedom, and of experienced time. This triplicity of tasks demonstrates to demand too much from Sartre’s basic ontology of the nihilating of the in-itself, even with its two-fold nature.

Sartre asserted Husserl treats self-consciousness as a matter of knowledge of self, of an epistemology which implies a contradiction between the knower and what is known, or in other words, a division between the subject and the object of knowledge. This Cartesian dualism privileges the place of the knower as a preoccupied entity whose association with its situation is indirect. Sartre calls this notion of consciousness ‘positional consciousness', for the name suggests a ‘position' in
which the self stands separately and seeks knowledge of itself as an abstract entity. Consequently, the first method of philosophy ought to be to expel things from consciousness and to re-establish their true connection with the world, to know that consciousness is a positional consciousness of the world. All consciousness is positional in that it transcends itself to reach an object, and exhausts itself in this same posting. All that there is of intention in my actual consciousness is directed toward the outside,

In contrast to 'positional consciousness', Sartre demands to develop a concept of a 'non-positional consciousness'. non-positional consciousness is an 'immediate consciousness ... not of things but of 'consciousness of self'. This immediate self-consciousness is a 'pre-reflective' consciousness that informs our consciousness of things. Nevertheless, Sartre's non-positional consciousness does not distinguish itself entirely from the Cartesian dualism of subject and object. Sartre all forms of self-consciousness are always consciousness of something. Hence, there is also always a space that splits consciousness from the object of consciousness. He articulates that 'I cannot limit myself to saying that my belief is belief; my belief is the consciousness (of) belief. 'Because consciousness is a spontaneous, pre-reflective phenomenon, it means that the for-itself does not perceive itself as an object, it, therefore, lacks clear organization and specific structure, Therefore, consciousness is a 'nothingness' which 'lies coiled in the heart of being.

As consciousness is simply a boundless void, the power to negate or 'nihilate' the in-itself is boundless. Sartre’s advocated distinction between the for-itself and the in-itself and the capacity of the for-itself to refute the in-itself and thus escape its influence, emphasizes the concept of autonomy as the attainment of a form of 'critical distance' among the self and its situation. Critical distance denotes the idea that the self is hypothetical to be able to
uphold a barrier between his or her capacity for reflection, and the 'external' forces which could sway the capacity for calm, detached, and rational reflection.

Sartre appeared to keep Descartes' and Kant's conviction that self-determination required a notion of critical distance, but Sartre's conception differed markedly from theirs. While Descartes's critical distance was to be attained by the use of doubt, and for Kant through the use of reason operational in the noumenal realm, Sartre's version of critical distance was tied to the concept of nihilation. In it, the questioner nihilates the object questioned by thrusting any meaning the questioned object may possess into the void of the questioner's consciousness and the questioner him/herself 'motivate...themself in his/her being as one who questions, disengages her/ himself from being.', and thus brings 'nothingness into the world'. This ekstatic (Sartre's theory of temporality and organizing) excellence of consciousness, by which it may 'disengage' itself not only from its surroundings, but from all prior loyalties, beliefs, values, or personal characteristics, constitutes arguably the most extreme notion of autonomy in the history of philosophy.

**Being-in-itself**

*Being-in-itself* is an objective being. Being-in-itself is opaque, objective, inert, and entails a massive fullness or plenitude of being. Being-in-itself is uncreated, meaning that although it is, it never began to be and there is no cause and no reason for it to be and is not subject to temporality because past, present, and future pertain uniquely to being-for-itself. Being in-itself, in Sartre’s metaphorical discourse, is thing-like in its solidity and identity. An inert plenum, the in-itself simply is what it is. This region includes any aspect of the experience that manifests these properties; for
example, substances or the temporal past, or any of the *givens* of our experience

Being cannot because of the manner of consciousness. Being in *itself* is neither passivity nor activity. Both of these notions are human and designate human conduct or the instruments of human conduct. There is an activity when a conscious being uses means with an end in view. And we call those objects passive on which our activity is exercised, in as much as they do not spontaneously aim at the end which we make them serve. In a word, man is active and the means which he employs are called passive. In particular, being is not active; for there to be an end and means, there must be being. For an even stronger reason, it cannot be passive, for, to be passive, it must be. The self-consistency of being is beyond active as it is beyond passive.

**Freedom**

Sartre endorses Heidegger’s view that we are ‘thrown’ into the world. We are but we did not choose to be. Sartre says we are *condemned to* be free. We did not choose to be free; certainly, we did not choose to exist. First of all, we exist, then we face the lifelong burden of creating ourselves, generating our essence by free choices. We are nothing other than what we do and the only constraint on our freedom is this: we are not free not to be free. Freedom, for Sartre, is not comfortable. It is a capacity to choose that never leaves us so long as we exist. Our freedom is a burden that confronts us. It is a source of profound anxiety because it carries with it a terrible responsibility. One and one alone can make his/her choices and they and they alone are accountable to the rest of humanity for their actions. For one pronounce 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 one thing, and that is freedom as the foundation of all values

Sartre held that the self can achieve *absolute* freedom. Because consciousness is a spontaneous, pre-reflective phenomenon, means that the for-itself does not perceive itself as an object, it, therefore, lacks clear organization and precise structure. Thus, consciousness is literally a nothingness' which 'lies coiled in the heart of being. Consciousness is so regarded as a void, a bareness of which we are painfully conscious. The formless self-consciousness of the for-itself is therefore never complete. It is a space into which the individual can project any meaning or generate any personality for itself. The for-itself then is completely opposed to the highly designed and determined nature of the in-self. the consciousness of being-for-itself 'is the power to put the world of things into question, to alter, or to transcend it. Furthermore, because consciousness is simply a boundless void, the power to negate or 'nihilate' the in-itself is boundless.

Freedom does not pre-date existence. Freedom is existence, and in it, existence precedes the essence we freely choose. Freedom is the being of consciousness, to imagine, consciousness must be free from all specific reality and this freedom must be able to define itself by a "being-in-the-world which is--at-Once the constitution and the negation of the world." 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." Man does not exist first to be free *subsequently*; there is no difference between the being of man and his being free.

Freedom as the definition of a man does not depend upon others, but as soon as there is a commitment, one is obliged to will the liberty of others at the same time as mine. So, they cannot make
liberty on his aim unless one makes that of others equally his aim. Consequently, when one recognises, as entirely authentic, that man is a being whose existence precedes his essence, and that he is a free being who cannot, in any circumstances, but will his freedom, at the same time one realizes that he/she cannot will the freedom of others. Thus, in the name of that will to freedom which is implied in freedom itself, individuals can form judgments upon those who seek to hide from themselves the wholly voluntary nature of their existence and its complete freedom. The recognition of our freedom causes such anxiety that we pretend to ourselves that we are not free. The multitude of behavioral strategies that make up this pretense Sartre calls *bad faith*. One thinks most of us are in bad faith most of the time.
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