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LEVINAS AND MEONTOLOGY

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by

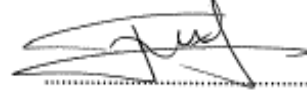
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ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to explain the relation of Levinasian philosophy with meontology which is the science of non-being in terms of a radical philosophy of alterity. In accordance with this purpose, the project of the phenomenology of sociality, which Levinas developed by exteriority and excedence, with the burdens of absolute theological intentions was problematised. Regarding this problematisation, it is questioned that whether this Levinasian meontology is a meontotheology or not. The thesis is composed of three sections. The philosophy of Levinas is elaborated in the terms of Ontology, of Phenomenology and of Meontology, respectively.

The section of Ontology involves objections of Levinas regarding the concepts such as being, unity, totality, State, objectivity, freedom which dominated Western Philosophy. In the light of these objections, the primary concepts of Levinas which are face, conscience, language, exteriority, subjectivity, religion are elaborated.

The section of Phenomenology discusses the relation of Levinas with phenomenological method, which inspires the philosophy of Levinas in the way of searching concrete, in the context of Husserl and Heidegger. Husserlian philosophy with regard to the concepts of noesis-noema, intentionality, infinite, representation, body, happiness, satisfaction, joy of life; Heideggerian philosophy with regard to Dasein, affectivity, disclosure, hotness, being-towards-death, mineness are positioned critically. By virtue of these critiques, the body precedes and conditions representation (Husserl) and the other person is not a matter of howness but a matter of whoness (Heidegger).

The section of Meontology is opened to two directions. First direction analyses the hypothesis of existent within existence and its dual structure of the self. Human being has to be oneself and to have oneself at the same time. It has to show effort to close the gap between being self and (shadow) having self. This endless pursuit of human being has no adventure, it cannot survive of lagging behind itself, stopping in this adventure. Existent becomes abandoned and forsaken within its never-ending tasks; it experiences being fatigue, indolent and weary as primordial events. This abandonment and forsakenness only and only ends with the spirituality and transcendence which is opened in the face of the Other. Second direction focused on meontology of such kind of spirituality in terms of Levinasian ethics of alterity. The concepts related with me ontology are saying, being unsaid, a null site, diachrony, heteronomy, substitution, expiation, sacred and goodness. These concepts put speaking, helping, looking to/after the Other, responsibility and disinterestedness as towards-God into the core of philosophical discourse.

Keywords: Levinas, infinity, face, intentionality, Other, ontology, phenomenology, meontology, Descartes, Husserl, Heidegger, conscience, saying, diachrony, heteronomy, substitution, goodness, disinterestedness, God.

ÖZET

Bu tez Levinasçı felsefenin varolmayan bilimi olan meontoloji ile ilişkisini radikal bir başkalık etiği yönünde açıklamayı amaçlamaktadır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda Levinas'ın dışsallık ile dışkınlık üzerinden geliştirdiği "toplumsallığın fenomenolojisi" projesi taşıdığı mutlak tanrıbilimsel yönelimler ile birlikte sorunsallaştırılmıştır. Bu sorunsallaştırma açısından da Levinasçı meontolojinin aslında bir meontoteoloji olup olmadığı sorulmaktadır. Tez üç ana bölümden oluşmaktadır. Levinas'ın düşünceleri ilk bölümde Ontoloji, ikinci bölümde Fenomenoloji, üçüncü bölümde ise Meontoloji bakımından ele alınmıştır.

Ontoloji Bölümü Levinas'ın, Batı Felsefesine egemen olmuş varlık, birlik, bütünlük, düşünüm, Devlet, nesnellik, özgürlük gibi kavramsallaştırmalara yönelik itirazlarını içermektedir. Bu itirazlar ışığında Levinas'ın yüz, vicdan, dil, dışsallık, öznellik, din gibi temel kavramları irdelenmektedir.

Fenomenoloji Bölümü Levinas'ın düşüncesini somutun araştırılması yönünde en çok etkileyen fenomenolojik yöntemle ilişkisini Husserl ve Heidegger üzerinden ele almaktadır: Husserl noesis-noema, yönelimsellik, sonsuz kavramı, temsil, beden, mutluluk, tatmin, yaşama zevki; Heidegger ise Dasein, duygulanımsallık, açıklık, nasıllık, ölüme-doğru-olma, benimcilik kavramları üzerinden Başka insanın etiği doğrultusunda konumlandırılmakta ve eleştirilmektedir. Bu eleştirilerle birlikte bedenin temsili öncelendiği ve koşullandırdığı; başka insanın da dünyada nasıl değil kim sorusu yönünde olduğu öne sürülmektedir.

Meontoloji Bölümü iki doğrultuya açılmaktadır. İlk doğrultu Levinas açısından varolanın dünyada varlık buluşunu ve ikili kendilik yapısını incelemektedir. İnsan hem kendisi olmak, hem de varoluş içerisinde kendine sahip olmak durumundadır. Kendisi ile kendisi arasındaki mesafeyi kapatmak için çabalamak zorundadır. İnsanın varoluştaki bu çabasının sonu gelmez ve kendi kendisinin arkasında kalmak, durmak yazgısından kurtulamaz. Varolan; yorgunluk, üşengeçlik ve bezginlik gibi temel deneyimlerin içerisinde bitimsiz işleri ile baş başa, terk edilmiş ve yalnız kalır. Levinas açısından bu yalnızlık ve terk edilmişlik ancak başka insan yüzü ile açılan ruhsallıkta, aşkınlıkta son bulur. İkinci doğrultu Levinasçı başkalık etiği açısından böylesi bir ruhsallığın meontolojisini ele almaktadır. Bu meontoloji açısından incelenen kavramlar söyleme, tersini-söyleme, yok-yer, başka-zamanlılık, yaderklik, yerine-geçme, kefare, kutsal, iyilik kavramlarıdır. Bu kavramlar Başkası ile konuşmayı, ona yardım etmeyi, ona bakmayı, Tanrıya-doğruluk olarak sorumluluk ve iyiliği felsefi söylemin temeline yerleştirmektedir.

Anahtar sözcükler: Levinas, sonsuz, yüz, yönelimsellik, Başka, ontoloji, fenomenoloji, meontoloji, Descartes, Husserl, Heidegger, vicdan, söyleme, diyakroni (başka-zamanlılık), heteronomi (yaderklik), yerine geçme, iyilik, çıkarırsızlık, Tanrı.

PROLOGUE

The search you are about to read was motivated and led by the concept of meontology, of which there are not so much extractions in the history of philosophy, which opens the way for a kind of strange philosophical religion in terms of Levinasian discourse in a very sophisticated style. That style is directly related with a phenomenological approach and it aims to have the clinging points to the exteriority and to the other person. It reveals the economic, social and existential meanings of human existence. Levinas' search conducts such a perplexed line that in it we have theological (to-God, faith), atheological (separation, joy of life), pre-theological (hypostasis, effort, fatigue etc.) and extra-theological (substitution, diachrony, heteronomy) manners. Therefore, it is not a line anymore. We will try to understand the form of Levinasian discourse.

The thesis on *Levinas and Meontology* is founded on three main parts: "Levinas and Ontology", "Levinas and Phenomenology", "Levinas and Meontology". Since Levinasian discourse is not linear, dialectical or proposition-based; this division is abstract and only for demonstrating the operation of ethical discourse step by step in accord with the aim of this writing that is towards me-ontological approach in terms of beyond being, non-being.ⁱ

From the very beginning, we can clearly understand Levinas' position against the history of philosophy from the perspective of alterity; we can distinguish that the roots of critique of Western philosophy in the start already reveals Levinasian approach in its full concreteness. Levinas forces us to think otherwise, as if a sentence can overflow whole work or as if the beginning already issues the target in its foundation.

ⁱ Here what Levinas means is not the opposite of being as non-being, it is not a dialectical opposition. It is me on, beyond being. In Platonic sense, it is goodness which is *epekeina tes ousias*. Levinas uses the term four times as Martin Kavka stated: "Two of these can be found in the classic 1981 interview with Richard Kearney which has appeared in variety of collections [*Dialogue with Emmanuel Levinas*, ed. Richard Kerney] and third occurrence dates from 1968 from 'A man-God' from *Entre Nous*. And the last and most complete occurrence of 'meontology' is found in *Otherwise than Being*: 'It is in responsibility that is justified by no prior commitment, in the responsibility –in an ethical situation– that the me-ontological and metalogical structure of this anarchy takes from, undoing the logos in which the apology by which consciousness always regains its self control, and commands, is inserted. This passion is absolute in that it takes hold without any a priori". M. Kavka, *Being and Nonbeing, The Appropriation of the Greek Concept to me on in Jewish Thought*, p. 36.

For Levinasian philosophy tends to speak in terms of religious discourse, Levinas sometimes uses concepts such as God, Absolute, Face, Infinite in the same sense. When Levinas is the philosopher we are dealing with, it is not easy to find the strict sense of a concept that is verified by a proportion with its content since his discourse could be qualified as a philosophical prying rather than a truthful cognition. The identifications are always abandoned to their break-ups. Although, for understanding what Levinas means, the thesis follows up a direction of conceptual relations and elaborations in terms of distinct and clear reasonings; it is inevitable that many ambiguities will arise within the context. And difficulty we sense in Levinas is in a way similar to a Hegelian one which indicates that philosophical search is not only in its results; but it is in its process through metaphysics. And lastly, the specific difficulty of this thesis is its being around *meontology* which is almost hardly worked on.ⁱ

Meontology as the science of beyond being is *epekeina tes ousias* [509b] in *Republic* of Plato. All objects are given on the condition of pre-sense of the sun, therefore the good as sun does not belong to the realm of being and becoming. We encounter two important concepts here for this discussion: “being and beyond”. The other-than-being and other being varies in Platonic dialogues but we will not analyze these variations here and stick to the Levinasian comprehension of goodness:

“Good is good in-itself and not by relation to the need to which it is wanting, it is a luxury with respects to the needs. It is precisely in that it is beyond being.... Plato deduces being from the Good: he posits the transcendence as surpassing the Totality. The Place of the Good above every essence is the most profound teaching – the definitive teaching – not of theology, but of philosophy”.ⁱⁱ

As Martin Kavka stated me-ontology has implications in Maimonides, Cohen, Rosenzweig and Levinas as a history of Jewish tradition, a messianic anticipation: “By using the term

ⁱ The most important exception of this scarcity is the works of Martin Kavka. Especially, “*Being and Nonbeing, The Appropriation of the Greek Concept to me on in Jewish Thought*” (his PhD thesis) and “*Jewish Messianism and the History of Philosophy*” (an improved book version of his thesis).

ⁱⁱ E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 103.

meontology and/or words which are thematically associated with it (“privation, “not yet”), these tinkers argue for a teleological arc that covers all history and renders it radically open, unfinished and ungraspable. The nature of human being is to not yet be, to be deprived of stasis of being. In turn, this sets the stage for a view of the religious life as an ethical one, centered around messianic anticipation.”ⁱ

The claim of this thesis is to question the possibility of a meontotheology in Levinas. Levinasian eschatology in terms of *me on* reveals such kind of position as a form of religious discourse: a meontotheology. The suspicion arises –reversely, a possibility too– because Levinas does not break-up with the material existence and nothingness. What distinguishes Levinas from this tradition is his search for concreteness and insistence on alterity which is not only transcendent but also exterior. He recognizes the weighs of bodily existence and revalues human being on the ground of his joy of life. Going beyond is only possible through this ground: there is no transcendence which does not cross over this world around us. Alterity is not the scene behind this world, it is in this world even though in forms of absence as face. It cannot be deferred to another world.

Following Martin Kavka, the root of philosophical discourse in Levinas is a compromise of Jewish and Athens tradition. Jewish tradition is attached to Athens tradition, faith to knowledge, demonstrating that Athens was also commanding faith as beyond being through goodness. Therefore Levinasian meontology is not a dialectical one, it is beyond the order of ontological dialectics of poles such as in Hegel. It is not an oscillation which is reflecting being’s other into being in return: thus, there is no beyond but only movement from being to another being. For Levinas, therefore, the philosophy is not a modality of knowledge but also and more importantly a search for ethics which is beyond science of knowledge: “Philosophy becomes an act –the modality of which is lies somewhere between knowledge, faith and hope...”ⁱⁱ

This thesis will try to explain the difference of a dialectical meontology which reflects into (another) ontology and a critical meontology which is ethical. Within the

ⁱ Martin Kavka, *Being and Nonbeing, The Appropriation of the Greek Concept to me on in Jewish Thought*, p. 17.

ⁱⁱ Ibid. p. 25.

Levinasian framework, the movement of thesis in term of works will be from *Totality and Infinity* to *Existence and Existents* and lastly to *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. For a discourse that is beyond proportion; we cannot expect a pure argumentation or linearity, thus there will be cross-references in-between the paragraphs. The analysis of exteriority in *Totality and Infinity* is transformed into an an-archival discourse through language and relation with the Otherⁱ in *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*. *Arche* represents consciousness and interruption of consciousness as *an-arche* takes us to meontological root as conscience and later on substitution in terms of hostage, obsession etc. Martin Kavka calls this passage to from *Totality and Infinity* to *Otherwise than Being* as from pacific tone to a violent one. And this violent tone of meontology, the model of meontological self has its own root in an earlier work of Levinas in *Existence and Existents* as self and its shadow, interruption and maintenance of the self against/before *il y a*.

“... the anti-idealist notion of the self, described as ‘meontological’ from the Kearney interview, bears much in common with the analysis of the self in writings as early as the 1947 *Existence and Existents*. It is to meontological elements in this early work that I now turn ... is an exemplary case of how Levinas limits Athen in order to make room for Jerusalem... oriented around the phenomenology of the area which lies between sleep and wakefulness.”ⁱⁱ

In this thesis, I will not fully accord with the claim of Kavka that *Existence and Existents* is an early root for me-ontological, at least not in Levinasian terms. It is an example of material existence of meontological self in the world, but not towards the desire for the

ⁱ In French, Levinas uses four different terms (*Autre, autre, Autrui, autrui*) regarding the Other, the other. When capitalized the Other means in the first instance “the other person” (*Autrui*). Therefore, the Other (*Autre, heteron*) also sometimes directly refers to the opposite of the Same (*Même, to auton*), thus it means not the other person but pure alterity, like God or Infinity in Levinasian philosophy rather than human being. In this thesis, we used both versions of the Other as the first and second implications of Levinas, both as the other person and as God, infinity in terms of the opposite of the Same. Also, we used *the other* as the translating term of the *autre* and *autrui*. The difference between these last two is not too clear in Levinas. When it is *autrui*, it is generally indicating other person and when it is *autre*, it is close to otherwise than being. If we are talking about otherwise than being or God-related conceptions (spirituality, infinity etc.) in terms of the Same; then the other is *autre* as otherwise than being; if we are talking about the personality, the self and the other person, the human other, the other is *autrui*.

ⁱⁱ *Ibid*, p. 37.

Other (*Autre*); but towards its own future, its own joy of life which is founded on the body. Without the completion of me-ontological self in the other (*autrui*) towards God through desire, without being ethical or spiritual on the weight of body; this work could be named only as a passage point to ethical and critical me-ontology. Therefore, if we hold on this claim that this structure of the self is me-ontological; we have to say that Levinas clearly in its spiritual claims towards the Other is in the realm of meontotheology.

During this thesis we will search for a possible answer to this problem of materiality and spirituality around me-ontology of the self and the other. How does Levinas found this me-ontological ethics taking also the exteriority and materiality [of the self and of the other] into consideration? Does relation with joy of life and with desire provide a ground to this question? Joy of life as materiality and desire as ultimate spirituality? What are the structures of this joy of life which is living for or enjoyment and this desire which is insatiable and through meontological conscience, which is non-intentional and non-reflective? Is a togetherness of worldly and other worldly possible in Levinas in terms of *meontology of sacred* from home to sociality? How does he use the term “religious discourse” with other, with face through language? How does responsibility for/of the other reveal itself in the language, even the language is woven around “to be” of ontology? How can Levinas go beyond while he still explains that one foot of philosophy is inevitably captured by ontology? How does Levinas re-value the critique and doubt within philosophical discourse? Ultimately, why not ‘what is a face?’, why not the other is or is not; but ‘who is a face?’ and beyond being, beyond is and is not? All these questions first must pass through the critique of ontology and phenomenology by *Levinas: the philosopher of the face*ⁱ...

ⁱ Levinas’ use of the face is inspired by Max Picard: E. Levinas, *Proper Names*, ‘Max Picard and The Face’, p. 94.

1. LEVINAS AND ONTOLOGY

For a comprehensive analysis of Levinasian meontologyⁱ, which in another manner is called *an-archical/Other ethics*ⁱⁱ *being compatible with the thesis of this writing*, and its extensive conceptual applications; we should draw a framework of relations, which Levinas posited critically, with the history of philosophy, mainly with the primacy of ontology and its domination in the area of fundamental knowledge. That means we should deal with the *being* itself, with the being as totality.

Philosophical movement of Levinasian architecture starts with a challenge to the totality which includes the critique of being as unity/same and of being of beings as the very foundation of all knowledge, the universality and the truth. Against the absorptive and historical power of totalizing being, Levinas puts forward the concepts such as “the individuality”, “the encounter”, “the immediate experience of *face to face*”, “the absolute need of the other and the accusative and responsible ‘me’” which is absolutely exposed to the Other. The Other is the main concept which he improves his infinity-based project. Thus, the science of totality of being, as the other name of ontology, which is just an appropriation, thematization and possession including consumption, is just transformed into the infinity of the other which cannot be represented, thematized, possessed and consumed by any virtue of understanding or grasping; on the contrary the infinity of the other, absolute call for any meaningful and just life become the absolute condition of all knowing and consciousness: the name of this radical project is ethics as the first philosophy; thus and so its priority over “the science of being: ontology” establishes the very core of the Levinasian philosophy.

Ethics as the first philosophy is on the hither side of every ontology and epistemology and the advent of every experience. It perturbs the order of power/being and thwarts the being that persists in being as the unique meaning and horizon of life qua being. Therefore,

ⁱ We can see many names for the name of this kind of ethics, in *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas calls it as real metaphysics and metaphysical desire. And in *Ethics and Infinity*, he responded to a question that he expounded me-ontology as the ethics of non-site which affirms the primary modality of non-being in his work, *Otherwise than Being*.

ⁱⁱ An ethics of conscience which interrupts the conscious self that is arche: then, conscience is an-arche.

the path to be followed, freed from the light of neutral, objective, impersonal and anonymous historical ontology; following Levinas, we just enter the world of *beyond*, hearing, personal encounter and ethics of the other person: likewise getting into the conscience of human being and to the realm of who-ness, instead of consciousness and what-ness. How does Levinas elaborate the meaning of this non-totalizing ethics of the other person while criticizing the metaphysics of presence, the metaphysics of objective knowledge within the horizon of being? Which conceptualities within language does he construct by this radical challenge of ethics and finally? How can such ethics come to legitimize itself without applying to the metaphysics of presence of I, of ego, of same, of being, of bringing to light as seeing, of re-presenting, of letting the beings be? These are the questions we will trace.

In order to effectuate the meaning of questions; first we must uncover the significations of the statements such as “applying to the ontology, to I, to ego, to same, to being etc.”? That is the main question and inspiration of this thesis: How and by which means can Levinasian philosophy go beyond being and offer the otherwise than being as promised while criticizing ontological applications which are the direct objects of ontology? Or put in these questions: what is me-ontological ethics and how does Levinas use it in his thinking of the Other while uprooting the foundation of understanding, of consciousness as the meaning of identical self? As the questions imply; since historical experience of the philosophy cannot be ignored; and even though the statement of Levinas as the very condition of any ontology is of justice and of ethics for Levinas, Levinas first must explain how he approaches to ontology and only then must demonstrate the dark and forgotten roots of (self)-consciousness as the guilt or shame in the core of conscience so that the thesis that ethics is the first philosophy can be legitimized. Therefore, in favor of ethics, what we need is a critique of ontology and the dark roots of ontological consciousness.

We must have a closer look on Levinas’ relation with ontology and his illuminating the being’s other and how it is suppressed under the sway of being (of beings)? Only after this demonstration, we can move forward to his me-ontological instruments by which he creates his genuine philosophical saying, which is quite different then said, as the locus of his philosophical truth. Therefore, let us shape our question according to the conceptual

framework of truthful saying: How does Levinas realize his betrayal, without which philosophy would never exist at all, to Western philosophy? In this betrayal, as Jeffrey Dudiak states in his article, *Peace as Being Taught*, Levinasian critique attacks to the intellectual tradition of the Western discourse which is unity, whole, coherence, participation, ontos etc: “for the intellectual tradition of the West, the predominant images are those of unity, of coherence, of the whole, of the ontos that is one –and Western reason, knowing, is to culminate in a knowledge of this whole, to have as its telos an absolute, total knowledge of the being which it knows and in which it participates”ⁱ.

*

If we want to have a functional analysis of ontology, in favor of this writing; we can follow these reasonings and positionings, concepts and philosophers. Philosophical discourse of/from [me]ontological reasonings will oscillate between being and existent; philosophy of power and philosophy of justice; immanence and exteriority of transcendence; the idea of infinity and the infinity; reflective/totalizing consciousness and non-intentional consciousness; appropriation (knowledge) and speech (co-humanization); the mediate experience of understanding and immediate experience of the face of the Other; the horizon of being as every openness to letting be in Heideggerian sense of word and religion as the real truth of metaphysical desire; seeing in the light of representation and hearing in the call of the other; the identity of self-consciousness as the closure of being to itself and the non-identity, the non-adequation as the non-intentional structure of the other person. The second ones here represent the Levinasian arc. Focusing on these conceptual events of ontology and its Levinasian critique; we will have a delineation of what the true philosophy is and what the role of critiqueⁱⁱ in philosophy is in the eyes of Levinas.

ⁱ Jeffrey Dudiak, *Peace as Being Taught The Philosophical Foundations of a Culture of Peace*, p. 242, *Levinas and Education*, ed. Denis Egea Kuehne.

ⁱⁱ To unsay what is said (an exact definition of Levinasian *critique*), thanks to the saying of philosophy as ethical discourse, in the philosophy of history is common. But this is not because of the structure of being; on the contrary, critique can only arise from the Other, as to unsay (*dedire*) the said. We will analyse the function of doubt/critique as to unsay “the said” by another structure of temporality, time: that is di-achrony. This concept is also closely related with the concept of betrayal in a later part of this writing.

At the last part of this ontology section; since the concepts are productions of philosophers, for a clearer account of Levinasian critique of ontology; we should also mention relations with the other philosophers, especially Husserl and Heidegger as the mainstream of phenomenology. The other names can be counted as Plato, Descartesⁱ, Kant and Hegel (as the absolute and highest representatives of reflective/conceptual thinking – though we will not establish specific titles for these latter names in this writing). Husserl and Heidegger as the founders of contemporary ontology and phenomenology, and in a strict way of speaking as the masters of Levinas himself are extremely important for us. Levinas' methodology owes many things to phenomenological tradition; nonetheless, his philosophy separates from the intentional analysis of the other person which is overflowing in terms of infinite and exteriority, and from the disclosedness of being and the being's being-in-the world as whatness and howness rather than whoness and as the horizon of every meaningful thought, act and authentic existence.

1.1 Being and Existent: From Impersonal to Personal

Levinas' one of the main works, *Totality and Infinity* starts with to explicate the conceptualities such as the war/violence and the totality, the individuality and the universality. Since his insistence on deriving the meaning of individual/existent for his ethical initiative not from the totality, or by depending on it, but from the meaning of individual self, from its humanized core, gives the first signals of his prophetic eschatological approach which takes sides on another understanding of the [messianic] peace which is beyond being of ontological peace and war that are functioning as their own dialectical creators and guards synchronically. Levinas claims that an understanding of war and peace within the realm of ontology and totality, under which human beings in their individuality are erased and sacrificed for an objective meaning, cannot be a provider of a real and humanized peace:

“The visage of being that shows itself in war is fixed in the concept of totality, which dominates Western philosophy. Individuals are reduced to being bearers of forces that

ⁱ The careful attention of Levinas to Plato and Descartes regarding goodness, beyond being and the idea of infinite must be noted.

command them unbeknown to themselves. The meaning of individuals (invisible outside of this totality) is derived from the totality. The unicity of each present is incessantly sacrificed to a future appealed to to bring forth its objective meaning.... The peace of empires issued from war rests on war.”ⁱ

Since Levinas’ emphasis on peace and individuality seems to create a dialectical discussion, Levinas warns us that the dialectical concepts or the poles as doubles themselves are another phase of totality in which the individual is just a moment of totality and absorbed in a higher unity as the temporal appearance of being, as sublated. So, as long as the peace and the war are only the moments of an objective totality, the peace is always a partner of war. Therefore, an exteriority which breaks up with history or with presence, which means objectifying, synthesis or appropriation, is required. As Muni Schweig writes in his presented paper, Peace and Justiceⁱⁱ: “Emmanuel Levinas understands peace through the lens ‘prophetic eschatology’, as proceeding from a unique vision of a radical future that is exterior to history or presence. Of a different order from the ‘synoptic and totalizing objectifying virtues of vision’ which reduces its object to the presentness of conscious through appropriating and synthesizing, it is the inspired prophetic vision that authentically glimpses the future as peace.” That is why he opposes to a peace comes from the plays and clashes of politicians or from the immanence continuity of historical order; he claims that another primordial and original relation with being is needed rather than a dialectical one which is already ontological as being and its negativity.

Levinas does not mean that we need a conception of final peace by deduction which includes the introduction of a teleological system, or neither he offers an oracle or prophet into the totality of history or revealing the final meaning or finality of being to human beings by supporting the philosophical evidences: Levinas totally rejects such kind of eschatology; for it also serves to the violence and war-peace mechanism of present times and ontology because since it depends on the evidences of philoso-political area and on a

ⁱ E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, Preface, p. 22.

ⁱⁱ The paper was presented at the 10th Annual Conference of Concerned Philosophers For Peace California State University, Chico September 25-28, 1997. <http://www.oocities.org/schweig9/levinas.htm>

totalizing dimension of an absolute future, which tries to teach the way of future to the history or the orientation it will take in time in terms of being/presence. Instead he offers that: Eschatology institutes a relation with being *beyond* totality of history; it is such a relationship which is always established with a *surplus* always exterior to the totality since in the realm of ontology we have only the objective totality which cannot fill out the true measure of being and because totality of history in its very concept and formation can never be a real totality including all humanized experience of the past. It is just a past, which is structured within the tools of objective understanding; however the experience and the relations of/between human beings cannot be limited to this understanding and cannot be only objective and ontological. Thus, the surplus beyond this objective and ontological history is the concept of infinity, which is the ethical center of being human by the means of conscience and beyond anonymous core of historical consciousness or totality.

Levinasian “beyond”, from the heightness of infinity, is not addressed to some unpredictable future or is not “send” to a messianic independence day, or to a protentive future; conversely, his beyond hollows out the present which creates here-and-now in another temporality of time, another exteriority that is not constructed by “I think”. That comes to say that this beyond is within the history, within the experience, within the past and present; it always already calls out/forth the cry of responsibility from the other which signifies (in) other than totality, as another time: as signification of infinity from the other time of Face: that is *diachrony* rather than *synchrony*. Without this significative diachrony, without this beyond and surplus of infinity and its absencing of ontological presence in now-and-here human being just serves to the thematization, to the conceptualization for the sake of being and ontology as first philosophy which corresponds to a philosophy of power and injustice. Hereby, totality cannot represent the humanity of human being but only the inhumanity, for it is not the total –meaning– of human beings [existents], on the contrary for it is the total knowledge of the same/being which depends on suppressing the knowledge and the life of the other. There is no human in this totality, no spirit but only the reflected materiality into the so-called sovereignty of being. And this totality in history, in a more political discourse, is seen as the mechanism of the State and its dispositions which posit the subject as “exposed/subject to the system” and as a neutral and de-humanized

essence of an impersonal anonymity. Thus this subject is only a material-ity before representation and only an impersonal content of reflection into total in-humanity:

“Thematization and conceptualization, which moreover are inseparable, are not peace with the other, but suppression or possession of the other. For possession affirms the other, but within a negation of its independence to an exploitation of reality. Ontology as first philosophy is a philosophy of power. It issues in the State and in the non-violence of totality, without securing itself against the violence from which this non-violence lives and which appears in the tyranny of the State. Truth, which should reconcile persons, here exists anonymously. Universality presents itself as impersonal; and this is another inhumanity.”ⁱ

As the revelation of totality, the State, which is above all humanity and people, is declared as the total reality, actual realization of whole ontology alongside the history. When politics and State are at hand as the totalizing horizon of reality; Levinas affirms that we are just trying to establish morality on politics; that is to say; peace on war which is impossible. As if, the reality of State is the truth itself and eternally holds for all people, for the sake of them for all times and spaces; as if this reality condenses in the whole surface of existence [while all the existents are bending before] as the primordial foundation of all known beings in political sphere.

From Levinasian point of view, the history of philosophy is founded on the constant equality/identity of being and the beings, the State and its citizens, the idea and the life of idea in favor of being and the idea: Thus what Levinas wants to mark in a critical manner is that the true philosophy cannot just be universal, objective, neutral, impersonal juxtapositions of philosophical discourses; its sources and effects cannot be abstracted from life [of the other person]; the sake of being can never be more important than the sake of the *existent*, namely the other person: The general, the universal objectivity and sameness cannot reign over the particular and individual objectivity, that is to say, over the “otherness”. Thus, a real philosophy cannot escape from its responsibility while just standing on the empire of the Same and concepts, cannot re-present itself to itself as only

ⁱ E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 46.

the self-consciousness of inhuman Being; it must take the relationship of beings with each other on the basis of themselves, not on the basis of totality into consideration; so that philosophy will not only be the science of knowledge; but also the particular lives and speeches of human beings/existents instead of just being a repetitive mouth of an anonymous being of immanent history: Levinas is just so careful about giving the uttermost importance to the speech between the existents as non-totalizing, unique experience of human being. And his prophetic eschatology, which converts the power of philosophy to the justice of philosophy, is only really ethical when depends on the speech of the same and the other. Only by this speech, by language, we can reach the vision of ethical peace as the hearing of the other without having any image or representation of intentional objectifications, of vision-based ontology which is synoptic and targets things and human beings only as the content of knowledge. Nevertheless, the progress of Levinasian philosophy is not with knowledge of understanding by signifying images or concepts, but with the conscience of human spirit by sharing, by helping, by dialogue. By them, we go beyond the totality; we get into the breach from which individual human emerges and the ethics takes places. Levinas calls such kind of ethics as an optics, another vision which is a hearing and is totally different that of ontology. If there will be peace between human beings, then it is only possible with something that is between people: by speech.

“Peace is produced as this aptitude for speech... The first vision of eschatology reveals the very possibility of eschatology, that is, the breach of the totality, the possibility of a signification without a context. The experience of morality does not proceed from this vision –it consummates this vision; ethics is an optics. But it is a vision without image, bereft of the synoptic and totalizing objectifying virtues of vision, a relation or an intentionality of a wholly different type... ”ⁱ

Therefore, ontological and intentional identifications by reflection to the same within representative being prevent philosophy to focus on ethical implications of the relation between being and existent, State and individual, Totality and Infinity. Philosophy fails to notice the hearing of the infinite voice of the other while deriving all meanings from the

ⁱ Ibid, p.23.

significations of visionary being; and since only this speech provides us with the proof of existence of other than being, in the absence of different individual and non-representable infinity, the power relations of ontical and significative being-s become the core of philosophical discourse and reign over ethics, which in return results in the exclusion of philosophy of justice. Thereby, for another philosophical positioning, Levinas takes the advantage of using speech as an interval and passage point from being to existent, from same to the other by establishing the ethical relation in optics of hearing, a non-synoptic or a diachronic meeting model. This is a kind of personification of the philosophy, not a merely subjectification of me or the other, but another philosophical manner which opens me and the other to each other. Thanks to this opening, “me” and the other meets in speech and create the possibility of a peaceful eschatology. Levinas can move on this peaceful eschatology as long as he aims beyond being as an infinite recurrence of exploring alterity. Though, there comes another question: who is the starting point of this peaceful eschatology? The direction [of the speech] is from “the I” to the “Other”; or just the opposite? Levinas’ respond is not an easy one. He will both claim that the starting point of all philosophy is the Other, however, it cannot be separated from the I, the Ego; likewise we cannot separate the ethics from ontology. The complexity of this problem will also be an anchor of this writing. Levinas, in short, will claim that we can only conclude the Other’s, ethic’s primacy from the very sources of the I and the ontology. Logically the Other is on the hither side of every philosophy, but without having the existence of the I at-hand, without the birth or hypostasis of the I-subject, it is not possible to claim that the Other precedes the I. The Other’s difference cannot be understood or stated without the terms of the presence, the terms of I. Levinas will respond to this problem in a detailed manner with the concepts of saying, said and synchrony and diachrony which we will take into consideration on the last part of this writing, that is to say in part of meontological tools. And will claim that the priority of the other over the I or ethics over ontology reveals itself in the I, in the ontology in such a structure that infinite/saying/diachrony overflows this egoistic, ontological existence towards beyond, towards null-site: Transcendence on exteriority, excedence.

For establishing an ethical standpoint, Levinas questions how we can save the difference of the other. It is nothing but the speech for him. Levinas’ move imply that

speech in its very unpredictable, non-representable and non-thematized nature always bring the difference to the front; and the other person's ideas, feelings and challenges which always already belong to the order of another time prove that totality is never a totality without applying violence to 'the other' and its different existence. It is always total from the side of being, not from the sides of existents. So, the meeting of existents, as me and the other, cannot be disclosed into the experience of totality; because it is the unique event which causes the other's life to be heard in its authentic and differentiating essence. The other becomes not the impersonal and reduced content of the understanding and history within speech but now becomes *the personal* and the very core of every content as the foundation of justice: Justice precedes ontology, humanization takes priority over violence. Henceforth, the other's life as existent is no more exposed to the being's reflection qua being. Being qua being is overflowed by meeting with the face of the other and the intertwinement of justice and ethics emerge from this encounter with the Other.

Simon Critchley suggests that, as Levinas said in *Totality and Infinity*, "justice defines and is defined by the ethical relation to the Other"ⁱ. Put in another words, justice arises from the ethical response to the need, call and suffering of the Other. Therefore justice and ethics are the two sides of the same coin. So, the meaning of ethics before historical totality is interrupted by the relation with the unique Other, by speech. Thus, to do justice starts to signify when the self responds to the Other in an ethical manner. The face opens a dimension beyond politics, beyond economics of needs; a dimension in which the metaphysical desire awakens to existent as such. Justice starts in doing justice to the alterity of the other, to its difference outside of historical totality; and traverses the whole humanity through speech and peace as breaking up with the anonymity of historical order. As Lis Thomas also puts it; "In making ethics and justice the 'same language,' Levinas is acknowledging the two-sided event of the face to face encounter itself, that it is a relation that confronts the unique other but also concerns itself with the whole of humanity.... The response to the Other differs from the reaction of a subject to the given of the phenomenal world in so far as it does not remain "between us" but concerns everyone."ⁱⁱ

ⁱ *Deconstruction and Pragmatism*, 'Is Derrida a Private Ironist or a Public Liberal?', ed. Chantal Mouffe, Routledge, p. 34

ⁱⁱ Lis Thomas, *Emmanuel Levinas: Ethics, Justice, and the Human Beyond Being*, Routledge, p. 113.

1.2 Language and Religion

Levinas' rejection of the primacy of ontology in favor of the ethics focuses on the importance of language, expression and a relation with being as a being; not as being qua being. Levinas claims that there is an irreducible and absolute difference between a person and an object/thing. Even contemporary ontology has somehow introduced the dimension of to be launched to the existence, to the knowledge as knowing how to use our knowledge by a tool, as in the case with grasping or shaping the matter by hand, and as being in an affective state rather than a definitive or descriptive one. That comes to say that human being is engaged, merged with what it thinks, it is affected by its own being-in-the-world as a mortal and thrown out body/soul. However, this contemporary attempt, which is mostly Heideggerian, still understands a being in the horizon of openness of being qua being; it does not lead us to understand the other as its own particularity although the event of my being cannot be separated from my relation with object-s in terms of existential bonds and affective states. Because the other person is not an object, not a whatness; neither is a modality of affective being which is actualized in how a person does or makes in the world. It is rather a whoness in its singular being for Levinas.

My existence cannot be reduced to the thoughts or the representations of the world in phenomenological tradition, especially in Heideggerian sense; since being-in-the-world concretely is my foundation and prior to any representational constitution. But even this opening to exterior world, being a bodily entity is interpreted through being's understanding [=openness of being]. So, from this point of view; we cannot understand a being from its own uniqueness or particularity, but from the light of being's openness. It seems that we are just under the shadow of universal again while grasping particular; that means the relations again are just re-interpreted in the highest hierarchy of totality in favor of ontology and *existential*, rather than ethics or *existentiell*. So, once more the alterity of the other vanishes and is absorbed by reflection of understanding as a contribution to the horizon of being. At this point Levinas questions; is our relation to the other person can be confined to the borders of understanding and to the concept of being as such in the disclosedness of presence? Levinas' explanation about the relation of structure with the

other person, as a being, separates from the openness of being and understanding, and thus from presence:

“Our relation with him certainly consists in wanting to understand him but this relation exceeds the confines of understanding. Not only because, besides curiosity, knowledge of the other also demands sympathy or love, ways of being that are different from impassive contemplation, but also because in our relation to the other, the latter does not affect us by means of a concept. The other is a being and counts as such.”ⁱ

Why cannot the other person affect us as a concept does? The main reason for this is language and speech in the meeting of the I and the other. Levinas says that understanding a being cannot precede addressing him or speaking to him; he is not first an object of understanding, it means that the systematical approach of understanding regarding the other cannot work out through conceptualizing him whether by representation or by opening it into the horizon of being: foremost, the other is the one to whom I speak, to whom I address; thus, he is an interlocutor that cannot be totally possessed or represented in my own being. Our relation with the other or meeting its particularity via its own being cannot be detached from speaking to him. Only as long as the speaking goes on, the other stays as the other and as the human being outside of inhumanity of ontology. Therefore, as the locus of ontological truth, as the very place of the representations and the concepts; the consciousness cannot have/possess the language, speaking to the other as its content; it is out of its scope. On the contrary the consciousness is subject to this function of the language. Levinas goes further and claims that, the consciousness' realization is only possible on the condition of language, of proximity with the other. Thereby, the language as the unique relation type with the other cannot be grasped on the level of understanding or representation. Conversely, it is the pre-condition of consciousness.

Levinas responds the questions such as “Why cannot extend the understanding in a way that it will include/possess language; why cannot we place language at the level of understanding?” in this way: our relations with the daily objects reflect the structure of handling, possessing and consuming. The very core of knowledge is justified in this

ⁱ E. Levinas, *On Thinking-of-the-Other - Entre Nous*, translated by Michael Smith and Barbara Harshav, p. 5

structure as going beyond of our knowing objects. We touch them, we handle them, we possess them, we buy or sell them, we consume them; so we make “them” present for the sake of our own existence; this is the way how presence works in this structure; the relation with the objects as a transcending movement from knowing to usage and from using to knowledge traverses the borders of understanding. To hand or to possess or to consume the object is within the borders of understanding, however my relation with the other person is radically different since I am speaking to him, addressing him as my partner. I do not understand him; I give my understanding to him and try to take his understanding, which is very different from mine:

“There is nothing of the sort in my relationship with the other.... He is my partner within a relation that was only to have made him present to me. I have spoken to him, that is I have overlooked the universal being he incarnates in order to confine myself to the particular being he is. Here the principle “before being in relation with a being, I have to have understood him as being”, loses its strict application: in understanding this being, I simultaneously tell him my understanding.”ⁱ

Levinas’ conjunction with the thesis that only by language we can set an original relationship with the other takes us to distinguish between an “other” as speaking being, as interlocutor, and the other objectified as being in the order of my presence: the other’s being in my mind. In my mind, it is not more than a representation. And Levinas defines this difference as “*meeting* with the other”, rather than having the knowledge, representation of the other. It is not a result of objective knowledge but a process of speaking. And if the representation corresponds to the knowledge; then in this manner *the expression* corresponds to this meeting since it does not refer to transmit a thought into the mind of the other. So, the statement of “expression” leads us to establish a sociality by/with the other prior to any participation to the content of understanding. This sociality is a mark of another type of question with the other for philosophy; having said this, the quiddity search in the ontological realm and its question mark “what” turns into the realm of ethics as the question mark “who” in Levinasian discourse: from the definition or from the content of signification to the expression or to the signification without content that is

ⁱ Ibid., p. 7.

possessed. The “quid?” refers to content, to grasping, to comprehending by concept, whatever the form is whether sensible or intellectual. The content is correlative with the content, cannot be taken apart from it; together they create the system of knowing and its inner relations. However, when a person is at stake, search for quiddity cannot put someone in the relations of knowing/knowledge for someone is already present before any question of “what-ness”; he is not a matter of a question as what; cannot be re-presented to a content or context as a subordination to the self’s knowing itself. He or she cannot be exposed to a hierarchy of knowing and neither is he the subject of handling or using in terms of tool. Someone is just there before every question and answer; and “who” is not a question anymore, because the answer of this who-ness precedes and exhausts all type of modalities of knowing. The question of what is always answered with the categories of knowing being, however the difference of the other can never be grasped or understood by these categories. The knowing subject manifests itself to the itself by not taking the manifestation of the other in/for itself, but only by descriptions or significations with content, which creates the procedures of knowing. So, ontology always leads to an egology, knowledge of the self and its disclosure onto itself.

Levinas is clearly aware of that in the daily language, the who, which is the real territory of the ethical meeting, is fulfilled and answered by the answer of a what question, but the answer never can answer or satisfy this non-question of who-ness, since the quiddity –as describing and adding the interlocutor to the system of known beings, thus as the content for addressing of the self so that self-referential context is created– as a representable identification makes impossible to understand the singular presence of an existent, the other as interlocutor, who always already presents himself without any reference to a category or a concept in his own unique and different presence. The main sign and the mark of this difference is the face:

“To be sure, most of the time the who is a what. We ask ‘Who is Mr. X?’ and we answer: ‘He is the President of the State Council.’ The answer presents itself as a quiddity; it refers to a system of relations. To the question *who?* answers the non-qualifiable presence of an existent who presents himself without reference to anything, and yet distinguishes himself from every other existent. The question

who? envisages a face. The notion of the face differs from every represented content. To aim at a face is to put the question *who?* to the very face that is answer to this question; the answerer and the answered coincide.”ⁱ

So, the meeting as the coincidence of the answerer and the answered cannot be contemplated as an intelligible or sensible content of understanding or of mind. Thus, the surplus of the other person as the unique presence of its own being escapes from the grasping of knowing subject, it is beyond every knowing and exterior to every thematization.

What Levinas criticizes generally is just this absorption of “surplus”, the erasure of its difference by the essence and procedures of knowledge, by what-ness. Put in other words, the critique targets the aim of making every exteriority “interior” to the mind. But since the abyss, the gap between the answerer and the answered can never be closed in such kind of internalization; the exteriority of the other person must be put in question because this exteriority is inexhaustible and unconceivable by the means of understanding. The other is always there, and this “there” in its pure concreteness is not within the mind, not inside. The other always stands exterior to one’s mind. Kantian construction does not work out here saying that “there”ness of the other is already constituted on the intuitions of time and space and other categories of understanding and the production of imagination and reason. The face cannot be produced in this reality-construction and the absolute difference of the exteriority of the other’s body and its inner construction within the mind persists.

The one what is questioned (a who-ness of the other) exceeds the questioner (a what-ness of knowing). The Other as the source of all meanings, all significations, as the precedent of all questions and answers about quiddity, can only be heard, not seen as a matter of vision, and only realized exteriorly. Its effectuation is only possible by expression as language. Therefore, the other name of expression is the face and this face is without image, it surpasses the structure of a being’s image, overflows any picture. So, we can contact to the other by expression through face which creates its own production in its own manifestation in/by language, not by vision of seeing but hearing, not by image but by

ⁱ E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, pp. 177, 178.

expression of the speech. This is where Levinas constitutes the height of exteriority and takes us to the height of philosophical discourse as the divinity of distance. The distance and the gap always stand between the same and the other. The difference and the other's own being cannot be possessed, it is not the matter of knowledge but only of the faith. We can even say that the conversation is the form of the faith as living, concrete and exterior. Immediately the problem arises: both exterior and high, both worldly and other-worldly? How can be both possible at the same time? A direct answer would tell us that it is exterior since the other is exterior to the being of the self, we have a concrete relationship with him, we speak to him, we address him; it is also at height because we can never reach him in its own being, we can never completely understand what it means, how it responds, there is always the difference of her saying, her addressing, her understanding. Thus there is always the distance as the other name of relation-ship. Thus discourse becomes a discourse with God and not with equals. And only by this dimension of height, the metaphysics is the essence of "to-God" and leads beyond being.

Levinas puts the expression as inseparable from speaking. The thought of the other is only possible by a non-reflective and natural meeting with the other; only thought of the other is beyond what it includes, since here the thought is surpassed by speaking, by expression and delivered to the hands of expression, not to the territory of mind or understanding; it is in-between. This in-between relation with the other identifies the transcendence in which the other cannot be weighted, measured on the *same or Being*; thus the person we have met cannot be articulated as a concept but only articulated as a *person*. Speaking to the other goes beyond thinking of the other in its action; we speak to him, he responds in a way we can never consume; that is the real meaning of an ethical dialogue. The one who speaks to him as I and the one who listens and is exposed to him starts differentiating each other; the identity of the I is splitted during communication. This type of ethical communication refers to an absence of common selves, common plane. I and the other are totally different; becoming common is only possible through speech while also the distance and the gap are maintained. So, commonality comes after invocation, not before, thus this invocation constitutes the total humanization of the other as a being, as an interlocutor. By this means, we can say that, the other becomes a being in a dialogue with

the I. What about the function of the understanding of the I if the I is the beginning point of the communication? Cannot we articulate this dialogue within mind?

Levinas responds in a negative way. And here he proposes his model of sociality as a religious bond in his ethical survey. As Heidegger did, and to which Levinas opposed, we cannot articulate expression within understanding, since the other cannot be objectified for any participation to common content of understanding. It is an irreducible sociality which is instituted through expressing oneself to the other: salutation, greetings, farewell and vice versa; not presenting oneself to the other in the way of Hegelian or metaphysical recognition; since the recognition is only a looking at the other for a while and then return to the dialectical logic of the eye/Same for Hegel through reflection. Levinas claims that this kind of expressive sociality, as an ultimate bond with the other, is prior to any participation or ontology:

“The relation to the other is therefore not ontology. This bond with the other which is not reducible to the representation of the other, but to his invocation, and in which invocation is not preceded by an understanding, I call *religion*. The essence of discourse is prayer. What distinguishes thought directed towards a thing from a bond with a person is that in the latter case a vocative is uttered: what is named is at the same time what is called.”ⁱ

In this manner, Levinasian philosophy seems to coincide with the theological discourse, when Levinas used concepts such as “divinity, height, greeting, invocation, call upon, religion etc.” However, Levinas warns us that he does not use this term in the manner of traditional theological way does. Theological discourse, like traditional metaphysics, takes God as Supreme Being, not as the Other. This is where Levinas departs from the ways of theology, in which all others re-turn to the One, as in ontology. In accordance with Levinasian direction, we should say that Levinas calls for another thought of sociality, not stemming from representations or understanding or reflective intentionality in which invocation is only a content of a (Supreme) Being. On the contrary, temporality cannot be exhausted by the timeless truth procedures of knowing Being and internalized within mind

ⁱ E. Levinas, *Entre Nous*, p. 7.

by presencing; here as in prayer's position, the invocation is externalized as a vocative by absencing and it is like a journey never comes back to the same place where it starts. Absencing here is not a simple opposite of being as non-being; absencing here moves beyond the dialectical poles of being and non-being; it is here being's other: a non-being which is beyond being and its magnitude. It is also not non-present of synchronical being as the negativity of being and its attributes; this absence of being's other belongs to the another time, to the diachrony of the other which creates a hole in the synchronic time model while hollowing out the present for another present. Here, easily, we can claim that this is the time of faith or belief for Levinas. Levinas gives the example of prayer for this sociality bond which is absent in terms of being or presence. Therefore, this relationship with the other, as being exterior and as being at-height at the same time is clearly understood in the example of praying. It is always to-God, to the future which is never present or never foreseen. However, the praying with the words, with the expression is also given to the exteriority. It is a dialogue in such a way that the preaching is asymmetrical. The prayer's position does not manifest what it means in a particular or meaningful content grasped by understanding, it is not to the Same of the being-in-the-world, it goes towards to the order of the other. Its what-ness, who-ness or where-ness cannot be understood by any categories of mind; it only and only seeks for goodness which is never internalized; and thus the words in the modality of the praying have the height of un-worldly resonances. That which is resonating is of religious-type sociality which is only realized by the bond of meeting, by greeting or by praying. Here "I" presents himself to the other as "me" who is always already exposed to the call of the other. And praying, greeting or meeting is the ethical forms of responsibility for/to the other. The one who is stating himself can never fulfill his responsibility through his actions or thoughts for the other and for goodness; that is why in praying there is more than being/I; it is the infinite process of realizing the ethical responsibility; the event of responsibility here calls itself as eternal conscience which is going beyond, to-God, does not name itself as finite, as self-consciousness which is within being qua as [Supreme] Being. Here, prayers prays to-Other, to the absolute of an interlocutor; not to a truth about beings. The other is believed or affirmed; he is the subject of faith or religion:

“Faith is not a knowledge of a truth about which one might be doubtful or certain. Beyond these modalities, it is the face to face encounter with a substantial interlocutor –who is self-originating, already dominating the powers that constitute and stir it– a thou, springing up inevitably, solid and noumenal, behind the man known in that bit of absolutely decent skin that is the face, closing over the nocturnal chaos, opening onto what it can take up and answer for.”ⁱ

To-God is here the sociality which the understanding can never penetrate into and is the between-us; and that is why ethics should be posited as an event of interlocutor beyond violence of knowing within the internalization and the absorption. Moreover it is anarchical base of every understanding and intentionality; it is ethics itself from where all sense generates before any meaningful act or content. This sociality, this bond with the other is the environment in which all beings exist and all lights are seen; it is the Other as to-God and this is where Levinas puts his main thesis: To-God here is goodness, justice beyond being and anterior to all beings and their science as the subject of knowing. Thus, here for Levinas, the Other as to-God, as unique sociality of otherness creates the faith element of his philosophy, that is to say, the types of invocation which in turn are the source of *an exteriority without violence*, an exteriority of the Other discourse. Herewith this invocation as the bond of sociality and exteriority cannot be preceded by knowledge or by the object of meeting that belongs to the understanding. The understanding cannot witness to the justice without violence and cannot insert itself as the unimpeachable between-us of ethical position:

“The object of the meeting is at the same time given to us and *in society* with us, but without that event of sociality being reducible to any property whatsoever revealed in the given – without knowledge being able to take precedence over sociality. If the word religion is, however, to indicate that the relation between men, irreducible to understanding, is by that very fact distanced from the exercise of power, but in human faces joins the Infinite – I accept that ethical resonance of the word and all those Kantian reverberations.”ⁱⁱ

ⁱ Ibid., p. 32.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., p. 8.

Therefore; the object of the meeting within knowledge is never adequate or proper to have the real structure of ethical meeting. The object of the meeting means to be conceived by understanding as a sensible content; indicates violence over sociality and expelling the real exterior from the inside. Since, the person as a being is not an object and cannot be possessed by any means of human capability or power; his exteriority stands forever as foreigner. Therefore, his existence is a unique part of shared religious sociality for Levinas and is the key for having relationship with a being as a being in its own, in its suchness. And as in the tradition of presence metaphysics; we do not equalize the foreigner, the other to the irrational or to the outside of the territory of reason. This is where Levinas demonstrates its unique position in the history of philosophy, while he insists radically that ethics comes from the relation with the other, he also claims that otherwise than being goes to-God as a social bond in terms of interlocutor; and still for Levinas all of this discourse is the subject of philosophy more than theology or any kind of mysticism. And even when Levinas posits God as interlocutor to whom we are addressing and addressed by in an ethical conversation; and even while he asserts that this God could not be God without having been first and foremost interlocutor, he is still philosophizing because all ontology comes from this kind of ethical position for him. Furthermore, Levinas' position, while aiming the justice by to-God; it also seeks for a peaceful conversation in which the order of reason is established by singularities of beings, by humanization of exterior environment within beings:

“Religion” remains the relationship to a being as a being. It does not consist in conceiving of him as a being, an act in which the being is already assimilated ... in *letting him be*. Nor does it consist in establishing I know not what belonging, or in overstepping the bounds of the rational in an effort to understand beings. Can the rational be reduced to having power over the objects? Is reason domination, in which the resistance of the being as such is overcome not by an appeal to that resistance itself, but as if by a cunning trick of the hunter, who catches what is strong and irreducible in a being through weakness, its renunciation of its particularity-through its place on the horizon of universal being?.. But is the order

of reason not constituted rather in a situation in which things are “talked over”, in which the resistance of beings qua beings is not broken, but pacified?”ⁱ

Levinas here tries to open another comprehension of “rational-ity”. And taking the risk of conflicting with the historical content of the concept, he asks whether the true reason is established and maintained in the realm of sociality, speech. And this speech between the I and the other is of religious bond and a true rationality which Western tradition of philosophy ignores. Levinas’ understanding of religion is directly linked with his ethical project while conflicting with dominant metaphysics of knowledge, because it is the human qua human and this humanization project is the main topic of philosophical discourse which includes giving the other utmost priority over oneself in terms of sociality. And for Levinas, this is the beginning of philosophy; and though ontology and the metaphysics of the Same posit otherwise, this ethical demand is the only locus where reason and intelligibility arises within justice and peace. And this justice is only possible within social interaction in which statement and dialogue with the Other reside. So, his rationality in connection with the good-ness of to-God coexists with the social bond as faith in terms of real justice. This social bound with the Other is religious, thus it is with God and it reveals also the word of God and Face in the world of justice. Levinas says that Face is already language before words, an original and originary one; it is the language of the inaudible, the language of the unheard, the language of the poor and the weak, the beaten and the homeless in its pure nakedness and vulnerability: the word of their world in their pure fragility. Thus, Face is the an-archival element of this philosophical project where language and religion concede themselves to the responsibility of/for this Face, to the world of those who are needy, thirsty, hungry and unsheltered etc.

A final remark of this section should be on the very similarity of the books with language and religion, with the Word and the God, with the statement and the social bond in relation to the other or to the Face. As we could say” without explaining the further grounds, the books are also not ontological as in the case of language, sociality, expression and statement. This is an interesting and crucial remark in Levinasian philosophy, when he just asserted the *inspired language*, the books as a surface of all ethical words; he just

ⁱIbid., p. 8.

demonstrates another analysis of a book as *being-towards-the-Book*, there we also find not the consciousness of "...", object of "...", intention of "..."; but the very subject of ethics, conscience of religious. As it seems that they are, especially the religious books (Scripture), but not only them since Levinas always refers to the works of Dostoyevsky, an important element of our ethical exigencies for the other. Hence, human beings are not only in the world, but more than that, they are in the word as being-towards-the-book. Furthermore, this relation with books are of not ontological realm of objecthood, it belongs to the order of exterior and infinite Other. One must go beyond these remarks of bookishness in Levinas, especially taking his relation with Blanchot into consideration and assess ethical resonances of bookishness in another work. It seems that Levinasian bookishness reveals a meontology of sacred, of inspiration, of scripture:

“... We forget our relation to books –that is, to inspired language. The books of books, and all literature, which is perhaps only a premonition or recollection of the Bible. One is easily led to suspect pure bookishness and the hypocrisy of bookishness in our books, forgetting the depth of our relationship to the book. All humanity has books, be they but books before books: the inspired language of proverbs, fables and even folklore. The human being is not only in the world, not only *in-der-Welt-Sein*, but also *zum-Buch-sein*, being-towards-the-book in relation to the inspired Word, an ambiance as important for our existence as streets, houses and clothing. The book is wrongly interpreted as pure *Zuhandenes*, as what is at-hand, a manual. My relation to the book is definitely not pure use, it does not have the same meaning as the one I have with the hammer or the telephone.”ⁱ

1.3 Exteriority and Infinity

Levinasian challenge to the violence and to the totality does not refer to a materialistic or anthropological point of view; on the contrary, more radically; it just opens another dimension of the spirituality that depends on a different relation with being, namely the idea of the other person by means of exteriority. Levinas' move is extraordinary because it is a differentiating attempt to save itself from both idealistic and materialistic point of

ⁱ Ibid., p. 109.

views by encounter with the other person. Thus, in this move, ethics' transcendence is constructed by the exteriority, by the *excedence* of the Other: thus the relation to the Other is both transcendent and exterior; it is not only a vertical but also horizontal. This traversing excedence, "the spontaneous and immediate desire to escape the limits of the self" in *Totality and Infinity*; this break-up and rupture with Western philosophy is carried by the idea of infinity. For Levinas, the subordination of human being to general concepts, to representations or to a historical totality cannot be defended as first philosophy in terms of ontological horizon because ethics and justice precede general concepts and ontological architecture by the concept of infinity:

"What remains ever exterior to thought is thought in the idea of infinity. It is the condition for every opinion as also for every objective truth.... The relation with infinity cannot, to be sure, be stated in terms of experience, for infinity overflows the thought that thinks it.... But if experience precisely means a relation with the absolutely other, that is, with what always overflows thought, the relation with infinity accomplishes experience in the fullest sense of the word."¹

Levinas' direction in *Totality and Infinity* arises with this understanding of infinity. And it is obvious that this passage from ontology to ethics is done by an asymmetrical transitivity from totality to infinity; it is asymmetrical since the latter one precedes the former one, not temporally or historically but an-archically: ethics is the only first philosophy and first condition of philosophizing. Thus, it is expected that Levinas claims that not totality but the idea of infinity is the path of his philosophical production. Thanks to the concept of infinite which is derived from the relation between the same and the other; he grounds a thesis around subjectivity in this first main work. The foundational thesis presents subjectivity as welcoming the Other, as hospitality, as the infinity by *the idea of infinity* the "I" contains. So, this idea is carried in "me", but the I cannot obtain it from the experience of things or outer world, because such kind of experience makes things "represented" in the understanding and can receive the things by knowledge without experiencing any overflow. The understanding is successful at grasping things and at

¹ E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 25.

presenting them to the consciousness as the parts of itself. Then, how is this idea producedⁱ, what are the relations of an infinite entity and the idea of infinity?

Levinas responds that there is a disproportion between the idea of infinity and the infinity of which it is the idea that this exceeding of limits is produced. So, infinity cannot exist first and *then* manifest itself; conversely it is a never-ending production as manifestation; its existence co-exists with its revelation as in the statement of language, or as in face-to-face. Levinas demonstrates that this infinite cannot be borne by the I, because its infinity is produced as a positing of its idea in me. It is posited in me and cannot be created by me, because infinity is non-identity, disproportion, non-equality; and the I is just its identity with itself and cannot present something to itself in which it is possible to contain more than it can do; so if we claim that the infinite is produced by I; we have to claim that there is also an identifiable and limited object of this infinity, a representation of infinity; this claim will lead us to a contradiction with the idea of infinity itself and its infinity, production in the exteriority.

The structure of the infinity as such is one of the main philosophical moves of Levinas, still taking the Descartes' argumentation of infinite to the center, since he defends that the infinite is the only idea that the one/known who thinks is transcended/overflownⁱⁱ transcended/overflownⁱⁱ in that which is thought. The idea of infinity and infinity relation is the unique relation that the idea is surpassed and the idea goes beyond being only a representation; in itself it already carries its exceeding limits; its own transcending activity of itself; and it demolishes its adequation every time we think the infinite. Thus, from this reasoning, Levinas deduces that the idea of infinity is the condition of all theory and activity; since it is the originary source of every finite thought and activity. In other words; this idea of infinite, unlike any other objects [of knowledge] cannot be consumed by a representation, by a concept or an idea by intentionality; on the contrary, Levinas assert that the idea of infinite is all condition of knowing, as the overflowing of the idea by its *ideatum* which corresponds to the idea:

ⁱ Levinas clearly distinguishes between this kind of production and the production of understanding as the effectuation of being and its being brought to light or its exposition. Since this is a mechanism of ontology and metaphysics of presence; conversely, Levinas will posit the production of infinite as the relation between same and the other.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., Plato, Aristotle, p. 49.

“Hence intentionality, where thought remains as adequation with the object, does not define consciousness at its fundamental level. All knowing qua intentionality presupposes the idea of infinity, which is preeminently non-adequation.... The incarnation of consciousness is therefore comprehensible only if, over and beyond adequation, the overflowing of the idea by its ideatum, that is the idea of infinity moves consciousness... The idea of this infinity ... is the common source of activity and theory.”ⁱ

For Levinas, this overflowing relation is the source of revealing and transcending activity of infinite; the never graspable distance between an *ideatum* and *idea* becomes the exterior and transcendent content here. Without infinity; there could be no transcendent being, or exteriority of the Other. The ideatum here is not of a sensual or perceptible nature; it undoes the function of perception and categories of understanding each time, the content as ideatum is always removed from its idea, from comprehension of understanding, because it always resides in the exteriority by infinity process. This infinity structure has the same structure with a relation with the other person as a being, not a part of Being: We cannot possess the infinite, we cannot suspend its presence, it always marks the difference between objectivity and transcendence, ontological and meontological. And if totality cannot be completed, it is because of the Infinity's not letting itself to be absorbed or integrated; on the contrary, it makes totality obliged to the non-totally, me to non-me “on to meon”. It is separation and transcendence in itself. It destroys the metaphysical power of immanence. Thus, excedence is the signification as the Infinite, as the Other before any combination of signs or units, or before any abstraction of people as impersonal beings. As in the Cartesian way, the concept of infinity establishes a unique contact with a being as being and it totally maintains its exteriority since it is not reachable as an object of immanence; it is always already “there” before us, not inside, not here and now. The one who thinks it is overflowed by its very exterior existence. A being, in this regard, is not tangible or touchable; and the contact to this being renders Absolute in two asymmetrical ways: one is towards this being as Absolute and the other is not-towards this being as Absolute relative; since absolution of the infinity means it also absolves itself from this

ⁱ Ibid., Preface, p.27.

being-towards, from this relation. It is not identical with itself, it is not dialectical or participative neither; in a way it always de-constructs its own content as transgression of its own limits; it always manifests more than it is expected to. With more Levinasian terms; this structure is not a taking without giving, it takes “giving” always: double giving, I give myself to the other, I give the other to the other. Double giving, as ethical meeting, is only possible within the structure of infiniton.

How does this relation make the concretization of the idea of infinity? asks Levinas. He responds that the structure of infinite distance with the Other, despite the proximity achieved by the idea of infinity, must be elaborated within face-to-face structure. And more questions come together with this expansion. How does absolute exteriority of the exterior being manifest itself and at the same time absolve itself within this relation? How does infinite come to existence in finite being? What is the nature of this interval between finite and infinite? And how does this distance become the source of being-towards the Other? What is a spiritual optics by which a being, an I can have excendent and this infinite distance with the Other? Possible common answers come from the concept of Desire and Face. In order to clarify the difference of this relation by infinite from objectification of possession Levinas writes:

“The infinite in the finite, the more in the less, which is accomplished by the idea of infinity, is produced as Desire –not a Desire that the possession of the Desirable slakes, but the Desire for the Infinite which the desirable arouses rather than satisfies. A Desire perfectly disinterested –goodness. But Desire and Goodness concretely presuppose a relationship in which the Desirable arrests the “negativity” of the I that holds sway in the Same –puts an end to power and emprise. This is positively produced as a possession of a world I can bestow as a gift on the Other– that is as a presence before a face... The way in which the other presents himself, exceeding the idea of the other in me, we here name face.”ⁱ

It is clear that this welcoming of the Other, Desire for Infinite does not come from vision or at-hand of touching. The face of a being as the other, every time the encounter comes to

ⁱ Ibid., p. 50.

existence, destroys and overflows the plastic image we have taken by vision, by the representation, it always surpasses my own measure of the ideatum. The face reveals itself as a desire for infinite only in a speech; we have only expression of it in conversation rather than in representation. Levinas goes beyond and tells us that this is the only way to have the truth: as expression, not as adequation or concordance of intelligible and perceptible in the objectivity of understanding. Truth as expression is of face.

Levinas' critique of modern ontology here depends on not to the disclosure of an impersonal Neuter, objective, adequation as measurement of the truth, but to the expression of the face as production of truth which is absolutely exterior to the circle of understanding. This model of ethical truth turns the thematization into conversation. This does not transmit the truth between minds as an objective common place but releases the singular experience of each face as the true content but never-ending production of truth. Without holding the possibility of saying a lie, there can be no truth at all. Levinas' truth brings de-objectification of dehumanized ontological truth. His truth comes from elsewhere, rather than somewhere of ontical world of finite beings' identity. Then how does a particular I gets the real truth of its existence? Levinas responds that the I goes beyond its capacity through receiving the infinite from the Other, that is to say by teaching, not by *maieutics*:

“To approach the Other in conversation is to welcome his expression, in which at each instant he overflows the idea a thought would carry away from it. It is therefore to receive from the Other beyond the capacity of the I, which means exactly: to have the idea of infinity. But this also means : to be taught. The relation with the Other, or Conversation, is a non-allergic relation, an ethical relation; but inasmuch as it is welcomes, this conversation is a teaching. Teaching is not reducible to maieuticsⁱ; it comes from the exterior and brings me more than I contain. In its non-violent transivity the very epiphany of the face is produced.”ⁱⁱ

ⁱ Ibid., Aristotle, p. 51.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., p. 51.

This teaching, as the expression of transivity of/to non-violent reason is found in a positive position and since it is the giver of infinite and expression; it questions the autonomy of the I and puts its freedom into question. It brings the concept of heteronomy. This teaching (of heteronomy) only calls for disinterestedness, for goodness. Not power or possession. This teaching teaches the immediateness and the directness of the face by making the I receive infinite call, absolute straightforwardness of the existent as such. This existent's immediate is interpellation by which we are in face to face. Levinas warns us that this is not some kind of theological or mystical relation; or as it many times were said, not a kind of totalizing relationship; Levinas seeks for another way. Levinas proposes that this kind of relation, as the real essence of metaphysics not only does question the freedom of the I but also the totalization of the history, the very horizon of Being. The teaching does not offer the amalgamation of the Other within history; but let us speak with the Other which is excluded from history. And the history is not and cannot only be the incessant flow of Being within disclosure, but also be the process of ruptures and intervals in which an ethical questioning arises and a true approach to the Other becomes possible. These ruptures and intervals as the beginning of ethical order takes us to the spiritual optics, to the spiritual activity which creates time of particular beings, not universal timeline. Universal timeline as totality of a plot, made by historians, cannot measure the life of a separated being, of an other. And this universal totalization is actualized by the powers of memory: a mastery of memory leads to Being. As an inversion, memory makes actuality of historical experience interior to the mind: passage from event to the nothingness of it in terms of pure thought: from factuality to conceptuality. Levinas claims that the separation of the Other from universal history is only possible and radical if each being gets its own time, if a being is not absorbed or reflected in the system of signs, in the interiority of conceptuality within Same. How can this spiritual activity, optics of a separated being be possible with-out History?

Spiritual activity as the way of real teaching, in Levinas, is defined in terms of Desire and brings front the distinction between desire and happiness. Levinas indicates that the difference is absolute and radical, since happiness is the void of Soul and desire is an aspiration in which we are towards to the Other. In happiness or need or enjoyment, the distance with object/subject is traversed; in Desire it is both traversed and at the same time

is untraversable since it is the very nature of a speaking with the other. The I can sacrifice its pure and complete being to happiness; but, in the Desire –for the other– it can sacrifice its happiness to its Desire. Therefore this desire is beyond happiness and its satisfaction. Levinas calls this kind of desire as “Insatiable Desire”, for it is not for food but for goodness, for truth and for justice. And where happiness corresponds to the realm of politics, mutual recognition and equality; desire tends towards religion which is, in Levinasian terms, humility, responsibility and sacrifice.

“Finally, the distance that separates happiness from desire separates politics from religion. Politics tend towards reciprocal recognition, that is, towards equality; it ensures happiness. And political law concludes and sanctions the struggle for recognition. Religion is desire and not struggle for recognition. It is the surplus possible in a society of equals, that of glorious humility, responsibility, and sacrifice, which are the conditions for equality itself.”ⁱ

The distance with the other shore provides us with the absolution of absolute distance. The relation is not reflexive or intentional, it is asymmetrical, an-archical and non-intentional: the interval is spanned and not spanned at the same time. When this interval is between subject and its object; it is to know objectively, to know the fact as already happened, already passed by of the historical process. And they now belong to the silence of immanence within history, and the historical fact is forever lacking its very presence, its eventuality and actuality; however, a being, a subject, as long as he can talk, he is only a subject of infinity, of noumenality. Thus, Levinas claims these facts which are having the absolute absence of themselves as passing by are only subject to possession and enjoyment which is a self-sufficiency and disclosure of the self into itself. The face which is to signify or to have meaning is the irreducible presence of exteriority. The meaning of meanings comes from the face; it is said and taught by it within infinity of expression and this teaching is not a content of sensibility or intellectual intuition. Only actuality of speech commands me in the way of the Other beyond objectification and presentation. The logic of presence, making something present in/to understanding is break down by the very impossible movement to-ward the Infinite as Desire.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 64.

Then, we should clearly make a distinction between the experience of perception, knowing as finite, disclosing movements of interiorizing understanding and the pure experience of exteriority as impossible movement to-ward the Infinite. The disclosure of perception and understanding are opposite to the pure experience of Infinity as exteriority with-in expression. Levinas explains the system of interiority as totality and the inter-positioning of things. First, he analyses the structure of *perception*. As Levinas says, when the things are done in-themselves for their final function they are disclosed into their form within system. Nonetheless, Levinas explains this disappearing under the finality, under the usage of functions, cannot cover the very truth of perception of the individual things. They cannot be sentenced to the chains of totality, cannot resolve into the relations of conceptual links under totality. They cannot be subordinated to the finality of Being since they also exist for-themselves apart from the knowing being:

“They are always in some respect like those industrial cities where everything is adapted to a goal of production, but which, full of smoke, full of wastes and sadness, exist also for themselves. For a thing nudity is the surplus of its being over its finality. It is its absurdity, its uselessness, which itself appears only relative to the form against which it contrasts and of which is deficient. The thing is always an opacity, a resistance, a ugliness... Objects have no light of their own, they receive a borrowed light.”ⁱ

As in the Platon’s Theory of Forms, the sun as the metaphor of light-giver makes the things exist by its own light; the light is possibility of seeing the things, it is the environment in which the things co-exist. After the analysis of perception, the nakedness of this ugly world of things, which also exist-for-themselves, Levinas identifies the process of clothing of the worldly things with signification which is a going beyond that of perception. The mind discloses them by science or by art: by knowledge or by beauty. They put the things under a system of signs and significations of functions and beauties. This is an internal finality, as Levinas names it. The mind lightens them under its categories and forms; they are now clarified by the forms of understanding within the whole. This is the science/art of abstraction also. And they are not only the things they are

ⁱ Ibid., p. 74.

while they are being used as a material aim or finality, as a progress, as a construction of other things or as a mask of beauty. In this use, they are also beautiful or knowledge with the signification of disclosure. Thus, there is a world of –represented– things within the mind, but as Levinas puts it, the world of things still exists-for themselves outside of mind. The abstraction still cannot put an end to the bare existence, to the nudity and the ugliness of the things.

Levinas does not reject the importance of this ontological or esthetical values system; on the contrary he affirms them; but on the very condition that ethics come first and grounds both ontology and aesthetics which depends on identity and intelligibility since he claims that ethics is the ground of all significations by metaphysical desire towards the Other in the realm of exteriority which resists to the powers of abstraction. And it is the form of all forms as having not any form but a relation with the other. The work of language, within relation to the Other, is before all lights; it is dawn before every day. The language puts us in a relation with a nudity independent from every form and signifies by itself before our projection or reflection, before intelligibility's giving light to it. It is evidently there, but not evidence, this "there" is ground where all evidences take meanings. It is such a nudity that always be disclosed by the powers of I, and therefore always stands exterior to us; since with our light, we leave the nakedness of the face in pure darkness. As if it is surrendered by the anonymity of *il ya* and as if the horrors of self before *il ya* legitimizes the ground of this exclusion. This nudity of the face which is not subject to the light of cognition founds the transcendence which means the absence of the face from this world. He is in exile, he is absent, he is of another world, a world of strangeness and destituteness:

“The nakedness of his face is extended into the nakedness of the body that is cold and that is ashamed of its nakedness. Existence is, in the world, a destitution... To recognize the Other is to give. But it is to give to the master, to the lord, to him whom one approaches as ‘You’ in a dimension of height.”ⁱ

ⁱ Ibid., p. 75.

This heightness comes with-in generosity which is opening of self to the Other, and is independent of the egoist position. This egoist position in which the I has the joyous possession and identity of the world is called into question by the Other. And Levinas puts that the generality of the objects are in correlation with the generosity of the subject who is towards the Other. Because in the generality of things, as in the case of subject going towards the Other, there is the beyond of the egoist and solitary enjoyment; there is the communality and dispossession of the things. This communality breaks up with the solitary property and possession of things. In Levinas, the trade in the form of possible merchandise is thought as a form of possession contrasting to the enjoyment of egoism. They are not anymore exclusive property –of enjoyment– in communality and universality of things. Thus, in this ethical project, generality of things co-exists with a subject going beyond itself, as towards-ness to the Other, in *giving*.

Universality and community is established by the very gift of language which is the passage from the individual to the general, to the universal since the language offers things which are mine to the others without any price. So, to speak is to make the world a common ethical place of human beings which is surrounded by dispossessed things through universality and communicability of the language. To give the universal, the communicable, the thought by language is an interruption in the order of enjoyment and solitary being. The enjoyment or happiness of the I which comes from inalienable property of things now is abolished by the very destitution, hunger and loneliness of the Other. Therefore, the possession of things by language transforms into the modes of giving or refusing. Dispossessed things in the conversation with the Other are now not a matter of enjoyment but a matter of desire to give:

“I can recognize the gaze of the stranger, the widow and the orphan only in giving or refusing; I am free to give or to refuse; but my recognition passes necessarily through the interposition of things. Things are not, as in Heidegger, the foundation of the site; the quintessence of all relations that constitute our presence on the earth (and “under the heavens, in company with men and in the expectation of the gods”): The relationship between the same and the other, my welcoming of the

other, is the ultimate fact, and in it the things figure not as what one builds but as what one gives.”ⁱ

So, welcoming of the other does not mean to be excluded by the world of things or society; on the contrary, it traverses these worlds of things and people within ethical relation. It is not a relationship of love which is a reduction of all society, all world into two of One in terms of blindness to alterity of speech. This welcoming is not participation to the infinite. The transcendence of this heightness of welcoming is not of a mythical order. In the relation to the infinite Other, the self who approaches the Other is never vanished or removed outside of itself: the one both stands as separated and as for-other: a relation and an absolution from this relation. Levinas calls this kind of relation as real metaphysical relation that is subject to the idea of infinity. A critique of positive religions, that are very similar to ontological approach in terms of structure, is realized by this comprehension of infinite.

Levinas' opposition to the participation and union model within One/Same of the ontology also counts for a critique of traditional understanding of God in theology: when God, taken as Supreme Being, he is also an infinite in which the Other is immersed and reduced into Totality, absorbed by the Same. Not only the other's existence in its proper individuality as an existent but also the very existence and separation of the I becomes impossible in this participation model: they are once more impersonal content of a perfect God, a flawless victory of the form of totality and oneness. Conversely, God is not comprehended in terms of participation or objectification of knowing in Levinas. God is within pure experience of social contact to the Other.

Levinas' religion and conceptualization of God, nevertheless, rests on the concept of exteriority and infinite which directly comes from the Other. From interlocutor. And hearing the divine wor-l-d of this exterior interlocutor means to have a relation with a substance, overflowing the very existence of the idea of infinite: the exterior one, as unlimited, goes beyond the objective existence of the concept of infinite within mind. And unexpectedly, when Levinas uses the term atheism of metaphysician, he does not refer to a

ⁱ E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p.77.

case in which the believer does not exist. He just offers another way for thinking of God rather than that of mythology or theology: a meontological one which signifies as a God accessible in justice. Moreover, he also writes this because he is not on the side of a God which is the Same of ontology. He is on the side of the Other, as true God in terms of a meontological justice. The comprehension of this God as transcendence, as the demand of justice, goes into Infinity that is beyond thematisation and participation. And this beyond by the Other is called as ethics, as spiritual optics rather than ontology:

“The comprehension of God taken as participation in his sacred life, an allegedly direct comprehension, is impossible, because participation is the denial of the divine and because nothing is more direct than the face to face, which is straightforwardness itself. A God invisible means not only a God unimaginable, but a God accessible in justice. Ethics is the spiritual optics... The Other is the very locus of metaphysical truth, and is indispensable for my relation with God... The Other is not incarnation of God, but precisely by his face, in which he is disincarnate, is the manifestation of the height in which God is revealed.”ⁱ

God’s revelation is by face and its teaching. The face commands the I in such a way that the never-ending revelation of God’s word is produced. God’s word by the straightforwardness of the face is the path of justice through social interaction. In Levinasian metaphysics, the just relationship between human beings depends on the conversation, welcoming of the Other. This expression of the face establishes the primacy of the ethics as *signification, teaching and justice*. These are the core of a spiritual ethics and goes to-ward a God accessible in justice. Without this access, our “*everything*” would be the captive of things and victim of participation. Therefore, by teaching our *everything* takes on a spiritual meaning of the height coming from the Infinite Other, coming from absolute: an other being commands us in the way of conversation. And this grounding relation with infinite in speech also affirms the separation of the I and its non-participation to the horizon of Being, to the Supreme Being God. The I is separated not because of its own powers, but because of its insatiable Desire for/to the Other. The I is separated because Infinite is not only within us but also it is infinitely exterior. However, this is not a

ⁱ Ibid., p. 78.

negative attribute of being; it is not insufficiency of the I, but the transcendence of the infinity that does not allow any internalization. Then we can ask, how this separateness of the I still relates to the infinite:

“In metaphysics a being separated from the Infinite nonetheless relates to it, with a relation that does not nullify the infinite interval of the separation –which thus differs from every interval. In metaphysics a being is in relation with what it cannot absorb, with what it cannot comprehend. In the concrete positive face of the formal structure, having the idea of infinity is discourse, specified as an ethical relation. The conjuncture of the same and the other, in which even their verbal proximity is maintained, is the direct and full face welcome of the other by me. This conjuncture is irreducible to totality; the face to face position is not a modification of the “along side of...”. Even when I have linked the Other to myself with the conjunction “and” The Other continues to face me; to reveal himself in his face.”ⁱ

Therefore, internalization of the infinite exterior is not possible because of the very structure of the transcendence of height. This height is an on-going infinity and absolute, a dialogue that keeps its endless distance related with absolute which is the ground of the meaning of life. Levinas’ position is so clear that a philosophical discourse is impossible without a discourse founding the foundation of all meanings, all affirmations or denials addressed to a revealing interlocutor across my idea of infinity in which the other and I meets face-to-face: as hostile, as master, as student, as friend, as neighbor. And this is not what reflection can do; since it is unnatural for it to go under the authority of an irreducible exteriority with-in the Other, it cannot call into question itself by the infinite which undoes all bounds of unity and totality. This questioning of oneself is a *critical attitude* which is a production and teaching in the face of the Other. This attitude originates from the very structure of teaching. The speaker which attends to its own manifestation is absolutely exterior to every image of being and thus knowledge, it is beyond being and its vision. It is hearing the very distance of the separated I from the Infinity in terms of disproportion, and also keeping relation with this distance of the divine exteriority, word.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 81.

The teaching includes the disproportion and overflowing in a way that the listener is not able to give meaning or to understand what is talked over in terms of being or vision. Since it is not a matter of what is talked over but rather to/with whom we are speaking to. The exteriority of the Other is never separable from its attendance to its manifestation in language; and where the ethics questions the quiddity of unity and totality before the infinite, there arises the essence of metaphysics as ethics:

“Speech refuses vision, because the speaker does not deliver images of himself only, but is personally present in his speech, absolutely exterior to every image he would leave. In language exteriority is exercised and deployed, brought about. Whoever speaks attends his manifestation, is non-adequate to the meaning that the hearer would like to retain of it as a result acquired outside of the very relationship of discourse, as though this presence in speech were reducible to the *Sinnggebung* of him who listens. Language is the incessant surpassing of the *Sinnggebung* by the signification. The overflowing of exteriority, non-adequate to the vision which still measures it, precisely constitutes the dimension of height or the divinity of the exteriority. Divinity keeps its distances. Discourse is discourse with God.... Metaphysics is the essence of this language with God, it leads above being.”ⁱ

The I is always exceeded and disturbed by the very existence of the other. The I can think that he understands the other; but always there is the trace of something that is beyond, out of reach of the I's capabilities. The I's journey is never-ending; he has to maintain the unlimited effort for understanding the Other in its own, unique existence. But it is for sure that, it will not be fully successful; that is why this effort is called responsibility or religious bond that is very similar to praying. Only the Spiritual optics as the quest for justice, separation and transcendence in Levinasian philosophy creates the heightness and uniqueness of a human being and calls the I for its responsibility to the Other. This responsibility which holds onto exteriority is infinite and never fully accomplished. We should clearly understand that this exteriority is not the world that surrenders us, is not the reality we see, we taste, we sense in a synchronical order. It is the other exteriority that is on the hither side of the foundation of these real things under the reign of perception and

ⁱ Ibid., pp. 296-297.

understanding. And it is the exteriority of the Other. Other qua Other has its own unique exteriority within the exterior world. This exteriority of the Other links all the I's to each other in the social bond, in religion for Levinas.

Signification and teaching arises in this bond of expression, welcoming, generosity, shame and guilt. The infinity is the inspiration and aspiration of these primordial feeling geographies. What humanization means is not only to establish some originary feelings of human being with a de-humanized horizon of Being; on the contrary to trace back them until their origins. Levinas' tracing back is by the structure of infinity and its effects on consciousness. Following this tracing back; Levinasian claim that ethics come first and then ontology is analyzed carefully on the roots of the consciousness; since if an ethics of the other will be possible and become first and an-archic instance or moment of philosophizing then the I which is characterized as I think, transcendental apperception or the consciousness is born with this ethical demand; so this ethical philosophy of Levinas must prove that the consciousness also comes after its ethical core. And his project must demonstrate that the ethical demand must prevail in the domain of consciousness as the conscience. Therefore, the anteriority of conscience must be explained.

Levinas finds conscience of an I with its relation to Infinite, to the Other. In this relation, he discovers the real origin of ethical and originary feelings which signify as Face; and he proposes that consciousness depends on the conscience which comes from exterior and Infinite Other. Thus, the origin of a human being is not the freedom he exercised but the other by whom he be-comes a human being in its own. While freedom corresponds to the consciousness, the face does to conscience. By elaborating guilt and shame, Levinas puts the freedom of the I before the Other into question.

1.4 Freedom and Conscience (Face)

The exteriority and the Desire which are produced in an encounter with the Other is qualified not as an object cognition but as Discourse: a metaphysical discourse. This discourse leads us to the metaphysics of justice, in which all significations and truths as spiritual activity come to existence. Ontologically speaking, truth is to know and to comprehend at the same time; since Kant and Hegel we very well know what the object of

knowledge and the role of the transcendental apperception of the I mean. The I grasps the object and reflects it into itself; now the object is more than a part of cognition; it is also a unit in the I's totality, cannot be detached from it. The I is then not just to know the whatness of things, but also to know the unity of these units and their relations within mind.

Levinas reminds us that to know is also to justify what is known. Hence theoretical activity is a justification of the worldly facts. A fact is justified by knowing and comprehending in way that it is not anymore having its being in-itself; it is now accomplished and past, and irrevocable; that comes to say that we cannot call it back as such, in its actual factuality which includes lively sensual content. It is now within the mind's system as a non-material content. Its suchness is absent from the world. Thus, this non-callable structure of this known, justified fact prevents the I from its spontaneous actions. Because now it is not possible that the spontaneity is able to co-exist with this factuality of lived past, therefore it cannot grasp it as such, and it faces an impassable obstacle. In this point, Levinas questions the power of the spontaneity, power of action and its claim that the justification of the fact is unjust because it is an obstacle to spontaneity. However, for Levinas, this cannot be followed by such deductions that we cannot put the spontaneity into question or this free exercise of the consciousness cannot be subject to any norm. What if, the failure belongs to the side of consciousness in terms of spontaneity? Levinas indicates that this obstacle the spontaneity faces cannot be understood in terms of the fact, of the factual, but on the contrary we must try to understand it on the very basis of consciousness while thinking of knowing, consideration and having a critical attitude on the freedom of spontaneous action. This thinking delivers that there is a keen difference between the structure of an action depending on drives, impulsive movements and consideration, justification of knowing:

“For an obstacle to become a fact that requires a theoretical justification or a reason the spontaneity of the action that surmounts it had to be inhibited, that is, itself put into question. It is then we move from an activity without regard for anything to a *consideration* of the fact. The famous suspension of the action that is said to make theory possible depends on a reserve of freedom, which does not abandon itself to

its drives, to its impulsive movements and keeps its distances. Theory in which truth arises, is the attitude of a being that distrusts itself. Knowing becomes knowing of a fact only if it is at the same time critical, if it puts itself into question, goes back beyond its origin –in an unnatural movement to seek higher than one’s own origin, a movement which evinces or describes a created freedom.”¹

Thus, distrust means that there is a self-critical process of knowing, justifying. The freedom and the power of spontaneity of action alongside with consciousness are questioned by Levinas and this questioning founds the created free-dom which puts a reserve over freedom in favor of critical search of the roots of this freedom. The reservation on freedom, on action when consideration be in play puts us in a direction of one’s weakness or unworthiness. The question arises: What does lie behind so-called glorious freedom?

The weakness one feels for its freedom, for its actions reveals the consciousness of failure as feeling guilty which in turn is manifested as the birth of conscience. Hence, Levinasian task is to demonstrate the real origin of justification, of knowing as being guilty, as being just. According to Levinas; ontological tradition of Western philosophy prioritizes the primacy of failure, an ontological value of spontaneity over unworthiness, on being guilty and ethical justice. Critical attitude and distrust to one’s own ability to act is sacrificed for objective and cognitive reflection. As if the failure does not belong to a human being but the human being does belong to the failure as a modality of its ontological existence. So, once more, a communion of rational beings within the empire of the Same is established without questioning the status of spontaneity of the freedom; and failure is supposed to have the status of a constructed known as an ontological fact rather to have an ethical signification or shame or guilt. Metaphysics of presence claims that all sufferings or pains are due to the limitation on freedom, not because of any kind of powerlessness or weakness of freedom we exercise. Levinas stands against this position radically.

¹ Ibid., pp. 82-83.

In the case of violence of spontaneity within consciousness; that is to say in the position of *failure*; it is supposed that the I has the power to reflect on its failure, on the totality and this failure is only possible within the horizon of knowledge. Thus, the failure is already within the system of signs and it is subordinated to the totality itself. It is not preceding theory or truth; not questioning the status of action, it is already a game in the clashes of established representations in which the ability to exercise power on the facts are understood as the only way of experiencing the world in terms of knowledge: what we have here is a representation of the failure, the knowledge of the failure. Thus, the consciousness of the failure is already within the Same and theoretical. It ends with the participation of the I to the universal; the I becomes again impersonal. The ethical and affective implications are excluded. In the latter case of feeling *guilty*; having the consciousness of unworthiness; we cannot have any representation of knowledge that already comes from an other knowledge within totality. Then, within this totality which interconnects ontological units of knowing human being is just through knowing and not having any kind of spiritual im-morality which carries the mark of infinity:

“The consciousness of unworthiness is not in its turn a truth, a consideration of the facts. The first consciousness of my immorality is not my subordination to facts, but to the Other, to the Infinite. The idea of totality and the idea of infinity differ precisely in that the first is purely theoretical, while the second is moral. The freedom that can be ashamed of itself finds truth (and thus truth is not deduced from truth). The Other is not initially a fact, is not an obstacle, does not threaten me with death; he is desired in my shame.”ⁱ

Hence, unworthiness or weakness takes us to the concept of one’s own imperfection. Without having the idea of infinity as the perfection itself; it would not be possible to have the moral consciousness of our shame. This shame calls in question my freedom and determines everything in accordance with welcoming of the Other. When a person measures himself before the perfection of infinity; he is not anymore on a theoretical basis. He cannot assess the infinity as a part of ontological unity, on the contrary knowing is transcended by it. Imperfection or shame as the very locus of guilt or weakness is

ⁱ Ibid., pp. 83-84.

concretely discovered in the murderous activity of the freedom. My power of spontaneity which is able to give rise to the death of someone is the origin where we find our weakness and injustice. The other human being is not a part of our ontological reference system within totality. As Levinas posits it; the shame does not have ontological structure of consciousness and clarity. It is exposed to the exteriority infinitely and its subject stays exterior forever. The ethical direction of this moral consciousness as shame moves in an inverse direction with that of ontological. In discourse of the Other, within the locus of Desire, in speaking to the Other over whom I cannot have the power –to kill– conditions the shame of one's being. The shame comes from the Infinite, Exterior, the Other. I cannot make this primary existence a fact or a consideration of knowing; it cannot be justified with internalization or object-cognition. I cannot integrate its very unique existence to my spontaneous consciousness. On the contrary, as a non-intentional and non-reflective origin as shame and as guilt, this very source of every meaning and spirituality makes my consciousness awake and possible. My human being is through this shame and guilt before exterior being. And the I with this very welcoming of the Other's perfection with the idea of infinity gets the power of questioning its powers; and realizes that every ontological and veritable content depends on this weakness of the I, self-critique of freedom in its spontaneous activity. Thus the conscience manifests itself as the revelation of a resistance to the powers of so-called glorious spontaneity of freedom within the self. And this is where a resistance turns into a manifestation of arbitrary and violent nature of freedom in the quest for intelligibility that in essence includes a self-critical attitude to freedom and focuses on its real origin in the very impossibility of exercising killing the other person. Therefore, the freedom in its origin is conditioned by this weakness, shame and guilt. The structure of this revelation follows an inverse movement: starts from ontological and results in the precedent of that ontological freedom as moral desire of justice. It goes to an ethical point which is on the hither side of freedom.

Levinas traces the origin of ground which gives the existence of freedom. He claims that when the metaphysical tradition does not trace back what precedes freedom; then it founds the freedom on itself, on its disclosing to itself, knowledge on knowledge. This causes the ignorance of the arbitrariness of freedom; and justifies every thinking and act within the determination of the other during historical process. Thus, this means the

critique as the essence of knowing is subordinated to the power of spontaneity of freedom and ethics comes after the action or power of the self over the world. This ontological power of human being, in turn, serves to the very justification of violence, killing and all kind of struggles within people. Levinas rejects this kind of power and puts it into question by the function of critical knowledge. For him, this questioning is true philosophizing. To philosophize cannot only mean to justify what passed away as a fact in the form of objective cognition, but also must bear the critique of this grasping and comprehending itself in terms of freedom. Grasping and comprehending, thematization and representation cannot found themselves since they have to suppose themselves already founded in the absence of worldly, lived experience. Then, Levinas asks, what is the real foundation of all consciousness? Even when Western metaphysics goes beyond objective knowledge in the form of “cogito”; this cogito also cannot satisfy critical exigency and cannot reach the certainty of its foundation:

“The evidence of the cogito cannot satisfy the critical exigency, for the commencement of the cogito remains antecedent to it. It does indeed mark commencement, because it is the awakening of an existence that takes charge of its own condition. But this awakening comes from the Other. Before the cogito existence dreams itself, as though it remained foreign to itself. It is because it suspects that it is dreaming itself that it awakens. The doubt makes it seek certainty. But this suspicion, this consciousness of doubt, implies the idea of the Perfect. The knowing of the cogito thus refers to a relation with the Master – with the idea of infinity or of the Perfect. The idea of Infinity is neither immanence of the I think not the transcendence of the object.”ⁱ

The perfectness or the idea of Infinity comes from the exceptional presence of the Other whom I cannot kill or treat as a fact that I can possess or enjoy. My freedom regarding him cannot be considered as a real freedom. Because he cannot be any subject of my knowing procedures by understanding or categories; he overflows every idea, every representation or every image I do have of him. The self cannot bend over itself by its construction of

ⁱ Ibid., p. 86.

him. The distance and exterior realm I do have with him persists. It affects the self in a very different way than an object does.

The other is the origin of freedom since it makes this freedom exposed to a fact that this freedom is created and weak before the other. The other teaches to free creature that this kind of freedom opens the arbitrariness, the weakness and the shame the I has in its origin as its imperfection; and this idea of (im)perfection is reflected upon the consciousness as conscience. Good and bad consciences as the real modalities of human being's spirituality reveal themselves in the face of the other. As Levinas puts it; the welcoming of the Other is the consciousness of injustice, the very guilt that the exercise of the freedom carries in-itself. The type of movement is inverted in this structure; for the presence of the freedom is subordinated to the justice, to the infinite perfection of the overflowing, to the exceptional presence of the Other, or more concretely, to the inability of killing the other person. This weakness does not amount to be wholly absorbed by the Other as in the form of participation to the One; on the contrary the Other, the Face invites the free I to a moral exigency by taking the responsibility of its own tracing back. And demands that a critique of self-sureness and pure trust in terms of arbitrariness of free powers is absolutely necessary for being just. And the I can no more extend its identity to everything he has, to the knowledge of the world because there is an absolute exteriority that disturbs its so-called freedom in terms of weakness and imperfection. The Other who escapes from every power the I has manifests the contingent and weak essence of freedom by a different and obscure essence of human being. That essence is conscience.

However, this process and superiority of failure over weakness in Western Tradition of reflection is not only consisting of the imperialism of the Same. It moves beyond this by the very structure of impersonal relation with-in a universal order of history. That is where a transivity from Same to Totality is opened, thus from subject's objectivity to historical objectivity; and the arbitrariness or freedom of the I is made a corner stone and a moment of the history which is sublated into hands of anonymous historical immanence. Then the comprehension of facts including the failure itself are legitimized as the sequences of a synchronic past. This personal and subjective freedom of the I is generalized into a comprehension of historical and impersonal totality. So, truth is

now ontological leaving behind that which was lived through a historical objectivity in which the subjectivity of subject is under erasure. Thus, knowing truth is only knowing fact by abstract representation, and in a strict sense of Levinasian perspective, this is not ethics but a factology. It disregards injustice and purifies history from ethical implications of that which was lived. This factology serves to the justification of the egology and its registry into a universal order. By this, ontology becomes the way of understanding history and for the failure and the weakness of the I are concealed under the name of historical experience; the history as totality becomes the core of violence and its dominance over humanity. Regarding this disclosure, we can say that de-humanization and the justification of personal freedom is completed within a passage to a universal order and regulation of history in accord with the self's totalizing and generalizing reflection on itself, and therefore the failure of the I and the weakness of freedom is wiped out from the experience of life. As if the subjects of historical experiences are all in conscious of what they do when they do while exercising the spontaneity. The plurality of beings is reduced to a single unity of Being in historical sublimation:

“.... This seems to us to be the justification of freedom aspired after by the philosophy that, removes from truth its character being a free work so as to situate it where the opposition between the I and the non-I disappears, in an impersonal reason. Freedom is not maintained but reduced to being the reflection of a universal order which maintains itself and justifies itself all by itself, like the God of the ontological argument. Knowing would be the way... by which freedom would denounce its own contingency, by which it would vanish into totality. In reality this way dissimulates the ancient triumph of the same over the other. If freedom this ceases to maintain itself in the arbitrariness of the solitary certitude of evidence, and if the solitary is united to the impersonal reality of the divine, the I disappears in this sublimation.”ⁱ

This impersonal and universal order, which legitimizes the contingency and the arbitrariness of the past events, is subordinating the people to the ideas; the interlocutor to the theme, the exteriority of the expression to the interiority of logical relations. Thus,

ⁱ Ibid., p. 87.

beings as existents are being reduced to the content of the universal Neuter in order to legitimize the arbitrariness of the freedom. Yet still, the Other is never graspable within this Neuter because it cannot vanish into Totality; it undoes the foundation of the Neuter. It stands as an exterior personality in a heteronomic order, instead of being a panorama of autonomic unity in front of mighty understanding. In this regard, Levinas maintains that the knowledge or the identity of the self is not absolutely negated; in the relation with the Other the reason does not consist of denying the existence of freedom; on the contrary this heteronomy of the Other which puts the freedom into question calls human being to justice and responding to the infinite call of Other. The principle of “know thyself”, or in another name, “for-itself” is not and cannot be the ulterior meaning of existence; that final and anterior meaning is rather found in tracing back the self where it earns its adjective as “human”, and search for the precedent of it in the presence of the Other. And only when it is discovered that the egoism of the I which rests on the freedom as arbitrary and unjustified is not a solid ground for an absolute approach to a human being. This is not the way of “*being human*” in an ontological perspective but of a “*human being*” in its ethical creation. Only when we are turning back what is prior to the self, we can have the definition of a creature as a human being which is beyond its being in its creation:

“The unity of spontaneous freedom, working on straight ahead, and critique, where freedom is capable of being called in question and thus preceding itself, is what is termed a creature. The marvel of creation does not only consist in being a creation *ex nihilo*, but in that it results in a being capable of receiving a revelation, learning that it is created, and putting itself in question. The miracle of creation lies in creating a moral being. And this implies precisely atheism, but at the same time, beyond atheism, shame for the arbitrariness of the freedom that constitutes it.”ⁱ

In the miracle of creation, this moral being realizes that its freedom is constituted. This freedom depends on an exterior presence. In this dependence, the independence of the self is not totally absorbed or annihilated by this exteriority, on the contrary it does have the distance of a relation founding and articulating the self-consciousness by face to face encounter in a way both independent and dependent. Therefore by this tracing back the self

ⁱ Ibid., p.89.

and its position through its weakness and shame, that bends over itself as conscience in human being, while at the same time having the revelation of being created in the face of the Other we reach to a different definition of freedom in Levinas which functions in both way: towards a critique of the self and hence towards a moral self that keeps its relation with the Other: the *before* of the Other reveals the “shame” and the conscience reflected upon the roots of the self against the spontaneity of freedom: the dependence of the self. And the *after* of this conscience takes this imperfection to the shores of the perfect Other with-in language, as expression, as conversation, as responsibility: the separated, independent self. Thus, in this relation with the Other, the *present* of the consciousness, as presentation, as consideration of the fact finds itself in the temporalisation of the Other as conscience. The self becomes now “creature” which becomes aware of justice and injustice: this creature is beyond all ontology and makes the primary meaning of what a human being is; or more truly; who a human being is. Herewith, human being gets into humanization with welcoming of the Other. By the teaching of the Other. Levinas clearly marks that this structure of relation is totally different than that of ontological order, such as dichotomies in terms of method and essence:

“The Other does not affect us what must be surmounted, enveloped, dominated, but as other, independent of us: behind every relation we could sustain with him, an absolute upsurge. It is this way of welcoming an existent that we discover in justice and injustice and that discourse, essentially teaching, effectuates. The term welcome of the Other expresses a simultaneity of activity and passivity which places the relation with the other outside of the dichotomies valid for things: the a priori, the a posteriori, activity and passivity.”ⁱ

Levinas is so clear that his philosophy of the Other is not around knowledge in traditional manners; his search is of another order. All his research depends on a very basic principle: the Other is not a matter of knowing or its dualities such as a priori or a posteriori; it is the source of human being in terms of a religious bond and being a created creature; it is the foundation of consciousness in the realm of conscience as the infinite demand of the Other. Thus, this demand is prior to every knowing as the justice of Discourse and justice is the

ⁱ Ibid., p. 89.

condition of the knowledge itself and beyond it as preeminent transcendence of the Face. It is both condition and beyond. In the movement towards the Other, the face as the experience of beyond becomes the condition. The face of the Other proposes the world in the language as speech; and its apparition in language is not similar to any other apparitions of objects. It speaks. As a sign, it attends to its own signification that cannot be absorbed in a referential system of signs which are excluded from their exterior significations. And the very anarchy of apparitions, as the whole panorama of phenomenons, which depreciates into appearances, are now given a meaning, a signification in a proposed world of the Other in speech. This is a passage from materiality of apparitions, which are destined to annihilation, to the spirituality of significations. Without this teaching and spiritual attendance of the Other; the meaning of any object would only be a pure thought of objectivity, pure but nothing at the same time when things or tools arrived their finality, they come to an end. And that is exact point that they lose their signification; not only have they lost their signification, but also usefulness or happiness they give to human beings as means also become dull. This kind of finality of consciousness cannot on itself be a source of signification or meaning because consciousness after satisfaction by happiness spoils it, but then how does consciousness go beyond happiness? How does consciousness give the signification? Not by finality Levinas responds but by proposing the world in a conversation with the Other in which there is no totality or system:

“Objectivity, where being is proposed to consciousness, is not a residue of finality. The objects are not objects when they offer themselves to the hand that uses them, to the mouth and the nose, the eyes and the ears that enjoy them. Objectivity is not what remains an implement or a food when separated from the world in which their being come into play. It is *posited* in a discourse, in a *conversation* which proposes the world. This *proposition* is held between two points which do not constitute a system, a cosmos, a totality.”ⁱ

The sign in this relation comes from the signifier, from absolute alterity. The Other thematizes the world in its own, proposes another world. The interval between signifier

ⁱ Ibid., pp. 95-96.

and signified cannot be completed or overcome since the signified is never a completed or absorbed presence, it refers to the absence of the Other in terms of being. The signified is only referring to the sign, which in turn refers to the signifier as the meaningful content. The signification of signified does not come to a completion or to an end, it always transforms itself into a sign. The Signifier, as the signaling source of the sign, comes with face to face without proposing himself as a theme. Thus, only when he speaks of the world that he proposed, he is more than a signified, more than himself in terms of whatness. Whoness of a signified subject is never ending in terms of being. In the conversation, the questioning and the interpretation are crucial elements of sign and its meaning. The questions and answers are opened to new questions and exceptional, unexpected interpretations in the presence of the Other. This coming to the assistance with questioning and interpreting determines the quality of teaching and of the ethical discourse.

Within this oral discourse; the meaning is produced before the Face; this structure is not similar to the needs of the self or to satisfaction of these needs. Hereby, this production is not related with any deficiency of the I. Levinas' theory explains that this production is actualized by the absolute surplus of the Face which is desired by the I. And in this production, the separated being of the I still persists with-in a relation to the Absolute. The separated being welcomes the Other around the world, the things; the other proposes the world and the world he proposes is received by the Same and the response of the I is given within dialogue. The speech overflows the position of I the in every proposition, question and answer. The world is thematized and interpreted within this speech in presence of the Other that resists reduction into generality and absolves from a unifying relation with/of the Same while still keeping the distance of relation with-in the language. Levinas does not introduce this kind of relation as hostile or rivalry; on the contrary this teaching brings the utmost surplus of attention to the relation between two points, two subjects as speaking to each other. Because by teaching the obscure part of what a proposition proposes is given and presented to the Same/Other and this giving and presenting creates the teaching and thus clarify the obscure content. However, this clarification is never completed within a system of knowledge. This clarification does not belong to an ontological order in which a statement is in accord with its content through verification. This ethical clarification is accompanied by gestural singularity of the other

human being. The other does not give any proof or verification for the knowledge of the self. And it also does not belong to another ontological structure which is finality of enjoyment or of satisfaction.

“To have a meaning is to be situated relative to an absolute, that is to come from that alterity that is not absorbed in its being perceived. Such alterity is possible only as a miraculous abundance, an inexhaustible surplus of attention arising in the ever recommenced effort of language to clarify its own manifestation. To have meaning is to teach or to be taught, to speak or to be able to be stated.”ⁱ

The for-itself structure of an ontological reference system, including enjoyment or the egoism of the consciousness, does not create the origin of their signification. The consciousness and all apparitions it experienced belong to the referential system which cannot deliver its enigma to itself. Apparition is only overcome by speech; and the origin that is created by the significative speech of the Other delivers the enigma of all significations. The enigma is the commencement of conscience. It is the only origin what presents the content to its own manifestation and going beyond the ground of consciousness while becoming the condition of it. The Face and its signifying presence which can never be separated from the sign presents the very word of world; thus this teaching of the world is the interposition where all significations come from in the form of conscience which is reflected upon the structure of for-itself. Therefore, the sense is given to every phenomenon within proposing the world by the Face of the Other. The pure and inexhaustible frankness, sincerity that are refreshed in the Face gives orientation and direction to every speech. And thus as the origin of conscience, this clothing of language by attending to its own manifestation, by proposing the world gives *the sense* as the orientation by teaching of the Other. The Face does not become like all other apparitions; but this becoming is preceded by the coming of his own attendance: this coming of the Face is attendance, frankness, straightforwardness. In the face of the other person or in the look of him, we do not look at a part, a place, a position of the world, but we look at someone that has his own world. He is beyond –our– world; and the anarchy we are surrounded by is interrupted by his speech:

ⁱ Ibid., pp. 97.

“The commencement of knowing is itself possible only if the bewitchment and the permanent equivocation of a world in which every apparition is a possible dissimulation, where commencement is wanting, is dispelled. Speech introduces a principle to this anarchy. Speech disenchant, for the speaking being guarantees his own apparition and comes to the assistance of himself, attends his own manifestation. His being is brought about in this *attendance*. This speech which already dawns in the face that looks at me looking introduces the primary frankness of revelation...”ⁱ

This frankness of revelation, this teaching of speech creates the an-archival sense, which veils the unveilings of all apparitions in sentences, and does this by the structure of giving. Phenomenon, while the world is proposed in-between, is given as a questioning and interpretation. In the proposition, in the work the enunciation of a sentence; the apparition breaks the bond with its own phenomenality, for the sentence proposes a fixed theme, in this being givenness a proposition creates a link between phenomenon and existent. This link as a part of teaching is an orientation towards to the exteriority of the Other which is not absorbable by understanding. This exteriority, which is real infinite and beyond access of consciousness activity, therefore is not thematizable; and it creates the interval, keeps the distance between the thematized phenom and existent. Thus, teaching towards Infinite is not a matter of theme but it is thematizing. Levinas claims in the absence of this distance, this interval, without presupposing it as a foundation; no logical definition would be possible. And since the face is the locus of an otherly existent, by whom we are in contact with infinity; a logical definition of an apparition that positions the content of thematization with its genus is preceded by the eventuality of the face, by the definition that already includes the distance with Infinite.

Our teaching by the Other as the breaking of phenomenality maintains a distance, a difference with its origin as an entry into a world of words. In the world of words; the Other lays the foundation not only by signaling itself but also speaking. It speaks not as a thematizable but as thematizing itself. Only the apparition of the face speaks and overcomes the order of visible, the order of phenomenality. Hence, within this speech the

ⁱ Ibid., p. 98.

world becomes the theme of the interlocutor, turns into the kingdom of words. This is the why how a teaching of the Other becomes possible: “I” can have a conversation with the Other that goes beyond the screen of phenomena, behind the curtains of this phenomenal world; and thus the Other can associate with me as the Other.

Levinas expounds truth in terms of teaching, speaking. Speech becomes the very core of the truth, it is not disclosure anymore as Heidegger put it in his philosophy. Here, we have far from visionary applications of Being by disclosure, the hearing and the appeal takes place instead of the solitude of vision, seeing. Levinas articulates speaking as *attention* to someone. *Attention* that is not to something but to someone, to someone that is beyond oneself and is the Master of the teaching from an exterior position. This master who is beyond Being exceeds the knowledge of consciousness. To *someone* of this attention is the key where we can trace back towards the foundation of our consciousness.

In order to trace back and to grasp the structure of this exterior teaching, Levinas uses the term “*association*”. The teaching of exterior master does not become a teaching in territory of knowledge; on the contrary, this teaching questions the very freedom of the thought in a critical attitude towards knowledge. The first teaching of exteriority is its overflowing consciousness. Moreover, it also precedes consciousness in terms of society; we experience this infinite other in society. The other associates with me and every objectification already refers to the association of him with/in me. This association cannot be comprehended in terms of representational or affective disclosure. It is the unique event of revelation of the Face as non-disclosing. This non-closing as the origin of every referential system of knowledge manifests the disappearing of the consciousness certitude and unity in which every regime of ontological truth functions in terms of apperception. The solitary of apperception is the ground on which one acts spontaneously. This is the essence of spontaneity of the freedom as re-presentation. And over this ground which apperceptive mind presents us we take the responsibility of what we know. On this solitary consciousness, we categorize the facts as either true or false; the facts are in question but not the freedom itself.

As-sociation puts solitary certitude of consciousness into question and traces back it into its real origin. Levinas claims that, in the exercise of welcoming the Other, freedom and autonomy of consciousness is called into the question, and it gives birth to the conscience on the hither side of consciousness. Questioning is for the sake of justice and responsibility. The as-sociation with the other before any conscious act is the conscience. It reveals the absolute exteriority and makes consciousness already exposed to make justice to the other. My consciousness is the production of my conscience in terms of justice. And from a different perspective than ontology presents, this production does not give harm to my freedom and make freedom conditioned for a higher purpose. The judgment that is borne upon me puts my freedom into a course regarding the justice, not a course regarding a neuter truth, as its origin; and demands the responsibility before the other becomes the first concern. This claim does only depend on the responsibility of my freedom, but also calls for conscience which is the real origin of our freedom. The I in its transcendental unity cannot find the source of its conscience, its justice, its responsibility in itself, in the referential system of knowledge. Being not able to find the source in itself, consciousness reveals its inability to assume the core of conscience in the consciousness; and therefore conscience precedes consciousness:

“The increase of my exigencies with regard to myself aggravates the judgment that is borne upon me increases my responsibility. It is in this very concrete sense that the judgment... is never assumed by me. This is ... the very life, the essence of conscience. My freedom does not have the last word; I am not alone. And we shall say then that conscience alone leaves itself... In conscience I have an experience that is not commensurate with any a priori framework – a conceptless experience. Every other experience is conceptual, that is, becomes my own or arises from my freedom. We have just described the essential insatiability of conscience, which does not belong to the order of hunger or satiety. It is thus we defined desire. Conscience and desire are not modalities of consciousness among others, but its condition. Concretely they are welcoming of the Other across his judgment.”ⁱ

ⁱ Ibid., p. 101.

How is the interval, the relation and the distance with this Absolute exterior not of vision? Why the locus of truth belongs to the society, to the as-association as a dialogue across conscience and its revelations as the proposed hearing of the world? Why hearing rather than seeing? Since this relation to the absolute is the giver of the world as the proposed word, rather than the apparition as a modality of losing all signification. With apparition, the signification also disappears. The distance, the interval which determines the communication of the ideas and the positioning of interlocutor beyond the system has to be expounded as not the reminiscence of interiority but as the essence of exteriority. Thus, we'd better understand the relation type we establish with the Face, which is all different from any sensible experience with the visible. Therefore, the question gives itself in the horizon, as Levinas asked: "Is not the face given to vision?"¹

Levinas' explanation on the idea of relation with face not only depends on the structure of sensible experience, for Levinas vision is not the realm of meeting with the other; moreover, epiphany of the face is only possible with-in absolute exteriority, that is in another sense "transcendence". This transcendence is not traversable either with vision or with touch. If it would be on the level of vision or touch; then it would be traversed by comprehension, by hand or gaze; and thus the relation with it would be finite and the distance with the Other would be disclosed in favor of the Same, possession or verification of the unity of the I and then there would be no Other in its difference, but only the representation of the Other by mind: The Other would lose its *being someone* in its *singular being* and would be the being of the not exterior singularity but abstract inwardness and unity.

For Levinas, the sensation is firstly recognized as an abstraction; however, in its truth the quality is actually always already referring to the object it is attached. So, the quality is always with the experimental side and this side cannot be detached from it. There is only creating an aesthetical value of object, which is attributing a signification that in fact does not exist for/in the thing-in-itself, after a long process of production or thought of an artist. More importantly, Levinas claims that the sensation that is taken as objectively-construction in representational model fails to understand the structure of enjoyment in

¹ Ibid., p. 187.

which the life is lived *concretely* (because it does not seek the real root of representation). In Levinasian analysis of the joy of life, the sensations are crucial and they are for the sake of the joy of the life. This joy of love arising from sensing cannot be objectified. This is an anchoring point Levinas totally agrees: In the enjoyment, the representational content dissolves into affectional content. Before having the consciousness of a quality within sensation; we do have the enjoyment of it: here there is an anteriority of joy of life before the consciousness of I and non-I; of subject and object. So, there is a *sui generis* formal structures of the non-I, rather than the structures of objectivity within the phenomenological analysis of the sensation as enjoyment. Levinas then deduces that there is a non-I which corresponds to every sensible experience in the first instance: we enjoy or suffer before any representational or conscious of the object we live from, we hear from, we see from.

Within the tradition of presence metaphysics, the construction of the object in order to be conscious of it as disclosed or discovered within our representational content becomes possible with the objectification procedures of categories which certainly prioritize the role of vision or visual. The objectivity of the object or of the quality that is clinged to it comes from its being seen or being touched. Levinas explains that the objectivity of [object] or our perceptions through the sensation and the categories of understanding and the exterior world directly comes from the vision or touch in Western metaphysics. Or put it in another term, it is the grasp that includes all sensations giving the primordial ground to the vision. Levinas agrees that the objectification is established on the plane of gaze and the plane of the gaze is the way of expanding into civilizations; however, Levinas offers another perspective in this matter and calls for the real roots of the gaze, the grasp. He claims that this objectification through gaze cannot explain its prior grounds as in the example of enjoyment, and also lacks a proper understanding of the spiritual activity of the created being that exists in the hither side of every objective experience according to Levinas. For this very reason, what we need according to Levinas is a transcendental phenomenology of sensation. The basic conviction which makes Levinas tells us this inevitable need for this sort of phenomenology lies in the fact that: “We have maintained

that enjoyment –which does not fit in the schema of objectification and vision– does not exhaust its meaning in qualifying visible object.”ⁱ

In the metaphysics of presence, the vision has three elements: the eye, the thing and the light as their interaction environment. Without the space the light illuminates seeing, vision is not possible at all. Seeing the object already presupposes the existence of light, seeing is only under light. The relation the eye establishes with the object, with something firstly gets through the light which is in-itself not something. The light as expelling the darks onto the out of space, as emptying the space from shadows and filling it with void makes the eye see the thing surrounded by this emptiness. Therefore, for this sort of metaphysics, the vision and also touch –to the extent it traverses the nothing of the space while going towards touching something– arises from nothingness. Their origin emerges from taking their objects through so-called nothingness. The movement of palpation or the look of the gaze are such kind of examples. Vision has no need to make any movement as in the movement of hand; thus the vision has an absolute priority over touch. It has the power of maintaining, preserving its object without any movement. From the eye of the metaphysic of the vision, this is the generality/intelligibility that is not something which opens the experience with the individual, with something; and it is the openness of Being that provides the experience with the manifestation of the individual things.

“This coming forth from void is thus their coming from their origin, this openness of experience or this experience of openness explains the privilege of the objectivity and its claim to coincide with the very being of existents. We find this schema of vision from Aristotle to Heidegger. In the light of generality which does not exist is established the relation with the individual. For Heidegger, an openness upon Being, which is not a *being*, which is not a something, is necessary in order that in general, a something manifests itself... Thus appear the structures of the vision, where the relation of the subject with the object is subordinated to the relation of the object with the void of openness, which is not an object.”ⁱⁱ

ⁱ Ibid., p. 189.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., pp. 189-190.

The intelligibility of an existent comes from the fact that there is this not-something of Being, its openness resides in the existence of all existents and its illuminating openness make the existent manifests itself as an intelligible content. Hence, the comprehension as abstraction and the generality of specific existent, such as genus or species, depends on this understanding of Being's openness into the void or the void's openness. It is not the object but the ground on which the existent exists as-such. The apprehension of particular is of this void and of this openness. Levinas is critical about the essence of the void and he claims that this spatial void arising from the light and vision is a "something" rather than absolute nothingness or not-something. He supports this criticism with the idea that without the things seen even the intuitive concepts of geometry would be meaningless and groundless. Therefore this spatial void inside which inhabits the objects of vision is an application realm of these intuitive concepts, which are in themselves the limits of the objects, into the objects. But what if considered in itself, in the absence of those objects; is not illuminated space is nothing?

Levinas responds that in itself, this spatial void can be thought as nothing, since it is before the application of concepts into objects (which are not yet intelligible), but it is not absolute nothingness since to traverse it is not a kind of transcendence. It is not a movement towards the Other, it is within the generality of on-tology *that which is*. Therefore, it is not absolute nothingness but it is a nothing that *is* still a something. Thus, this "a something" does not share the structure or the order of something as an object, since it is the general ground to see something as/through illuminated space, and yet this means it is (of) another plenitude. In this regard, we come to see another important concept of Levinas — "*there is:*"

"If the void that light produces in the space from which it drives out darkness is not equivalent to nothingness, even in the absence of any particular object, there is this void itself. The negation of every qualifiable things allow the impersonal there is to arise again... The silence of infinite spaces is terrifying. The invasion of this there is does not correspond to any representation. We have described it elsewhere its vertigo."ⁱ

ⁱ Ibid., p. 190.

The light when it banishes the shadows, the darkness; it does not overcome the terrifying anonymity of the *there is* yet. The density of the void as *there is* holds until the vision in the light presents itself as possibility of escaping from this spatial void and its horrors. Levinas gives us the example of the enjoyment and the separation of existent from this anonymous void as a being in itself, in its sufficiency and in its interior being: being-at-home. Thanks to the satisfaction or the contentment of happiness, we survive in/from *there is*, from the elemental essence by becoming our own separated being. This becoming-at-home with itself, this survival and escape stays within the modality of the I. It is the self-love: the love of life in general by means of an ego.

Within the vision or touch we grasp the objects, the hand traverses the distance and catches the object; at the end either we enjoy them or possess them and in turn this enjoyment or possession provides us with the material of mind, they become the ground of comprehension or representation. Here in the vision, the relation of the possession and the representation is essential. For being happy and escaping from the horrors of *il ya* or from the death-like vertigo, we labor and earn our enjoyment or security in many different ways. This is also a pre-condition of becoming a separated being so that this being has its representational content within mind.

Levinasian analysis depends on the ultimate fact that face is not given in the vision since it is with-in a transcending movement towards the Other, to-God. Thus, the structure of relation with the face is neither representational nor enjoyment, labor or possession-based. On the contrary, it is never graspable, possessed or traversable. The distance is infinite; no eye, no hand, no mind can grasp the presence of that of the Other and put it together with the representational units of the mind. And since it is not in terms of objecthood; it has no form which is open to hand or to eye. The signification process under vision operates in a way that things are inter-positioned to each other as in a referential system. So, a meaning of an object is determined with a reference to the other object-s. All happens in the horizon of the illuminated space through vision. Signification as such is with the horizon of vision not beyond it or not transcending it in terms of a breach or break. Ultimately, the order of the Same is nowise inversed in this modeling, it is rather

maintained by this very structure of spatial void. And yet, the consciousness, by comprehension through the light of space, returns to itself with the essential satisfaction, enjoyment, contentment; and escaping the disturbing structure of the *il y a* ensures the disclosure of a primordial concern for the in-finite. The vision not only dis-closes the *il y a* within the satisfaction and gives independent being arise in a positive manner; but also – even though this satisfaction which will be opened to an insatiable Desire is a condition for going beyond, for a movement of transcendence to the Other– it also dis-closes/reduces the Other to the Same and to a representational content as if the Other were reachable by the structure of vision. Even in the relation with sun and fire –as it seems that on them the being of light and its appearance coincide– we still treat sun as another object and the sun stands relative to the ground of illuminated space. And even those objects, as the source of diurnal and nocturnal light, are coming from the same ground and not coming from themselves: they are always already on the ground of illuminated space, i.e. spatial void. Thus, their exteriority is never absolute, but only relative to the other things and to the ground of space. Then, how is it not possible to understand, to comprehend and to posit the Face as something depending on this illuminated space? If we can understand in this regard, it is not of having the absolute exteriority of itself as its own source or ground? Is not the Face, in Levinas, the absolute light to see (this ground of) light that ensures the consciousness, the Same? Can we understand an existent, a person in its own being with reference to the existence of the other people or things, through enjoyment or representation, as ontologically speaking?

Levinas' responds are not easy: about the question of ontology or quiddity of the other person, he responds in a negative, radical manner, sometimes in a very complex and blurry perspective. So, while answering one, many other questions arises, like: why do we need something absolutely exterior that does not depend on the vision, and why this absolutely exterior refers to absolute nothingness and why the spatial void as nothing is never equal to absolute nothingness? If we glimpse to Levinasian truth, a possible simple profound answer would be: the vision gives the enjoyment and the representation, the possibility of separated being and the happiness of the ego and thus in turn the structure of consciousness; therefore the Other person as its own unique being is not through ego, representation or enjoyment; the Desire that is never satiable (even after the satisfaction of

all our needs, there is a need for the beyond) takes us to our responsibility for the other being and that is only possible by spiritual activity that makes human beings human. So, the spiritual activity, as metaphysical transcendence is not given in the vision, it is not a matter of consciousness, the Face is not by/through illuminated space. The face is the only existence that reveals its own revealing by attending to the dialogue, to the speech; it is always absent from it speaks; but yet there he is still speaking and says "*Here I am*". And it does not have a surface on which the gaze works and thus nowise it can be interiorized. It is the "wor-l-d" of the other. Wor-l-d is only of his singular being.

Levinasian philosophy proposes that total alterity is not through the form, since this form is the ground of any intelligible content on the horizon of Being rather than beyond being. The surface of an object could be transformed to another for the use of it. It serves to the purposes of human possession, enjoyment, satisfaction. So, it demonstrates that the revelation of an object is superficial; the truth of a thing is not more than the matter it carries in itself. While a person transforms the wood into a desk; then the revelation of the thing changes and therefore it gives nothing but the matter as its essence. But this transformation or being superficial does not hold for the face. The face is the one that breaks with sensible; it speaks to me and it does not present itself in the form of space; it is not transformable to another form or surface. It is a living, genuine, authentic singularity.

As a last remark of this section, we should note that Levinas also makes a distinction between obverse and reverse. He uses the metaphor that the reverse stands invisible to the vision and indicates the other plane. Thus, there is the art of façade in which the object now does not only become a matter of vision but also of exhibition. So the object is more than a use now and its transformation within the art form stops. Its truth is now more than being a matter. It has now glory and a signification of artist's clothing on it. Nevertheless, unlike Face, even an art work in its glorious shining and in its monumental essence is not beyond sensible and is not responding or listening or attending to its speaking. It is indifferent, cold and silent:

"The notion of the façade borrowed from building suggests us that architecture is perhaps the first of fine arts. But in it is constituted the beautiful, whose essence is

indifference, cold splendor and silence. By the façade the thing which keeps its secret is exposed enclosed in its monumental essence and in its myth, in which it gleams like a splendor but does not deliver itself. It captivates by its grace as by magic, but does not reveal itself. If the transcendent cuts across sensibility, if it is openness preeminently, if its vision is the vision of the very openness of being, it cuts across the vision of forms and can be stated neither in terms of contemplation nor in terms of practice. It is the face, its revelation is speech.”ⁱ

ⁱ Ibid., p. 193.

2 PHENOMENOLOGY AND LEVINAS

2.1 Husserl

The philosophy of Levinas has both positive and negative relations with the tradition of phenomenology. Levinas states that he owes many things to this tradition of thinking in contemporary age, though he deviates from this tradition in his results and philosophical insight which target the ethical relation as the primary focus of philosophical discourse rather than ontological horizon. The concept of intentionality and the phenomenological method that searches concrete, by which Levinas explains the passage from ethics to metaphysical exteriority has been made possible, is crucial in this assessment. The main aspect of this evaluation is woven around this exteriority: The construction of exteriority and our relation with this exteriority.

For Levinas, the metaphysical exteriority is not the reality in the strict sense, but it is the other person that initiates humanization and justice over the I, the same and the imperialism of the presence. And this other person is not represented to the conscious as/by a representation or thematization; it cannot be taken to the internal mind within the constitution of ideal objectivity, as in Husserl. And such kind of ideal objectivity for Levinas still serves to the ontological imperialism or to the reduction of alterity in which Being is primordial.

“Phenomenological mediation follows another route, where the “ontological imperialism” is yet more visible. It is the Being of existents that is the *medium* of truth; truth regarding an existent presupposes the prior openness of Being. To say that the truth of an existent proceeds from the openness of Being is any event to say that its intelligibility is due not to our coinciding, but to our non-coinciding with it. An existent is comprehended in the measure that thought transcends it; measuring it against the horizon whereupon it is profiled. Since Husserl the whole of phenomenology is the promotion of the idea of horizon, which for it plays a role

equivalent to that of the concept of classical idealism; an existent arises upon a ground that extends beyond it, as an individual arises from a concept.”ⁱ

Levinasian thesis is not only related with the concept of “horizon”; the thesis’ evaluative application goes beyond by conceptualizations such as identifying the phenomenological process of constructing as “*a phosphorescence, a luminosity, a generous effulgence.*” This light, this glorifying illumination symbols or signs are not of existent but of a ground which has been established already on Being. So, our experience with existent does not coincide with the existence of existent qua existent; our experience is not in terms of singular existent, conversely this horizon of being already means that the experience of intelligibility, generality which now represent the content of existent is in the structure of non-coinciding by means of concepts. Thus, what we know is already a constructed phenomenologically, that is to know is within/through the horizon of Being in this approach. Phenomenology proposes that our relation with existent, we already have the luminosity of this horizon with-in our comprehension. The being of existent as such cannot be detached from the Being and its light-giving or its openness. The ground is (on) Being.

Within the assumptions of this thesis; Levinas insists that speaking to an interlocutor; to someone in its own, unique being cannot be disclosed to the horizon of Being and is not compatible with the structure of luminosity or openness of intelligibility via concepts. The other stands as the Other, without being reduced to an object of cognition, only while entering into a dialogue; this dialogue is revealed in the face and this is the only locus where the coinciding actualizes as the revealer and the revealed in the face. This coinciding is not under a category, nor is under a conceptualization or a luminosity of light-giver. Therefore, existent is itself only in the height of this coinciding with-in the experience of the face. This experience of face cannot be found on a borrowed light of intelligibility but only found on a foreign, naked, conceptless existence of the other person. This is not a cognition but a meeting in which a primordial sphere of who a human being is understood and esteemed. Furthermore, as in Husserl, the great master of phenomenology, the existence of existent, the other person cannot be established on the

ⁱ Ibid., p. 45.

constitution of a “living body”, the other person is more than this what-ness, this cognition or sphere of a living body:

“The relationship with this “thing in itself” [the other person] does not lie at the limit of a cognition that begins as a constitution of a ‘living body’; as according to Husserl’s celebrated analysis in the fifth of his *Cartesian Meditations*. The constitution of the Other’s body in what Husserl calls “the primordial sphere”, the transcendental ‘coupling’ of the object thus constituted with my own body itself experienced from within as an ‘I can’, the comprehension of this body of the Other as an *alter ego* –this analysis dissimulates, in each of its stages which are taken as a description of constitution, mutations of object constitution into a relation with the Other– which is a primordial as the constitution from which it is to be derived.”ⁱ

Levinas’ critique against Husserl holds that the difference of existent cannot be marked by a transcendental coupling of the body; a person is unique in its own existence and its destitution, its foreignness and its alterity cannot be produced by an “I can” or within the representation model of cognition. And a body is already a form and an element of a living from/living for and not a subject of cognition but a subject of sensibility and enjoyment or pain. Before everything, the other person is his own body, which is blood and flesh, in the plane of joy of life. And besides our relation with the other person moves beyond the sensible experience with life or “living from ...”. It is not exhausted by bodily needs such as hunger, thirst, pain or joy etc. There is something deeper in this event of “living from”: *desire*. The desire Levinas calls as metaphysical; and it does directly take a meaning beyond being as disinterestedness, as Good, in terms of Platonic conception. And this goodness eventually becomes the pathos of Levinasian discourse.

Levinas analyses the intentionality, the representation, the enjoyment and the desire in relation with Husserlian phenomenology especially in *Totality and Infinity*, under Section II of the book, Interiority and Economy. He just aims to show that the relation with infinite, with the other person as desire cannot be traversed by the structure of intentionality. And moreover he would like to indicate that for a relation of the I with

ⁱ Ibid., p 67.

infinite; the I also needs to be separated; otherwise the I would only a moment of totality and would dissolve into a system and unity, into an impersonal mouth of the history. This separation and the multiplicity of separated beings is what a real society needs to be established. Levinas maintains that both interiority and separation is possible and this is not incomprehensible or irrational, as Spinoza and Hegel claimed.

For understanding Levinasian analyses of intentionality, of enjoyment, to have a clear sight on the separated being is what we need. We need to understand the foundation of a human being as its own, separated being. Levinas explains that the Western tradition sees separation as a fallenness, as an illusion or a fault or being in low. He maintains this is just because of this tradition only knows the separation that is evinced or followed by argumentation of need. Since this kind of comprehension of need means a lack and a void and it comes to say that that being in void has not realized itself in its full existence. This comprehension presupposes that this need is able to close the void which is only actualized/satisfied towards full satisfaction of this lack. Therefore, this is a privation or a rupture and must find a way to participate to its own unity; thus has to overcome, leave this fallenness behind. It is the only true and accurate way. Levinas radically opposes to this view.

The critique has a second perspective regarding this void. Levinas raises the question of the relation with Good and its possibility; and praises Plato so that he deduced being from Good as he posited transcendence as surpassing the totality. And this relation with Good is not (of) a void or a lack; it is not preceded by a suffering or a void in the spirit. And Levinas is certain that this Platonic good, for his analysis, is the structure of infinite and infinity is not a need of someone who lacks something or who has its own unity and possession in itself. It is the need for beyond: that is the desire for the idea of Infinity. And this is realized concretely within society by multiple existents: with co-existence of those singular existents. And if we can say this as a comment on Levinasian relation model; this finitude and the separatedness of the existent has a relation with Infinite not in terms of ontological order, but of an ethical order as the realization of the Good within expression, dialogue and co-existence in society. These terms as finite and infinite are not terms reciprocally lacking to one another, on the contrary in society, in

what Levinas calls as religion, as society with-in God, they suffice to themselves. Without this separation, the Idea of Infinity would be the Idea of Totality and it would not be the order or ethics but of ontology which is not Levinas' way. In non-Levinasian way, the dialogue in this ontological plane would end before it starts and the society would be the same words of the same individuals. The individuals can speak to each other only if they separated in their own and still can affect each other because they are both in the need of desire of Good and thus justice; and state the different aspects of other beings, this multiplicity or separation do not conflict with the structure of infinity, it is nothing but the perfection of infinity:

“An infinity that does not close in upon itself in a circle but withdraws from the ontological extension so as to leave a place for a separated being exists divinely. Over and beyond the totality it inaugurates a society... Society with God is not an addition to God nor a disappearance of the interval that separates God from the creature... Multiplicity and the limitation of the creative Infinite are compatible with the perfection of the Infinite; they articulate the meaning of this perfection.”ⁱ

Levinas equalizes the ontological extension with the objectifying act and for him ethical extension corresponds directly to the social extension, thus to the metaphysical act (and desire) which is realized within society. The latter one does not establish a relation between a subject and object. Before passing to this metaphysical direction towards the Other by Desire, Levinas analyses the psychism or inner life, the structure of living from/for, compatible with his comprehension of separation. Though these are analogous to transcendence that leads to the other person, they are still within internal life, within the same; however, for a relative relation with Absolute, infinite; this inner life is necessary to establish.

In this analysis, he firstly demonstrates that the representation model [that also serves to the epistemological concerns of Husserl] which is crucial for the metaphysics of the presence cannot explain the “living from ...” and the “living for ...”, such as nourishment and need. Whilst the representation bends or reflects over consciousness

ⁱ Ibid., p. 104.

within consciousness as self-consciousness, that means a pure internalization of exteriority, inward movement; the enjoyment is outward-oriented, not from same to the same, is traversing the exteriority as lack or satisfaction. And this essence of living from cannot be represented to the mind as a concept Levinas claims; it is from the other to the same. It is happiness or pain in short. The hunger, nourishment and thirsty are also the forms of this living from. Then, as expected, the question comes: what is happening different in this structure of living from/for than representation model:

“Nourishment is the transmutation of the other into the same, which is in the essence of enjoyment: an energy that is the other, recognized as the other, recognized as sustaining the very act that is directed upon it, becomes in enjoyment, my own energy, my strength, me. All enjoyment is in this sense alimentation. Hunger is need, is privation in the primal sense of the word, and thus precisely living from ... is not a simple becoming conscious of what fills life. These contents are lived: they feed live. One lives one’s life: to live is a sort of transitive verb and the contents of life are its direct objects... To live from bread is therefore neither to represent bread to oneself nor to act on it nor to act by means of it... thus the bread I eat is also that which I earn my bread and my life...”¹

Levinas does not see these life acts, the enjoyment moments as the representations or a means or a goal of life or purely contents of mind. They maintain keeping the delights or saddenings with themselves and the enjoyment is the full consciousness of all the contents that fill the life with life or energy of life. And these things and labor towards/around these things make up the grace of life in Levinasian philosophy. In the labor example, such as, we do not only live from our labor as a source of our subsistence; but also we live from it as a filling of our life with sad or joy, with happiness or pain. And this filling with life makes our consciousness of life; not the representations that is reflected upon mind. So, this love of life, with enjoyment, with transitive “living from” and its contents, founds the egoism of life in the surroundings of these things/feelings; not knowing of the I does that. Thus, in/as the love of life: we are happy and not naked, we are happy with “thinking, eating, sleeping, reading, working, warming, daydreaming, feeding etc.” Life is not

¹ Ibid., p. 111.

thinking but living through these acts. To the extent that they make up the worth, the grace and the joy of my life. When naked with only representations, clothed by them in pure concepts, knowings and reflections as Levinas puts it; the life only would be a life of a shadow, as in the existence of the shades Ulysses visits in Hades.

It is clear and rigorous for Levinas that, life's essence is not before its existence; it is thereafter. Its worth is established upon the ground over which the reality of life is already on the dimension of happiness or sadness. And only with this ground, the being of existent, the life of its singular presence is constituted. And it is not in/of ontological order; it is beyond, it is already. And it is nor theoretical, nor practical; and cannot be attached to dialectical or conceptual poles:

“... ‘living from’ is not a simply representation of something ... and also does not fit into the categories of the activity or potency... If living from..., enjoyment, likewise, consists in entering into relation with something other, this relation does not take form on the plane of pure being... We live from acts and from the very act of being, just as we live from ideas and sentiments. What I do and what I am is at the same time that *from which I live*. We relate ourselves to it with a relation that is neither theoretical, nor practical. Behind theory and practice, there is enjoyment of theory and of practice: the egoism of life. The final relation is enjoyment, happiness.”ⁱ

Levinas is so clear that, without this enjoyment, this love of life, there would not be subjectivity in its independence and sovereignty, nor would be subject. And this subjectivity, the relation with fooding through the foods of life is a “must” for a separated being to exist so that he can go beyond this love of life in its Desire for the beyond of life that is not satiable as in the content of happiness. And only through his accomplishment of happiness; his self-possession of the body by working, having time that abolishes the alterity of what he has lived from, the I can turn his eyes what he does not lack, turning his attention to spirituality. Only after satisfying needs, it distinguishes the material from that of spiritual. This means he opens itself to/for the Desire of infinite.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 113.

We are still in need of noting that even the order of enjoyment is not from an order of ontology or representation; it still does not hold itself in the order of the other or the ethics, it is not me-ontological yet; but gives the signals of that order. However; for an ethics to be established with the other; the I has to have the inner life first and distinguish the height of its Desire that is not material or in relation with its happiness as a satisfaction of the need. So, here we see the clear distinction between the need and the desire; though the love of life is a must for the awakening of the spiritual, though spiritual is always already there and this love of life rests on the desire already:

“... in need I can sink my teeth into the real and satisfy myself in assimilating the other; in Desire there is no sinking one’s teeth into being, no satiety, but an uncharted future before me. Indeed the time presupposed by need is provided me by Desire; human need already rests on Desire. Need has thus time to convert *this other* into *the same* by labor... for a body that labors everything is not already accomplished, already done; thus to be a body is to have time in the midst of the facts, to be me living in the other.”¹

The problem here or the question we should ask: how is already Desire there, as the ground over which the need is satisfied? Levinas responds that it is the time for the need to be processed in the way of satisfaction; but not the time of the I; but the time of the Other as uncharted future. The production of the time here is crucial. Since the need and its satisfaction, as the content of personal happiness of that personality; is not *at the same time*; it is by labor; thus means to have the time. This is across time, not instantaneous; and this process also includes suspension and postponement of dependence on the other which we live from/for. To break this dependence becomes possible by labor and economy. Therefore, for Levinas, the need is not all in a negative manner or a privation because of pleasure elements; he does not condemn pleasure or need, and moreover he proposes that the need is the possibility of a society that is lacking time or consciousness of life of happiness. A man means a break with animality, this rupture owes itself to the very detachment of the same from the other across time. Without this rupture; there would be

¹ Ibid., p. 117.

no distance at all between the man and the world or the nature. There would be no liberation, no separation of a human being at all. So, he is safe and secure; freed of uncertainty or animalistic struggle or instincts. The exterior world is always a threat for the animal, animal in its own existence does belong to this threat, but not (for) the man because its relation with need is radically different; it is at a distance with the world/nature: the human being is detached from the world which it still nourishes itself. And human body here as the place of articulation of the satisfaction; it articulates a distance, establishes a delay through world which is convertible into time. Being now is both liberated and still needy one: but *across the time. Across the space*. By time, or time acts, he or she can satisfy his needs by laboring, by economic structure of self-possession and he establishes its freedom from the world. He now has *a world* of its own which has a certain distance with the exterior world. Levinas surely is aware of this time breaks the instantaneous structure of the happiness:

“This revelation of distance is an ambiguous revelation, for time both destroys the security of instantaneous happiness and permits the fragility thus discovered to be overcome. And it is the relation with the other, inscribed in the body as its elevation; that makes possible the transformation of enjoyment into consciousness and labor.”ⁱ

So, a separated and liberated being here what Levinas favors so that he can be rendered as a matter of unicity, rather than a moment of totality thanks to the enjoyment. The existent as such, no more, is a sub-species of a genus or a content of an individuation by a concept. Levinas infers that, the I is an ipseity only on the condition that it is outside of the concepts of individuality and generality. The refusal of concept here conveys its unique being, its unique interiority. If a being is at home with itself; that is because it has a distance with the world and other beings; and it is not a part of totality in which its singular existence dissolves. The very ipseity of singular being is the foundation where a break-up or rupture with totality occurs and concretely, bodily accomplished. This is what Levinas calls as “solitude” that drives/calls the being to the presence of the absolutely other. So, this

ⁱ Ibid., p. 117.

intimacy, secrecy of the I guarantees its separation while signaling the other's absolute presence.

The unicity of the I is acquired qua sufficiency but the sufficiency provided by happiness traverses the “not sufficing to oneself” in terms of need. The sufficiency here is deployed by a *contraction* of the ego. Contraction as fleeing away of the consciousness within pleasure. It is an existence for “itself; not in-itself or in view of its existence. Neither a representation of self to self-consciousness. As Levinas puts, “it is for itself as in the expression ‘each for himself’, or as the ‘famished stomach that has no ears’ capable of killing for a crust of bread”.ⁱ This for-itself measures the structure of happiness as an involution of the self to itself; withdrawal into the self. In this nourishment, enjoyment or happiness, there occurs a vibrant exaltation in which the I is exposed to involution or contraction. In this involution, the matter is not representing self to the self, or a reflection. A very different intentionality is at stake here:

“The ‘intentional’ structure is here wholly different; the I is the very contraction of the sentiment, the pole of a spiral whose coiling and involution is drawn by enjoyment: the focus of the curve is a part of the curve. It is precisely as a ‘coiling’, as a movement towards oneself, that enjoyment comes into play. And now one can understand in what sense we were able to say above that the I is an apology: whatever be the transfigurations this egoism will receive from speech, it is for the happiness constitutive of its very egoism that the I who speaks pleads.”ⁱⁱ

Here this intentionality is not phenomenological; it is not (of) ontological or epistemological; and is not included within the totality or absorbed by it. Therefore the solitude of enjoyment is a breach in totality; the ipseity escapes from the exterior world to its own inner existence: a pure withdrawal. Therefore, the separation of this ipseity is not the end of story of being human at a distance to the world. The presence of the Other will call in question this creature of happiness, joy of life. And this created being, in addition to its solitude, will exhibit its novelty and apology at the same time because of its egoistic and

ⁱIbid., p. 118.

ⁱⁱIbid., p. 119.

selfish enjoyment. For the apology issues in this happiness and there raises the existence of the Goodness, beyond, Desire in which the completion of accomplishment in happiness is not enough anymore for a human being, for who a human being is since the spirituality of human being is at issue. Though, this signaling or referring to the alterity by solitude is not beyond itself; this involution or separation is not subordinated to an ontology. It is not a matter of to be but the exaltation as to live, love of life:

“The upsurge of the self beginning in enjoyment, where the substantiality of the I is apperceived not as the subject of the verb to be, but as implicated in happiness (not belonging to ontology, but to axiology) is the exaltation of the existent as such. The existent would then not be justiciable to the comprehension of being, or ontology. One becomes a subject of being not by assuming a being but in enjoying happiness, by the interiorization of enjoyment which is also an exaltation, an ‘above being’. The existent is ‘autonomous’ with respect to being; it designates not a participation in being, but happiness. The existent par excellence is man.”ⁱ

So, Levinas concludes that the I in its separation or involution process cannot be identified as reason, as thematization or as objectification. The I is not to know, not to be being; the I has its ipseity as exaltation or contentment in its unicity by enjoyment, happiness; without this a being would be entirely a rational being and there would be no society at all in non-difference of rational beings. And would the society disappear into a pure rational unity. We can claim that without this happiness or separation, there would be no multiplicity within society and Levinas explicitly declares that representation or thematization is not the founder of such multiplicity. It is the enjoyment and separation of the I that gives a society to exist and this dimension leads us to the Desire of alterity. It gives rise to the heights of distinction between materiality and spirituality. This happiness opens the place for Desire, for apology and for Goodness. Thus, in Levinasian framework, to represent means to empty oneself from its ipseity and to insensibilize enjoyment; which is all contradictory with the love of life, with the creature exists for it-self in its satisfaction. Without this separated happiness there would be no I and no relation and dissolution with Infinite, in/with the presence of absolute Other. For the rise of this other, we need to have

ⁱ Ibid., p. 119.

an I, in such a way that: “To be I is to exist in such a way as to be already beyond being, in happiness. For the I to be means neither to oppose nor to represent something to itself, nor to use something, nor to aspire something, but to enjoy something.”ⁱ

We have come to a point that Levinas’ thesis revolves around the multiplicity of beings within society through the separation of the I and its relation with other beings. Levinas expounds that if this relation between multiple beings are seen by outside [by the eyes of totality such as], if it is visible, then there would be no way not to participate to the unity of the present One since the exterior point of view would form a totality to which the individuals have to join. So for the relation maintained within multiplicity, the relation of the I with the other person must be more powerful and secret than the formal and visible signification of conjunction. Thus, the bond between me and the other, the movement from the same to the other should not be included within general relations or should not be gazed by a third party. It should be secretive and intimate. If it is fully apprehended by some other power; then the gaze would suppress it into totality, thus:

“The individuals would appear as participants in the totality: the Other would amount to a second copy of the I... Pluralism is not a numerical multiplicity. In order that a pluralism in itself (which cannot be reflected in formal logic) be realized there must be produced in depth the movement from me to the other, an attitude of an I with re-gard to the Other (an attitude, already specified as love or hatred, obedience or command, learning or teaching, etc.), that would not be a species of relationship in general: this means the movement from me to the other could not present itself as a theme to an objective gaze freed from this confrontation with the other, to a reflection. Pluralism implies a radical alterity of the other, whom I do not simply conceive by relation to myself, but confront out of my egoism”ⁱⁱ

Therefore, Levinas is exactly saying that the society to be established with multiple beings needs a non-representational of objective gaze; that is the Desire between the same and the

ⁱ Ibid., p. 120.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., p. 121.

Other. Following this, Levinas concludes that the different type of an intentionality which is in the form of living from is necessary for a separated being; so that separated beings can enter into a dialogue within society which is not thematized, not gazed and absorbed by totality. In this point, Levinas differs from Husserl who claims the priority of representation over all other modalities of intentionality. Husserlian priority of representation corresponds to the theoretical intentionality of objectifying act as the foundation.

“Yet already with the first exposition of intentionality as a philosophical thesis there appeared the privilege of representation. The thesis that every intentionality is either a representation or founded on a representation dominates the *Logische Untersuchungen* and returns as an obsession in all of Husserl’s subsequent work. What is the relation between the theoretical intentionality of the objectifying act and enjoyment?”ⁱ

In order to explain the difference between intentionalities of enjoyment and objectifying act as representation; Levinas reminds that in Husserl, the meaning is given to the object by theoretical consciousness, that is by the act of representation. This already implies the difference between the act of representation and the object of representation. That is to say, here the act and the object coincides; it is the clarity of Cartesian terminology, put in another words *clear and distinct idea*, which means a total adequation of the thinker and what is thought. It comes to say that what we have here is a foundation of the exterior being as the work of the thought; the very exercise of it over objects. This master of thought over that which is thought provides the subject with vanishing of the exterior resistance of that (intentional object) which is thought. Levinas identifies this process as intelligibility (or the horizon of being as luminosity) by clear and distinct idea of that what is thought. With a clear and distinct idea; since what is produced is not a thing-in-itself; therefore we get a productivity at hand here: and that is what the mind endows as a “meaning”.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 122.

“This mastery is total and as though creative; it is accomplished as a giving of meaning: the object of representation is reducible to noemata. The intelligible is precisely what is entirely reducible to noemata and all of whose relations with the understanding reducible to those established by light. In the intelligibility of representation the distinction between me and the object, between interior and exterior, is effaced.”ⁱ

Thus, what does the effacement of this distinction, of this resistance of object imply? Levinas replies that this effacement attests the immanence and truth of the thought. There is no mystery or enigma no more; there is nothing left that will leave the mind in a shocking or surprising state before the existence of the world. Everything is under the light. So, there is no other that determines the same; but the same determines the other and bends over itself. No alterity is allowed within this clear and distinct intelligibility. It is omni-present. The non-I disappears by intelligibility, which is equal to the free exercise of representation. And this act of representation explores nothing before itself; all other intentionalities only are realized within this intentionality, luminous intelligibility. Compatible with the Husserlian phenomenology, this intelligibility is always already the very first act since it illuminates every activity. Levinas who is opposing to this view is well aware that this very first act corresponds to the pure spontaneity, pure present which is made of forgettings of the past.

“The I that thinks the sum of the angles of a triangle is, to be sure, also determined by this object; it is precisely the one that thinks of this sum, and not the one that thinks of atomic weight. Whether it remembers or has forgotten, it is determined by the fact of having passed through the thought of the sum of the angles... At the very moment of representation the I is not marked by the past but utilizes it as a represented and objective element. Illusion? Ignorance of its own involvements? Representation is the force of such an illusion and such forgettings. Representation is a pure present. The positing of a pure present without even tangential ties with time is the marvel of representation. It is a void of time, interpreted as eternity”.ⁱⁱ

ⁱ Ibid., p. 124.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., p. 125.

Both Kant's transcendental apperception thesis and Husserlian representation model take "representation" as a non-conditioned condition. is the constitution by reflection. That is where Levinas opposes. Levinas calls this attitude as "the idealist creation" which in turn is the explanation of passage from individual to the universal in "I think". For this "I think" is the pulsation of the rational thought, in order to remain the same by fading of the opposition between the I and the non-I. Though there are multiple objects before the I, within representation of the I, they dissolve into the work of thought. And even for the I that observes this process realizes that it is a unique and marvelous event. A unique capability of the thought which functions as the spontaneity and present; a return that assumes a past in the present, a going beyond of this past and this present. And this is exactly where inspiration and the door to the eternity opens up and the subject is elevated up to the timelessness.

Levinas explicitly submits the importance of this unique inspiration, elevation and the production of thought that is re-presented by representation. However, he opposes the idea that this is the real foundation. He claims there is a latent birth which is the condition of this representation. This representations turns every anteriority, that is given to the reduction of the same, to the instantaneity of the thought where a meaning of the represented arises. For Levinas, the value of this transcendental method comes from the fact that it actualizes the universal possibility of reducing the represented to its meaning; in turn, rendering the existent as the noema. However, *to live for/from*, the different intentionality of the enjoyment cannot be understood by this noema structure or representation of it. Or a meaning that is given to represented object. That, as a result, takes Levinas to say that the transcendental or the idealist constitution, pure spontaneity becomes a content of that which is constituted by nourishment, feeding. Because in enjoyment; the human being does not represent the exterior being to itself; it holds on the exteriority. Meaning that a body is put in the world corporeally in the hither side of representation:

"The body is the elevation, but also the whole weight of the position. The body naked and indigent identifies the *center* of the world it perceives, but, conditioned by its own representation of the world, it is thereby as it were torn up from the

center from which it proceeded, as water gushing forth from rock washes away that rock. The body indigent and naked is not a thing among things which I constitute... nor is the instrument of a gestural thought, of which theory would be simply the ultimate development. The body naked and indigent is the very reverting, irreducible to a thought, of representation into life, of subjectivity that represents into life which is sustained by these representations and lives of them; its indigence affirm “exteriority” as non-constituted, prior to all affirmation.”ⁱ

So, the process of doing, doubting, swimming, walking, laboring, destroying or killing; none of them belongs to the order of intentional representation; and they already suppose exteriority, love of life just before the foundation of objectifying act as representation. And those acts are on the weight of a body; brought by it and cannot be thematized as in the way of reciprocal relation of representation. In the *living from*, we posit ourselves in the world on the basis of accomplishments corporeally, bodily; we touch the world but this touching is already founded on the food which steps into reality, already constituted on the very realized action of the body. So, the constitution is not done by work of thought or representation in this corporeality or the stand of the body in the world; on the contrary this corporeality in the form of living from is the condition. Therefore, reducing the world to an intelligible, clear and distinct idea or content does not count for “living from”. It is not a noema or the unconditioned spontaneity of creative and productive schema. Here, we are not in the territory of the same as the eternal recurrence of the I think.

“What I live from is not in my life as the represented is within representation in the eternity of the same or in the unconditioned present of cogitation. If we could still speak of constitution, here we would have to say that the constituted, reduced to its meaning, here overflows its meaning, becomes within constitution the condition of constituting, or more exactly, the nourishment of constituting. This overflowing of meaning can be fixed by the term alimentation. The surplus over meaning is not a meaning in its turn. The aliment conditions the very thought that would think it as a condition.”ⁱⁱ

ⁱ Ibid, p. 127.

ⁱⁱ Ibid, p. 128.

In living from, in alimentation, the event's originality comes from the production of this condition in the midst of representation, between representing and represented, constituting and constituted. Until the forces, the foods become mine, become me; until the satisfaction of the need; the act of eating involves more than its represented reality. The meaning of eating is overflowed by this very act of sinking one's teeth into food. The surplus here is not of thought, it is not quantitative neither; nor is subject to representation. The alterity of the exteriority, the other, is thus confirmed until the satisfaction comes into play. Through laboring or possessing, *across time*, the alterity of nourishments are transformed into the same by satisfaction of the need. Still, it is true that intentional models of representation and enjoyment differs radically. As above said, there is a surplus of meaning, not reducible to the content of thought, and this time thought finds its condition in so-called product. The body is the source of this surplus or overflowing. And in the midst of the event, it is comprehended that to give a meaning to this exteriority as "consciousness of something" is abolished by the direction that the body takes. That is also what involution means. It is in the world and it is this very world that the I think is conditioned to this antecedent world as the body's permanent contestation:

"The world I constitute nourishes me and bathes me. It is aliment and "medium". The intentionality aiming at the exterior changes direction in the course of its very aim by becoming interior to the exteriority it constitutes... If the intentionality of "living from ..." which is properly enjoyment is not constitutive, this is therefore not because an elusive, inconceivable content, inconvertible into a meaning of thought, irreducible to the present and consequently unrepresentable, would compromise the universality of representation and the transcendental method. It is the very movement of constitution that is reversed. It is not the encounter with the irrational that stops the play of constitution, the play changes its sense. The body indigent and naked is this very changing of sense."¹

For Levinas, the position of the body and its determination by Descartes as not belonging to the category of clear and distinct ideas makes its superiority over Husserlian

¹ Ibid., pp. 129-130.

phenomenology in which there is no limitation over noematization, even for the body. In Levinasian analysis regarding corporeal existence, the movement of the body with-in the world is not of second order. What happens by the body which is indigent and naked is the constituted one's, the exteriority here, turning to a condition here. The condition of thought is manifested in what it has welcomed or refused [the nourishments]; and thus by this, the represented becomes a past that cannot pass through the present of representation. And the intentional exteriority of enjoyment, which holds on the level of exteriority and suspends the presencing of the self into self –self-consciousness– by representation, is treated as an absolute past not receiving its overflowed meaning from the memory or eternal essence of representation. Without nourishment at each time; the consciousness of something is not possible at all; every time we have the consciousness of something, it is only possible on the condition of enjoyment that is accomplished:

“The turning of the constituted into a condition is accomplished as soon as I open my eyes: I but open my eyes and already enjoy the spectacle. Objectification proceeding somehow from the center of a thinking being manifests, upon its contact, an eccentricity. What the subject contains represented is also what supports and nourishes its activity as a subject. The represented, the present, is a *fact*, already belonging to the past.”ⁱ

Even though, Levinas evidently made the distinction of different intentionalities of objectifying act by representation and enjoyment; the question still holds; why cannot we define it as a correlative of representation? How is possible that the world is still exterior and anterior to man and irreducible to its own representation? Levinas' respond lies in the way of things' coming to us. Things does not come us qua things but a medium, a background from which they emerge and to which they return. They are already in space, in the air, on the earth, along the road, across the street, alongside the lake etc. This medium, these extensional backgrounds are essential for the existence of the things. The things in enjoyment are not made of their technical finalities which create a system of functions or goals, nor create a self-referential system of usages. And the medium from which things come and go is not a goal or finality for human being; it is not a system of

ⁱ Ibid., p. 130.

operational references or a totality of things' ends in the way of their purposes. Levinas calls these archi-backgrounds as elementals:

“The medium has its own density. Things refer to possession, can be carried off, are *furnishings*; the medium from which they come to me lies escheat, a common fund or terrain, essentially non-possesable, “nobody’s”: earth, sea, light, city. Every relation or possession is situated within the non-possessable which envelops or contains without being able to be contained or enveloped. We shall call it the elemental.”ⁱ

To overcome the elements is only possible by the domicile, so that man gets its own extraterritoriality. And through this domicile, fishing in the sea, cutting the wood, the field I fertilize, sowing seeds etc; all these labor acts are rendered as domicile: primary appropriation. This domicile is the condition of all property human being will possess and through domicile the inner life of human being becomes possible and therefore the I is at home with itself by this foundational appropriation of place. When we have a “home”, the distance of our existence with the world and the extensive reception of the space is substituted with another structure. By domicile we plunge into the elemental. We are now inside of it by standing outside of it: this bathing occurs in an inside-out world. And no representation is possible since this pure quality of the element, say the liquidity, manifests itself without any support to the immersion of the bather. The element: as wind, earth, sky, air comes from nowhere. They are like the reverse side of reality since they are indeterminate and have no origin in the being.

“Indetermination here is not equivalent to the infinite surpassing limits; it precedes the distinction between finite and the infinite. It is not a question of something, an existent manifesting itself as refractory to qualitative determination. Quality manifests itself in the element as determining nothing... Thus thought does not fix element as an object... The question what is the “other side” of what offers us one

ⁱ “The element has no forms containing it; it is content without form. Or rather it has but a side: the surface of the sea and of the field, the edge of the wind; the medium upon which this side takes form is not composed of things. It unfolds in its own dimension: depth, which is not convertible into the breadth and length in which the side of the element extends... The depth of the element prolongs it till it is lost in the art and in the heavens.” E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p. 131.

side does not arise in the relation maintained with the element. The sky, the earth, the sea, the wind –suffices to themselves.”ⁱ

The human being, by domicile, baths in the element; immerses within this non-substantial environment. This element, this environment is without support to be. It is not in terms of to be. On the contrary all beings are already with them, bathing in them. The elements are not convertible into exteriority; no substance exists to which they can be attached. The element is by itself and indetermination as pure quality. Thus, things qua things emerge in/from this indetermination of the elemental. Levinas concludes that the element is that which separates from infinite, opens up a relation of human being with itself as towards the movement of satisfaction, as towards process of happiness, contentment and love of life as pulsating I in its egoistic form. And thus the relation with element in bathing is prior to any reason and is before any distinction of limited or unlimited, before having the “consciousness of ...”; therefore it is not a transcending movement, it is “nothing” and/but “pure quality”. Sensibility founds the relation with the element in the way of contentment, of enjoyment. We have first domicile and also possession, then by laboring we can have our separation through the satisfaction of the ego. And the utilization of the things, tools is in-view-of enjoyment. However, this activity of utilization within enjoyment, does not earn its signification and value from an ultimate and unique goal of things. The use-references of things are not the goal of human being as a whole or finality of a totality. These finalities are not inter-connected at all, meaning of human being is not exhausted by satisfaction from these things bathing in the elemental:

“The world answers to a set of autonomous finalities which ignore one another. To enjoy without utility, in pure loss, gratuitously, without referring to anything else, in pure expenditure —this is human. There is a non-systematic accumulation of occupations and tastes, equidistant from the system of reason, where the encounter with the Other opens the infinite, from the system of the instinct, anterior to separated being, anterior to the being veritable born, separated from its cause, nature.”ⁱⁱ

ⁱ Ibid., p. 132.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., p. 134.

Thus, the biological finality which ends with satisfaction remarks the very disinterestedness of man. This disinterestedness is implied by enjoyment that is sensibility in Levinasian philosophy. And this enjoyment by element does belong to the order of sentiment rather than that of thought: it is affectivity wherein the psychism, the inner life of the I pulsates. It is not a matter of knowing here, but living the sentiment as qualities. And the things to which are attributed are the source of contentment which in turn makes the finite possible without the infinite on the ground of sensibility. This contentment constitutes the very existence of human being, not the world as representation. In this regard, the void of thought with world disappears on a horizon in which the satisfaction by means of involution spreads forth. This contentment or this satisfaction is not rational, it is naive and without distinct and clear character. It is of the order of useful not of that truth to know as verification or coinciding. The sensibility as contentment is not a moment of representation, but as the instance of enjoyment. Sensibility is only bound to the affective states. Therefore, it is not an experience of knowledge, but of enjoyment in form of living joy of life, in addition to that, it is not understood in terms of “consciousness of”. In enjoyment, the objects of contentment are dissolved into the elemental again, not to the content of rational, objective thought.

This is a *for me* structure and the question, “does not this *for me* presuppose a representation of oneself?” is not legitimized. Since the relation with oneself is already accomplished when the I *stands in* the world which precedes its self-existence, as an absolute anteriority. The earth upholds my body, my existence is already on the ground of this city I live, this neighborhood I am on, this street I move, this pool I swim; it is them they ground me, not I ground them. Firstly, I am surrounded and given by the world, not the vice versa is true. Already standing in the world is different from thinking the world. This standing precedes thought and labor. This enjoyment of separated being is not rendered up to a point that the human being is only its enjoyment in reality. The love of life is essential, the love of life is the enjoyment of sensibility; we enjoy the world before its constitution within mind: we breathe, we walk, we see etc. It is to be thoughtless in each instant of living. It is the relishing of life. But is it the concrete man within society? No, absolutely not responds Levinas: Human being is more than its enjoyment which is the

unreflection, an anteriority of the distinction of the finite and the infinite. Human being in its concrete existence is beyond this enjoyment, in society human being speaks before the other and experiences the alterity. This experience is actualized by expression and language in the face of the other person.

“In reality man has already the idea of infinity, that is, lives in society and represent things to himself. The separation accomplished as enjoyment, that is, as interiority, becomes a consciousness of objects. Over and above enjoyment –with dwelling, possession, the making common– a discourse about the world takes form. Appropriation and representation add a new event to enjoyment. They are founded on language as a relation among men. Things have a name and an identity. The identity of persons and the continuity of their labors project over the things the grill through which they find again identical things. An earth inhabited by men endowed with language is peopled with stable things.”¹

However, unlike human existence, the identity of the things is effaced under the threat of their phenomenality. The thing brings the ashes and wastes also. The thought cannot follow their trace, their transformation, such as smoke’s to the air, is very fast, they are not traceable. Thus, their identity is lost since the form of the thing changes, it has now become another thing. The matter and the form relation are essential; the form dissolves into the matter in any way. Levinasian claim of face here comes to the play: he says that the face is without form. It is not a thing nor a matter. Things are seen in the light, in the realm of elements, but not the face. It signifies itself. Things are in seen from a point of view, they have profiles, perspectives etc. and exactly their being are established around these profiles. And they are convertible into another thing and they at last become a price of trade, ex-change or universal value: They become the matter of economy, transform into the terms of money. They get a price because they are of elemental nature, corresponding to the wealth, contentment. Their roots emerging from elemental is confirmed as tools. That is a return to the enjoyment, to the elemental order. In addition to this trade value, things can take an aesthetical value also; can call for arts, decorated by art and qualified as beautiful, in return recurs the enjoyment.

¹ Ibid., p. 139.

“The world of thing calls for art, in which the Infinity of the idea is idolized in the finite, but sufficient, image. All art is plastic. Tools and implements, which themselves presuppose enjoyment, offer themselves to enjoyment in their turn. They are playthings: the fine cigarette lighter, the fine car. They are adorned by the decorative arts: they are immersed in the beautiful: where every going beyond enjoyment reverts to enjoyment.”ⁱ

The relation by enjoyment, the structure of *for me* is a contention. But it does not the traverse of the always of the time. Since the freedom of representation is overflowed by this irreducible surplus of meaning in happiness, in living from by the elemental; we should not infer that it is a restriction and failure of the freedom, it is not about the knowing of representation, it is the enjoyment of/in a world. It results in a temporal meaning since on the horizon there is the indetermination of the element. The pure quality of the elemental is not quality of something; the blue of the sky, the breath of the wind, the undulation of the sea, the rainbow over my head do not attach themselves to a substance. They do not cling into any form of matter. They emerge from nowhere. This coming from no man’s land, from nowhere, that is not something or from something, seen without there anything that is seen; coming incessantly, coming always without being able to possess. This flow of elemental cannot be possessed and within enjoyment there is always this touching of elemental, this coming always from nowhere is at stake. And this incessant flow stands as unknown, insecure, anonymous; it puts the future forward. An insecure future that is not yet possessed or represented. So, we should keep on laboring, dwelling in order to close the lag between the time we live in and the future that is full of the divinity of the element, the threat and danger of its anonymity. This anonymity is impersonal and inhuman. Before human being, it is there and it is there without being there. Therefore, the satisfaction of the need already implies an insecure future, provided that the satisfaction is temporal and not permanent. *Across* time, labor and effort in order to possess should be maintained. This across is the insecure future itself within the element.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 140.

“The future, as insecurity, is already in the pure quality which lacks the category of the substance, of something. It is not that the source escapes me *in fact*, in enjoyment quality is lost nowhere. It is the *apeiron* distinct from the infinite... Quality does not withstand identification because it would represent a flux and a duration; rather its elemental character, coming forth from nothing, constitutes its fragility, the disintegration of becoming, that time prior to representation – which is menace and destruction.”ⁱ

For escaping this destruction, menace and insecurity human being needs endless laboring. Levinas proposes that, human being can overcome the resistance of the matter and its source as the elemental, by domicile. Though, this already implies the abyss between the I and the happiness. The I will try to close the gap by possession and its satisfaction. Here Levinas is very cautious that this losing oneself in the elemental differs radically from relation with infinite. The relation with infinite is only possible within the existence of a separated being. Unlike the one’s losing itself in the nowhere of elementary satisfaction, the separated being does not lose itself in the presence of the Infinity. While the enjoyment presents itself as a contentment; it also carries the possibility of a withdrawal from this enjoyment by losing itself in the anonymity, by satisfaction.

And this anonymity of nowhere as the structure of the elemental opposes to another element, which is only personification and humanization, the presence of the Other that signifies itself by Face. Without the welcome of the Other in a recollected home, as hospitality, there would be no relation with Infinite. And this recollected home establishes the *hold* on the things. The grasp and the comprehension of the things. Levinas also identifies it as the recollection of dwelling without which the separation from the elemental would be impossible. The lost in anonymity would occur. The *hand* qua hand arises in the separated being, independence from the elemental in which the body immersed. And this hand is the possibility of possession. Thus, this possession qua body is not permanent, the separation is at the frontier of the elemental since nourishment is of the elemental; it still lives from and it is still interior to itself with satisfaction. So, the interiorization needs laboring and thus a movement towards the world by hand. The passivity of the satisfied

ⁱ Ibid., p. 141.

being is again interrupted by the needy one which is towards the fathomless and endless depth of the elements. It is knotted between two voids; void of the satisfaction and void of the elemental. These influences of two voids are incarnated in the body. The sovereignty of enjoyment is thus the possibility of both the separation and dependence:

“The sovereignty of enjoyment runs the risk of a betrayal: the alterity from which it lives already expels it from paradise. Life is a body, not only lived body, where its self-sufficiency emerges, but a cross-roads of physical forces, body-effect. In its deep-seated fear life attests this ever possible inversion of the body-master into body-slave, of health into sickness. *To be a body* is on the one hand *to stand*, to be master of oneself, and on the other hand to stand on the earth, to be in the other, thus to be encumbered by one’s body... I pass from this dependence to this joyous independence. To be at home with oneself in something other than oneself, to be oneself while living from something than oneself, to live from ... in concretized in corporeal existence.”ⁱ

Thus, the incarnation of thought depends on not the work or production of thought, but on the happy dependence of need, which in turn creates the independence and separation of the self, through providing itself with the secure zone of inner life and strength. This “through” happens by dwelling which postpones the betrayal of alterity by laboring and obtaining a safe and happy future so that the expiration of the satisfaction has been overcome and the contentment refreshed. This is what establishes consciousness as the perpetual postponement of being within the elemental and anonymity, the escape of being surrounded by the *there is* of Levinas, far away from the threats of this anonym world that is not substantialized. Thus, such as the consciousness of death is this postponement of its inevitable fact, the ignorance of the day it comes, the time which is accompanied by forgetting. The time which is opened in this dimension of laboring or acquisition as body. Nonetheless, this postponement cannot be fully accomplished, and the suffering always becomes within this horizon of enjoyment as an inevitable fact of corporeal existence since the anonymous forces cannot be fully or always excluded. They are always in the world but not the body of the self. Thus, the suffering of the recollected being is the patience, as

ⁱ Ibid., p. 164.

pure passivity, as being exposed to inevitable facts of anonymous powers. But it is not only a defeat; it is also a distance with the elemental. The dependence as defeat and the distance as separation, by the equivocation of the body, create the consciousness. And this consciousness is the delay of the elemental reality in which the body is also a sector among other things. In addition to be a part of world; the body is the condition of being separated by enjoyment. Therefore, as the postponement of anonymity, the consciousness is the disincarnation of the corporeality of the body:

“Consciousness does not fall into a body –is not incarnated; it is a disincarnation– or more exactly, a postponing of the corporeity of the body. This is not produced in the ether of abstraction but as all the concreteness of dwelling and labor. To be conscious is to be in relation with *what it is*, but as though the present of what is were not yet entirely accomplished and only constituted the future of a recollected being. To be conscious is precisely to have time –not to exceed the present time in the project that anticipates the future, but to have a distance with regard to the present itself, to be related to the element in which one is settled as to what is not yet there.”ⁱ

Therefore the separation, the freedom of the self depends on the time, on the process of dwelling, laboring, possession etc. The medium as the elemental is incommensurable and this indetermination of the element makes the present within danger, fear, feeling, trembling. The time only emerges in overcoming this anxiety towards the future so that the consciousness is not only be a consciousness of this fear, this anxiety or all horrifying terrors; but a consciousness of self-sufficiency and maintenance, resistance against to the elemental and its horrifying silence. So, human being is a being of struggle against impersonal and endless elemental. And its laboring is just another name for a *will* of consciousness which will survive the threat of anonymous forces across the time. Human being has the time to get rid of this threat of the elemental, has the time to live its own life. It is not a force more powerful than it struggles. It is not a fight of A versus B, approaching each other to punch and seeing the fall of opponent in equal terms. The human being is never strong enough to beat its opponent permanently. It is only temporarily.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 166.

Levinas infers that this having time means to have an interval between the obstacle and the willing person. “To will is to forestall danger. To conceive the future is to forestall.”ⁱ The future by which *there is* inhabits in the nothingness. This *there is, this nothingness* of the future is not something but rather is a fathomless absence, an existence without existent. It is the mythical elemental, a nocturnal prolongation of anonymity. And this nocturnal strangeness of the world, the vertigo, the fear and the trembling in the face of the elemental is just interrupted by enjoyment, by action through laboring, possession. The delay of the elemental means a punctuating of the time, a commencement, a birth. The delaying the elemental by laboring is only possible having the structure of the body which holds the beings in its own being. In a form of recollection at home with itself: that is to say, recollection of dwelling. That is the point where we should explain this *recollection*:

“This insecurity ... conforming its insularity, is lived in the instant of enjoyment as the concern for the morrow... In the concern for the morrow there dawns the primordial phenomenon of the essentially uncertain future of sensibility. In order that this future arise in its signification as a postponement and a delay in which labor, by mastering the uncertainty of the future and its insecurity and by establishing *possession*, delineates separation in the form of economic independence, the separated being must be able to recollect itself and have representations. Recollection and representation are produced concretely as habitation in a dwelling or a Home.”ⁱⁱ

Therefore, Levinasian recollection is based on extraterritoriality that is in the elemental but also aside from it: an being in-outside. Levinas claims that this positioning in-outside of the strange, uncanny world is produced in the warmth of intimacy within home: a gentleness [*douceur*]. This intimacy comes from the Other, not as a shock but as a familiarity, not as a harsh natural uncanniness but as an intime feminine grace. This is the primordial event of the gentleness in which the separated being is able to recollect itself in the peaceable welcome of the light of the face. And it is only possible within Home. Home is radically different than all other tools, such as the hammer of the pen. The recollection of

ⁱ Ibid., p. 166.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., p. 150.

the world as represented and as worked over, as labored is accomplished within home in terms of inwardness. Home is an in-between of the human with himself and with the world: he is within elemental and without it. Thus, that does not mean that home which belongs to the realm of buildings in the objective world nullifies the separation since the constitution of the objective world is not prior to the dwelling, it is after dwelling. The *stand*, the positioning of the subject is before any idealist construction of the object/subject. By dwelling it is already exceeding knowing since only by dwelling things become concrete. Therefore, knowing is *after the event*. Thus not the representation is the condition of dwelling, but the dwelling is the condition of the representation. The consciousness of the world is already through that world, that concretization. A specific intentionality different than that of representation is at play here. That is by which the outpouring of the consciousness occurs in the things, not as the representation of the things, but as another intentionality of concretization. It is through recollection that the subject becomes its own being in the overflowing of concretization:

“The very notion of an idealist subject has come from a failure to recognize this overflowing of concretization... Contemplation, with its pretension to constitute, after the event, the dwelling itself, assuredly evinces separation or better yet, is an indispensable moment of its production. But the dwelling cannot be forgotten among the conditions for representation, even if representation is a privileged conditioned, absorbing its condition. For it absorbs it only after the event, a posteriori. Hence the subject contemplating a world presupposes the event of dwelling, the withdrawal from the elements, recollection in the intimacy of the home... recollection, a work of separation, is concretized as existence in a dwelling, economic existence. Because the I exists recollected it takes refuge empirically in home. Only from this recollection does the building take on the signification of being a dwelling...”ⁱ

The interiority that is given by home, the habitation by recollection; the intimacy and the gentleness make labor and representation possible. By recollection, human being is having its attention to itself rather than losing itself in the elemental nature. This recollection is

ⁱ Ibid., pp. 153- 154.

also now beyond enjoyment since it suspends the immediate reactions to the nourishments. Eventually, the distance of separation is produced in the midst of the event of enjoying. The distance brings the intimate familiarity of the world within the interiority. It is not the shocking of *there is* any more. It is now the gentleness which extends into the face of the things. It is not only a matter of satisfaction; beyond that now separated being has an affective relationship. The intimacy of this affection, the relation with this familiarity is with someone already. The interiority in-outside world is already human. And this someone, this absent Other as the source of intimacy is the Womanⁱ who is hospitable and peaceable within Home. She is the condition for recollection and inhabitation, for Home. Still, Levinas makes a distinction between this other of familiarity in isolated home and the other of height which is established on society, on language. The feminine alterity is a language that has no teaching. This alterity and gentleness within feminine presence is a silent and deaf language: an intimate expression but a human welcome simultaneously. Comings and goings of this grace of feminity is of human order. The possibility of being both in-visible for the feminine, within home: Invisible to the world, visible to the home, and thus to the in-outside world.

The human being passes from home to the recollection in dwelling and then to the labor and property. The grasp of laboring which explores the world presupposes the event of recollection. The home opens up the dimension with the world to be possessed, to be acquired, and to be rendered interior in its feminine welcome:

“The first movement of economy is in fact egoist –it is not transcendence, it is not expression. The labor that draws the things from the elements in which I am steeped discovers durable substances, but forthwith suspends the independence of their durable being by acquiring them as movable goods, transportable, put in reserve, deposited in the home. The home that founds possession is not a possession in the same sense as the movable goods it can collect and keep. It is possessed because it already and henceforth is hospitable for its proprietor. This refers us to

ⁱ “Sexuality supplies the example of this relation, accomplished before being reflected on: the other sex is an alterity borne by a being as an essence and not as the reverse of his identity; but it could not affect an unsexed me.” E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p.121.

its essential interiority, and to the inhabitant that inhabits it before every inhabitant, the welcoming one par excellence, welcome in itself –the feminine being.”ⁱ

Within walls, doors, windows; the tranquility reigns over the home in which the human being is calm. It is safe and secure. Thus with this recollection in dwelling, in home, thereafter starts the possession of things different than the enjoyment which possesses without taking as bathing of the sensibility in the element. No activity precedes such kind of enjoying and openness to the threat of the elemental. Thus possession by laboring masters and suspends this openness to the elemental as grasping, as ontology, as labor’s hold. This possessing by hold posits the existence of the substance. In this substantiality, a thing does not present itself absolutely, it is given or taken, it is a matter of exchange. This is where the market place comes into the play as the economy, the trade of movable goods. Thus things are converted into money which is the foundation of exchange; and belonging, possession, property. However, this possession opens us the dimension of relation with the other human being that cannot be attached to the money or to the labor. And this other human being is not from the order of possession. The face of the other is not of money or of labor; it does not take other possessors as in the things. It presupposes the absolute resistance of the Other to the violence or murder.

This Other is not the other of representation in which the other is absorbed into the same by reflection. Levinas points out that Husserl to which he owes the intentional analysis that aims concretizationⁱⁱ is excluding this unique presence of the Other qua Other. Other. Also ignores the fact that the presentation is conditioned by living from of the enjoyment. The representation is conditioned by the joy of life and this conditioning is only reversed after the event. This does not demonstrate the so-called idealist opening to the abstract eternity; conversely, the production of separation occurs with-in time. This separation is through recollection in home where the I takes his own sovereign position

ⁱ Ibid., p. 158.

ⁱⁱ “Our work in all its developments strives to free itself from the conception that seeks to unite events of existence affected with opposite signs in an ambivalent condition which alone would have ontological dignity, while the events themselves proceeding in one direction or in another would remain empirical, articulating nothing ontologically new. The method practiced here does indeed consist in seeking the condition of empirical situations, but it leaves to the developments called empirical, in which the conditioning possibility is accomplished –it leaves to the concretization– an ontological role that specifies the meaning of the fundamental possibility, a meaning invisible in that condition.” E. Levinas, *Totality and Infinity*, p.173.

before/against the world. It is the accomplishment of the separated being by hand, by possession. Levinas also sees the possibility that this possession of things refers to the withdrawal from the things and to the Other that is not a matter of possession.

“This withdrawal implies a new event... the relation with the Other who welcomes me in the Home, the discreet presence of the Feminine. But in order that I be able to free myself from the very possession that the welcome of the Home establishes, represent them to myself, refuse both enjoyment and possession, I must know how *to give* what I possess. Only thus could I situate myself absolutely above my engagement in the non-I. But for this I must encounter the indiscreet face of the Other that calls me into question.... The Other –absolutely other– paralyzes possession... the untraversable infinity of the negation of murder is announced by this dimension of height, where the Other comes to me concretely in the ethical impossibility of committing this murder. I welcome the Other who presents himself in my home by opening my home to him.”ⁱ

This Other does not conquer me as my opposite, as another I, he teaches without becoming a totality in itself. Thus, the representation derives its freedom from what it lives with this relation with the Other in the dimension of morality. It puts the egoist I into to the question by the Other which escapes the powers of the I. As in nourishment, this Other does not transform itself to the same as enjoyment or satisfaction. It is through language, through society. We cannot grasp or hold it; it is not subject to a possession or sensibility. It moves in transcendence, in absolute exteriority that signifies by itself. However, this transcendence is not of another world or of celestial order; it is within the home, within economical order. To approach the other with empty hands or within a closed home is not possible at all; the metaphysical desire presupposes recollection and separation as the concrete way of being hospitable to the Other. Levinas warns that home is not a root where human being is self-sufficient with itself and its being is interiorized as its existence. On the contrary, home is the surplus of meaning, overflowing of the Other by a disengagement or the wandering of the I. Though, the opposite possibility is also true that the separated being can maintain its pure isolation and become forgetful of the Other or of hospitality;

ⁱ Ibid., p. 171.

thus the separation in its home is able to traverse both side, as transcendence or its (the other's) absence as a positive event of being lonely.

“The relation with infinity remains as another possibility of the being recollected in its dwelling. The possibility for the home to open to the Other is as essential to the essence of the home as closed doors and windows.”ⁱ

In speaking the world to the Other, there is the first donation of language as primordial dispossession. Words are dispossession of things. Though this dispossession already depends on the primordial functions of possession and economy; the relationship with the Other puts this possessed world into question. The language puts the things into a common realm which establishes the generality of the word. The thing is grasped and possessed; it is the matter of hold; but also as a word it is presented to the Other, as a mode of dispossession at the heart of the ethical event by generalization. It is a unique way of universalization in terms of ethical perspective. It is the offering of the I's, donation of the world to the Other. This donation of language is the first effectuation of the ethical meeting over and above the labor, though it involves the labor of speaking, it is more than that by donation, by generosity. The act overflows its antecedents. That is by this offering of the world to the Other, the language opens up the metaphysical heightness and desire of human being. Not by consciousness but by dispossession, by conscience that puts the freedom and possessing of the I into question. It is where the only meaningful arises, where ego is under suspicion. The conscience opens up the radical search for the absolutely concrete, exterior that is the Other as the humanization itself; and this humanization is not through “the consciousness of ...” as in Husserlian analysis.

Levinas seeks for this concretization, as Husserl does, by intentionality; though Levinas radically differs from him in that he says that living from is the condition of the representation, as the joy of life in the separated being; without enjoyment, dwelling, possession and labor, representation is not possible at all; it is marked by the latent birth of the other intentional structures that are not in terms of consciousness of something but enjoying the life; making the consciousness possible after the event of living from. So not

ⁱ Ibid., p. 173.

every relation with exteriority is of “a conscious of something” structure or with Husserlian concepts, *noesis-noema* structure. In a footnote of the Preface to the *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas writes:

“In broaching at the end of this work, the study of relations which we situate beyond the face, we come upon events that cannot be described as noeses aiming at noemata, nor as active interventions realizing projects, nor, of course, as physical forces being discharged into masses. They are conjunctures in being for which perhaps the term “drama” would be most suitable.”ⁱ

So, there is a rupture, there is an “interval” that intervenes the regular functioning of noesis-noema structure. The very reason of this interval, this undoing of every knowledge and intentionality is the very concept of infinite. And only by this relation with infinite, Levinas expounds the radical exteriority of the absolute, of the Other. In these revelations of the Other, the main inspiration point is Descartes:

“The research *Totality and Infinity* takes up certainly does not consist in questioning the phenomenology of the object embraced by that science, of presence lending itself to its grasp, of being reflected in its idea... –of that which is thought in the thought always on the scale of the thought that thinks it– a correlation and correspondence of the rigorous noetic/noematic parallelism of intentionality... But in the discourse of *Totality and Infinity*, we have not forgotten the memorable fact that, in this third Meditations of First Philosophy, Descartes encountered a thought, a noesis, which was not on the scale of its noema, its cogitatum... A thought thinking more than it thought. A thought that also responded with adoration to the Infinite of which it was the thought....”ⁱⁱ

This relation with Infinite does not only reverse noesis-noema structure, representing things to the mind structure; but it happens in way that in relation with an existent in its unique existence we have been called upon and the sovereignty of our consciousness is put

ⁱ Ibid., p. 28.

ⁱⁱ E. Levinas, *Entre Nous*, p. 200.

into question and Levinasian move brings forth an anterior beyond as the precedent of this consciousness: *conscience*. The conscience is put as non-intentional and as primordial birth of human being, creation *ex nihilo*. Thus, we come to a point that the founding condition of all intentionalities are marked by non-intentional structure of prereflective consciousness as conscience.

In the article “Nonintentional Consciousness”ⁱ, Levinas starts with the method and writes that Husserl is at the origin of his writings; since he inspired Levinas with the concept of intentionality which animates consciousness and especially *the idea of the horizons of meaning*. These horizons are rediscovered by intentional analysis when it works on the thought that has forgotten the horizons of the entity. Husserl, as his master, taught Levinas how to search for these horizons. In spite of the fact that he is the main master; Levinas still deploys his critique around a new meaning different than that of the theoretical consciousness that depends on the ontological meaning of being, of knowing, of representing, of experiencing. This new meaning arises in the relation with the Other which does not subordinate the religion, the sociality and the language to the experiences that are lessons learned in a unity of knowing including all modalities, such as contemplation, affectivity, sensibility, understanding, thematization, reflection etc. Without doubt, that is also the case with the cogito of Descartes as the unity of the I. This cogito is re-presentable memory and the synchrony of the immanence that captures the otherness in itself as its content; thus the diachrony is taken as the privation of synchrony.

Levinas clearly marks that this synchrony, this re-presenting of unity to the I is already through the grasp, the hold on what is learned. It is not without at-hand. Thus, thinking is already through a possession, an enjoyment, a satisfaction: “from cup to lip”, the distance has to be overcome, the need should be satisfied thereafter. The event of coincidence between the thinkable and the thinking is through *being given*. Without that constitution of unity of the I, consciousness of the self would be impossible. Therefore, the consciousness already implies the presence of worldliness, the fact of being given, a positing of the self by body, through hold, hand or grasp: a com-prehension, an appropriation, a stand in the world. Though, Levinas goes on, a consciousness directed at

ⁱ Ibid., p. 123.

the world and at object through these means presuppose consciousness of itself that represents the world and its objects to itself, that is self-consciousness:

“The latter, reflective consciousness, in which consciousness directed towards the world seeks help in overcoming the inevitable naivete of its intentional rectilinearity, forgetful of the indirect *vecu* of the nonintentional and its horizons, forgetful of what accompanies it... It is not illegitimate, however, to ask ourselves whether, beneath the gaze of reflective consciousness understood as self-consciousness, the nonintentional, lived contrapuntally to the intentional, retains and renders up its true meaning.”ⁱ

The self-consciousness is purely of accompaniment and would be immediate, without an intentional aim. Non-intentional. And conversely the reflective consciousness takes the states of the self as objects and forgets the horizons from which it is born. Thus, in this regard, the meaning is rendered as this act of objectifying of the mind of reflective consciousness. Levinas traces another understanding of the meaning that is in the non-reflective consciousness which is not an implication of the envelopment of the particular in a concept. Rather is the intimacy of inexpressibility that is not clear or distinct idea or of cogito. So, what is at play here is not compounding of the consciousness to itself, as if the thinking the self appeared in the world and belonged there in a primordial sense. The dark, the unclear and the confused context of the world is at stake. Before any constitution of the world there is pure passivity as exposure to the world. It is not a knowledge; it is not a knowing of the self. It is an accompaniment to the knowing of reflective consciousness that precedes all intentions.

“Conscience that, rather than signifying a knowledge of self, is a self-effacement or discretion of presence. Bad conscience: without intentions, without aims, without the protective mask of the character contemplating itself in the mirror of the world, self-assured and affirming himself. Without name, without position or titles. A

ⁱ Ibid., p. 128.

presence that fears presence, stripped bare of all attributes. A nakedness that is not that of unveiling or the exposure of truth.”ⁱ

This conscience is before all wrong-doings, before all will. It is the reserve for the non-justified, the stranger in the earth, the homeless, the poor person. It is the latent birth of human being in bad conscience or timidity. It is not in the world but in the questioning of the interior self. An already hateful being in saying I, in its egoism, in its already born apology because of its ipseity. The spontaneity and the freedom of the I is marked by the very advent of humility. Thus, the very meaning of human being derives its original meaning from this hither side of all intentional orientations: that is bad conscience which puts the affirmation and confirmation of being into question. That comes to say that primordial meaning is not that of vital, psychic or social purposes or implications. Levinas’ demonstration does not only claim that the pure passivity or the bad conscience is realized by the structure of nonintentional consciousness, it is not after of an I’s right to be or after the reflection of the subject that suppresses the timidity of non-intentional; but also, conversely, it is from the very beginning, it is the latent birth that preoccupies the realm of consciousness. It is always already there, it is an-archival. The human being is “me”, not an I from the very start. It is the accusative, not the affirming or self-assured nominative. In this accusative; different from the anxiety of Heidegger, the spontaneity and the self-affirmation, before all representational content, of the I is questioned. The control of the present by grasping or comprehending; the justice of the position I takes before the world is a matter of suspicion. It is that anterior question that puts the I in a position that it has to give answer for its being an I, its right to be an ego. Levinas radically claims that the I is already me. It is already exposed to the Other.

“My ‘being in the world’ or ‘my place in the sun’, my home –are they not a usurpation of place that belong to the other man who has already been oppressed or starved by me... Fear for all the violence and murder my existing, despite its intentional and conscious innocence, can bring about. A fear that goes back behind my ‘consciousness of the self’ and despite all returns of pure perseverance in being towards good conscience. A fear that comes to me from the face of the other

ⁱ Ibid., p. 129.

person... Uprightness of an exposure to death, defenseless; and before all language, before all mimicry, a demand made of me from the depths of an absolute solitude; a demand addressed to me or an order issued, a putting in question of my presence any my responsibility.”ⁱ

This fear and responsibility signify by “Here I am”. It is being with the Other when he faces death. It is being in service of him as not-letting-him-die alone in its exposure to the death through its very fragility and defenselessness. The face of the Other, as the center of Command and Word is the manifestation of the glory as the surplus of significance. It is not a thinkable or matter of a thematization. It is entering into and welcoming the Other that is not graspable as non-intentional, non-representable; that is Infinite. This call from the Other is the word of God that commands me “do not kill”, “do not make injustice.” The relation with Infinite as towards-God is not intentional; it does not have an end point or nor does posit a finality. It is irreducibility of the glory of towards-God or of the fear of God in which the perseverance of the being is interrupted. Human being is already beyond being in this signification of the Face to which I cannot be indifferent and disinterested.

This relation is the foundation of the ethics and me that are anterior to all ontology and intentionality of phenomenology. The real meaning of human being does not lie in its sovereignty or freedom of its ipseity, its spontaneity; on the contrary in its being responsible, in its apology for being an I, an egoism, in its culpability or shame that fears most from making injustice to the Other or killing him. The other escapes my power. Fear for him not fear for/of myself; this fear does not return over my being as in Heidegger. Not a reflective one; it holds onto the other person. Thus the question is not to be an I, it is to be a me that is always already exposed to the presence of the Other, that is beyond being in its conscience, in its spirituality:

“In the deposition by the I of its sovereignty of the self, in its modality as hateful self, ethics, but probably also the very spirituality of the soul signifies. The human, or human inwardness, is the return to the inwardness of non-intentional consciousness, to bad conscience, to its possibility of fearing injustice more than

ⁱ Ibid., p. 130.

death, of preferring injustice undergone to injustice committed, and what justifies being to what secures it. To be or not to be is probably not the question par excellence.”ⁱ

2.2 Heidegger

Levinas was a student of Husserl mainly, though he also met Heidegger several times. The most important thing that Levinas declares as inexcusable was Heidegger’s involvement in Nazi movement. This engagement also demonstrates very clearly the crisis of Europe. Though Levinas is an admirer of his philosophical journey and his speculations on *Sein und Zeit* for human being; his views are radically different than Heidegger. The main difference is the relation with the Other. Levinas demonstrates that relation is suppressed by Da-sein’s mineness or being-there, Da of Dasein in Heideggerian philosophy. The world and the other are constituted by *being there*, as the horizon of all beings. This is disclosure of being, excluding the alterity of the Other, reducing it into the Same. Thus, Levinas claims, this is still ontology of presence, of being and of dehumanization. Conversely, Levinas offers the relation with the Other as primordial in the face and the face is where the meaning of human being as infinity, as ethical meeting, as language, as sociality arises, not the being of Being. Levinas explains that he is attempting to construct a *phenomenology of sociality*ⁱⁱ in his article, Diachrony and Representation. So that he focuses on the concretization of the relation with the Other, such as in language, in love, in dying for, in sacrifice, in responsibility, in fraternity etc.

His article “Dying For ...” serves to the main schema of his critique and his relation with Heidegger. This is a gentle speech at the same time, starting with “Ladies and Gentlemen, Director”. Levinas calls the listeners to understand the meaning of Dasein, the mediation of Heidegger on being in the guise of human *being-there*. Levinas asks whether this analysis of Dasein in Heidegger is without ambiguities or not: “Is the adventure of being, as being there, as Da-sein, an inalienable belonging to self, a being proper –

ⁱ Ibid., p. 132.

ⁱⁱ “I have attempted a ‘phenomenology’ of sociality, taking as my point of departure the face of the other, proximity, by hearing a voice that commands: an order addressed me, not to remain indifferent to that death, not to let another die alone...” E. Levinas, *Entre Nous*, p. 169.

Eigentlichkeit, an authenticity altered by nothing— ... the virility of a free ability-to-be, like a will of race and sword? Or on the contrary, would not to be, that verb, signify—in *being-there*— non-indifference, obsession by the *other*, a search and a vow of peace?”ⁱ

This peace is not that of silence, coming from this authenticity of to-be, that is created by beautiful, or not that silence keeps silence and protects it; it is anything but a peace that is taken from the eyes of the Other, from his look, from his naked face that calls for responsibility. So, the remarks of Levinas about the crisis of European philosophy, mainly Heidegger, is woven around *to be* that indicates being as an event, an adventure in the horizon of ontology; and its beyond as the Other, dying for the Other in an absolute alterity of ethical attempt.

Levinas makes the distinction that Heidegger’s philosophy of to-be is an event, that is not a logical production or reflection of conceptual knowledge, like Hegelian philosophy. It is not manifested around the totality of things or living beings or ideas. It opens the dimension of affectivity of human being. It is more than an understanding; since understanding meaning of this event is already within the horizon of the very event of being; the understanding already belongs to the event of being. The understanding, the speaking, the signifying, the act, the motion, all is caught up in existing, in being there, being a Dasein. Therefore, Dasein is the essential modality of to be; it is on the hither side of every being. It conditions every condition of human existence, it is primordial.

Heidegger’s main conceptual framework deploys the concepts such as *concern for being*, *a being-there*, *a being-in-the-world*, *a being-with-others*, *a going-to-death*. This is not some kind of transcendental operation of reduction or objectifying act, as in Husserlian phenomenology; for Heidegger being’s preceding and gathering as *being-there* and *being-man* is primordial in the event of being. The event of being is attached to its meaning, inseparable from/in *being-there*. And the question of the meaning of being is no more an understanding of whatness, quiddity:

ⁱ Ibid., p. 205.

“An understanding of being that would no longer be the objectification of a quiddity or representation of substantives qualified by adjectives and answering the question: ‘What is it?’ Understanding of the ‘event’ of being thinks itself in adverbial modalities, which may be discerned in ‘existing’, ‘being-there’, ‘being-in-the-world’, ‘being-with-others’, ‘being-for-death’ –modalities of being, their ‘how’. Strange adverbs of existence which Heidegger calls ‘existentials’.”ⁱ

In accord with Heidegger’s philosophy; the human being is not a property or a synthesis of properties that is taking place in the present reality. It is an affective mode of existence, a mode of being. Thus, Heidegger’s philosophy substitutes this mode of being, this affectivity for theoretical of intelligibility or for the general idea of pure concept. The systematic of representations perish; and knowledge as the guise around conceptual relations are subordinated to the very acts of Dasein. Thus objectification systems, such as science is put into an existential order in which the science of objectification is no more a foundational source of Dasein. In its very existence, in the event of being, the science is established. The science comes after the establishment of Dasein.

The human being, therefore, is not a production of transcendental subjectivity. He is identified as being-in-the-world, being there; as its anterior possibility to exist as authentic, in an authentic way. Thus in this authenticity, there is nothing about humanization or an interest in humanism or a real relation with the other in terms of the Other. No search for an excellence, dignity or certain truths regarding ethical facts. There is only a concern for being-there as the essential articulation of the event of being. If we can say, it is still ontology of being, not a transcendental one but an affective one in which the being as existence is at stake, not as a quiddity but as an adverbial modality: a being in its howness instead of its whatness. This modality already opens the question of meaning of this event of being, meaningfulness of this event. The signification is (as) being-there. Levinas offers another source that signifies itself, other than that of being: “that is ‘dying for’ the other”. It is not ontological, but ethical, beyond-being, excessive of it. At this point, Levinas maintains to ask questions around being-there and its implications. Such as: Did not this kind of ontology choose between the values and respect, prefer existence in an

ⁱ Ibid., p. 210.

authentic way, and despise the everyday life? And given those, how is this ranking or choosing possible within the realm of primordial ontology, between right and wrong, between good and evil? And what of the meaning of a Fall (the *Verfallen*) in this ontology? Do they not already imply more than being, beyond being? Do they not already refer to a proper being as a true way of being human? Then, Levinas points out that we have two different approaches at hand, that belongs to the way of Heidegger and of himself.

“The alternative between, on the one hand, the identical in its authenticity, in its own right or its unalterable *mine* of the human, in its *Eigentlichkeit*, independence and freedom, and on the other hand being as human devotion to the other in a responsibility which is also an election, a principle of identification and an appeal to an *I*, the non-interchangeable, the unique.”ⁱ

Heidegger’s search in the event of being is for the authenticity by mineness (*Jemeinigkeit*) which all alienation refers. Primordial signification is attached to one’s own being, rather than otherwise than being, the Other. Authenticity in Heidegger determines the genuineness of being or of the thought as gathering in which the being is full of itself in its concrete being: as mineness. This mineness refers to a Thou, to a youness. It is a concern for its own being in an existential, in an affective manner. The existential manner, the modality of a being, is opened by the stage of “*being-in-the-world*” as around things. Before being the objects of representation or knowledge of the mind; the things give themselves off to grasping, to hold, to hand as tools. They become the materials of hand. Heidegger’s concept for this hold is to be ready-to-hand, *Zu-handenheit*, which is not a whatness, is not property of the real as nouns but a howness, a way of being, a modality as adverbs. It is the work of doing in this or in another way. Nearly a problem of ontological style. What of the other people in the world?

Levinas, regarding this analysis, concludes that this way of holding the things near the world as being-in-the-world excludes the humanity and the alterity of the other person and reduces it to a tool, to a thing between the other things of the world in the realm of work, tools or equipment.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 211.

“But then the other people are already signified in this work implied in things, which are already ‘equipment’, ‘our things’ and in an already common world. Hence being-in-the-world means being near things having a meaning, and whose coherent significance, in terms of the concern for being, precisely constitutes the world. And thus being-in-the-world, in *Sein und Zeit*, is immediately to be with others. According to Heidegger, being-with-others belongs to the existential being-there, being-in-the-world.”ⁱ

Thus, Levinas elaborates the true meaning of *being-with* in *Sein und Zeit*; since still seems that it still is related with the other, anticipating a distinction between things and human beings; even though the other people are still counted as “they are what they do”. The distinction emerges from the fact that the other human beings are also constituted by being-there as having the capability of to hold, to grasp by hand. But the concern for human being in Levinas goes beyond that of being-there by hold. It is also a care for the other that is an already founding articulation of that *Dasein*. This care includes the food, the drink, the shelter and clothing of the Other. Conversely, Heideggerian care is understood in terms of work and not confirmed by the structures of *for-the-other* as solitude and indifference. It is more likely around idleness or unemployment. Around work the other people do.

Being-there, being-in-the-world comes with being-for-the-other since life is in a space of population. The ‘there’ of being-there marks the birth of the world, it traverses the concreteness of the life. In this population of humans, people live as *for one another* and *with one another*. They live with and they live for: *Miteinandersein* as being together with others in a reciprocal relationship within society. Levinas in this regard questions his own remarks about love and peace because there is a relationship of with and for in society of Heidegger; but since he claims that such kind of ontology does not serve to these structures of love and of peace, on the contrary to nothing but to the violence and to the sword. Heidegger’s *Dasein* is now with the others and for the others; thus there is “the they” now at stake.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 212.

“Yet it is precisely in this relation to the others as *Miteinandersein*, signified by being-in-the-world, that the human being-there in its authenticity begins to get mixed up with the being of all the others and to understand itself in terms of the impersonal anonymity of the “they”, to lose itself in the mediocrity of the everyday or to come under the dictatorship of the “they”, as Heidegger puts it. This they, this every man, the impersonal personage becomes a legislator of morals, fashion, opinion, taste and values.”ⁱ

Henceforth, there is no authentic being without the they. The I’s being is no more a substantive or substantial identity of its own. There is no different type of relation with the other person other than with and for structure of a being, which is enveloped as being-in-the world. Being-in-the-world precedes all relations of sociality and thus it is ontology by the understanding of “the being of beings”. Here is the being, in its verbal sense, understood by Heidegger as logically empty, the discovery of this event of being is signified by this emptiness. This being is fundamentally in the world and existential, and moreover it is historical and temporal.

Authenticity is re-established after this relation with the they as “*being-for-death*” in the anxiety. This being-for-death is brought about by *being-there*: one day Dasein will not be *there as its* ownmost potentiality. One day he will not take place in its own *there*, one day he will perish. In death, it is not the fear or evasion of everyday life taking place but the anxiety. For Heidegger, this courage of anxiety is perfect authenticity. Heidegger claims that in death, Dasein stands before itself in its ownmost potentiality for being. It is unique as much as being-in-the-world. In death, in such kind of standing before itself, Dasein’s relations with the other beings are all erased. All relations with the other Daseins dissolve into this anxiety of a particular Dasein. Since this relation of oneself with its own death is a non-relational, it is the uttermost possibility of impossibility of Dasein’s death. Dasein cannot overcome this impossibility, the reality of death surpasses the very being of Dasein, in its being-in-the-world as anxiety towards Death: “An authenticity of the most proper being-able-to-be and a dissolution of all relations with the other.”ⁱⁱ

ⁱ Ibid., p. 213.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., p. 214.

Being towards death is a precedence; ahead of itself that is not surpassable by any modality or affection of Dasein. It is Dasein's journey towards the absolute outside. The death signifies as this absolute exteriority that has no genus or specification or determination. In Heidegger, being-towards-death is absolute otherness in which mineness of Dasein and Da of this Dasein comes into/through an impossible relation. The transcendence which is opened in this impossibility of experiencing death makes the Dasein turn into itself as concern for itself, as *ahead-of-itself*. Therefore, Heidegger claims that this being-towards-Death of Dasein is not beyond being but is the concern, in its most original concreteness. It is the locus of authenticity of being-there. It is not beyond being but determined by the horizon of being. This being-towards-death is the very possibility of dying as Dasein, being-in-the-world's being there carries this utmost unique possibility of impossibility with itself. The death belongs to an impossible opening of Dasein in the world. This impossible experience of dying is in being of Dasein, not beyond its being; on the contrary the being of beings passes through this impossible experience of dying as most original authenticity. It is not through the other but it is through *to be* itself.

Levinasian analysis deviates from this horizon of being as being-towards-death, as ahead of itself in terms of "the dying for another" that is completely beyond being, beyond being-in-the-world and beyond being-there. Beyond concern for mineness. Though, Heideggerian analysis includes care for the other; all relations with this other are undone by the structure of ahead-of-itself as being-towards-death. Thus the horizon of being reduces the other person to its occupation and to its work. "How does he do in the world?" is the unique question of Heidegger. Instead, Levinas asks another question: "Who is he in his unique being?". This question is beyond the other's being in the world, beyond it being 'there' or of another world. This whoness is related with the Infinite, the Desire which is in strict sense metaphysical. The other is not "there", this there, this Da is the Da of the self, of the same: A disclosure of being into itself, an ontological openness of being into itself. Conversely Levinas seeks another foundation, not for ontology, but for ethics as first philosophy in the face of other person:

“Here we have ontology through the being-there concerned with being, and being in-the-world maintaining a priority and a privilege of *Eigentlichkeit* in relation to care for the other person. A care which is certainly assured, but conditioned by being-in-the-world; an approach to the other person certainly, but in terms of occupations and works in the world, without encountering faces, without the death of the other signifying to the being-there, the survivor, more than funerary behavior and emotions and memories.”ⁱ

On an opposite direction towards the Other, Levinas demonstrates the structure of dying for, or dying together as beyond being, and that structure already precedes the very thereness of being as the face of the other. Levinas’ example is a biblical one that is taking place in a war: “Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in and in their death they were not divided; they were swifter than eagles and stronger than lions.” [Samuel, I: 23] Thus in dying together in this combat; the death did not undo all relations with the other; and Levinas is very clear that this is not signifying as an afterlife that they will come together again in that. This is not of another world. These poetic words represent the power of love between a father and a son. Should this tell us that the love that binds them were beyond the concept of being-there in perfect authenticity towards-death in their togetherness? That is more than a there, it is beyond that there in which the concept of intensity occurs. This love, this swifter than eagles, stronger than lions, this sign represents the essence of human being that is beyond ontological powers. It is this surpassability of human being that make them separated from animals or being-in-the-world as purely natural life. This is passage from body to the soul and thus the latter one precedes and overflows the human being of human in a relation with the Other, with Infinite. It is the spirituality of human being. It is now not a perseverance of the being; it is a responsibility for the Other, let him not to die alone.

“... an opening of the *human* through the living being: of the human, the newness of which would not be reduced to a more intense effort in its ‘persevering in being’; the human, that in the *being-there* in which ‘being was always at stake’; would awaken in the guise of responsibility for the other man, the human in which the ‘for

ⁱ Ibid., p. 215.

the other' goes beyond simple *Fürsorge* exercising itself in a world where others, gathered round about things, *are what* they do; the human in which worry over the death of the other comes before care for the self. The humanness of dying for the other would be very meaning of love in its responsibility for one's fellowman..."ⁱ

Levinas calls this dimension of humanity, as holiness, in the heightness of the face. This holiness comes to existence before every being-there as dis-interestedness, as goodness beyond being. And the others are not here a production or a synthesis of what they do or how they do; they are not the modality of with-the-others or for-the-others which *Fürsorge* initiates in the being-in-the-world as the occupations or the tools of them. The care here in Levinas is understood as the concern for holiness, love without concupiscence, in Pascalian terms: a no place, no where preceding being there, a null site. As in Plato, this goodness of human being is beyond being, beyond the care for its own death. Prior to the place in which Dasein exists as Da, as the possessor of Da by which first usurpation of human being takes place. This is not human intrigue, but the gentleness of the face. Transcendence is towards the exteriority of the Other and the face of the other already realizes the impossible experience of human being as human being: You cannot kill the other and you cannot let him die alone.

In Heidegger's analysis human beings does not associate or open their worlds to each other, as proposed world: The world is like a place only the how or the modality is circulating, not the who or whose. And being-towards-death only anticipates the modality of human being as authenticity which does not take care of dying for the other or looking to the eyes of the other. Heideggerian care for other is without sacrifice or holiness, without humanitarian sharing. Levinasian way puts forward the true sacrifice for the other that is not ontological or disclosed by the horizon of being.

"Sacrifice cannot find a place for itself in an order divided between the authentic and the unauthentic. Does not the relationship to the other in sacrifice, in which the death of the other preoccupies the human *being-there* before his own death, indicate precisely a beyond ontology –or a before ontology– while at the same time also

ⁱ Ibid., p. 216.

determining— or revealing a responsibility for the other, and through that responsibility a human ‘I’ that is neither the substantial identity of a subject nor the *Eigenlichkeit* in the ‘mineness’ of being?”ⁱ

Levinas focuses on the spirituality of a human being, a peaceable welcome of the Other so that goodness as being dis-interested creates the essence of human being: a unique chosenness of human being as sacrifice, as responsibility for the Other. His uniqueness as chosen for the Other preoccupies the space of Dasein and thus dying for the other realizes itself in its creation as primordial before dying of Dasein, as the uttermost ahead-of-itself, as authentic death. Levinas concludes that ahead-of-itself is already constituted on the death of the Other. This does not imply an after-life but an excessiveness of sacrifice in mercy and generosity. In a relation with Infinite that is excedence of the future. The future does not belong to the factual existence of Dasein, on the contrary, an absent time of the Other already preoccupies it. And dying for the other, as in the example, the death on its own being is surpassed by the very love of beings; by dying together. This is beyond and on the hither side of every ontology as ethical bond that hollows out the thereness of Dasein.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 217.

3) LEVINAS AND MEONTOLOGY

Levinas himself uses the term meontology four times in his works.ⁱ Main meontological tools Levinas used are “saying, said and unsaid, un saying”; “diachrony and synchrony”; and the structure of the self he improved in *Existence and Existents* in terms of *Fatigue, Insomnia and Indolence*. Since he demonstrates that the sociality bond (that is in a way religious) in which the relation with the Other and the Infinite is established is crucial on the level of language. Thus, the importance of meontological tools as “saying, said” is all clear. The diachrony as the time of the Other is different than the time of consciousness as the apperceptive and synchronic. An attaching to this another time through the structure of conscience, the “me” is no more autonomous, it is heteronomous.

And the essence of enjoyment which is living from and very different from the intentional one which is on foundation of the consciousness and representation on the level of being is inversed from a semi-meontological point of view through possession, labor etc. Being as consciousness of itself is already conditioned by its stand in the world as body and the needs of body and their satisfaction. Since the uncharted future and the *there is* is before the self; the self will effort to close the gap between the satisfaction and its nonsatisfaction, between the security and insecurity. Not always he will be successful, when he failed he will stay behind the time and the place where he would like to be. Thus, the obstacle between his will and the future’s way will threaten its existence. It is semi-meontological because when he satisfied, he will fly over his consciousness as satisfied, as an ego that is separated and free, for a while. The meontological moment is the structure of enjoyment that is in the midst of the event of satisfaction, before bending over the consciousness as the energy of satisfaction; during the labor and the effort to have what it is desired. In *Existence and Existents* Levinas will elaborate this “during” and the relation of the self and the world through a meontological perspective. Thus it is not completely meontological, only complete meontological structure is relation with the Other; since the

ⁱ The most important saying of Levinas on me-ontology: “On the contrary....the ethical relationship with the other is just as primary as and original as ontology – if not more so. Ethics is not derived from an ontology of nature, it is its opposite, a meontology, which affirms meaning beyond being, a primary mode of non-being (*me-on*).” (p. 25 Emmanuel Levinas and Richard Kearney, in *Face to Face with Levinas*, ed. By Richard A. Cohen – State University of New York Press)

self cannot return to itself, to its consciousness as satisfied or relaxed or relived; it is insatiable, it is metaphysical Desire of being human in terms of conscience. It always calls for the effort and the responsibility to the Other and it is never fully accomplished and thus the me is always already exposed to the Other who is indigent, poor, naked and helpless.

Levinasian meontology seeks the way for not holding on the level of ontology which mainly deploys the concepts of representation, intelligible, Being, light, autonomy, freedom, apperception etc. The way he tries to improve his philosophy against ontological horizon is through his radical concepts such as saying, diachrony, heteronomy, an-archic past, passivity, insomnia, fatigue, indolence etc... We will analyze those concepts so that we can have his understanding on the way of radical ethics of the Other, mainly through his second important work, "*Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*."

3.1 Existent and Excedence: Indolence and Fatigue

3.1.1 Indolence

For Levinas; movement towards Good has foothold in Being. He analyses how an existent arises in its individuality, in its subjectivity from this anonymous, impersonal Being. The name of this arising as oneself against anonymity is *hypostasis*, to have a body, to have a stand and to have a consciousness. To be oneself and then to have oneself in the existence is the very movement of a subject which creates a self and its partner, a shadow self. Its own existence becomes a burden for the subject in such original cases like *fatigue and indolence*. Since these original situations are radically different than to be conscious of something; they are examples of semi-meontology in accord with the search of this writing. Because they resist to representation and since they are on the level of exterior within body; the world is already given and before concept there is the world founded. There is no objectifying act here; we hold onto body corporeally. The body has its own weight before any consciousness.

Fatigue and indolence are the extreme cases Levinas would like to elaborate the double meaning of a bodily existent; it is both towards a future that is under the eye of il ya

and it is also towards a possession, a labor, a contentment and separation. In any case; to live is not a continuity of a self; a self is disrupted by its existence in the world, by its shadow and boredom, aversion etc. capture him and these ones do not belong to order of ontology.

Existence in its origin depends on already existing; so it is not a relationship with the world; since it is antecedent to that world we are conscious of. It seems that there is a gap between oneself and its existence. So, how do an existent adhere to existence, in which concrete ways? How does this struggle between what exists and its existing take place? Levinas claims that the relation between existence and existent plays the role of a prototype: a prototype for life, for struggle of life. Within life, the belongingness of an existent to existence is not given to it by a super-natural or divine order; but this very belongingness is established on its very existing as oneself by effort, work etc. on concrete life. Each instant is the occurring of a birth in this struggle for future of its existing. But these orders of occurring are not synchronic nor are they continual; they are interrupted; occurring is not incessant. Levinasian analysis is directly related of an existent's birth into instants in each event. He is analyzing this non-continual birth on the time, that is a being' taking up existence. Thus, he takes fatigue and indolence as the refusal of continuity of existing, they are impotent cases of the existent's for not existing; and Levinas searches the structure of this interruption of impotency to live, and the lag these cases establish in existent's life. They are before every structure of theoretical consciousness of them as mental contents. These mental concepts does not reveal the truth of them in themselves. Therefore, they are not of ontology.

Refusal or non-acceptance by fatigue or by indolence is weariness: Weariness concerning the existence itself, rather than its particular forms. It gives us how hard to live, how serious to live is rather than fleeing in smiles or laughing etc. How hard to maintain the life as an existent. How hard to fight back against anonymity of future. The commitment to exist is a contract which cannot be undone. So the existent has to exist, he has not choice over this, it is inevitable obligation; he has duties, he has tasks, he has todays and tomorrows to think, to act, and that is to live as undertaking its own burden. Weariness is weariness of/from this obligatory task to exist, to do something:

“It [the contract] animates the need to act and to undertake, makes that necessity poignant. Weariness is the impossible refusal of this ultimate obligation. In weariness we want to escape existence itself, and not only one of its landscapes, in a longing for more beautiful skies. An evasion without an itinerary and without an end, it is not trying to come ashore somewhere. Like for Baudelaire's true travellers, it is a matter of parting for the sake of parting.”ⁱ

Here, this weariness is not a movement of consciousness; it is not a judgment neither which includes an affective tonality. In this weariness, in this taking up of existent into existence; there is hesitation, interruption of refusal, non-acceptance of being a living one in existence. The relationship of an existent and existence takes place in this movement of refusal which gives rise to the event of birth.

Weariness is the effect of refusing to exist. And in this very weariness, the action of an existent to exist is exposed to its hesitation. This indolence, we are mentioning, is an attitude regarding the action. It is not being indecisive about an intention; here the intention has always been formulated but to realize it through existing is another phase which passes through indolence. “As in William James' famous example, it lies between the clear duty of getting up and the putting of the foot down off the bed.”ⁱⁱ Therefore, it does not mean that we do not have the strength to follow task or make our duty. We have the sufficient materiality of getting up, the body, the legs, the muscles etc. We have our body waiting for our orders. There is no pain or fear of this getting up. It is more like the aversion to make the movement in the first instance. Here something different is in play. The problem of a start, a birth of an action. To make the first movement of the body towards getting up, “Oh, don't make them get up. That's disaster...” says Rimbaud as giving the perfect case with indolence remarks Levinas. Thereby, what the existent experience here is an inhibition as the movement of beginning is preceded by this inhibition and gets his pre-existence in this very instant of discretion. This pre-action of this beginning by inhibition signals a previous moment of to exist in the birth of existing

ⁱ E. Levinas, *Existence and Existenz*, p. 25

ⁱⁱ *Ibid.*, p. 25.

moment. It is like the beginning has its own roots in this non-beginning of inhibition, in this negative energy of inhibition. Indolence then is at nowhere, in a point that is imperceptible between two instants as a cutting of incessant flow. In another sense, this inhibition is the beginning of to start acting in indolence. It initiates the beginning of an instant. As if, the man that is to exist crashes the obstacle and the obstacle gives rise to the birth of an instant that will move towards existing as a discontinuity. That means each instant starts with its singular perspective; not expectedly with full accord of a previous instance; because it has the weight of indolence as the impossibility of beginning. The order of a job in its harmony is no more a job that is incessant flow of following the same road to accomplish it. The job and the existent are jolted about in this effort of realizing, for the indolence exists in a pre-existing way. This pre-existing way affects the modes of instants in which the existent exists. The existence of existent, its future radically changes by the weight of indolence in unpredicted ways. In the beginning of action there is a peculiar way of a special belongingness; its movement is doubled up towards two different directions, towards the beginning and towards the goal. It is about having that is a matter of both possessing and being possessed. The double movement reveals the truth of it as the concern to what it belongs and what belongs to it in terms of being not care-free; both a care for the beginning itself and its movement towards the realization of activity as success:

“The beginning of an action is not "free as the wind." An impulse is simply present and ready. It begins available and proceeds straightforwardly. It is without anything to lose, is carefree, for it possesses nothing. In the instant of a beginning, there is already something to lose, for something is already possessed, if only the instant itself. A beginning is, but in addition, it possesses itself in a movement back upon itself. The movement of an action turns to its point of departure at the same time that it proceeds towards its goal, and thus possesses itself while it is. We are like on a trip where one always has to look after one's baggage, baggage left behind or baggage one is waiting for. An act is not pure activity; its being is doubled up with a having which both is possessed and possesses. The beginning of an act is already a belongingness and a concern for what it belongs to and for what belongs to it.”ⁱ

ⁱ Ibid.. p. 27.

So, the beginning also would like to take care of itself, this care is in its event; would like to keep up the precious power of starting to exist in the action. Though, since this starting is never a real return to when/to where it starts; the self is obliged to move on from beginning to the accomplishment of the end; therefore to interrupt this journey will only lead to a failure of job or task. But even in the case of failure, the beginning is not effaced; it still is a beginning, a part of journey, a part of life. Thus, it does not disappear or vanish but inscribed into the very existence of existent. “To take lessons” should be coming from the existence of these beginnings and their unique values. Though there are lessons, the self is not willing to take lessons from the failures of its existence; so there is the indolence of taking charge of these beginnings going nowhere, perishing in failures, especially within the case of being tired, in fatigue. Therefore, even the indolence is the impossibility of beginning and the form of original refusal and non-acceptance; the I is not with peace in itself within indolence as in enjoyment or satisfaction of the need. There is no feeling in this indolence. Thereby, in the depths of this indolence, in the heart, the very presence of action pulsates: “To the extent that this state is not sleep nor somnolence, it is not peace. The injunction ‘we must try to live’ of Valery’s ‘The Graveyard by the Sea’ runs through it like a malaise and makes the relationship with existence and with action palpable in the heart of the softest indolence.”ⁱ The indolence is indolent because it is in aversion against life, against existence; but this contract of the self with existence is such that even this aversion is a life. This repugnance is born by the duality of the self: the self of existent and the self of existing. It is what the contract of the self with life means.

The contract of the self with existence means that the ego does not see the self in its reflection only; but in its involvements, in its living, in its concrete tasks; there is a partner of this ego. There is a coupling movement of the self, a duality of the self within itself. It is not only contemplating or representing; but it is on itself doing the labor of existing; is taking charge of enterprise of existing. It is both being and having this being. This having is the existence of another self which is a shadow of self which *is*. Existent pursues this shadow of existence. And this following, always staying behind of existence is a real and inalienable burden, an inescapable weight, gravity for every existent. To exist is always

ⁱ Ibid., p. 28.

trying to be oneself and to have that oneself as its own existing self. To live is this experience of closing the gap and the indolence is just the name of this aversion against this effort of closing that can never be totally closed:

“Existence drags behind it a weight — if only itself — which complicates the trip it takes. Burdened with itself — *omnia sua secum portans* — it does not have the serene calm of a sage of old. It does not purely and simply exist. Its movement of existence which might be pure and straightforward is bent and caught up in itself, showing that the verb to be is a reflexive verb: it is not just that one is, one is oneself [on s'est] It is before this enterprise that indolence is indolent. The trouble in acting from which the indolent one holds back is not some psychological content of pain, but a refusal to undertake, to possess, to take charge. Indolence is an impotent and joyless aversion to the burden of existence itself.”ⁱ

So this burden of existence, this weight of enterprise to exist is never surpassable completely. Indolent person, as Oblomov, is on the hither side of beginning of action, action of enterprise. It is not a thought on future which withdraws from the current enterprise, on the contrary it is the refusal of every enterprise. It is, in its bodily concreteness, a withdrawal from the continuity of life, from future. The tragedy of this burden reveals that the self is being fatigued from the very existence of the shadow in itself as having the existence of the self corporeally, as trying to secure the future of this being and having. But for that, a birth of new instants are necessary and the self is obliged to pass through this already weary present because of its structure to take the risk of the unknown, the uncharted future. It is not a joyful present, it is not as in enjoyment, it is not satisfied in the beginning of action, since the action never promises the total success of enterprise of existing. To exist is always already with the burden of unknown and taking care of itself reluctantly. A beginning does not mean a rebirth of the self in a pleasant or healthy existence, it is just a beginning of new instant by action; the start does not embrace or guarantee the security or relief of future for the self. For the self, a virginal instant that breaks with the history of the self, the future of a new self that is not lagging behind of its existing is not possible at all. The self is always already behind of its existing. And the self

ⁱ Ibid., p. 28.

that is aware of this effort of pursuing the enterprise of existence is dragged into fatigue. Therefore, here Levinasian analysis indirectly indicates that a human self is never capable of existence in a meaningful future on its own self as a solitary subject. It needs sociality, a relation with the other, with the feminine grace etc.

3.1.2 Fatigue

Whereas indolence is refusal of any beginning for taking up the existence and carrying his burden; fatigue is already on the level of this acceptance of being and having and their original difference through labor and effort. Unlike indolence; fatigue is with labor and effort. Levinas determines the characteristic of fatigue as numbness and stiffening. The lag between the self and that which it has been attached to is subject to incessant effort and labor. But for a human being; to pursue the existence's shadow, burden and to be at the bottom of "to do" is not always possible; it becomes fatigue in one way or another. He is overwhelmed by the burden of existence and gets numb, pale. It is a relief of peace or happiness; it is to be insensitive to oneself and self's journey towards success or security. It is an impotency which causes to be drifted. You are beyond indolence, you are in conscious of "to do" but you do not have strength to close the gap in a success for a while; but you are trying to do no matter what, nonetheless, eventually it appears that it is not enough. You accepted the idea of taking charge of your goal and following the life course through the dual structure of being oneself and having oneself:

"The numbness of fatigue is a telling characteristic. It is an impossibility of following through, a constant and increasing lag between being and what it remains attached to, like a hand little by little letting slip what it is trying to hold on to, letting go even while it tightens its grip. Fatigue is not just the cause of this letting go, it is the slackening itself. It is so inasmuch as it does not occur simply in a hand that is letting slip the weight it finds tiring to lift, but in one that is holding on to what it is letting slip, even when it has let it drop but remains taut with the effort. For there is fatigue only in effort and labor."ⁱ

ⁱ Ibid., p. 30.

Within live, a human being targets the success while passing through the stage of effort and labor. It is this goal of success that motivates human being on the way of the burden it will take, the risk it will face. This weight is the very demand every task includes from the very beginning of any effort. And in the daily flow, it seems that the success depends on our will and strength of overcoming possible obstacles; and also we have the possibility of giving up the enterprise whenever we want. Nevertheless, as Levinas puts it, it is not the whole story of showing effort towards a target. In the moment of effort there is already an involvement of human being to its target as surrender. In our effort, we give ourselves to the sake of task: it is forsakenness in which human being is surrounded by its own toiling. Therefore, fatigue and suffering arises in this surrounding, toiling; the energy of the self in following the target is absorbed; and the interruption takes places in very exhaustedness of the self. Levinas demonstrates that the condemnation of the effort is fatigue; it is not possible not to be fatigue while toiling over work. It is the revealing structure of to be over the course of task.

Effort goes beyond fatigue in its movement, in the upsurge *ex nihilo* by force into the world; but yet again it falls back into fatigue. It lifts the burden of the task and even the task accomplished, the task of existing and following tasks is never-ending; therefore in the creative moment in which the risk of task is taken, existent is reflected into existence by accomplishment; though this accomplishment of creative moment is still with the burden of effort. In its essence; the effort is already attached to fatigue; effort is through fatigue. The conquest of accomplishment over the world tends to “drop everything”; yet this accomplishment has already been achieved by a sealing of existent into existence; therefore into fatigue. The creative moment ends with the essence of fatigue. It is not a subject of cognition, nor is of the consciousness:

“Effort is not a cognition; it is an event. In the midst of the advance over oneself and over the present, in the ecstasy of the leap which anticipates and bypasses the present, fatigue marks a delay with respect to oneself and with respect to the present. The moment by which the leap is yonder is conditioned by the fact that it is still on the hither side. What we call the dynamism of the thrust is made up of those

two moments at the same time ... Effort is an effort of the present that lags behind the present.”ⁱ

Thrust which creates the realization of the task in creative moment passes through a recoil in the midst of the event; the leap, the upsurge which seems to create a future bypassing the present is recoiled by the very event of fatigue. And it reveals the fact that this leap is still on the hither side of future. Like an elastic band, that is forced up to the point of its extreme limit in extending and when we slacken it; it is now behind or on the hither side of its previous extension which was a future for it. Effort is a forcing of the self over itself and over present; therefore in its core effort is a movement of catching the present; but since it is already marked by getting tired, by fatigue –or as in the case of elastic band, corrosion- it lags behind the present. That is what makes up the burden of life for an existent and to be weary of being. Consequently, the happiness of accomplishment is volatile and always already is lagging behind.

Levinas warns us that the analysis of this event is not of concepts; here events create concepts; not the contrary. Therefore as in the classical analysis; we cannot take this event under the notion of action or within the resistance of matter to human being. As we again see, the exterior as event precedes the consciousness and concept. In this precedence, the fatigue as condemnation is carried upon the structure of effort towards task. There is movement here, therefore the birth of instant regarding the condemnation as a stop, as an interval or pause. Interruption takes place within this movement. A magician is not involved in the instant of realization of task since he has a wand and there is no duration of taking place of a magic: it suddenly comes to the eye. There is the distance of wand both to the place and to the instant it takes place. In this sense, he is not through duration. A sudden appearance of what is wished for, that is the event of magician; a sudden completion of the task which is indifferent to duration or process of constructing it. Two points support each other: he is not involved in the instant or duration and by the wand he has, he is able to follow the work from distance. Conversely, the human being has no wand and subject to duration and involvement step by step construction of the task. Human being does self-possess the instant he is involved in towards task; the effort brings with itself the

ⁱ Ibid., p. 31.

seriousness of task and the inevitable fact of fatigue. Temporal horizon is at stake here. It is not a joy or happiness that is satisfied; these are not within the essence of work or effort; the happiness comes from the heroism, sacrifice, difficulty involved etc. In the effort, there lies the fatigue, suffering and forcing the self to take up the burden of existence. And in this taking up, there are stops of effort; the duration of effort is coming from these rests.

“The duration of effort is made up entirely of stops. It is in this sense that it follows the work being done step by step. During the duration of the work, the effort takes on the instant, breaking and tying back together again the thread of time. It struggles behind the instant it is going to take on... At the same time the effort is already involved in the present, and is not like an impulse bent over an instant to come. It is caught up with the instant as an inevitable present in which it is irrevocably committed. In the midst of the anonymous flow of existence, there stoppage and a positing. Effort is the very effecting of an instant.”¹

Therefore, the effort is towards the task and traverses the time to get to the point of success as capturing the future in the present; though the effort is still in present in the commitment of effort that is not the present of task (future present). The existent establishes its position within existence by positing its effort as an effecting of an instant, namely duration by stops and going-ons, where particular being of existent is founded on this very action. This position by acting interrupts the order of incessant flow of nature. Existent arises from the action it takes up, from the burden it tries to lift; in that sense the subject appears in the flow of anonymous existence with its particular intervention to this flow. Although this action is subject to the contract with existence, also it reveals a subject that takes up existence in existence within his own “being”. A someone arises against this anonymity as “is”. Then the relation of existent and existence takes place in this interruption, lagging behind present; because it creates a distance regard to anonymous being, a separation in Levinasian language though full of suffering. This distance is in essence the lag of fatigue; subject starts and then stops, becomes tired, and then again has upsurge and thrust as ecstasy. It is his style of appearance by instants of steps towards its future. Without stop or lag of fatigue; there could not be a distance, nor would it be possible the particular

¹ Ibid., p. 33.

existence of existent different than existence and its anonymous flow. Subject by its action creates its own position within the existence. It takes charge of the present and takes up being and therefore, it gets tired, fatigue and stops, it becomes numb and these goings and comings create the interval, the distance with world: the separation of subject.

Thanks to the existence and the appearance of subject, the existent is not identical with existence's being anymore; it is now in its own being as a particular being and not indifferent to duration. Still, the existent did not earn its complete freedom; its freedom is only limited one before eternity of anonymous being. Thus, it is with condemnation all along his life. The instant existent takes up is not detached from eternity it works against. The instant of effort is not durable before the eternity; since it is opened up on that ground of anonymous being, the existent is still bathing under the elemental, *il y a*. The existent is still in the world and subject to the powers of world. Against the ancient powers of life, the effort is not free, it is spent in the instant as present; and this energy of human being invites the fatigue as this spending of life. Human being is condemned being present in the eternal. Existent carries the burden of the present which is fatigue or pain in turn.

The analysis of fatigue does not only elaborate the sticking around of existent into existence; but also it opens up the dimension of a retreat from life, breaking up with the forces of existence. It is withering, fading away: at last it is all alone and waiting for his death in its solitude and despair against anonymous flow of time. It is not forsaken by the world; on the contrary from itself, its joining into the instant so that takes up its particular existence within anonymous existence. If it does not locate itself in the instant; then it is not in the same line with itself. It is in the absence of itself, its position in the world. "Forsaken" means here, not for the sake of existent's life anymore as position, as action. The existent is weary of being in this being abandoned by itself through fatigue.

"To be weary is to be weary of being. This is so prior to interpretation; the concrete plenitude of fatigue has this form. In the simplicity, unity and obscurity of fatigue, it is like the lag of an existent that is tarrying behind its existing. And this lag constitutes the present. Because of this distance in existence, existence is a relationship between *an* existent and itself. It is the upsurge of an existent in

existence. And conversely this almost self-contradictory [sic] moment of a present that tarries behind itself could not be anything but fatigue. Fatigue does not accompany it, it effects it; fatigue is this time-lag.”ⁱ

This existent owes its existence in the existence to this time-lag and the distance this lag creates. This lag is inscription to the existence as a spending of life, of present, of effort that is never completely satiable before the eternity of the universe. Therefore the existent exists by stopping, by hesitation; its position is woven around this interruption of the flow: a surprise for/in the existence in which the present is incarnated. Event of the present is a taking charge of the present by existent through the time-lag which is interval and distance with the existence. The upsurge that is carried by the present constitutes the very action of existent: to be in the world through the embodiment of the effort, of the action. This act does not exclude being inactive; on the contrary it means to take a position in the world, on the ground. It is related with a “here”; including the rest of existent. Since even the rest is in the world, on the ground of it. A birth of existent means it has its own “here”, position. Levinas calls this foundation of the existence as “hypostasis” in which the instant of existent is created as here by taking up the present. That taking charge of the existence by instant takes us to relations with the objects by labor in a broader sense of this foundation of existent; since taking charge of the present is a relation of the self with itself, being and having this self in existence; rather than a relation with objects of existence which are subject to possession, to use, to enjoyment, to exchange. Unlike self’s relation with itself, they are substantial, on the level of substances. Therefore, they are a concern for ontological, whereas the relation of the self stands in a relation that is prior to ontology. Hypostasis is a passage from *il y a* to a particular being with a price of running against eternity (through fatigue, indolence etc.) as a particular being. It is the foundation of human being as bodily stand having its own separated being. It is the foundation of human being in existence. It is not ethical yet, but not ontological neither. Therefore it gives the signals of impossibility of transcending the world by itself, since fatigue and indolence is inevitable within the contract of existence; thus self needs not to be alone, needs the other so that the face signifies more than this existent’s existence for itself and endless struggle with eternity of *il y a*.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 35.

While the effort and the task are around objects; the self having a position already opens the dimension of relation with objects. And when the effort of to be in existence comes to the service of enjoyment and satisfaction; the objects are now a matter of contentment, a satisfaction. In that satisfaction, the need is satisfied; but a never satiable desire shines forth from a meeting face to face with the other. This desire as infinity is not of this world (of ontology) but from a null-site, from a saying of the other or a diachrony, another time and interruption of the presence of the self. By this infinitude with the other as metaphysical desire, we have now meontological consciousness as conscience and a meontology of the sacred in which human being comprehends that it is created and goes beyond as not-knowing, but speaking to each other in sociality and taking the responsibility of the other's time that is not present. Here taking up the present in the finitude as human being is already preceded by the signification of ethics in the infinity. Taking up the present by effort creates the present of an existent that is; and therefore as the worldly creature against the world and objects, the self is never at rest, at peace with itself; and is weary of being, of pursuing worldly intentions. Only possible and meaningful way of escape from worldly pursuit is *excendence*: transcendence towards the Other, the responsibility of the other, the spiritual activity of human being. It is now beyond being as goodness and disinterestedness. And way to the excendence for Levinas firstly starts at home, in separation and familiarity of gentleness through feminine grace, an alterity. But it is only a start not the whole of alterity; it is a silent and deaf language. The complete experience of alterity as desire towards the Other which has no position, no place since they are all mine: the position, even in the sleep as position or even in the insomnia as participating of consciousness to *il y a* presupposes "presence", a here and a position, a being in its own body. But we cannot take the Other as present, its saying is from a deep formerly which is not recallable. It is an-archival and has no place, it is of a non-place, null site, a meontological sphere that transcends in the exteriority of the face towards God. This transcendence of metaphysics is beyond any task, any knowledge and thus not a worldly activity of self's action; but a substitution which is always already a form of sacred, of soul and taking the other's place in spite of the position the self occupies: that is the ultimate meaning of human being. Not being the self or having the self; but sacrifice all possession

and its own being for the sake of the other: this is the meontological initiative Levinas takes through diachrony, saying and heteronomy...

3.2 Meontological Concepts

3.2.1 Saying and Said

The language in which we meet the face to face in Levinas is woven around “otherwise than being” rather than to be or being. To be is the verb of ontology; and the other has its own as otherwise, an adverb by which it is beyond being. And otherwise does not refer to “non-being” either, since being and non-being –as in Hegelian philosophy which represents the highest accomplishment of Western metaphysics– condition each other in a dialectical manner and again disclose over consciousness. Thus, beyond this speculative oscillation there is the transcendence of a mortal human being in its relation with Infinite; that is where a human being becomes a human being beyond the mute and anonymous powers of *there is*. *There is* supports the persistence of the essence, the term which Levinas uses as the movement or event of being rather than its stable substance. Thus the interruption or the interval of nothingness is avoided in favor of Being. That is why the death of human being is not significant since *there is* fills the emptiness of that body as in the case of Being’s illumination of intelligible, its vision of existent under the unity of consciousness, which in turn serves to the thematization of the History that overshadows the personal and individual existence of human being within an objective, historical and de-humanized horizon. A person in its otherness is erased by the anonymity and the totality of the history. Conversely, the movement of transcendence to the alterity of a human being is not found on the historical order. This difference is not on the level of “to be or not to be” since even the negativity against to be or being is transformed into the totality of Being in history. All negativities are absorbed by ontological realm. And language also seems certainly to be constructed on the place of “to be”; generally by the implications of whatness, quiddity, as “is” or “was” or “have been” or being etc. Thereby, the question arises: “Is there any other language than of to be, that is not ontological? Is there a place that is not filled up by the density of “*there is*” even after dying which is the absolute negation of particular being?”

In this analysis of “beyond essence” and “otherwise than being”; Levinas demonstrates that “*Esse is interesse*” has a double-meaning: first, the being is with beings, the being is in-between beings; and secondly, it seeks for its interest in this society of beings: everyone fights with everyone, the struggle is inevitable from the first moment of the togetherness of egos. Egoisms shape the structure of war within the processes of being’s to be. In this determination of essence through the event of egos, the immanence of Essence and its extreme contemporaneousness abolishes and expels every difference and alterity:

“War is the deed or the drama of the essence’s interest. No entity can await its hour. They all clash, despite the difference of the regions to which the terms in conflict may belong. Essence thus is the extreme synchronism of war. Determination is formed and is already undone, by the clash. It takes form and breaks up in a swarming. Here is the extreme contemporaneousness or immanence.”ⁱ

And where the reason is involved into this process of war as the suspension of this war of the egos; does not it provide the peace and otherwise than being of this immanence that always seeks for the interest? Does not reason keep the possibility of being’s other in that of its providing patience to the beings; make them wait rather than fight and respect to each other’s interest? Levinas’ respond is a negative one; and this so-called peace is just a silence before the coming war by which now the realization of trade is possible, and money and its applications between beings. He claims that this is not a real peace but only a calculation, waiting the right moment to win the battle or rather, say it, “politics” or “strategy” which is generally expressed in terms of commerce and exchange. The interest is maintained in a way that we now tolerate this for a future compensation; we stay in this present together with all others with the memory and the history, in a totality similar to that of matter which is without fissure, break or interruption. Human being, in its interest, in being in present together and reflected in this totality of representations through memory is without any interval, any becoming as if human being is of material unity; as if the persistence of there is in the void he is. In this process of rationalized peace supported by

ⁱ E. Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, p. 4.

the materiality of exchange; there is the absence of a human being, otherwise than being; a relation to-God that is meaningful beyond any exchange or trade; a peace that is more unique than every satisfied interest etc. So, in this peace by future interests there is no place for God or nor for spiritual. Though this peace is not the peace with the other person and transcendence; it is better than war; since this peace presupposes the interval, the beyond of essence, the rupture of human being into the present in disinterestedness, in goodness. This peace by trade is already on the terrain of goodness. And we should search the origin of this difference and being better of this rationalized peace in a more radical way as in the *breathlessness of the Spirit* in which the interest of being is interrupted and broken away, Levinas explains, towards the Spirit's utmost humanity.

Levinas explains that our languages which are through to be corresponds to the *said* of being and the quest for being's other is threatened by the hold of this "said" over the saying in which the language of ethical arises. The thematizing essence of being takes place also within the realm of transcendence and fixes this being's other as the world behind scenes. This is a kind of theology which Levinas totally rejects since it is a legitimization of the being's happenings in the history and it assigns the violence and the war to the totality and memory as the truth of reason, ontologically. Therefore, the interest of the being and clash between beings are affirmed as the very foundational play of human being's existence within the said of thematization, reduction and reflection. That means horizon of Being as totality and perseverance of it like a durable substance are confirmed without any sign of humanity which overflows totality and puts interval into the event of being. Then let us ask, what does Levinas mean by *saying*?

"Saying is not a game. Antecedent to the verbal signs it conjugates, to the linguistic systems and the semantic glimmerings, a foreword preceding languages, it is the proximity of the one to the other, the commitment of an approach, the one for the other, the very signifyingness of the signification. The original or pre-original saying, what is put forth in the foreword, weaves an intrigue of responsibility. It sets forth an order more grave than being and antecedent to being".¹

¹ Ibid.. pp. 5-6.

Saying is the word of responsibility, rather than being a free play of interests where even murder, killing and war are possible and legitimate. Money as the current and most powerful value of interest is the ultimate goal in the realm of the said. Opposing to this mechanism; in the responsibility of saying, the interest is not at stake anymore. The substitution means a hostage of one for the other: the self sacrifices itself for the other person in a pure disinterestedness. But how does this saying express itself in the language? The answer of this question lies on the fact that saying is manifested by the said, by the linguistic system. For Levinas this is the price every manifestation must pay: amphibology of the said carries every proposition by this betrayal of the price. Though the betrayal by said is a condition for saying's manifestation; the language is still able to say everything, even the exception of the other's saying, its beyond: "Language permits us utter, be it by betrayal, this *outside of being*, this *ex-ception* to being, as though being's other were an event of being."ⁱ

And this exception for Levinas, this saying gives the signification of the said and its cognition. The occurrence of cognition and the exception demonstrates themselves in the said. Still, even this hold to be true, that the saying gives the truth of significance by its apophantic variant, that is to make known or to bring under the light of judgment; it is not yet legitimate that this apophantic variant of saying is the absolute and the order of responsibility. This order of responsibility is before every cognition and its signification: Because even saying, however ancillary or angelic be it, is always mediating through the language of thematization. Every proposition exposes the matter or the subject as thematized, as open to knowing. And knowing is subordinated to ontology rather than ethics.

Not only with the revelation of saying through said ethics take its place and resonate in the language; the revelation presupposes a responsive/responsible language which is disinterested towards the Other. This respond has nothing common with the *esse* or being's interest. It is absolutely not possible to escape from this responsibility; even when someone refused this responsibility; this impossibility is manifested in the bad conscience that follows or in the shame that is before refusal. However, since saying is

ⁱ Ibid., p. 6.

through the said, thematized and known in the form of the betrayal; this responsibility has its reference to being and to ontology inevitably; and the reality of being has the power of ignoring this bad conscience or shame as putting it into the totality of thematization in terms of cognition or memory. Thus, Levinas asks, how will this betrayal within the language be overcome in the way of saying of radical ethics which is an-archival, pre-original, in terms of conscience or shame?

“A methodological problem arises here, whether the pre-original element of saying (the anarchical, the non-original...) can be led to betray itself by showing itself in a theme (if an an-archeology is possible), and whether this betrayal can be reduced, whether one can at the same time know and free the known of marks within thematization leaves on it by subordinating it to ontology. Everything shows itself at the price of this betrayal, even the unsayable, which is the very task of philosophy, becomes possible.”ⁱ

In order to maintain the otherwise than being or beyond essence, and not to be absorbed by this betrayal of thematization –since every saying takes the patterns of formal logic–; every said that manifests saying must also be unsaid. If this saying is not unsaid by extracting itself from the said; this *otherwise than being* is thematized as “*being otherwise*” under the reign of ontology. But if this saying, this otherwise than being is unsaid; then how philosophy becomes the transcendence of beyond in its metaphysical statements? If saying and its being unsaid be attached to each other; then the beyond will always be depending on this reversal, and thus we will be reducing the being’s other (saying) and its absence (unsaid) to being and non being, to presence and absence. Yes that would be true, but only on the condition of supposing their simultaneity, synchrony, their being at the same time, Levinas explains. And the time here on saying and being unsaid, for Levinas, is a diachronic one. They are not at the same time. Here Levinas applies to skepticism, and tells us that skepticism is the philosophy’s illegitimate child and is founded on the lack of synchrony:

ⁱ Ibid, p. 7.

“To conceive the otherwise than being requires, perhaps, as much audacity as skepticism shows, when it does not hesitate to affirm the impossibility of statement while venturing to realize this impossibility by the very statement of this impossibility. ... Skepticism has the gall to return, it is because in the contradiction which logic sees in it “at the same time” of the contradictories is missing, because a secret diachrony commands this ambiguous or enigmatic way of speaking, and because in general signification signifies beyond synchrony, beyond essence.”ⁱ

3.2.2 Diachrony

Diachrony re-presents us the true metaphysical search as subjectivity. A subject that is not of/in synchrony of the history or totality, a subject which breaks up the fate of ontological order in the horizon of being. What of freedom, is it not a resistance to this totality and to the order of Being? Does not a free act or movement of individuals interrupt the persistence of history? Though it is a rupture in the realm of war and violence; freedom belongs to the narration of essence which assembles the events into the same time frame and flow. Thus, it takes place its place, its direction within this synchronic essence; freedom as the spontaneity of human ego is opened to the interest and love of live, to an egology. Therefore; beyond essence is not with freedom, since it is not egoistic, and it is a sincere apology face to face, a conscience of being human; then where it is and when it is? How will we survive from this totalizing, reflective and synchronic historical essence that suppresses the Other in its difference? *To where* will we escape? For there is only whatness and whenness in the sphere of being and essence; Levinas reminded us that the search he undertook was about the individuality of a human being and the bond of sociality which expresses the true nature of the Other in the language. He offers the question type as “who” rather than quiddity, “what”. At this point, Levinas directs us that the question is not “to where” because it would leave us on the plane of ontology. Levinas rejects the superiority of the question where and indicates that, the extraction from essence is only meaningful as a going towards a null-site, a non-place (*non-lieu*). Since, he marks, already starting from Plato –even Plato goes beyond the metaphysics of presence–; the presence as the main form of ontological reason claims to include every negativity, every negation or exception

ⁱ Ibid.. p. 7.

in the verb to be as “is”. It claims even they do not exist; they still “are” in the sense of essence. Their being such owes their being to be; they are parts of essence in this sense. Thus, the task which Levinas needs to indicate depends on showing a one-self who is able to repulse the invasion of essence in terms of “...is” so that we can reach otherwise than being. Thereby, Levinas comes to define a human being as a unique existence which is disturbed by its own identity with itself, a human being that is outside of the community of genus and form and does not find any peace in indifference, nor finds quiet in coinciding to its existing. Only and only, this unique human being can survive from the essence and go beyond the interest and the epos of the history as the humanity of human being.

“The outside of itself, the difference from oneself of this unicity is non-indifference itself... A unicity that has no site, without the ideal identity a being derives from the kerygma that identifies the innumerable aspects of its manifestation, without the identity of the ego that coincides with itself, a unicity withdrawing from essence – such is man.”ⁱ

Then, what kind of temporalization would make this man’s and its time arising as the subjectivity which ruptures the history of essence? Levinas indicates that the time is essence and eventuality of essence as a process of revelations. Therefore, the time as the history includes the recuperation of all variations, separations, disengagements by memory, representation and retention. So the register or synthesis of the time into totality of history regulates the order of immanence and synchrony. But the temporalization of the time in the essence does not recuperate all the passings of time within beings. Not all the time can be retrieved in the essence by representation, memory or retention. The temporalization of being as essence gathers all before the reality of being which comes to pass disjoints from its present substance; but “is it *all* at all?”, asks Levinas. The signaling of the other time, the other person as in a winking is just given here. It does not give itself as such to the memory, to the representation or to the essence. The signaling of the other time is not a matter of assembling or crystallization of unicity of human being into inscription, into the Same. The signaling, according to Levinas, evinces and indicates the “*deep formerly*”, which is not a modification of presence and foreign to all thematization and representation,

ⁱ Ibid., p. 8.

is not a recallable or recollectable past by memory; and therefore it is before every past and present. It is an-archival as a past more ancient than every assembled past: it is an-archival past and pre-original. It is the principle of Saying. A similar methodological problem emerges from the question that “Is not this signaling of deep-formerly still taking place in the present and thus in the locus of ontology?” Then, if this signaling exists even in the presence of very present; the definition of time as the essence must be restored in the way of “otherwise than being.”

The time in the temporalization carries the burden and gravity of diachrony; the ambiguity is here not different than of the said and the saying. So, the time is not essence but is the saying which manifests itself in said that is of ontology because the saying is diachronic and its equivocation has the power of being unsaid. The saying keeps its secret as its enigma and escapes from the powers of understanding and essence. By said it oscillates towards the essence; and with being unsaid it oscillates to otherwise than being or beyond essence: it signifies as signaling the beyond. And this is what Levinas calls as subjectivity of beyond. This enigma which does not give itself to comprehension or to gathering of essence, but which still has a reference to the said, is the transcendence and the structure of diachronic time. The diachrony which is the time of the Other that is of unrecallable past, of deep formerly or of anarchical past.

What matters here is how this saying will be said in its anarchical enigma. How will be the transcendence of the saying will go beyond *esse* in which the saying and the lapse of time as the other's time is being signaled in terms of presence, in being? How will be a singular relation with this pre-original past established without representation, memory or interest? A singular relation which will not reduce this an-archival deep formerly into immanent present and not leave pre-origin of its enigma behind its historical order as a content of ontological cognition. This singular relation is responsibility and non-indifference regarding the Other. Being responsible of/from the other person does not belong to the thematization or to *esse* of the said or to an ontological plane the question of where is answered and the answer is grafted into the chronology of immanent, synchronic history. The other as dia-chronic belongs to the order of meontology. This relationship with the other is on the hither side of every re-presentable or recallable past; it is the origin

of all past and present as an-archival. This an-archival responsibility calls for another freedom which is always already Good that I have not chosen but already chosen by. The goodness as disinterestedness through responsibility is of null-site, from the locus of me-ontological which is deep formerly, that which has always already passed away. So, the time of pre-original saying and subjectivity signals the humanization in every present as other and goes beyond essence by diachrony:

“The relationship with a past that is on the hither side of every present ... is included in the extraordinary and everyday event of my responsibility for the faults or misfortunes of the others... The freedom of another could never being in my freedom, that is, abide in the same present, be contemporary, be representable to me ... The unlimited responsibility in which I find myself comes from the hither side of my freedom, from “a prior to every memory”, from the non-present par excellence, the an-archival, prior or beyond essence. The responsibility for the other is the locus in which is situated the null-site of subjectivity, where the privilege of the question “where” no longer holds. The time of the said and of essence there lets the pre-original saying be heard and answers to transcendence, to dia-chrony, to the irreducible divergency ... which in its own way makes a sign to the responsible one.”ⁱ

“Is not oneself’s relation with diachrony of the saying, pre-original or an-archival still a form of recuperation?” asks Levinas in order to clarify the position of that which is deep formerly or an-archival past. This is not because of lack of capacity that reigns over the reason, but by the very reason of this non-present’s immensity or as Levinas puts it, “superlative humility or goodness”. The meontological Good, as beyond being, since from Plato, is not a subject of representation, nor is the subject of vision or unity. It is separated from the being in a way that it is sacred: if we can say, what Levinas constructs is *meontology of sacred*, as goodness, as disinterestedness. Since this sacred is invisible, non-present and an-archival; it is not about being or its intelligibility that founds the origin and the present in the order of history or memory. Therefore, if this sacred of goodness is not of present; what of freedom as the spontaneity of my ego, as my actions? The freedom in

ⁱ Ibid., pp. 10 -11.

its spontaneity and in its being present opposes to this goodness, to this non-present; thus as long as the freedom is present the good is not involved in freedom. One of the Levinas' famous remarks tells us that "The good has chosen me before I have chosen it."ⁱ That is to say, we are not good because of we are volunteer for it; on the contrary, we are obliged to be good before who/what we are; there is no choice here, thus there is non-freedom. I am already penetrated into the hither side of every interest and egology. And preliminary indications of Levinas suggest that "if no one is good voluntarily, no one is enslaved to the Good."ⁱⁱ There is here beyond of free or slave.

The freedom as the correlation of the finite in the essence is a representable conjunction, assembling of the beginnings and ends: no ruptures, no intervals; that is why it is finite. Events occur in the world's presence and they are assembled in a thematization of the essence, as having beginnings and ends, reasons and results open to cognition in which the synchrony governs and regulates the order of knowledge of the saids within propositions as if it were also the locus of power of judgment. Thus, Being decides what happened and what did not happen, who is important and who is not and reflects them all into the system of the reference, the system of memory of the present: representations and presents all again into the present, into the conjunction of totality. It is a violence of the Same's time, synchrony, using the present and the freedom inside of it as a pretext. Violence over the other person who is excluded from the history or memory. In contrast with this violence; the radical ethical position is founded on the diachrony of "despite-me", "for another":

"Diachrony is the refusal of conjunction, the non-totalizable, and in this sense, infinite. But in the responsibility for the Other, for another freedom, the negativity of this anarchy, this refusal of the present, of appearing, of the immemorial commands me and ordains me to the other, to the first one on the scene, and makes me approach him, makes me his neighbor. It proves this responsibility against my will, that is, by substituting me for the other as a hostage. All my inwardness is

ⁱ Ibid., p. 11.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., p. 11.

invested in the form of a despite-me, for-another... They are signification par excellence... it is the very fact of finding oneself while losing oneself.”¹

Therefore, it is not I which is exposed to the Goodness or the Other; but it is *me*, the accusative. This accusative means I am under obey of the face; the face orders me my responsibility. The positivity of the responsible, by means of goodness, effaces the negative attributes of non-freedom. The non-representable provocation or call made by the other person puts me into an original trauma in which the response of me is born. The understanding of the mind does neither comprehend the meaning of this provocation, this non-vocation, the question or the call of the other; nor the answer of it. He is not in a position that is supposed to know. The response is, as conscience, always already there, before every question and answer, before every consciousness and cognition; before every free act, it is a debt of to be a human being before the other. It bypasses the present not passing through a present; but still this bypassing has its own trace as the fact of bypassing the present as if it hollows out the present and expels the present from being present. This trace is revealed as the face of our neighbor. I answer *before/for* him towards his Face. Therefore, the exception deploys its secret, enigma here as I answer *to* him, I answer *for* him, I answer *before* him by my responsibility for the sake of goodness: that is meontological sacred.

The goodness as otherwise being is infinity, the relation with it is infinition going beyond essence. What we meet in the responsibility is this relation with Infinity, with Other. It reverses all principles around interest, ego and finitude of beings. The responsibility is infinite since we can never pay back; it is a debt that is made of spiritual transcendence towards God, a responsibility of being human in this movement before the Other. The infinity of infinite does not live in the future, but in deep formerly that is not-presentable referring to memory or history. It exceeds every capacity of thematizing. On the hither side of being free or non-free; it is the non-place, null-site which breaks up the order of essence. The trace of infinity, that is enigmatic and equivocal glory, is non-traceable. It is neither a departure nor an arrival point as in the phenomena which serves to the time of essence or demonstration of reason. The trace is not of the world of ontology,

¹ Ibid., p.11

but of me-ontological transcendence in a face: “A trace is sketched out and effaced in a face in the equivocation of the saying. In this way it modulates the modality of transcendent.”ⁱ

Therefore, the residue of infinity is not in the register of ontological, of presence; no hunting of this trace is possible since the very glow of it is ambiguous; it does not come however its bypassing as a command to present without vision passes through the face of the Other in a diachrony that is not present or is nothing as so-called negativity of being. Otherwise, it would be present and finite. The command of the infinite Other is not able to take us to the deduction of the Infinite from this command; since the Infinite is beyond the present and representable; and since this command is not a matter of knowing:

“The infinite wipes out its traces not in order to trick him who obeys, but because it transcends the present in which it commands me, and because I cannot deduce it from this command. The infinite who orders me is neither a cause acting straight on, nor a theme, already dominated, if only retrospectively by freedom. This detour at a face and this detour from this detour in the enigma of a trace we have called *illeity*”.ⁱⁱ

“*Illeity*”, here is established on a neologism of Levinas explained by Morrison: “Levinas describes alterity as the trace of *illeity*... With French *il* (he) and Latin *ille* meaning ‘that one’. Levinas describes it as, ... the *he* [or ‘that one’] in the depth of the you.”ⁱⁱⁱ *Illeity* marks how the entering or welcome of the Other into me without having conjunction with me, without being a representation or theme of mine becomes possible. We cannot “be conscious of” *illeity* in terms of a *Thou* or a *He*, as a subject of meaningful proposition. The *illeity* comes to me not as an arrival but as a departure and directs me in the way of approaching the other in this very departure towards the transcendent. The diachrony of this departure in its affirmation is responsibility. In the obedience to the Other, to Infinite by this responsibility we are no longer within consciousness but within conscience. Not my consciousness participates to this obedience, but my conscience. The I obeys the order of

ⁱ Ibid., p. 12.

ⁱⁱ Ibid., p. 12.

ⁱⁱⁱ Morrison, *Education and Humanism*, p. 11.

the Other, before this obedience is represented, formulated or welcomed to consciousness. It is deep formerly which demonstrates itself in the present of obedience without being memorized, without being represented. It is not in the present, nor in the past but in unrecalable, an-archival past as the origin of the present and past. Since this obedience, this debt is not after a contract or an order received, but it is always already inside of a human being as conscience, as me having a relation with infinite by shame and culpability; or weakness; and therefore sending human being to transcendent relation with perfect, with Infinite.

In this regard, Levinas tries to show that there is another subjectivity than that of the I formed by transcendental apperception as unity. That subjectivity of subject is *substitution* of oneself for another. The infinite signifies as this substitution, as taking place/responsibility of the other person. It undoes the interest of the essence and puts subject in a primordial sphere of disinterestedness before any form subject is exposed to. The glory of infinite shines in one-for-another's goodness in substitution that is not of ontological, cognition, but of beyond, of me-on. It signifies as saying, it is the signification itself before any birth of meaningful contents:

“Substitution is signification. Not a reference from one term to another, as it appears thematized in the said, but the substitution as the very subjectivity of a subject, interruption of the irreversible identity of the essence. It occurs in the taking charge of, which is incumbent on me without any escape possible. Here the unicity of the ego first acquires a meaning –where it is no longer a question of the ego, but of me. Here the identity of subject comes from the impossibility of escaping responsibility, from the taking charge of the other. Signification, saying – my expressivity, my own signifyingness qua sign, my own verballity qua verb– cannot be understood as a modality of being; the disinterestedness suspends essence.”ⁱ

Then, what is the nature of this substitution? What does Levinas mean by oneself-for-another? That is clearly he does not mean that I physically changes his place and occupies

ⁱ Ibid., pp. 13-14.

the other's place. Completely not. Oneself does not start making the work of the other or redefining the identity of the other person. What is at stake in the substitution is not transubstantiation. I do not annihilate my own existence; I do not own another avatar. Levinas gives another name to this kind of subjectivity that is made of spirituality by responsibility: *expiation*. This is how otherwise than being in the subjectivity of subject is produced. Therefore, we could note that Levinasian meontology gives already the signals of a meontotheology.

Levinas, in order to explain the term *expiation*, uses concepts that are beyond ontology, beyond being and non-being, such as vulnerability, sensibility, fragility, incommunicable etc. These concepts make human being "human" before any constitution of ontology. The one-in-the-place-of-another signifies before identity or apperception. This substitution breaks up the essence to an alternative time by the breathlessness of the spirit or disinterestedness or gratitude. This breathless of not resting on its own theme, on its own understanding of the world, but being prior to any said, interrupts the order of continuity, of essence. Null-site is the locus of this interruption by substitution. Null site is the *epoche* in which the being turns into signification of human being, into subjectivity. We are not on our interests anymore; but we are holding our breath as the extreme subjectivity of human being, we are towards our responsibility: this is what we have as susceptibility, vulnerability and sensibility. We are more than what or how we are; we are much more than everything in our less: less of the ego, more of the other. Becoming more less, becoming more responsible and passive:

"Subjectivity, locus and the null-site of break-up, comes to pass as a passivity more than all passivity. To the diachronic past, which cannot be recuperated by representation effected by memory or history, that is incommensurable with the present, corresponds or answers the unassumable passivity of the self "*Se passer*" – to come to pass- is for us a precious expression in which the self figures as in a past that bypasses itself, as in ageing without 'active sythensis'. The response which is responsibility, responsibility for the neighbor that is incumbent, resounds in this passivity, this disinterestedness of subjectivity, this sensibility."ⁱ

ⁱ E. Levinas, *Otherwise than Being or Beyond Essence*, p. 14.

In diachronic past the self is exposed to utmost passivity, to wounding as “*me*” responsible before the face of the Other. It passes through this *accusative* as being responsible from everything; radically this responsibility is lived up to the point of trauma and persecution. The self is a hostage in his responsibility for the other, it is suffering, it is obsessed with the other and the self gives off its identity in this passivity which is more passive than all patience. The ego here is defeated by this very passivity, the I’s spontaneity and the ego’s interest, action are totally suspended in terms of sensibility, substitution. And this substitution is through the exposure of expression, saying, diachrony, face to face. Face to face or saying of the Other reveals sincerity and frankness and whole alterity lies on this meeting with face to face. In this meeting, in this expression of the face; there is sacrifice without reserve, it is beyond form. The self in this relation, as me, is a hostage, sacrifices itself; he is not voluntary or voluntary; he was chosen by Good which is of meontology as not presenting or re-presenting itself to the present. Though, within substitution, me is exposed to the violence of being guilty before any act, and suffers from being in not at-home-with-itself, having pain from the infinite demand of the other which is never totally satiable; the Good redeems all by signification, by transcendence as being human and having a soul, a unique soul through being responsible for the other.

3.2.3 Heteronomy

Being-responsible-for-the-other is prior to my freedom. And it is not the freedom or the autonomy of the self; but it is heteronomy we establish with the other and precedes freedom and autonomy, or separation. In auto-nomy; nothing could limit the journey of the thought, the history is a direct output of both freedom and its disclosure to the Same. Within this disclosure, human being is thus founded on its being free, its freedom to choose and its mastery over nature, history etc. by cognition. The human being, in its very being, supposes that it can possess, know, transform or use the world it inhabits in the way of its free will; as if he would conquest the infinite spaces; and govern the order of the universe. Man’s ego as separated, as free, as autonomous is ready to represent all to itself and to reign over this representation system. His identity as an ego is thought to be the a priori scheme of human being; there is no before or no beyond. Every other, from the *il y a*

to the other person or to the other time or the other place is trans-positioned within the system of reason, thus within the totality of the same by inter-referentiality of the representations. Therefore, the alterity or the difference of all others are erased by the light of intelligibility, either by categories or by representation through the horizon of being.

Levinas reads this process of totality, or the intelligibility of disclosure as the reduction of the other into the same. And auto-nomy, freedom is leading legitimization of human history and thus its refusal of alienation to itself: maintaining the self, the essence within historical process where there stays no unknown for thinking self. There is no limit of thought in this way and all is reflected into generations by memory, inscription, works etc. It is such an attractiveness that human ego is free and thus the essence, as the event of being legitimizes the every act of human being as the true measure of human being within the historical process and all free experience around the spontaneity is registered under the power of reason to the system of totality. Therefore, by the idea of infinity and the relation we established with it is beyond this system of totality and the power of reduction of the other into the same here. The freedom or the ego cannot embrace it: it is the less in more. On the contrary, the infinity towards the Other is antecedent to thought and transcendental apperception of I think. The idea of infinity becomes the origin of such heteronomy.

Within the realm of metaphysics, Levinas distinguishes two directions, two understanding of truth. The first one which is called the metaphysics of the presence as the dominant power of Western philosophy takes the truth as verification of propositions, the internalization of that which is exterior by thought and its comprehension. It seeks for the unity of reason in finitude or infinite as only dialectical pole of finite. There is no beyond of reason; no foreigner is welcome. This is the truth of presence which is auto-nomy, which is the victory of human ego over nature, over others etc. since in this seeking, in its origin, there lies the unity of the ego, unity of consciousness. This unity of the ego maintains the same and it comes to say that, it always establishes the order of immanence, putting different events to the same order of history, to the same chronology. The same is not same because the ego has the always same shape or essence; it is same because the process of identification remains solid prior to every knowing. In cognition, the individuality of the other is always already under the light of generalization. By this

generalization, it is the soul that becomes conqueror of the world over the others in the history. In autonomy, the light of intelligibility as the openness of being by generalization is the condition of every truth here. Thus the transcendence, the other in its exterior singularity has always been excluded from the lands of intelligibility. The other qua other is only a theme or a concept, or a journey of the ego's immanence. As Levinas puts it:

“Freedom, autonomy, the reduction of the other to the same, lead to this formula: the conquest of being by man over the course of history. This reduction does not represent some abstract schema; it is man's ego. The existence of an ego takes place as an identification of the diverse. So many events happen to it, so many years age it, and yet the ego remains the same! The ego, the oneself, the ipseity (as it is called in our time), does not remain invariable in the midst of change like a rock assailed by the waves (which is anything but invariable); the ego remains the same by making of disparate and diverse events a history - its history. And this is the original event of the identification of the same, prior to the identity of a rock, and a condition of that identity.”ⁱ

Conversely, by heteronomy –unlikely the egology of the same– the world before the ego is revealed on the face of the other. The condition here is inversed and is not anymore the unity of the ego, the same. The goodness and disinterestedness shines forth from the saying of face as shocking the ego and the unity of freedom. It is beyond which cannot be absorbed in its alterity; an exterior transcendence, a journey to divine, to God. This divine exteriority is on the hither side of essence by which Being is reflected into itself through the being and non-being, I and non-I. Unlike this divine exteriority, in the metaphysics of presence, this very essence legitimizes every act and experience in favor of the freedom of the ego. Even the other person is under a concept within this legitimization of immanence and essence as the science of being, ontology. But Levinas demonstrates that the face of the other resists to this very comprehension of being, of the ego; and they are not given as things, they are not around whatness; they are nothing but a community of whoness. The other puts the freedom of the I, the essence into question. That is where ethics is born before every birth.

ⁱ Ibid., p. 48.

Ethics as the real truth signals in a heteronomic relation with the other and this marking, before every consciousness of something, is revealed in the infinity which is a concept-less experience with Absolute. It is the movement of/towards transcendence. The same, the ego is weak before this infinite, they are not able to contain it, and the freedom of the ego is interrupted by this relation with infinite. And the auto-nomy of the same or this movement returning to where it started is now preceded by another kind of consciousness: meontological consciousness as conscience. The imperialism of the same has its condition in the depths of the I as me, as conscience. This imperialism is only after this heteronomy where the I has no power over the other's alterity. The face provides us with becoming interior or within the light of the same. Therefore, the heteronomy is antecedent to every free act, every freedom, every consciousness of something by conscience which is shame, guilt etc. The question where or what does not hold here. The pre-original, an-archival origin of human being is of meontology as the face of the other; and the I is exposed to this face as "me". The face is me-on. No satisfaction here is possible, that is why Levinas calls this me-ontological consciousness as Desire towards the Other. The traces of diachrony, the saying and the heteronomy is of conscience of human spirit. Therefore, the I becomes I only on the condition of being a "me", being exposed to fragility, sincerity, nudity of the face. Ontology comes after me-ontology. The starting point of this heteronomy is the face and ethics starts by the critique of conscience, by the saying and acceptance of this heteronomy which is rooted in the very truth of substitution, exposedness of freedom:

"Then if the essence of philosophy consists in going back from all certainties towards a principle, if it lives from critique, the face of the other would be the starting point of philosophy. This is a thesis of heteronomy which breaks with a very venerable tradition. But, on the other hand, the situation in which one is not alone is not reducible to the fortunate meeting of fraternal souls that greet one another and converse. This situation is the moral conscience, the exposedness of my freedom to the judgment of the other. It is a disalignment which has authorized us

to catch sight of the dimension of height and the ideal in the gaze of him to whom justice is due.”ⁱ

4- CONCLUSION

In the first section of this writing; I elaborated the relation of Levinas with the history of philosophy, with the metaphysics of presence in terms of being itself. The aim of this section was how Levinas takes the breaking-up with Western philosophy in terms of presence and what his critique targets on the territory of totality, State, Being etc. So that we could establish his position in/against the tradition of ontology and that establishment could lead us to his understanding of ethics as first philosophy. In order to clarify me-ontological approach of Levinas, which is always already involved in all sections of this thesis by his critique and his positioning, we had to start with more known philosophical discourses and then to move into less known specifications, which are Levinas’ original conceptualizations.

First section, “*Levinas and Ontology*” indicates that for a critique of metaphysical tradition in the perspective of Levinas, it is necessary to deal with unity, same, universality, truth, knowledge by representation and to assess their values against the measures of face, individuality, encounter, responsible “me”, alterity, justice etc. Levinas assigns the concepts of appropriation, thematization, representation, consciousness, possession, consumption to ontology. And he takes his challenging stand on the term of infinity, over which he many times reminds the contribution of Descartes to us. By this infinity, Levinas takes us to beyond as the unique meaning of being human rather than to light of neutral, objective, impersonal historical ontology. The main question type he asks is not what or how, but who; and not the identification of the ego which is bending over to consciousness by reflection; but the alterity of the other. Levinas asks, “How does presence of metaphysics erase the alterity of the other, what is this mechanism of suppression?”

Levinas’ survey also conveys the dimension of history, war and peace. He does not think “ethics” in the abstract terms, he always goes with the concrete. Therefore, it was

ⁱ E. Levinas, *Collected Philosophical Papers*, p. 59.

explained how Levinas conceives of war/violence and the totality, the individuality and the universality in its radical ethics since his ethical insistence is related with the other person in its individuality, not with the concept of that person under the light of intelligibility or universal history. Levinasian ethics, in this regard, starts in an exterior subjectivity out of this universal history. If there would be no objectified meaning, that is de-humanized content, and then the way to peace would be opened in terms of alterity. Because objective totality erases and sacrifices the individual existence for the sake of historical order on the level of egos and their struggles with each other. Beyond of totality, the real intersubjective human relations are reduced to a referential system of the same. This system of the same is within objective understanding and thus, the relations of human beings can never be absorbed by it. There is always already a surplus that is not included in objective past and an exteriority which is never reflected into mind: for Levinas, it is infinity within human relations, it is the other person centered around desire and transcendence through conscience. And that infinity through social relations is otherwise than the State which is actual realization of totality in the historical process. Infinity opens up ethics by the speech of existents prior to ontology which takes existents only beings of history in an objective, neuter and de-humanized order. Hearing of this other starts with dialogue and goes beyond vision of knowledge taking place in universal history. Dialogue in terms of a sociality bond is the breach with totality and breaking up with the identical ego of the same; it is where ethics takes place as the antecedent and ultimate signification between individual existents.

Levinas is well aware of that contemporary ontology, such as Heidegger, did add a different and valuable path to ontology on the way of the affections, such as interest, concern, care etc. However, even they are not definitive as in Hegel and belong to the states of being-in-the-world, they are still unsuccessful to grasp the other in its alterity for Levinas. Therefore, Heideggerian disclosure of being is not of ethical. Conversely to this disclosure, the other person, an existent can be understood in language through conversation. But this understanding is not exposed to thematization or to representation or to the anxiety of Dasein's death; the worlds are shared, proposed and thus the phenomenality, the apparition is transcended in this proposing and in this sharing of individuals. We can infer that, Levinas seems to claim that the anxiety of death could be overcome by transcendence toward the Other within this world.

According to Levinas, Husserlian and Heideggerian understandings of the other is not the right path to have a proper relation with the Other. The speech which I meet the other is not a thematization, it overflows the generality or whatness; it also goes beyond “howness”; it is a whoness in which I am giving my understanding of the world and taking his understanding of the world by language, by primordial donation. Thereby, it is not knowledge of the other, nor the affection, this relation with the other is not exposed to objectification; on the contrary Levinas moves further and claims that the relation is prior to all objectification. In this claim, while representation corresponds to the cognition; expression counts for sociality, relation with the other. The subject of expression by face is exterior to any comprehension; it attends its own revealing. And this revealing is not a matter of knowing but faith in Levinas. A faith which is exterior, transcendent and at the height is the source of being human and having relations with other people. The other is always who he is before all knowledge and affection; the other is the one in who I am in a relation with faith as being myself. To stand in the world already reveals a human exteriority and relation in the face of the other before all knowings and identifications. If we are alive, concrete and exterior to ourselves, that is because we are not composed of knowledge within our inner world but composed of our relation with the other.

Levinasian faith in terms of social relation is provided with the structure of infinite: we have a relation with infinite, it is exterior to us and the distance is never traversable, at the height as transcendent. This is an asymmetrical relation. And therefore, the discourse is not discourse of equals; the discourse at the height is to-God; a journey towards the God. Here, the God of Levinas is not the supreme Being of theology or God of ontology; it does not belong to the order of being: it is not an “is” or “is not”; but otherwise than being. We could conclude that the search for concrete and exterior is, in Levinas, taken to a meontotheological moment which depends on infinite, prying, divinity, height, salutation, expiation, belief, sacred, saint, farewell, to-God, faith etc. As Levinas puts it, this relation with the other through expression is religion: “This bond with the other which is not reducible to the representation of the other, but to his invocation, and in which invocation is not preceded by an understanding, I call religion. The essence of discourse is prayer.” But this is not the God of classical tradition as it is said; it is radically different. It depends

not on the being [on]; but to non-being [meon]. The modality of religion does not consist of participating to the One, to the God. It is a God that never is present but always beyond present, as goodness, as responsibility, as sociality, as an exteriority without violence. The God is the one to whom we pray, the one we pray for the absent past and future. And this activity of human being is beyond knowledge. Levinas calls this kind of faith as the true rationality going to peace which Western metaphysics excluded within the proportionality and the objectivity of the reason. The real word of God is the face of the Other: the poor, the weak, the beaten and the homeless in their pure nakedness, vulnerability and fragility. The word of God does not belong to a place, it is not a conscious of or an intention, it is on the hither side as me-ontological, as the locus of ethical invocation. It is metaphysical desire in which transcendence is constructed by the exteriority, by the *excedence* of the Other. Levinasian challenge to ontology here gains another crucial perspective and extends the critique of philosophical tradition to theological tradition in terms of meontotheology. The exteriority of the concrete Other is constructed around an absent God through the infinite in the face.

For Levinas, the infinity as the real, concrete and only relation type with the Other makes the intersection of the worldly (exterior and concrete relation) and other-worldly (metaphysical desire) possible. It is the passage from the exteriority to the transcendence in this world; this passage as a synthesis is called “*excedence*.” The disproportion between idea of infinity and infinity is direct proof of this *excedence*. Infinite is the only idea that the one who thinks is transcended/overflowed in that which is thought: the ideatum is beyond idea. It marks the difference between *on (knowledge)* and *me-on (desire)*, between *power* and *justice*. This absolute infinity towards the Other precedes consciousness and intentionality by desire towards the Infinite, the Other as goodness which is never satiable. This desire comes us from the face of the Other and the only possible truth is welcomed as justice in this regard. The other reminds us not the knowledge, not the power, but the truth of weakness and the humanity. Truth reveals its revealing not as adequation or proportion of facts to statements; but as expression, teaching of the other, cry of the eyes in the face. This teaching is the real way of spiritual activity of human being through desire in terms of dialogue. This desire is not enjoyment or satisfaction of a need, or possession since the face cannot be a matter or a measure of satisfaction or possession. It is insatiable: As

Levinas explains, "... where happiness corresponds to the realm of politics, mutual recognition and equality; desire tends towards religion which is, in Levinasian terms, humility, responsibility and sacrifice."

These terms are not of conscious but of conscience, not of objectivity but of subjectivity, not of knowledge but of faith. Not on freedom, but on a critique of it. When Levinas faces the tradition of Western Metaphysics; he also blames ontology and its continual justification of the violence in terms of freedom and historical factuality. Therefore, without analyzing the freedom of the ego, his survey towards the Other could not be completed. The spontaneity as the freedom to act whatever an ego wants is here put into question. The failure of the spontaneity in not catching what passed (*past*) in its materiality is an obstacle on a factual base. This is a weakness and a reservation on freedom; it takes us to the critique of freedom. The spontaneity cannot bring back the lived content. This is a failure of this power. The failure is not a part of the cognition since in that case it is just a legitimization of the freedom in totality. And for Levinas, it is never possible to legitimize killing the other person in terms of freedom. This killing cannot only be a matter of factual and ontological experience. Killing someone else means killing the singularity of a unique existence, killing someone is killing the one who has a face, a soul. That face, that soul is never possessable even by killing the other person. The murderous activity of the freedom cannot be attached to ontology, but it is already exposed to an ethics of the Other as in the statement, "*Thou shall not kill*" as the spiritual command of being human. Therefore, feeling guilty, having shame is not (of) knowledge or ontology; it directly refers to the imperfection and the perfection; that is a to a relation with infinity through the spirituality. The shame, to be guilty is before the Other, before the eyes of the other person. And they are the locus of non-intentional and non-reflective origin of meta-ontological consciousness: that is conscience. The spirituality, being human and justice is through this conscience. It is prior to any free act. Therefore, self-critique of freedom and the weakness of the I is traced back into their real origins in Levinas, that is to say into this conscience. This conscience is moral consciousness which brings another kind of rationality centered around desire, justice and responsibility. In this morality, the other is not what a human being but a who human being is in its meeting with the face which is itself signification, frankness and sincerity. This is an-archival way of Levinasian

philosophy and this way leads us to a new understanding of the spirituality and the responsibility.

Consequently, Levinas tries to improve a new model of spirituality and of rationality moving beyond representation in terms of justice while criticizing the ontological roots of philosophy qua being, totality, same, history, reflection etc. He is shifting the origin of philosophy from *on* to *meon*, from present to absent, from ontological knowledge, affectional existence to justice and ethics, to meontological and meontotheological horizons. In the first instance, it seems that this movement is moving in the opposite direction with the element of rationality since Levinas insists on the terms like faith, religion etc. However, it is not the whole of the picture because Levinas also targets the theological traditions with his new concept of God, an absent and an exterior God. Thus, we can infer that Levinas is improving a new path for rationality which also includes and opens absolute religious resonances. This rationality is against the spontaneity of the freedom in which the instincts, the impulses and the thrusts are dominant; against the primary role of representation or affection in which a human being is not experienced in its singular uniqueness; against the universal history and the State in which the human being is just an historical content. Here, a special kind of thinking, a demand of justice attached to this rationality, with responsibility comes to the play in a religious bond within a society. This is a moral consciousness, which breaks up with the dominance of ontology, of representation and of proportionality of the truth, enlightens the spiritual essence of who a human being is in its pure alterity. This alterity becomes the core of philosophical discourse within Levinas. Philosophy must seek for justice and a peaceable welcome of the other, of the naked, of the poor, of the unsheltered, of the hungry rather than Being or its continual violence during history. It is no more a discourse of identification; but it is now a journey of separation from metaphysics of representation, a challenge to ontological presence in terms of a break-up with totality, as Levinas puts it, the new ethical discourse is the unique event of the possibility of breathlessness of the Spirit. Within this break, within this interval, now philosophy questions its own de-humanized roots towards the real metaphysical desire with the Other.

The second section, *Phenomenology and Levinas*, was essential to understand the phenomenological tradition and its relation with Levinasian ethics. Husserl and Heidegger were anchoring points. The critical manners Levinas takes against them are generally focusing on the basis of intentionality and the infinite for Husserl; the disclosure of Being, the singularity of the other and its whoness rather than whatness, howness for Heidegger. The main pivotal is here again the search for exteriority of the other: but not under the neuter, generalizing light of intelligibility, or under the intentional structure of Husserlian noema-noesis. Neither it is being-in-the-world and nor is the impossible experience of Dasein's dying. What is at stake here are the structures of intimacy, proximity, humanization, justice, faith and speaking to the Other. Levinas expounds these structures in a different phenomenological manner which is inspired by Husserl and Heidegger, however this inspiration does not go to the same direction with them; Levinas quickly departs from their intentions and aims.

For Levinas, the case with Husserl is much more like on method and his relation with scientific essence of philosophy. Levinas is certain that our relation with infinite and the other person cannot be understood in terms of noesis and noema. Therefore, the intentionality giving utmost priority to representation is not the core of the philosophical discourse. This difference of Levinas from Husserl is clear with the concept of body. Against Husserl, Levinasian critique starts with the position of the body. It is not a transcendental coupling of a living body as an object; it is not an alter ego either. It is not a structure of Husserlian intentionality. A body is a structure of living from/for for Levinas: a subject of enjoyment, sensibility and pain rather than representation or reflection. The enjoyment of the ego, saving it from the dominance of anonymous elemental is the condition of separation. Without this separation, there would not be a multiplicity of beings and nor would be an ethical search of human beings.

Levinas claims that representation is not the condition of enjoyment. It is not exposed to a representation; conversely it makes representation exposed to the movement of enjoyment towards to love of life. Love of live (essential separation of the ego from anonymity) is prior to representation of consciousness. It ensures the egoism of life, therefore the separation of the ego in its own being. And whole leverage of this gravity

stands on the body. If there would be no love of life; the life of an existent would be a shadow founded on nakedness, abstraction of representations without any concrete life. The reality of life arises from these facts of nourishment, contentment, feeding, walking etc., not from representation or reflection. They are on the dimension of happiness. This is nor theoretical, not practical; the enjoyment precede them as *from which I live*. Love of life, which is in the midst of the event of feeding, holds onto exteriority rather than interiority of representation: and this exteriority as the love of life is antecedent to the *conscious of something*, to that intentionality. It gives the signals of a me-ontology: a meontology of love of life. Though, it returns to satisfaction, to the ego; it is not totally meontological; because it becomes the present when it is satisfied and since it is on the body, it is the present in itself and attached to the presence in its own bodily way. If we need to name its meontology, it would be a material meontology since it is only existing with its satisfaction. It is meontological because it is an event of the body which cannot be represented or reflected. Thus, its presence is not of a clear, certain order of ontology or of its universal light of intelligibility.

Becoming separated by feeding from the other (good) and by pouring its energy into the enjoyment of the ego; soon enough the subject in its separation gets aware of that he is in need of something that is not satiable. The love of life awakens the love of spirit: that is desire. For Levinas, a proper meontology is related with this spirituality rather than material meontology of the body. Therefore, the meontology of body needs to be completed and transcended by beyond, by ethical exteriority. Because this effort for being happy on bodily level is across time and human being finds itself always before an uncharted, unsecure future. He always needs to struggle by labor, by self-possession etc. through the structure of for-itself. And this uncharted future is not secured by representation, since enjoyment presents a different structure, it is an event. In enjoyment, the focus of the curve is already a part of curve, there is no objectifying intentionality here: there is a coiling over, and thus the I is an involution, contraction of the sentiment. The I is an I in its happiness, over its ego; that is why it is an already apology. Apology for being selfish and interested in satisfaction, apology for being *for itself*. The apology issues in this happiness and there raises the existence of the Goodness, beyond, Desire. Goodness is

opened through the ipseity, the separation and the enjoyment of the I. And this contentment is the condition of a society of multiple beings.

Here the structure of this living from is totally different than the act of representation which Husserl gives priority over all intentionalities. Levinas rejects the idea of Husserl that the representation is non-conditioned condition. Levinas claims that it is already on a body, on its stand and on its enjoyment of life. The body takes its stand on the world corporeally before the act of representation. Living from is not a noema. The nourishment of constituting overflows the constitution of representation. Alimentation is always already a surplus over representation and its signifying act. The event of alimentation is produced in the midst of constituting and constituted. Until I get satisfaction or things become mine; I am overflowed by the very act of sinking one's teeth into food. It is not of thought, nor is of representation. The alterity of feedings on exteriority are confirmed until they transform into my powers, to my possession, to my energy. The position of body abolishes the direction that "consciousness of something" takes. I think is already conditioned by body's position in the world.

Levinasian discourse proposes that the body is not a process of noematization as in Husserl's philosophy. By body, not the representation becomes a condition, but on the contrary the exteriority becomes the condition of constitution of being. The feedings, the things' coming to us creates the difference of an irreducible exteriority. Things come us through a background from which they emerge. They are already in the air, on the earth, on the space etc. The medium or background is earth, sea, light, city which are not possessable, they are common terrain which belongs to no one. Levinas calls this common terrain as *elemental*. *Elemental* is without support to be; it is not substantiality but over which substantiality and beings emerge. The elemental is pure quality as indetermination. The objects of contentment dissolve into the element again in the order of enjoyment. But this structure does not hold for human relations. Ethics is not on the order of the elemental. The face is not in the same line with things; it is not a matter of satisfaction or egology, or neither does dissolve into the terrifying endlessness of *il y a*, the elemental. It is not coming from elemental; it is of God. There is a double movement here; we should keep up laboring in order to have a separated being from elemental; therefore if we are a separated being; we

have a Desire, a hunger that is not satiable with the things; a desire which arises in the face of the other person, it is being disinterested with the dissolving satisfaction of enjoyment. The ethical desire is both with separation and its transcendence towards the other by insatiable desire. The divinity of elements is interrupted by separated being in the order of sensibility as happiness, and this separated being which coils over its love of life is interrupted by spirituality in the order of the face. So for the spirituality is born, the self must have its love of life and struggle against the insecure future in a material base. (Semi)meontology of sensibility here passes over to a meonto-theo-logy of the other or put in another terms, from material meontology to the spiritual one. In Levinas, this spiritual meontology is opened up in a meontotheological sphere since it is to-God, with infinite. The difference of infinity and elemental emerges in the meeting with the other. The Other is not something that I am not with myself, not conscious of myself; but in enjoyment the I loses its consciousness, it flies away. The enjoyment carries the possibility of a withdrawal from this enjoyment by losing itself in the anonymity, by satisfaction. By satisfaction, this anonymity of nowhere-ness of the elemental opposes to the another primordial element which is only personification, the presence of the Other. Human being does not fly away in meeting the other, nor it is drifted onto a threat to its love of life; on the contrary, this meeting provides the human with who he is before the other person. This meeting starts in dwelling.

In dwelling human being welcomes the Other in a recollected home, as hospitality. It is the base where the hold, the grasp and the comprehension of things take place; it is the land of separation from the elemental. The hand qua hand traverses the elemental in which the body is immersed. It possesses things in the enjoyment; therefore the movement of hand oscillates between the void of the satisfaction and the void of the elemental. The body carries all the weight of these conflicting events on itself and thus it becomes both the possibility of separation and of dependence. By laboring, being tries to secure its own future, staying far away from *il y a*. Thus, the time is the very horizon human being takes on laboring towards satisfaction, towards future. The time is the terrain the laboring takes place within duration. Securing the love of life is never fully accomplished; the world is not totally conquered at a distinct time; absolutely not; the time comes from these series of actions; stoppages and going-ons. And since the suffering of a failure against elemental is

always on the horizon; this creates the passivity and in turn the patience: being depended on elemental, tolerating this dependence in waiting and never achieving a total independence from uncharted future. But being is not on the fear or on this insecure feeling always, by satisfaction it also opens the dimension of distance to the elemental as a separated being. This is what the equivocation of the body means. It is both traversing the life on the way of the ego (separation and dependence at the same time) and on the way of spirit (possibility of desire).

Levinas claims that this equivocation of the body creates the consciousness. Laboring across time and space; being happy during time, having duration as stops and goings, this is exactly the source of consciousness since it provides the human being with distance. This delay, deferral of *il y a*, of elemental, being separated is the consciousness; therefore the consciousness is exactly the embodiment of corporeality of the body. This separation of being becomes a consciousness of self-sufficiency in addition to be in fear before the elemental still. And this self-sufficiency by laboring proceeds through the will of existent. The existent lives in-between of its will and the obstacle it encounters, the danger he should overcome in order to have future happiness. But for a complete sense of separation and security, human being needs home, needs intimacy. Without home in which human being is at peace and at distance with the elemental through a feminine grace of the Other; laboring, possession or standing in the existence over its body would not be possible at all Levinas indicates. All laboring and will is possible through recollection which is the name of existent's positioning as in-outside in the intimacy within home: by a gentleness of the Other, he survives from the fear of infinite and stranger spaces. Not a shock of unknown spaces but a feminine familiarity within Home he is in.

The recollection of the world as represented and worked over before the elemental becomes possible within home in terms of inwardness. By recollection within home, the human being is giving its attention to itself rather than losing itself in the elemental; and also existent is now beyond enjoyment since it suspends the immediate reactions to the nourishments thanks to the distance the separated being has with elemental. "There is" is interrupted in the face of someone within home. The being is now beyond satisfaction, it is in the realm of affection: the intimacy of affection, a relation with someone who is

familiar. The home is already human. The Other as the source of intimacy is the Woman; not a complete Other, but the first shape of it since it is not on the society yet, it is deaf and silent. Yet, it is still a human welcome. Without home recollected, withdrawal from anonymous existence; this withdrawal from elemental implies a new event: that is the event of the Other which is not enjoyable or possessable since it paralyzes possession. It is hospitable; though home still carries the possibility of loneliness, becoming forgetful of the Other; thus it is not the full event of meeting the Other. Home is just a beginning of alterity. That fullness is through language in society. By speaking; by giving the world to the Other, the language in its all forms shines as a donation, as a gift which is a primordial dispossession. This donation of the language is the first actualization of the ethical encounter over and above the labor; in spite of the fact that it is through the labor of speaking that is mouth opened with wor-l-d, it is much more than this effort of opening. It is such generosity and straightforwardness that comes to play as a spiritual sharing of the existents who have their own worlds. Different worlds and different understandings are given, the infinite signifies in this sharing by itself. Not by possessing these clothes, these tools, or satisfaction of feedings; but the face gives the infinite desire and sense of the world: it is for free and beyond all prices. It is not “what” makes human life precious, but it is a “who”. A who that is speaking, listening and looking into the eye directly. The language of this sacred face to face marks the heightness and the desire of human being; not by consciousness but by dispossession; and by conscience which is the twilight of who a human being is and must be, on the contrary of a search for quiddity in the horizon of being. The spontaneity of the I and its possession is now under questioning. This dispossession demonstrates that the I is already an apology of selfishness through its freedom that is not interested in anything else except himself and his solitary future.

The conscience opens up the radical quest for absolutely concrete, exterior and at the same time absent for the present; and this search of desire, transcendence by language is a humanization and justice by not through “the consciousness of ...” as in Husserlian analysis. But through non-intentional consciousness which is another name for conscience, moral consciousness: or with a more radical naming as meontological consciousness. That is not an intentional consciousness, but non-intentional. And it is not within the idea of horizons of meaning; it overflows the idea of horizon discovered by intentional analysis.

Levinasian critique holds that rather than a reflective consciousness there is a non-reflective one which does not envelop particular in a universality and intelligibility of concept: that is the other's intimacy through the face which is not a clear or distinct idea. The self does not come to a world which completely belongs to it; the self has already belonged to a world corporeally as body before consciousness founds the world in its own measure as representation or reflection. Therefore the pure exposure of body to world is antecedent to this measure in terms of representation. This exposure as passivity always already accompanies reflective consciousness which is before all intentions: the dark, the confused context; the weakness or the imperfection belongs to conscience as non-intentional consciousness. This conscience is not after some wrong doing; it is not after choices, it precedes all choices of the self. Already an apology for its interior being which is disinterested in homeless, poor or stranger. The human being in its latent birth is a me, rather than I. "My being in the world, my place in the sun; they are already usurpation of place that belongs to the other man who has already been oppressed." This conscience is fear for all the violence, a fear which already goes back to consciousness of the self, coming from the face of the other. The fear in the word of God as responsibility: "Do not kill, do not make injustice." This fear interrupts the order of being, the self in its egoism. Fear here does not return to my own being, it is not fear for/of me as in Heidegger, it is fear for the other person in pure exposure to this exterior other...

Levinas holds onto exteriority in his all ethical research. In his analysis, we sense the phenomenological effect of searching in the horizon of concrete. Without doubt, this is an Husserlian effect. However, the focus is the other person and his discourse, even if it is a phenomenology of sociality, here sociality directly refers to a religious bond. Husserl was not interested in such kind of ethical, religious and transcendent bond; he was in the realm of a scientific discovery and searching for the foundation of meaning in a transcendental and representational manner for Levinas. Levinas departed him in his search for the spiritual essence of human being; the face as the primordial core of metaphysical desire emerged and a new philosophy of alterity depending not on the representation or transcendental reflection, but on expression, dialogue, teaching, sharing, praying appeared. These are all related with philosophical excedence of Levinasian challenge which includes the element of alterity "to-God", which is absent and infinite. In Husserl, these are

not the topics of a philosophical discourse. Main ideas of Levinas regarding body and the other person are clear examples of how he receives the role of representation (as not unconditioned condition) different than Husserl. Therefore, the concept of Husserlian intentionality is criticized, and then re-constructed and inversed in terms of infinity and face.

Levinasian critique is deployed in a way that, against Husserl, Levinas takes the side of absolute alterity, infinite, face and faith; and tries to demonstrate the origin of who a human being is, rather than what to know or how to know. Against all other essences of philosophy, Levinasian move brings the justice to the front lines and teaches that a real philosophy is the one who thinks over “acts, responsibilities, justice, existents in their own.” A real philosophy is the one who captures truth as an infinite search for justice and its realization before the other person. So, within the dimension of transcendence in society, Levinas, leaving from Husserlian objectivity, offers another subjectivity in terms of philosophy of teaching and sharing; and improves a new understanding of ethical exteriority in terms of other person. What is radical in this understanding is that it is completely determined by non-conceptual relations with the other person and here the concrete and the exterior as the phenomenological horizon of objective foundation within Husserl are transformed into somebody who has face and that face is already preceding Husserlian transcendental and phenomenological sense. And Levinasian sense is not related with intentional or reflective consciousness but with non-reflective and non-intentional one which opens the dimension of meontotheological discourse. That meontotheological is an indication of absence by the ways of conscience, shame and guilt in terms of a different religious, social spirituality.

Heidegger was, possibly, the greatest philosopher of twentieth century Levinas said. Therefore, he always reminded his silence and did never forgive him for his in-direct participation to the Nazi movement... Therefore, here we only focused on philosophical relations. Levinas praised Heidegger in a way that he contributed to philosophical discourse in terms of affection, primordial feelings, howness etc. Since he mentioned from the importance of being-in-the-world; he could not be positioned in a representational or idealist construction. He changed question from what to how. Though, eventually Levinas

declares that it is still on the realm of ontology, light of intelligibility, on the disclosure of Being, neuter, impersonal rather on humanizing, personal or the value of ethical implication of spiritual activity.

Levinas marks that the relation with the Other is subordinated to Dasein's mineness, Da of Dasein in philosophy of Heidegger. The world and the other are established on *being there* as the horizon of philosophical discourse. It is an ontology of presence, of being. Not interested in spiritual activity or with the face of the Other. In his concrete search for phenomenology of sociality, Levinas tries to expound the grounds the exteriority of the Other is revealed. These grounds for Levinas are language, love, dying for, sacrifice, sharing, responsibility, faith, frankness, sincerity, straightforwardness etc. Heidegger defends an authenticity of a being; therefore Levinas asks "does not this authenticity, a being proper refer to a right and wrong?" And this question is a legitimate question in this thesis of this writing.

According to Levinas, Heidegger's philosophy, its being an event of to-be and not a conceptual production opens the realm of affectivity of human being. It is an original contribution to the contemporary philosophy. Therefore, Dasein, in being there is the essence of being; it is the irreducible condition of every human being. In its existence; there is concern for being, a being-with-others, a being towards death. This discourse is beyond the objectifying act of Husserl's representation. Thus, here in Heidegger, the search for whatness is transformed into a search for adverbial modalities, by howness: as existing, being there, being in the world, being for death becomes the core of philosophy. These modalities are existentials of Heidegger. This event of being, these adverbial modalities are substituted for representational discourse. Therefore, objectification only takes place on the ground of these modalities; on the event of affective being, not on transcendental subjectivity or objectivity. Nevertheless, there is a clear and open intersection point of Levinas and Heidegger in this critique of transcendental and idealist construction of human being. Nonetheless, this does not come to a point that the orientation the critique takes is similar; conversely it is radically different. Levinas, in his radical philosophy of the Other, explains that Heideggerian discourse has no relation with interest in humanism or humanization: There is no place to ethical, infinite, absolute

implications; no relation to dignity or to an excellence of man is at stake; no interest to justice basically exists. The signification is still within presence, within being as being-there. The meaningfulness of the authenticity only refers to the experiences of “mine”.

Levinas questions this kind of philosophy of existentials; for him it is not possible to despise everyday life (the they) without giving the signals of any good and evil. It is not properly understandable how Heidegger speaks of a *Fall* without any perfection or human essence. Levinas is clear that all those implies a perfection, a beyond being, a unique existence. Unlike Levinas, Heideggerian philosophy still maintains the superiority of freedom, the power of spontaneity, independence over the other person through mineness. Levinasian path of human being is, on the contrary, with responsibility, conscience (moral consciousness), apology of I before the other and sacred of spirituality while including the absolute exposure of “me”. This path is not some sort of religious discourse that is far away from worldly, from exterior; this transcendence holds onto exterior by sensibility: excendence through spirituality of ethical search in the eyes of the other person. Therefore, authenticity by mineness in Heidegger holds onto exteriority only on the basis of Dasein, on the disclosure of being by reduction of the other’s whoness to howness in being-with-the-others. There is no time of the other, no saying of the other, no spiritual uniqueness of the other. No transcendence of being-there while standing in the world. The authenticity of mineness includes only attachment to its own being: it is gathering of being around its own existence through existential manners. That manner is opened up by “being-in-the-world”. And the objects before being objects of the representation becomes objects of the hand in Heidegger as ready-to-hand. Dasein is surrounded by these handy objects. They are also a matter of how: how we use this tool etc. in the work of doing, how we capture that object and for what purpose, in which ways are essential. *Techne* in an existential standing and doing in the world determine the horizon of being-in-the-world. The other person is not beyond that comprehension of how-ness or of style of doing in Heidegger.

The humanity of the other person is not subject to otherness as who-ness. Still, it would be unfair to say that the things and the people are at the same line in *Sein und Zeit*; since the other people are also able to grasp, to hold by hands. They are understood around what they do, how they do; around work, not around for-the-other, or disinterestedness as

goodness. The goodness is not a matter of employment or idleness in Levinas. It is not exposed to the style of *doing* in the world. Rather, Levinasian discourse depends on the style of *speaking* which precedes all styles. Nonetheless, Dasein in society is with the others and for the others, Miteinandersein; however this living does not serve to peace or to love or to share. The human being-there mixes the being of all others and understands itself in terms of impersonal “they”. The others here are not of ethical singularity but of ontological generality. For Heidegger, Dasein loses its value under the everyday of the they. Or as he puts it, under the dictatorship of impersonal personage around the they Dasein is preceded by a primordial feeling. And in this regard, authenticity of Dasein around the they now is determined as “being-for-death” in anxiety. To be death is utmost possibility of Dasein; one day that Da of Being will not be filled up by its being. Therefore, anxiety takes place as the perfect authenticity in death in which Dasein stands before itself. All relations with the others are now dissolved into the anxiety of Dasein in being-towards-Death, in precedence of this state. This fact of being death is not surpassable; it becomes the absolute exteriority which has no genus or specification. It is, if we could say, like elemental or *il y a* of Levinas. Only difference is that Dasein passes through towards it by itself. His consciousness is not flying away in this inevitable fact. Dasein in this relation comes to an impossible experience as being ahead of itself. There is no other truthful experience of Dasein that comes before this impossible experience. It is already on the foundation of human existence. Therefore, the structure of being-towards-death turns Dasein’s eye to its own existence: now he is only concerned about himself in its most original concreteness. Before everything and everybody, he is in the world only for the sake of his well-being. Not beyond being since it is already determined as being in its ultimate end. The absence of concreteness as being not there, as being vanished from ground is now the only interest of Dasein. He is supposed to take care of his “da”. And here at this specific point Levinas questions, then what does “dying for the other” or “taking the responsibility of the other” mean? What does to love, to desire, to meet with the other person and proximity mean? Are they still within the horizon of being and Heideggerian anxiety of being death eventually?

Levinasian beyond is not within the horizon of concern of being for itself around the ultimate fact of dying or that fear of dying. This dying for another, this possibility, is

beyond this Heideggerian impossibility of experience. And then Levinasian question “what/how does he do?” in the world; or how does Dasein take care of itself, but “who is the other person?” par excellence. This question of/with the other in Levinas is the relation with the Infinite, the Desire, the spirituality of human being. Here the concern is for the other before every other concern of human self. The desire here is not interrupted by the fact that every human being will die or will die alone. The care of the other person is conditioned by this very fact of not dying alone in Levinas, and not by being in the world as in Heidegger. In Levinas, encountering the face, responsibility is already beyond the fact of dying or the primordial feeling of anxiety; it is an ex-cendence and meaning that goes beyond *il y a*, or elemental. There-ness of being is exceeded by transcendence towards the infinite Other. Lovers die together for each other; another one dies for a person, sacrifices its own being; this is all beyond the order of presence, ontology and primordial affections of Dasein; they are not around “da”. They are beyond this concrete Da of Dasein. Here, another Da, if we can say, is at stake; Da of the other person. This da, however, is not related with any intelligible or representable category, it is not something the self lives in it by its own affections or doings with the instruments as in Heidegger; this another Da is of human spirit and around speaking to the face of the other, learning from this other and sharing with this other. Since this “there” of other is not of “sein/being”, it is from not-being, it is otherwise than being; therefore Heideggerian ontology and Levinasian ethics conflict here in terms of ontology and ethics and departs to very different directions. This other Levinasian Da, with our naming and comment, is not a place, it is a non-place and it is something that we never can have or present to ourselves. It is such a non-place that it offers an exteriority of responsibility and sensibility, therefore by this exterior, we transcend the worldly material existence towards a spiritual, religious, ethical one. It is a spiritual Da. Levinasian human in the ways of transcendence and spirituality is not anymore Dasein. The transcendence and ethical desire are not explained by Heideggerian mineness of authentic being or its anxiety. The love of father and son: “this true love which is swifter than eagles, stronger than lions”, this sign represents the essence of human being that is beyond ontological powers. A human being hears the call of the other person and does not let another being die alone. This is holiness, heightness of the face as dis-interestedness for Levinas: excessiveness of sacrifice in mercy and generosity... the true meaning of human spirit.

The dis-interestedness of Levinas is in the essence opposite to the concern of Dasein in its own being. Here, the goodness before the Other is not something present, it is neither a material absence. Even if we can see some clear traces of a “meontology” regarding non-being in Heideggerian philosophy, especially after *Kehre* regarding the concept of freedom and Schelling, we must keep in mind that this meontology is not similar to Levinasian one in its content and shape. While, the concept of death and impossible experience of Dasein ahead of itself shapes the orientation of Heideggerian philosophy in presence and absence regarding being-in-the-world; Levinasian philosophy is oriented by the concept of the Other, which is the relation with Infinite through desire, and by ethical resonances regarding a social and religious bond with other human beings. And this bond is not of being but of non-being which is not the opposite of being or subject of a dialectical relation reflecting over itself in the unity of the present intelligibility. It is beyond or otherwise than being in relation with the other person in terms of responsibility and sacrifice. Therefore, in a manner of speaking, if we claim that Heidegger constructs a kind of meontology of Death (by the way of an absolute future absence) emerging from the impossible experience of Dasein’s dying, then we can conclude that Levinas is constructing a meontotheology of the Other (by the way of an absolute past absence, *deep formerly*). First one is Dasein holding onto itself as being in the world towards future by ways of affections and doings, second one is human being holding onto the other as being responsible towards God (by speaking to a ‘who’) which has always already passed by. Therefore, a material absence of Heidegger here in Levinas is challenged by a spiritual absence searching for infinite justice in terms of humanized alterity. Subsequently if there is a continuity regarding phenomenological tradition between Heidegger and Levinas in relation with the essence of existent and its corporeal, concrete existence in the world; at the same time there is also a more powerful separation in philosophical discourse focusing on different exteriorities, the exteriority of transcendent other (in Levinas) and the exteriority of Dasein’s death (in Heidegger).

In the last section; “*Levinas and Meontology*”, from substantiality to spirituality; it was expounded how Levinas created his own philosophy and contributed to philosophical discourse in terms of conceptual manners which are radically different than that of

philosophical tradition. It was indicated how his me-ontological approach was constructed and conceived as meontotheology in this thesis. In the first sub-section, indolence and fatigue were analyzed as the main core of the event of hypostasis, which is taking up of existent in existence in Levinasian philosophy. These events, which are before consciousness as cognition –on the contrary the consciousness arises from these events– causes to the forsakenness of subject and its solitude in the process of living, that is to say as long as we live with the burden of ‘existing’. Therefore, the future of effort is never virginal for a subject since every act for living in a secure future involves engaged moments with the success the subject is trying to reach. So, there is no moment that is completely separate and independent of its preceding burdens. Thus, the contract with existence of existent is tiring, suffering and the subject is never able to find any durable meaning on this endless pursuit. When he has reached to its goal; it is not infinite or enough for keeping his well-being; he must go on; or when he is unsuccessful; he is still in need to be maintaining his effort for a possible future success. This process has no absolute happy ending. As Levinas puts it: “To be weary means to be weary of being.”

These events of indolence and fatigue explained how an existent arises in the world and takes a position which is the foundation of substantiality. Without this foundation of substantiality, there is no subject or existing. By this foundation; the subject is able to be itself and has the possibility to go beyond being, to spirituality in meeting the other person while he is living. Therefore, Levinas seems to construct the meontology of sensibility by hypostasis; but he will not call this substantiality as meontological; thus he will put the thesis that for an ethical meeting; for an me-ontological movement towards the Other (we called this movement as meontotheological), firstly the existence of existent must arise in the fathomless depth of elemental, in/before *il y a*. So, firstly an existent must come to the existence, hypostasis must take place and the subject must stand in the world separately as not being a creature of nature. Without standing in the exteriority as its own being, passage to another exteriority as transcendence and spirituality is not possible at all for Levinas. Levinas is firstly searching for how an existent adheres to its existence in concrete manners, in corporeal forms. It is the advent of taking up existence. It is pre-ontological and prepares the ontological realm over which an existent will take up and rise for the spiritual. Ascending to the presence of absolute alterity is through worldly existence in

terms of hypostasis. So, there is no spirit on its solitude within the inner world as most commentators claim. Spirit becomes possible by passing through the material existence.

For Levinas, the events of substantiality are not subject to ontological understanding of being; as in enjoyment the consciousness comes to play in the midst of events. The events are not on the realm of representation. Representations are already on the stand of body. These events are the events of body and they are not conceptual. The substantiality precedes spirituality in terms of matter or corporeal existence. Levinasian method always works on the same style: The substantiality, material existence of a person is before the event of ethical meeting; however, after ethical meeting it overflows, transcends any material existent and opens itself to a spiritual meaning: a deep formerly past becomes the pre-original of human being and goes to the hither side of material events. Spiritual movement to-God puts the materiality of being in question and seeks for the exteriority of alterity. We see that how a subject is forsaken and abandoned in its material effort towards its task; the events of indolence and fatigue signals the latent anterior birth of the other's existence, and marks a metaphysical desire towards him which is never satiable in terms of effort or task. Indolence and fatigue is only overcome by responsibility and spiritual sharing of different existents.

By hypostasis, existent has its body, stand, consciousness. This movement of existent in existence is a struggle between to be oneself and to have that oneself as the self. The self pursues its shadow self while showing effort for a safe future. And this creates a burden, a weight on the self which causes the events of indolence and fatigue. These events are not of representation because they precede intelligible order since they become actual on the level of exteriority which is always already given. They always bring with an interval of darkness, blind and deaf moments which are not penetrable into. What Levinas explains is that the self is not a continuity; its structure is woven around disruptions. Boredom, aversion and weariness capture the self in its pursuit of having its existence. The self always needs to do more than it has already done, the self has to refresh its belongingness to the world always in concrete manners, such as working, effort. Being's taking up existence is non-continual and depends on the interrupted processes of different works that are not synchronically. To make them united for the same goal is beyond the

reach of an existent's will. Then, the self stops working, becomes sick of working, becomes hateful of showing effort incessantly. This is the event of indolence comes, a pure refuse of to maintain taking up existence in existence. Since the contract with existence cannot be undone, the inevitable obligation of existing is totally rejected by existent: the duties, the tasks, the plans etc. Indolence is weariness of/from this obligatory to take the burden of taking up in the existence every day. A complete form of escape. This weariness of indolence is not a movement of consciousness, not a judgment. It is the refusal of getting up from bed while have the potency to do that. We have material sufficiency but we do not want to follow our duty for getting up. It is an aversion for the legs' touching to the ground once more. It is before any start, any action. The problem of a birth is the issue here. The indolence is inhibition of existent before this movement, like a pre-existence of an instant to act. In a way, it is the tension that the energy of existing in existence is being signaled in this pre-existence of refusal. Indolence is at nowhere, notime; since it interrupted the incessant flow of self's having itself in the existence. It gives us the unique perspective that each beginning, each moment has its own singular burden, perspective; the interruption of human being is a disorder/disquiet of existent from (its) existence. It is never a full accord with previous instant. The direction that the self will follow is altered by the structure of this birth of instant. Though, the indolence accumulates the negative energy; the birth that has its own roots from inhibition becomes the instant of the self, not the instant of incessant flow of existence. Therefore, an instant of living is a moment of creating affirmative position of going on to live from the deeps of this tension and negative energy. Even though indolence is the refusal of any beginning; it is not a case of peace; nonetheless, even the inhibition and indolence is destined to create the energy of action. It is "we must try to live with". The aversion of indolence is even registered to the life: it is still a form of life, still life. So, this material meontological break within the creation of following moment, this absence of concreteness in the interval of moments fill the energy of existent's life from the heavy burden of life, from aversion of indolence.

In short, Levinasian duality of the self, existent and existing are understood in the event of indolence explicitly and the birth of instant by interruption of incessant flow of existence is elaborated. Existent is the name of that which is always in the experience of closing the gap between to be and to have through indolence, aversion. And even the

beginning of action does not mean or guarantee a success, an accomplishment; it may be, or may not be. It is never for sure; always a dark, confused possibility in the enterprise reigns over existent; and even that enterprise is accomplished; the next one and the others are waiting in the line of an endless checklist. They can never be overcome totally. The self is never a real human in its endeavor. Levinas concludes that a human self is never capable of existing in a meaningful life, secure future in his efforts towards happiness; it is in solitude in its endless pursuit. It needs sociality, a relation with the other, a desire that will traverse the fear of an unsecure future by an intimate familiarity, by a metaphysical movement towards face. Another kind of primordial meaning and meeting that will eliminate this endless pursuit and its possible pains is needed. This primordial meaning is of the other person who will bypass the event of indolence, being weary towards disinterestedness and another attention of spirituality that will be given to the other person rather than the success of the ego.

Another original event in Levinas which is a concrete condition of going beyond in order to have spirituality is fatigue. Being different from indolence it is not a refusal of starting; it is already with effort and work but the self is tired, numb. The self while pursuing its shadow self is stiffening, exhausted. He wants to do what he must to do; but inevitably he is caught up in fatigue. In the effort; there is already an involvement of human being in what he tries to do. He is surrendered by its task, everything is for the sake of the task. And the fatigue is the inevitable fate the effort will have to pass through. It is such a condemnation that occurs during the self's toiling over work and reveals itself as exhaustedness. The creative moment of the force to realize the task through effort is interrupted by being tired and not to have the strength to maintain the force. Fatigue marks a delay with respect to oneself and to present. Effort is always already lagging behind the present. The structure of actions that are taken on by self has stops, intervals, pauses. Interruption is the very meaning of acting towards task. The human being is not a like a magician, does not have any wand; it involves in the realization of duration and place. It is attached to what it does. It is engaged. The task is carried step by step, stop by stop. This is the essence of duration, not a sudden appearance of a magic in the ground out of nowhere. This is the seriousness of the effort it brings with itself; it is not a joy, a temporal horizon is at stake as the inevitable event of fatigue. The existent gets its position under the power of

existence by positing its effort as an effecting part of duration. Instants of existent which includes stops and going-ons are actualized. The effecting is through process, through time, not in time. Taking position of existent in existence is an interruption of incessant flow of existence. A someone arises in the anonymity in its own stand, position by its temporalizing effort. A separation of existent from anonymity takes place. The distance with existence is earned by this taking up existing in hypostasis. This distance comes from lagging of the self behind its existing; from the births of instants that are through stops, interruptions and through time by fatigue. The existent takes its unique position in existence; because it becomes tired; it stops with its own body under *il y a*, against *il y a* since *il y a* is never lagging behind itself, never have a burden of existing, it is always flowing without stops.

The fatigue is a breaking up with the forces of life; in a sense it is a retreat from life. It is despair against anonymous flow of time. It is not forsaken by the world, but it disjoints from itself, from having its existence. However, it is not a total retreat towards an impossible possibility as in death. The existent has its upsurge in its effort still and posits its own “here”, its hypostasis: the existent is still able to take up its present against eternity of *il y a*. Hypostasis is a passage from *il y a* to a particular being with a price of running against eternity (through fatigue, indolence etc). These events of hypostasis are not ontological, yet not ethical. They create the possibility of a desire which is totally different than satisfaction of daily needs or happiness. The events are in the horizon of forsakenness, in solitude of the self; they create the possibility of separation in an in-outside space. Thus it is not to be human yet, it is not a search for spirituality. It is only for the joy of life, the love of ego. In truth, these events signal another primordial event of existent which includes being on stand but also goes beyond it through ethical meeting. The being’s creation of its own infinity in the face of the Other by meontological tools are articulated by Levinas in this point. Ultimate sense and meaning of life is derived from not the works of ego which is always on the level of fear and anxiety for its own sake but from taking responsibility of the other, from giving attention to this unique source of spirituality. This spirituality is through speaking, by expression such as saying, diachrony, heteronomy: through a meontology of the sacred which is opened up as another possibility towards

goodness in the unrest of existent's endless effort. Now, existent gives its attention by language to another place, to someone unique.

Meontological task of Levinasian philosophy, in his own words, is fully understood in conceptual tools he improved for his ethical project. These tools are related with language, gestures and all other linguistic styles. However, this attempt is not anymore around "to be" since it is the verb of ontology. Beyond being comes from the relation with infinite. It is where a human being becomes its own against the persistence of the essence. Essence is the term of event-s of being during history of totality in Levinas. The history of totality as essence overshadows the personal and the individual existence of human being in a horizon of de-humanization. The very alterity of personal is effaced by essence. Therefore, the language of ontology is constructed on the level of to be, around whatness as *is, was, has been, will be*. Levinasian spiritual meontology (*meontotheology*) is established on the level of beyond, null site, through a whoness and a diachrony.

Levinas indicates that otherwise than being is beyond this immanence of history and essence, it is not within contemporaneousness which expels every difference around interest of essence, which leads to the synchrony of war while also legitimizing it. We need a break up with this order of essence in which trade and politics takes place as so-called suspension of war in favor of money. This suspension is not a real peace in a Levinasian discourse; still within the horizon of violence, war, politics, lies since it is not with the other person or transcendence of just social bond. Yet, this horizon of trade is of course better than war; because it invites the rupture of human being as disinterestedness. It opens up a truthful possibility which creates the relation with infinite and presupposes the interval of goodness. For this goodness, Levinas presents us the metaphor of "*breathlessness of the Spirit*" in which the interest, the ego, the clash of beings is broken away towards Spirit's utmost humanity. This breathlessness reveals itself in language as the *saying* and rather than to be of the *said*.

The appearance of the Other in the language is through the saying. The said is the use of our daily languages around to be. Proposition and thematization in terms of subjects and objects are at the service of the said. This thematization by to be is also determining

the transcendence as the world behind curtains, scenes: as being's other. Levinas rejects this concept of behind scenes since it is already in the horizon of being as being's other and a rational legitimization of historical happenings. Otherwise than being is not a thematization of propositions of the said, nor is it knowledge; it is the word of responsibility resonating in the language. The money, which is a form of universal generality in Levinas, as the current value of the interest is ultimate mechanism of the said; opposing to this mechanism of responsibility. The saying is disinterestedness to the interest, to the money. It marks a substitution of the self for the other.

This substitution needs to be clarified in terms of the revelation of the saying within said. Levinas is well aware of the problem to be within language and he tries to demonstrate how the saying reveals itself in language, in the system of references within the saids. Every word, proposition is enunciated in the said; therefore this is the price the saying must pay for its revelation according to Levinas. The saying is through this amphibology of the said, by this betrayal of the said. Though this betrayal is real and in effect; the language is able to say, even the exception of the other's saying, beyond being as if the event of the other were an event of being within language. Therefore, how ancillary or angelic saying is, it is still through thematization of the said since it is being opened to the cognition. So, for an exact ethical discourse, the revelation of the saying is not sufficient yet; but the revelation itself presupposes a responsive language, a responsible language in which the goodness takes place. And this respond has nothing to do with interest or essence. It is not possible to escape from this responsibility; if it is tried then bad conscience shows its face as a result of this denial. Nevertheless, being is the power of ignoring this conscience, then question taking power from this power of being remains in its full pressure: how will this betrayal within language be overcome in terms of radical ethics?

Levinas demonstrates that this betrayal and its revelation as thematization are only overcome through by unsaying what is said. So that to extract the saying from the said would be possible and otherwise than being would not be absorbed by "being otherwise" in the order of formal logic. If the saying and its being unsaid is at play; then how can we be sure that the saying will be equal to being and its absence as being unsaid will be equal to

non-being, as a dialectical pole? Levinas responds that, yes that is true, but only on the condition of supposing their simultaneity. Thereby, another new concept for the solution of this problem regarding being unsaid, is introduced by Levinas: “diachrony”. The saying and the unsaying (being unsaid) are not at the same time. That is where Levinas reminds the value of skepticism again as the philosophy’s illegitimate child that is always haunting philosophical truth which only functions on the level of verification. This diachrony that is born in this skeptical approach is the core of metaphysical subjectivity. The saying of the other is not within the immanence of history, totality or essence; the time of freedom also participates to the time of history in synchronical and neuter de-humanized order since it is representational and memorable register of historical happenings and not an apology before the Other whose uniqueness is absorbed by the Same and who is from an immemorial past, Levinasian *absolute past*. Then the question type “to where”, survival from essence, from history becomes irrelevant for Levinas. It is not an escape to a place but a transcendence over history. The time of the other is not “to where”, and it is not a quiddity as Levinas claims. The extraction from essence is only possible as going towards a null-site, a non-place; to a meontological place which is always already absent from presence as goodness.

The null-site, the no-where is the core where Levinasian meontology takes place as ethical since a human being as unique, sacred existence is out of any genus, any form, it does not find any peace in coinciding to itself. A place as the identification center of egoistic presence is not the matter here, the oneself is outside of itself in ethical realization, and it is a unicity that has no site. Only and only he can extract from history as going beyond his interest, his ego, his site, the epos of history. Such is man, excellence, Levinas defines. This human being is disturbed by its conscience and does not coincide itself in a place in the time of simultaneity. Therefore, a non-place emerging from conscience calls for a just, spiritual human being. It is out of time which is the essence and process of historical revelations. However, Levinas goes further and says that time is not only the essence since it includes the temporalization of the other and because the register of history cannot recuperate all happenings between human beings. The gathering of essence by memory does not recover *all* before the reality comes to pass and disjoins from present substance: a *deep formerly*, a past that is more ancient than all pasts which are recallable,

recollectable is beyond every assembled, crystalized past in presence. It is an-archival, pre-original and principle of the saying. So, the present signals the diachrony of this ancient past in terms of otherwise than being, in the resonance of ethical responsibility. This signaling is possible in the present even if it is not a matter of the present/presence. It is by means of the structure of diachrony which bypasses the present but still leaves the trace of this bypassing of goodness, disinterestedness of human being. This trace hollows out the present and reveals itself as face. A person responds to this face and becomes responsible of/for the other through deep formerly. This relation with the other is relation with infinity in null-site; this is a relation with sacred of transcendence. It is the equivocation of the saying and its trace by face. The face leaves a trace, but it is a trace of absence. The residue of facial infinity as the mark of glory commands the self not as an I but as an *me*. Levinas names this trace of alterity as *illeity* which reveals the type of relation of the other with me; without entering into a thematization or representation of self. It is not knowing of the self but a conscience of sacred. And this subjectivity of conscience does not take place as transcendental apperception of unity. Through diachrony, through substitution, being a hostage of the other, me comes to an asymmetrical relation with infinity. This relation with infinite undoes the function of interest; and the good which chosens person before person chosens it exposes the self to obedience to the other in terms of substitution.

This substitution is not physical displacement, it is not a transubstantiation. It is more likely a religious term for Levinas: *expiation*. And once more, Levinas gives a distinct signal of meontotheology in its religious orientation towards religious experiences. The breathlessness of spirit in Levinas is through many religious conceptualizations, such as salutation, greeting, prying, expiation, religious bond, to-God, sacred, saint etc. Null site of the saying, diachrony is to-God. In this towards God, we are becoming more in the less, becoming more responsible than all others; this passivity of me before the other is more passive than all patience. This passivity is lived up to the point of trauma, obsession and persecution declares that self is more guilty than everybody. The ego is desperate in front of this passivity as being hostage of the other; the interest of the ego is totally suspended in favor of sensibility by substitution. Substitution as the radical transgression of the self's love of life is experienced across being-responsible-for-the-other.

Being-responsible-for-the-other is not an autonomy or freedom of the self; but a heteronomy. In autonomy of the self, the light of intelligibility operates in the same line with cognition by the process of identification: it is the conquest of the ego over nature, history, world. However, an I is already an apology before the other since it is in his interest, in his struggle for power. But the face of the other precedes any interest, any power, especially the powers of appropriation and consumption; and takes the self hostage and expels every interest and every free act that do not depend on the other and goodness. This is the type of relation *me* is involved before the Other. The self is always already guilty from the very time of an-arcihal past, of an ancient deep-formerly. In this relation of heteronomy, the goodness shines forth from face, saying, diachrony. A just and truthful *me* is born on this very ground of heteronomic alterity. This alterity of face reveals the function of a critique of traditional truth which is only proportion of propositions to reality. This kind of truth is no more proper. It is the face who judges the self in the way of truth as the quality of justice and responsibility, it exposes the freedom to meeting of fraternal souls in an infinite demand. This is a concept-less experience before God and to-God, can never be completed. The movement of this exterior transcendence by Face precedes all relations of human being in terms of infinite which is the ultimate fact that overflows the idea of itself. Meontological consciousness as conscience pre-conditions every act in being responsible for the other, in substitution. The direct proof of this kind of consciousness lies in the fact of feeling guilty and shame without having any intentional cognition object. The justice emerging from meontological consciousness is in this heteronomy with the Other; the height of transcendence does not come from the freedom, enjoyment or ontology of cognition; but from the desire of metaphysics which incarnates the spirit of human being as an insatiable movement to goodness, to beyond essence or otherwise than being. This desire is meontological because infinity is absent; therefore still it does not depend on a materiality of nothingness or null-site; but on a spirituality which clings to diachrony, saying and heteronomy.

Consequently, in accord with the main thesis of this writing, Levinasian discourse is meontotheological (Levinas never uses this “concept”, he uses “meontology” for his radical attempt) with its different understanding of religion in the ways of absence and not-attending to-One but always searching towards it. Nonetheless, Levinasian meontology is a

revolutionary theology which is not disclosure of Being into a Supreme being but is beyond being and essence prescribing the true realization of justice between human beings in terms of social interaction, such as speaking, sharing. And more importantly, Levinas is so clear that human being's spirituality and justice is not possible without holding onto justice of materiality, of exteriority: That means the other cannot be poor, hungry, unsheltered. The justice of spirituality starts from exteriority and from material foundation of human being through hypostasis, labor and possession; but this exteriority does not reflect into the horizon of ontology, it is within meontological, it transcends before the Other towards God (that is why we insist on the idea of meontotheology). Ultimately, Levinasian philosophy is responsibility of both materiality and spirituality: it is frankness, sincerity, salutation, fragility, expiation, not letting the other's die alone, proximity, vulnerability, giving and generosity leaning on the other person. That is why Levinas praises the idea of communism and saying that it is the first ideology in the history that focuses on making justice to the other person.

Levinas called for justice and peace in terms of the face of the other, for him the face was a new beginning for philosophical discourse, it was a new horizon for a new society whose members are all sacred. And whose members are all speaking of their eternity before the eternity of *il ya*: the eternity of human soul within this world.

EPILOGUE

Levinas and his philosophy: an experience on a great master. Many ineffaceable traces of him on thoughts, feelings, hopes and inspirations for coming philosophical way: To be human, to have spirituality and to cross over the moments of infinity through life. And not to limit philosophy to the realm of ontological in which the justice, the love, the fraternity, the friendship, the responsibility is secondary in terms of Being. On the contrary to put individual, its feelings, its world and its other time to the center of human spirit.

Levinas is a unique philosopher when he is analyzing the other, the face, effort, fatigue, indolence, hope, faith all of which are founding realities of our lives. His method does not depend on a priori or a posteriori as he explains. It is another dualist structure generally but there is the separation of first pole and the infinity of second pole. Finite and separated being is overflowed by infinity, however, the finite does not lose its finitude. In case of human being, it is the only creature that has a relation with infinity without participating to the unity. There is a surplus here in favor of second term and the relation is never dialectical. Human being as created has faith in infinity, in face, in absolute and it is not a matter of knowing. His analysis of enjoyment as coiling, involution, which means representation in its intentionality already is overflowed, conditioned by enjoyment, is also a radical challenge and contribution to Western philosophy in which he also introduces us a new dimension of materiality which depends on exteriority and its alterity. His comprehension of elemental, *il ya*, reveals that human being is a resistance against this *il y a* in hypostasis. And with effort, labor he always tries to survive the dominance of *il y a*; though he always is a double self; a self as to be and a self as having itself: he is always lagging behind itself and these stops and going-ons establish the time of individual human being.

Unexpectedly, Levinasian philosophy with its emphasis on justice gets closer to Marxist philosophy and Levinas himself reminds us the value of Marxism in terms of making justice to the other over capitalist flow of money and its violence. And unlike idealist constitution of human being in terms of representation and the light of intelligibility Levinas claims that human being is already on its stand in the world and

human body is through joy of life. It is by living for/from and is not on realm of representation. It is exposure to *il ya*, to the elemental and its effort is always already for a secure future; and the time just comes from the position of body in the world; as we are in the events of fatigue, indolence. Body is not a subject of cognition but it is to live in the midst of events. And it conditions the representation already, not the reverse is true.

Levinasian emphasis on both exteriority and transcendence illuminate a philosophy which is always already on conscience rather than cognition. Therefore, me-ontological way here does not cling to a material perspective but a spiritual one which already includes exteriority of the other. But question arises, doubt comes to existence, critique of philosophical discourse shows itself in the midst of thoughts Levinas clarifies. If life is mostly owes itself to walking, to looking, to swimming, to enjoying, to resting, to standing, to running; how transcendence towards the other materializes its life? And if thought, ontology, the light of intelligibility is a discourse reducing the Other to the same; after Levinasian discourse of Desire, face, the Other; would that be possible to maintain an ontological standpoint against Levinas? How will his saying be able to unsay itself; efface and sketch itself at the same time? Is not understanding of Levinas exposed to being, to history, to memory? And why depending on an obsession, a fear, an absolute concern, and faith that always slips our hands rather depending on freedom, new ways and experiences of human being? Why towards God? Why indeed a meontotheology? Is ethics of the other not possible without referring to God, to a messianic hope or eschatology?

According to my opinion, a me-ontology would be referring to a materiality of future that has not arrived yet; and the freedom of self with its relation with the others and with world would reveal it. So, here in Levinasian case there is no spatialization of a material me-on, but more likely a spatialization of an absent time on the face of the other: this is a spiritual me-on; therefore it can be proposed that this is a meontotheology and in many points opens us to a religious discourse. And another perspective that comes to mind is the alterity of human being in terms of self and its future: Experience of future, experience of freedom. Such as why not a “deep latterly” rather than a “deep formerly”. Another question, as Levinas told us memory cannot gather all past; then ask: can deep

formerly gather all future around itself?.. And his sayings are not now under the gathering of cognition?..

Nonetheless, directions, questions, answers, doubts, critique, betrayal... greetings, salutations, felicitations, farewell... Are not all surrounding us while thinking of Levinas in terms of human being, in terms of infinite spirituality?

A real farewell to his works would not be possible at all for any thought thinking human and who-ness of that human in ethical horizons...

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