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HUME AND SARTRE ON THE SELF

by

Raymond H. Archer

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"It might even be argued that recent continental philosophers have been discovering, with immense fuss, what the English empiricists have known since Hume . . . ."

Iris Murdoch, in Sartre: Romantic Rationalist

"Sartre's point here, as so often at this stage of his career, is very like Hume's; the many similarities between the two philosophers have been insufficiently noticed."

Anthony Manser, in Sartre, a Philosophic Study
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INTRODUCTION

This study has its focus in the philosophies of David Hume and Jean-Paul Sartre, and in a central concern of both — human nature. Man is differentiated from all else by a consciousness of his selfhood, yet in spite of significant contributions, such as these men have made, he has not been able to satisfactorily conclude his investigation into what it means to be a self. Is it to be perceptive, rational, emotional, embodied? Is it to be just all of these, or is it in something else besides that the crucial definition is to be found? This remains a major problem today, and I will get just a little way into it in conducting this comparative study of two philosophers' approaches.

The main line of investigation, then, will limit itself to the innovative handling of the problem of the human self represented by the work of two markedly original thinkers. There are remarks in their works concerning the self that appear to indicate a likeness in their estimations of what man is. How are the insights which such remarks indicate tied into their respective philosophical systems, and how are they related to one another? Does the initial resemblance of affinity continue and deepen on closer scrutiny, or is it dissipated?
David Hume, an eighteenth century Scottish rational empiricist, and Jean-Paul Sartre, a twentieth century French existential phenomenologist, seem unlikely to have enough common ground for a significant relation. But by bringing forward the whole philosophical work of each I will be able to show how each transcends the limits of the narrower view which has given rise to an official interpretation of his work, and how each approaches the position of the other.

In considering Hume's case in the first two chapters, I note that a strain against the conceptual limits of strict empiricism is evident from the first. Psychological considerations creep in as he attempts to capture the essence of the self as mind. He brings his critique of self as a knowing being to a crisis through a skeptical rejection of reason and sense perception as adequate instruments for cognition, and in his survey of the history of thought he finds no account of the world which provides a basis for an adequate characterization of man. Therefore he rejects the notion that self is an independent substance (a traditional "soul"), and accepts the insurmountable problems which accrue for the continuing identity of the self when it is reduced to a mere bundle of perceptions, lacking any independent basis of being. Yet there is in Hume the rudimentary recognition of a self which lies prior to sense experience as the receptor of impressions and ideas. This self responds to
provocation so as to cement ideas into knowledge by believing them, and so as to begin the formation of a community through passional response to various aspects of interpersonal contact.

But the potential that lies in a skeptically isolated self cannot be tapped without circumvention of that skepticism, for all its initiatives otherwise result in arbitrary opinions and relations. In Chapter Four, therefore, I turn the discussion to a consideration of Kierkegaard, whose rejection of the pretensions of absolute rationalism, and concomitant emphasis on the passional element in man, gave rise to the existentialist identification of truth with the most intensely experienced dimension of reality, one's self. For while Kierkegaard tended to locate this dimension in an inward (private) direction, his emphasis on intensity of response is useful in understanding how the follower of Hume might find a criterion of adequacy in his account of the world, in an intensity of personal response to stimuli, while maintaining an outward (public) meaning for the concept of truth. The self would not, then, engulf the truth, as in Kierkegaard, but would be found at the nexus of interaction between analytically separable elements of the person (intellect, emotions, body) and the world.

In my consideration of Sartre, whose emphasis on the centrality of the self continues the tradition of Kierkegaard,
I observe a corrosive analysis at work, as in Humean skepticism, but this time, since the self is central, it is the self that is sundered first, and the positive elements of selfhood, characterized as the ego by Sartre, are placed at a dialectically irretrievable distance from pure, primordial consciousness. This rupture within the being of man naturally extends to relations with the world which, in Sartre's major work, results in a breakdown of interpersonal relations and the loss to self of any stable and supportive community. Thus, in Chapter Six we are faced with a collapse of both philosophies of the self. Hume's skepticism is barely pointed back towards public cogency by the broadening of Kierkegaardian intensity from self-realization to communal interaction. Sartre's self is riven by internal breakdown and faces the world antipathetically. Although there is similarity in such a common malaise, my concluding chapter seeks to find positive elements around which to reconstitute a more positive common ground.

I approach the history of the problem of the self through a brief survey of dualism in mind/body relations and an account of its downfall, attributing part of the problem in Hume and Sartre to their common dualism. I then introduce the criteriological position of P.F. Strawson, and the doctrine of configurational unities offered by Kenneth Gallagher, as viable contemporary analyses of the nature of the "person" (the "self"
taken non-dualistically), and find in Hume and Sartre parallel elements that make their doctrines of the self more positive and stable.

In the particularly difficult case of Sartre, I consider the views of Norman Greene and Konstantin Kolenda on the possibility of a Sartrean ethic as one route to approach the question of the adequacy of Sartre's doctrine of the self. I conclude that Sartre's later work emphasized only one alternative that was open to him. In his early, formative work I find a doctrine of the imaginative self as consciousness which is still united to ego and body in a fuller selfhood. This could, at least potentially, bind the original divisions within Sartre's ontology so as to enable a sympathetic return to the world by the self as a consistent ethical agent of the sort envisaged on other grounds by Hume.
CHAPTER ONE

Hume's Philosophical Approach

a) The Larger Objectives

Hume clearly stands as an original genius of the first calibre. But as is often the fate of the great, his work has not only been lauded, but has been the object of abuse and neglect as well. His first and most significant major work, A Treatise of Human Nature (hereinafter cited as the Treatise), was sufficiently neglected to lead him to complain that it "fell dead born from the press." There is a certain element of grandiosity in this judgment, and Hume can be accused of failing to perceive or accept that a work of such difficulty and radical quality could hardly command a broad and sympathetic audience as could a more simply entertaining book, but on the other hand, although the Treatise was recognized and commented on from the first, most responses to the book were negative and lacking in appreciation of its contribution to philosophical insight. A continued lack of comprehension of Hume's overall sensitivity and genius, extending even to our time, does mark the Treatise as a singularly misunderstood publication.

Hume has also been the victim of misdirected enthu-
siasm. Scholarship abounds in explications that exploit some single facet of the Treatise as alone central to his thought, emphasizing it at the expense of full appreciation of what he discerned and built as his philosophical perspective on the broad front. For example, his work is often so exclusively interpreted as an extension of the thought of John Locke, Francis Hutcheson, and other empiricist precursors whose principles and vocabulary can be found in Hume's discussions, that those elements of his work that comprise a departure which wreaks havoc among the empiricist assumptions are passed off as the results of a mistaken zeal. Yet this anti-empiricist dimension of his work is as thoroughly grounded in what may be called his Weltanschauung as is his empiricism, and is invaluable because it gives his philosophy open windows towards other traditions.

The same sort of conclusion follows from considering the criticism that Hume too frequently commingled psychology with his philosophy, to the ill-advantage of both. Here again the critic copes unsuccessfully with the range of Hume's apprehensions, given in a world vision that outstripped the conceptual and linguistic vehicles possessed by him or any of his peers. His presentation is not wholly successful, but its shortcomings are not to be overcome by an austere rescension of his written program, either. They are inevitable and natural
concomitants of radically original thought, and on the whole Hume's handling of his insights is as good as could be expected.

What judgment are we to make, then, concerning Hume's relation to his predecessors, and concerning the charge that he included purely psychological considerations in his epistemology? Regarding his relation to the thought of earlier empiricists, we can recognize a tension in Hume's philosophy between his continuation in the language and categories of earlier thinkers and his fashioning of a new perspective. Use of the old categories enabled his readers to locate his ideas in a familiar context, although at the price of importing other men's problems to his work, while the new perspective offered fresh insight at the expense of alienating those who could not readily appropriate or tolerate new and tenuous conceptual structures. The benefits of incorporating both elements outweigh the penalties for doing so, and thus his strategy in this regard is readily defensible. But Hume continues to pay the price of distortion and misunderstanding even today.

Another line of argument sheds further light on this complex relation to his predecessors, and is needed to understand the introduction of "psychological" elements into his philosophy. It is this. Hume clearly did not live above all intellectual conflict, choosing consciously from among clear,
developed, and conceptually available alternatives those which he would incorporate into his presentation. Rather he was within the process, endeavoring within his limitations to light upon a mode of thought and presentation which would enable an advancement of understanding in matters which lie at the foundation of thought. His work reveals an endeavor to rationalize the demands of conflicting theses which arose because his own struggle for insight grew out of the experienced conflict of elements within a newly deepened awareness of the world. He was as much fashioned by his unique insights as fashioner of them, as is any man, and was honest enough to signal from time to time in his writings this sense of being on the frontier of cognition, beyond which yawned an abyss of irremediable ignorance. This is expressed in part as his skepticism.

This opens up a question that we dare not seek to answer fully since it is the substance of a deep and seemingly irreconcilable difference between schools of "philosophers." It may be posed as follows: how wide ranging, in terms of the inclusion of factual material, may a discussion be and still be philosophical? Analytic purists would exclude every factual consideration, if that were possible, while some general intellectuals, who recognize no fixed limit, are nonetheless called philosophers. Between these extremes can be found about as many judgments as to the right answer as there are "philosophers."
Under these circumstances I think it meaningful to allow that some "psycho-ontological" considerations may be termed philosophical. At least if we recognize that avoiding both confusion and material inadequacy is not a simple matter, we can also see that Hume's fusion of considerations, which may seem to some to be more properly kept apart, arose almost inescapably because a really far-reaching intellectual endeavor was undertaken, call it what we will. My judgment is that man cannot satisfactorily finally separate his intellect from his total condition. The field of inquiry will be arbitrarily cut up if the answer to the question about mind fails to comprehend to some degree the psychological element as well as the narrowly logical. Not that there is no point in making distinctions, but the distinctions need to be recognized as valid relative to a project, and it is clear that Hume's project took in a survey of man so broad that a psycho-ontological element entered naturally. Of course, the naturalness of an idea may not be a sufficient criterion of adequacy in philosophy, but perhaps near the frontiers of insight it is a necessary if not a sufficient condition, and thought which evidences it in a marked degree is not to be excluded from philosophy.

At any rate, insistence that the psycho-ontological be excised would alter the essential form of Hume's endeavor, and it is my project to see what dimensions there are in his
thought towards other traditions than the empirico-analytic with which he is often too simply associated. To put it another way, while Hume is, as Zarbeeh terms him, a notable "precursor of modern empiricism," still his style differs from that of contemporary empiricist philosophers in striking ways, and lends itself to comparison, within limits which need careful delineation, with subsequent thinkers of other, broader traditions.

There is another interpretive consideration which needs to be kept in mind. It is tempting to consider the work of a man, especially one which is objectively available to us as a finished corpus, a static whole, requiring of us that we either discover a rationally coherent account of its doctrines or castigate its author for his inconsistence. But the reality is that the work available to us, even a single book, was produced over a period of time, by a thinker whose insight, powers of presentation, and intentions in publishing were multifaceted, and we must decide whether we are concerned with propositions in ideal (and unreal) isolation, or as representing a revolving insight (one which refuses to remain fixed in one perspective for the mere sake of systematic expediency). The interpretational attitude which we adopt will be of immense significance in determining the conclusions which we reach in evaluating the thinker's "position" on any problem or set of
problems. The more narrowly we construe our task the less significance our attitudes and his dispositions will have, of course, for the adequacy of a single proposition may be determinable in isolation, or in the framework of some set of fixed presuppositions, quite straightforwardly. But if we try to fit that proposition into the context of its paragraph, chapter, or whole published volume, we are faced with an increasingly complex set of inter-related propositions and intentions. The commentator on any thinker’s whole contribution must seek to avoid compressing his subject’s thought into arbitrary categories, but attempt to delineate as objectively as possible the general set of determinations under which the philosopher himself was operating, say where he abandoned them, and trace out what follows both from his principles and from the aberrations.

It is also true that the process of change from one segment to another of an author’s work may not necessarily constitute progress towards greater adequacy. A ranked ordering of the adequacy of portions within a work such as the Treatise, or between the Treatise and the later Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding (hereinafter cited as the Enquiries) would differ from one school of thought to another. For example, some esteem improvements in clarity and consistency above all else while others may judge that a concomitant loss of scope and singular penetration would turn the gain in clarity into an
overall loss of philosophical value. In our case, it seems that Hume's own intellectual commitment was increasingly given to clarity and consistency, and that this was obtained to a greater degree in the Enquiries at the cost of narrowing the purview of the Treatise. Early insights which proved unyielding to his available tools of analysis and explication were no longer explored in depth in the later work. Therefore, since I am concerned with the nature and consequences of a set of insights which he attempted to develop mainly in his earlier work, I will concentrate on the Treatise. I thus place a premium on the range of insight for the moment, at the risk of seeming to undervalue the restraint which clarity and systematic cogency demand. However, in the concluding sections standards of clarity and accuracy will form an important part of the critical apparatus.

The main attraction in the Treatise is that there the doctrine of the self is most explicitly developed, and in this doctrine Hume's pervasive skepticism comes to have its most significant impact on his philosophy. The consequences of his skepticism are not, I think, to be judged to be merely negative, for purely negative consequences would follow only for an exhaustive positivism wherein every element in the world were held at once to be concrete in itself and discrete vis-á-vis all else. Hume is not a thorough-going positivist, for although there are
positivistic declamations in his work, where he concentrated for the moment on his intellect to the exclusion of his broader sensibilities, the margin of his consciousness was witness to the dissolution of sufficient grounds for picking out the elements of that complete atomism which is implicit in unrelieved positivism. Negative consequences there are, of course, but they do not offer a consummation of Hume's skepticism, even though in their articulation there lies a philosophical accomplishment of the first order, the demotion of metaphysical speculations from the eminence of absolute authority to the status of relatively poorly substantiated hypothetical models. How his discussion undertakes this task will be examined later.

For now we must consider the positive aspect of Hume's skepticism, too often overlooked because of the facile manner in which his skepticism is accounted a mistake. Calling his skepticism positive is a way of saying that some of his significant doctrines are calculatedly founded on extra-rational grounds so as to obviate the negative consequences of skepticism for purely rational inquiry. This raises, as a matter of course, the problem about the (rational) validity of such an anti-rationalism. That is, given the truth of Hume's skeptical thesis, it seems inevitable that that thesis must itself be undermined. Either the thesis must be denied or all evocations of truth become vacuous. But this is absolutism of a sort inconsistent with
Hume's deeper grounds for mounting a mitigated skepticism. For in his skepticism he could admit the validity of the judgment, but then hold that that validity itself would be tenuous under the thesis, and rest his case there. The point is that his endeavor was not to deny either skepticism or its self-debilitating effects, but rather to delineate a "new Scene of Thought" wherein an account of human nature might be given in terms peculiar to its own capabilities which extend, he was convinced, constructively outside the strictly rational. The doctrine's rational validity then becomes elusive, but it is proof against invalidation in nonarbitrary ways, and its significance for the development of a doctrine of the self must be explored.

An important aspect of Hume's commitment to the search for extra-rational dimensions of understanding is his use of language. The informality of his linguistic practice has rightly been judged to be evidence of a general tendency of his mind, but such a judgment, left just there, supposes that no closer analysis of that tendency exists. But I think that we can work toward a better analysis. For one thing, it can be said that Hume's philosophy seems broadly to anticipate certain forms of existentialist analysis, and his use of language seems to be a species of what Kierkegaard called "indirect communication." Hume himself was without doubt lacking in any significant insight into these further implications of his philosophi-
cal practice, but we are in a position to recognize that there are alternatives to judging his seemingly haphazard approach to language and systems of thought to indicate only a mere dilettantism. Since his writings are devoid of adequate internal justification of his common practice, they do warrant, in a degree, a judgment such as Passmore’s that "Hume . . . was a philosophical puppy-dog, picking up and worrying one problem after another, always leaving his teeth marks in it, but casting it aside when it threatened to become wearisome."  

Perhaps Passmore is right, but there is a fresh promise in the judgment that Hume’s practice evidences a certain sense of the way things are ordered, or, perhaps better, disordered, which makes that judgment worth considering. Certainly this aspect of his Weltanschauung was not dominant in Hume’s systematic thought, for it was inexplicitly grasped. But it lay behind his thought in such a way as to systematically trouble the waters around intended rational investigation. It seems consistent with his whole doctrine to say that he had a marginal intuition that in many cases no term could exactly fit the elusive foundational fact, which led him, in an unconsciously defensive ploy, to appropriate language rather carelessly with an eye more to common practice than to philosophical nuance. Had his consciousness of this intuition and reaction been more explicit, a certain

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systematic variance of terminology might have been developed in an attempt to illuminate obliquely what could not be directly floodlit. But his writing evidences what Kierkegaard called despair, a kind of savaging of intellectually viable resolutions, and his consequent apprehension of a certain hollowness in the perceived world resulted in appropriation of the nearest conceptual vehicle he could consciously grasp, skeptical reductionism. Our project will be to examine whether Hume's skepticism leads in this way to a viable anti-positivistic insight, how his endeavor to work out the problem determined his view of the self, and how his view of the self has been modified by Jean-Paul Sartre's existential phenomenology.

I have now discussed some considerations which make further examination of an eccentric side of Hume potentially worthwhile. That Hume has this relatively neglected anti-positivistic and nonempiricist side is the burden of my thesis. I will continue by considering in some detail Hume's writings in the Treatise, first dealing in general with some foundational elements of his philosophy, and then proceeding in Chapter Two to Hume's Book I, Part IV, "Of the skeptical and other systems of philosophy," enroute to a delineation of his doctrine of the self in Chapter Three.
b) The Specific Elements of Hume's Philosophy

Whatever digressive tendency he may have harbored, Hume's thought was centered on the principles of the empiricist tradition which had nurtured him. In its beginnings his empiricism was strict and naive in an unpejorative sense, meaning simply that he was possessed of a drive towards epistemological atomism. This created tensions in his system because his insight also reached to very subtle and sophisticated dimensions which, as I have suggested, were the antithesis of atomism. The *Treatise*, an early and formative work, is the least compromised evidence of the interaction between conflicting aspects of his fundamental intuitions. It is therefore an invaluable instrument for tracing his central empiricist thrust, for making out those elements of insight that could not be filled out within empiricist limits, and for seeking to discern ways in which the empiricist thesis was expanded into an account which took in the passions and some independent intellectual intuitions as grounds for a wider "experientialist" view. Not only the individual theses are significant, but the overall ordering of the *Treatise* must be received in explicating that which, though manifested on the periphery, was yet intrinsic to his basic view of the world. Further, it must be emphasized that in explicating Hume's metaphysical theses the published corpus must take precedence over any speculation about arrangements which may have
preceded it in Hume's pre-publication thought, supposedly to continue to exercise a covert influence on his meaning. The arguments of Professor N.K. Smith, for instance, which seek to establish that there was an early and foundational development of a doctrine of belief, cannot be allowed to disjoint our estimate of what Hume presents in considered form as his philosophy. Logically first things are systematically first in a well ordered philosophy, and Hume's beginning with the elemental grounds of cognition is significant in establishing what it is that stands first in the hierarchy of epistemological priorities for him. Whatever developed first in his personal thought history, he evidently chose, for reasons of his work's internal logic, the presentational order and emphases we find in the Treatise. Where it begins, and where it ends, are of special significance in identifying his general philosophical thrust.

Whatever the case so far as the chronological precedence of the bare emergence of certain ideas is concerned, it is hardly credible that any element developed in isolation from the rest of his thought. Any specific insight grew to its final form in relation to other concerns, contributing to the organic growth of a whole doctrine of human nature. Moreover, the seminal grounds of Hume's philosophical insight must have consisted of organic and reciprocal interaction between the
elements of thought and life. Expressions of rapture which seem to give exaggerated place to a single element of fresh insight might more safely be taken to have emotional and motivational significance than to indicate systemic precedence in the development of the whole philosophy.

Hume's own consciousness of the philosophical dimensions of his "new Scene of Thought" must be discovered in the logic of his presentation. In the "Advertisement to Books I and II" of the Treatise, Hume says, "My design in the present work is sufficiently explained in the introduction." He thereby puts major emphasis on a portion of his work which reveals two major commitments. First, there is the commitment to plumb the depths of human nature in order to discover a new foundation for all scientific, in the sense of experimental and systematic, inquiry:

In pretending therefore to explain the principles of human nature, we in effect propose a compleat system of the sciences, built on a foundation almost entirely new, and the only one upon which they can stand with any security. (2)

Second, there is a commitment to work in recognition of a limit

2. Treatise, p. xx.
to human discernment which must rest within experience:

But if this impossibility of explaining ultimate principles should be esteemed a defect in the science of man . . . 'tis a defect common to it with all the sciences . . . None of them can go beyond experience . . . (3)

The essential difference and problem affecting the full extension of the experimental method to moral philosophy is the greater susceptibility of human affairs to disturbance by overt experimentation, a factor of which modern social scientists are now keenly aware. But for Hume the problem of satisfying the challenge differed only in degree from domain to domain. No philosopher was ever more aware that there are deep problems in establishing knowledge of every kind, and that these simply come to a head in the attempt to make out the being of man.

Briefly, what are the steps by which Hume sought to realize the project of securing a science of man in the face of stipulated limitations? Hume's beginning introduces a technical vocabulary of an extent and precision which exactly represents the character of his philosophy. He identifies the contents of mind as "perceptions," and divides these into "im-

3. Ibid., p. xxii.
pressions" and "ideas." Ideas are said to be "deriv'd from" impressions, and in perceptual experience we come to recognize certain "objects" of that experience on which our knowledge is based. We can examine ideas as they are presented by "memory" and "imagination." Now, what is the problem?

There are factors stemming from the philosopher's whole aim and disposition that stand behind the use of a particular language. For instance, the endeavor to open up a new scientific understanding of human nature by the introduction of technical terms was conditioned by Hume's skepticism which, as suggested above, affected his use of language in general. As a result, he writes quite informally, and even carelessly (he holds ultimately that our minds must adopt this mode), ignoring distinctions which could be expressed more adequately only if more careful definitions of a larger, more precise vocabulary were established. Part of the reason he does not offer them, I have suggested, is that he senses a quality in the world that even precise definition will fail to bring within the compass of linguistic competence. However, we must make the endeavor he eschewed, for extensive clarification of concepts can be useful, since further extrapolations depend for their meaning upon the nature and adequacy of the basic formulations. Any searching examination of Hume leads to an early conviction that elimination of as much of the misleading ambiguity as possible is salu-
tary to reaching an understanding of his meaning. Concerning the terms just introduced, we can supply some initial commentary that will at least point up the inherent vagueness of Hume's stated position.

For instance, Hume uses 'deriv'd from' in both a psychological and a logical sense, and sometimes in a way that requires both senses. Psychologically, 'deriv'd from' refers to the cause or origin of some mental entity. Philosophically, the term means simply "logically dependent on." But when the caused thing is an idea, the logical derivation of the proposition which stands for it is also a consideration, so both senses are significant.

'Perception' has both a narrow and a broad application, sometimes referring to the contents of empirical experience only, and sometimes to the external physical entity of which experience is enjoyed. So, too, the term 'object' sometimes refers to that which is broadly present to conscious apprehension, and sometimes more concretely to physical objects. The term 'idea' refers contradictorily to two mental entities — officially to that which is the end product of sense experience, but often to that which is to be discounted or rejected because it has not been produced by perceptual experience. Finally, 'imagination' refers at times to mere fancy,
the source of fictions, while at other times a basic element of mind's ability to grasp reality, a kind of "reproductive imagination," seems to be the object of reference.

But Hume's struggle to bring forth his thought is not sufficiently comprehended by observations about his use of language. On a deeper level are issues concerning the world that he apprehended, compared to which questions about language are merely questions about symptoms. Hume avowed an intent to offer a full characterization of human nature, and his opening remarks about mind may not only be taken to present human nature as cognitive, but may be taken alternatively to reveal a part of his grasp of a larger possibility. The correctness of this view is established by the manner in which he undermines the adequacy of intellectual endeavor while insisting that an adequate grasp of the world is nonetheless possible. Put another way, we might say that the careful reader of Hume, who is not satisfied to pick out just his most cogent statements as his philosophy, becomes aware that for Hume the rational and intellectualistic aspect of man is just a facet of the whole person. His Treatise, endeavoring to be a full investigation of human nature, gradually reveals the dimensions of a larger self. Every part of the Treatise is therefore germane for this inquiry, and although, since his emphasis on the broadening elements varies from place to place we will have to be careful
in choosing our areas of concentration not to fall into choices that present the less equivocal and more dogmatic portions as the philosophy of David Hume, we will not want to lose sight of the "normal" interpretation either. So, although I will be somewhat arbitrary in my selections, it will be only in an attempt to redress the balances against an overly simplistic view of Hume. Certain topics which have often been neglected will be of special interest in this task, and I will concentrate on those that hint at an anticipation of philosophies that have been developed since Hume's time, and are not often thought to have any affinity to his thought. But this is not to deny, and I emphasize this, that there is an official, dogmatic core in Hume's presentation which has the sort of resonance that conflicts with more wide ranging theses. I do suggest that that element is only part of his whole discussion. My task, therefore, in examining the central position that he ascribes to the cognitive process, is to show whether, and if so how, by weakening the structure of cognitive certainty he approaches the threshold of understanding self in more flexible terms.

The formal model of reality, and therefore of mind, with which Hume starts is nearly mechanistic, but his skepticism about confirming this model compromises its rigour. The process by which this is done is not laid out in formal, successive stages, but rather the model is at once displayed and attacked,
as if it were introduced for the purpose of breaking it. A pervasive sense that the dissolution of clear, univocal descriptions is intentional is imparted by shifts in Hume's account which follow almost as soon as the description is given. So far as form is concerned, the rationalistic presuppositions of his age are implicit from the first, and never formally cast out, but what is said as content gradually establishes feeling against reason, doubt against knowledge, and offers baffling equivocation where univocity could be wished for. My examination of the systems which underlie Hume's doctrine of the self will have to be cursory, but in his epistemological doctrines I will be looking for elements that demand satisfaction in terms of a personal self more elaborate than a mere knower can be held to be even in his most cogent states.

Hume's epistemology is at first undergirded by the ontological commitment that knowledge itself consists of something real. This is the device by which he intends to make human nature subject to science, which needs real entities on which to conduct its investigations. The inspiration to this commitment lay first of all in Thomas Hobbes, and later and more substantially in John Locke. For Hobbes, "perception . . . involves seeing something as something," implying a discrimination or recognition which required supplying something durable from the past by means of memory. Always for Hobbes this "something"
was to be found in a material, probably an organic residue, for Hobbes was radically mechanistic. But Locke rejected the Hobbesian doctrine with its tendency to pass perception off to natural science on account of its material basis, and dealt with the mind as physical only insofar as explaining mental phenomena required taking note of such connections. Locke's object of perception, in being thus freed from the physical, had to become ideal to some extent, and he held that "any object of awareness or consciousness must be an idea." This still required that what was present to the mind must be akin to the physical in being an object of awareness (having some sort of density) and avoided idealism by holding that ideas stand between mind and reality, linking them but not replacing independent realities with ideal objects. Hume thus inherited what we can call an objectivist view of the mind (mind consisting of concrete but non-physical mental entities), and it is the resistance of this quasi-physical view to all attempts to make it fully consistent with the phenomena of experience that leads to Hume's movement towards skepticism.

It is also Locke's terminology that Hume modifies in beginning his account of the objectively existing mind. For Locke the contents of mind were ideas only, all rooted in experience. Hume modifies this to say that mind consists of perceptions, all of which originate in experience, either in
sensation or in reflection. Ideas become for him the name of the fixed or established element of mind, whereas the mobile element, in the process of occurring, are called impressions. In Hume's philosophy, ideas are consequent to impressions which are original. Ideas function in thinking, which must logically come later than the experience which supplies ideas, whereas impressions are possessed as feeling. Ideas are deemed "copies" of impressions, and are held to be "fainter" than impressions which have greater "vivacity."

Hume has often been criticized for his characterization of ideas as faint in contrast to the vivid impressions which precede them, but some scholars have undertaken to defend his sense if not his unfortunate terminology. As Laird has stated, "Hume's term 'vivacity' was intended to indicate something ultimate and indefinable, not, as would seem in the preliminary discussions, the mere intensity of our perceptions."4 Hume recognizes that the two classes of perceptions tend to run into one another and overlap, but thinks the distinction a valid and useful one anyway since everyone who reflects can notice the difference in his own thought. In loosening the model suggested

4. John Laird, Hume's Philosophy of Human Nature, p. 33. This is but another testimony to the way Hume's depth of insight and breadth of apprehension outran his technical tools in development and presentation of his philosophy.
by the originally absolute distinction, he introduces terms such as "resemble" and "correspond" to describe the relation between ideas and impressions, but both of these new terms are quite vague as to what would stand as a sufficient condition for their use. Furthermore, even these relations do not apply unexceptionally to complex ideas, but only to simple ideas which are the direct irreducible product of atomistic experience, an abstract notion in itself since experience gives what James called "a blooming, buzzing confusion," a mobile complex out of which more or less static simples are distilled.

Thus Hume, in his endeavor to take formal account of an experienced difference between the reception and maintainance of perceptions, introduces a distinction between ideas and impressions that relegates the latter to relative instability, and renders the former vulnerable to skepticism concerning their ultimate origin. The ideas of sensation are the sine qua non of cognition, being logically the first given sort of idea, prior to reflection for reasons which will emerge in our study of the self. Yet these ideas themselves are rooted in causes which must be unknown since ideas are the only known objects. An alternative would be idealism, which would identify ideas as the only objects, but given the priority in experience of impressions Hume opts for a skeptically compromised realism. Ideas of sensation are thus held to be faulty objects for philosophical
scrutiny from the first, and are best left to be treated just
as the phenomena they are by "natural philosophers," that is,
scientists. This is a near reversion to Hobbes' policy, but is
limited by Hume's broader thesis concerning what makes up per-
ception.

It is worth noting here that Locke did not have Hume's
problem of the disconnectedness of ideas from their causes.
Less sensitive than Hume to inner nuances of feeling, although
in fact proceeding on a similar basis of immediate intuition,
Locke identified the external thing as the ideas' source in a
directly realist way. He wrote, "External objects furnish the
mind with the ideas of sensible qualities, which are all those
different perceptions they produce in us." 5 For "furnish" he
sometimes used "convey into," concerning which he wrote, "when I
say the senses convey into the mind, I mean, they from external
objects convey into the mind what produces there those percep-
tions." But Hume's faithfulness to the experience of perception
drives him to seek another recourse. Because of the instability
of impressions he is determined to originate his investigation
of human nature qua mind in an inspection of ideas rather than
impressions. This is to take the temporally and logically de-
pendent, and Hume's strategy has been critically challenged.

5. John Locke, An Essay Concerning Human Understanding, p. 124
(emphasis mine).
But clearly he was motivated by a desire to uncover the structure of mind as its most stable and enduring entities would reveal it, and it is only later that his empiricist commitment is given freer rein to lead him back into dependence on the domain of the fluctuating quasi-entities which are impressions. Initially, his principal objective of serving science had to be given priority, and this meant concentrating on the relatively more stable of the perceptual elements.

Since the ideas of sensation are problematic in their origins, although absolute in themselves, Hume moves to exploit the relative stability inherent in ideas by moving to ideas of reflection, which occur in response to the experiencing of some sensation, and therefore in concert with some continuing idea of sensation, but are not of problematic external origin. In reflection there is a panorama of ideas always present, maintained by memory or reconstituted by imagination. There is a greater reality value in the remembered idea, which Hume describes in terms of greater vivacity, compared to the ideas of imagination, and there is an established pattern of occurrence in contrast to the free flow of ideas into novel patterns in the imagination. Memory settles the mind into accepting a stable world view. Against this we learn from imagination's freedom that, in principle, no two ideas, or their impressions, or, presumably, their secret source, have any necessary relation
other than that which experience reveals. In what sense experience can reveal a "necessity" is a moot point, since all matters of fact must be contingent, strictly speaking. But Hume's negative point is not hurt by this consideration for it stands even stronger if no such necessity can be said to be experienced.

But the question which then arises is, what prevents a descent into total perceptual chaos under the indeterminability shown by imagination to be inherently in complex ideas? What causes (or, better, accounts for) essential continuity in the order and form of complex ideas? Hume lights upon the notion of a universal principle of association, which operates, like gravity between physical entities, with gentle, pervasive force between mental entities, and is affective in the absence of any countervailing force. The manner in which the associative force is evidenced is as either resemblance, contiguity, or causation, all of which are ways in which ideas are related. Resemblance influences the ideas because the mind favors a route along which passage is easiest due to the lack of discrepancies between resembling successive members of the series. Contiguity draws the mind to proceed "along the parts of space and time" for much the same reason (no gaps), thus forming a coherent world view. Causation is the strongest connexion "in the fancy" (imagination) and thus explains more. Its nature and operation will be discussed separately. In all three relations we see that the associative relations are natural forces, not objects of the mind's apprehen-
sion so much as grounds of its possibility. We have in them a first dim foreshadowing of Kant's synthetic _a priori_ conditions of possible experience, although they are pushed off into the world, apart from self, by Hume's early objectivist leaning. Yet that they are not quite construed as objects for self is significant in that in this way they lay Hume's theory of the mind open to non-objectivist innovation at so early a stage.

Hume's treatment of the third relation, cause and effect, comprises one of his most radical but insightful contributions to philosophy. Although Hume's doctrine is usually discussed in a purely physical context, and understandably so both because his doctrine has so much significance for the philosophy of natural science, and because Hume used physical object interactions in illustration of his doctrine, I think that it is worth observing that Hume's first mention of causation in the text of the Treatise is in terms of the complexities of social interaction. The developmental line that terminates in the third book of the Treatise reveals the significance of Hume's interest in social causation, for there his thought culminates in an attempt to explain ethical relations. This con-

7. Treatise, pp. 455 ff.
cern to account for human nature at a point of fullest complexity acted as a sort of final cause in drawing out Hume's doctrine of the causal relation. He alludes to the complex in his opening statement, reverts to simpler contexts in order to reveal the bare structure of the principle, and then moves toward the concrete application of the principle to practical affairs. It was always a matter of despair for Hume that his solutions in principle broke down in attempts to make that application.

However, it is the case that Hume discloses this sympathy for the practical in his initial account of causation, using as his illustration of the constitutive power of causal influence the relation of master to slave. In fixing the slave's state of life, Hume says, the master, by his activities, constitutes an entity (in this case, a human entity) in its essential features, qua slave. Being the cause of an existence is thus but the sublime degree of efficiency of action, which in turn is the final effect of motion in general. This often neglected element in his analysis of cause and effect is of interest to us in showing how basically Hume's philosophy entered into exploring dimensions of the world which a simple mechanistic philosophy, flowing from a pat objectivist view of mind, would have avoided. But the breakdown of the elements of mechanism

8. Treatise, p. 12.
occurs much more explicitly in his discussion of the way in which the idea of causation originates, and so we will move on to that account which begins with Part III of the first book of the Treatise.

Hume here observes that of the seven philosophical relations that he can make out, causation has an exceptional status, being neither intuitively known nor observed through the senses. Yet what is grasped is deemed both a necessary relation (as are the relations of ideas intuitively grasped) and true of the world (as are the matters of fact given by sense observation). Thus causation is judged to be operative among relations of ideas and between matters of fact in ways which go beyond the proficiency of either of the normal authorities, intuition and sense. The more heavily stressed of the two, and the more important, is the transcendence of sensation. Its importance is that ideas grounded in sensation are, as noted earlier, rooted in sources unknown to sensation itself, and so knowledge of a causative function which is ascribed to existences and objects beyond sense clearly must establish a new cognitive dimension. How is this remarkable extension of the understanding accomplished, Hume asks? It is given by no impression, idea, or reasoning process. It is a relation among objects, not an object itself.\(^9\) In searching for a connection

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\(^9\). Note that in holding this sort of position on relations
to other relations, some connection is found to contiguity and temporal precedence, but nothing sufficient to account for the discernment of causation, because both are necessary but not sufficient conditions of the relations. Hume concludes that the principle is generated by some sort of inference, and he proceeds along this line of investigation.

No process of mind leading to an inferred conclusion (Hume calls it "reasoning" against his own judgment that reason is not the source of the relation) is possible without a base in sense experience. Without it there could be nothing to think about at all. The testimony of witnesses may serve as a basis for inference so long as there is independent reason to

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Hume identifies an aspect of mind which is not a perception. This is not consistent with his earlier claim, but no defence of the later emergence is offered. In this Hume is not so adequate as Berkeley who clearly distinguished notions from ideas as mental entities not rooted in perception. (cf. Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous, pp. 231-2).

10. The criticism that temporal succession is not necessary can be granted without hurting Hume's point here which concerns the absence of a sufficient condition. On the other hand, Hume can be defended against the criticism by claiming that even in seemingly concurrent cause/effect relations finer analysis rationally leads to a search for some more minute precedence in the cause or in some proportion of its constitutive members. Theory assumes its presence even without confirmation.
believe their testimony, and it has a material precedent in our experience. "Reason to believe" is also a dubious category in Hume, since, as we shall see, belief is hardly a function of reason, strictly taken. But since Hume's interest here is as much in the possibility of thought as in the criteria of adequate thought, the evidence for possible thought which actual thought supplies may suffice. For both, the impression is essential, so he claims that for the purposes of accepting the testimony of witnesses, a conviction consonant with there having been such impressions will suffice. This unfortunately admits sincerity of belief as a criterion of truth.

However, Hume's claim that impressions are essential can be restricted to making the point that sense observation is essential to our world-referring propositions' having meaning. Thus Hume's position that it is immaterial what the source of ideas is beyond impressions is an attempt to put off an impending skepticism. His claim that coherence in the set of ideas must be sufficient warrant for belief (for it is all we have) is not used to establish a positive idealism, but to undermine the foundations of a realism which, paradoxically, he continues to assume is nonetheless correct in its main objectivist thesis.

The importance of impressions is illustrated by Hume in his observation that an artist finds a model more satisfac-
tory than mere memory in producing the likeness of an object. The more elapsed time since the impression was experienced, the less clear the simple idea, the weaker the sense or order in a complex idea, and the more likely one is to be confused by the innovations of fancy. But the impression base can be rendered more durable by repetition so that custom and habit take hold to generate a continuing vivacity. Under these circumstances the mind enlivens its own imagery by the addition of perceptual energy, a motif certainly foreign to the "tabula rasa" which constitutes the passive perceiver in prior empiricism.

This energy contribution is the key to Hume's completion of the picture of causal inference. Nothing in the external circumstances serves as a sufficient condition. Any idea is in principle separable from its impression, so no causal tie can be discerned between them. But repetition of the experience of contiguity and temporal precedence and succession, what Hume calls constant conjunction, provokes the mind into an interpretation in terms of cause and effect of the relation of two elements, both of which must have been perceptually available to us in learning the meaning of the language of causality. We receive no new idea from the repetition, but accumulate memory of the ordering. The factual necessity which we ascribe to the relation arises from the actual irresistibility of the inferential move, but since it is not a logical necessity, the
question arises whether the inference is grounded in reason or in the imagination. Hume denies that reason is the ground because neither (intuitively certain) knowledge nor probability can support the principle of the uniformity of nature, upon which the ability to extend past experience into inference predicting future events, even for the immediate future, would seem to depend. The rejection of knowledge of the future is just the skeptical insistence that radical reversal of any matter of fact is conceivable, coupled with the claim that since the fact is not logically certain, it is therefore doubtful. But this detachment of the reasoner from the world is even more marked in Hume's rejection of probability as a route of reason to causality, for the path of reason is said to be limited to the implications of ideas, which alone can be given propositional form it seems, whereas causation uses impressions immediately. Both sense and mind must be commingled in "reasoning" ("thinking through to conclusions" would be a better expression) about the world. The world is given to us in original impressions and consequent ideas, and since we are proceeding to a conclusion which is more than can be empirically sanctioned, something more in the way of ideas must be added. This is provided by the imagination, which may be capricious and irregular, but appears to graduate into operation according to

11. Treatise, p. 89.
principle at this zenith of its orderliness. At least its consequences are discernible as the regular principle of causality, and we are led into beliefs about the nature of the world on its warrant.

So in Hume's discussion of causation we are presented with an alternative: either skepticism about the world's causal relations, by which it is structured, because of the absence of sufficient grounds in the passive perceptor for establishing connections to anything beyond immediate perception, or the acceptance of an active principle of response in man, constituting belief by the elevation of ideas to a forcefulness which coerces reason. It was to be Kant's project to find in reason the potential for active constitution of understanding of the world, releasing man's mind from the confines of empiricistic passivism without reducing the real to the ideal. But this consists essentially in a restriction of the term 'world' so as to exclude from the world the external noumenon over which Hume agonized in the conviction that that which was there, even if termed noumenal, should not be eliminated in so cavalier a manner. Consistent derogation of the noumenal renders the term vacuous, and hence eliminable, upon which idealism moves to the fore once again.

Hume's alternative has appealed to post-Kantian exis-
tentialists whose realism was to be maintained in the face of tensions between the world as it is and awareness as it is.

From this point we will first consider Hume's rejection of objective knowledge, followed by a complementary consideration of Kierkegaard's position on these matters.
CHAPTER TWO

Hume's Critique of Objective Knowledge

Having considered some of the positive elements in Hume's theory of knowledge which involved an ontological commitment to the objectivist view of mind, I am now in a position to proceed to the second stage of my examination of his doctrine. Here I will consider the way in which he softened the rigid form of his claims, while continuing to hold their substance, by raising questions about the reliability of objective knowledge. By his skepticism he intended to open the way to examine the complex field of social interaction, and although our primary goal lies in an area just short of that sort of application to humanity en masse, I will not seek to limit too severely the scope of our scrutiny. For as we move beyond the effects of skepticism to his doctrine of the person, we will find relevance in his account of social sensitivity. It is not only worked out by Hume in terms of principles, and is hence readily amenable to philosophical scrutiny, but offers a reflection of the individual in a social macrocosm. As Plato wrote in the Republic, the society reflects the individual's nature in many of its sub-structures.

Because of its larger connections we can say that
Hume's concern for the self focussed and crowned his philosophy. As he approached skepticism as the limiting factor in the drive to complete human knowledge, he began to see the self through an irrevocably open concept, for he believed that the nature of the self could only be approached by a depth analysis which would tax man's intellectual resources to the limit and reveal insuperable problems. Skepticism is thus held to be unavoidable, and is of immense significance in Hume's philosophy. Although much of the commentary on Hume has separated the doctrine of the self from skepticism in his thought, and has erred in doing so, his skepticism is certainly not merely accidental or tangential to some positive thesis. There can be discerned in Hume an understanding of the self that involves an inextricably interwoven skeptical line, a thesis that establishes the concept of the self as irretrievably faulted from the standpoint of pure reason. But perhaps it is not so faulted from some real perspective that diverges from the purely rational. It is true that Hume himself was not fully aware of this possible development of his thesis, and did not see at all clearly how such a synthesis of the doctrine of self and skepticism could be articulated. In many places he lapses back into dependence on a positivistic screening out of the negative element, and it is this that has misled the commentators, but his skepticism invariably returns. And although he lacked adequate conceptual resources to enable an unwavering presentation of what reason must judge to be an im-
possible conceptual hybrid, Hume's account is interesting in anticipating elements of the more sustained endeavors of later continental existentialists.

To begin our examination of Hume, we note that his method is to approach the self first through a skeptical examination of what can be said about its abstract — human nature. This constitutes a courageous pursuit of a potentially destructive principle into its deepest implications for his project of establishing a foundation for the sciences, or for true knowledge in general. If skepticism is found to corrupt every seeming capability, then the project may end in utter loss of all confidence in knowledge.

a) Skepticism and Reason

The first facet of human understanding which Hume subjects to skeptical criticism is reason, one of two domains which he has discriminated between. Reason is the domain characterized by "Relations of Ideas," in contrast to the practical domain of "Matters of Fact." The basic problem with reason is not in its principles, for its "rules are certain and infallible" and lead naturally to truth. But reason is thwarted from fulfillment of its natural function by intervening causes, the most significant of which are attributable to its own deficiencies.
The main problem in this regard is that the operation of the mind is inconstant, resulting in lapses of attention and a susceptibility to distraction by the intervention of irrelevant, distorting elements of sense or fancy. Grounds for skepticism would thus seem to be in the very foundations of the intellect, and to extend from there to the way in which the cognitive and perceptual elements which are reason's milieu are interrelated. The effect on our projects to achieve rationally sanctioned knowledge are pernicious, so that only a degree of probability can be attributed to any of reason's actual conclusions. Certainty exists, but only as a state of mind which must be cultivated by minimizing the intervention of distorting factors.

On this ground it might seem that any proposition could qualify for inclusion among the certainties, but in practice the mind can be raised to certainty only about those conclusions which are relatively the least affected by compromising relations. Mathematical truth, dealing only with the relations of ideas, best qualifies for confidence due to the austerity of the domain and its accessibility to mental (intellectual) control. But even this relative reliability of the mathematical process is established by the consistency of past experiences in doing mathematics, and hence is limited in two ways: by the uncertainty of induction, and by memory of our past mistakes. We have, therefore, in practice only a degree of probable truth. But repeated experiences of successful problem solving by appli-
cation of rules which consistently lead to the same answer in the same case, augmented by the experience of approval from those who look on confirming the results, leads to a growing certainty. This certainty is grounded in "the constant union of causes and effects, according to past experience and observation," and so cannot be qualitatively distinct from confidence concerning matters of fact. This claim effectively destroys the sharp distinction between the domains of "Relations of Ideas" (or Reason) and "Matters of Fact" which, in other places, is held to be absolute.¹ Now we are told that matters of fact differ only in the lesser degree of confidence with which they can generally be held due to the greater complexity of the interaction and relations which characterize things and events.

But as suggested above, we are conscious of uncertainty in mathematics, too, particularly in the case of a difficult problem. Hume chooses as an example a relatively practical difficulty, the problem of doing a long sum. We do not know from the first what the correct conclusion will be, and the potential for error accumulates with each step in the process of addition, resulting in a loss of certitude. But the difficulty can be seen to exist in principle as well as in practice, so that even

¹. Treatise, pp. 413, 463.
the simplest sum is affected. For in reducing the long sum to one of adding two single digit numbers, we arrive at a problem where certainty about the conclusion is "perfect." But on reflection we realize that in approaching the simplicity of this problem and its certainty through a gradual emendation of the long, complex, and therefore uncertain sum, we cannot specify the point in the process at which uncertainty is countermanded. Hence there is at least ground for suspicion that uncertainty lurks behind the "perfect" certainty which attaches to the obvious case. In fact, on completion of the skeptical line of reasoning concerning the base of this certainty, uncertainty is again experienced, showing that reflection undermines rather than produces grounds for confident knowledge. Reflection systematically diminishes whatever certainty is present for original intuition by applying the principle that the faculty of reason is fallible, a principle which experience has borne out in many instances. Eventually even the basic grounds for confidence in the rules of logic are eroded, and simple, total loss of belief must occur.

Now clearly Hume is here mixing emotional and philosophical considerations in a rather artless way. But I think that it was his intention to be artless, and that the issue is not entirely settled by damning the introduction of the psychological element. Rather we must seek to understand what he is
about. The distinction between psychological confidence and philosophical grounds can be made, but how much is established by it? For when it is enforced, the question remains as to what warrants the intuitive conviction of the truth of even a tautology. This question is not satisfied by the evocation of formalist criteria for analytic truth. Hume's point is that there is a fundamental, unreasoned response to the tautological proposition which establishes its status for the existing individual whose cognitive needs are not satisfied merely by the presentation of fulfilled formalist criteria. Every presentation is extrinsic to the person; what is needed is an understanding of the affirming response which arises from the person. As Kierkegaard would have put it, truth grasped is truth for a particular individual, and as such cannot be left as a mere abstraction. It is the case, in Hume's words, that:

. . . all our reasonings concerning causes and effects are deriv'd from nothing but custom; and . . . belief is more properly an act of the sensitive than of the cognitive part of our nature. (2)

Although this passage is explicitly about cause and effect, we can infer that it is applicable to every area of un-

2. Treatise, p. 183 (emphasis mine).
derstanding. It is even the case that in the compactness of
Hume's system the relation of the sensitive to mathematical con-
clusions is one of cause and effect, hence the applicability is
direct.

Now it might be argued that in the passage quoted Hume
should have said, instead of "belief is more properly an act of
the sensitive," that "belief simply is an act of the sensitive." In
fact, in some places he does avow the latter. But he did not
limit the difference to this, and rather than dismissing his
practice as a mere eccentricity, a slip, or an historically con-
ditioned mistake, we might look for a neglected element in Hume
upon which the valuative element can be soundly based, one which
points, rightly or wrongly, to something about human knowledge,
human nature, and the human condition that has continued to find
a place in later philosophies. We will keep this possibility
open as we proceed.

As Hume develops his thought in Part IV, Section I, he
observes that to remain in intellectual doubt about the conclu-
sions of mathematics is not our lot. He undertakes to describe
the remedy for skeptically conditioned uncertainty by a charac-
teristic reversion to an account of our natural manner of pro-
ceeding. It is a primitive fact about our natures which explains
why our beliefs are not finally prey to conclusions which follow
from "mere ideas and reflections" running on in endless, unfettered force. The fact is that the chain of skeptical reasoning loses force with repeated "copyings" of the idea. Hume speaks of the need for "naturalness of reasoning," by which he must be referring in his empiricist system to the root of ideas in sense experience. Without close resemblance of the train of thought to the naturally experienced facts of experience, there can be no lasting tendency of mind to accept the conclusions with behaviour-affecting conviction. Part of the problem regarding mathematics stems from its remoteness from practical sense experience, which renders it susceptible to the ravages of abstract skeptical reasoning. The other horn of the dilemma for reason is that Hume places mathematics in essential if remote connection to sense experience, and thus renders it susceptible to the inconsistencies of practical experience. The true dichotomy in Hume's philosophy is not therefore between the mathematical and matters of fact, as if between the certain and the probable. Rather, by including our mathematical conclusions among those that are the effects of precedent experiential causes, he sets up a dichotomy in his philosophy between a pristine intellectual distinction (relations of ideas versus matters of fact) and a broad counterbalancing skepticism about even this rigorous and fruitful distinction, which must be made up in some non-intellectualistic way. Nor, I think, could he shift his opinion without a fundamental reorientation of his
philosophical perspective. For he does not deny the correctness of mathematics, but seeks a deeper understanding of that correctness. The insight which moves his thought does not break down into a displacement of mathematics from being a manifold human endeavor to being no more than a positivistic nominalism can allow, but rather seeks to specify the responsibility of the philosopher in maintaining a broad sensitivity to the possibility of that endeavor's being maintained successfully. The philosophical thinker must maintain, as it were, a constant "correctifying" process of judgment concerning any object of his thought in the light of what experience and reflection have led him to grasp concerning the mind and its performance. There will not always be grounds or need for an actual emendation of the standing judgment, but the skeptical attitude must be constant given the mind's evident capacity for error. Skeptical reasoning maintains in continual force a consciousness of reason's shortcomings and custom's pervasive efficacy, a necessary service in view of the extent to which we are governed not by reasoned thought but by our unreasoned sensitivity and the inevitable adoption of its consequences as if they constituted a viable understanding.

Under what rubric shall we classify the function of contra-skeptical "correctification?" Is this critical philosophy in its corrective function, as suggested in our time by
John Wisdom? Quite the converse, for as noted above, Hume holds that the critical faculty leads to an erosion of the grounds for claiming knowledge rather than their establishment. That we are not finally prone to skepticism concerning the conclusions of reason is not due to analysis, but to the natural suppression of analysis by an irrepressible confidence in our judgments which arises from our basic natures. Intellectually we see the truth of what we judge to be the case just as clearly as we see physically what lies before our eyes in the clear light of day. The mechanics of this achievement lies in a process whereby the mind tires, as it were, in following the long chain of skeptical reasoning which would be required to entirely subvert our understanding, so that its effect on the imagination lacks force, and fails to produce belief in the conclusion. The sentiments on which belief as a passion depends are suspended by intellectual operation, and fall into antipathy over its consequences.

This account of how we avoid final skepticism does nothing to sanction our normal enthusiasm about our cognitive abilities, but neither does Hume's insistence on the validity of skeptical conclusions destroy grounds for proper confidence. The potentials for confidence and despair, knowledge and skepti-

cism, are grounded in human mental activity. So far as the reasoning portion of the activity can itself be examined, it is a faulted function leading to confidence and uncertainty by turns, and unable to offer final warrant for either of these attitudes. Some more comprehensive capability is needed to conciliate the two propensities of mind, and what we find when we examine Hume is an underlying assumption of nature's coherence under which man is so constituted that a proper balance is unfailingly maintained, a balance between the rigid prescription of reason's most rigorous grasp of truth on the one hand, and abandonment of all commitment to there being meaningfully explanatory systems on the other. But can Hume justify his assumption of nature's coherence? Certainly not on rational grounds, for the assumption is logically prior to reason's function and recognizes fault in his system. And so Hume must rest any attempt at justification on other grounds, broad considerations that complement his doctrine of rationality with doctrines of the nature of man and his experience. 'Reason' under this program perhaps needs a more adequate definition, but Hume does not work out the problem in this. He holds to a doctrine of a broken but functioning reason, saying that even "the skeptic still continues to reason and believe, even though he asserts that he cannot defend his reason by reason . . .," and thereby commits

himself to discovering extra-rational grounds of justification or having no grounds at all.

Hume must then join the skeptic in this assertion about reason, for he accepts the skeptic's arguments as sound in principle. He rejects the rebuff which runs, "If the skeptical reasonings be strong, . . . 'tis a proof, that reason may have some force and authority: if weak, they can never be sufficient to invalidate all the conclusions of the understanding."5 He holds that the skeptical reasoning is strong where reason is strong, sapping her vitality and subsequently sinking with reason into pensive quietude as reason's pretensions are ravaged. Thus were it not for his conviction that understanding's vitality is grounded outside reason, he could justify no belief in reason's validity.

In what way can we describe a situation in which understanding is grounded outside reason? We need some verbal distinction by which to sort out the Humean position which lies in bits of insight rather than in his system. Perhaps to this end we could follow a form of language already appropriated without supporting justification when we spoke of skepticism not entailing "intellectual" doubt, which arises from (mere) men-

5. Treatise, p. 186.
tal activity. The category of the intellectual must be distin-
guished from the rational to fulfill this function. It must
indicate a continued grasp of the relatedness of things in the
face of rational doubt and passional drives (non-rational com-
mitment, which is thereby kept from being irrational). It will
include the intuitive consciousness of the coherence of the
world despite skeptical doubt about our knowledge of the world,
and will represent self in consciousness against the skeptical
reduction of mind to a set of ideas. The problem will be
whether a distinct category of the intellectual can be articu-
lated in Hume's terms of reference, and whether it can be justi-
fied as meaningful in the general context of philosophical anal-
ysis.

b) Skepticism and the World

We can now say something about Hume's extension of the
consideration of skepticism from reason to sense experience and
to the world which it gives to understanding. This is begun by
a further affirmation of nature's coherence and by making pro-
vision for a wider adequacy in man's apprehensions and conduct
than can be strictly justified. He first recognizes a belief
which is from the first a product of the general activity of our
natures, namely, belief in the existence of some body. This is
beyond all our ability to doubt, although it is evidently not
founded as a truth of reason, *a priori*. Not only can we not doubt or question it, we can hardly discuss it, for all we can ask concerning the ground of our conviction is whether it is a conclusion of our thought processes or not. Hume then introduces a distinction between two separate issues: whether there is *continued* existence of body outside those of our experiences which are uninterrupted, and whether there is *independent* existence of body distinct from any experience whatsoever. For methodological reasons Hume decides to keep the two issues apart despite their intimate connection, but there is one question that can be asked about both: Is it the senses, reason, or the imagination that produces these opinions?

Now the senses clearly cannot give an opinion of *continued* existence outside perception. To claim they could would be to utter a contradiction. On the other hand, there is nothing logically offensive in the notion that they *could* present the object as distinct, but only if the sensory images can be read off as representations of an independent object. But such an impression-having-depth is not what our perceptions give. In Hume's words, "single perceptions" cannot support "double existences" (percepts plus something else). Senses do not give the required kind of "thick" impressions, for the self perceiving as well as the object perceived would have to be distinguishable by the senses alone for this to be given. But how
one senses one's self is not evident - we would have to be able to establish personal identity as an object of the sense experience of the same person, and this seems hardly possible.

An impression appears as just an impression, no more, no less, for otherwise it would not stand truly as what it is. It is internal, or private in a more contemporary vocabulary, and cannot stand as an external or public entity. Nor is Hume prepared to accept the claim that "beyondness" simply appears as a perceptual object, for to locate anything beyond the self at least one of three conditions would have to be satisfied. The self would have to be experienced as in space itself, the senses would have to give every quality as in a place, or the senses would have to give distinct depth in themselves. But none of this is the case; when objects are known to be what we conclude they are, reason is involved. For these and other reasons Hume dismisses the senses as the source of the idea of independence in objects.

Reason fares no better. The average man is convinced of the independence of objects and of their continued existence, but wholly without the aid of subtle thought. Nor can reason overrule the testimony of sense that objects are just perceptual objects.
Imagination is considered next. Is it the source of the conviction of objects' continued existence and their independence from perception? It seems the only possible candidate. We can note that Hume seeks a concurrence between qualities of impressions and qualities of the imagination. He assumes that it must be for some cause that we take certain of the private and perishing impressions to have public and enduring existence. Hume is looking for the imaginative quality in an originating impression, presuming that impressions are purely univocal, having no more import than is evident in their first appearance. On these grounds, he decides that neither force and violence in the impression, nor its freedom of occurrence, can account for an imaginative ad lib on the world, resulting in a notion of free and enduring objects. After all, he reasons, greater force and involuntariness characterize impressions of the emotions, and yet we never extend them beyond private and perishing existences. But in this Hume seems to misdirect his protestation. It is not that we attribute public and enduring status to impressions of the external senses, but that we recognize something beyond the mere impression. And in the case of the internal impression of an emotion, although it too remains perishing and private, force and violence do raise a sense of self-presence, which is again a recognition of something beyond the mere impression. The difference between external sense and internal is just in the differing "directions," or objects, that
objective sense and emotional sense reveal.

But being satisfied that force and violence, and independence from will, are not qualities which imagination could use to represent the object as public and enduring, Hume seeks out something else. He settles on a degree of "constancy" or patterned repetitiveness in the impressions such as lends a coherence and sense of mutual interdependence in the objects. The fire in my fireplace is likely to alter during my absence from the room in a way the other things do not change. The key element seems to be that the received impressions in certain perceptual contexts evidence a need to be accounted for in some way that exalts the relative durability and independence of some elements over others in a way the congeries of impressions from the passions do not require for all their regularity. Such experiences require that radical inferences about real states of affairs be made so that other (past and present) experiences will not be blatantly contradicted. The least violence is done to experience by making these strictly unwarranted assumptions. Importantly, when this is done imagination is found to move more easily over the ideas, establishing the idea of continued existence as a filler between similar objects of interrupted experience.

An interesting problem arises here for Hume. He in-
sists on something like a doctrine of sufficient cause, holding that since imaginative inference of continued existence outruns the degree of regularity observed in the reinstitution of former states of affairs by subsequent experience, some other cause of the inference must be found. Earlier, too, Hume had insisted that the mind must be able to extend expectation beyond particular experience by following a general rule of causation, so that even a single instance of conjunction might be described as the first instance of a causal relation. But in that case, he was supposing that regularity would follow in accordance with the general rule, so that the defining element in causation, constant conjunction, was still the theoretical foundation of the inference. But now he proposes a need for a cause (that which the inference "must arise from") other than causation's defining element, and in order to preserve the coherence of his system we must discount Hume's insistence that there is a logically necessary cause other than what he defines a cause to be. Rather, he must claim only an insight which discerns the regular presence of a certain factor in the inference to continued existence.

This is simply to say that Hume must bring in his new element under the auspices of causation, not outside that principle, recognizing that inference to real effects involves a characterization of real antecedent causes, as well as a prescription of the conditions for the ascription of causation in principle. Then all he would be doing is specifying one of these elements as
factually necessary to a particular effect. This added element is the sense of coherence of the whole of experience which is given by the imagination's movement from one idea to another over associations which render that movement smooth and easy. The removal of difference between separated impressions to the greatest degree possible, which is done by assuming the identity of objects of separate experiences, most effectively removes any uneasiness from the transition. But what we have are two perfectly irreconcilable objects of experience; a perceptual diversity of entities, and a profound belief in the continued existence of a single thing. How is the gap to be bridged?

Hume is content to vest most of his case in the psychological account of how the mind works to achieve the transition from experience to belief. So he suggests the following steps for investigation. We must ask:

i) How we come to hold a concept of identity,

ii) Why we attribute identity to the objects of broken experience,

iii) How attributing identity leads to the idea of unity,

iv) What our belief in the idea of unity consists of.

The philosophical element in Hume's procedure would seem to re-
quire some emendation of the steps to the following:

i) What do we mean by 'identity'?

ii) What is the justification for calling the objects of experience identical with one another?

iii) What is the relation between perceptions and the existing object?

iv) What justifies belief in the existing object?

i) Hume holds that by identity we mean "invariable and uninterrupted in time," and that we conceive of time as a continuous phenomenon by extrapolation from our experiences following imaginative synthesis of temporal segments.

ii) Objects of perception existing as perceptuals is all we know. Ascription of identity as defined is strictly a mistake due to confusion of related, usually resembling objects with one another, for no perceptual object is "invariable and uninterrupted in time."

iii) Sensing the problem, imagination displaces identity into an independent domain of real things, which enables the perceptions to be left separate as they appear, but raises the problem of the relation between the perceived and the conceived objects. Can imagination sanction its products
as real states of affairs? Hume's answer is that there is no relation between things which is logically necessary (as noted above he does not adhere to this principle in laying down grounds for his own arguments), hence ideas (perceptual things) can be thought of without contradiction as passing away and recurring quite arbitrarily. There is no established standard to the contrary which could be broken by such an activity. Therefore, perceptual experience may go on in an irregular way, while imagination "feigns" absolute regularity by postulating a continuous physical thing where resemblance intimates the possibility.

iv) We are justified in believing in the product of imagination's machinations because, again, we have no other standard. All belief consists of the possession of forceful images, whatever their origin. There is an absence of theoretical contradiction, and hence there can be, and is, coherence of actual beliefs. The cause of this coherence is one of nature's mysteries. The nearest we can approach to an answer is to observe that the resemblances which lead imagination along seem to be primitive facts on which the rest of the structure rests. These primitive resemblances have a correlate in human nature in memory which receives, maintains and reproduces them parallel to present experience, leading to the ascription of identity.
However, the thesis of continued existence is unsupportable. It implies an existence that is both dependent on perception and distinct from perceptual objects. But perception's broken skein refutes continuity, and fails to offer grounds for inferring objects distinct from its own objects. Hume concludes that the problem has no satisfactory resolution, for the thesis requires a knowledge of relations that can never be obtained. In order to infer the existence of physical things (continuous and independent objects), the causal relationship must be known, and in order to know that there is a causal relationship, the cause must be experienced. Yet only the presumed effect, perceptual objects, are ever experienced, hence physical things can be known neither in themselves nor as the supposed cause of perceptual objects. Reason must therefore reject the thesis.

But since the thesis is clearly not a product of the imagination, but is about the imagination, it is not sanctioned by imagination either, nor can Hume imagine how it might be. The thesis that that which ceases continues to be must appear repugnant on the face of it even to the imagination. However, we are ruled by a vulgar, unsophisticated nature, and the systematic advantages of belief in continued independent existence outweigh the skeptical scruples which indicate unbelief to be the proper attitude. The doctrine of a double existence of per-
ceptions and things is a device designed to ease the conflict of reason with the vulgar tendency, to enable the perishing quality of impressions to be faced while permitting things to exist in a stable way perception does not warrant. Here Hume explicitly opposes nature and reason as enemies, saying that by the doctrine of a double existence we can "humour our reason for a moment, when it becomes troublesome and sollicitous; and yet upon its least negligence or inattention, can easily return to our vulgar and natural notions." The agent of our vulgar nature is a vulgar operation of the imagination, namely fancy, the undisciplined imagination. Two proclivities of mind Hume mentions as indicating the closed course of fabrication are, first, the fashioning of external objects in the images of the perceptual for the reason that no other conceptual material is available to fancy than what is given by perception. Second, the mind tends to extend relations observed to hold between ideas in concert to the concerted support of those supposed worldly existences of which we, strictly speaking, have no idea. When this operation is carried out by a relaxed mind, without the tension of philosophical investigation to distort it, the natural state of human belief occurs, and it is upon the assumption of these prejudices which can never be satisfactorily removed that Hume intends to proceed in his investigation.

c) Skepticism and the History of Ideas

Hume attempts to gain objectivity in his analysis of the problem of our ability to know by examining two historical approaches, the ancient and the modern, to a central problem, that of substance. The problem arises, as we have seen, from the fact that although ideas of bodies are just collections of ideas of sensible qualities, we judge them to have one thing which continues in a certain identity as their source. We thus contradict ourselves, and how we endeavor to conceal the contradiction is the subject matter of Hume's investigation.

The relevance of the problem of substance for making out the nature of the self is evident. The self has traditionally been thought of as something distinct from the body, and going together with it to make up the whole man. Essential to this thinking was the concept of substance, which serves as a basis for approaching a more adequate characterization of the self. I will give a brief account of the doctrine of substance as it was promulgated first of all by Aristotle,\(^7\) for whom sub-

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\(^7\) cf. W.D. Ross, *Aristotle*, who credits Plato only with bringing to light what were to become Aristotle's categories as "general aspects of reality." (p. 23), although it is noted by Werner Jaeger (*Aristotle*, pp. 41-2) that Plato's final entities, such as soul
stance became an explicit level of being, and then by Locke and Descartes, the great precursors in the modern era of our less affirmative subjects.

Aristotle begins in his Logic by attributing predicate status to substances, whose nature it is to be qualities and thus secondary substances. Primary substance is the individual entity that can be used as subject, and to which predication belongs only secondarily. Assertions (propositions) relate secondary (universal) to primary (particular) substances truth functionally, and the individual thing is thus elevated to an un-Platonic eminence as substance or fundamental reality, although Aristotle qualifies this by saying that behind individuals stands an ultimate plane of being which is substance in another sense.\(^8\) That is, substance is attributed "most obviously" to individual bodies, he thinks, but the limits are conceptually extended to more diaphanous and hypothetical things whose existence is a facet of what is apprehended or is theoretically conceived.\(^9\) In fact, it is the formal aspect of the

\[\text{in Phaedo, were substances in the Aristotelian sense.}\]


9. Ibid., Bk. VII, Ch. 2 (p. 784).
thing that is of its essence, and substance cannot be reduced to materiality alone. Materiality seems to count towards substantiality just by giving form actuality, and in man this is to give soul actuality in the existing man; but as to whether the man is just his actual soul, or the actuality which involves the material as well, is not settled by Aristotle. But it is clear that the way remained open, due no doubt to the influence of Plato, to seeing man as substantial in a dualistic way that grows out of the dual aspect conundrum which Aristotle left unresolved.

In modern philosophy the incipient division of the material from the immaterial aspects of man, backed by the doctrine of trans-sensual substantiality which lingered in the tradition, gradually divided philosophers into increasingly exclusive rationalist and empiricist camps. Although the tendencies had not yet grown to their full potential (and were not to until the 19th century), the commitment to fundamental premises which bore divisive potential as they were refined and narrowed was present in both Descartes, the rationalist, and Locke, the empiricist.

In Descartes we find substance defined as "an existent thing which requires nothing but itself in order to exist." 10

This turns out to be uniquely God, so a qualified use of 'substance' is introduced for finite corporeal and thinking things which depend on nothing else but God. God is thus ontologically the source of all there is. But epistemologically our senses and our consciousness are filled with qualities of finite things, and we know substance first, by such attributes, as that to which attributes belong. As our knowledge is refined we discover that "there is always one principle property of substance which constitutes its nature and essence."\textsuperscript{11} Extension especially characterizes corporeal substance, as thought characterizes thinking substance. It is similarly known that God is absolutely perfect Being, in full recognition of the fact that we do not understand fully what absolute perfection consists of.

The two finite and one infinite substance can be conceptually distinguished, yet Descartes is sensitive that there is no actual separation, for mind and body are subtly interfused. The relation is in their common creation as different substances, both caused by God. Causation is thus a key concept in understanding substance, and Descartes is required to deal with the difficult question of how the creating Being came

\textsuperscript{11}. Rene Descartes, op. cit., Principle 53 (p. 276).
to be as caused substance. His reply is that self-causation is a coherent notion in connection with the absolute, but that the notion of cause must be modified from the ordinary to suit the extraordinary substance being discussed. He insists that thinking of God negatively as uncaused is inadequate, for God is wholly positive being, and the via negativa is but an aid to the finite intellect of man. He suggests that the extraordinary device, an intermediary position between full efficient cause and no cause, be obtained by dropping the notion of temporal precedence in the cause and the notion of substantial difference between cause and effect, both of which are out of place in self-causation. Descartes declares that what is left is a notion of "positive cause," by which he means to indicate some analogous relation to ordinary causal influences. That this is unclear, and not proven to be a coherent step, I believe remains a problem.

We can say, though, that Descartes is true to his rationalistic premise that thinking substance is itself known first in its attributes (feeling, doubting, etc.), that his idea of the self is tied to mind, but that he has a broader concept of the embodied person explicit in his work due to the necessary dimension toward the divine that he introduces. But

12. Rene Descartes, "Objections and Replies" (in Descartes Selections, from Scribner's, p. 215 ff.).
it is not until the Sixth Meditation that the practical significance of embodiment is dealt with.

The Cartesian type of causal base for inference from real consciousness to a prior source on *a priori* grounds has its classic rebuttal in Hume.\(^{13}\) He argues that all demonstration requires experience, that everything experienced is contingent (might be conceived not to exist without contradiction), and that, so far as experience teaches, each thing has its causal precursor in an immediate antecedent. Any other application of the term 'cause' is an abuse of the term. Hume grants that the argument from prior cause has a general intellectual appeal, which is his way of saying its plausibility rests on \(a\) prior (and illegitimate?) commitment to finding a general explanatory base of all reality, but that the endeavor to expand the base of understanding through such an appeal is illegitimate.

It seems, though, that the epistemological base in Descartes really rests on finite consciousness, and whether or not consciousness is held to reveal substance in a deeper sense seems a matter of semantics so long as the explicit definition introduced by Descartes is adhered to. I will later accept such

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13. David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, Part IX. (hereinafter cited as *Dialogues*).
a limitation on the Cartesian model, and attempt a comparison of the Sartrean claim regarding the object of consciousness with this form of the Cartesian.

We will now consider the position of John Locke, Hume's great precursor in the empiricist tradition. On the matter of substance, Locke is not so clear as one could wish. There is a tendency in his thought which draws his account of substance away from strict consistency with the implications of empiricism. He seems, at bottom, to wish simply to identify substance with ideas, particularly those congeries of simple ideas which make up our idea of the complex thing. He even uses 'substance' to refer to such a complex that fails to represent the reality. He writes, "Such are our ideas of substances, which, consisting of a collection of simple ideas, supposed taken from the world of nature, may yet vary from them."\footnote{14} But just leaving substance there, associated with the consequences of perception, would verge on idealism, whereas Locke's use of 'idea' reflects his robust realism. He therefore moves substance out into the world. He says that although we know only "a great number of simple ideas, conveyed in by the senses," we notice "that a certain number of these simple

ideas go constantly together." We form "one simple idea which is a complication of many ideas together" and "acustom ourselves to suppose some substratum . . . which we may therefore call substance." The noteworthy element here is his reference to "a supposition" as the vehicle which moves understanding from mere complexes of ideas to a notion of underlying simplicity in the object. This reliance on supposition as the ground of the ascription of substance is constant in Locke, and he evidently accepts the evocation of such a unifying substratum as a necessity for our talk about things. He makes analogous reference to the use of words by children who are "perfectly ignorant" of the referent of their final terms if pressed, but who then "pretend to know" that of which they "have no distinct idea at all." He thus is led to say that we possess only "An obscure and relative idea of substance in general." But talk of complex individuals is legitimized in this way as talk about real things, passing over the fact that the epistemological foundations are quite illegitimate. The reason he allows the move to stand is that "we cannot conceive how they [perceived qualities] should subsist alone," and the notion of

16. Ibid., p. 392.
substance is thus judged permissible on the grounds that it is conceptually inevitable.\textsuperscript{17} Thus material substance is established as the ground of knowing the world of sensible things.

Locke applies the same analysis to reflection, by which we confront the "things" of the inner or mental sphere. These he catalogues as "thinking, reasoning, fearing, etc. ," which would never be able to present themselves to us did they not arise from some substantial ground of support. In this portion of the discussion the argument occurs that I believe Locke was most concerned to offer, and which obscured from his critical attention the spurious character of all inferences from strict empiricist premises to underlying substance. The argument is this, that the move from mental configurations of ideas to mental substance is no more abstract or lacking in foundation than is the move from congeries of perceived ideas of the external thing to external substance. What he neglected to recognize is the fact that one could concede this argument, and yet deny that there were grounds for supposing mental substance to exist, because both arguments are equally invalid. The premise in either case, that everything experienced is to be accorded a deeper supportive (causal?) ground is inconsis-

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., p. 395 (emphasis Locke's).
tent with the empiricist premise that only the perceived itself is to be accorded ontological status, for the former entails that the perceptually most primitive entity would have to have an unperceived source. It is precisely this sort of rationalist compromise of the empiricist claim, namely that one inferential step beyond perception-based premises to establish knowledge of the transcendent is acceptable, that Hume puts into the mouth of Cleanthes and attacks through Philo in the Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion. But Locke's explicit support of the concept of substance was actually undermined by an earlier attack than Hume's, for the interdependency of grounds for affirming material and mental substances in Locke causes the latter to fall as well as the former under Berkeley's skeptical attack on material substance. Locke argues that it is the existence of coherent congeries of objects of perception that calls for a substantial ground, whereas Berkeley insisted that it was purely the mentalistic nature of ideas, as the only ob-

18. David Hume, Dialogues, Part IV. But note that Hume's continued acceptance of an unknown source of impressions in the Treatise, and his admission in the Dialogues that the source of the world most likely bears some resemblance to the world order, are tacit admissions of a lingering question which the skepticism which follows from naive empiricism is powerless to banish. But Hume stops short of ascribing systemic priority to the unknown in his system.
jects available to mind, that made a ground in mental substance necessary, and the notion of material (by definition, non-mental) substance offensive. As a fellow proponent of naive empiricism Locke could not withstand Berkeley on this.

But taking Locke's philosophy as it stands, the role of mental and material substances, as the grounds of mental and material realities, provides for a dualism of mind and body. Under the natural tendency of mind to assume ascendancy for itself at the conclusion of its investigation into the relation between mind and body, the self continued in this period to be identified with mind. Locke writes, "For, it being the same consciousness that makes a man be himself to himself, personal identity depends on that only . . . ."\(^{19}\) He even held that a succession of different substances could underlie the unifying consciousness in providing for the continued identity of the person. For our purposes there are two elements of equal interest here — the unvarying dependence of the continuing consciousness on some substance, and the central role of consciousness in defining the person. This is a characterization of the person as consciousness and the self as mind that we will observe to be present in Hume's philosophy as well.

\(^{19}\) John Locke, op. cit., pp. 450-1.
Now, to Hume looking at this tradition what stood out was the use of substance to establish identity, for the ascription of identity is to him nothing but recognition of a relation, which is itself nothing but an easy path of transition along ideas. This ease of transition is disrupted if we take the so-called "same" entity in separated time segments, for then the sameness is no longer apparent, and difference affects the mind. The natural response is to attempt to reconcile the disparate experiences by positing a two-level reality of material substance (unified and stable) and appearances (diverse and in flux). The analysis progresses to the point that a simplicity of basic substance is posited, providing for absolute unity in the physical object because its parts, or qualities, are contiguous, forming a whole, as opposed to the diversity of the kinds of qualities. The ancient peripatetics handled this relationship by conceptually differentiating between material and formal substance because this allowed simplicity and diversity to be attributed at once to the same object. Qualities were thus called "accidents," indicating a dependence of the formal on the material presence. This dependence of qualities on some substratum is no more than imagined, but Hume holds that imagining it has the same effect as observing it would have, although, to a dispassionate, skeptical viewer, it is clear that no quality is ever observed to have dependence on something beyond itself. In those who are not skeptical, the system extends itself even fur-
ther to the postulation of "occult" qualities which are never experienced, but are defined as having perfect relation to substance in a degree imperfectly observed qualities can never be seen to have.

Hume holds that judgments on this question arise from one of three perspectives, either the vulgar, unconditioned view of the common man, or the perspective of a false philosophy, or that of true philosophy. The vulgar position imagines the connection of qualities to some distinct external object necessary. False philosophy sees that there is no necessity ascribable to the connection on the basis of perception, but seeks an account of what ground of existence behind percepts is implied by total perceptual and a priori conceptual categories. True philosophy utilizes a moderate skepticism to deny any connection on the ground that none is perceived, and that perception alone sanctions reality claims. But since, as we shall see more clearly, true skeptical philosophy accepts the influence of imagination as a defence against immoderate skepticism, there is a need for a justification of its criticism of "false" philosophy's imaginative constructions in order to see that its own claims are not damaged.

Hume's answer is this: that there are two discernibly distinct functions of the imagination. One is "permanent, ir-
resistible, and universal," giving rise to such ideas as that of cause and effect, while the other is "changeable, weak, and irregular," giving rise to notions of substance and accident. Hume calls the first essential to human nature, but we might ask on what grounds he judges anything to be essential to human nature. His skepticism denies him objective grounds, and reduces to a subjectivist account centering on coherence of the systematic account. Hume does not make this as explicit as could be desired, but it must be inferred from his occasional reversions to coherence as an element to be looked for in a satisfactory account of the perceptually given world.\(^{20}\) On these grounds Hume presents an analogy:

> One who concludes somebody to be near him, when he hears an articulate voice in the dark, reasons justly and naturally; tho' that conclusion be deriv'd from nothing but custom . . . (21)

An apprehension of spectres in the dark is also "natural," but is pathological, as is the ascription of substance, accident, and the like to the world by the ancients. We note here that

\(^{20}\) Treatise, p. 197, et al.

\(^{21}\) Treatise, p. 225.
in the case of properly functioning imagination, the presence of the image by perception and the coherence of the system of judgment, as harbingers of the natural, Hume adds that it should be "agreeable" as well, presumably on the grounds that that which coincides with one's judgment will produce a feeling of concurrence.

The problems of the ancients, who followed imagination too indiscriminately, are said to have been overcome by the moderns who accept only the ineluctable workings of imagination as a ground for assent. But Hume attacks the central claim of the moderns which, in his judgment, is that sensations must be traced to external bodies because basic human nature requires it. He does agree that there is one good argument for their ancillary claim that sensations and the qualities of objects do not resemble one another, namely that variations in impressions could not be derived from stable external objects. But he thinks that what this good argument indicates is that there are no grounds for affirming stable, external objects as the root of sensations. This entails a "most extravagant skepticism," wholly banishing all belief in external objects. For on examination we discover nothing but ideas of qualities, and these reduce to nothing because there is a hierarchy of dependencies among sensed qualities, ending in solidity which is no more than a feeling one has on certain occasions. No idea can
be traced to an external referent, and so there is no idea per-
mittened under this rigorous reduction. Reason thus prohibits
attainment of what it requires, and the system of reliance on
perception alone which just reason requires turns out to be im-
potent in establishing the world and the self.

What is required is some account of the positive re-
sponse in man that does maintain a world and self for him. In
the next chapter I will begin with Hume's analysis of the sub-
stantial self, and proceed to his presentation of the phenome-
non of belief.
CHAPTER THREE

Hume on the Self

a) Skeptical Conclusions

Since Hume has shown that all previous philosophies fell prey either to absurdity (affirming what did not appear) or Pyrrhonism (denying that appearances are of anything), how is he to establish the world and, particularly, the self from which any structures amounting to a world view must extend? We should note that his discussion of the self is implicit in both the Treatise and Enquiry, since the notion of the self lies at the root of the concepts of both "human nature" and "human understanding," but it is discussed specifically and at length only in the Treatise. In examining that discussion I will concentrate on Book I, Part IV, Sections V and VI of the Treatise, which are entitled, respectively, "Of the immateriality of the soul" and "Of personal identity." Hume tends to use terms casually and interchangeably because of the looseness in his use of language that we have already discussed.¹ So, although his doctrine is an objectivist one as his thoroughgoing empiricism requires, since it is paradoxically also

¹. cf. above, pp. 15-17, 22-24.
a dualist one in its implicit body/mind polarity, what he means by "personal" is "mental" for the most part, and the referent of 'self' is not much distinct from that of 'soul' and 'mind'. But there is considerable richness in the mind for Hume beyond the Cartesian ideal of pure rationality.

i) Soul as Immaterial Substance

Hume begins the discussion "Of the immateriality of the soul" by agreeing with the tradition that the intellectual domain, for all its lack of material objectivity, is the easiest to render intelligible because it "agrees with itself." The mental is "obscure," but free of inherent contradictions so far as its nature can be discerned. But there then is a stage beyond which no inquiry can convey us, and Hume rejects the usual rationalist assumption that the mind must be evident to itself as something. He is prepared to grant only that if final objectivity could be conferred on the mind, through making the metaphysician's talk about mental substance clear, then the whole truth about the mental might be made out. But since insuperable problems regarding material substance in the world have already emerged under his skeptical analysis, Hume evidently doubts from the first that the notion of immaterial substance can be made intelligible. Further, there are problems peculiar to the idea of mental substance which his empiricist philosophy
finds unmanageable. The "idea" of it seems derivable from no impression, for a particular impression can hardly be like a general substance. On the other hand, it must resemble substance in order to represent it. In the light of these problems, Hume puts the entire burden of explication of the problematic notion on the positive advocate of the doctrine of mental substance, asking specific questions about the place, experience, and cause of the impression which needs to be established as a ground for cognition.

Hume thinks that these questions can never be properly answered because their object, substance, is an unintelligible notion. Therefore the project of validating the claim that there is mental substance is likely to be sidestepped. Rather than trying to identify the idea in terms of some impression, the claimant is likely to revert to an abstract, intellectual formula, defining substance as "something which may exist by itself." But this will not do, for the definition fits everything which exists. Now, in offering this criticism Hume might seem to have forgotten his earlier skeptical misgivings concerning distinct existence, but I think that the appearance is misleading. Here he leaves the question whether or not anything has a distinct existence entirely open. He merely says that if something has distinct existence, defining it as being grounded in that which makes existence possible will not differentiate it
from other existing things. And certainly the advocate of mental substance will not press the skeptical point against Hume because his own thesis requires the existence of at least one thing, and that all that exists be substance. Therefore he must accept the criticism that he has defined every possible existent, not a special sort of existent.

Of course to this criticism the advocate of substance may reply that this is just his point. It is every existent he means to define, qua existent. The distinguishing features by which existents may be separated are in other qualities than this most general attribute which all things share in common as a necessary condition of being. Hume's retort in that case must be skeptical, that in itself the definition establishes no existent, material or immaterial. In picking out an attribute of anything at all, the definition leaves open the question as to the existence of each real exemplar of the attribute, a question which can be settled only by particular experience of the other qualities. Hence the notion of substance remains unintelligible, i.e. without empirical content. This rebuttal is implicit in Hume's reference to the function of imagination as separating every (real) thing from other (real) things, for he holds that imagination is possible only as an image is given by an impression. Only then can the thinker work it into his account of what there is.
Hume then turns to another sort of attempt to establish immateriality. Roughly this attempt trades on the notion of the incompatibility of immaterial thought with extended things, such as self's material body, without the mediation of an immaterial ground of thought which establishes a link to the material by its substantiality. Against this we can observe that the paradox of interaction is not solved by inserting an immaterial soul between thought and body, for the problem of interaction between thought and body is simply reformulated as the problem of interaction between soul and body, but Hume does not attack the problem in this way. Rather, he observes that this is not a problem affecting the question of the substance of soul, but rather "its local conjunction with matter" (emphasis Hume's).

On this topic Hume differentiates between sight and taste, which give us the idea of extension, and all other senses and all sentiments, none of which by their natures can be thought of as existing in an extended way. Hume's analysis would be clearer here if he had distinguished between what a sense gives to us and the manner in which it is given. Undoubtedly it is the quality given by sense experience that he means to talk about, but his language frequently slips into talk about ideas as if they were themselves extended or figured. For example, he writes, "What is extended must have a particular fig-
ure, as square, round, triangular; none of which will agree to a desire . . . ."
2 But if this presentational misstep is corrected, Hume's point is well taken, that extension is known as a consequence of the operation of sight and touch, and that qualities, given by other senses, are, strictly speaking, not known as extended.

Following from this, Hume concludes that, on the basis of experience, it must be admitted "that an object may exist, and yet be no where." This raises the interesting question of what an object is for Hume. Clearly the statement jars the intuitions because we most normally apply the term 'object', in contexts of this sort, to physical things. But there is a warrant even in ordinary usage for different sorts of application, and the Treatise shows Hume using the term to mean any element of conscious apprehension. This is illustrated in Book II, for instance, when he identifies a good name as an object of the feeling of pride. But to appreciate his meaning in the statement "An object may exist and yet be no where," one must be aware of his skeptical doubts about the separate existence of things of sense. Then we can see that his meaning is that there is nothing known beyond perceptions. A perception is the object of conscious experience. He makes this meaning clear by con-

2. Treatise, p. 235 (emphasis mine).
joining 'perception' and 'objects' in, "Now this is evidently the case with all our perceptions and objects, except those of sight and feeling." But can it not be said that the conception of a thing existing but being nowhere is absurd? Under quantificational logic we understand 'exist' to imply being some (where). That is, the term carries an ontological commitment. But what we see here is a conflict between Hume's realism and mystical dualism of the self. The idea-object is for him not in time and space, being conceptual, and his skepticism strips it of any significant ontological extension. Such a position, that there is a coherent concept of being but being nowhere, is consistent with a dualism, but this claim further requires an idealist metaphysic for its support, while Hume's skepticism is intended to guard against a comfortable reduction of the world to the set of ideas we have of world. So Hume is in a dilemma, although he does not recognize it. All that he says is that any opponent would have to find a ground for the idea of extension in the passions or in some sense other than sight or touch, and that since he has no positive idea of how this might be argued, he leaves the burden of support on any who would refute his claim. But I think that his internal dilemma cancels from within the security of his defence.

3. Treatise, p. 236.
But having established the point to his own satisfac-
tion, Hume goes on to the problem of conjoining that which is
spatial (the appearance of fruit) with that which is non-spatial
(the taste of fruit), but he again handles the problem, as is
his systematic tendency, by leaving it in abeyance, just giving
an account of how we come, by the associative relations of
causation and contiguity, to conjoin the two on the grounds of
experience and in response to the felt need for an ease of men-
tal transition among ideas. But leaving the problem itself in
abeyance signals the continued presence of skepticism in his
philosophy of man. He cannot give a philosophical warrant for
the conjunction, and he explicitly recognizes the element of
dissemblance in his approach by admitting that under his anal-
ysis we must say that we only "feign" the conjunction in place,
in order to establish an idea of unity which is merely suggested
by the co-ordinated experience of contiguity and causation. But
the implications are deep, for Hume holds that reason immedi-
ately discovers the contradiction between the non-spatial
character of the non-visual, non-tactile quality and the exten-
sion of the object supposedly given by sight or touch, so that
the understanding can maintain its equilibrium only by paying no
attention to the incompatibility of the two analyses of the ex-
sting object.

Hume then proceeds to extend this skeptical thinking
to the conjoining of thought to either a material or immaterial substance. Both sorts of conjunction constitute the same error of attempting to make that which is not known as spatially extended fit into some place. The idea of extension is given only by visual or tactile sense observation, and can never be ascribed to what is not an object of sense. The thing known is a perception-object and, as a complex idea, it is known to have extension among its qualities. Or rather, it seems, extension is the quality which emerges at the convergence of other qualities which are "the distinguishing properties of extended objects." Moving conceptually back from this intellectual convergence towards experience we discern first such properties as mobility and separability, which are dependent on experience of some figure having length, breadth and thickness, which in turn have arisen from observation of the placement of elements which constitute the particular thing. But even at the intellectual terminus, the idea of extension is still the product of an immediate impression of extension, not a mere abstraction, and hence gives a fact about the world of things, although it is one which is apprehended only as the terminal element in experience. A sort of distended Gestalt, allowing for serial ordering of elements presented in a wholistic experience, is envisioned here. This is a much richer model of cognition than Hume is generally represented as incorporating, and one which runs beyond the impression/idea model of atomistic perception.
with which he began.

The full significance of the foregoing will have to be left for a later time. For the present account, we need only observe that Hume concludes that even having established extension as a property of the observable, particulate perceptual object, the independent minded philosopher ("the free-thinker") can do no more than recognize that we violate either reason's conclusion that the unextended cannot be extended or the necessity to anticipate in experience qualities as if they were extended, and so go beyond what reason can sanction.

Hume next spends some time attacking the notion of simple underlying substance found in Spinoza's philosophy. He wishes, by attacking this form of immaterialism, to show how any immaterialism is susceptible to attack. He is also motivated by the opportunity to proceed in an *ad hominem* manner because Spinoza's reputation as an antagonist of religious orthodoxy will provide a readier support in his audience for the attack than would the simple tendering of his own reasoned line of argument. This expectation is shown by the florid epithets he uses to describe Spinoza's doctrine; "universally infamous," "hideous hypothesis," "gloomy and obscure regions,"

"a dangerous and irrecoverable atheism." But this is, as I suggest, a matter of manner; his argument does not depend on the ad hominem element, but is designed to stand or fall on its own merits.

Hume's first move against substantial monism is a reminder that every legitimate idea is "deriv'd from (logically dependent on) a preceding impression." The consequence that Hume draws from this is that the object of experience cannot be even conceived to be distinct from the impression, but that because there can be a "supposition" of a difference, there may be deemed to be qualities in a distinct physical object which impressions do not represent to us. But once we have become clear about the idea of a distinct object, we may be sure that the qualities of that perceptual object have been given in the impressions of it, for unless this were so, there could be no conception of the object. Thus the relationship is asymmetrical: everything in the object must have been given, but not everything given must be in the object. We need to be on guard, therefore, against the connection of spurious notions (of substance, for example) to objects.

The fact is, of course, that generally Hume's doctrine is symmetrical, for the skepticism which affects judgment from impressions to objects must affect judgment in any particular
case from the conceived object to the impression. It is re-
quired by his empiricist ground of all ideas that the elements
which make up the image (the idea of the object) all be trace-
able to some impression. Hume should not have generalized on
the asymmetry, but have simply maintained that the relation in
the case of Spinozism was asymmetrical, to its undoing. An
inference from the conceived object to an impression must be
required in this case, and by the impossibility of the infer-
ence it can be seen to follow that no coherent idea of sub-
stance can be held, even under what Hume allows as "an irregu-
lar kind of reasoning," because the object for which reality
is claimed by Spinoza is absolutely simple and there has been
no impression of absolute simplicity at any time. Whereas in
the general case the imagination might fabricate a synthetic
object out of accumulated impressions, in this case it can
only strive to represent an unavailable impression, and its in-
ability signals the vacuity of the substantialist's claim.

Hume amplifies the statement of his position in con-
sidering three particular arguments that have been offered
against Spinoza's doctrine of world substance by scholastics,
so that he might show that the deficiencies of Spinozism can be
transferred to those who claim special substantial reality for
the soul.

First, the scholastic criticism that there is an in-
commensurability between the extended universe and the unextended substance which is said to underlie it can be turned against the scholastic claim that the ideas we have are grounded in the soul, since the ideas of things are known to include extension whereas the soul is said to be unextended. Here we must reiterate our argument that Hume should have differentiated the idea of extension from extension itself. But he did not do so, and so his attempt at a parallelism fails, although since the scholastics he attacks fail in the same distinction, their position is not established either.

Second, a criticism is offered to the effect that since ideas applicable to substance are applicable to matter, matter is not a mere mode, but is substance itself. The argument is effective if its factual claim is true, but for Hume's purposes whether it is true or not is unimportant. What he seems to want to say is that if the argument is effective, it is effective against the thesis of the immateriality of soul as well, for if what the ideas of substance are applicable to is itself substance, then if the idea of substance is simply "something that can exist by itself," then substance is perceptions, for that is what is most fundamentally known to exist, i.e. what the idea of substance is applicable to. In this Hume seems quite correct.
Finally, the criticism has been levelled at Spinozism that there is no intelligible sense in which a simple underlying substance can take on contrary modifications such as a square table and a round one. Hume observes that, if this is so, then the same criticism can be levelled at the scholastic critics, for the same soul substance could not then receive the opposite impressions of the tables. Again, Hume is correct.

Substituting the term 'action' for 'modification' so as to intellectualize the operation will solve nothing. For to all appearances situations and conscious states both really differ from time to time, so that to say that only some action relative to an unchanging underlying somewhat has changed is unintelligible. We have no perception, that is, no idea, of the unchanging, only of the changing. Conversely, if there were any intelligible idea applicable to the idea of soul, it would be available to the Spinozist as well, but his doctrine of underlying substance denies the primacy of soul and would be contradictorily affirmed.

Having dealt with substance and local conjunction, Hume goes on to discuss causation and perception, for it is denied by some that the states of matter are qualitatively those of conscious perception, and hence that thought cannot be accounted for without a mental basis. But Hume's skeptical doctrine of caus-
tion denies any form of real connection other than the association of ideas in experience. Taken a priori, anything might cause anything else, and thus there is no impossibility that a state of matter should cause a perception. The seeming qualitative difference is only an absence of absolute connection, yet all causes and effects suffer under this same lack. And since we do experience perceptions in conjunction with material action, and passions as a result of similar material changes, experience has established a causal connection in the only way it can be established. No other considerations are needed or even relevant.

The alternative to this analysis of causation and mind is to deny natural causation altogether, which is absurd. Nor will reversion to deity, or supernatural Cause, solve the problem, for even God must be naturally known through perceptions, and his causative influence by constant conjunction of perceived objects. Furthermore, if God were allowed to be the source of causative influence, then every deed must be attributed to him since "thought is in no case any more active than matter," and all willful action must therefore be traced to him. But Hume holds this consequence to be theologically unacceptable, for it makes Good the source of evil, a logical

5. Treatise, p. 249.
contradiction.

Hume's "true" analysis then "gives the advantage to the materialists over their antagonists" on the question of mind, provided that material is just what perception gives to understanding. Then material causation is alone intelligible, for there is no perception-based alternative to it. But Hume recognizes a claimant against this conclusion from "the analogy of nature" which moral philosophy must recognize: religion. Hume takes religion to have a recognizable right to an apology concerning any device which seems to run contrary to her pronouncements, and this he endeavors to give. The outcome, however, is ambiguous. Taken ironically, Hume could be saying something quite destructive, for his apology is that this skeptical attacks have been as effective against religion's materialist adversary as against religion herself, so that both having been equally devastated, religion is relatively no worse off. On the other hand, he may be arguing that he has undermined the metaphysical rationalist positions on both spirit and matter, and to have established "moral arguments . . . and natural analogies as a basis for reasoning in support of either."

Hence true religion is unharmed, only certain illegitimate philosophical approaches are devastated. Between the two alternatives I judge the latter interpretation to be preferable, for it seems a dubious tactic to invoke irony to turn around a
straightforward testimonial of intent unless there is no suitable non-ironical interpretation.

ii) Self Identity

If the self is not a substantial soul, then what is its nature? That natural clarity which should belong to the consideration of soul has been obscured by the devious tendencies of the intellectual process, and Hume opens this subsequent search for self-knowledge by observing that so-called philosophers are the agents of this obfuscation with their recondite analyses of the subject. They have held that there is an immediate sense of a singular, simple identity of self which stands out the more clearly beyond all argument the more it is bombarded by perceptions from within and without. But Hume holds that the contrary is the case, and that we have no solid grasp of a continually identifiable self because there is no experience of a simple self-identity at all. His argument is as follows.

For a singular and simple self or person to be known, it must be given by a singular impression. But "the self or person is not any one impression," but that to which the multiplicity of impressions "are supposed to have a reference." And this doctrine, that the self is a referent apart from impressions,
seems necessitated by the self being such that no impression could qualify to be a self, since self remains identifiable over the whole term of the person's life, whereas impressions vary constantly in their very constitution. Every new impression can succeed only in the wake of a vanished predecessor, and therefore none is capable of giving the idea of the persisting self to consciousness. Further, if the self were itself a perishing impression, to what could we constantly refer the stream of other impressions? This question serves to introduce the question of how perceptions relate to the self, from which Hume thinks there may be derivable an account of what the self can be said to be.

First he observes, the relationship between perceptions and the self is a necessary one. It is discovered that no self appears, except in the holding of a perception, so that were there no perceptions any longer possible, there would be no self ("When my perceptions are remov'd . . . (I) may truly be said not to exist."). On the ground of his endorsement of moderate skepticism one would expect Hume to say that the relation is found to be "invariable," rather than "necessary," and to leave speculation about possible existences alone, but on the contrary he does not flinch from undertaking this evidently

metaphysical leap. However, when we remember that Hume means by "necessary connection" what we apprehend in experience by constant conjunction, the claim is clearly less pretentious. But although Hume admits that a dissenter may have a wholly different intuition of the self than he does, we can see something like colloquial force in "necessary" when he does not hesitate to claim "the rest of mankind" for his own party in the dispute. Men everywhere, he says, experience nothing of self but a sort of theatrical revue of perceptions, multiple in occurrence, but constantly passing off stage singly and in combinations. This revue takes place nowhere, supported by nothing extraneous to its own flow. So the question of relationship of perceptions to self is largely settled by the abolition of independent self and the substitution of the flood of perceptions alone.

The question which then arises is, "what then gives us so great a propension to ascribe an identity to these successive perceptions?" Put more philosophically, what justifies our ascription? At the end of Section VI Hume will note that what has been accomplished is the full explanation of the nature of our judgment and understanding. So here he separates thought and imagination, the agents of judgment and understanding, off from the passions, which are the subject of an in-

vestigation restricted to them in Book II of the Treatise, so as first to illuminate the subject of perceptions of the world. He searches for an answer to the continued identity of the human self, taken as objective and in the world, in terms of the continuity we ascribe to other organic beings. These, too, change, and yet are said to remain the same individuals. It is salutary to note here that what he leaves off searching for, besides any account of identity in terms of the passions, is a justification for his denial that the self is known apart from the knowledge of individual perceptions of other things. He never returns to this problem, and Passmore is right in claiming that Hume's defense of the moral sciences as objective disciplines finally breaks down for him here in the question of self-identity. For it is evident that, as both Passmore and Kemp-Smith observe, Hume implicitly assumes a self apart from impressions which governs what the mind can endeavor. Pike's contrary endeavor to show that Hume could maintain his thesis consistently cannot claim that he does, and would adequately account only for a program much more meagre than Hume's announced frontal assault on the conception of human nature.

9. Ibid., p. 77.
10. Norman Kemp-Smith, The Philosophy of David Hume, pp. 73, 96-8.
But Hume was not sensible of this sort of criticism, and he proceeds to explicate the notion of an enduring self in terms of an analysis of things which are given by external perception. What we have is a stream of perceptions which by an accurate view is a diversity even when the members fall under some relation, and indeed is the root of this concept. But as some means is afforded the imagination to slip more easily over the series members, perhaps by noticing a closer relation in some instances, the feeling comes to be one of the identity of the whole. In order to justify to ourselves this consolidation we feign a unity which goes beyond the perceived diversity and give it a name, in this case soul, self or substance. Even where we have no name, Hume suspects that we "imagine something unknown and mysterious" behind the set of perceptions, but even if we hold up short of this, we still tend to identify objects, although the absence of sufficient relational qualities in the perceptions leave us with an uneasy feeling. Hume want to show that there is a real misapprehension here, not just the appearance of one such as might be eliminated by clarifying the terms. He will endeavor to show that diversity is all that experience gives, and that we genuinely misapprehend when we conceive identity in the broad object of our perception.

The question in part is, what conditions warrant the ascription of identity? First, he observes that we tend to at-
tribute identity as the object maintains a degree of invariability relative in proportion to its whole being. Any change that is small is not counted as destroying essential identity. Second, the change can be larger without undermining identity in the degree it is a smooth and gradual change, for concept formation and maintenance is not disrupted by readable fluctuations in perception. Third, organization of the parts toward an end will give an identity in terms of that end which is not easily displaced by the alteration of parts so long as the end served remains intact. Fourth, continuation of a whole nature in mutual interdependence of parts will allow even the total replacement of parts and considerable change in configuration and function, and so long as the organic integrity is not violated, identity will be ascribed, but on the basis of feeling.

That we do ascribe identity under these circumstances seems to be correct. But in some exceptional cases Hume seems to be misled by linguistic convention into identifying the wrong object. He observes that a noise interrupted and renewed is called the same noise, and a church which falls into ruin and is wholly rebuilt of different material is called the same church. He ascribes this tendency to a confusion of specific and numerical identity arising from the annihilation of the predecessor prior to the appearance of the successor, and thereby to inattention to the difference which should normally count
against identity. While these observations are not entirely off the mark, there is something of greater import present, and that is that the verbal formulas, "the same noise" and "the same church" are short forms for complex propositions. "The same noise" refers to an identity of qualities, and the numerical difference between the soundings is being overlooked not mistakenly but intentionally in order to state that qualities such as pitch, tone, and perhaps duration were repeatedly present. There is a greater complexity in the second case, deriving from the complexity of reference of the term 'church'. But part of the answer is that in "the same church," 'the same' informally picks up an entire family of elements which make up what is meant by 'the church', and the speaker might use the locution only apart from specific reference to the building. To the degree one wanted the destruction and replacement of the building kept in view, he would tend not to speak of "the same church." Hume generates confusion by analyzing subtle and flexible usage under a simplistic and rigid philosophy of language.

The same criticism can be brought against his judgment that things whose nature it is to change are allowed more extensive and rapid change without dislocation of their identities. So the river might wholly alter in a day's time, yet be the same river. This analysis narrows too much on the channel of moving water and immediately contiguous earth as the referent of the
term 'river'. In fact the term has a reference which takes in a system as broad as the watershed, tending merely to focus on the water channel as its central element, and in this larger context the river does not change from day to day. Hume is simply being too rigid about what the term "the same river" means.

Having committed himself to a particularly narrow view of language, Hume is required to carry back to the human sphere the conclusions derived on the basis of it concerning the non-human sphere. Personal identity is thus the product of the imagination, working as fancy, and productive of fictions. Hume supports this general thesis with a particular examination of the human, holding that the mind, being just its perceptions, is a set of discrete entities: "distinct . . . different . . . distinguishable . . . separable" from one another in every way. What is the ground of the identity which we ascribe to such a congeries of ideas? Hume asks whether it is observed, or only felt, a seemingly simple minded question in considering the mind for one who recognizes the impressions of sense and reflection as the only source of ideas, for surely the mind is not going to be the object of external sense experience whether the objects given be judged a diversity or an identity, and this would seem to leave only reflection, which is made up of felt experiences. But, as Passmore has seen, the cause of this strangeness is a
quiet and quite illicit shift from introspective to public inquiry, from asking about our ideas to asking about his ideas, from the objects which are elements in self-consciousness to a search for objects which are things in the world. External sense experience is thereby reintroduced as a possible source of the idea of the self, and it is only because of his skeptical reduction of the external that the question becomes one of how we feel about the other person's basic psychological coherence. The passion by which final connections are established provides the only capability by which objects which are not sensed things can be established, so the experiential ground of personal identity comes to be an experience of ideas occurring under certain relations and having a concomitant effect on our judgments. Now, since these relations — resemblance, contiguity and causation — are those which "are for us the cement of the world," the ascription of identity to persons is on no worse ground than the ascription of identity to any object, and that is on no worse ground than the ascription of independent status to the objects we perceive. On the other hand, at this stage it is on no better ground either, while very much needing better grounding. But at least to the extent that Hume's psychological account of acceptability in a candidate idea, that it should have derived from smoothness and ease of imaginative transition along some series of perceived ideas, can be restated as a philosophical warrant, we would seem to have a potentially viable
account of the legitimacy of the idea of personal identity. And the philosophical equivalent of this psychologism is surely just that the idea fits the particulars of general perceptual sensitivity, or is a believable true statement. Under such a criterion, the ascription of identity is surely warranted, but we must ask whether the criterion is adequate. Because this is not settled, Hume teeters between reference to the elements of consciousness and to elements of public behavior as the objects by which we know selves. I will have more to say on this later.

Finally, let us see how Hume applies his criterial elements. Consider resemblance. Hume holds that the linking connection in this case is the resemblance of images (remembered ideas) to original objects, which must always be representationally perfect. But this is, as it were, a vertical resemblance, whereas personal identity would seem to require a horizontal resemblance of idea to idea, enabling easy transition of the imagination. The nearest we can come to an answer in the Humean epistemology is that the objects of the remembered ideas are themselves perceptions, and that an idea-object resemblance is thus tacitly ideal (in a sense tending towards solipsism, for the object is thereby "pulled inside"). But this is countered by the fact that whether the object is ideal or real an assumption is still needed that there is a closely textured pattern of likenesses between the objects that make up the world
such that a basis is provided for resemblance in the derivative ideas. This is nowhere argued independently by Hume, although his statement that the memory produces the relation of resemblance among the perceptions may be intended to get around the problem by implying that the resemblance of ideas is itself an arbitrary consequence of mental operation. But then, since the relation is said in turn to provide for the transition of the imagination, the picture becomes one of the mind driving itself along an arbitrarily descried route, strewing roadsigns along the way to validate its choices in a fictitious and even deceptive display of natural necessity. Everything in that case comes back to mind, to idealism, and to skepticism vis-à-vis the real world.

Hume moves closer to adequacy when he considers causation, for the model of adequacy is one of the interdependence of elements of thought, akin to that which characterizes a (good) republic or commonwealth. The whole population of elements as well as the principles governing its conduct, may change, but the entity remains the same one. That we are what we are due to a causative reciprocation of elements is "discovered" by memory, but the idea of identity extends in our passions' grasp of the continuity of causal chains to portions of our life no longer remembered, thus filling out an account of self beyond what perception gives direct warrant for. But the consequence is that,
given Hume's doctrine of causation as a product of passional anticipation, self-identity can never be justified intellectually, i.e. to or by strict reason. The understanding comprehends "truths" which are rationally susceptible to Pyrrhonistic elimination, but which stand in practice nonetheless, being established as objects of conscious commitment by a natural process which undergirds all processes of the mind and body. This opens the way for a thoroughgoing pragmatism, which will deny the objective validity of the skeptical elements. But the skeptical elements will continue to survive, too, and to appear as the objects of concerted attempts to give an account of that dimension of lived reality that stands as complementary to, but in dialectical opposition to, the positive and settled elements. A concerted endeavor to account for selves within these limits informs the philosophy of J.P. Sartre, much of whose thought focuses on the problem of the nature of the human self.

b) Rudiments of Positive Belief

Hume undermined rational grounds for assent to any proposition, yet recognized that we entertain beliefs about mathematics and the world which tend at their strongest to complete conviction. The question must be, what explains and justifies belief for him if not reason? It is evident, of course, that the successive stages of investigation must be conducted by
reason, and reasoning so used at each stage can be said to have been necessary to obtaining the conclusion. But is such reasoning a sufficient ground? Are the "good reasons" which must be found if our practice of forming and maintaining certain beliefs is to be justified strictly reasons, that is, fundamentally the consequences of rational thought processes? Are there "reasons of the heart," or something analogous? The whole question seems irretrievably open because of the extent to which 'rational' is a value term, and as such difficult to establish in a set, denotative meaning. The concept of rationality is also open-ended, which means that its precise limits are impossible to set. Considerations and questions such as these highlight the fact that reason may be broader in its application than is often granted. Certainly Hume seems to have varied from a strict reference to deductive reasoning to a broad definition intended to include some "trans-rational" element, and if the element he hinted at could be sifted out and somehow judged our ability to decide on the limits of proper cognition would be enhanced. It is likely, however, that this study will have to be satisfied with the more modest task of comparing Hume with Sartre in their modes of presentation of this fascinating possibility.

In approaching Hume on the matter of the grounding of belief it must be kept in mind that he was not wholly concerned
with the standard of true belief, but to a large degree he was concerned simply to account for the fact that people do form beliefs in a systematic way without final regard for their warrant. So another problem with which Hume leaves us is the philosophical issue of just what degree of rational warrant can be insisted upon in view of the practical need of men to live an everyday life.

In pursuit of an answer, Hume distinguishes belief from the thing believed. Belief is not a concept, either of a thing or its existence, both of which can be entertained without belief, and so is not empirically rooted in an idea or its source, an impression. It is rather a principle governing the manner in which an idea is held; so Hume defines a belief as "A LIVELY IDEA RELATED TO OR ASSOCIATED WITH A PRESENT IMPRESSION."¹² The definition is sharpened by the distinction between belief and the concept believed so as to show that what he calls force or vivacity is of central significance. It is also evident from the definition that the species of belief that Hume is interested in, even what Hume will mean by belief, is tied to the way sense experience reveals matters of fact, to that sort of belief which persists despite the rational fact that its contrary is conceivable without contradiction.

¹². Treatise, p. 96.
Belief arises in this manner: the experience of a sense impression leads us, by a mechanical act of mind such as custom or association, to infer an existent object outside of strict phenomenal experience. This is not a reasoned inference, but is a sort which moves through the mind involuntarily to focus on the lively, forcefully presented image. In this way conviction is established in the mind. The mind's tendency to follow the trail of a forceful idea is furthered by its preference for easy transition to the clearest conclusion available. Custom affirms the tendency; personal inattention or externally given ambiguity in the ideas will weaken it. In this regard, there emerges an important mutual relation between the principle of belief and the principle of causation. Causation, wherever posited, enhances that liveliness in the related ideas which is belief, but also in the case of succession of matter of fact events particular liveliness in some instances enhances the ability to anticipate the natural successor of the event, which is the cause's effect. Since neither is clearly prior to the other, belief and causation are often naturally taken to be rooted in some third factor, an inner power. But Hume thinks it evident that causation and belief are themselves internal, and thus without an assignable precursor. Each must be taken to be an original propensity of mind.

Yet there are elements in belief formation akin to
those discernible in the assignment of a causal relation. Since it is not something within the impression-rooted idea which is identifiable as the belief component, belief must arise due to a response to the circumstances of perception. Belief emerges, Hume holds, when the impression stands in some constant relation to past events, in which case a ready response of the mind, resulting in liveliness, is found to occur. Belief is immediate, and does not rely for further augmentation upon reason or imagination. In this Hume does seem to overlook the service or dis-service which can be rendered to belief by these ancillary capabilities of mind, but he seems concerned here to establish the essential independence of the move to belief, and so ignores the actual involvement of other aspects of mind in affirming originality and immediacy.

What is needed most fundamentally is an impression, for an idea, being fainter, will not enable so full a conviction. The impression's original vivacity is missed when the idea is substituted. All argument about matters of fact is therefore dependent on sensation, and even taste and sentiment govern belief through their immediacy more effectively than can any abstract philosophical reasoning.

Effective conclusions are then not those which are reasoned to, but are arrived at by animal response to the way
ideas associate of themselves, for around them centers of forcefulness form. The whole process, Hume says, is too immediate and unreflective a function to be the result of reason. Of course, behind this front line of the formation of beliefs is found a network of contributing relations. For instance, where an expectation or anticipatory belief towards the future is formed on the basis of only one instance, it is most likely because the whole front of experience has prepared us to respond in an enlivening way to the received impression. This brings in not only variety, but brings us back to consider custom, to which causation had been traced already.

Here again repetitiveness in an idea is sufficient to produce one of the mind's more important dispositions. Even where the impression is no longer available, a well inculcated idea can have enough vivacity to function in its lieu to produce belief. It is just a matter of degree of conviction. Although they cannot on the whole produce so lively an effect, ideas do have the advantage that they can be remembered, and so can result in what really seems a re-enlivening of belief when recalled. In this connection, Hume speaks optimistically, but very strangely, of "thinking of a past thought of which we have no remembrance." It seems most likely that this is just an ob-

13. The parallel to Santayana's idea of "animal faith" is striking here.
tuse way of speaking of recalling a thought.\textsuperscript{14}

After considering some exceptional relations which contribute to belief formation in Section IX of Part III, Book I, Hume returns in Section X to discuss the influence of belief, having traced all the exceptional relations back to animal response.\textsuperscript{15} Education is then assigned a role in the service of opinion and contrary to (abstract) reason and philosophy. In order to be most effective it need simply direct its force coincident with the course of sensation. Pleasure and pain are exciting impressions which tend to produce lively beliefs and consequent actions, and indeed any idea for which we have been taught a relation to the passions can arouse a lively belief connection or adversion to itself. As passion-related ideas, imagination, and rhetoric inflame the passions, beliefs are excited too, and at their zenith the reality criteria are lost sight of, and everything appears equally credible. This might be the mood of a rioting mob, although Hume's sedate example is of the effect of poetry on the judgment.

The point is then that the extreme case clearly dis-

\textsuperscript{14} Treatise, p. 106.

\textsuperscript{15} Treatise, pp. 106-117.
plays in an overwhelming manner something that is present in human judgments from the first, an element of passional re-
sponse which fixes belief. There is something lacking even in a pure tautology so far as eliciting support is concerned, and this has to be made up by the recipient of the report or, more fundamentally, of the set of ideas. The question is, how does this conviction coincide with what empathetic thinkers had to say in the years after Hume. I will first consider Kierkegaard in this connection as a thinker whose uncritical realist epistemology essentially paralleled Hume's, and who filled out his rational antipathies in prescient ways.
CHAPTER FOUR

Kierkegaard and the Existential Transformation

Hume’s skepticism regarding the founding of knowledge in rational inquiry arose as the consequence of his attempt to ground knowledge explicitly in immediate perceptual experience, to which everything that was had to be objectively present. This objectivism was but the empiricists’ development of the whole modern Cartesian emphasis on the unitary nature of mind and material things which, separated in irreconcilable domains, were held to be individually sufficient in themselves. In the Cartesian system, even the embarrassing separation of the domains was initially overcome, for the domains were linked by God who was established as a mind-like source of neo-Platonic coherence. But for post-Cartesians the tension of a divided world returned to sunder the reality as it became evident that the God-link could not be established. Hume himself presented an argument against a priori demonstrations of the existence of God.\textsuperscript{1} Hume’s skepticism can therefore be seen as a reaction against Cartesian rationalism, prompted by the downfall of

\textsuperscript{1} Dialogues, Part IX. This was likely composed some time after the Treatise, but the assumptions are those of the committed empiricist.
Descartes' fractionary dualism. The reason that his reaction took the skeptical form is that he had no other recourse when his anti-Cartesian alternative, an even more fragmenting atomism, failed equally to account for the nature of a world which, although it seemed to be made up of perceptual fragments, persisted in evidencing an underlying unity which defied explanation so far as the inferences Hume was able to draw could determine. Hume's skepticism was thus no more than an acceptance of the sundered world of ungrounded possibilities, and did not provide much suace or renewal of vision. It was left to Kant to provide much of the needed synthesis of experience and concepts.

However, even after Kant, and about one hundred years after Hume's publication of the *Treatise*, another severe reaction to rationalism occurred, this time against the all-consuming rationalism of Hegel. Its prime genius, Soren Kierkegaard, attempted to relocate radically the perspective on man and the world, devising a counter-thesis which abandoned rationalist presuppositions much more explicitly than Kant had done, while attempting to avoid the break-up of reality which led to Humean skepticism. Kierkegaard's philosophy is looked to today as the clearest early exposition of the view known as existentialism. Examining some major structures of his thought will serve as a bridge in connecting Hume's early gropings with Sartre's devel-
oped radical doctrine of the self.

But first a brief characterization of existentialism as a point of view on philosophy and the world. Kurt F. Reinhardt has accurately observed that, "Existentialism in all its forms is keenly aware of an element of insecurity that attaches to all purely philosophical knowledge."\(^2\) To this we can add Alisdair McIntyre's list of six key themes: "... the individual and systems; intentionality; being and absurdity; the nature and significance of choice; the role of extreme experiences; and the nature of communication."\(^3\) All of these are present in Kierkegaard, although the second and third are more muted than the others. Regarding Hume, the statement from Reinhardt reminds one not only of Hume's skeptical attack upon certainty in knowledge, but also of his conviction that his philosophical manoeuvres were irrelevant to practical life. So soon as he left his study, he was convinced, the reality of things that he had disproved would be immediately reinstated in his beliefs. And Kierkegaard based his criticism of objective knowledge on a similar conviction that the fundamental reality for every knower, a man's own existence, was systematically

\(^2\) The Existentialist Revolt, p. 16.

left out of every system.

Kierkegaard's adversary was picked out by his conviction that the values of individual existence ranked first. It is certainly true, so far as extreme rationalism is concerned, that the mundane aspects of life are not seriously treated. Nor is it to defame Hegel that we call his philosophy an extreme rationalism, for Hegel saw the world as a rational whole and held that only a thoroughgoing rationalism could represent it. Man's role as an individual was thought to be subordinate to the general panorama, and properly played down. The reality was absolute rational Being, within which the world of sense, thought, and history were developing conceptual schemes. Any individual was nothing but some sort of expression of his times, and the truly important man, the "world historical individual," was simply the consummate expression of the Zeitgeist, the temporally localized form of the absolute Weltgeist. To Kierkegaard, the eccentric man, this derogation of the individuality of every man was wholly unacceptable, and on this issue most of our contemporaries in the Western world seem to agree. What made the Hegelian opposite attractive in its time, and to continue to appeal in one form or another (its motif is deeply imbedded in Marxism) to many today?

To understand what makes one approach rather than an-
other appeal to a man or an age (and we can attempt this only superficially) we must understand that certain broad tendencies affect individuals and societies, and that they arise from commitments that are made virtually precognitively. Nietzsche attempted to sketch in such a commitment in the form of a basic dichotomy between the Dionysian and the Appolonian minds. These are functional tendencies to adopt what have been called the romantic and the classical points of view. I will concentrate on a general description of the romantic tendency as most germane for this study, but its antithesis will be always conceptually in view through dialectical interplay.

One hesitates to apply the term 'romantic' casually because of the rigidity of the stereotypes that have come to be associated with the term. But the brief developmental histories of romanticism given by G. Ant. Borgese\(^5\) and Crane Brinton\(^6\) show that maintaining flexibility in approaching the concept of romanticism will yield dividends.

The term 'romantic' is derived from terms that began

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to be used during the Renaissance, 'romanzesco', 'romanesque', 'romanhaft', to indicate the antithesis of strict medieval scholarship, and so the terms "hinted at an atmosphere of sensiveness" (Borgese), so that as the term 'romantic' first began to be used in the seventeenth century England it meant "freely imaginative," "extraordinary," or "visionary." During the eighteenth century it came to mean "exalted fancy," "unrepressed passion," or "depth of feeling" whether resultant in enthusiasm or melancholy. All of these feelings, though universal in mankind, had been "rigidly restrained by the canons of orthodox classicism" (Borgese), but as the barriers against free expression were battered down the tendency was allowed more and more unfettered display. The period from the late eighteenth century to the mid-nineteenth century was the period of the most feverish abandonment to romanticism.

Brinton notes that, in a general sense the term indicates a "constitutional dispositional element" in a man, at least partly free from formative cultural fashions. He quotes W.T. Jones as holding romanticism to be "a complex syndrome of 'biases' in the direction of the dynamic, the disordered, the continuous, the self-focused, the inner, the this-worldly."

Now there are traditionally certain men and ideas which are called "romantic." In philosophy, the "dark will" of
Schopenhauer, and the evocation of a "faculty transcending common logic" in Fichte and Schelling, are perhaps the most striking. Nietzsche was somewhat ambivalent, and in general philosophers have so strong a commitment to the rational, that their romantic dispositions, to whatever degree possessed, are likely to have a muted expression. Despite this, Brinton cites James, Whitehead and Nietzsche, and even Kant as incipient romantics. Of Kant, Borgese says he achieved a balance between feeling and sensitivity on the one hand, and strict rational and moral structures on the other, and a balance necessarily implies the presence of both elements. Borgese also includes "Locke, Berkeley, and their followers" as philosophers whose empiricism led away from Cartesian rationalism and its a priori strictness. And finally, indeed, one wonders about classifying even Descartes as pure classicist in view of the closing words of Meditation One and his struggles to reconcile the inner and outer man in Meditation Six. In any case it is clear that there is merit in asking what leanings to romanticism are to be found in any given philosopher.

As regards Hegel and Kierkegaard, Ronald Grimsley has observed that Hegel's absolute idealism was a manifestation of romanticism in that it fulfilled the romantic's search for

an underlying system of elements, beyond the control of social constraints, which the artist in free interplay with nature was supposed to be able to reveal. In being intellectualized, the project was carried to one of its extreme possibilities by Hegel, and more so by his disciples, representing in its severe universalism only one side of the tension-ridden romantic ideal. The other side stressed that the artist was an individual, and that his intercourse with nature was a matter of feeling rather than of reason. This side is represented by Kierkegaard's protest and, I think, to some extent by Hume's skepticism about the rational ways of coping with the world. The reliance of both on the imagination is further evidence of their romanticism. But the strain is much more overt in Kierkegaard, and the importance of romanticism to his theses about the nature of the world can hardly be stressed too much. It is instructive, for instance, in comparing him with Hume to observe that whereas Hume's merely latent romanticism led him to incorporate feeling into the cognitive foundations of his epistemology, Kierkegaard's fuller romanticism barred epistemology from providing the formal base of his philosophy. And there are other of Hume's commitments which display an undercurrent of sympathy to principles that Kierkegaard placed in a central position in his philosophy. For example, both Brinton and Borgese observe that one way for the philosopher to escape the strictures of his rigorous rational discipline is through the writing of popular essays. This immediately turns
the mind to Hume as well as Kierkegaard.

Kierkegaard's reaction to Hegel issued in his most striking and pivotal conviction, that the most significant feature of the world is the individual man. Although overlooked by the "System" (a term Kierkegaard applied to the thought of Hegel and the Hegelians), he is existent for himself first of all. Kierkegaard held that some correction of the System's tendency to conceive and hallow goals that leave man on the periphery must be achieved, for every system is generated in answer to the initiatives of an inquirer whose humanity stands first in time and value. The outcome of thought must serve the thinker or be condemned as senseless. We find here, incidentally, a first sign of what is actually a significant affinity between the committed empiricist and the existentialist in their common insistence on a singular pivotal standpoint for inquiry. For the naive empiricist, too, holds that the perception that occurs for each individual in isolation is primary. The existentialist differs from this only in that rather than speaking of how knowledge is gained, he prefers to locate knowledge ontologically in relation to man. This difference undercuts the objectivist tendency we observed in the elemental epistemology of Hume, which later leads to a collapse of the self, by denying that man or any aspect of his being is to be judged a thing among things in the world. On the contrary, what
Kierkegaard meant by 'exist' was man's peculiar way of being — to exist is to "ek-sist" (from ek-stasis, to stand out from), and to be qualitatively differentiated from anything which merely is (man is, but not merely as just another thing). Man is thus the prime reality, but any system of thought tends to dissolve this experienced concreteness in abstractions, and thus to deny its primacy by ignoring it. Every knowledge system is thus inherently irrelevant to the primary fact of life, that man "ek-sists."

But the elements of thought have a role to play. In it they support action. In themselves concepts represent only possibilities, whereas the individual man is actuality, and therefore ontologically superior. Concepts are valuable only insofar as the individual can will them into actuality. Just as imagination can distort the reality when left to run wild, and to become what Hume deprecated as mere fancy, so can concepts become fixed in arbitrary systems when they are left idle. One can be confident that the mobile reality is being adequately treated only when the concepts flow through man so as to lead to concrete humane actions. Otherwise their merit remains an object of idle speculation. For human reality is existence toward a future, made up at its best by a stream of constantly renewed decisions flowing from a cogent will. Whatever serves to attain this end for man is existentially worth-
while; nothing else can be of equal value.

It is not, then, so much that the world cannot be known, but that only those aspects which are relatively trivial compared to man's highest possibility are knowable. This is Kierkegaard's criticism of objective knowledge. Having left the epistemological question in abeyance, he elevates Hume's bare intuition that the human project is faulty to a value-oriented concern for meaningful insight. This is never obtained by mere intellectual activity but, as Hume's quasi-romantic disposition also led him to conclude, required the cooperative response of feeling, to which Kierkegaard added something which is designated the "spiritual" element. Man must be completed by becoming what he can potentially be. As he exists, his nature is wracked by "ambivalence and instability," and deepening consciousness uncovers a "desperate seriousness" in the problems of man's nature and philosophy's role. Man needs to do more than seek to know truth abstractly, for the important truths elude his intellect. He must appropriate truth by passionate construction of his whole mode of existence around the matter of ultimate importance. This, Kierkegaard holds, is his final beatitude.

Now, what are the possibilities of finding a properly value-weighted approach to the world? In an endeavor to ex-
plore this question, Kierkegaard presented a critique of objec-
tive knowledge under two categories: historical knowledge and
speculative philosophy. The critique of historical knowledge
took the following form. Our knowledge of history depends on
evidence as to the nature of past events. A belief which de-
pends on history is no sounder than the evidence which supports
the historical account. But the dialectical question is always
relevant, "Why accept the evidence?" In answer to this it must
be admitted that the reliability of any supposedly authorita-
tive source can be established only within limits which are a
step inferior to direct personal observation, for the written
documents or drawings, purporting to be related to some partic-
ular facet of the event, can hardly surpass in adequacy the ex-
perience-base of the witness, and may very easily be inferior
to it in some degree. Nor can the problem be easily overcome.
At the least it should be clear to even an enthusiastic propo-
nent of the soundness of critical method that conflicting opin-

8. Since Hume cast skeptical doubt on sense observation, and
further doubted the reliability of subsequent infer-
ences, he should join Kierkegaard in classifying all
historical evidence as dubious. Apart from the im-
plications of this fact for his role as a historian,
the point is philosophically relevant in view of his
cautious rejection of historical evidence for Chris-
tianity in his essay, "Of Miracles," which cites
particular shortcomings of religious testimony rather
than generally rejecting historical knowledge on
principle. It is questionable that Hume's modera-
ions result from its application by equally accredited practitioners, so that in any particular case the evidence must be taken to be established only to a degree. Kierkegaard calls this whole endeavor to establish evidence an "approximation process," for truth is never absolutely guaranteed by objective means. This does not mean that these same facts can be established by subjective means. This would constitute a subjectivism that is alien to his thought. Rather those things which are matters of objective knowledge can never be made certain, and subjectivity (which is not subjectivism) establishes something else altogether.

That which seeks to reveal, or promises, ultimate things is by its nature not an object of empirical scrutiny. One hesitates to call it an ideal, even though that is the category that we find most natural for it, for to Kierkegaard Christian truth concerned a concrete transcendent fact. However, its transcendence makes it like an ideal for pragmatic investigation, and we are justified in treating it as such unless the Kierkegaardian claim that transcendent facts can be concretely presented in paradoxical form can be vindicated. As Alasdair Mcintyre has observed, the notion of paradox is

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tion in skepticism in this regard is wholly consistent with the skepticism of the Treatise.
"fatally unclear" without clarification of how it differs from mere inconsistency. On these grounds, lacking such clarification, and treating the object of ultimate concern as an ideal, we find that Kierkegaard can still make his point against objective knowledge, that the ideal is not accessible to sensory inspection. He displays an entire interconnected set of ideal (non-empirical) principles in one of his famous statements:

Christianity is spirit, spirit is inwardness, inwardness is subjectivity, subjectivity is essentially passion, and in its maximum an infinite, personal, passionate interest in one's eternal beatitude. (9)

This sort of inwardly collapsed metaphysic cannot deny the validity of all that is known, but it locates as real the unknowable that is man, and places a highest value upon it since it conditions his whole relation to the world. The unknowable is existence, which is man's way of being. Not only can it be experienced, but experience is its being. The individual who grows into personal cogency, but is an "unarticulated man," neither knowing how, nor being concerned, to explain his competence (in fact, he will not know that he is particularly competent as a humane individual), is living the

unknowable. He is able to deal effectively with those things that stretch away from his personal center. He is not just in the hands of God, he is the hands of God, or in other words, in deep functional harmony with the world. In contrast, mere knowledge is obtained after the fact, and leaves the individual to some degree at odds with the world, for his competence, based on knowledge is concerned with the past, and there is a temptation to be indecisive about the present, for who knows to what degree the future which is presently unfolding will conform to the past.\(^\text{10}\)

Therefore, about all that is present, philosophy must be skeptical, unless something is fixed by the passion of the spirit. By intellectualizing, objective philosophers deny passion its place, and can present only a relative truth. Their pretensions thus become comical due to the discrepancy between their professed aim, to establish certainty about final things, and their achievement, uncertainty about how to live. In search of a way out, the mind is seized by an anxious, restless desire to stabilize consciousness by eliminating dialectical interplay, closing off the process of inquiry, setting up a limit that is not to be challenged. Herein lies the root of superstition, for relevant and irrelevant considerations are excluded indiscrimi-

\(^{10}\). Hume's skepticism about inductive inferences must occur to one here.
nately. There can be no truth here, because existential "truth," even on the first level, about the world, is made possible by a union of fact and self, and how can the honest commitment of a subject be generated in a domain from which both facts and personal integrity have been banished?

Kierkegaard's thesis is reminiscent, to this point, of Hume's stress on the extra-rational function of belief, which is an individual's felt response to the impact of experience. But Kierkegaard goes further. Having introduced spirit as essential to establishing truth, he wants to keep spirit tight against the world, as it were, not separated by a linguistic barrier. But facts are given in a language. Therefore he extends the concept of spirit in a way that anticipates Marcel, seeing world as an extension of the spirit through perception. Truth, properly seen, he says, is spirit, not a relationship between a consciousness and a set of propositions. This is to say that the body of objective knowledge is banished, so that not even a set of propositions related to a postulated transcendent is admitted. One can at least agree that merely calling an unstable branch of such knowledge "faith" will not cover its inadmissability. Faith becomes for Kierkegaard an existential position involving the total man, something one finds oneself committed to rather than discursively thinking one's way into it. And language is rec-

11. This is, perhaps, the rationale that underlies Hume's es-
ognized as a limited instrument, serviceable at the limit as a vehicle of "indirect communication" whereby an attempt is made to lead the individual to that point from which the decision to grasp the ultimate is made.

One might ask whether Kierkegaard's choice of historical knowledge as the epitome of objective knowledge distorts the issue due to the peculiar unavailability of direct historical experience. What if he had chosen science? I think that there are two elements necessary to the proper answer. First, had science been chosen the results would not have been different, but since he would have been driven back into fundamental epistemological skepticism, his analysis would have revealed his ideological kinship to the skeptical side of Hume much more clearly. Kierkegaard always presupposed the validity of previous skeptical analysis, and sought to extend his own into the area that was newly relevant for his time. He wrote,

The study of Greek skepticism is much to be recommended. There one may learn thoroughly what it will always require time and exercise and discipline to understand, . . . that the

cape from skeptical doubt as soon as he leaves his study, i.e. leaves off the language based project of thought.
certainty of sense perception, to say nothing of historical certainty, is uncertainty, is only an approximation; and that the positive and immediate relationship to it is the negative. (12)

The second point is that the body of scientific knowledge was not so relevant to his concern to speak about the ultimate condition of man as a spiritual being. He had no doubt that intellectually and materially science was of interest, but he was equally convinced that its purely objective attitude rendered it irrelevant to ultimate concern.

Kierkegaard was moved to attack speculative philosophy, however, just precisely because it did affect man's attitudes toward his status and destiny. But he held that its deficiency was in its starting point, the phenomena of perceptual experience. It sought to reduce everything to a phenomenon, and matters of ultimate concern were reduced to their maintaining institutions (Christianity to the church, or as he called it, "Christendom"). Evidently the crowd of men who naively believed could not be in possession of ultimate truth, for they had no claim on philosophy, but he wondered if the solitary thinker had a just claim to possess that truth. Truth could

then be the object of investigation. Kierkegaard concluded that this objectifying of doctrine prevented the intellectual from being in possession of that which was true because it tended to make him satisfied. The pagan Greek philosopher really had achieved a grasp of the truth of his religion when he analyzed it, but this was because it offered no eternal beatitude. But man has now been revealed as a synthesis of the temporal and the eternal. There is evidence of this in Christian thought categories and the "great" philosopher even thinks that he can go beyond this temporally conditioned subjective truth to the eternal. But all that he can actually attain is the universal, that which is intersubjectively true on the temporal plane. But that which is eternal cannot be thought. How then is it grasped?

In answering this Kierkegaard once again is reminiscent of Hume, yet goes beyond him. He says,

... Christianity receives an intensification, by means of a more profound inwardness ... (so) that the truth is the subject's transformation of himself. (13)

Hume, as we have previously observed, sees an energy

contribution like this as essential to belief, and holds that this comes from mysterious dimensions of an unknowable reality. Kierkegaard specifies that this energy source is a passion within man, and that it is released by a turning away from the objective world. The individual alone can do this for himself. Of course, what he has become dampens his movement, and living in the world has a continually dulling effect. Nothing is worse than seeing oneself in historical perspective, for "... an overdose of historical interest paralyzes the individual's spontaneity."\(^{14}\) On the other hand, the conflict between his yearning to become himself (to fulfill his human potential) and the leaden quality of the world given in knowledge exacerbates the spirit. What takes place then is a sort of dialectical evolution of the spirit. What can not be really understood becomes the source of passionate concern, and the subjective thinker uses imagination and receptive feeling in concert with the energy of passion to illuminate his ruminations on his personal state. He grasps hold of a process requiring involvement of his whole existence, and since it is not merely understood it must be constantly repeated in practice.

The key terms for understanding Kierkegaard on this subject are despair, passion, dread, freedom, decision and

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faith. The movement of the individual through these categories is upwards through three stages: the aesthetical, the ethical, and the religious.

The process of spiritual evolution is as follows. The unreconstructed individual comes to awareness in the aesthetic state, which is characterized by "spiritlessness" (the state of Philistinism) and "obsession with the ambiguous aspects of certain finite experiences."¹⁵ Fate and a notion of a predetermined, blind destiny exercise a terrible fascination.¹⁶ Only that which gratifies the senses is sought after. But realization of the futility of conduct that cultivates only the immediate and temporal has broken the spell, and despair follows. This is a creative state so long as it is not perpetuated, for true philosophy reveals a higher plane of existence, and the man in despair is sensitive to the revelation as a way out. "The egoistic and merely utilitarian point of view gives way to a broader perspective in which reality appears in its objective and enduring aspects."¹⁷ This is a vision of the

¹⁵ Ronald Grimsley, op.cit. p. 30.

¹⁶ See Rudolph Otto, The Idea of the Holy, for a discussion at length of spiritual terror and fascination in religious experience. One would be led by the parallel to suppose that every stage in the Kierkegaardian analysis is an archetype of the religious.

¹⁷ Kurt F. Reinhardt, op. cit., p. 18, quoting Peter Wust.
ethical life.

The despair is accompanied by dread, an invariable concomitant of the full freedom of human existence. Dread is anxiety about existence, fixed on no particular object. It is both positive and negative vis-à-vis the victim's project to leave the aesthetic. Turned inward he becomes a pure subject, wholly dependent on his own will, but aware that nothing impedes a decision to move spiritually upwards because his self is freedom. Using imagination and receptive feeling in concert with the motivational feeling of passion he illuminates his existence, past, present, and future. In effect he lives them all at once existentially, in the freedom of imagination but with his whole being, not just his mind.\(^\text{18}\) The dread he experiences is possibility, freedom, and self. It is dialectical and ambiguous, offering both promise and threat, both attracting and repelling. The moods it produces vary from individual to individual, ranging from frenetic self assertion to melancholy quiessence. If the individual is strong (what strength consists of, or whence it derives, is not dealt with) he can move into

\[\text{18. Hume's dictum that every element in mind is strictly separable by the imagination, and that the imagination's reconstructions are wholly free, is brought to mind here.}\]
the ethical stage, which is still finite, but universal rather than immediate and selfish (note that subjectivity does not imply selfishness, but is the way out of selfishness). Greater perspicuity comes with the broadening horizon, and fate governed by blind chance is replaced by guilt, for one who has experienced freedom, and knows all is not well, recognizes his responsibility. But the focus of guilt is not certain; he does not yet know what is wrong. Once again despair takes hold. The individual turns passionately to his subjectivity, and experiences dread of his freedom to move on because there is no sufficient understanding to guide his decision.

The next and final state is the religious, although this unfolds into two possibilities. In the first, a natural state having to do with the idea of transcendence, the guilt persists in a transmuted form. The old guilt is assuaged by belief in the acceptance of the person by the divine being, or he views himself as free of guilt because he could not have done otherwise (for example, his environment had caused his bad disposition), but there is fear for the future lest his actions continue or get worse. Dread becomes concrete and is objectivized as the fear of evil. The relationship can become pathological as fear of the greater possible evil causes the eschewal of the endeavor to achieve good in favour of clinging to the lesser actual evil, abhorrent though it is. Dread in this form
is daemonic.

But on the whole dread serves to stir man to realization of his being in freedom. It comes about in this way. Lacking a sufficient idea of God, the individual can benefit only by choosing to submit to a saving force beyond the world of understanding; for Kierkegaard this submission is to God. Since understanding of the transcendent must be deficient, God must approach through a paradoxical event in order to intensify passion and dread, provoking decision, and must "carry" the individual into the true religious state by grace (an unsolicited act). Thus the seeker in fleeing from his actual self to his potential self along the path of inwardness finds himself in faith. Freedom utilized in this way, to leap unknowingly away from deficiency in hope of finding sufficiency, is the ultimate personal exercise, and develops a concrete, coherent spirit. The seeker is still just that for he is anchored in finite relations (i.e. he exists), but faith overcomes the negative as he maintains his leap into Christianity. Christianity is Kierkegaard's term for ultimacy. Ultimacy is the achievement "through bones and marrow" of a true way of life. 'True' in this context is used in the sense that is used in speaking of a singer's voice as true, or a shot being made true to the mark. Existential truth "acknowledges the presence of an absolute and unconditional demand." It is the possibility of transcending
limitations in the direction of perfect coordination of all one's powers. But it is not an easy way. That which is deemed absolute must inspire fear, and dread persists in the face of rational indeterminacy concerning the immediate and concrete steps by which the absolute is to be approached. Faith "believes" (continues to press forward) against the understanding, for the commitment to operating within understanding puts off the leap by producing a false sense of sufficiency. Only when that which is sought is admitted to be beyond understanding will man move to grasp the ultimate with desperate passion.

But how can one move aright without understanding? The answer to this supplies understanding of Kierkegaard's choice of Christianity as the ultimate state for man because, for him, God has provided a clue to the direction man must move in the person of the naturally absurd Incarnate Word. Man as a natural being is offended by this unnatural event of incarnation. Existence itself is dialectical (yields up no fixed normal pattern), but man fights off this realization and does not want to be reminded of it by Christianity. Christianity is the witness that Jesus Christ especially mirrors man's ambiguous nature, yet is Himself revealed without imperfection. God's answer to man's problem is that ineluctable personal ambiguity is compatible with the achievement of personal integrity. In approaching Jesus Christ, man approaches existentially both
the objectively indescribable God and his own yearning to be complete (perfect). The paradox, by yielding passion, tears the individual loose from the finite and hence from the natural, including natural limitations. The natural, institutionalized church came to be detested by Kierkegaard as untrue to Christianity's nature, and only the solitary Christian man is accorded esteem in his philosophy.

This structure is deeply significant for the future development of a view of the existential person. The person is first of all unique in his individuality. He cannot rightly be accounted for by some metaphysic of mass mind or consciousness, or subjected to a purely statistical characterization. He grasps reality, and is a cognitive being on a very fundamental level, although he is capable of transcending cognitive limitations and accomplishing a post-articulate Gestalt apprehension of categories that outstrip the analytically classifiable.

Secondly, man is supremely himself when turned inward. The world is important, but only through increasing in subjective awareness of himself can man gather himself into a coherent self. This coherence is laid out in patterns of increasing adequacy which are correlated with greater functional harmony with all elements of the world. So balanced enjoyment of sense experiences comes first, comes to be dominated by the
maintenance of ethically sound relations with other persons, and finally is overcome by the development of an integration of self into the cosmic totality through exploitation of structures that are in the person from the first.

Lastly, the person is capable of existence, for a time at least, in which none of the stages dominates and the elements of self, gained possibly by wide ranging experience, are in relatively unpatterned flux. These "twilight zones" in personal development occur during transition from one state to another, but there is always the possibility of remaining in such a state.

These accounts of the self need considerable development, but it will be seen that they are, to a degree, possible extensions of Hume's doctrine, and that they lead to Sartre's.
CHAPTER FIVE

Sartre on the Self

My stated aim is to explore Sartre's doctrine of the self. This virtually entails exploring his whole philosophical project, for his philosophy is a philosophy of the self. Early in *Being and Nothingness*, he writes:

It is enough now to open our eyes and question ingeniously this totality which is man-in-the-world. It is by the description of this totality that we shall be able to reply to these two questions: (1) What is the synthetic relation which we call being-in-the-world? (2) What must man and the world be in order for a relation between them to be possible? In truth, the two questions are interdependent, and we cannot hope to reply to them separately. But each type of human conduct, being the conduct of man in the world, can release for us simultaneously man, the world, and the relation which unites them, only on condition that we envisage these forms of conduct as realities objectively apprehensible and not as subjective affects which disclose themselves only in the face of reflection.(1)

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Thus Sartre attempted from the first to give a "universal ontology of people and things" as the basis of his philosophy, and he sought, in reaching for this goal, to "apprehend the person in his uniqueness." This represents a meaningful goal for analysis, which I will further sharpen by directing my consideration toward Chapter Six in which Sartre will be brought into direct comparison with Hume on certain of their propensities and implications. In pursuing this end, I will adopt the essential insight suggested by Norman Greene who discerns "three splits in the unity of Sartre's universe."  

a) The division in consciousness into pre-reflective and reflective levels.

b) The division between consciousness and the thing-world.

c) The division between individual consciousnesses which faces us with other people.

I will collapse the final two distinctions into one, and divide the first into two by discussing the functionality of the imagi-

2. Hazel Barnes, the "Introduction" to her translation of Existential Analysis, the last two parts of Sartre's Being and Nothingness.

nation. What ensues may seem to constitute a rather tortuous explication of Sartre's early work, but its point and value will be made evident in the next chapter.

Sartre's work is a unique balance between what we might call thrust and aims. While the thrust seems nihilistic to a marked degree at places, his thought remains rich in potentials that arise out of the positive genesis of his thought. This same paradox is found in his great precursor, Descartes, who sought the world through a method of doubt. So, too, Sartre seeks by devastating the heart of man to erect a viable self in the world, not just in theory but in practice. A certain disdain for theory accompanies this aim and makes him the philosophical kin of not only Kierkegaard but also of such a skeptic as David Hume whose world shattered under his attacks on the best theory that could be devised in this time. Sartre draws upon Kant, Hegel, and Husserl, who bent themselves to incorporating the world into theory by one device or another, but each in turn is transcended by Sartre's existentialist commitment that the reality transcends theoretical structures.

An important feature of Sartre's thought is his phenomenological commitment. He had been inspired as a young man by Husserl's challenge, "Back to the things themselves." Sartre sought to be true to this dictum, and often criticized Husserl
for adopting positions that betrayed the principle that things are what appears. But Sartre was not so much a developer of phenomenology as one of its practitioners. He accepted the essential correctness of its methodological premises, and sought to go on from there; he accepted its principles but adapted them to the attainment of his own peculiar ends.

Phenomenology's emphasis that things are presented in consciousness, without allowing intervening conceptual distance, makes it a hybrid method. Although it runs contrary to that sort of rationalism that leads to idealism, it does not precisely sanction the realist attitudes of ordinary empiricism either. It emphasizes perception, but in its own distinctive way. Things are constantly in view, most immediately, as qualities of perception (as they are for an idealist), but their existence is independent of any mind (as it is for a realist). In Hume's standard empiricism (his official position) qualities were themselves accorded an objective status as impressions, and even A.J. Ayer's post-Humean phenomenalism maintained impressions as sense contents, although the status of these is rather ambiguous. But Sartre's phenomenology clearly leads him to disdain any objectivist tendency to separate out an element from perception so as to make it stand alone for sensations (impressions) as if it were a cause of observation. Rather, he prefers to leave the qualities as they are in experience, objects of that
experience, and to describe the way in which they appear in consciousness, for the object observed is alone what is known. Qualities alone are mere abstractions, and in experience they coalesce with objects.  

So to Sartre the quality, as object, exists alone for pure consciousness, although as soon as the purity of naive consciousness begins to slip the perceiver is moved out toward the thing itself. To begin with, this is quite consistent with a phenomenology, for the perceiver is aware that the object's existence is something for him, not of him as an idealist would have it. The thing (object) has no spontaneity, as does a mind, nor is it dependent for its being on a spontaneity. But since what appears in consciousness includes will, Sartre is in a position to uncover an ontological weight in the inertness of things which renders them resistive of all attempts to intervene in their careers and manipulate them. They are thereby so cut off from the perceiver's "intentions" that their essence is, from the first, the essence of a thing. Phenomenologically the

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4. Hume could not have been too out of sympathy with Sartre's convictions on this matter had they been presented to him, for not only did he have skeptical doubts about employing causation as an explanatory agent of the source of experience, but impressions and ideas, together exhaustive of what is given in perception, coalesce so that "it is not impossible but that in par-
whole status of the object is intentional, but so forcefully does Sartre develop the alien quality in things that I think it is fair to say that he undercuts phenomenology and opens up a channel back towards an empiricist realism. However, his language and official commitments remain phenomenological, as Hume's remained officially empiricist. It is only the undercurrent of implications in both Sartre and Hume which carries them toward a convergence that is hardly made explicit, yet governs many of the subsequent outworkings and potentials of their philosophies. We will see more of this later in the chapter, and in Chapter Six.

a) The Divided Self

The pure self is a theoretical ideal, for pure consciousness is nothing but the antithesis of the thing itself which is the quintessence of ontological grossness and inertia. The self, then, is pure diaphany and pure mobility. Such a consciousness exists simply, without regard to any external particular instances they may approach to each other."

5. 'Intentional' in phenomenology means something like "serving as the orienting end for consciousness." But the sense here of 'in-itself' and 'for-itself' is that of intense ordinary terms. Their particular Sartrean depth will emerge later.
condition, being purely for itself, pure spontaneity, pure confrontation with the heavily existing things. But objectivity is a pervasive condition, and heavy existence comes to encroach on the domain of the conscious self. The question that arises is as to precisely where such a heavy psychic thing is to be located, and what effect correctly locating it can have on our understanding of the self.

Sartre begins his examination with a statement of aim, to show that the ego, a heavily existing thing, is not in or behind consciousness, but out before it in the world.⁶ To appreciate this project it will help to consider what has happened to the concepts of consciousness and the ego since Kant.

Admittedly, Sartre thinks, the conditions required for experience laid down by Kant were not intended to be elements of consciousness. For him the question is, what makes our experience valid, not, what in experience is the object of which we are conscious. That is, he presupposes the world, and stamps it "phenomenal." Kant's transcendental consciousness "is nothing but the set of conditions which are necessary for an empirical consciousness," according to Sartre. Thus the transcendental

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self is not set up as a "reality," for Kant's analysis has nothing to do with an inner "thing." Questions of fact are not posed by a Kantian phenomenology (although a ground for the factual is described), and so the self is not something whose presence changes or constitutes the substance of what is present to consciousness.

But even granting, with Kant, that the objects of consciousness are independent of that consciousness, the question might still be asked, from outside Kant's system, is the self *that* which unifies consciousness of objects, or is it the *product* of that unity? The question can only be answered by a scientific approach through intuition to the data of consciousness. We thus must move away from Kant toward Husserl, away from critical abstraction towards questions of fact about personal experience. Through the delimitation of the sphere of investigation by the *epoche* (by which existence and existents are set aside) to the phenomenal, a real "empirical" examination of the self is enforced. The answer to the question then is possible: self *constitutes* the unity of phenomena. But this inner activity is all it is; it is no absolute transcendent

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7. Whether the means of empirical experience, sense contents, is well referred to as itself being capable of being empirically investigated is moot. Nonetheless, this is the sense which Sartre means to give to the term 'empirical' in this phenomenological framework.
being.

There is a transcendent being, but it is not the self.\footnote{Sartre's ambiguity about whether the term 'self' is to be applied to pure consciousness or to the ego-structure is troublesome already at this point — there are elements of selfhood in each. Cumming (The Philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre) restricts 'self' to reference to ego, and thus contrasts 'self' and 'consciousness', but this is impracticable. It is more natural to identify the self with pure consciousness, even though Sartre wants at times to speak of self-elements as the object of consciousness. I will try to keep the discussion free from ambiguity while following this latter usage, and the resolution of this dilemma will figure centrally in any remarks on Sartre's idea of the self in the last chapter. In the final analysis, the term 'person' will mean the self in its most comprehensive sense, but it will not often appear until near the end of my discussion.} The self is but the central aspect of conscious being which includes other persons along with the self taken objectively. That is, even given that in a sense one's own self is an object of consciousness, one's own cogitation still must be dependent on prior, impersonal existence for its possibility. But can this impersonal being be one with the unity of consciousness? Husserl affirms it can be, for after locating the self as pure consciousness, he reverts to a concept of transcendental consciousness as a sort of knowing light-from-behind which illuminates the phenomena, one identifiable with the self so far as it goes, but transcending it. But this move to find
a detached source of cognition which is more than the self was wrong and unnecessary, Sartre thinks. Consciousness unifies itself in itself by an activity which transcends only toward the intentional object, "... it is in the (intentional) object that the unity of the (multi-elemented) consciousness is found."9 Far from needing unification, consciousness provides for unification, first of itself in time from state to state, and finally even of the anterior self, the "I" which is but an external expression of the privacy of the self or consciousness. And more than being merely superfluous, postulation of such a being as transcendental ego is retrograde because it debilitates consciousness, inserting a block to the normal lucidity which self-consciousness has in its moments of uncompromised unity. "... Consciousness is purely and simply consciousness of being conscious of the object."10 This unreflected consciousness "in the first degree" is not object to itself but pure subjective self-awareness in awareness of other objects. What can a transcendent "I" be for consciousness? Nothing intelligible. Supposing it to be hides consciousness from open view, placing it inside a mystery. Con-

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9. *T.E.*, p. 38. The intentional object is just simply that towards which consciousness is directed. This technical meaning supports 'intention' in the vernacular.

sciousness can be what we experience it to be, an absolute, only by the freedom which comes "by virtue of non-existence."
The self as "I" is an object for consciousness, not of consciousness, and hence the lightness and lucidity of consciousness is preserved. On the other hand, the ego is not some "thing," but the synthesis of the consciousness' commerce with things. It is, in other words, in part a consequence of consciousness' process, and hangs as a veil between consciousness and the world.

Phenomenology of the ego begins with the fact that something called "self" is present to be apprehended in every reflective act. In the "I think" every act of consciousness holds consciousness itself as object, hence we are in an act of "the second degree" because the reflected consciousness is in view of the reflecting consciousness. The "I" of the Cogito belongs to the reflected consciousness. To locate the reflecting consciousness a further reflection is required, but then a new reflecting consciousness has emerged, so we are in the third degree. Regression can be halted at any time by refusing to look for self as object. What is important in this is that we have established how it is that the objective self emerges, as a reflection of consciousness, not in consciousness itself. There is no "I" so long as I remain "unreflective," i.e. concerned about other objects, a fact I can ascertain by a
surreptitious inspection through memory of a conscious interval just past. This absence of the "I" is no accident of inattention, but is due to "the very structure of consciousness."

Three categories emerge, as follows: 11

i) Reflected consciousness as absolute and static

ii) Spatio-temporal objects as ideal unities within an actual infinity of aspects

iii) Meaning and mathematics, as transcendent of time, eternal and opposed to the self which endures in time for only its moment.

Where is the Cogito to be placed? It is transcendent and imperishable, more like an eternal truth than an existing self: Descartes and Husserl both wrongly put the Cogito on the level of time with the unreflective conscious self. The Cogito is vague and indistinct, given through reflection, but not as reflected consciousness. The "I" eludes full comprehension; the "think" postures as the source of consciousness, whereas consciousness can have no object of itself as source. Sartre thus reaches the following conclusions.

1) The "I" is an existent with permanent structures.

11. T.E., p. 49.
2) Intuition apprehends it behind reflected consciousness only.

3) It is transcendent of both consciousnesses, reflective and pre-reflective.


"I" is an infinite contraction on the material "me" which is an object of unreflective consciousness. But the two levels of consciousness, reflective and unreflective, must not be confused. Doing so leads to the mistaken notion that every act is done for love of "me," or self-love. But in fact, on the unreflective level I am conscious of no such motive (i.e., there is consciousness of no such motive). I am conscious of Peter-having-to-be-helped, and nothing else intervenes. It makes no sense to say I really act to rid myself of unpleasant feelings arising from Peter's condition. If this is the true unreflective response, why am I not conscious of it, and why is it not susceptible to displacement itself as my conscious apprehension is under the theory? The reflected state cannot be said to be the source of the more basic impulse, because the unreflective is always ontologically prior, whereas the other is always secondary because dependent. So the unreflective is autonomous, and our conscious apprehensions are established just as experienced. The self as object enters only on reflection,
and only then can self-love be possible. The action carried out reflectively may still be quite altruistic, but the form of the impulse to act is changed in a way that allows for self-centredness. The unreflective is therefore the purer, and even if it is always lost due to the "poison" of reflection, it should not be confused with the reflective, for it is always there, primitively, beneath reflection. Note that here the psychic "me" is not in or behind unreflected consciousness, but "appears only with the reflective act, and as a noematic correlate of a reflective intention." 12 Sartre reveals here that the "I" and "me" are emerging as facets of a unity, "I" as the unity of actions; "me" as the unity of states and qualities, both of the same self.

The ego is a second stage of reflective consciousness, which is at first immanent, as a general flux, and then transcendent as the located self-object that is fixed as a synthesis of unreflective experience. States of self, such as hatred, are real since they are present to reflective inspection. They are always more than immediate consciousness contains; that is, they transcend it, and are known to do so because they overflow

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12. T.E., p. 60. 'Noematic correlate' simply refers to the logical or ideal end that holding an object in consciousness for oneself would entail.
immediate experience, and elicit from us testimony that present experience alone will not support (Sartre gives "the blue of the blotter" as an example, wherein my idea of blue depends on much more than my present experience). Yet reflection is done on what consciousness presents, so reflection is transcended, too. And so one can discern two sorts of reflection, pure reflection which limits itself to what unreflective consciousness supplies, and impure which reaches beyond to build states by unifying many (resembling?) consciousnesses. And beyond this it is possible to "meditate" (reflect) on reflection, and thereby run the risk of confusing immanent and transcendent reflection, leading one to believe that reflection is deceptive, and requiring that he treat reflection as hiding states behind mere appearances, so that symbolic forms of representation of the state, which differ from the representations of normal thought, must be devised. On the other hand, I may believe my reflection not only to be reliable but exhaustive on the immanent level, and wrongly identify the transcendent state as present. These are the Scylla and Charybdis of reflective consciousness.

States, being transcendent and hence durable objects,

13. It is interesting to wonder if an associative principle such as resemblance is implicit in Sartre's process,
are passive, being energized from without. A state is "a kind of intermediary between the body . . . and the Erlebnis." causing and being caused by body activities, but itself en-
liened by the spontaneous activity of consciousness. But to reflection the state seems to found the consciousness, which "emanates" from it. In so doing, the consciousness would have to draw something from the state as the cost of representing it. Nothing more insightful can be said concerning this ap-
parent transaction than that it appears "magical." For that which is inert (the state) cannot be thought of coherently as causing anything, and 'emanate', which is properly designed to indicate a ground, also parades as signifying a source. And so, while, as ground only, the state can be seen as that which the active consciousness exploits in producing its own form, since the transaction falls outside scientific understand ing it is prone to distortion as the magical. But, as such, it is unacceptable to the rational inquirer as an ex-
planatation.

That which exists as an object may be active, but only that which forms itself otherwise than as an object is "spontaneous." Consciousness is spontaneous. Actions are transcendent because their possibility is necessarily grounded

for this could be made explicit in Humean terms.
outside consciousness in the domain of objects, a domain which includes psychical objects as well as physical, objects such as reflective mental activities. Actions are real, and exist in time, available to reflection through the consciousnesses which trace their courses. But not all similar consciousnesses are equally actions. Doubt may be pure consciousness (occupying a Kierkegaardian "instant") when spontaneous, or it may be an enterprise (prolonged action) as in Descartes' methodological doubt. The two should not be confused. The required analysis shows that qualities are interposed on occasion between actions and states; they are potentialities, often held as dispositions to act, and as real they are transcendent objects in themselves. They do not stand as emanations, for they are not consciousness in themselves. They are not states, for a state is "a noematic unity of spontaneities" (meaning "the union of the objective ends of conscious intentions"), whereas the quality is "a unity of objective passivities." Spitefulness is such a quality, and differs from a state like hatred, which exists even when not operative, by being only a potency for action. Sartre includes "faults, virtues, tastes, talents, tendencies, instincts, etc.," under qualities because of this status as mere potentialities. Finally, "the ego . . . is directly the transcendent unity of states and actions."
Cartesian doubt then, as an action, does not belong to pure consciousness.
Although the psychic is not consciousness, but an object of reflection, it is still quite distinct from the "psycho-physical" or neurological. It is a pure synthesis which is involved with its elemental states, dependent on nothing else, yet in a sense constituting a beyond, for it transcends them all together. Ego stands to objective psychic states as the world stands to its things, but is more immanent, appearing constantly in the background or "on the horizon" as the identificatory presence. Every state must be bound to "me" as my state, to be what is signified by language about it, because it is me. The state is not free — nor is mere activity grounded in ego.

Sartre's doctrine of deficiency thus goes deeper than Hume's in its explicit structures, into this objective aspect of the self's very being. For the ego must always be held in question — it can present itself deceptively and its states cannot be counted on absolutely as definitory of its being. The problem is in the ego itself; it is not a mere problem of objective knowledge. There is no "true me" which is being falsely represented or judged. In the extreme possibility, I could be possessed of wholly illusory ego elements (states given by faulty memory extending from "just now" into the past). But it must be remembered that the ego is distinct from the conscious self, so this claim of dubitability, although deep, has
its own restrictions. In the doctrine of Sartre at this stage there is an inviolate purity attaching to unreflected consciousness. Then, too, despite problems of representation, the ego is a real entity, creatively synthesized as just what it is on the ground of these dubitable states. That is, whatever the degree of accuracy in the representation of states, I am still reflectively just what I apprehend, for the ego is truly fixed by reflection. Further, there is a reciprocity between the ego and its states, the ego producing states as well as being what the states give rise to, and there may be genuine creative novelty in this act. As a result, reflection reaches back only to discern, concerning each state of the ego, the ego as its source (at least as synthesizer). One consequence is that I ought to understand that I am not what my past has made me except as I have cooperated in the venture.

Qualities are in similar relation to the ego, constituting its powers which are held together by nothing other than their confederation. Sartre says, "It does not seem to us that we could find a skeletal pole if we took away, one after another, all the qualities."\(^{14}\) The ego seems more substantial

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14. _T.E._, p. 78. This is again reminiscent of Hume, for whom the self is just the set of ideas derived from perception. The difference is that the ego which is just the set of phenomenologically present qualities
than this, an entity apart and in itself, only because of the collective density these qualities take on in comprising the ego. Yet, as we have said, the ego is more than its powers, spontaneously creating new qualities as well as new states of itself. This is an unexplained paradox in Sartre.

I think that it is because of this paradox, that the ego both is comprised of, and yet is more than, its powers, that Sartre says, "Most of the time, the progression (of the ego to its states) involved is magical."\(^{15}\) By "most of the time" he may mean "in the view of most persons," and by "magical" he would seem to mean "lying outside of any account in terms of linear cause-effect relations." In this, following Kierkegaard, Sartre denies that certain objects of conscious concern are objects for scientific scrutiny. But does he mean to restrict the claim to saying that the mind stretches into a mysterious dimension, one that has not yet yielded satisfactorily to scientific analysis? Given the role of "empirical" observation in his phenomenology of mind, one might expect such a qualification of a Kierkegaardian thesis. But it seems that his empiricism is infected with a Humean skepticism and

\[\text{and states is itself mere object of the self for Sartre.}\]

that he denies more than a quantitative inability of science to cover everything. For not only does he contrast magical progression with rational operation, he also includes so many other non-rational modes, "the pre-logical, childish, schizophrenic, logical, etc.," that one is forced to conclude that he holds there to be something basic to the nature of mind which renders each facet of its operation impenetrable to the others, and hence to rational inquiry, which is but one mode. We note that he differentiates between (presumably narrow) logical function and (more far ranging) rational inquiry, so cannot be reflecting nothing but the factual emptiness of a priori propositions.

As concomitant of the rejection of scientific rationality Sartre claims, at this stage in his thinking, that the appropriate manner of expression for the ego is in a poetry arising from each facet of psychic need. Feeling, as given in the particular mode of consciousness, thus comes to have a major significance. The poetic is a sign of a kind of spasmodic spontaneity which occurs under pressure, not the true, constantly flowing freedom of creative expression of which the unfettered consciousness is capable. This phenomenon occurs because the ego is made up by consciousness, and consciousness (or the free self) often abdicates its freedom to the world, and confers on its thing-like locus, the ego, something of the
creative power without which consciousness would collapse. The actually passive ego is thus paraded as the root of activity, and understanding can render such a topsy-turvy relationship only as the magical. Sartre thinks that this "degradation" of spontaneity, repeated when we apprehend others (whose ego-structures alone are revealed) as free, is always magical, for to each of us others are always a mask of passivity. We have yet to see what becomes of the being of others in his work.

Sartre then draws a curtain over intelligibility through an analysis of the self's relation to events through the ego. The problem develops as follows. The self is said to be both passive, and therefore defenceless against others, and yet cut off from the world, and hence beyond being affected by externals. Now, that an isolated self could be merely self-affected is intelligible enough, but Sartre envisions the ego, which stands in community, before consciousness and in the world, as being affected only by what it produces, part of that being "occasions" for involvements in external events. Sartre's reason for this includes the observation that, being an object for reflection, the ego is linked to the phenomenal only by states and qualities which it devises and by which it is constituted. The panorama given immediately to consciousness is not given directly to the ego, hence it is never touched except through that which it has devised. "Participation" becomes a
key notion in understanding the standing of the self in the world, in both its actuality and its dissimulation. Sartre admits that this attempt at explanation involves "an irrational synthesis of activity and passivity." Of course, it is only so in that the origin of the first move of passive ego to provoke states and qualities into being is not explained, but perhaps the citing of an activity which can be spoken of in terms of provocation means that Sartre should not have called ego passive. 'Heavy', or 'sluggish' as we suggested at the outset might be better terms, although this would not allow his conclusion of an absolute difference between conscious self and ego.

Sartre plays a similar game with 'interiority' and 'transcendence'. The sense of having a private consciousness is just the sense of existing. But in reflecting on one's inner privacy, one must objectify interiority. Sartre says "must objectify," although perhaps a better expression would be "may erroneously objectify," but this again would spoil Sartre's paradox. He holds, in any case, that one cannot avoid objectification of that which is being thought about, with the result that consciousness is excluded from the object, which "turns inward." But we are dealing here with an egological structure which appears in absolute consciousness and hence has no exteriority to turn outward towards inspection. We do not know what
it means for that with no exteriority to "turn inward," and so although the ego is thus presented to inspection as contradictory, it remains dark to our intellectual gaze. The ego is therefore indistinct, although intimately connected to consciousness, that is, although clear in Descartes' sense, and these qualities of indistinctness and intimacy must simply be taken to be the structures of objectively given interiority. They arise from the necessity of treating the ego like an object, coupled with the impossibility of gaining true objectivity concerning it. Failing this project, Sartre thinks, one's data source becomes the essentially false perspective of others who can never view self-consciousness as an interiority, for what is grasped in a Gestalt experience for one's self is given only piecemeal to others. What is grasped cannot be expressed and we fall prey to using accounts based on a defective perspective.

A further problem arises from the duplicity of the ego towards its ideality, for it is never wholly the concrete actuality it appears to be in the present, but is strung out, through intentionality, towards past and future. So elusive is the ego to direct approaches that it is always apprehended only out of the corner of the eye, as it were, on the vanishing horizon of my direct apprehensions. Direct inspection is carried out unreflectively, but the ego is an object of re-
flection merely. If the ego is referred to as unreflective subject, it is only by an empty concept. But by this move the self appears as active in the world, and hence the natural tendency is to identify erroneously the self with the body as agent, degrading the self from its centrality in the conceptual realm infused by native consciousness.

So, in summary, the self can be found in several forms, always but only in some semblance of the term's primal sense, on three levels; on the reflective level, as immanent and interior to consciousness, but as the harshly opaque ego which at once transcends and is intimate to consciousness; on the unreflective level, as an empty concept, surfeit for the true object which is always wholly other; and as body-self, the realization of a concrete locus of activity displacing conscious self in fulfillment of the need for an object of conscious apprehension. But in all its modes it is necessarily elusive, and constantly shifts its locus to a position unsuitable to the tools of apprehension appropriate for any particular domain in which it is sought.

On these grounds, the Cogito can be vacated of self. That is, unreflective and reflective states can be "supposed" without an apprehension of self. But this pure supposition should not be confused with fact, for consciousness is psycho-
logically comprised, and the actual arrival at insight will carry with it the egological structuring materials of states and activities through which the goal was approached. The troublesome "I" of the Cogito may be detached, but never practically eliminated, for it appears on the edge of every methodological endeavor carried out by a questing agent. In Descartes, the Cogito is thus logically bound to the doubt it seeks to allay — it is impure by necessity. Only if the consciousness of being sprang into being without any antecedent states or actions could it be absolutely pure, but then in any developing thought life its purity would immediately be lost in the growth of reflective self-identity.

b) The Imaginative Self

The roots of both possibility and loss for the self are in the world, for the nature of consciousness, "poisoned by reflection" on its commerce with the world, is focussed on by calling consciousness "being-for-itself." It is thus marked as set off from the world, yet remains as "being-in-the-world." It is this doubled (or reflexive) worldward relation, and the way it fills out conscious life, that I will examine now.

We move into a domain here where tolerance for
Sartre's technical terms is important. Among the most crucial are l'etre-pour-soi (being-for-itself) and l'etre-en-soi (being-in-itself) by which he refers to the character of things and to the character of consciousness, respectively. It is their reference to a deeper nature which makes it difficult to dispense with the terms, although many scholars seem disturbed by them on the grounds that the translations make barbarous English terms. This is undoubtedly true and it arises, as Cumming notes, because the French language is normally richer in reflexives than is English. But I would argue that as technical terms they are quite inoffensive, and I will use them whenever they serve to enhance the meaning.

The fundamental relation of the for-itself to the in-itself is that of perception. There are two sides to the relation, which must be seen dialectically. For on the one hand, being-in-itself appears to consciousness in experience, overflows that experience in ways that experience can never provide adequate explanation for (it evidences what Sartre calls "trans-phenomenality"), and generally overwhelms consciousness in an onslaught of positivity. Yet, on the other hand, consciousness is always primary, and controls the relation by the bestowal of meaning only on that which appears. So full is this suzerainty

that which ceases or fails to appear in perception ceases to exist "for-me." However, being-in-itself cannot be wholly banished once an appearance has occurred, for the thought-life of the for-itself has been irrevocably enriched. As Sartre observes in *Imagination*, something which is thing-related can then appear — its image. There is a negative side to this occurrence as I have intimated, but let us concentrate for the moment on the positive aspects, leaving the negative for our consideration of *Being and Nothingness*.

Taken objectively, the image has the virtue of being something in reality. As such it is more akin to the other human subspecies of perceptions, the idea, than were his qualities to impressions, for Sartre has come to the most basic second-order element of consciousness, of which I can say in a sense, Sartre allows, that the thing has appeared in an image. To elaborate this notion, I can say that the imaged thing is the same thing as the perceived thing, and has the same qualities, although it lacks existential identity with the perception. It has an identity of essence ("structure" and "individual character"), but it is existentially not inert as is being-in-itself, and does not limit spontaneity with ontological massiveness.

Now despite its immanence, Sartre thinks that one is "never" confused as to the difference between images and things.
One can credit him with some insight here, for we are not victims of illusions so often as some philosophers have supposed. J.L. Austin's massive rout of the illusionists in *Sense and Sensibilia* establishes that fact. However, there are delusions, and dreams which linger as misleading memories of the real, and so forth, so one could wish to amend the claim to, "We are never mistaken so long as there is not (philosophically) pathological displacement of cognition." Of course, this renders the statement effectively tautological, and therefore empty. Better would be to recognize that even such common mental phenomena as perceptions and memories can be enough alike, or vague enough, to cause confusion and mistake. Images, to whatever extent they figure in the mental life, would seem to be liable to the same problem. In fact, since Sartre means by image not some picture-entity but a re-presentation of a remembered object of perception, the suggestion would be sound, for surely a second act such as a re-presentation offers a potential for error. Sartre should not say we "never" make mistakes, but (in his vocabulary) merely that on the whole we are able to differentiate images from things because the latter are given in an experience that is qualitatively phenomenological, involving confrontation with resistive being-in-itself. This gives ontological difference status as a basic datum of normal conscious experience but does not make out the experience to be incorrigible.
But although objectively Sartre means no more by 'image' than we have indicated above, there is still his concern to delineate the relation between the image and the conscious self. He therefore presses on in his analysis to observe that apprehending images is one thing, but forming a correct idea of what an image is is another. The goal in seeking to determine what an image is is to enable the relation between images and whole experience to be correctly discerned, but to begin the task one must first focus on the image itself. What has been done in the past is to treat the image as a content of consciousness. A content of consciousness must be, and the problem that analysis on that basis raises is that one tends to conceive images as like physical existences.\footnote{Sartre's attack through this passage carries essentially the same burden as Professor Ryle's Concept of Mind.} Although the modes of existence between thing and image are quite different, theorizing leads to error when the essential difference is lost sight of and existential identity is supposed. The image is treated as a thing — inert, independent of consciousness and its spontaneity. A naive and inadequate metaphysics results which treats all realities as if they existed on the same plane, ignoring the arbitrariness of the supposition. The ontological status of real things has then been established \textit{a priori}, a clear mistake in method. But intuition of consciousness, if allowed any play,
contradicts the "thing theory of images," requiring that the first sophistication in metaphysics be introduced. An experienced difference between things and images is recognized, but the image is simply demoted to being an inferior sort of thing. But it is still a thing, existing in external relations with the thing of which it is the image. It is Sartre's contention that this has influenced the philosophy of mind universally and perniciously. Of particular concern to us is his estimate of the role played by Hume in the tradition of treating the image as a thing.

Sartre refers to Hume's doctrine as a "panpsychologism." That is, "Psychic facts are (for Hume) individualized things connected by external relations, and (therefore) thought must have a genesis." But the Cartesian tradition of distinguishing thought from world has been abandoned, and "only the thing-image" remains as self-generative reality. The natural consequence is associationism, wherein a homogeneous display of psychic objects produce reality through their congeries. In holding this position epistemologically Hume adopts a tacit ontology. From an objective viewpoint all that exists are quasi-physical things which, at one limit of their possibility, give rise to the consciousness which we are. Hence man as conscious

18. *Imagination*, p. 15.
is not idealized but debased to thinghood, possessed of nothing generally describable only as thought, but constituted of one conceivable element of thought, the image-thing.

This interpretation of Sartre's is not without insight, but he is abandoned to oversimplification, running to the extreme logical limit the standard account of Hume as a positivistic reductionist. It seems highly dubious to assert that all entities are homogeneous in Hume's view, for the point of his skeptical evacuation of his own atomistic official position is to make room for a more subtly textured philosophy of felt response, whose prime innovation is to contrast the concrete but mysterious mind of idea-atoms with the overarching observing self which accomplishes the discovery of the atomistic set. Admittedly, this relation is suppressed in Hume, but the elements are there to be related by us today, and Sartre's failure to join them is unfortunate. Furthermore, there can be no doubt that Hume was dualistic enough to allow for a difference between the body and the set of ideas which resulted from perception of body. This was his reason for affirming that perceptions in their origins as impressions have a mysterious, unknowable cause. "That body is," distinct from mind, was part of his distressingly arbitrary claim about what we must assume to be true.
Actually, on the question of the image, Sartre is not so far removed from Hume as he supposes, offering through a radicalization of the image (the idea) a phenomenological account of the wider context of human sensitivity to the world. If he does not characterize the image as a content of consciousness, still he leaves it with the definiteness of a form of consciousness, which is rather more, I think, than the post Humean positivism of Ayer allows even to sense contents in holding that they occur rather than exist. Of course there are two reasons that we must recognize that Sartre is not giving more than the minimum status to images that his system requires. One is that the image could not have been outrightly denied to be without either contradicting the obvious experience of at least some of one's auditors or else descending into vagueness about the precise nature of the claim. The other is that Sartre will later subject consciousness to a reduction which makes being a form of consciousness hardly more than an honorific appellation. But nonetheless he does grant this much, and recognition of it is a safeguard against overplaying his denial of the immanence of objecthood in the image to the complete exhaustion of the psychical. There is at least an intentional presence involved.

in entertaining an image, for just as we live the exploits of
the hero in the novel (or suffer the reverses of the victim, or
the spiritual malaise of the villain), we live the form and
qualities of the absent object intentionally, and by having in-
tentionality wholly within our formative grasp, can differen-
tiate the image from the object to the extent that we are pres-
ent as directed controlling consciousness.

The insight inherent in Sartre's attack on Hume is this. The objectivist perspective on the mental life, whereby
the elements of that life are viewed as somehow external to the
self, is so widespread as to be virtually the normal view. In-
so-far as Hume is prone to this view, he is rightly criticized
for it. Now it is certainly implicit in Hume's official doc-
trine from which the skeptical and sensitive elements are ex-
cluded, so he is vulnerable to attack on this point. And
Sartre is right that the elements of mental life (this in it-
self is an objectivist expression, so hard is the view to avoid)
are better seen as constitutive elements, formally, of con-
sciousness. But in setting up his view, Sartre himself comes
close to immanentism, for while he identifies some elements of
awareness as just forms of consciousness, he identifies other
elements as constitutive of the opaque, relatively objectified
psychic life which reflection generates, and which he calls the
ego. But I think he is saved by the argument that in the case
of these latter elements of ego that which conscious reflection gives rise to is (of) consciousness in a meaningful sense that its transcendence does not obviate.  

Sartre further develops the phenomenology of the image so as "to describe the great function of consciousness to create a world of unrealities, or 'imagination' and its noetic correlative, the imaginary." Sartre brackets the preposition, typically in conscience (de) soi, so as to disincline his reader from attributing possession, and therefore an object, to consciousness. This is my intent above.

Consciousness is clearly being thought of here as immediately active, functional within its own bounds, and multi-faceted. So he begins to talk about freedom as a critical element in human ontology constituting "separability from the world of a consciousness which is in the world." This theme is to become a dominant one as he develops his theory of the self in such a way as to disengage consciousness from the world absolutely. We will see more of this shortly.


21. Frederick Molina, Existentialism as Philosophy, p. 82.
But first we will consider the route whereby he slips from concern for the nature of the appearing image into a scrutiny of the consciousness whose focus is revealed in imaging. A definite mode of consciousness is discernible, but its description has been constantly modified from Descartes through Husserl. It was Descartes' contention that the power of mind was a single illuminating source, constituting knowledge of various orders as it fell upon various domains which owed their unique natures to God. Husserl continued to treat mind as a single force, but so as to avoid reversion to God in restoring the world, he presented his conviction that the elements of cognition were in original differentiation from consciousness. He spoke of the noema (the intentional object), the noetic (mode of awareness), and the noesis (intentional awareness of the object). By using these terms he stressed that each object of awareness is given from the first as independent. But while it is true that the awareness can comprehend various things, for example, the experience of seeing different objects in a group, he also recognized that the same object could be comprehended by various awarenesses, for example, seeing something then imagining it later. But in his quasi-idealism, for he was not quite emancipated, Husserl accounted for the difference between perception and imagination in terms of a difference between primary and secondary modes of apprehension. Sartre was convinced that no mode could be relegated to inferior or secondary
status in a true phenomenology, and so held that it would be necessary to accept and inspect each mode as its characteristic form of consciousness gave it. Consciousness could no longer be seen as singular, but had to be treated as manifold in its discernible modes.

What can be said about the mode of imagination? Sartre suggests that it evidences four characteristics. First is that the image is a consciousness, not in consciousness. The image gives its object, and is a manner of being conscious of which we become aware only by reflection. Sartre attacks the "illusion of immanence," which he attributes to Hume, as the contention that "to have an idea of a chair is to have a chair in consciousness." The root of the mistake is supposed to be materialism, which confers on everything the status of a material thing. But this is to attribute a hopelessly naive materialism to Hume who, however sympathetic he was to metaphysical materialism, was not committed to holding that the idea had to be composed of the same material as its object.23 But Sartre's valid point is that whenever the presence of a thing to imagination does lead to the positing of a parallel

23. For a thorough account of the extent to which Hume's philosophy involves materialism see R.F. Anderson, Hume's First Principles.
object in the world the legitimacy of the move is suspect and has to be defended, not boldly assumed as a fact (Hume was skeptical of the move, too). Sartre is convinced that argument will sanction only maintaining an empty, active imagination, which nonetheless touches the world, rather than transferring world structures into consciousness. However, as Hannay has noted, this raises a problem of the relation of consciousness to its object. For Sartre has stated that consciousness can operate only on itself, and if its object is in the world, how it can be present to imagination has to be explained. Hannay adopts Anscombe's analysis of "X saw a" whereby two senses of 'saw' are established, one of which allows a reference to be made to experience only and therefore has no dependence on external facts. So the imagined object can be "seen" (intentionally) even if there were no such object in existence, for the claims to see and to exist can be mutually exclusive.

Sartre does not, therefore, have to deny the existence of images in order to exclude objects from consciousness.

No object should be ascribed to consciousness, for reasons that will become increasingly clear as the self's nature as nothingness is revealed, but to deny the existence of the image as consciousness would be to deny an important fact of introspection, and so cannot be tolerated. All that needs to be claimed, or can be claimed, is that if a chair is imagined, the chair be presented. This differs from perception for which it would be more correct to say that the chair is encountered. Sartre presses in to say that the root of the difference is that consciousness has "a synthetic organization related to the chair in perceiving it." He implies that no such further organization needs to be accounted for in the case of imagination which is precisely just a presentation of the intentional object. "An image is nothing else than a relationship" of this object to consciousness.26

Secondly, Sartre observes that imaginative consciousness is a phenomenon of quasi-observation wherein the object is given as in perception, but being given immediately it is already all that it will ever constitute as knowledge. The perceived object "overflows" the act of perception since further perceptions continually add to knowledge, but the image, on the other hand, is set, and "suffers from a sort of essential poverty," for it is determined in scope completely at the instant

of its appearance. What ensues psychologically is a multiplicity of synthetic acts as consciousness endeavors to raise the image to near-perceptual richness. The attitude intensifies, but is thwarted by the essential paucity of material content. But consciousness is a yearning to be more, and leaps over the limitation to endow the image with a meaning that its real distance from reality will not support. Therefore by imagination the self attempts to span the gulf between immaterial consciousness and material reality, and in so doing creates a world of precarious meaning correlative to the span of its imaginative forays towards the world.

Third in the characteristics of imaginative consciousness is the consequence that it posits its object as nothingness. This comes about as consciousness, by "envisioning" external objects, transcends itself in the bestowal of meaning. And since consciousness maintains a margin of self-consciousness by which it reflectively differentiates itself from things, the question arises as to what is the criterion by which this differentiation is maintained. The criterion turns out to be a negative one, the image being *sui genesis* an image

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27. *P.I.*, p. 11.

28. *P.I.*, p. 11. "Towards the world" sounds odd, but since
as not perception. This "positional" consciousness (that is, one directed at something) of the image identifies it as one of a set of negations (non-existent, absent, elsewhere, or existentially neutral). This recognition that imagining depends on the object's not being there now supplies the meaning of what it is to imagine the object, which is thus "nothing here now."

The fourth, and last, characteristic is the image's spontaneity. As such it is cut off from definite being, "a diffuse light which consciousness releases for itself." 29 It is consciousness' own in a peculiar degree, hence but a constantly lingering moment in the synthetic unity of whole consciousness by which the world is established. Sartre says it appears as "a wave among waves on the sea." 30

From the vantage point of the Psychology of the Imagination we can see that consciousness is able to be more than a mere receptor of perceptions just insofar as it is not "engulfed in the real." The fact of consciousness' wider

consciousness never reaches the world its sallies must be internally consummated.

29. P.II., p. 18.

30. P.II., loc. cit.
capability testifies to its freedom from the world. As free, consciousness is basically imaginative, and secondarily perceptual, a reversal of the Husserlian order. Sartre will still point out, in Being and Nothingness, that consciousness is initially awareness of being-in-itself, but I think there to be no conflict here, for now it is what consciousness is for itself that Sartre is considering. If one conceives of Descartes' doubt as a method (albeit a crude method) of detaching self from the world, the Cogito is necessarily thought of as free and self-determining. But also, since something must be doubted, consciousness is seen as being-in-(contact with)-the-world. In Being and Nothingness, "the world," which is just what is given in perception, is distinguished from "the totality of the real," which is Being taken as including being-for-itself. Here in the Psychology of the Imagination the elements of the developing position are also present, and although meaning is more partitive, standing astride imaginative acts which are carried out on the perceptual residue (Humean "ideas"), and outside freedom which is detachment from the perceptual, there is a perverse union of the two. The world is just a projection of meaning by imaginative consciousness beyond what is perceptually given, and the world and the real therefore are bipartite aspects of whole consciousness. Consciousness conceives the obverse of what perception gives, imaginatively filling in what isn't there, or limiting what is there to its place alone,
thereby excluding all the imaginable ones. This contrast between the present and the conscious in terms of an imaginative absence of what is not serves as an essential element in Sartre's approach to the world.

c) The Self and the World

I suggested at the first of the chapter that Sartre's whole philosophy could be viewed as a philosophy of the self. As we will see in this final section, this can be stated more broadly to be a concern for man as full person in the world. But because of his starting point, and the resultant whole orientation of his philosophy, this concern for man culminates in what Desan calls "the tragic finale," a loss of man's viability as a positive being in the world. Yet I think a positive value can be placed on this negative conclusion, and I will argue that in the next chapter, after this present discussion has portrayed the depth of Sartre's negativity.

The focus of man's being is in its more intimate aspect, the self, and the self is more centrally what Sartre calls pre-reflective consciousness, as contrasted with the psychic-self, or ego. Our route to the delineation of the final form of Sartre's view on the full person will be through an examination of the consciousness of man in its primary worldward mode,
imagination. Sartre does not often mention that consciousness of the world is imaginative, but it will be well to keep the fact in mind.

We see then that this is a point to which our early examination of the divided self and imagination has brought us. We can perhaps consolidate our Sartrean view of the self at this point, in preparation for the final assault on his thought, by referring to an imaginative analogy offered by R.D. Cumming when he discusses and attempts to clarify Sartre's distinction between the reflective and unreflective selves.31 After presenting the analogy I will attempt to extend and intensify it in order to develop its potential.

Cumming says that reflection in Sartre has two senses, one referring to a flat, dimensionless turning back of a gaze to its origin; the other referring to the epitomization of a motion in a body's consequent motion. The former gives the phenomenologist's stable and accurate view of (his own) perceptive self as if "mirrored" for him. The latter gives a distorted view since there is movement of a quasi-spontaneous sort in the medium of reflection. Now, if we may do so without pressing the

analogy too far, we might ask what are the media of reflection? The answer in the first case would seem most naturally to be the phenomenon of perception, for this confronts the perceiving self with primeval being-in-itself from which the conscious being is reflected to itself. We will see this relation in greater depth and detail shortly.

Even more interesting, in view of the doctrine of the divided self we have uncovered, is the second case, where the answer might be the psychic-self, or ego. For this is a self, made derivatively conscious by reflection, and yet thereby also a massive body. In this case we get a representation of the self as ego serving as both reflector and viewer, twisting about to see in its image its own origin falsely given because it has produced distortion through its movement, giving itself as mere and defective reflection, dark and dense. This is the image of self moving out to engage the world, and suffering poisoning of its purity by reflection as it tries to orient itself by gaining a steadfast image of itself as source. Altogether a strikingly tragic picture.

One might speculate that it is discontent with viewing mere self-reflections that leads the psychic-self to wrench itself about in pathetic quest of a more direct view. Man is thereby presented as the "useless passion" of Sartre's famous epithet (of which I will offer another supplemental interpreta-
tion later). The for-itself is a questioner at heart, and must be by virtue of its standing there in the world as conscious, dependent being, and its ineluctable probing of the plenitude of being-in-itself must inadvertently turn its gaze back upon itself due to its restless and inexhaustible zeal for the task.

But the fundamental thrust of the questioning is outward from the self even if its fate is to turn inward again. This is clear, and we have therefore noted the importance of perception for Sartre's phenomenology. We can now add that for Sartre perception is a consuming passion, for when contact is made with the ever present object of conscious apprehension the effect is to alter or "suck up" being. There are two aspects to this, both of which are comprehended by the remark that the force of consciousness is **nihilation**. 'Nihilation' is a coined term, a translation of Sartre's **neantisation**" for which there is no warrant in the vocabulary of the natural French language either. But 'nihilation' is the least deceptive term among the negatives available, and if it is kept in mind, as I will define it, it will steer us safely around the shoal on which Heidegger, for one, seems to have run aground when, in enthusiasm for his insight into the centrality of the negative, he reified Nothing into an active agent.  

32. **Pace** Sartre, who denies that Heidegger made this mistake. He writes, "he [Heidegger] does not preserve a being
Now what does Sartre mean by this intensely negative term, and what two aspects of the encounter with things in perception does it reveal? I believe that Sartre means to pick out two aspects of conscious life which are evident enough but whose significance has been overlooked. First is an effect of thought upon the perceptually given wherein the act of apprehension places the object in a place or context. Sartre calls this the "positional" consciousness. For it follows that the object which is fixed in a place and mode is excluded from an "infinity" of other places and modes. Hence the greater component of apprehension is the nihilation of all the other possibilities of the object. In fact, the idea that an object even had other possibilities is the result of consciousness' capability to distinguish something that is not actual from what is. This capability arises from the second aspect of conscious life.

This second aspect is the nihilatory force rebounded onto the self so as to make it nothing at its core. What is being noticed is that conscious encounter is possible with unconscious things only because conscious being recognizes itself for Non-being . . . " (B.N., p. 17). Sartre claims, however, that Hegel did make a slip here.
as not that unconscious being which is given by an appearance. By incessantly noticing by direct, positional consciousness only what it is not, consciousness is constituted as nothing it apprehends. And since everything of which one is positively conscious, and therefore everything there is, is apprehended, consciousness itself is simply nothing. But it is not substantial nothing (a contradiction in terms) but a constant collapse toward nullity, the basis for which we will see more clearly later on, but which essentially depends on self being an embodied person.

As Desan has written, human reality continually divides, limits, and organizes the cosmos, and through its negations makes the world an organized world. But as Grimsley observes, the process of organization includes acts as well as judgments, which again introduces the significance of body into the larger concept of the self.

One result of this tearing of consciousness loose from the world is that destruction becomes possible. The state of being, recognized from the inception of conscious apprehension, is constantly being altered. Alteration is an abolition, or destruction, of what was, and the fact of radical ma-

terial destruction is but a more intensified experience of what is present in milder form in every change of perspective or image. Without this underlying basis of interpretation provided by the conscious witness there could be no more than blind redistribution of material, for the consequent absence of what had been destroyed would not be grasped. Destruction thus enters the world with man who alone imagines towards the future projects that will destroy the present by preserving them as past when that is all there is of them.

The selfward aspect of this unfettered potential to alter is the realization of consciousness as freedom. Sartre's radical move is to identify self at its core with a total absence of determining world influences which are banished by nihilation, hence with absolute freedom. Other philosophers have looked at man more shallowly and, considering his activity in the world to be evidence of his whole nature, have concluded that this buffeted creature was somewhat free, or free to a degree. But Sartre plunges to the heart of man and says that there man is totally, unqualifiedly freedom itself. I do not think that this means that analyses which catch man in the world are necessarily at odds with Sartre's basic affirmation. In his enthusiasm he did try to subjugate every event affecting the fullness of being-in-itself to a freedom flowing from man, and it is evident that this cannot be comprehensibly worked out.
But the statement, so far as it is limited to man as not-being-in-itself, seems insightful and to give tremendous impetus to the quest for the ways in which that real freedom is world-affecting, even if only to a degree. One will search more steadfastly for the partial evidences of something he is convinced exists without qualification.

But the presence of freedom, since it is the consequence of nihilation, carries problems with it. Barnes refers to Sartre's statement, "Nothingness lies coiled at the heart of man — like a worm," as basis for observing that Sartre sees the outer world as normal (the standard for judgment) while within man there is darkness and rottenness. And this is not an avoidable consequence. Grene holds, perhaps in the extreme, that there is a hopelessness in the nihilatory foundations of consciousness' possibility, and so "the 'circuit of selfness' ... is ontologically illusory," meaning that the heart of man as a self is cut off irreparably from any meaningful return to the world. The result is that by just simply living man falls into bad faith, and turns against the nihilatory essence of his being. Grene thinks that only a withdrawal from life into an

34. Hazel Barnes, The Literature of Possibility, p. 42.
intense Kierkegaardian inwardness could fulfill Sartre's notion that the person could be radically converted in order to escape bad faith. But this positive return to the self would deny the effectiveness of nihilation and thus defeat the purpose for which it was sought.

Bad faith is then a flight in anguish (Angst) from what I am in the face of an unstructurable freedom. I suffer from a "decompression of being" and resultant "ontological inferiority," conditions which devastate my ability to live in the face of the full responsibility which is mine alone in the absence of guidelines to conduct which are relevant to my situation. The irony is then that my freedom and my inability to handle it are grounded in the same lack of substantiality. As lack I desire to be otherwise, and seek to take on the being of my ontological antithesis, being-in-itself. I thus become futile desire, again "a useless passion" to be otherwise than I must be.

But out of this struggle comes the only meaning there can be, that which I impose on the world in my efforts to control it. My every move to grasp the world places the thing I confront in a context. But my doing so is a facet of my being free, and I thus again find freedom an impossible burden. The challenge is not merely to what is normally called ethical con-
duct, but involves all the parameters of life itself. As Grimsley points out, the self is all too conscious that its evaluational scale is a creation of its own agonies and cannot provide objective guidance. It is not that objective guidance is desireable, but that it is feverishly desired. But the fullness and stability which values would have to have in order to heal the rift in being that occasions freedom and anguish are unattainable against being-for-itself's nihilatory persistence.

The feature of reality which renders personal responsibility absolute is the impossibility of God. Once consciousness is identified as nihilation of being-in-itself so as to become not-that-which-appears (and is), God as conscious would have to be the nihilation which is being-for-itself. But as an absolute existent, God would also have to be being-in-itself (lacking the nihilatory aspects of consciousness). He would then have to be a self-contradictory in-itself-for-itself, an impossibility. Man's desire as consciousness to be substantial is in effect a desire to be impossibly God-like, and theism is man's projection of his desires to an infinite degree.

Things which appear have a transphenomenality about them, but this is not a positive transcendence tending toward the projected divine. Rather it is essentially a nihilation of
mere appearance, allowing the thing substantial being-in-itself and distinctness from everything that mind must be whether human or divine. And in any case, this transphenomenality is grounded in the markedly human dimension of temporality, for transphenomenality depends on the maintenance of a continued inspection under a perceptive process in which the thing constantly reveals aspects which had not previously appeared. I will now turn attention upon the identifying temporality in man which makes his activities what they are.

Time is not real in itself but is the for-itself's mode of being. The for-itself is present flight out of the past toward a future. The past is that which is set, a kind of "solidification" of the for-itself, akin to, but not to be identified with, its egological structures, for reflectively I am my states and qualities, but I was my past, I never am that past. The thing present to perception is never a past thing, but always just what it is, hence things have no past. My ni-hilation of them, of my egological structures, and of my own past has the effect of objectifying each of them, and freeing me from them as nothingness by contrast with their relative fullness. I am always beyond all such objects, and my past becomes related to them and to me as my knowledge, a dull and heavy counter to my spontaneity and freedom.

Just as the thing I perceive is merely present and
without a past, it is also not future. The sense of a lack and a concomitant desire, peculiar to being-for-itself, drives the self toward the future in search of a satisfaction not yet possessed. But the anticipatory movement by which the future is hurled out ahead is terminated in a recoil to the present self. Satisfaction is never obtained. So whereas all possibility is gone from the past, the future is pure possibility. Possibility is that which the self is not, but it is grounded in the self because what the self is defines what is possible for one's self (this is a practical tautology). Although possibility is grounded in self's nihilatory function, and hence is negative vis-à-vis the actual, it furthers hope that the unsatisfactory elements in the present can be overcome. Two elements of illusory hope emerge: the earlier mentioned "circuit of selfness," in which the self pursues its potentialities, and "the world," as a set of existents actually being traversed by the for-itself's movement towards its possibilities. Self-realization and the world are mutually dependent, and the one is as full as the other because of their common source. But the hope for satisfaction of desire is illusory, and although the impending future opens up hope, freedom, and anguish, in about that logical and experiential order, both self and the world teeter on the brink of mutual estrangement and loss of meaning.

Lastly, the present is reality, and it is significant
that the for-itself is not to be especially located there either. But although it is not a real thing, the for-itself rules present time because being-in-itself is merely presence to consciousness as something. The present as "presence to" is the for-itself's creation, for it requires consciousness to ascend above what would otherwise be mere proximity. Unconditioned "proximity to" is all that being-in-itself is capable of; it achieves "presence to" by virtue of the for-itself. But nihilation is therefore a feature of "presence to" since differentiation is essential to the appearance of the thing as not-self. So the for-itself in the present is in flight, creating a world of things and a past while consuming the future.

Time, looked on in this way, is "diasporic" and "ec-static," that is, dispersed throughout the temporal modes and standing out from being-in-itself. The self can never be found simply in any of the temporal modes, for the for-itself is incapable of settlement. Nonetheless, this is what Desan calls the "static" element in the Sartrean account of time, fixing as it does on the relation of self to each of three distinguishable dimensions of time. 36 They are fixed conceptually as the for-itself cannot be. As for the contrasting "dynamic" element, Desan concentrates on displaying Sartre's insistence that what

we call progress is the product of the for-itself's constant quest for satisfaction of its unquiet appetite for stabilization, a quest which it conducts in bad faith, for it seeks to become being-in-itself, a being which it alternatively alters (and so "destroys") and avoids. Its paradoxical behavior is a plea for capture and an enforced halt to its restless movement, made in the realization that restless movement is its very being. This too is bad faith.

Temporality is thus "the internal ontological structure of human reality."37 No concept, which must be fixed, can grasp its fluid, diasporic nature. Sartre then wonders whether pure (pre-conceptual) reflection can catch the for-itself in its movement, but concludes that for any reflection to be successful consciousness would have to be objectified, and since this is inconsistent with its nature consciousness cannot carry it out. But the attempt divides the self into two modes of "pure" and "impure" reflection. Impure reflection admits states and fixed temporal moments which are objects of consciousness. Pure reflection, Cumming's "mirroring" of self, is an integral, constitutionally necessary self-revelation in which objectification plays a minimal part. Pure reflection reveals true temporality in its ontological foundations; impure

reveals only psychic temporality, or our sense of time. Whereas the psychic tends to solidification about the past, original temporality spreads over the spectrum of possibility towards the future.

There is an interesting and, if misleading, still valuable psychic correlate of selfhood. Psychic states occurring in succession form a shadow or draft self which is the first stage in recognition of the self as exterior and in-the-world. The draft is such as can be filled in only by contact with other people. This introduces a tension in human reality, the challenge to be outside one's self as an objective viewer of one's self without losing one's identity. In connection with fully being one's self, one ultimately must come to grips with the being of the body, but in Sartre's doctrine of the self the recognition of the body flows from the encounter with other people and is realized as a facet of interpersonal interaction. I will therefore give attention to Sartre's account of the emergence of the Other (self) at this point.

Sartre introduces the Other as an ontological warp in consciousness. That it is consciousness itself that I am confronting is immediately evident from the first in the form my own consciousness takes. For I am capable, when meeting what I come to identify as another consciousness, of feeling the emo-
tion of shame, which presupposes another observer before whom I am dis-covered. I realize the fullness and accuracy of the presentation of my self to the Other, for there is the sense of him having seen me precisely as I know myself to be.

It can therefore be recognized that solipsism is effectively "put out of the game" in Sartre's view. For, as Manser notes, whereas in English language discussions attention is given chiefly to the grounds for aff irming minds in relation to observed bodies, thereby giving the solipsist the initiative and requiring that the affirmation of other minds be defended, Sartre views solipsism as impossible from the first. Evidence against it need not be defensively amassed because it is evident that we must know what another mind is to ask the question about its existence. If the question arises, it is answered by the necessary preconditions for posing it.

Although there is some ground for suspicion that the Other largely knows me as I was, for his access is through those static modes of my being in which I have deteriorated to being-in-itself, first my body, then my egological structures, still he adds dimensions to my lively being by establishing those connections of my static to my conscious self by giving

behavior added meaning for me. I am converted into an actor on
a world-stage before a perspicacious beholder. But his reac-
tions just mirror my newly found relations, they do not create
them, hence the relations are really mine and I am responsible
for them. That is precisely why guilt and shame are so easily
provoked, and become the most basic sign that my being-for-it-
self stands beyond itself as a being-for-the-Other.

Leaving the first revelation of self, Sartre turns to
examine the structures of the Other as he appears, drawing me
out of myself towards the world. He appears as a disruptive
centre in my world, introducing relations from things to him-
self of a sort which without him would be reserved for my re-
lations to things. They constitute a reordering of my grasp
of ontological structures. The ends of the relation nearest
him absolutely elude me. "The distance [between him and any
object] appears as a pure disentegration of the relations which
I apprehend between the objects of my universe." 39 He is a
nothingness or, better, a center of nihilation, in my world,
and hence is revealed as a locus of consciousness, or what I
call a man. He is the being who regroups my space, and whom I
must regard as having stolen my world in the sense that my
drive to organize the world unequivocally around me is doomed

to be frustrated by his presence.

But although he causes the world to escape me he is fastened in my world, and hence the flight of the world into nothingness is an escape down a "kind of drain hole" in my world's being. At times he is relatively quiescent, absorbed in some activity such as reading that keeps his attention focussed near himself. Then he affects my world hardly at all—he is just "a little particular crack in my universe" since I can almost relegate him to objecthood. What it is that enables him to run rampant in my world then appears; it is his sensory contact with it. Sartre concentrates on vision to the exclusion of all else at this stage in his analysis, and identifies the "look" or glance of the Other as the action by which he devastates my world. In fact Sartre goes much further and identifies the look as an ontological phenomenon in itself which is the unleashing of nihilation upon the world. It is this capability which makes the Other an alien and irremediably hostile force in my world. I discover him in going out of myself towards the desired objectification of my world, and I am hurled back into my nihilatory freedom by the encounter. The Other is for me "the one who looks at me."

What is the look? The eyes are only incidentally involved in a sort of instrumental role. It is he who is the
source of his look. I can fix his eyes as objects in my space, (even he can locate his eyes in space, as I can mine), but he is no object. He is the unbound referent to every object. His look obliterates my sufficiency as a perceiver by escaping my perception, and I know by this that his being there cannot be grounded in an inference from my own case since I am impaled by his look whereas he appears to escape mine. I know that he is, although the relation appears inexhaustibly asymmetrical, and I must ground his being-for-me in absolutely immediate apprehension. Another way to put this would be to say that he is evidently not an object in the world since I do not perceive him, but perception is cut off in a moment of totally defenseless vulnerability when I sense that I am being perceived, and that he is established by my sense of being looked at.

What structures of the self are established by the Other's look? First of all, a recap of what I am simply for myself: I am my acts as they are corollaries of my intentional consciousness. I am both before the world, which is essentially given its meaning by my conscious interpretations, and find my ends in it. This is my freedom and facticity. I am nihilatory, not full being in situations which arise vis-à-vis the world of things. I appear only at the margin of my own consciousness, and am constantly sucked back into myself.

With the appearance of the perceptive Other "essen-
tial modifications appear in my structure — modifications which I can apprehend and fix conceptually by means of the re-
fective cogito." By reflection, in response to his look at me, I make myself an object-in-the-world. The person thus emerges primarily by reflection that I am an object for the Other, and he becomes my personal foundation (not the founda-
tion of consciousness). But as I am his object, I cannot hold him to be merely my object. He, and the egological structure to which he gives rise, escapes me, and I live the shame or pride I feel in his presence rather than knowing it. I cannot anchor my self against him in knowledge, and hence the security of my world flows out, to form around his perceptual vacuity before plunging irrevocably away from me.

I am, in a sense, the being he makes me, and my dis-
positions are maintained in indeterminacy by his freedom. I am cut off from control of this aspect of my being. I may be able to mask this loss of control to myself through bad faith, but it continues to contribute to my self. I am thus given a na-
ture, an essential self, an "outside," separated from my con-
sciousness as at a great distance, yet separated by nothing, just by his freedom which is not a thing.

Beyond my self, my possibilities are altered by the Other’s presence. If I try to hide from him, for instance, the places possible are conditioned by his possibilities for response and search; if he holds me at the point of a gun, all possibilities for hiding are stripped from me. My very freedom, which is what I am, is conditioned by his presence. All this is ordained for me by his look.

But I affect him, too. I place him as the Other through his looking at me. His act condemns him to this role. Hence I abrogate his freedom and open up the possibility of transcending towards greater possibilities for myself. There is a reciprocal plane in our relationship which establishes our common humanity. For we are fallen before each other into the plight of "original sin," the state of being an object for one another. Our mutual subjectivities become properties of our selves as objects.

Although Sartre continues in the first person singular, it is clear that another dimension has opened up — the relation of reciprocity. It lies as a logical obverse to the description of self's fate before the Other from the first, and I will illustrate its tenor by continuing the analysis for the moment in the first person plural. Sartre does not do this, for he makes explicit only one side of the relationship at this stage, al-
though the duality is brought out in the concrete discussion of sexuality which we will not consider in detail since it does not further our investigation beyond what adopting the language of reciprocal relations will do at this juncture.

In becoming objects we release one another's subjectivity again, since neither of us can be object of that which is not itself a subject. But it can be easily seen that the movement here is one of unceasingly dialectical to and fro movement as the look of the subject which sets the opponent as an object is reflected from the opponent's unquenchable spontaneity to drop the subject again into objecthood. We alternately prey upon, and are preyed upon by, one another. The Other captures only my exteriority, and I his, and we fail to touch the self's true being which escapes the look. The mechanism of recognition Sartre suggests is again shame, which tears me from the visible selfhood of which I am ashamed (it is mere object, but I must recognize it as my self), and thereby makes clear the distinction between reflective and pre-reflective consciousness, the former the ego-object, the latter the persistently perceptive consciousness of . . . . "Thus shame is a unitary apprehension with three dimensions, I am ashamed of myself before the Other." 41 Not only is it the case, as Sartre

41. B.N., p. 289.
notes, that shame is dependent on all three, but the first mentioned "I" is freed to impale the other person by a look and to become its Other.

Sartre holds that pride is actually built on shame's foundations. Pride is compromised by the fact of human limitation which at first look gives the reaction of shame. I can be proud of no more than human status and capabilities allow, and in my heart I know this is all I have. Vanity, or bad faith, results naturally from the uneasy disequilibrium of pride, and overextends the claim against the facts. I further reach out to involve the Other in admiration for my qualities, although I know that he knows me concretely only as object, while I seek admiration from him as absolute subject. But as pure subject he does not know emotion; that is an egological structure. So my enterprise is doubly in bad faith, towards self and the Other.

At the concourse of the Other and the self the body appears to both. This gives body a multidimensional significance, which Desan has analyzed under three aspects which we might profitably reduce to two.\footnote{Wilfred Desan, op. cit., p. 75 ff.}
First there is body as being-for-itself. This is the self in archetypal isolation, formative but not real. Body in this aspect is seen through by consciousness so thoroughly that it can be identified only with consciousness. Sartre's reason for holding to this intimate relation is two fold: that consciousness could not be without the appearances which the senses enable, and that the senses in turn are just consciousness of the object given in a certain way. Expanded further, body is the union of the world and self in knowledge, which is what sensation gives rise to. In a kind of surreality, the world is given at a center round about which I find myself in the world by sensation. But there is also a certain "utensility" of things in the world by which sense knowledge is deepened and refined, a utensility which is discovered by extending instrumentality from self, where it originates in the body, to things to which the body is applied.

Body is self's viewpoint on the world. It conditions my life in the world by being an aggregate of past experiences, and by being something which I must go over in transcending to get perceptually into the world. For instance, I may live in pain because of my body's accumulated store of past experiences (I carry a load of shrapnel in me from a war wound), but I can put it at a distance and live beyond it. At the same time, pain is one way in which the body reinforces my sense of con-
tingency. Nausea at gross and contingent reality, in which I recognize my death, is another.

Finally, it should be observed that as being-for-itself the body is a nothingness, or is nihilatory. In this case the term 'nothingness' is more revealing, for it signals that the body is not normally present to consciousness, but only on occasion by a reflection on its status. Usually I use it and see by it without having it present to consciousness. Yet being-in-itself is by its very nature just that which appears, so the body is therefore not just a thing in my world.

The body's status as a thing emerges in the second aspect as being-for-the-Other. All organic facts (of anatomy, of physiology) are facts stemming from the other's vantage point which I can share only by a grotesque warping of my normal outward looking stance. This aspect Desan separates off as an aspect of objective knowledge, calling it body-as-known-by-the-Other. I choose to keep it simply in the category of body-for-the-Other.

The most far reaching dimension of being-for-the-Other is that I become aware of my being as a body through experiencing the Other. The things which I am in contact with through the body's sensations point to the Other, for the world
has been disturbed by him. When I catch a glimpse of him it is of a body moving through certain situations which his intentions ripple into a certain pattern. His body tends the world, and tends itself as a thing in the world. But through it all I perceive a man, a self, whose body is his as mine is mine.

The body is then, in a sense, a psychic being extended from the Other by intentionality. As long as it continues to organize the world, it does so by transcending present states of affairs towards a future which requires transcendence of itself. When this ceases, it becomes pure object, the subject of mere knowledge, a corpse.

By comparison of my state with the state of the Other I become aware of my body-for-the-Other. Out of such comparative analysis also arises the notion of a character in the individual, a set pattern conforming to the past. The for-itself has no character for it is pure spontaneity towards the future, but I turn out to be more than a being-for-itself, I am a person with a character, that is I am possessed of a certain definite potential for the future which rests on my being in the past.

On this analysis Sartre bases his account of concrete relations with the Other. These are realized most strikingly
in sexual encounter wherein the essential element is just the
dialectical fascination of the for-itself with the in-itself
epitomized in a body-focussed heterosexual presentation of the
antithetical. But sexual involvement results in a hopeless
collapse of love into masochism, and desire into sadism and
hate, for one is diverted from the apprehension of a pure con-
sciousness, and the search for it as absolute object within my-
self and the Other alike, to seeing oneself and the Other as
mere objects. And this can be generalized for there is a sexu-
al element in all interpersonal contacts which leads inevitably
to alienation and conflict between the parties.

This leads naturally to an account of the self as a
member of a community. Sartre sees the community relation in
essentially negative terms, and it is significant that only on
this level is true reciprocity achieved, and that human rela-
tions are therefore a negative achievement in Sartre's view.
The situation unfolds in the following way.

When we stand alone together, the Other and I are in
reflexive alternativity between different levels set according
to whether the incisive look is being given or received (both
at once by one self is not possible). But if a "Third" comes
on the scene and looks at us together we are reduced to ob-
jects at once and become what Sartre calls the "us-object."
This is an ontologically viable state as an aspect of relations with another, but ontologically demeaning in conferring mere object status upon us. As the offices of the us-object and the Third are multiplied, classes form inevitably and irremediably, based upon the mixed masochism-sadism into which all interpersonal relationships collapse.

Nor is there any hope of binding the community as a unity of "we-subjects," for although the us-object relation has validity as a perception of the Third, and is apprehended as reflected by him and the Other to me, the we-subject relation ties me into a situation in which my outward looking spontaneity is always countered by the dull objectivity of my proposed fellows. The individuals remain separate on the subject level, and hence the relation is unstable, having no common ontological ground. Sartre, in an attack on the ideal of cooperative community, and an implied dismissal of Heidegger, has written, "The essence of the relations between consciousnesses is not the Mitsein; it is conflict." 43

Thus the Sartrean self is drawn out from nothingness only to find that "Hell is other people." There is a necessity in the negativity of self's beginning working towards its final

43. B.N., p. 429.
frustration and abasement. Whether this judgment is unrelieved, and whether it is itself without value, will be discussed in the next chapter, as promised earlier.
CHAPTER SIX

Critical Evaluation

This chapter will have two main, inter-related goals: a) to investigate the standing of Hume and Sartre \textit{vis-à-vis} a circumscribed view of the mind-body issue, and b) to pursue the development of their doctrines of the self into the notion of community where all understanding of the self must now culminate. The first project will gradually merge into the second.

The philosophies of both Hume and Sartre derive many difficulties from the adoption of dualistic perspectives at the outset. This is not remarkable in the historical context, for dualism has exercised a powerful influence on Western thought from classical times. The reasons for this are complex, but are not in themselves of primary interest for this study. But it should be noted on this question that the fundamentally realist dispositions of many thinkers were subverted by this overreaching tendency of our culture. The effect was that self was consistently identified with mind, to the derogation of the status of the body which was only allowed to be a component of a more loosely conceived person. The concept of self was thus accounted a status distinct from the concept of the person, a
judgment not wholly absent from contemporary thought, though today it is obviously in need of the sort of qualification which I will introduce towards the end of my thesis.

I will identify dualism as a Cartesian doctrine. In doing so I am proceeding in the spirit of Professor Ryle's exposé of the dogma of the ghost in the machine. Ryle subjected one particular dualistic approach to the problem of the self to rigorous scrutiny in order to reveal a fault which lies in all dualistic theories. But it should not be thought, because the attention is drawn to Descartes, that he is the source of the dualistic view of man. As Stuart Hampshire has pointed out, the dualistic distinction is to be found in the roots of our language.¹ No particular dualistic philosopher has done more than develop and extend, within a systematic metaphysic, one of the most deeply imbedded prejudices of our western world view. Thus the implications of an attack on dualism extend much more deeply into the structures of mind than Ryle imagined, and Professor Lewis' complaint² that Ryle too simplistically aligns "The Official Doctrine" with Descartes' position has some point. Descartes did not even follow out the

² H.D. Lewis, The Elusive Mind, pp. 15-44.
implications with exceptional rigor, compared, for instance, to Plato's wholehearted separation of dying body from immortal soul, for Descartes was deeply concerned to account for the role of body in making up the human perspective. But there are two elements in Descartes which recommend him as the representative of dualism. First, he is at the root of modern, rational philosophy, and has exerted a tremendous influence on our age. Second, his development of the dualistic notion is highly imaginative and, although not adhered to with complete rigor, still strictly leads to complete mind-body exclusivism. Descartes' realization of this fact led to his realist attempt to introduce a bridging interaction.

The dualism which is usually identified with Descartes claims the following things. (1) The individual consciousness is the ultimate ground of being and knowledge. (2) The individual man is made up of thinking consciousness and non-thinking body. (3) The properties of each of these two aspects of the human are mutually and absolutely exclusive. The difference between mind and body is therefore a qualitative difference.

The main problem, which arose even in Descartes' time, is one of interaction. How can the body give rise to ideas in, and be directed by, an entity that is qualitatively and abso-
lately different from it? Descartes' response is to divide the self into more or less body related strata. Pure intellect is held to have no intercourse with body at all, but sense and imagination are said to be affected by the body through the brain. But the previously established unity of the thinking self is thereby disrupted, and the distinction between body and mind is severely weakened. Descartes attempts to display this ordering of things in a strict mechanical model, but in fact the rigor of the model has to be sacrificed in order to slip by the points where either the mind-body distinction becomes nebulous or interaction continues to be a problem. Under the pressure of the need to connect the spiritual self to bodily states, Descartes tends by the Sixth Meditation to apply 'self' to the mind and body in union, and to speak of himself as having a certain "nature," but this just glosses over the underlying problem inherent in a dualism.

Another problem for dualism concerns the grounds for affirming mind as a thing which by its nature cannot be observed through the senses. The grounds for affirmation of this sort of being must have a rationalist or idealist element, yet in contemporary philosophy empiricist and realist grounds for reality claims are recognized almost universally to be superior. But it might be asked, what, then, is the status of introspection? Generally the answer is that in order for the object of
introspection to be susceptible to being known, some empirically available criterion must be available to stabilize it for a community of knowers. Knowledge is public, however private some felt experiences may be. I will return to this issue of criteria in discussing Strawson's and Gallagher's positions, but it can be noted here that the demise of a priorism marks the end of uncompromising dualism, and some way of providing for knowledge of self in a faithfully maintained neo-empiricist frame must be found.

Although dualism continues to find supporters, it is increasingly evident that some more integrated picture of man's nature is needed. Hume's doctrine will hardly suffice, for it might be said that Humean skepticism finds its foothold in barrenness of the mind which Hume officially identifies as self, composed of elements having no necessary ("essential" or "evident" might be better) connection to the world they are presumed to give to knowledge. As we have seen, Hume had no other official account of the self, but he did approach human feeling and relations in a mind-transcending way in order, I am convinced, to circumvent the shortcomings of his doctrine of the mental self.

Sartre, for his part, begins in consciousness, which naturally tends to elevate mind over body. Body then necessar-
ily becomes linked to being-in-itself, set fast, and alien in its nature from the pure mobility of consciousness. This stance erects barriers to meaningful human interaction and to moral relations in a community. The extent to which this is irreparable in his philosophy will have to be decided.

What we need is another model or models by which to assess man's nature. A significant amount of work has been done in this area, indicative of which are such collections as the Gustafson volume, and Shoemaker's comprehensive attempt to delineate a doctrine of the self. But from this rich presentation I would like to select two approaches to the problem as particularly useful for my endeavor, and then seek to evaluate Hume and Sartre in light of them.

First I will consider the approach to persons undertaken by P.F. Strawson in his article of that name. His stated thesis is that man is apprehended as a subject, not merely a body and a psyche in isolation. When man is seen as

3. Donald F. Gustafson (ed.), Essays in Philosophical Psychology. See my selected bibliography for other volumes of particular interest.


a subject, what dimensions of his self, or person are seem? Strawson lists seven: actions and intentions, sensations, thoughts and feelings, perceptions and memories, location, bodily attitude and certain physical characteristics. Later he added, in another article, skills and abilities, and traits of character. And there is no reason to pronounce this an exhaustive list.

Now, why are states of consciousness and physical characteristics ascribed to the same thing? In fact, he asks, why are states of consciousness ascribed to anything at all? For it would seem both that since body sensations are essential to having experiences, and since body is itself an object of experience, that an account of body states and behavior would suffice. But Strawson asks, what more is there in the concept of self that seems especially connected to the use of "I?" An invideous answer is that body-oriented theories overlook the fact that the same language accounts of self and others' states are offered to others, whereas, he argues, one must know others as more than mere objects if one is to apply "I" characteristics to them. But the question still remains: What else is

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known?

Strawson's answer is quite Sartrean: there is "nothing" else, but we know others as persons by a primitive concept: "... a necessary criterion of states of consciousness being ascribed at all is that they should be ascribed to the very same things as certain corporeal characteristics ..." 7 This is because "... the concept of the pure individual consciousness ... cannot exist as a primary concept. ... It can only exist ... to be explained, analyzed ... in terms of the primitive concept of a person." 8 Strawson goes on to claim that the concept that cannot be had in isolation was what Hume was looking for when he observed forlornly that all he could apprehend were ideas (constituting mind). Thus, we must logically begin with the full person, or not at all, and use of the language of person, the attribution of "P-predicates," implies the presence of consciousness.

Strawson then asks if there are criteria for the correct use of P-predicates. If there were none we could have nothing but "signs" of the state of consciousness, but

8. Ibid., p. 341.
this cannot be the case for we could not recognize such a sign (in ourselves) without criteria for ascription to others, for this is a necessary prerequisite for possession of a conceptual scheme of the person, and even skeptical rejection requires a conceptual scheme.

On the other hand, though others are essential, one could not get along in this case with only others. Just as one does not go from learning P-predicates privately to using them publicly, so one does not go from learning them in application to others to using them to apply to one's self. Both the first and third person concepts of person are equally primitive. The structure of our language in which we talk about P-predicates requires equally founded facility, and we cannot allow a logical gap by assigning priority to either first or third person uses or both are bound to be lost to us.

At this stage a new form of the original questions can be introduced. How are P-predicates possible? How is the concept of a person possible? Strawson underlines the importance of bodily movement for both possibilities, even for self-application of some P-predicates on a non-observational basis (E.g. going for a walk, furling a rope, etc.). He writes:

It is easier to understand how we can see each other (and ourselves) as per-
sons, if we think first of the fact that we act, and act on each other, and act in accordance with a common human nature. (9)

By this, Strawson rests his theory on the criteria of individually discerned relations of interaction with a world and each other, preserving essential empiricist elements of epistemology, but concentrating on the public rather than the private domain of experience. He therefore concludes:

The problem that seems to have perplexed Hume does not exist — the problem of the principle of unity, of identity, of the particular consciousness, of the particular subject of 'perceptions' (experiences) considered as a primary particular. (10)

This is fair enough criticism of the objectivist, skeptical Hume. Whether it is the final word on Hume will emerge shortly.

Secondly, before turning to the direct consideration of our prime subjects, I would like to consider an approach that is complementary to Strawson's criteriological view. "Comple-

10. Ibid., p. 352.
mentary" because one might accept Strawson and yet say that there was something subtle that his analysis leaves out. By its very nature it steps back from the scene and looks through objectivist filters appropriate to its empiricist presuppositions, and what is left out is the subtle dimension of personal involvement which may be offered from a phenomenological viewpoint. As an example of this I will discuss what I will call a "configurational" view, as presented by Gallagher. 11

The question is just what stands as a Strawsonian criterion of the person. Talk about language seems to cover over the question of how an empiricism can be maintained without the specification of isolatable elements of perception. The public domain of interpersonal interaction generates the criteria, and they are expressed in language, but to what real elements of the perceptually available world do the criteria refer? In offering some elucidation on this matter, Gallagher first asks what causes us to view some bodies as subjects and not just objects. A naive view holds that my knowledge of subjectivity is purely and necessarily private. But I recognize that the assertion, "There are other subjects," has meaning for me, especially if related to a certain kind of animate object

— a human being. That is, we do not understand what it is like to exist as another form of being (e.g. a rock, a leaf), but we do know what it is like to exist as a person. What we are sensitive to is that some things exist as subjects. Nor is this based on an inference from our own case. Any quasi-dualist approach which requires that we move inferentially to constitute the self from behavior fails to represent the real state of affairs. I could never arrive at knowledge of other selves inferentially because I know neither my behavior as another's nor experience as another's. In fact, there is the problem now of how I could know myself as a "self" in isolation. This opens up a crucial clue. "It is the other who actually calls us forth into full self-consciousness." 12 He does this by responding to my overtures in increasingly highly articulated ways which lead me into adult stature. Encounter thus becomes a foundational element in the creation and concomitant knowing of a self.

But this cannot be the whole story, for the knowledge of self is already present with a high degree of subtlety in the infant. Response, which can be recognized and built on, more describes mind than self. An indirect route through inference is still being used, whereas self seems to be known directly. Gallagher follows Scheler in asserting that the self is itself

12. Ibid., p. 379.
expressed in experience; "our primary experience is that of configurational unities."\(^{13}\) Parts of the whole self are conceived by abstraction from the experience of the whole, so that body is not the primary object of experience, but a secondary realization of the process of analytical cognition. It is simply, as F.H. Bradley pointed out, that we become aware of subordinate structures in the midst of cognitive analysis, and so misapprehend its products as if they were experientially first. But the truly primitive elements are deeper in experience than the analysis shows, and our realization of this gives grounds for throwing back the frontiers of experience to include pre-analytic wholes. So Gallagher drives more deeply than Strawson into experience to identify the basal criteria of recognition as non-predicable apprehension of subject status in the other. Predication is a subsequent act.

This is, admittedly, a delicate area, in which absurdity lurks to engulf the unwary. I would not care to follow Scheler and Gallagher further into an explication of the pre-cognitive primitive, or to embrace their claim that we do experience another's higher personal experiences, such as joy or grief. To share another's grief is, I would judge, just to be in grief at the same time and for the same reason. But so long

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13. Ibid., p. 382.
as all that is meant by the expression is that we do not appropriate grief inferentially from one another's behavior, but mutually by primitive, sympathetic response, the expression "sharing another's grief" is acceptable, and even invaluable.

Now the question arises, how do Hume and Sartre compare in the light of these wider appreciations of what is involved in recognition of, and therefore in being, a self? Taking Hume first, we recall that he has two aspects to his search for a self, the earlier being more our concern. The first one mounts a question about the substantiality of self, and as we have already observed, through Strawson's criticism, by asking this sort of question Hume becomes wrongly oriented for finding the self. He actually conducts what Gallagher would term a search for mind as distinct from a search for self — that is, for perceptually recognizable elements of independent intellectuality. Hume's discovery that only perceptions constitute mind does not surprise us on this basis, and so long as the restriction that he has imposed is taken into account, so far from being counted an error his argument can be seen as a triumphant refutation of previous attempts to find

14. We can note that Terence Penelhum ("Hume on Personal Identity," The Philosophical Review, 1955, pp. 571-589) makes the same point.
substance over and above the evidenced elements. That is, there is "no-thing" there besides the perceivable. But claiming that there are nothing but perceptions is a strange claim, as Penelhum points out, and that Hume in fact conflated mind and self in his formal presentation is problematical.

But Hume's readiness to give place to all perceptions, including feelings as well as (external) sensations, gives his notion of mind a self-ward dimension which exonerates him in part, for not all the impressions that come from feeling are amenable to incorporation into conceptual systems. The "ideas," which are the residual form, of such a broadly conceived perceptual stream are not to be narrowly conceived either, and are perhaps just the element with which Hume can extend his system into domains which are characterizable as reasonable but not rational (see my further mention of this point below).

The analysis of the passional self in Book II of the Treatise is the first Humean step beyond the breakdown of the search for self under the auspices of rationality. He deals first with pride and humility, which become models for the passions in a large degree. He establishes a non-cognitive area of recognition from the first by noting that these passions cannot be defined but can only be given in a description of the circumstances which occasion them. In themselves, experientially,
they are objects of bare experience which everyone "knows" without fail. Their object is the self, the sensitive collation of perceptions bound together by "intimate memory and consciousness." He speaks of the "idea of ourself" in this connection, but what is serving as subject of the idea-perception, while self stands as object of the passions, Hume does not say. But what he does say is that passions are related to the world by the imagination which, in his account, renders them essentially free of determinative associations, except so far as such associations are found in experience. In principle, considerable freedom is allowed in such a context. On the other hand, the force of the passion is caused in a strict enough and rigorous enough fashion to be thought of as giving a real impression of the world. Thus Hume seems close here to teaching that the passions, having truth value, are themselves virtually cognitive, while remaining free enough to constitute an autonomous self. 15

Another revealing facet of Hume's discussion of the passions is that touching on love and hatred. 16 These, too, are simple primitives of experience, and thus incapable of defi-

nition in more primitive terms. He narrows the meaning, none-
theless, to apply to one's self and other selves; no non-human
thing or being are ever objects of what he means by this pas-
sion. Whether there is a distinct feeling of love and hatred
directed only to other human beings seems doubtful, but what
Hume has in mind is becoming gradually clearer; he wants to
focus passions into social (especially moral) relationships
which are purely interpersonal, and his sensible intuitions are
conditioned teleologically by his intentions.

Hume, of course, is a man of his time as well as an
innovative thinker, and attempts in his extended discussion of
that which is first recognized as a simply given response of
the passions to work out a rationally viable understanding of
the process, and we are saved from following it into mechanical
rigidity only by evoking the skepticism of Book I again as Hume
fails to do. But in his defense it can be said that at least
he traces the love of relations itself (which leads to attempts
at rationalization) to an unexplained primitive disposition of
the mind to tie its reasons to experienced realities — the
body of another, his rational actions, his behaviorally evi-
denced emotions, and deepest and most meaningful of all, the
very intimate seat of emotion in the other self. Such intimacy
with another is the foundation for the recognition of self.

Increasingly, as Hume considers more complex passions,
such as a mixture of benevolence and anger with compassion and malice, he stresses the subtlety of our sensitive natures, and their ability to respond givingly to need through sympathetic realization. 17 Not denying that there are malevolent responses, he is yet most appreciative of the human capacity for benevolence. Our greatest problem is that the mind judges merit on grounds of strength, he thinks, so a definite malice will sometimes be allowed to intrude on the more appropriate benevolent sympathetic response simply because some stray element in the complex situation gives it birth in our feelings. This is the difficulty of having an operative ethic lying outside of a doctrine of right with its strict reasons; yet Hume (inconsistently?) maintains his judgments as to right and wrong independently of this interplay of free passions in the imagination.

What, then, can be made of Hume at his best? There is a covert reserve for judgment, tending always to appropriate (right) responses because of its grounding in nature, which oversees a functional thrust toward action on the basis of sympathetic response. This response is kept from suffering the debilitating effects of skepticism by being guided not by reason (strictly understood) but by an ebullient imagination that supplies not only a display of potential activities, but directs

17. Treatise, p. 382.
their choice by belief in the form and content of our most impressive, experientially given object-world. He thus emphasizes effectiveness at the theoretical expense of correctness in conduct in the conviction that nature's guidance will cause the two to merge.

Hume does not look for empirically given predicates of the person to build into reasons for talking as we do, as Strawson does. The dimension of one's own body activity, with its potential for giving adequate empirical grounds, is absent from his view of the self because he so nearly identifies self with mind, and so he withdraws to the ground of sympathetically discerned passional responses in the face of the loss to skepticism of intellectualistic grounds. But the leaving of rationalistic grounds, which is what intellectualistic grounds without body must be, in stopping short of a doctrine of the embodied person as self gives his position the character of existential a priorism such as we saw in Kierkegaard. Activity of pure spirit is stressed in lieu of intellectual and bodily activity, a deficient model in terms of the configurationalism of Scheler and Gallagher as well.

Does Sartre fare any better? I think the crucial test for Sartre, as it was for Hume, is in the adequacy of his account of interpersonal relations which are essential to both
the criteria and configurations that the empiricist and phenomenologist seek respectively.

The first prospects for success in Sartre's doctrine are not good. We have seen that the look of the Other drives man as subject towards objecthood, while offering him a potential for transcendence of the Other as his object into more acutely experienced nihilation. But, and this is the crucial point, both routes are negative — the one away from the pure subjectivity which is human realization, the other away from both things and the Other into isolation through nihilation. In view of this, Konstantin Kolenda has drawn out a negative analysis of Sartre's position, while Norman Greene has attempted the delineation of a positive ethic for Sartre. Our judgment will be made sounder by considering the case each of these men makes.

For Kolenda, Sartre's radical characterization of self as nothingness vis-à-vis the causally interrelated world, and therefore as absolute freedom, takes precedence over all


19. Norman Greene, Jean-Paul Sartre: The Existentialist Ethic, especially Chapter IV.
else. No ethical norm can bind the individual for he is as
void of all parameters of serious commitment as he is of every
other necessity. This is Sartre's definition of man, and he is
unable to undo its implications. But truly moral action stems
from commitment, which depends on one's having accepted binding
relations to others, and hence ethics are not possible in
Sartre's system.

What is the value of freedom? Sartre claims it is
absolute, but Kolenda, while agreeing that freedom is invaluable,
intimates that there is no freedom in the moral sphere except
that which arises under the recognition that an obligation is
incumbent upon one's self. To call unencumbered license "free-
dom" is to mistake the nature of freedom in the moral context.

In view of the absolute right of the Sartrean individ-
ual to dissociate himself from any or all particular obligations,
the link to other persons is fragile to an infinite degree, for
no moral relation is ever naturally fixed. All community is
ephemerel, appearing in momentary cooperation against the Third.
Only artificial pressures and oaths tie men to one another to-
wards an end, so that morality is always merely a means.

Sealing this negative conclusion, Kolenda quotes
Sartre's own late admission, "From the period when I wrote La
Nausée I wanted to create morality. My evolution consists in my no longer dreaming of doing so."20 He further notes that Sartre's notion of a "fundamental choice" is hardly meaningful when assigned as a concept to something almost (perhaps fully) as basic as the formation of a Weltanschauung, a "choice" that can be grounded in nothing deeper. This circumstance obviates any attempt to search for a reason, and a movement of the self without reason can hardly be called "choice." A similar analysis vitiates Sartre's concept of "radical conversion," a movement which precedes every reason and determines what will count as a reason.

Kolenda astutely compares Sartre's idea of freedom to Bergson's élan vital, but treats the revelation of similarity as a criticism in itself, as if knowing Bergson to be wrong we could immediately see that Sartre must be wrong. But I think that the real value in the insight derives from the discovery that both philosophers are concerned with a primordial flow of life into mind and body such as causes (or, occasions) the eruption of concepts and directed action in the world of things and persons. It is this that Gallagher nibbles at the edge of with

his notion of "configurational unities" apprehended as pre-partitive wholes. But it is the difficulty of rendering a linguistically viable account of so primordial a fringe of human perception that led me to evoke closure of the Scheler-Gallagher analysis, and has persuaded Professor Kolenda, perhaps prudently, to draw an even tighter line around the enclosure of language as it is used (ordinarily). How far dare a philosopher press in? Cogency tends to evaporate when the endeavor to do so is too vigorously pressed.

So Sartre struggles, as did Hume, with a consequent bifurcation of his insight, one side of which has evidently become his official position. Our task from here in is to see how much must be yielded to this official doctrine, and what is tangential to its hopeless "circuit of selfness" and thus available to an analysis which would draw out positive structures of a forthright self-in-the-world. For Sartre may have come to desert the possibility of creating a system of morals, but this should not impede us unduly from examining his work with hope for successful discovery, especially that which was written while he still had his dreams.

Approaching Sartre as positively as possible, what do we find? Greene offers a vigorous defence of Sartre's ethical cogency based mainly on the evidence of his dramatic works, and other writings later than *Being and Nothingness*. He argues
that there is no inconsistency, but a development of a potential that had lain untapped in the earlier work. To a large extent Greene admits the nihilistic thrust of Being and Nothingness, but identifies it as stemming from the core of Sartre's intention, which was to castigate the society of the World War II period.

Greene admits, on the other hand, that it is necessary to draw a line from the ontology of Sartre to his ethic. This is from "static being" (he evidently should say "established being") to transcendent goals. We then see that, ontologically, bad faith is first built into man's predicament as an unavoidable consequence of confronting a world alien to one's own nature, one which the self nevertheless yearns to be like. This is his "static being." But this doctrine is balanced by the doctrine of freedom, man's absolute condition, which should, if taken absolutely, open up an escape from bad faith towards the "transcendent goals." Sartre writes, "... in the bright realm of values, we have no excuse behind us, nor justification before us."21 For we are not determined to act by external factors which abrogate freedom, nor is there an authority who sanctions our actions. Man is free to be himself.

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21. Jean-Paul Sartre, Existentialism, p. 27.
Although freedom is accompanied by anguish, practical reason requires that we accept it. Life then unfolds the higher necessity of moral obligation as the form of our project towards the future, which is shaped by choices we cannot avoid making one way or the other. We live beyond ourselves towards an open future, committed to goals that are transcendent in being forever future in their fulfillment. Sartre is skeptical of the notion that we can settle issues once for all by an astute choice. Rather, choices are made against a background of pedestrian ambiguity, the higher goals being introduced only by the free acts of man as transcending. Freedom is action and never settled; how authentic we are depends on the vitality of the acts by which we fly free.²²

Nonetheless, Greene sees universality and stability in Sartre's ethic. "If Sartre condemns seriousness, he is also unhappy with moral acrobats, who must prove their virtue by a constant pursuit of temptation."²³ We are responsible for all men, and this leads the authentic man, in anguish, into long term commitments in the knowledge that certain goods can only be realized in this way. As early as Being and Nothingness

²² Sartre's implication that vitality is a criterion of our selfhood adds a "something more" to the purely perceptual elements, as would Strawson, and is reminiscent of Hume's notion of the importance of the liveliness of the idea.
²³ Norman Greene, op. cit., p. 51.
Sartre writes, "the responsibility of the for-itself extends to the entire world as a peopled-world. It is precisely thus that the for-itself apprehends itself in anguish . . . ." 24

How is this responsibility to be worked out? Sartre has a doctrine of an "intersubjectivity" which tends to assuage the conflict with man as the Other. I am a conscious subject who can make myself something for others in order to satisfy their needs. In this way alone can I really satisfy my own needs, for much that I would be requires their assent. There must be reciprocity. Conflict can, in part, be overcome by existential psychoanalysis, or by parallel techniques of an informal sort, whereby the Other is led with me to see the stake we have in mutuality of attitude and conduct. I will not be able to manipulate the Other in the long run, for the look grows harsher and corrodes my well being as he falls into relative disadvantage. So, for instance, the poor draw me out ethically to soften their look by providing for their need.

But the main problem persists. Where is obligation founded? There are two answers offered by Greene. One is that, although we freely create values, we are bound by them once they are created. This is not to deny that man can make a new

choice, but to say that the effect would be to replace one norm with another. Every choice implies a norm; we bind ourselves into coherent selves as we create norms with our own freedom. As Sartre said, "Man is an absolute." The other answer is that Sartre is a kind of rational pragmatist in the end, holding that the choice of the authentic life is simply the least self-defeating mode of conduct, for although anguish is involved in freedom, the alternative option for the "unauthentic" man is nausea. It is as if the admission of absurdity and freedom at least makes the human condition bearable, and reason will not sanction less.

What Greene offers is a view of the ethically oriented existential man. We can add that every man has an ethic, unless, perhaps, he is morally pathogenic, and will naturally display his commitments as part of any systematic attempt to account for man in relation to the world. But this natural tendency can be suppressed, and is likely to be, if there is a discontinuity between the implications of the metaphysics and ontology and the author's ethical intuitions. This has happened in Sartre's case, I am convinced, and abandonment of the attempt to reconcile incompatible considerations has resulted in a hardening of the metaphysical line against the intuitive sensi-

bilities which have thereafter received a more informal expression in drama, essays and political writings. What must be done is to retrace the metaphysics into their origin in search of a more compatible element which might be developed alternatively to the official doctrine of Sartre's formal philosophical offering.

This does not imply a dismissal of Being and Nothingness. Its ontology and resultant metaphysics must be faced up to, but in doing so the roots of its doctrines can be traced into the pre-war years to Sartre's earlier publications, The Transcendence of the Ego, Imagination, and Psychology of the Imagination. This shows that its doctrines are not superficial, as an ad hoc document written in mere reaction to the wartime trauma would be likely to be. Rather, Sartre founds his doctrines of man in principle on the radical otherness he believes he discerns between consciousness and things, and continues consistently by picturing the genesis of interpersonal awareness in terms of the conflict and hostility which stems from the arousal of shame at the first contact.

But there is another side to Sartre. He does not abandon values to nihilism, but says that they are real consequences of human choice. And to the considerable extent that Sartre has genuinely humane concern for others, he independently
supposes that humane values will be generated. But how is this possible in a confrontation charged with hostility, especially when the body which acts is from one perspective a mere thing, frozen in facticity at a distance from the humane self? The proper answer is two-fold: that body is not a mere thing, and that it is not so far removed from the self.

First, the nature of the body is such that it is more the \textit{locus} of conscious subjectivity than an \textit{object} of consciousness. Negatively, this is dramatized by Sartre’s recognition that it is the extrusion of gross being from the self as gore and excrement that makes these things so immediately productive of nausea. Superfluity in the body is \textit{my} superfluity as a conscious being, and the evidence of it undermines my false sense of independence from the world. In a sense, it is consciousness which is downgraded to the level of serving positive being-in-itself as body, for it is "nothing," and cannot persist in time or perform in the world (good acts, especially, which are cherished for their value content as my creation) without the utensility which extends from body.

But there is a tension that enters the analysis at this point, for this that is "nothing" is unreflective consciousness of everything else, and is essential to there being a reality for me at all. So a compromise is necessary. I must
hold that man is neither pure being (private and spiritual) nor a mere congeries of externally observable elements (public and behavioral). All testimony that he is merely either is un-rooted in reality, a "sheer performance." And by the alternative realization of connectedness between the self and the world there is given a ground for an ethical return to that which, in many ways, is alien to man's vestigial being, to the domain of things and other people.

What then are the dimensions of the self? A clue is given when we consider the picture of the self developed in The Transcendence of the Ego, for we find there that self is in the world. In a sense, all that exists is in the world; there is "nothing" besides. This realization excludes only pure consciousness from being in the world, but such consciousness is self only in an undeveloped sense. But the mature, ego-forming states of mind must be located in the world for, although they are epistemologically less easily available, they are in principle public just as surely as physical things, which are just more straightforwardly available. The difference between them is rooted only in the procedures by which each sort of object is to be apprehended, intuitively versus empirically. In contrast, the inaccessibility of pure consciousness is radi-

26 I refer in the following discussion to T.E., p. 93 ff.
cal, not to be removed by the endeavors of the conscious person any more than by his fellows. Thus there are two domains, one broadly scientific to which either sense observation or introspection gives access, yielding classifiable, partitive data, and a phenomenologically prior domain of pure apprehension to which any account must introduce a distortion, and in which, at best, some control over the distortion might be achieved. The self, or what Sartre calls human reality, is at the intersection of the two domains, constituted of body, ego, and consciousness, though not fixed in nature as either the ego or the body are, and not characterized by spontaneity to the radical degree consciousness is.

Even this degree of differentiation of self from consciousness sounds odd, and I cannot even claim that Sartre has maintained it constantly. The reason for both these facts is that dualism has so deeply affected our intuitions, and his, that differentiation of self from consciousness sounds odd, as, perhaps, does that from ego, whereas differentiation from body does not sound odd at all. But in his keenest moments Sartre saw that if simple identification of the self with any facet of self was inadequate, it would be inadequate for all facets.

What, then, is consciousness for Sartre that it cannot be simply identified as self? It is self-generative spon-
taneity, impersonal being, constantly just itself, without a past, and, most fascinating, it is beyond freedom.\textsuperscript{27} Clearly it must then be distinct from self, for \textit{self is} freedom. But primordial awareness of possibility can seize consciousness in a way that leaves behind all the structures that the self has invested in it by virtue of its ego and body links to the public world and to the past. In fact, a practical freedom is achievable for the self only as the ego masks spontaneity, and thereby dulls its impact. For in the full flow of spontaneity conscious self cannot grasp distinctions between action and passivity, or autonomy and determinedness. Only as man \textit{sees} himself as subject beyond the object-like status constituted by the presence of an ego can he transcend a mere spectator role onto the level of self-directed action. Sartre thus implicitly rejects the unworldly mystic as an inadequate model for man, for he, dazzled by spontaneity, is unable to see where practical duty lies. His egological structures are rendered null and void, whereas the ego as an object for transcendence actually occupies a place of functional necessity in man's being a whole, active person.

In Sartre's early system 'ego', 'consciousness', and even 'body' are metaphors for functional aspects of this whole

\textsuperscript{27} \textit{T.E.}, pp. 98-100.
person (self). The world of existences is given to practical reason, which lives in anguish as a result of its emergence into reflective awareness of its task and limitations. Thoroughgoing collapse into the egological would limit the task, but this occurrence is naturally held off by the exuberance of pure self-realization, and can only be imposed by desertion of selfhood. This is bad faith. Allowed to be simply what it is, self is the contrary of the complacent, egological self; it is the "suddenly anguished," that which is "dread, absolute and without remedy," is in "fear of itself."\textsuperscript{28} It could maintain itself, but is never left to be itself, and so "the natural attitude," that of the ordinary man, is one of flight, an attempt to escape the anguish of spontaneity by identifying self with the ego. The forces that play upon its members are uneven, and thus man sinks into unauthentic loss of selfhood by losing equilibrium in his being.

I have argued, then, that there exist grounds for broadening the application of 'self' from Sartre's normal practice in \textit{Being and Nothingness}, where 'self' is used as a near synonym for 'consciousness'. For he did not seal the latter use inviolably (indeed, could not), and in order to grasp the more open dimensions of his thought it has seemed advisable to

\textsuperscript{28}. \textit{T.E.}, p. 102.
search for such precedents in his thought as I have presented from The Transcendence of the Ego. We better understand what "human reality" might be if it is not arbitrarily foreshortened in meaning. We might even adopt the word "person" to refer to it, although it will remain convenient to use "self" in the Sartrean context with this wider meaning added.

What I have offered, then, is a softening of the interpretation of Sartre which recognizes the harshness of metaphysical relations in Being and Nothingness, but which allows for a reinstitution of interpersonal relations on a more substantial ground than the limits of that work would allow. The difference is in the location of the self in closer proximity to the world, which allows consciousness access to ego, body, and other persons and things. Why Sartre determined as time went on, and against his own precedent analysis, to maintain austerity in these relations in Being and Nothingness is more a question for the psychologist than the philosopher, but one is reminded of Camus' tale of the suicide who had been undermined years before by his ongoing existential experience. 29 Perhaps there is merit in admitting the effects of the World War on Sartre at this primordial level, rather than directly at the social level, as Greene does.

However that may be, the amended view of Sartre moves him closer to Hume's emphasis on morally positive responses as structuring parameters of self. Both men look for a being which is an integral whole, capable not only of thought but feeling, and capable of moving concretely into the world as humane agency. But because of the lack of a doctrine of body, Hume leaves the onus on the individual to meet other individuals on the basis of sympathetic passionable response, and cooperate with them towards the formation and regulation of society in terms of mutually held concepts of justice, promise-keeping, respect for property, and allegiance to authority, all governed by benevolent and intellective feelings in response to the empirically given world. In a figurative sense he presents a single-story theory of integrated passion based on a foundation of segregated perceptual elements.

Sartre, judging the individuals of society to be in tenuous relation with one another, looks to the realization of individually generated and sanctioned norms within strict political institutions (particularly the party), which will artificially provide the dialectical backdrop against which individuality in its free expression can form its positive commitments in a reality-conditioned manner. In the same figure used above, his is a two-story theory in which the first story of interpersonal hostility has to be transcended, as the founda-
tion of impersonal ontological conflict had to be transcended in the recognition of other selves.

For both men, imagination is a key factor in holding the self together. For Hume there is at first just a constellation of free ideas in mind which are loosed from deterministic connections by his skepticism. These ideas include not only ideas which originate in perception of the world, but are the consequences of feeling as well. These feelings are all passions, but the imagination regulates, or is regulated by, the most ubiquitous passion, that which energizes the mental context, producing belief in certain feeling- and perception-based congeries, and giving the self its reality-grasp. It is the ideas in dynamic, functional union which are evidenced as self in sympathetic relation to other selves and to the physical world. Nothing could account for anything but an apathetic reception of ideas except the energizing imagination which, so long as it leads to actions (intellectual primarily, and then physical) which are responded to in keeping with anticipations, is not to be derogated as mere fancy. The acceptance of the congeries of ideas formally arranged in reality-conditioned ways in imaginative freedom is what Hume looks for through transrational belief, for mere rationality to him was strictly the causative creation of thought formations out of the implicit power of ideas in themselves, and this he conclu-
ded skeptically was not consummated in our experience. Hence we find that the transrationality of self is no unregulated irrationality, but offers what Hume in other contexts referred to as reasonable conclusions.

In Sartre, imagination as a mode of consciousness is the mechanism by which we escape the tit-for-tat of dialectical nihilation which would render our relation with the world nihilistic. Under such circumstances the self would cease to be meaningful itself, so self is portrayed by Sartre, in free display of its power, conferring meaning on the world against the forces of the realization of otherness which would cause loss of all if not halted ("loss" perhaps literally, for without meaningfulness in the world, withdrawal leading to either active, or more likely passive, suicide would follow). Imagination is then ready to transmute the image of the other, who shames me, into a brother on the basis of our similar locations and functions in the phenomenological frame. And my self thereby gains the status of a concerned being, bridging the gap between world and consciousness in its contrived activity. This reconciles the alienating tendency of Sartre's early divisive ontology with the integrative, humanistic side of his position.

It is my judgment, then, that in spite of obvious differences there is a fundamental affinity between Hume and
Sartre. I can cite their common beginning in phenomenal representations, their common dismissal of the notion that the world is merely the initially given structures, the recourse both take to a doctrine of a dynamic person, and the centrality of imagination in enabling a way to be found out of their impasses, one primarily cognitive, one ethical. Because of their separation by two centuries many features of their approaches differ, but in fundamental insight, thrust and conclusion they are remarkably alike.
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