Senior Essay on Sartre (Working Title)

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1.0 Introduction

What is *being?* "Why are there beings at all, instead of nothing?" That was the question, presented in the words of Martin Heidegger, as the *fundamental question of metaphysics* (Heidegger 1). The question of being is both the broadest question, as well as the deepest – those answer must account both for "some elephant in a jungle in India, just as much as some chemical oxidation process[1] on the planet Mars." (4) Our ability to give an adequate account of being is important, not just on the basis of some abstract, theoretical desire, but as a practical necessity too – for to understand the being of a human, is to know what is the "characteristic activity" (Aristotle 11) of a human-being. Hence, as Physics is to Mechanics, so is Metaphysics to Philosophy – the understanding of the axioms of the former will allow us to derive the facts of the latter. Thus, there is a necessity for Metaphysics, should we hope to understand the entirety of human-reality – just as how there is a necessity for Physics to understand the entirety of the empirical world.

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[1]First published in 1935, Martin Heidegger's astronomical quip predated the Viking lander (and any practical investigations into the being of Martian surface chemistry) by more than 41 years.

2.0 Endpage

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