

Phl 421: Sartre, ProfLotz, Handout 6: Temporality

1. Again

- a. Value: "The particularity of this project is what gives rise to different values. For the waiter, things take on value precisely in the light of his project to be a particular kind of waiter, to be a particular kind of waiter-God. Everything is evaluated in terms of that goal, the impossible, ideal goal. Everything is evaluated in terms of, measured against, the particular kind of God the waiter is trying to be." (from Spade, online)
- b. It seems as if S argues that authenticity (*be a waiter*, but do not run away from your freedom) is *higher* than inauthenticity. However, he does not present an ethics implied (for this, see the later *Notebook on Ethics*)
- c. S seems to argue that there is an ontological necessity for the primacy of authenticity because the for-itself is characterized by *lack* (is not what it is) and the necessity to *be* lack (to actualize your existence as lack); lack, however, presupposes that that which one lacks (being) is posited as better and *desired* (=value)

2. Temporality

- a. The three moments of time should not be conceived as a series of given nows, of which some are no longer and some are not yet
- b. S argues against
 - i. "Presentists" = those who implicitly argue that there is only the present (sensationalists); the past exists in memory, memory is a present act, hence the past is present (160)
 - ii. "objectivists" = those who argue that the past has a "kind of honorary existence" (161); the event "keeps" its being; the past is as the present; here, again, there is no real past and we can't explain that the past is "no longer" and that I am *not* my past (so, here, again, S prepares his viewpoint via negation), and we can't explain how the past can be *for us* (162)
- c. Past
 - i. So, the past "must be for us as non-being" (162)
 1. The "no longer" cannot be the result of being (we know this from the former chapters); so, the past must be constituted via not-being; if this would not be the case that we would *be* in some kind of "eternal now"
 2. The past can also not just "be," as Bergson seems to claim, for the past must belong to someone; it is *my past*, i.e., it cannot be thought of as something independent from (self)consciousness
 3. As a consequence, time is for S not some kind of container; rather, time must *first* be someone's past (or future), and *then* constituted as something objective in which everything participates (165)
 - ii. Now, "having" a past cannot mean that the past is an objective property of someone or something external to the for-itself (166)
 1. The past cannot be something "passive" (167)

2. The for-itself *has to be its past* (you have to acknowledge it, struggle with it, reject it, relate yourself to it, etc.); we constantly change the *meaning* of the past (170)
 3. So, S treats the past like any other phenomenon; it is intentional, it is a phenomenon, but it emerges as something that “no longer” exist; it can only emerge *for* consciousness
 4. I cannot disconnect myself from my past; I am my past (168)
 5. Death = I am *entirely* past; I no longer have a relation to it; I am myself
 6. S argues similar to how he argues about nothingness: the past cannot be a creation of the subject (or a representation); it cannot be *in* consciousness; however, it can also not be discovered without the for-itself (170)
 7. A past not known by anyone is not really a past (for example, we could not say that something is *no longer*); there would only be a reconfiguration of the itself
- iii. “if I am not what I was, it is not because I have already changed, which would suppose a time already given, but because I am related to my being in the mode of an internal bond of non-being” (172)
 - iv. The past is the *facticity* that I transcend towards the future
- d. Let’s jump over the “presence”
- e. Future
- i. S starts in the same way as he had argued about the past: the future cannot be a *present representation* of the self (he argues against the entire tradition of subjectivist positions)
 - ii. We *exist* our future
 - iii. Remember: the for-itself is “pre-judicative relation of itself to itself” (180); therefore the future primarily cannot be some kind of representative act (imagination, etc.)
 - iv. Example: tennis court (future is part of pre-reflective action, it is embodied) (181)
 - v. The future is not another now that is not yet (182)
 - vi. “The future is *what I have to be* in so far as I can not be it” (182)
 - vii. Remember: the for-itself is a *lack*; so, the future is that which makes my present *meaningful*
 - viii. As we have seen in the last chapter, the for-itself transcends itself towards the future (possible/impossible identity, value); here, S introduces the concept of project; the for-itself projects itself towards itself *as* not being