

Chapter - IV

Section - I

A brief account of Sartre's Philosophy.

INTRODUCTION

Though Kierkegaard, Husserl, Heidegger, Jaspers, Marcel etc. are called ~~as~~ the pioneer of Existentialism, this philosophy owes much to Sartre, the French philosopher, for its wide popularity. Sartre was born in Paris in 1905. World war II and the experience of France under German rule transformed him, the withdrawn, apolitical intellectual, into a political being. These years of the German occupation of France were to be the most astonishingly productive of Sartre's life and moulded his philosophy of life in many respects. His major intellectual production during that period was the massive essay ' Being and Nothingness '. Sartre had begun to write this systematic statement of his philosophic view point during the gloomy winter of 1942 in occupied France.

Sartre was already thinking of constructing a serious philosophy which would provide guidance for life in the contemporary world by explaining the nature of the world and by expressing the human condition, what it is to live as a human

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condition, what it is to live as a human being. He turns away from all empiricism and cartesian Rationalistic deduction, for both can neither explain the world nor express what it is like to live as a human being. He turns to Descartes, Husserl, Heidegger, Hegel, Marx, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche from whom the richness of his philosophy is derived. He took Descartes' subjectivism of the Cogito, Husserl's view of consciousness as intentional, Heidegger's concept of conscious existence as being-in-the world, Hegel's concepts of the object as it is "in itself" and the object as "it is "for" a subject, concept of the dialectic of being and nothingness and the principle of negation, Kierkegaard's emphasis upon individual conscious existence, Nietzsche's concept of the death of God, and from Marx, his entire system, with some revisions. These concepts and themes converge, yet remain identifiable in Sartre's Philosophy. To quote from Lavine, 'Sartre's originality lies in his reinterpreting, revising, and reworking these materials into a bold new integration which became the centre of French existentialism, in the form of philosophic treatises, novels, plays and literary and political essays'.¹

Appearance and BEING (Being-in-itself)

The dualism of being and appearance which we find in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, and in the philosophy

and Kant, Baradley etc. in modern time is an important problem of philosophy which Sartre tries to solve. Sartre's theory of Phenomenon is that the appearances does not refer to being as Kant's phenomenon refers to the noumenon or Bradley's appearance to reality. In his book ' Being and nothingness ' (page 3) he cites the examples of 'force' and 'electric current' which do not refer to anything hidden behind them. They are nothing but the totality of their effects and actions respectively. They indicate only themselves and the total series. Likewise, there is no exterior or covering for the existent which hides from sight the true nature of the object. As he says. ' The obvious conclusion is that the dualism of being and appearance is no longer entitled to any legal status within philosophy. The appearance refers to the total series of appearances and not to a hidden reality which would drain to itself all the being of the existent. And the appearance for its part is not an inconsistent manifestation of this being. To the extent that men had believed in noumenal realities, they have presented appearance as a pure negative. It was " that which is not being ", it had no other being than that of illusion and error ' ². He further thinks that the phenomenon can be studied and described as such, for it is absolutely indicative of itself.

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Sartre denies the existence of any kind of objects which can not be reached by consciousness. Beyond appearances there are no: transcendental objects. Objects are nothing but the conglomeration of appearances. The appearance is not supported by any existent different from itself ; it has its own being.

Sartre speaks of two kinds as well as, modes of being, viz, 'being-in-itself' and 'being-for-itself'. There is also a third mode of being namely, 'being-for-others', though not a third kind of being. ' The first being which we meet in our ontological inquiry is the being of the appearance' - says Sartre.³ The ' being-in-themselves' are external objects around us. They need nothing in order to exist, for they are there, massive, shapeless. There can be no explanation of how or why things are what they are. They just are. They obtrude, and when I have a sheet of paper before me, I can not make it be anything other than what it is. These things he calls ' being-in-themselves '. They are neither passivity nor activity. This inertness of the content of perception is being-in-itself. They exist in themselves but they are in no way exact. It is consciousness that illuminates them , that delineates form within the chaotic world

of things, and gives it meaning. By 'being-in-itself' we are to understand a being which does not refer to anything beyond itself. The primary characteristic of being is never to reveal itself completely to consciousness, and so they are in no way exact.

Sartre speaks of three characteristics of being. These are : being is ; Being is in-itself. Being is what it is. ' Uncreated, without reason for being, without any connection with another being, being-in-itself is de trop for eternity ' ⁴
- says Sartre.

BEING AS EXISTENCE

' Existence Precedes essence '.

sartre, like all other existentialists, is concerned mainly with ' being as existence ', not with any kind of being, because existence alone is being proper or authentic being. Being in the sense of existence is prior to essence, and this is expressed by the statement ' existence precedes essence '. Being other than existence may not precede essence, but being as existence must precede essence. Of all existentialists, Sartre alone is most emphatic on this point. In his book 'Existentialism

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and Humanism^o, Sartre has allotted pages to clarify the implication of the statement 'existence precedes essence'. This is a view just opposite to the view that 'essence precedes existence' as held by the essentialists like Plato and others. So, in order to make the contrast clear, Sartre first explains in what sense essence is supposed to be prior to existence. Citing a common instance he says that before the production of a pen-knife or a book, the producer of it makes a plan as to the nature, shape and form of the thing to be produced, the purpose likely to be served by it, and the method or procedure of producing it. Thus the idea or concept of the thing is prior to its actual being. This idea or concept of the thing is in fact its essence, and so the essence of the thing is prior to the being or existence of the thing. Similarly, the theists believe that God had in his mind an idea, concept or plan of the world of things produced by him, and thus the essence of the things of the world was prior to the actual existence of the things. Plato, the Ideal-Realist, held that idea, concept, form, substance, essence or universal is the only reality, while the particular things and beings are only the imitations or imperfect copies or shadows of the ideas. Thus the so-called existent thing, a sensible particular, has

no reality, and the so-called reality that it has is dependent upon the reality of its corresponding idea or essence.

Existence, is, therefore, posterior to essence.

Contrarywise, Sartre says that if God does not exist, there is at least one being whose existence is prior to its essence, a being which exists before any conception of it can be formed. That being is man or the human reality. Says Sartre, "What do we mean by saying that existence precedes essence? We mean that man first of all exists, encounters himself, surges up in the world - and defines himself afterwards. If man, as the existentialists sees him is not definable, it is because to begin with he is nothing. He will not be anything until later, and then he will be what he makes of himself. Thus, there is no human nature, because there is no God to have a conception of it. Man simply is. Not that he is simply what he conceives himself to be, but he is what he wills, and as he conceives himself after already existing - as he wills to be after that leap towards existence. Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. That is the first principle of Existentialism⁵.

From man's existence being prior to his essence, it follows that man is solely responsible for what he is and what he does ; there is none else who may be held responsible for his

being and doing. So says Sartre, " If, however, it is true that existence is prior to essence, man is responsible for what he is. Thus, the first effect of existentialism is that it puts every man in possession of himself as he is, and places the entire responsibility for his existence squarely upon his own shoulders "⁶. Not only this. A man is responsible also for all men by his own choice ; that is to say, an individual's choice is not for him alone but for all human beings, in so far as he has to see that his choice does not stand in the way of the well-being of others. " When we say that man chooses himself, we do mean that everyone of us must choose himself ; but by that we also mean that in choosing for himself he chooses for all men. For, in effect, of all the actions a man may take in order to create himself as he wills to be, there is not one which is not creative, at the same time, of an image of man such as he believes he ought to be what we choose is always the better ; and nothing can be better for us unless it is better for all. If, moreover, existence precedes essence, and we will to exist at the same time as we fashion our image, that image is valid for all and for the entire epoch in which we find ourselves. Our responsibility is thus much greater than we have supposed, for it concerns mankind as a whole "⁷. The image of man that is created by an individual man by setting an example of his own is an

essence that comes only after the existence of an individual man. A individual's own choice in conformity with the good of humanity as a whole is universalised, and thus there is a passage from existence to essence. Says Sartre, " I am thus responsible for myself and all men, and I am creating a certain image of man as I would have him to be. In fashioning myself, I fashion man " ⁸.

CONSCIOUSNESS

(Being - for - itself)

Appearances refer to something which expresses itself through its appearances, and that something must be consciousness. Consciousness, on the other hand is 'being-for-itself'. Being-for-itself is all the things which being-in-itself is not. It is the second type of being which Sartre speaks of .

According to Sartre, consciousness is the only reality that man experiences. As because he rejects the metaphysical, that is, the unverifiable, he refuses to imagine behind consciousness a supporting mind, or behind things a separate existence. The distinguishing trait-of-consciousness is never to be itself but always to be attentiveness to an external object ' All

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consciousness is consciousness of something'. It exists only to the extent that it is tied to external objects, and it needs them in order to exist. The "Percipi" referred us to a percipiens, the being of which has been revealed to us as consciousness. Sartre speaks of the ontological proof in support of his theory of consciousness. Consciousness is consciousness of something. This means that transcendence is the constitutive structure of consciousness; that is, that consciousness is born supported by a being which is not itself'.⁹ This is what he calls the ontological proof. This proof is derived not from the reflective cogito but from the pre-reflective being of the percipiens. Like Husserl, Sartre admits that consciousness is intentional in the sense that it reaches out towards an object. In reaching the object consciousness is also consciousness of itself. But the self is conscious of itself not as an object. We are aware of 'being-for-itself' in ourselves, in self-consciousness.

Consciousness is nothing by itself except the power to delimit the world. It is the power to set itself outside of being. That is, to deny one part and also to deny that it is identifying itself with that part through a withdrawal effected with respect to things. It is the power to set itself outside of being. Sartre designates ^{it} as 'for-itself' and calls it 'a being through which nothingness comes to things'.¹⁰

It is consciousness that illuminates them, that delineates form within the chaotic world of things and gives it meaning. Thus when consciousness says, ' there is a Chair ', it is separating from the chaotic world of things a tiny portion of matter and conferring on it a structure and a meaning. It becomes indifferent to the rest of the world in order to consider the chair, it assumes that everything else does not exist, it relegates everything else into nothingness. Thus Sartre assimilates consciousness with nothingness.

Sartre thinks that as consciousness is intentional and it has a negative character, it is not possible to define consciousness. Of course, some characteristics of consciousness can be mentioned and they are as follows :-

Firstly, it is impersonal. Consciousness is consciousness of something. He criticises Descartes 'Cogito ergo sum' and Husserl's ' pure consciousness ' and shows that human consciousness must always be directed upon some object of which it will be aware. Further, in being aware of this object, it will also be aware of itself perceiving, or being aware. Sometimes the object of awareness will be something in the world, sometimes it will be the self. But in either case it will always

be accompanied by an awareness of being aware. This second-order awareness is referred to by Sartre as 'the pre-reflective Cogito'. According to him, the reflective 'ego' is not the consciousness itself but is created by consciousness. Secondly, Consciousness is not a substance of any kind. It is not like a 'thinking substance' of Descartes. As it is always intentional, i.e. tries to reach out towards an object, substancehood can not be ascribed on it.

Thirdly, there is a lack in consciousness, and, he thinks that it is the essential characteristics of the 'for-it-self'. This lack is described in different ways by Sartre. He says that consciousness is a vacancy or an emptiness. He says that it essentially consists in a gap - a gap, that is, between thought and the object of thought. 'This lack does not belong to the nature of the in-itself', which is all positivity. It appears in the world only with the upsurge of human reality. It is only in the human world that there can be lacks¹¹.

Sartre makes use of the concept of the possible to explain what he means by the lack which is characteristic of consciousness. He compares this lack of consciousness with the broken disc of the moon and says, '.... in the human world, the incomplete being which is released to intuition as lacking

is constituted in its being by the lacked - that is, by what it is not. It is the full moon which confers on the crescent moon its being as crescent, what-is-not determines what-is. It is in the being of the existing, as the correlate of a human transcendence, to lead outside itself to the being which it is not - as to its meaning¹².

He says that consciousness lacks for something else. What is lacked by a conscious being is the coincidence of himself with himself. What a human being ceaselessly aims at is himself, that which he is not, his own possibilities. So the lack which is at the heart of consciousness is a lack of completed possibilities ; and it must always remain unsatisfied as long as a being is conscious¹³.

So, we see that Sartre tried to reconcile Philosophical Realism and Idealism. To resolve the difficulty of the two, he reinforced the link between consciousness and things by making them interdependent ; without consciousness things are but they are nothing other than a meaningless chaos. Without things, consciousness does not even exist, for its life consists of imagining them.

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N O T H I N G N E S S

The idea of 'nothingness' is central to Sartre's Existentialism. Nothingness has no meaning except in relation to being. His theory of nothingness and the relation between being and nothingness is very complicated. But however obscure the meaning of the term 'nothingness' as used by Sartre may be, there is no doubt that this conception holds a very important place in his philosophy.

By 'nothingness' Sartre does not mean absolute non-existence. He identifies nothingness with consciousness i.e. for-itself and says, 'Man is the being by whom nothingness comes to things'.¹⁴ He says that nothingness can not be produced by 'being-in-itself'. The notion of being as full positivity does not contain nothingness as one of its structures. He says, '.... being is prior to nothingness and establishes the ground for it. By this we must understand not only that being has a logical precedence over nothingness but also that it is from being that nothingness derives concretely its efficacy. This is what we mean when we say that nothingness haunts being'.¹⁵ This means that being has not need of nothingness in order to be conceived. But on the other hand, nothingness has a borrowed existence, and it gets its being from being. 'Nothingness can be

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conceived neither outside of being, nor as a complementary, abstract notion, nor as an infinite milieu where being is suspended. Nothingness must be given at the heart of being, in order for us to be able to apprehend that particular type of realities which we have called negativités¹⁶.

So, nothingness as such, can not be conceived. If we can speak of it, it is only because it possesses an appearance of being. Nothingness is not, nothingness is made to be. In our perception when we say, ' That is a Chair ', we become indifferent to the rest of the world in order to consider the chair ; it assumes that everything else does not exist, it relegates everything else into nothingness. Thus nothingness is made to be by us i.e. for-it-self or consciousness.

Ordinarily we think that non-existence simply means nothing. It is a negative concept. It is comprehended within the meaning of a negative judgement. A negative judgement simply denies that there is any relation between the subject and the predicate. Sartre rejects this view and maintains that we have an intuitive knowledge of nothingness. This intuition precedes the negative judgement. In support of his view, Sartre described a situation in which we can have actual experience of nothingness. The situation is : suppose, ' I have an appointment with Pierre at

four o'clock. I arrive at the Café a quarter of an hour late. Pierre is always punctual. Will he have waited for me? I look at the room, the patrons, and I say, "He is not here". Is there an intuition of Pierre's absence, or does negation indeed enter in only with judgement? ¹⁷

Sartre says that, at first sight it seems absurd to speak of intuition here. But on analysis it will be clear that the absence of my friend Pierre, whom I had expected to see is a perceived absence, and it is an actual experienced negation or nothingness. In perception there is always the construction of a figure on a ground. When I enter the Café to search for Pierre, there is formed a synthetic organization of all the objects in the Café, on the ground of which Pierre is given as about to appear. This organization of the Café as the ground is an original nihilation. Thus the original nihilation of all the figures which appear and are swallowed up in the total neutrality of a ground is the necessary condition for the appearance of the principal figure, which is here the person of Pierre. This nihilation is given to my intuition. ¹⁸

Here what is offered to intuition is the nothingness of the ground, the nihilation of which causes the figure to appear, and also the nothingness of the figure which slips as a nothing

to the surface of the ground. It serves as foundation for the judgement - "Pierre is not here." So, we see that in every negative judgement we have an intuitive apprehension of this double nihilation. Sartre thinks that this example is sufficient to show that non-being does not come to things by a negative judgement it is the negative judgement, on the contrary, which is conditioned and supported by non-being.

He explains the nature of question and shows that in every question, be its reply affirmative or negative non-being or nothingness is intrinsic. Likewise, the idea of destruction of objects give rise to the idea of nothingness. He says that destruction presents the same structure as the question. That nothingness is in the root of the idea of destruction, is clear from the following : ' In order for destruction to exist, there must be first a relation of man to being i.e. a transcendence ; and within the limits of this relation, it is necessary that man apprehend one being as destructible. This supposes a limiting cutting into being by a being, which is already a process of nihilation. The being under consideration is that and outside of that nothing '19

Sartre says that in order for negation to exist in the world and in order that we may consequently raise questions concerning being, it is necessary that in some way nothingness be given.

F R E E D O M

The dispute between the determinists and libertarians about free will or human freedom is a long one, and Sartre also, like the other philosophers attempts to solve the dispute. It is a familiar paradox that human beings are both free and not free. ' To be a " free mortal " itself indicates a paradox, for death is the final full stop, the final limit to my freedom .'²⁰ We see that we are born in a certain place at a certain time with certain characteristics which are not of our choosing and which are beyond our control. Our freedom is limited by all these factors.

Again, on the otherhand, we feel that there is nothing to prevent me from doing a particular act. We also feel that there is nothing which can compel us to do that particular act. We are free to be what we choose to be. Even our feelings, as much as our actions, are freely chosen. So, we see that we are both free and unfree, and herein lies the paradox of free will.

Sartre attempts to solve the problem. He does not try to solve the problem by reconciling what is free with what is undetermined, or by showing that the apparent opposition between them is a false one. His attempt is different from his predecessors.

Ordinarily, by freedom or free will we understand our ability to do everything at our sweet will. But Sartre says that, '..... the formula "to be free" does not mean " to obtain what one has wished " but rather " by oneself to determine oneself to wish " (in the broad sense of choosing). In other words, success is not important to freedom the empirical and popular concept of "freedom" which has been produced by historical, political and moral circumstances is equivalent to " the ability to obtain the ends chosen ". The technical and philosophical concept of freedom, the only one which we are considering here, means only the autonomy of choice ' 21

Sartre says that, we are free. Our power to choose to decide, to plan, to act is a direct proof of our freedom. The manifest difference between active and passive can not be denied and we can experience this difference all the time. He analyses human action and motives and shows that there could be no such thing as action at all if human consciousness were not free - free to contemplate its 'situation' and form negative judgments about it and about the future. The fundamental condition of act is freedom. ' I am indeed an existent who learns his freedom through his acts ' 22. Freedom makes itself an act, and we ordinarily attain it across the act which it organizes with the causes, motives and ends which the act

implies. It is the act which decides its end and its motives, and the act is the expression of freedom.

He further says, ' I am necessarily a consciousness (of) freedom since nothing exists in consciousness except as the non-thetic consciousness of existing. Thus my freedom is perpetually in question in my being ; it is not a quality added on or a property of my nature. It is very exactly the stuff of my being, and as in my being, my being is in question, I must necessarily possess a certain comprehension of freedom.

An individual, according to Sartre, is absolutely free. Indeed freedom is one with being. I am free in the sense that each of my acts is wholly unconnected with what happened in the past. It is our choice of the future which makes our nature and not a fixed structure which was formed in the past. This free deciding has its context. This context is what Sartre calls 'Situation'. Sartre does not deny 'facticity' or our factual situation which restricts our freedom, and these factual situations are my place, my body, my part, my position and finally my fundamental relation to the other. But these obstacles and restrictions have meaning only in and through the free choice which human reality is. The Paradox of freedom is : ' there is freedom only in situation, and there is situation only through freedom ' ²⁴.

Sartre says that freedom is not an accidental possession of man but a necessity of his being. " Man is condemned to be free. Condemned, because he did not create himself, yet he is nevertheless at liberty, and from the moment that he is thrown into this world he is responsible for everything he does " ²⁵.

Sartre modified his views about human freedom in his later work ' The Critique of Dialectical Reason '. In the critique Sartre has laid less emphasis on the absolute freedom of the individual in so far as he considers the individual in a socio-material milieu.

(That Sartrean notion of freedom is incompatible with the notion of 'leading a moral life' is decisively shown in a paper named 'Sartrean autonomy and morality' by Smt. Koyeli Ghosh - Dastidar ²⁶ .

BAD FAITH

One interesting contribution made by Sartre in connection with his discussion of freedom is his notion of 'bad faith'. According to him, 'bad faith' is pretence, self-deception, a sheltering behind a role, making out that one is completely determined and could do no other. The human being is one who can take negative attitudes with respect to himself. 'The determined attitude which is essential to human reality and which is such that consciousness instead of directing its negation outward turns it toward itself. This attitude, it seems to me, is bad faith'²⁷ - says Sartre.

Bad faith is frequently identified with falsehood. But Sartre analyses the characteristics of lying and shows that bad faith has in appearance the structure of falsehood. The main point of difference between the two negative attitudes lies in the fact that in bad faith it is from myself that I am hiding the truth. The duality of the deceiver and the deceived does not exist here. Bad faith implies in essence the unity of a single consciousness. Bad faith does not come from outside to human reality. One does not undergo his bad faith. One is

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not infected with it, it is not a state. But consciousness affects itself with bad faith. That which affects itself with bad faith must be conscious of its bad faith since the being of consciousness is consciousness of being. So, it follows that the one to whom the lie is told and the one who lies are one and the same person. So, it is the unitary structure of a single project. This unitary structure is explained by Sartre in the following way : ' There must be an original intention and a project of bad faith ; this project implies a comprehension of bad faith as such and a pre-reflective apprehension of consciousness as affecting itself with bad faith. It follows first that the one to whom the lie is told and the one who lies are one and the same person, which means that I must know in my capacity as deceiver the truth which is hidden from me in my capacity as the one deceived. Better yet I must know the truth very exactly in order to conceal it more carefully - and this not at two different moments but in the unitary structure of a single project ' ²⁸. He further says that even though the existence of bad faith is very precarious, and though it belongs to a kind of psychic structure, it presents nonetheless an autonomous and durable form. It can even be the normal aspect of life for a great number of people. A person living in bad faith implies a constant and particular style of life.

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Sartre now speaks of the two patterns of bad faith. In the first kind a human being tries to believe, while knowing at the same time that it is pretence, that he is just a thing, and therefore, can not help behaving as he is behaving.

He illustrates this mode of bad faith by his story of a girl who is taken to a restaurant by a man, and who, in order to preserve the excitement of the occasion, and to put off the moment when she must face making a definite decision, saying either 'yes' or 'no' to him, pretends to herself that she does not notice his intentions towards her. The aim is to postpone the moment of decision as long as possible. Her hand rests inert between the warm hands of her companion - neither consenting nor resisting - a thing. Her hand, then, is a thing, quite separate from herself, and she has disowned it and can not be held responsible for what happens to it.

This girl is in bad faith. This is the first pattern of bad faith, and it is, it must be said, instantly recognizable and familiar.

Sartre illustrates the second type of bad faith by the example of a waiter in a Café. He is observed by Sartre to be plainly acting a part manifestly playing at something.

All the movements and gestures of the waiter are slightly over-done. His movements are all of them like the movements in a mime or a game. The game which he is playing is the game of being a waiter. Sartre described the over-acting of the waiter in the following way :

' His movement is quick and forward, a little too precise, a little too rapid. He comes toward the patrons with a step a little too quick. He bends forward a little too eagerly; his voice, his eyes express an interest a little too solicitous for the order of the customer. carrying his tray with the recklessness of a tight-rope walker by putting it in a perpetually unstable, perpetually broken equilibrium which he perpetually re-establishes by a light movement of the arm and hand ²⁹.

All his behaviour seems to us a game. He is playing, he is amusing himself. There is nothing surprising about this. The waiter plays with his situation in life in order to realize it. Sartre says that the obligation to do this is the same as is imposed on all businessmen. Their status is entirely one of show, and the public requires them to realize it as show 'there is the dance of the grocer, of the tailor, of the auctioneer, by which they endeavor to persuade their clientele that they are nothing but a grocer, an auctioneer, a tailor ³⁰.

All these people are in bad faith, according to Sartre. But at the same time the fact is that what the waiter, in acting out his part, is attempting to make real is the being-in-itself of the Café waiter. He knows that he cannot be wholly and completely a waiter and nothing else at all. The 'ideal' waiter is a representation, not something actual ; and so one can only represent the waiter as oneself, in the way in which images may represent non-existent things by a kind of analogy. But the waiter does not pretend to be a thing as the girl in the first example does. ' But if I represent myself as him, I am not he ; I am separate from him as the object from the subject, separated by nothing - but this nothing isolates me from him ; that is, I imagine to myself that I am he. And thereby I affect him with nothingness '.

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It is clear from this quotation that bad faith is linked with our freedom of imagination as the power to conceive what was not the case, and it is also linked with our power to choose and decide. The play of the waiter is pretence, for he could choose not to play the part of a waiter, he could value things differently. To value things as he does and to accept the consequences of the evaluation is his own decision. ' Basically, bad faith is an attempt to escape from the

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anguish which men suffer when they are brought face to face with their own freedom.

Conscious beings are essentially free, not only to act as they choose, but to see the world under the headings and categories that they choose . They are free in their accepting the truth about things or in imagining things which are not true. It is also involved in their choice of ends and means to these ends. They are even free to accept hopeless and useless kinds of behaviour in the face of their difficulties. They are free to make use of the magical, in emotion .³²

Sartre comes to the conclusion that such a kind of behaviour (bad faith) is possible only to a free conscious human being.

Besides, he uses bad faith to prove the existence of the power to conceive non-existence with which he is primarily concerned. His argument is ; if human beings were not capable of conceiving what is not true there would be no such thing as bad faith. But there is such a thing as bad-faith ; therefore, they are capable of conceiving what is not the case.

He takes it for granted that bad faith occurs and says that the necessary condition for bad faith is the grasping of nothingness, which is identical with the freedom of consciousness.

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Being-for-others

About being-for-others Sartre says : ' What I know is the body of another, and the essential facts which I know concerning my own body come from the way in which others set it. Thus the nature of my body refers me to the being of others and to my being-for-others. I discover with it for human reality another mode of existence as fundamental as being-for-itself, and this I shall call being-for-others '33.

So, we see that the above definition of being-for-others shows that first, I am aware of my own bodily existence as something which is known to other people. Secondly, I am aware of the bodies of other people and thence their existence in the world.

In traditional philosophy, the existence of other minds is argued by an analogy with our own case. But for Sartre there is no such thing as ' the problem of other minds '.

Sartre first argues against solipsism and by examining the theories of other philosophers like Husserl, Hegel and Heidegger, seeks to prove that at one and the same time as I am aware of myself, I necessarily become aware that other people exist and are observing me. If I were not aware of this fact

I should be only partially conscious of myself.

Before going to the discussion of the proof of the existence of others, we should see first what does Sartre mean by a proof. ' A proof is, for him, a description so clear and vivid that, when I think of this description and fit it to my own case, I can not fail to see its application The particular description of my case must come first and may then be used as a description of another particular case, and then of another, and so on ' ³⁴ . ' He believes that only after its descriptions have been recognized as true for me can they be used in the construction of a description of the world as a whole ! ³⁵

This is the characteristic of existentialist writing - insistence on the particularity and concreteness of descriptions, from which ontological and metaphysical and general statements may be drawn. Sartre's demand is that philosophy should be concrete, particular and true to life. This method is found in his novels, plays and philosophical doctrines.

Anyway, now Sartre seeks to show how we know, without doubt, that other people exist. He describes a concrete situation which we can feel to be plausible. The situation is : ' Let us imagine that moved by jealousy, curiosity or vice I have just

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glued my ear to the door and looked through a keyhole. I am alone on the level of a non-thetic self-consciousness.....³⁶
This means that I am for the time being, completely absorbed in what I am doing, in such a way that my consciousness of myself and my body is reduced to the minimum of prereflective consciousness. ' I am my acts, and hence they carry in themselves their whole justification ' ³⁷

' But all of a sudden I hear footsteps in the hall. Someone is looking at me ! what does this mean ? It means that I am suddenly affected in my being and that essential modifications appear in my structure - modifications which I can apprehend and fix conceptually by means of the reflective cogito ' ³⁸

It means that my existence is reconstituted in a wholly new way. I suddenly exist, not just as a series of aims and actions, but as a person eavesdropping. I suddenly spring into existence as an object which can be looked at from outside, a thing such as can be truly or falsely described. I accept these descriptions of myself in shame.

This anecdote is simply intended to make us recollect the emotion of shame, as it is actually experienced. Shame is shame of oneself before the other. In order to feel ashamed it is necessary to be aware of someone besides oneself. When in the

ment of shame, I realize that I am under observation, I also understand a profound philosophical truth, namely that we exist, essentially, in relation to other people. Without inference of any kind we know that people exist in a full-blooded way.

Thus Sartre proves that other people exist.

Sartre on God

Sartre seems to be influenced by Anthropocentric Humanism. He emphasizes the problems of human life more than the problem of God. To him, the problem is not, therefore, whether God exists. Each of us must, on the otherhand, realize that man occupies a lofty position in the universe and that he has an important role to play. and in no case he can shake off the responsibility. He says, " Not that we believe God does exist, but we think that the real problem is not that of His existence ; what man needs is to find himself again and to understand that nothing can save him from himself, not even a valid proof of the existence of God " ³⁹

Sartre is an atheist. His idea of God is the logical outcome of his conclusion on human freedom. He thinks that if human being is to be free, then the idea of God as ordinarily conceived, can not be accepted. All the traditional views about

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God are inconsistent with human freedom. He says that the very idea of God is self contradictory. He rejects the idea of God as a Causa sui and also as a creator of the universe and man. It is man who contemplates God - the ideal of perfection - and pursues that in a way determined by himself - God is the name given to the impossible conjunction of properties which we all aim to have. Every human being, realizing his own imperfections tries to become perfect and loses the human characteristic of emptiness and imperfections. To him, man is a useless passion. He says, ' Thus the passion of man is the reverse of that of Christ, for man loses himself as man in order that God may be born. But the idea of God is contradictory and we lose ourselves in vain ' ⁴⁰

Sartre analyses the nature of consciousness and shows that God as self-identical consciousness can not exist. ' Consciousness is always consciousness of something which is itself not consciousness. Thus there is an internal rift in consciousness. Now, my consciousness is my awareness of my being conscious of something. All consciousness is, then, inclusive of something other than itself, and any notion of a self-identical consciousness is self-contradictory. For, consciousness and selfidentity are mutually exclusive, since the

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aforesaid internal rift is the essence of consciousness. As a result, God as an absolute, infinite, self-identical consciousness. can not exist'. He further says, ' Imperfect being surpasses itself toward perfect being; the being which is the foundation only of its nothingness surpasses itself toward the being which is the foundation of its being. But the being toward which human reality surpasses itself is not a transcendent God, it is at the heart of human reality, it is only human reality itself as totality'.⁴¹ As an existentialist, he attributes existence only to man, and as an atheist he denies the existence of God on the above ground. According to Sartre, ' God is ~~not~~ a useless and costly hypothesis nothing will be changed if God does not exist. We shall find ourselves in the same norms of honesty, progress and humanism, and we shall have made of God an outdated hypothesis which will peacefully die off by itself'.⁴²

Echoing Nietzsche, Sartre says that God is dead i.e. it is our belief in God that is dead.

Nature and Kinds of emotion

Sartre's treatment of emotion is novel and unique in so far as he considers emotion to be a kind of perception in the sense that it is a peculiar way of perceiving things. Of course emotion is a kind of feeling, still it is not an unmixed feeling. It is invariably connected with perception and action, with thought and conation or volition. The thought arising out of or involved in the perception of something gives rise to a feeling or emotion which results in some particular willing and action. There is no feeling or emotion that is not preceded by any perception and not succeeded by any action. Like William James' "specious present" that includes the immediate past and the immediate future, Sartre's emotion includes also the immediately preceding perception and immediately succeeding action. That emotion is caused by something, by some perception, is admitted by all, but it is generally held that emotion is unproductive, it leads to inaction, because when a man is emotional, he can not perform any serious act; he becomes passive. But Sartre holds that emotion makes a man active, it is not a fact that emotion and passivity always go together. In his book, 'Sketch for a theory of the Emotions', Sartre has defined emotion as intentional, that is, as directed towards an object, as a particular kind of perception, a way of apprehending the world. In emotion, a person sees the world

not as governed by causal laws, but as governed by magic. A man is gripped by fear at the sight of a face at the window, because he sees the face as belonging to some one who could reach him and destroy him immediately, although as a matter of fact, he may be quite safe in his room looked from inside. This shows that emotion consists in looking at the state of things in a new light in ones own way. Thus when a man stamps his foot in anger, he does so because he can not really trample his enemy under foot, the enemy being a stronger than him. Whenever the perception of a thing creates unbearable tension in the mind of a person, he or she tries to perceive the thing otherwise, or he automatically perceives it otherwise in order to get rid of the tension. When a man can not have some grapes, he may consider them to be green and sour. One may relieve the tension by fainting or by weeping so that there is no longer any perception of the offending object. This early view of Sartre about emotion remained unchanged even at the time of his writing ' Being and Nothingness '.

Sartre recognizes mainly three kinds of emotions namely, anguish, the feeling of absurdity and nausea. Anguish is the affective tonality of man's boundless freedom or that of the apprehension of such freedom. The feeling of absurdity

is the feeling of the dispensableness of everything. And nausea is the feeling of disgust in ~~the~~ the face of certain characteristics of beings-in-themselves.

Anguish (Psychological and ethical).

This kind of emotion arises entirely from the conscious being's perception of himself, from the contemplation of his own freedom. Hence, it is characterised as the affective tonality of man's unrestricted liberty, or as the affective tonality of man's apprehension or consciousness of his unrestricted liberty. It is fear of something indefinite, and thus is to be distinguished from ordinary fear that is always related to something definite. It is in anguish that man becomes conscious of his freedom, but it is not a proof of human freedom, it depends upon freedom, it is a special consciousness of freedom. This kind of anguish may be taken as psychological, because there is also, another kind of anguish called ~~the~~ ethical anguish which occurs when we recognise our own causal responsibility for what we do and what we are.

According to Sartre, the statement 'man is in anguish' means that " when a man commits himself to anything fully realizing that he is not only choosing what he will be,

but is thereby at the same time a legislator deciding for the whole of mankind - in such a moment a man can not escape from the sense of complete and profound responsibility ⁴³. Some people disguise this anguish or take flight from it. Only by a kind of self deception can a man get rid of the disturbing thought as to what would happen if everyone did as he is doing. To say that everyone will not do it is nothing but an act of lying in self excuse, it is a denial of the universal value. A man's action becomes exemplary, so whenever a man does anything, the thought of his responsibility for other members of the society arouses anguish in him. For instance, when a military leader himself shoulders the responsibility for an attack and sends a number of soldiers to their death, he alone makes the choice, but the thought of his responsibility in taking the decision he necessarily feels anguish. Thus anguish is not an impediment to action, it is a condition of action.

Anguish also accompanies the feeling of abandonment, as it accompanies the feeling of responsibility. Abandonment is a state of being forlorn consequent upon the thought that God does not exist, and therefore, one has not account for his action to anybody, the sole responsibility of the action lying entirely upon oneself .

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Another concept dealt with by Sartre in this context is that of Despair. " It merely means that we limit ourselves to a reliance upon that which is within our wills, or within the some of the probabilities which render our action feasible "44. That is to say, despair arises out of the thought of the limitations of our wills and probabilities. We can rely only upon our limited wills and limited probabilities, beyond that nothing can be relied upon. There is no God and no convenient design to adapt the world and all its possibilities to one's sweet will. This thought arouses despair, because one has to act without the hope of crossing the limits of one's will and probabilities. This concept of despair is different from quietism or the attitude " Let others do what I can not ", it is also different from pessimism, because the feeling of despair does not discourage man from action, but tells him that there is no hope except in his action. The feeling of absurdity arises out of the contemplation of our own ' facticity '. " The facticity of a human being is the particular set of contingent facts that are true of him and of him alone. For each one of us there is such a set of facts, concerned with our parents, our date of birth, the physical appearance which we happen to possess and so on. We tend to take these facts for granted, as a necessary part of each one of us ; but though it is true that every one must have

some parents, some sort of appearance, hair of some colour or other, there is no possible reason why one of these features in particular should be present rather than another, for any particular person. There is no possible point in our being as we are " 45. Nothing that is an integral part of a rational plan is absurd or de trop. So long as we believe that there are things to do and materials or tools to use for doing them, and we make plans and projects seriously, we do not suffer from the sense of the absurd. But as soon as I have the apprehension of the facticities of my life I apprehend myself as being for nothing, as being de trop.

Nausea

It is a feeling of disgust, detastation or lothesomeness at the apprehension of nasty look of things in an outside one's own body. It is a quality of our awarness of the body, without which we can not be aware of anything else. It is through the medium of our own awareness of our bodies that we have all our contacts with the world, whether in perception, emotion or action. Thus nausea is a kind of physiological counterpart of pre-reflective consciousness. A man carries it around with him

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inevitably as long as he is alive, but very often he is not conscious of it, because he is fully engaged in some other feeling or activity. But when he is not so engaged in any other feeling or activity, he becomes conscious of the nausea which was so long overlooked by him. Says Sartre, " This perpetual apprehension on the part of the For-itself of an insipid taste which accompanies me even in my efforts to get away from it, this we have described under the name of nausea. A dull and inescapable nausea perpetually reveals my body to my consciousness. Sometimes we look for the pleasant or for physical pain to free ourselves from this nausea, but as soon as the pain or the pleasure are experienced by consciousness they manifest its facticity and its contingency, and it is against the background of nausea that they are revealed "46

we experience nausea not only in the apprehension of our bodies, but also in the apprehension of certain Key-aspects of the world. The very nature of existence itself is disgusting to us. If it is asked, what it is like to exist, the answer is : it is disgusting. In Sartre's novel ' La Nausee ', Roquentin, looking at the roots of a chest-nut tree in the park, suddenly saw it was existing as part of an un-differentiated mass of being,

and he reflected thus : " But all that was happening on the surface. If anyone had asked what existence was, I should have replied in all good faith that it was not anything, just an empty form which was added to external things, without in anyway changing their nature. But suddenly there it was as clear as day, existence was revealed. It lost its in offensive look of an abstract category ; it was the very stuff of things the roots, the park railings, the benches, the sperse, the grass on the lawn, had all disappeared; the diversity, the individuality of things was a mere illusion, a veneer had splintered, living moustrous flabby, disorganised masses - naked, terrifyingly and obscenly naked ⁴⁷.

This being a real aspect of nature which can be revealed to us at any moment, the natural objects possessing this kind of features, as experienced by Roquentin in the tree stump, will obviously disgust us by the revelation of the true nature of reality.

Chapter - IV

Section - II

Elements of Intellect and emotion in Sartre's
philosophy and their relative Predominance

Lastly, we are to analyse Sartre's philosophy, and for this purpose we shall classify his philosophy under the following heads :

- a) Appearance and Being (Being -in-itself).
- b) Being as existence.
- c) Consciousness (Being - for - itself).
- d) Nothingness.
- e) Freedom.
- f) The Being-for-others.
- g) God.
- h) Nature and kinds of emotion.

a) Appearance and Being

Sartre thinks that beyond appearances there are no transcendental objects. Objects are nothing but the conglomeration of appearances. The appearance is not supported by any existent different from itself ; it has its own being. Sartre denies the existence of any kind of objects which can not be reached by consciousness.

In support of his view he cites the examples of

'force' and 'electric current' which do not refer to anything hidden behind them. They are nothing but the totality of their effects and actions respectively. ' They indicate only themselves and the total series'.⁴⁸ Further he speaks of two kinds of being ' being-in-itself' and 'being-for-itself', that is to say, he classifies being. Lastly, we see that he speaks of three characteristics of being. They are :being is, being is in itself, being is what it is.

Therefore, we see that to establish his view on being, he compares it with 'force' and 'electric current', classifies it on some principle and characterises it in the end. Now the question is : Are comparison, classification and characterisation possible without the exercise of intellect ? Certainly not. So, it is clear that although Sartre's view on being and appearance is grounded on experience, it is also supported by reason.

b) 'Existence Precedes essence'.

Like other Existentialists, Sartre also attaches utmost importance to existence and insists that 'existence precedes essence'. This cardinal doctrine of the Existentialists is itself established by opposing the platonic Idealistic

proposition : ' essence precedes existence'. When the Existentialists talk of existence they talk of human existence, Human existence is actual and not conceptual, To say that ' existence precedes essence', it to affirm that there is no prior definition of man. Now the question is whether Sartre has in fact been able to throw essentialism completely overboard. We see that instead of the concept of 'human nature' he offers the concept of 'human condition'. But the characteristics of the human condition are after all general characteristics. So we see that Sartre could not avoid generalising about man, altogether.

c) In his theory of consciousness, Sartre tried to reconcile between philosophical Idealism and Realism by making them interdependent. Without consciousness things are nothing but meaningless chaos, and without things, consciousness does not even exist. Thus, by reinforcing the link between the two he tried to resolve the difficulty.

Sartre does not define consciousness but he speaks of the characteristics of consciousness. As for one of its characteristics, he says that it is impersonal. To prove this he criticises Descartes' ' Cogito ergo sum' and Husserl's

pure consciousness and shows that human consciousness must always be directed upon some object of which it will be aware. ' All consciousness is consciousness of something' - says he.

Again, Sartre speaks of the ontological proof in support of his theory of consciousness.

He speaks of the negative character of consciousness. He says that consciousness is nothing by itself except the power to delimit the world. It is the power to set itself outside of being. That is, to deny one part and also to deny that it is identifying itself with that part through a withdrawal affected with respect to things. This power to delimit the world, to deny and to set itself outside of being is rational. Lastly, he speaks of the ' lack' which he thinks the essential characteristic of consciousness and to make the idea of 'lack' clear, he compares it with the broken disc of the moon, Sartre makes use of the concept of the possible to explain what he means by the 'lack'.

a) Sartre assimilates consciousness with nothingness and says, ' man is the being by whom nothingness comes to things'. Nothingness is made to be by us i.e. for-itself or consciousness.

He maintains that we have an intuitive knowledge of nothingness. In support of his view he described a situation, the situation of pierre's absence in a cafe where I had an appointment with him at a particular time, in which we can have actual experience of nothingness. Thus, from the observation of a particular situation he generalises that we have an intuitive knowledge of nothingness.

Besides, he explains the nature of question and the idea of destruction to show that nothingness is intrinsic in them.

Lastly, he uses a connected concept of 'badfaith' to prove the existence of the power to conceive non-existence. His argument is : if human being were not capable of conceiving what is not true there would be no such thing as badfaith. But there is such a thing as bad faith ; therefore, they are capable of conceiving what is not the case.

He thinks that the necessary condition for bad faith is the grasping of nothingness, which is identical with the freedom of consciousness.

e) We see that human being is both free and unfree,

and herein lies the paradox of free will. Sartre attempts to solve the problem and his attempt is different from his predecessors. Sartre understands freedom not in the ordinary sense. By freedom, he means only the autonomy of choice. He says that man is absolutely free. Our power to choose, to decide, to plan, to act is a direct proof of our freedom. According to him, every individual man is the master of himself. He is the sole authority to decide what he will to be, as also to determine the means to the end. It is upto him to choose what he will do and how. He is the best judge of his own good. The fundamental condition of act is freedom.'

I am indeed an existent who learns his freedom through his acts.'

It is the act which decides its end and its motives, and the act is the expression of freedom. Sartre says that freedom is not an accidental possession of man but a necessity of his being. Indeed freedom is one with being.

So we see that in his attempt to solve the problem of free-will he analyses the characteristics of human act or action and shows that action implies freedom. For the existentialist freedom is not to be proved, but is rather a postulate of action. But that freedom is a postulate of action is established by Sartre by analysing our power to decide,

to choose, to plan, to judge, to act and says that man is absolutely free.

One interesting contribution made by Sartre in connection with his discussion of freedom is his notion of 'bad faith'. Sartre shows that bad faith is linked with our freedom of imagination as the power to conceive what was not the case ; and it is also linked with our power to choose and decide. The play of the waiter is pretence, for he could choose not to play the part of a waiter, he could value things differently. To value things as he does and to accept the consequences of the evaluation is his own decision.

The course of the discussion of bad faith is not only of interest in itself but is also a useful and central example of Sartre's philosophical method. In this description of interaction between man and the world, between being for-themselves and being-in-themselves, he argues both from certain very general features of the world which he assumes to exist to the particular nature of individual situations in the world ; and also, starting from a description of a particular scene, he argues that this could not be a true

description, which we recognize that it is, unless in general the world were as he wishes to say it is. In this pattern of argument he starts from observations. He observes how people in fact behave, and argues that they could not behave in this way unless the whole structure of the world were thus and so.

Taking first, then, the argument from the general to the particular, Sartre proceeds as follows : there are certain features (consciousness) of Beings-for-themselves from which it is possible to derive the concrete fact of bad faith. Bad faith would not be possible except to a creature who was capable both of self-consciousness and of negation; it consists in seeing what one is, and denying it ; asserting that one is what one is not.

If we turn our eyes to the second type of arguments which move from the particular to the general, we shall find that Sartre here observes particular behaviours of man, for example, a waiter in a Café, or a girl who is taken to a restaurant by a man, and herefrom he deduces that such behaviour would be impossible without the human ability to conceive of that which is not, and to transcend any particular situation. This transcendence is the essential characteristics of consciousness.

According to Sartre, consciousness is compounded of distance or nothingness, which sets conscious nature apart from non-conscious nature and to prove this he has established the existence of bad faith by means of acceptable and recognizable descriptions of kinds of human behaviour which are familiar to us. And in the attempt for establishing bad faith, we see that Sartre's arguments are both of deductive and inductive nature.

f) Lastly, in his attempt to prove the existence of others (being-for-others), we see the same philosophical method which we have previously discussed in connection with his notion of 'bad faith'. His definition of being-for-others⁴¹ shows that first, I am aware of my own bodily existence as something which is known to other people. Secondly, I am aware of the bodies of other people and thence their existence in the world. Here in lies the method.

Sartre proceeds by providing the telling example. He gives us the example of 'a peeping Tom, a voyeur, from which he concludes that other people exist in a full blooded way like us.

Though Sartre says that without inference of any kind we know that other people exist, yet the method which he adopts is nothing but generalisation from particular concrete facts. In his discussion or proof he says, 'A proof is a description so clear and vivid that when I think of this description and fit it my own case, I can not fail to see its application.....The particular description of my case must come first and may then be used as a description of another particular case, and then of another, and so on.....He believes that only after its descriptions have been recognized as true for me can they be used in the construction of a description of the world as a whole !'⁴⁹

This discussion of 'proof' by Sartre himself shows his insistence on the particularity and concreteness of descriptions, from which ontological and metaphysical and general statements may be drawn. So we see that in his attempt to prove the existence of other people (being-for-others), he adopts a rational or logical i.e. inductive method which is found also in his novels and plays.

After analysing Sartre's different philosophical views, we can firmly affirm that his entire philosophy is

the outcome of his rational thinking. In the course of our previous discussion we have seen that Sartre's philosophical method is both deductive and inductive in nature. In the course of his philosophical thinking, nowhere we see him to be emotional or to resort on faith or to draw conclusion from intuitive knowledge of any kind. He criticises, analyses, classifies, compares, argues differently and offers proofs in support of his theories and then draws his conclusions about this world and human being.

g) Sartre is an atheist. His idea of God is the logical outcome of his conclusion on human freedom. According to him, man is absolutely free. And if human being is to be free, then the idea of God as ordinarily conceived, can not be accepted. He tries to prove the non-existence of God with the help of the following hypothetical argument (" MODUS PONENS") :

If human being is to be free,
then God can not exist.

It is the fact that human being is free.

. . . God can not exist.

Sartre gives priority to existence over essence as the other existentialist philosophers did. As conscious being man determines his own essence only by his choices of what he would like to become. His essence is not pre-determined. So he can not turn to God as his creator or foundation for truth and virtue.

Besides, he analyses the nature of consciousness and shows that the notion of God as a self-identical consciousness is contradictory.

So we see that by criticising the traditional proofs of God, and analysing the nature of consciousness, Sartre shows that the idea of God as a 'Causa Sui' and Creator of the universe and man is contradictory. As an Existentialist, he argues for human freedom which excludes the idea of God as an outdated contradictory hypothesis. Thus it may be concluded that although according to Sartre experience is, in all cases the basis of his philosophy of existence, experience alone does not constitute his philosophy. When reason is applied to experience, there arises knowledge, and no philosophical is an exception to it. While Hegel based his philosophy upon abstract reason, the existentialists based

their philosophy upon concrete reason. Reason becomes concrete when it is applied to the concrete experiences of our life. In this connection we may refer to the very beginning of Kant's Critique of Pure Reason, where he says that all our knowledge begins with experience alone does not constitute knowledge. When reason applies the a-priori concepts of categories on the manifold of sense intuitions, then and then only does knowledge arise, so it is with Sartre. He based his philosophy on concrete experiences of life, but in doing that he exercised his reason. So it may be said that in Sartre's existentialism experience comes first and reason next, but reason is there nevertheless. One may not understand by 'reason' here any discursive reason, but a kind of rational thinking without which life itself becomes impossible. In this wider sense of the term we may say along with Sartre that there is 'reason of life' and 'reason of existence'.