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Sartre's Temporal Self. A tenable non-egological account of being in time.

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Abstract

Any convincing theory of self-awareness pertains to a consideration of temporality. Husserl acknowledged this necessity but overlooked temporality's potential for such a theory of self-awareness. Instead, Husserl employed his analysis of temporal experience merely to confirm the substantiality of a transcendental ego. In line with Sartre's critique, I argue that an alternative account of the self and being in time needs to be developed, and such an account is required to render a comprehensive account of non-egological being in dynamic time. This present work consists of an examination of the alternative offered by Sartre and it shows that Sartre's notion of the temporal self is a tenable alternative. The consideration of Sartre's ekstatic temporality explains why reflective self-consciousness remains a possibility for consciousness but is characterized by certain limitations. It also helps to clarify how pre-reflective self-consciousness, as a mode of existence, is possible in the first place, and it elucidates Sartre's phenomenological account of selfness that does not posit an 'I' as a separate entity over and above the stream of consciousness but manages to account for its unity though the ekstatic dimension of reflection and temporality.