

Drives as Original Facticity

DANIEL O'SHIEL

ABSTRACT: By introducing 'drives' into a Sartrean framework, 'being-in-itself' is interpreted as 'Nature as such', wherein *instincts* dominate. Being-for-itself, on the contrary, has an ontological nature diametrically opposed to this former – indeed, in the latter realm, through a fundamental process of 'nihilation' (Sartre's 'freedom') consciousness perpetually flees itself by transcending towards the world. However, a kernel of (our) nihilated Nature is left at the heart of this process, in the form of 'original facticity' that we here name *drives*. Drives are the original feelings and urges of a freed Nature that simply are there; they are the fundamental forces that consciousness *qua* freedom always has to deal with. Drives, in addition, can be nihilated in their own turn, onto a reflective, unreal plane, whereby they take the form of *value*. This means Sartre's notion of ontological desire is always made up of two necessary components: drives and value.

KEYWORDS: desire, drives, instincts, Nature, nihilation, Sartre, value

This article plans to interpret being-in-itself as Nature as such. Hereby Nature is considered as that ultimate reality towards which scientific understanding strives. Under such a conception we see that (other) animals are governed, for the most part, by their *instincts* – defined here as actions that individual beings cannot not do. In this manner instincts are little 'atomic in-themselves' that simply are what they are.

The problem with science is that it projects this strictly deterministic viewpoint onto being-*for*-itself (consciousness) as well. Here we cannot follow, because being-*for*-itself possesses an original nihilative capacity whereby consciousness *is* free, in its very ontological fibre, so to speak. Humans do not possess a predominance of instincts because even the most basic (to survive, to eat, to procreate) can be subverted by such freedom (in suicide, self-starvation, celibacy, to name the corresponding examples).

Sartre's notion of consciousness as perpetual and original nihilation does not, however, mean simple negation, nor total *annihilation*. Nihilation (*néantisation*) is a much subtler notion whereby consciousness 'secretes a nothingness'. This is the transcendental condition of consciousness to exist as such, for consciousness is and must essentially be non-coincidence; consciousness must 'coat' being with a veil of nothingness, allowing for a metaphysical 'distance' to be instantiated at the very heart of being, through which the advent of consciousness is constituted as such. Consciousness is therefore only possible because of such a fundamental nihilative process that perpetually separates itself off from, but also constitutes, its relationship to the world and its own spontaneous, free activity.

Because nihilation is not annihilation therefore, a kernel of Nature is left at the heart of this process – we call this 'original facticity' or 'drives'. Drives are nothing other than nihilated instincts which, though only possible through freedom (*viz.* nihilation), still at the same time present a formidable opponent to the latter, often restricting it greatly. Drives are in fact the brute forces and urges that simply are there, just like the world, our body, and our past – but they are even more primary, we contend, in that they go a long way in constituting our relationship to these latter. This is because drives, under this conception, are the last remnants of a Nature that forms the basic ontological material for all desire and value. In fact, with the introduction of drives into a Sartrean framework we discover two grand realms of Sartre's ontological desire: drives and value, which as composites always form our individual 'projects'.¹ In this manner, drives take on many forms that can latch onto objects and people in ways that challenge our very freedom. Values, in their own turn, become nihilated drives – that is drives that are unrealised and moralised onto the realm of the ideal, with this latter often coming into direct conflict with its progenitor (namely our drives, as found in cases of neuroses and psychoses). Thus the dynamic between Nature, drives and values is a multi-layered and complex one that may go a long way in beginning a thorough philosophical anthropology based on Sartrean insights.

An Explication of Some Technical Sartrean Terms

Sartre names the first ontological category 'being-in-itself'; the second 'being-for-itself'. Being-in-itself simply 'est. ... est en-soi. ... est ce qu'il est'² [is. ... is in-itself. ... is what it is]. Strictly speaking

one can say no more than these few points about being-in-itself, for it is beyond most, if not all, of our human distinctions. Being-in-itself tests the very limits of our language and concepts. It is; it is in-itself; it is what it is. It is that pre-eminently nonhuman category of existence that ultimately needs no conscious observer to exist. Being-in-itself thus forms the absolute ontological basis of all reality, human or otherwise. It is, in short, that ‘transphénoménal’ [transphenomenal]³ being which simply *is*.

Being-*for*-itself, on the other hand, ‘est ce qu’il n’est pas et n’est pas ce qu’il est’⁴ [is what it is not and is not what it is]. What does this mean? First of all it means that being-*for*-itself is diametrically opposed in its ontological nature to being-in-itself. To elucidate: whereas being-in-itself is an ontological category defined by absolute coincidence; being-*for*-itself is one defined by absolute non-coincidence, or what Sartre calls ‘freedom’. This is because being-*for*-itself is an essential nihilative activity that both perpetually constitutes and transcends towards a world, *and* through such transcendence is capable of separating from itself by coating that which it nihilates (being-in-itself) with a film of ‘nothingness’. Such nihilation provides the fissure in being that constitutes the advent of consciousness as such; but it isn’t total *annihilation*. Nihilation, under this interpretation, neither simply denies (negation in the normal sense) nor completely obliterates (annihilation); nihilation ‘negates’ in a more complicated sense by keeping an element of what it ‘nihilates’ at its very core. Nihilation is therefore always linked in some kind of relation to being-in-itself, or elements thereof. These latter ‘elements’ are what Sartre subsumes under the general label of ‘facticity’, which is manifested more concretely in (aspects of) the world, our body, our past, etc. All of these facts of our existence are thus so many immediate consequences of such a fundamental nihilative activity. Through the nihilation of being-in-itself, therefore, consciousness is always already confronted with facts and concrete states of affairs that are simply there.

In this manner we ‘are what we are not and are not what we are’ because through nihilation we are both freedom and facticity, transcendence and objectivity. This means we can never ‘be what we are’ in the manner of ‘pure coincidence’ – neither as ‘pure facticity’ (because one is always free to change one’s relationship to the given situation); nor as ‘pure freedom’ (because one always has facts to deal with) – though we are often wont to try either of these extremes through ‘bad faith’.⁵ Considering this being-*for*-itself must be both freedom and facticity, meaning the ontological nature of

consciousness must be what it is not (facticity) through not being what it is (freedom).

Our facticity is thus consciousness's inherent link to being-in-itself; it is the aspects of the latter that are preserved in the nihilative act. In other words, we always, so long as we exist, have a world before us, and we always have a past and a body. However, although it is absolutely necessary, so long as we exist, *that* there is a world, *that* we have a past, it is still always felt as rather 'contingent' whether this or that particular state of affairs is in front of us, whether this or that thing happened to us previously. 'Contingent' must be understood correctly here: it does not mean 'absolutely arbitrary' – on the contrary some concrete state of affairs in the world or something definite that has happened to us previously is quite necessary insofar as it is there or it has happened; and yet one's freedom always recognises that it *may be* or *may have been* otherwise. This means that one can always relate to the world, one's body, one's past in many different – that is free⁶ – manners, depending on one's present situation and thoughts, as well as one's future projects. This means, at bottom, that the nihilative process of freedom never ceases, meaning our relation to particular aspects of our facticity is always liable to change and is therefore always felt as only a rather arbitrary, shaky 'foundation' (if it can be called a 'foundation' in the proper sense of the term at all).

Such a structure also leads to consciousness's need to be equated to value. Indeed, consciousness as value can be seen as almost the polar-opposite of facticity in that it is '[I]'en-soi manqué ... pure absence'⁷ [the missing in-itself ... pure absence]. Value arises in order for consciousness to try and attain ideally what it cannot do concretely – that is, give itself its own sturdy foundation. However, precisely because consciousness *is* nihilation, it cannot help but always determine itself as 'un *défaut d'être*'⁸ [a *lack of being*], which is what Sartre means by ontological desire. This 'lack' is the deepest of all our 'négations internes'⁹ [internal negations] and constitutes consciousness as essentially missing being-in-itself in the manner of an aching and troublesome hole in our being that we incessantly yearn to fill. Value is hereby any ideal, in-itself absence, borne out of such an ontological lack, that consciousness may strive towards to try and give itself meaning and foundation. Even the most basic yearnings, Sartre says, already show one is heading towards, and even presupposes, something more universal. This demonstrates that the for-itself always 'se dépasse'¹⁰ [surpasses itself] towards an ever-higher value, ultimately culminating in an absolute Value that was

always already implicitly implied. Such an accomplishment *would* make consciousness its own necessary reason for being and would thereby fill one's lack and obliterate one's contingency – but alas, it is an 'impossible synthèse'¹¹ [impossible synthesis] due to the inherently contrary natures of the two ontological categories (namely being-in-itself and being-for-itself). However, notwithstanding – or even precisely because of – the impossibility of *actually* being a for-itself that founds its own being in the manner of an in-itself, our ontological lack must hold such a wish as an ideal, in the imaginary, although one will never actually attain to such an ideal.

Drives – the Forgotten Facticity?

With regard to that most fundamental of Sartrean relations, being-in-itself constantly haunts and is constantly strived after by being-for-itself, which is of an exactly contrary ontological nature to the former. We have seen that being-for-itself can exist closely in relation to being-in-itself in both concrete forms (viz. as facticity – the world, my past, my body, etc.) as well as in an 'ideal' form (viz. as value). Such dichotomies Sartre presents as quite absolute. We hope to augment these relations by introducing a notion of drives into the picture, where a more dynamic and flexible principle between being-in-itself and being-for-itself, and thus also between facticity and freedom, may arise. First, we may propose that the nihilating pole of the for-itself can contract and expand in relation to the in-itself, therefore modifying its relation – and even its strength – in an inversely proportionate (or 'elastic') manner. Hereby there is a way to view freedom not always as absolute but as dependent upon the particular dynamics of a given for-itself, as instantiated in a particular *Leib* (that is, a particular 'lived-body'). For instance, a migratory bird, as consciousness, must have some of the most fundamental elements of a for-itself, or else perception, volition and self-movement would be impossible. However, we can at the same time recognise that a bird is not of the same 'freedom' as a human being – the former flies south in winter, north in spring, eats, procreates and dies, with very little deviation. What does this signify? In general we may say that its freedom is 'less', in that it is more directly fused to the in-itself – to Nature as such. Here we do take 'being-in-itself' to be 'Nature as such', meaning that necessary being that is the fundamental precondition for all reality to appear as such.¹² Additionally, precisely because consciousness,

as freedom, constitutes itself in contradistinction to that which it nihilates, we understand why human reality, its world, its desires and values, are often in direct conflict to such a Nature, which, (all anthropomorphism aside, must be considered under this view as simply being, without any real rhyme or reason, amoral and therefore nonhuman.

Under this interpretation, the freer a particular existent is, the less it is immediately fused to Nature. In this respect humanity is the freest being we know of, although Nature quite clearly still has a very great influence, even if it has been transformed into something that often 'haunts' us. Considering such 'haunting', a bird, under this conception, is less 'haunted' by Nature because it is more directly fused with it. In other words, a bird's *instincts* seem to predominate more, with the latter being defined here as little 'atomic in-themselves' that cannot but be what they are.¹³ Put in another way, an instinct is an action one cannot not do. As Darwin notes in one example, a wild migratory bird will die before it passes the migration season in a cage.¹⁴ If instincts are defined in this manner – that is as little 'in-themselves' that cannot but be what they are – then what instincts do humans have? Certainly the initial behaviour of a newborn child is very instinctive (seeking milk at the breast, for instance) – but even these actions soon have the potential to become nihilated. This means that theoretically at least, there are no 'unnihilatable' instincts for a human being – all may eventually be nihilated by our freedom, even the most basic (such as to survive). Our freedom is therefore much 'greater' than a bird's because we are less fused to Nature as such. Suicide, celibacy, self-starvation are all examples of obliterated instincts in that it is always possible for a very strong instinct (to live, to procreate, to nourish oneself) to be subverted by our freedom. These examples are direct contradictions of instincts. However, our freedom is so diverse that it can give rise to capacities and characteristics that are much less direct, that seem so far removed from Nature that they often procure the label of 'perversions', which again highlights the formidable power of consciousness's nihilative activity.

There nonetheless remains an important question: are our instincts completely obliterated? Obviously not, for we have already stressed that nihilation is not annihilation; nihilation only 'coats' being-in-itself with nothingness, and such 'coating' may be more or less dominant (i.e. more or less 'free') depending upon the given individual under consideration.¹⁵ Freedom therefore has a very formidable opponent in the form of 'nihilated instincts', which may

also be called the ‘original facticity’ that Sartre forgot or rejected. In a word, we are speaking of drives (*die Triebe*).¹⁶ Drives under this conception may first of all be direct replicas of instincts (such as to procreate), which are freely assumed in an almost identical form to the original instinct. Drives differ here from instincts through the small but vital difference that one is now always implicitly aware that this is a free choice. In other words: even though one procreates, one at the same time, as freedom, realises that it is possible not to. However, because drives have been defined as nihilated instincts, and nihilation is nothing other than the perpetual activity of our ontological freedom, we also realise that this freedom nihilates in a manner that has the potential to be almost infinite, meaning there are many more possibilities for drives above and beyond the rather simple ‘replicated instincts’. Hereby we see why human existence can both, on the one extreme, freely affirm the drive in the manner of an instinct (procreate, survive, etc.); and on the other extreme (try to) completely deny the instinct in its entirety (celibacy, suicide, etc.). In this manner drives would be the original facticity of the nihilating-for-itself that we always have to contend with. In fact, our very body as a natural organism could then be seen as the necessary manifestation of these fundamental drives, and although we must be and have a body, just *how* one relates to such a body through different stages of one’s life depends upon how we relate to the forces that drive this body.

It is obvious that any talk of drives within a Sartrean framework would have to come under his rubric of desire, and would also have to avoid problems of the unconscious. However, we do not view this latter issue to be a problem: Sartre’s notion of consciousness is so broad that consciousness as explicit knowledge of something forms only a rather small realm, which means ‘to be conscious (of)¹⁷ something’ can be anything from direct and explicit knowledge, to an implicit, almost subterranean feeling that cannot be formulated so clearly. The non-conscious would then be of the realm of the in-itself – the organic, the instinctive. Consciousness (of) drives may therefore be considered as touching the limits of consciousness but nevertheless still within that realm. Here we are close to Freud when he defines *der Trieb* as ‘ein Grenzbegriff zwischen Seelischen und Somatischen’¹⁸ [a concept on the frontier between the mental and the somatic] where we would view ‘the mental’ as consciousness (being-for-itself); and ‘the somatic’ as the biological, the organic, the instinctive – in short the in-itself (Nature). In fact drives as immediate and original facticity *must* manifest themselves on the prereflective level as intentional forces and feelings towards one’s

own immediate situation (although, as we will see, they may be picked up later by reflective consciousness through value).

In this manner, we are always conscious (of our) drives even though we may try to ignore or reject them through bad faith.¹⁹ However, this still has not answered the question of how drives would fit into Sartre's rubric of ontological desire. We have seen that consciousness as ontological desire *is* at bottom 'a lack of being'. But what does consciousness lack? The in-itself. This means that through its original nihilation being-for-itself is ontologically divorced from the in-itself – but like any divorce, the thing from which one separates is never totally eradicated from one's mind and can often go a long way in defining all one's future behaviours and actions. For Sartre this 'defining' is absolute: the for-itself as a free ontological nihilation of being-in-itself is never freed from its relation to this latter; the whole of human existence is an incessant effort to recapture that which forever haunts it. Such a 'recapturing' is a pursuit in an augmented form, however: consciousness does not desire the 'en-soi contingent et absurde'²⁰ [contingent, absurd in-itself]; consciousness desires a kind of in-itself that would *found* its (i.e. consciousness's) own being, thereby making it an *ens causa sui*, as we have already seen.

Considering this, Sartre's ontological desire at bottom seems coextensive with absolute Value (namely to be *ens causa sui*), being-for-itself and the latter's perpetual free nihilation. We view this as a tendency in Sartre, namely to start with rather precise terms that become so expanded that they all seem to merge into a cloud of universality. Perhaps it would be worthwhile to specify certain realms of being-for-itself that do not fall victim to such an expansion. We will now attempt to do this, with the concept of drives.

Under this interpretation of being-in-itself as Nature we claim that drives arise through the nihilation of instincts, of which the latter belong to the realm of being-in-itself, in that the instinct to fly, for instance, simply is what it is. In other words birds simply fly; humans have the drive to do so and employ their freedom to bring it about. As Fichte already noted, '[i]n ihrer [die Tiere] Bildung hat die Natur ihr Werk geendigt, und das Siegel der Vollendung darauf gedrückt'²¹ [in her creation of animals, nature has completed her work and has imprinted the seal of that completion upon it] – in the form of instincts, we may say. However, Fichte also notes that '[i]st er [der Mensch] ein Tier, so ist er ein äußerst unvollkommenes Tier, und gerade darum ist er kein Tier'²² [if the human being is an animal, then he is an utterly incomplete animal, and for that very

reason he is not an animal]. So for Fichte, just like for Sartre, it is our very ‘incompleteness’ or ‘lack’ that makes us what we are, namely freedom.²³ Fichte, however, highlights a point that Sartre seems to overlook, namely our free being in contradistinction to instinct. If we were to import this concern into the Sartrean framework, we may say that humans possess a predominance of drives, not instincts, with drives being conceived as an original facticity in that they are influenced by Nature most immediately, though not absolutely (as is the case with instincts). Drives are therefore ‘original’ facticity because they are the direct consequence of the nihilation of being-in-itself as instinct. They are, moreover, ‘facticity’ because they keep the absolutely contingent and ever present character of being-in-itself, as seen through the nihilative lens of our freedom. The drive to procreate, for instance, is viewed through the lens of freedom as contingent – i.e. it is simply there, and it is up to my freedom to live this fact in one way or another (to have children or not, to name but two options). Furthermore, we may also say that any given individual at any given moment can be more fused to their drives than to their freedom (though the latter is never totally eradicated, it being the – irreducible – condition for drives to exist as such).²⁴

What we mean by drives here must not be understood as some metaphysical ‘things’ which are ‘in’ consciousness; on the contrary consciousness as desire is an inherent lack that ceaselessly strives towards that which it is not. Drives are then the more particularised and concrete – i.e. the more factual and material – manifestations of such ontological desire, and form the basic ‘raw material’ for our values and our ensuing projects. In this manner all drives are still at bottom grounded on Sartre’s ontological notion of desire.²⁵ However, although desire as such *is* a lack, this does not mean that drives are, though they are all made possible through such a lack. Once again we do not understand nihilation as annihilation: to lack is indeed to lack something, and although it seems that our ultimate lack is some ideal being-in-itself-for-itself, on a more mundane, everyday level our lives seem to be governed by more particular, down-to-earth desires – in a word, drives. Drives, in this manner, are both the last remnants of a Nature that we still are, as well as more particular and even more positive manifestations of our general, ontological desire, where each particularisation can really become linked to certain objects and people in the world in positive forms, even before we *then* form values and projects pertaining to such objects. This means that to desire a glass of water to quench thirst, or to desire *this* woman, seems a universe away from wishing to be ‘God’

(a being-in-itself-for-itself; an *ens causa sui*). Of course Sartre does not claim that thirst is immediately linked to wishing to be 'God', but he does seem to hint that ultimately every act, no matter how apparently insignificant, is aimed towards such an absolute end.²⁶

Sartre is well aware and in fact incredibly interested in how particular individuals are driven in very many different ways (think of his philosophical biographies), so perhaps the introduction of drives would just be another word for his detailed analyses of people's particular teleological desires (which Sartre calls 'projects').²⁷ However, it seems that this conception of drives is more primary, in that drives are simply there, as the raw material of desire that we *then* must make values and projects (always composites of drives and value) out of. Moreover, there is a restrictive, external and even a positive character to our conception of drives that Sartre – in *Being and Nothingness* at least – would be loath to allow for. Basically we can see that in the different phases of one's life, or in different individuals, one's freedom can be greatly restricted due to the predominance of drives. In fact, many people's lives seem to be guided more by their drives than any conscious realisation of an 'original project', and would therefore be situated more towards the drives pole in the freedom-drive dynamic. Could they all be in bad faith? We think not. In short we argue that it seems there are many eventualities towards which one aims that are not all reducible (or expandable, as the case may be) to the idea of 'being God' or to living an 'original project'; it seems, on the contrary, that drives often latch onto things and other beings in a very instantaneous and fixed manner, therefore preceding the more explicit projects we then carry out, in 'good faith' or not. This means our freedom is challenged by drives almost in an *a priori* manner – a challenge, moreover, that has the capacity to restrict freedom's power significantly.

Value as Unrealised or Moralised Drives

Through introducing drives into the Sartrean framework we are presented with a dynamic principle of freedom that has a very formidable opponent – so formidable in fact that many people's lives are often governed by the former, though freedom remains as an ineradicable precondition for drives to exist as such. Where, therefore, would value fit into the picture? We have seen that value, just like Sartre's ontological desire, ultimately aims at nothing else than the ideal in-itself-for-itself. Is value therefore another Sartrean

concept that has become too universal? Perhaps, but there is a more important problem, namely the complete theoretical arbitrariness of any particular value, which seems counterintuitive. We mean here, simply, that it seems not to be the case that any given individual may value this or that just as well as anything else, even considering their ontological freedom. Indeed, through our being as drives we seem to latch onto particular objects and people in manners that do not make us indifferent in the slightest, whether ontologically or otherwise; and the same pattern seems to follow in what we value – in short, there is an equally fixing, external quality to value that Sartre also does not seem to allow for fully.²⁸ It seems, in *Being and Nothingness* at least, that any particular value is ultimately arbitrary, due to our ontological freedom. However, if values are conceived as ‘imaginary drives’ – that is drives that are unrealised onto a conceptual, reflective plane, we see that although the ultimate source of our particular values must stem from our drives, they take on, through a second moment of nihilation, a rather new character. Here we may claim that drives – or at least the feelings they give rise to – are ‘real’ in the sense that quite clearly we are conscious of such feelings in very concrete situations (even though they may often be hard to articulate). However, it is also equally clear that we always have values attached to such feelings – these are, strictly speaking, not ‘real’ under a Sartrean conception because we never experience a value ‘in the flesh’ like we would when perceiving a cup or having a feeling of hatred. We may hate something or someone *due to* a value we have, but we do not ‘feel’ the value directly – we feel the hatred, meaning the drive or emotion linked to the value. Values hereby always draw from and then project onto reality, but in a manner that perpetually unrealises – that is nihilates in a second moment – aspects of that reality. In short, the dynamic between freedom and drives may be considered as the ‘sub-real’, in that they are conceived here as primary principles that constitute our being-in-the-world (the ‘real’) through an original, free upsurge. The irreal as value, on the other side, plays an equally vital role in our daily lives, in that through thought and reflection upon our likes, desires, and so on, we constitute a reflective realm in which values are always already attached to real phenomena, though their more abstract sources remains in the irreal, namely the imaginary. We would always then relate to the ‘real’ through projects that are always composites formed out of these two other realms, namely the ‘sub-real’ (drives-freedom) and the ‘irreal’ (value and ‘magic’²⁹). The sub-real, the real and the irreal therefore are all vital planes of our being that are all

ultimately intertwined, and can only be separated abstractly through philosophical enquiry.

It is in this manner that 'values' may be interpreted as 'imaginary', or 'irrealised' drives, in that they are the necessary conceptual components that accompany our very real factual desires, and may actually often guide and even restrict our drives due to their ideal, future-directed, and *moral* character. Such values are thus a second dimension of that most fundamental of Sartrean activities – namely that of nihilation. Moreover, because consciousness can always spontaneously irrealise aspects of reality in order to invoke values upon that reality – this process, just like the formation of drives, is free. Hence the fact that our values and our drives often do not correlate, and can actually come into great conflict with each other (as in neuroses and psychoses).³⁰

In fact, and as already hinted, value may also be defined as 'moralised drives'. Drives simply *are*, brute facticities of our original nihilative activity; value, however, are drives 'lifted up', so to speak, onto the reflective plane, where they can take on an idealised, moral character that relates to our being-in-the-world and its society in a highly complex manner. Values thus are irrealised drives that assume the 'pure absence' of the 'missing-in-itself'; but they also go a long way in forming, through combining with our drives, many of our concrete and habitual emotions, projects and character traits. This does not mean, however, that values are always direct copies of drives; on the contrary, as nihilated, values become a plethora of psychical intentionalities that can take on just as many, and perhaps even more, contrary forms to our drives than the latter do to instincts.

As a way of conclusion, we posit two main subcategories within the grand realm of desire: drives and value. These two subcategories, as we live our lives, form dynamic constellations of desire that we often do not have much control over. Drives are the more immediate, material manifestations of our nihilated instincts and constitute our being-in-the-world as original facticity. Values are these drives nihilated in their own turn, constituting the grand realm of the reflective and the moral, which obviously have just as much influence upon our daily lives as the more concrete drives do. Desire is always a complex composite of such drives and values, meaning such 'constellations of desire' ultimately form, through 'the look', vast social networks and moral systems, meaning a further investigation into this fundamental dynamic would hope to provide a thorough and interesting philosophical anthropology that would further augment the wonderful insights Sartre has made.³¹

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Daniel O’Shiel, Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO), is a student at the K.U. Leuven, Belgium, where he follows a Ph.D. programme researching the nature of emotions and the role of the imagination therein, using disgust as a case study (primarily focusing on Freud, Aurel Kolnai and Sartre). He has presented a paper at the NASS Conference in Montréal, April 2011, and a subsequent version of it has been published by *Sartre Studies International* under the title ‘Sartre’s Magical Being: An Introduction by Way of an Example’ (Vol. 17, Issue 2, 2011). He also presented an earlier version of this present paper, ‘Drives as Original Facticity’, at the UK Sartre Society Conference in September 2011.

Notes

1. The last clause in this sentence is thanks to a query raised by Jonathan Webber, made at the UK Sartre Society in September 2011.
2. Jean-Paul Sartre, *L’être et le néant : Essai d’ontologie phénoménologique* (Éditions Gallimard, [1943] 1986), 34. (Translation taken from: Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology*, trans. Hazel E. Barnes (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), 22.) From now on, references to the French will be provided first in the notes, followed by the page numbers of the corresponding English translations within parentheses.
3. *Ibid.*, 16 (6).
4. *Ibid.*, 158 (142).
5. Indeed: bad faith, at bottom, is the always ultimately futile attempt either to flee one’s facticity through freedom (think of the woman on the date) or to try and flee one’s freedom through facticity (think of the waiter). Going even further Sartre actually has two ‘spirits’ that are common in human reality and seem to be based upon these two extremes of bad faith: first *l’esprit de sérieux* (the spirit of seriousness), which is encapsulated in our times by the scientific obsession with

empirical facts; and second the fascination we have for *le jeu* (play), which must entail a predominantly imaginative and frivolous choice, wherein all reality and facticity are stripped of any real concerns. Cf. *ibid.* 75–76 (63–64); 641–646 (601–606).

6. 'Freedom' here must be understood in the ontological form that we have been discussing, and not some commonsensical notion of 'freedom' that allows one to 'do whatever one wishes and go wherever one pleases' – this 'freedom' for Sartre would be a bastardised one that is of bad faith, precisely because it tries to ignore many brute facts about the world, which always contain many situational and physical restrictions. Here, on the contrary, freedom is 'ontological' in the sense that even in the most desolate physical conditions (starvation, prison, etc.) we still *are* free – that is we can still confront our facticity with a multitude of different attitudes, thoughts and deeds. In short, we *are* freedom, and such a freedom necessarily needs facticity in order to manifest itself concretely as choice.
7. *Ibid.*, 127 (113).
8. *Ibid.*, 124 (109).
9. *Ibid.*, 124 (110).
10. *Ibid.*, 127 (112).
11. *Ibid.*, 128 (114).
12. Because we always 'see through human eyes' this conception of 'Nature as such' may be as elusive as being-in-itself – perhaps we can only say that 'it simply is'. However, we may at the same time suggest that this interpretation gives a little more scope, for science (at least in its ideal) could then be said to be the study of Nature or (external) reality as it is, with the problem then being that science extends such a viewpoint to (human) consciousness too. We view this latter step to be erroneous due to the totally different ontological nature of the for-itself, which is not even to mention the latter's 'magical' aspects (the ego, the emotions, the imaginary and language) to which Sartre dedicated many pages (cf. Daniel O'Shiel, 'Sartre's Magical Being: An Introduction by Way of an Example', in *Sartre Studies International* 17, no. 2 (2011): 28–41). Nevertheless, although such scientific study can of course never totally escape particular human standpoints, the breathtaking force of scientific discoveries do at the same time show that we can say more about Nature (being-in-itself) than 'it simply is'. (Although under this still Sartrean conception such enquiries would have to become more 'phenomenological' than they seem to be at present.)
13. Sartre's own conception of 'instinct' is quite different – though not, we contend, ultimately incompatible – cf. 'La transcendance de l'Ego', in *La Transcendance de l'Ego et autres textes phénoménologiques* (Librarie Philosophique J. VRIN, [1936] 2003), 113.
14. Charles Darwin, 'The Descent of Man and Selection in Relation to Sex', in *Great Books of the Western World – 49. Darwin*, ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, [1871] 1952), 310.
15. Hence why some people are considered more 'animalistic' than others – they are closer to their instincts, albeit freely so.
16. This obviously means that we do not translate *die Triebe* as 'instincts', leaving this latter to correspond to *die Instinkte*. These terms have a long history, even before Freud and psychoanalysis. Here, although our conception of *die Triebe* is obviously related to the psychoanalytic term, importing it into a Sartrean

framework changes it in a manner that leaves much of its psychoanalytical meaning behind.

17. The 'of' is bracketed here, in line with Sartre, because such an awareness of drives would, initially at least, be prereflective.
18. Sigmund Freud, 'Triebe und Triebchicksale', in *Gesammelte Werke: Zehnter Band – Werke aus den Jahren 1913–1917* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, [1915] 1999), 214. (Translation taken from: Sigmund Freud, 'Instincts and Their Vicissitudes', in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud, Volume XIV (1914–1916) – On the History of the Psycho-analytic Movement, Papers on Metapsychology and Other Works*, trans. James Strachey et al. (London: The Hogarth Press, 1978), 121–122.)
19. Bad faith would have to be Sartre's alternative to the psychoanalytical notion of 'repression' (a topic that would require a separate article).
20. Sartre, *L'être et le néant*, 625 (586).
21. Johann Gottlieb Fichte, *Grundlage des Naturrechts, nach Prinzipien der Wissenschaftslehre* (Hamburg: Felix Meiner, [1796] 1960), 82. (Translation taken from: J.G. Fichte, *Foundations of Natural Right, According to the Principles of the Wissenschaftslehre*, trans. Michael Baur (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 76.
22. *Ibid.*, 81 (76).
23. This is of course not to rule out that (other) animals have a great deal of this ontological freedom – in fact it is quite clear that many animals, though their instincts do predominate, are not totally governed by them. Hence the dynamic, elastic principle of Sartrean freedom that we are trying to introduce. Furthermore, another key though non-absolute difference between humans and (other) animals would be, we suspect, the lack or greatly reduced capacity the latter have for the imaginary, which is a necessary intentionality for many of those 'higher' human traits (such as morality, art, religion, etc.) to exist at all.
24. Indeed: the facticity of freedom is that one cannot not be free.
25. Cf. Rudolf Bernet, 'Sartre's "Consciousness" as Drive and Desire', in *Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology* 33, no. 1 (January 2002): 4–21.
26. Such is, we believe, Sartre's ultimate meaning with regard to one's 'original project' too, when he discusses his conception of an 'existential psychoanalysis', which ultimately studies nothing other than how any given being, as desire, relates to being-in-itself-for-itself.
27. Again thanks to Jonathan Webber.
28. An interpretation of Sartre's rich notion of 'the look' may help here, though this subject takes us too far afield from the purposes of this present article.
29. How exactly the 'imaginary' (the unreal) manifests itself in the world (the real) is a massive and intriguing Sartrean topic that must be investigated further. In a word, it is magic – namely the ego, emotions, language, and the imaginary in general (but especially a Proustien kind of *souvenir involontaire* – cf. Roland Breeur, *Autour de Sartre – la conscience mise à nu* (Grenoble: Millon, 2005), especially 231–309).
30. In fact, it is between drives and their nihilation into value that the psychoanalytical notions of 'repression' and 'sublimation' may be introduced, though obviously in a much modified form.
31. Such a project must next analyse what Sartre may mean by 'need' in *Critique de la raison dialectique*, which, we anticipate, may be similar to what we mean by 'drives' here.