

THE PROBLEM OF THE MEANING OF HUMAN BEING IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF JEAN-PAUL SARTRE*

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Abstract. *The paper critically engages with Jean-Paul Sartre's philosophical project of Being and Nothingness, especially with the way Sartre articulates the key philosophical question of the meaning of human existence. It argues that the problem of the meaning of being in Sartre's thought is rooted in the negation of the metaphysical base. To explain this philosophical negation we aim to spell out Sartre's rejection of the dualism between being and appearance. We argue that Sartre's philosophical emphases on appearance, on nothingness, and the negation of the consciousness of the Other should be understood against the socio-political background of the mid twentieth century post-war Europe. Sartre's understanding of the non-authentic and authentic conditions of existence, otherwise known as the individual and non-individual, is also critically discussed. The paper concludes that Sartre's emphasis on nescience and on radical choice is both philosophically and existentially counterproductive.*

Keywords: *Sartre, consciousness, existence, Other, meaning, freedom.*

The Origins of the Question of the Meaning of Life

Jean-Paul Sartre is an important figure in the 20th century philosophical movement known as existentialism where the driving question focuses on the meaning of life. Sartre's interest in this question is arguably conditioned by the metaphysical breakthrough in western philosophy, evidenced by Sartre's discussion of the matter in his *Being and Nothingness (L'être et le Néant, 1943)*. There he argues that modern philosophical thought has attained significant

progress by negating the previously prevalent metaphysical dualism between appearance and the unchanging or perfect being.

Modern thought has realized considerable progress by reducing the existent to the series of appearances which manifest it. Its aim was to overcome a certain number of dualisms which have embarrassed philosophy and to replace them by monism of the phenomenon (Sartre 2001: xlv).

The rejection of such dualism is likely influenced by the emergence of the question of the meaning of existence. That is, rather than positing the metaphysical basis of an *a priori* essence on eternal permanence, Sartre emphasizes the phenomenologically grasped meaning of existence as appearance. By emphasizing the phenomenologi-

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cal, appearance refuses to hide through its numerous manifestations its essential basis, from the metaphysical point of view, encapsulated in itself as the being of that which it manifests. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre essentially makes this point by connecting the interpretations of the phenomenon from three other philosophers – Immanuel Kant, Edmund Husserl, and Martin Heidegger. According to Sartre, the common element in all three interpretations is the relativity of a phenomenon manifested in a variety of ways while the one – consciousness – in which it is manifested must also exist. In this way, the focus shifts from the metaphysical notion of things *as such* towards the concept of consciousness, which becomes the synthesizing and systematizing source of cognition for everything that manifests itself:

[T]he being of an existent is exactly what it appears. Thus we arrive at the idea of the phenomenon such as we can find, for example in the “phenomenology” of Husserl or of Heidegger – the phenomenon or the relative-absolute. Relative the phenomenon remains, for “to appear” supposes in essence somebody to whom to appear. But it does not have the double relativity of Kant’s *Erscheinung*. It does not point over its shoulder to a true being which would be, for it, absolute. What it is, it is absolutely, for it reveals itself as it is. The phenomenon can be studied and described as such, for it is absolutely indicative of itself. (Sartre 2001: xlvi)

While Kant too criticized the metaphysical conception of being, the philosophical project of his *Critique of Pure Reason* is the enquiry into the possibilities of human knowledge against the background of traditional metaphysics. There Kant indicates that one can only gain knowledge about appearances (phenomena) while the being of things themselves remains beyond our knowledge. And yet, even if in the negative

terms, Kant still relies on the dark side of the moon, on the metaphysical noumenon:

Hence if we wanted to apply the categories to objects that are not regarded as appearances, then we would have to lay at the basis an intuition other than the sensible one; and then the object would be a noumenon in the *positive signification*. Now such an intuition (...) lies absolutely outside our cognitive power, and hence the use of the categories can likewise in no way extend beyond the boundary containing the objects of experience. And although to the beings of sense there correspond beings of the understanding and there may indeed be beings of the understanding to which our sensible power of intuition has no reference whatever, yet our concepts of understanding, as mere forms of thought for our sensible intuition, do not in the least extend to them. Hence what is called noumenon by us must be meant as such only in the *negative signification*. (Kant 1996: 318)

Sartre rejects this as a metaphysical remnant. For Kant, however, knowledge is mediated and limited by a) objective forms of sensations *a priori*, i.e. space and time, b) the necessary categories of intellect, and c) universal ideas existing in the mind. This way, cognition gains a certain objective and necessary regulative form within the limits of which cognition is deemed right or wrong. As G. Shpiegelberg rightly argues in his *Phenomenological Movement* (Шпигельберг 1969: 476), Sartre is critical towards the possibility of Kant’s objective knowledge. According to Sartre, Kant completely ignores the real and particular beings of consciousness; the being of consciousness does not imply necessary and objective knowledge because consciousness does not exist in itself. It is always intentional; it is a consciousness of something, a ‘positional consciousness’ of objects. Sartre argues that:

[t]he first procedure of a philosophy ought to be to expel things from consciousness and to reestablish its true connection with the world, to know that consciousness is a positional consciousness of the world. All consciousness is positional in that it transcends itself in order to reach an object, and it exhausts itself in this same positing. (Sartre 2001: li)

Such a shift in philosophy finally determines the authentic being of consciousness in which it departs from itself, as it were, in order to gain knowledge of things. Yet, consciousness can only acknowledge its own object which is a result of its activity, assessment, and satisfaction: “The totality ‘object-essence’ makes an organized whole. The essence is not in the object; it is the meaning of the object, the principle of the series of appearances which disclose it” (Sartre 2001: xlix). In other words, we can say that the essence of the object is a projection of meaning, the projection by consciousness. Such projections of consciousness organize, as it were, the meaningful being of human existence. For example, ‘God’ as a projection of consciousness is a projection of meaning that ‘organizes’ human existence in a particular way. Sartre calls them – the projections of consciousness – being-for-itself (*pour-soi*), which will be briefly discussed in more detail later in this paper.

In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre also presents Edmund Husserl as another representative of the idea of the phenomenon thus understood. Similar to Kant, Husserl, in his philosophical research, focuses on the possibilities of unified and methodologically sound knowledge. However, Husserl differs from Kant in that he does not split ‘things’ into phenomena and things *in themselves* (*noumena*), that is, things as they exist beyond consciousness.

He simply rejects Kantian *Ding an sich* altogether. Yet, a phenomenon manifesting in consciousness as its act (*noesis*), which can be phenomenologically reflected, is not the same as the being of phenomenon. The changing phenomena, which form a whole in consciousness, demand what Sartre calls trans-phenomenal being or, in Husserl’s terms, *noematic* being accessible to intuition and correlating to *noesis*. Husserl argues that, in contrast to *noesis*, *noema* does not emerge from knowledge because it is not real. It should be noted that, according to Sartre, Husserl has no difficulty answering the question how the synthesis of the phenomenon and the being of phenomenon is possible. According to Husserl, such synthesis is possible after performing an *eidetic reduction* on the basis of which one can get closer to the passive activity of consciousness, which in turn allows the appearance of various phenomena to manifest to the consciousness in their inherent form as well. Sartre indicates that such attempts by Husserl to link *noesis* and *noema* is simply an introduction of yet another type of dualism. This is the dualism between *finite* and *infinite* which, according to Sartre, causes many difficulties in the attempts to grant the state of being to appearance: “If the essence of the appearance is an ‘appearing’ which is no longer opposed to any being, there arises a legitimate problem concerning the being of this appearing” (Sartre 2001: xlvi). It is this particular problem depicted by Sartre that becomes his starting point in *Being and Nothingness*. That is to say, according to Sartre, both Kant and Husserl betray the idea of the phenomenon. Husserl’s philosophy is trapped by the problem of ‘the finite and the infinite’ in the similar way that Kant turns away from the particularity

of the actual being of consciousness. The reduction of the particularity of the being of consciousness allows Husserl to identify consciousness with (scientific) knowledge. According to Sartre, such reduction of active and existentially engaged consciousness into transcendental consciousness is Husserl's rejection of the truly active consciousness and its relation to being. After all, even when we say that a desk appears to us independently from our will, it still appears to us as it seems to us and in so doing the desk remains a projection of our consciousness in a particular way.

Movement between Being-for-Itself and Being-in-Itself and the Impossibility of the Objective Meaning of Existence

According to Sartre, the projection of consciousness towards an appearance does not indicate objective knowledge but rather depicts consciousness as existing and active. Sartre believes consciousness to be the most non-transparent thing since it is always directed beyond itself; and, thus, it has no objective content in itself. This means that consciousness, as active, is free of objective knowledge in the sense of unchanging, static, given truth. However, consciousness can always rise above that which appears in its intentionality. That is, not so much as to know what is manifested in it, but the projection of meaning by what appears in order to exist. According to Sartre, consciousness meets that which exists in itself and thus it is inaccessible to consciousness. In other words, consciousness cannot cross the boundary of its own freedom. It is conditioned by its own absolute freedom. Since consciousness in this respect is free of objective content, nothingness is

its limit and arises out of freedom. Due to this reason, there exists the insurmountable separation between consciousness and that which Sartre calls *being-in-itself* (*l'être-en-soi*). Therefore, consciousness projects its essential structure and shapes the *being-for-itself* (*l'être-pour-soi*). Sartre formulates the key distinction of *Being and Nothingness* – the distinction between *being-in-itself* and *being-for-itself* in the following way:

[B]eing is opaque to itself precisely because it is filled with itself. This can be better expressed by saying that *being is what it is*. (...) First the formula designates a particular region of being, that of *being-in-itself*. [T]he being of *for-itself* is defined, on the contrary, as being what it is not and not being what it is. (...) Being-in-itself has no within which is opposed to a without and which is analogous to a judgement, a law, a consciousness of itself. The in-itself has nothing secret; it is solid. (Sartre 2001: lxv)

Thus being in-itself is static, “solid”, inert, it is identical to itself precisely because it has no consciousness, has no “within”, a thing or a substance which does not have spontaneity, is not conscious, cannot be responsible or free. Being for-itself, on the other hand, is dynamic, spontaneous, and therefore it is not identical to itself, it is conscious and a negation of “situatedness”, of the fact that human life is “thrown”, that there are certain facts about it, is the key part of being for-itself. As Herbert Marcuse, commenting on Sartre rightly puts it, the *En-soi* “is characterized by having no relation to itself, being that it is, plainly and simply, beyond all becoming, change, and temporality (which emerges only with the *Pour-soi*), in the mode of utter contingency. In contrast, the Being-for-itself, identical with the human being, is the free subject which continually “creates”

its own existence” (Marcuse 1948: 312). This separation between *being-in-itself* and *being-for-itself* allowed Sartre to solve the problem of the finite and the infinite arising from Husserl by introducing the concept of the phenomenon of being.

The phenomenon of being is the structure of meaningfulness; it is both the condition of and manifests itself to consciousness and exists in as much as it does so in actuality. The point of Sartre’s philosophical thesis is to show the actuality of the being of consciousness. In doing so, he takes Heidegger’s idea about the being of *Dasein* in the world and interprets it in his own way. Both Sartre and Heidegger claim that the existence of man in the world is not authentic. A man is born into the world which is a multiplicity of the preexisting structures of meanings which delimit him. Human beings are simply immersed into pre-existing meaningful space. Heidegger, however, remains true to the notion of some sort of foundation, which, for him, appears as a possibility of different ontic ways of being in the world:

Here, however “Nature” is not to be understood as that which is just present-at-hand, nor as the *power of Nature*. The wood is a forest of timber, the mountain a quarry of rock; the river is water – power, the wind is wind ‘in the sails’. As the ‘environment’ is discovered, the ‘Nature’ thus discovered is encountered too. If its kind being as ready-to-hand is disregarded, this ‘Nature’ itself can be discovered and defined simply in its pure presence-at-hand. But when this happens, the Nature which ‘stirs and strives’, which assails us and enthralls us as landscape, remains hidden. (Heidegger 1962: 101)

Meanwhile, Sartre, having rejected the notion of a foundation, argues that the phenomenon of being is the projection of

consciousness. That is to say, consciousness is itself the foundation in this respect. Sartre also articulates the possibility of dynamics of the phenomenon of being in its actuality which always is historical. Such an historical actualization of the dynamics of being allows the manifestation of individual consciousness. This refers back to human freedom, which negates the previous historically embodied projections of consciousness. Sartre further argues that such consciousness may occur only if there is a previous consciousness that no longer includes the newly formed consciousness. The key requirement determining the birth of individual consciousness is the experience of displeasure. That is to say, my freedom of consciousness is actualized through the negation of the other who or which is the source of displeasure. This claim once again indicates that consciousness is free, yet its projection is contextual and actualizes itself through the nothingness of consciousness, that is, through the negation of the other:

If there is to be nothingness of consciousness, there must be a consciousness which has been and which is no more and a witnessing consciousness which poses the nothingness of the first consciousness for a synthesis of recognition. Consciousness is prior to nothingness and “is derived” from being. (Sartre 2001: lv – lvi)

Sartre confirms, both theoretically and practically, the idea of the individual as contextual consciousness realized through the negation of the consciousness of the Other. It is important to note that Sartre develops this notion of the negation in a particular historical context that shapes his understanding. Sartre lived for most of the 20th century, experienced war, and the barbarity of fascism. Historically this was the period when clashing ideologies turned into

two world wars, when human life and life in general had no value at all. It was also the time when competitiveness, efficiency, and profit became the key sociopolitical goals. As such, the animosity and power of the Other was a daily experience instead of being merely contemplated. Hence, it is against this historical background that we have to interpret Sartre's understanding of the Other.

The Other as the Death of My Possibilities and Freedom

The horrors and tragedies of the 20th century shape Sartre's negative understanding of the Other. In one of his plays devoted to the issue of others entitled *No Exit (Huis Clos)*, Sartre famously claimed that "Hell is other people". It was during one interview that Sartre was asked what exactly he meant by this phrase. He replied as follows:

Hell is other people because from one's very birth you are thrown into a situation into which you are subjected. If you are a son of a Christian, the social rules oblige you to go out into the city where machines needing such guys await you. Such is your fate – to be a labourer. The fate of all those being driven away from the countryside is a phenomenon of capitalism. From now on, the factory is the function of your being. What is your being exactly? It is the job enslaving you completely because it sucks you dry. It is the wage classifying you based on a certain pre-determined standard of life. All of this is imposed upon you by other people. Hell is a description of similar nature. Or, we could think about a child born in Algeria in 1930 or in 1935. He is condemned to suffering and death which has become his fate. This is also hell. (quoted in Колябко 2009: 9–10)

The description of the Other by Sartre is rather remarkable in his work *Being and Nothingness* as well, especially in the

chapter entitled "The Look". It begins with Sartre claiming that the Other is manifested to him as an object. Sartre indicates several types of object-ness. One of such types is a simple daily opportunity to distinguish between a man and his actions in the sense that on a daily basis we treat others as functions (e.g., a student who needs to be evaluated or a worker in a factory who needs to be told off). Sartre finds another type of object-ness in Husserl where the Other is depicted as absence, not the absence of consciousness in terms of a body but rather the absence of the world:

[W]e are dealing with a particular type of objectivity akin to that which Husserl designated by the term absence without, however, his noting that the Other is defined not as the absence of a consciousness in relation to the body which I see but by the absence of the world which I perceived, an absence discovered at the very heart of my perception of this world. On this level the Other is an object in the world, an object which can be defined by the world. (Sartre 2001: 232)

Sartre also indicates that classical theories considered the Other to be a separate organism that manifests itself and is the source of its own real existence in a similar way to, for example, the classical liberalism of John Locke where individuals are self-determining where they own themselves as it were. However, Sartre is interested to know what it means to be seen by the Other and what it means for the Other to look at 'me'. For him the Other is a reflection of the being of 'I'. That is, the look of the Other defines the being of 'I', my being: 'It is the shame or pride which reveals to me the Other's look and myself at the end of that look. It is the shame or pride which makes me live, not know the situation of being looked at' (Sartre 2001: 237).

The fact that the Other is one of the sources for one's action illustrates Sartre's notion of the structure of the being of consciousness, first and foremost a reflective consciousness. Sartre distinguishes two levels of the being of consciousness. First, unreflective consciousness is when a consciousness is filled by and through immersion into the existing meaningful structure of the Other's consciousness out of a transphenomenal consciousness, i.e. a free consciousness with no content in itself. In other words, the unreflective consciousness is granted certain landmarks of its operation that are imposed by the Other although its imposition is hidden. Second, reflective consciousness is a level of consciousness that constructs and defines the possibilities of 'I'. The 'I' is only formed via the Other. It is the Other and the Other's look that allow 'I' to see whether or not his/her actions are acceptable. Sartre believes that due to this reason the Other becomes a hidden limit of one's operating possibilities. It is hidden because the 'I' deems it as his own possibilities arising from him: "The Other is the hidden death of my possibilities in so far as I live that death as hidden in the midst of the world" (Sartre 2001: 240).

Here, however, a problem arises as Sartre's puts forth seemingly contradictory claims. On the one hand, he argues that the being of consciousness is free and has nothing that restricts its nature. Yet, on the other hand, he claims that consciousness is filled with the meaningful structures of the consciousness of the Other. Considering the previously mentioned ideas about the possibility of manifestation of an individual consciousness, Sartre argues that for the being of individual consciousness to manifest itself, the consciousness of 'I'

must negate the consciousness of the Other as invading. In other words, the very possibility of negation enables the existence of an individual and free consciousness. At this point, however, it is important to note that in the process of human history the appearance of individual existence, as beyond the establishment of meaningful structures, as beyond founding of them, is short-lived. That is to say, Sartre separates existence as ecstatic *and* structures of meaning, or, as he puts it, existence is prior to meaning or essence. This is so because having negated the meaningful structure founded by the consciousness of the Other, individual consciousness takes the 'place' of the content of the consciousness of the Other and in so doing establishes 'totality'. This 'totality' is the de-individualized existence as the constitution of a new world of meanings. According to Sartre, the underlying theme of this process is that the being-for-itself strives to become the being-in-itself. And yet Sartre thinks that he himself presents a philosophical argument that overcomes this contradiction by asserting the freedom of existence beyond meaning. To this we now turn.

Individual Existence as Absence of Meaning

According to Sartre, an individual, authentic existence is an existence not restricted by any objective knowledge or pre-given morality. As we showed above, Sartre's thesis was influenced by the negation of metaphysical basis, on the one hand, and of the given historic context and circumstances, on the other hand. The latter is the sphere of the ideological battles of the Enlightenment, having freed men, as it was believed, from illusions, traditions, and superstitions. As

there is nothing beyond the individual and Sartre believes that objective knowledge and values stem exclusively from the will of the self, he treats the objectively established sociopolitical forms as a projection of individual consciousness, which is saturated by hegemonic power. According to MacIntyre, these historic circumstances allow Sartre to formulate the definitions of individual existence in the following way:

For Sartre the central error is to identify the self with its roles, a mistake which carries the burden of moral bad faith as well as of intellectual confusion (...) [F]or Sartre the self's self-discovery is characterized as the discovery that the self is "nothing", is not a substance but a set of perpetually open possibilities. (...) For Sartre, whatever social space it occupies it does so only accidentally and therefore he too sees that self as in no way an actuality. (MacIntyre 1985: 32)

In *After Virtue*, MacIntyre engages Sartre's idea of individual (authentic) existence. Although it is not our task here to analyse his engagement in depth, it is important to note that MacIntyre contends that Sartre's accounts of freedom and the authentic existence of the self are a result of emotivism and its social embodiment (for a more in-depth account of MacIntyre's critique of Sartre see Bielskis 2012). The key principle of emotivism is that reason is incapable of making any true claims about objective moral criteria because emotions and feelings are the only source of morality. If so, then rationality becomes instrumental, both in the sense of instrumentalizing and institutionalizing sociopolitical relations. MacIntyre rejects emotivism as a theory, yet claims that it is socially embodied (that is, it has become our social reality); morality has become nothing else but the expression of our conflicting preferences. This predica-

ment is characterized by the fact that no appeal to common morality and the common good therefore is possible and thus all we are left with are laws established by the state bureaucracy which are highly ideological.

It should be noted that even though Sartre criticized such sociopolitical relations, his existentialist account of the self remains emotivistic in precisely this MacIntyrean sense. And yet his emotivism – the claim that the status of morality is that of individual free choice, the choice of one's arbitrary preferences – is of more radical nature than that suggested by MacIntyre. This radical choice, according to Sartre, occurs every time we make a moral choice as well as when we have to negate objective knowledge and choose to not know. Rejection of objective knowledge would mean, for Sartre, the refusal of the possibility of identity between the *being-for-itself* and the *being-in-itself*. Such choice would presuppose an existential situation where a man acknowledges his own absolute freedom that arises from nescience. As Jean-Marc Mouillé, one of the leading commentators on Sartre, puts it:

The theme of nescience occurring in the works of Sartre in the forties becomes the main motif in 1947–1948. Instead of knowledge of something cognitive, it presupposes a paradoxical knowledge of nescience which is an essential part of 'my being'. Any philosophical pursuits, i.e. the pursuit of the true and that which is real, must pay attention to this paradox. Finally, the acceptance of nescience will enable raising the question about the meaning of individual existence and of human history. (Mouillé 2006: 101)

Being influenced by Friedrich Nietzsche, Sartre suggests that man should choose to act as if his existence were a game. To live one's life as if it was a game means to

understand that one is totally free and thus responsible for each choice and action made because the *being-in-itself* remains inaccessible and, hence, one does not know what the truth and, at the same time, the meaning of life is. Such interpretation of human existence presupposes Sartre's reply to the question of whether or not a necessary account of what is a right action exists would be a firm "No!":

Thus at the moment when I ask, "Is there any conduct which can reveal to me the relations of man with the world?" I admit on principle the possibility of a negative reply, such as "No, such a conduct does not exist". This means that we admit to being faced with the transcendent fact of the non-existence of such conduct. (Sartre 2001, 5)

This means to acknowledge that any direction of mine towards *being-in-itself* is but a projection of *being-for-itself*. What we are left with then, is a constantly changing game played without any apparent goal to win. As observed by Juliette Simot (1992), such behavior by humanity would open up an entirely different ethical relation. Having acknowledged being-for-itself as the only possible existence, the Other-for-me and 'I' as the Other-for-Other would no longer be the limit of possibilities for one another. In turn, it would imply the possibility of free choice to both of 'us'. This possibility of free choice is the possibility of individual existence allowing one to choose freely without restricting oneself. As Jean-Marc Mouillé puts:

The moral meaning and certainty of such attitude and clarity of thought end up by forcing us to accept this fate. This new form of existing is defined by the necessity to desire freedom and the "passion" of chance (I must accept everything that happens to me as a chance), to see being as deserving of love,

to understand that the others as "hell" are in reality a place of honesty (because it is us that force each other to be and to turn the hideousness of life into joy). (Mouillé 2006: 112)

Conclusions

Jean-Paul Sartre's philosophical position neither seems very attractive nor convincing: his emphasis on nescience and on radical choice is both philosophically and existentially counterproductive. Meaningful human life cannot be dispensed with a serious and systemic attempt to make sense of the world and our place in it. Such an attempt always involves a narrative effort to give account of oneself, first, to oneself and then to others. In so doing we try to understand ourselves and act not only as separate individuals, individuals whose existence is negatively defined by the culturally institutionalized consciousness of the Other, but first and foremost as the authors of dramatic narratives in order to make our actions comprehensible. Sartre's denial of the narrative unity of the self and the one-sidedness of his 'Hell is other people' make his philosophical position vulnerable: human actions consist of nothing else but a discrete set with no overall meaning. It is in this respect that we can conclude that the question of the meaning of human being remains unanswered. Even if individuals live authentic lives of radical freedom, it is dubious as to whether the constant change of the projections of being-for-itself arising from nescience could grant individuals such a socially cosy environment as depicted by Sartre. Thus Sartre faces a similar problem to that of Albert Camus who, instead of trying philosophically and existentially to overcome the feeling of the absurd, universalizes the absurd making it the only 'real thing' of human existence (cf. Bielskis

2007). Sartre's existentialist affirmation of the meaninglessness of human existence is therefore philosophically self-imposed. Yet the reason for such imposition is not only

the dubiousness of his ontology of being and nothingness, but also his inability or refusal to move beyond the nihilism of post-war *Weltanschauung*.

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ŽMOGIŠKOSIOS BŪTIES PRASMĖS PROBLEMA JEANO-PAULO SARTE'O FILOSOFIJOJE

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Santrauka. Straipsnyje kritiškai aptariamas Jeano-Paulo Sartre'o filosofinis *Būties ir niekio* projektas, ypač jame pateikta filosofinė žmogaus egzistencijos prasmės interpretacija. Teigiama, kad būties prasmės problema Sartre'o mintyje yra tiesiogiai susijusi su jo metafizinio pagrindo neigimu. Tam, kad būtų paaiškinta ši Sartre'o neigimo filosofinė koncepcija, siekiama aptarti jo būties ir regimybės dualizmo atmetimą. Prancūzų filosofo regimybės, niekio ir kito sąmonės neigimo ontologinė artikuliacija turi būti suprantama socialiniame politiniame pokario Europos kultūriniame kontekste. Straipsnyje trumpai aptariama ir Sartre'o skirtis tarp autentiškos ir neautentiškos egzistencijos. Išvadose teigiama, kad Sartre'o akcentuojamos nežinojimo ir radikalaus pasirinkimo sampratos nėra nei filosofiška, nei egzistenciškai įtekančios.

Pagrindiniai žodžiai: J.-P. Sartre'as sąmonė, egzistencija, Kitas, prasmė, laisvė.

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