

SARTRE'S PHILOSOPHY FREEDOM AND IT IS ACTUALITY

Formulation of the problem. Philosophers have been pondering the notion of freedom for thousands of years. From Thucydides, through to Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, John Stuart Mill and Jean Jacques Rousseau, the concept of freedom has continually been dealt with to some degree in political thought. This is an important concept because we must decide whether individuals are free, whether they should be free, what this means and what kinds of institutions we are to build around these ideas.

Goal. Explore the concept of Sartre's philosophy and is it actuality.

The concept of freedom is the core of Sartre's entire system and the theme of his political works. Sartre's view of freedom has changed a lot. Scholars disagree whether there is a fundamental continuity or fundamental difference between Sartre's early view of freedom and his later view of freedom. However, there is a strong consensus that after World War II, Sartre turned to the view of material freedom, which is contrary to his early ontological view. According to the argument of «existence and nothingness», human freedom lies in the ability of consciousness to transcend its physical realm (p.563). Later, especially in Critique of Dialectical Reason, Sartre turned to the view that humans can only be free when they meet their basic needs as actual creatures (page 327). Let us study these two different concepts of freedom in more depth.

Sartre believed that freedom was synonymous with human consciousness in the early days. Consciousness («being for oneself») is characterized by inconsistency with oneself. In simple terms, consciousness escapes, both because it is intentional (consciousness is always directed at the object rather than itself), and it is temporal (consciousness must be facing the future) (Being and Nothingness, Nos. 573-4 and 568 pages). Sartre believes that human freedom lies in the ability of consciousness to escape reality. This is «ontology», that is, any normal human being cannot be free from freedom. The subtitle «Existence and Nothingness» «Phenomenological Ontology Essay» reveals Sartre's purpose in describing the basic structure of human existence and answering the question «What do humans mean?» His answer is that, unlike inert substances, human beings are conscious and therefore free.

The concept of ontological freedom is controversial and often rejected because it implies that humans are free in all situations. Sartre firmly accepted this meaning in his early works. Sartre famously declared that the French people were as free as ever during the Nazi occupation. He argued fiercely in Existence and Nothingness that even prisoners can be free because they have conscious power (p.622). Although the prisoner is coerced, he can choose how to deal with his imprisonment. The prisoner is free because he controls his reaction to imprisonment: he can resist or acquiesce. Since there are no objective obstacles, only when I form a will to escape, the prison will restrain me. In a similar example, Sartre pointed out that a mountain is an obstacle only when one wants to climb to the other side but cannot climb the mountain (Being and Nothingness, p. 628).

Sartre's transition to material freedom was directly driven by the Holocaust and the Second World War. «Réflexion sur la question juive» (Réflexion sur la question juive, 1946), just published after the war, is the first of many works that analyze the moral responsibility of oppression. Sartre's views in «Being and Nothingness» seem to have little room for diagnosing oppression. This fact did not prevent him from publishing powerful anti-Semitism normative criticism. In fact, his analysis of oppression will use the same dialectical tools as in the «Specific Relations with Others» section of Existence and Nothingness. Anti-Semitic and Jews believe that oppression is a master/slave relationship. The master oppresses the slave's freedom and relies on the slave (pages 27, 39, and 135). Sartre modified his concept of «appearance», arguing that only some but not all interpersonal relationships can lead to alienation and loss of freedom.

Sartre's new understanding of oppression is a concrete loss of human freedom, which forced him to change his view that humans are free under any circumstances. Although he explicitly abandoned the view that humans are free under any circumstances, he did not explicitly discuss this change. «The important thing is not to conclude that a person is free to be bound,» and «To interpret me as saying that as the Stokes say, people are free in all situations. This is completely wrong» (Critique, Pages 578 and 332). Sartre's basic assumption in his political writings is that oppression is the loss of freedom (Critique, p. 332). Since human beings will never lose their ontological freedom, the loss of freedom must be in another form: oppression must damage material freedom.

Take prisoners as an example. The prisoner is logically free because she controls whether to try to escape. According to this view, freedom is synonymous with choice. But there is no qualitative difference between the selected types. If freedom is the existence of choice, then even the wrong choice will promote freedom. As he will say later, it is difficult to say that an attacker who asks me to choose «what kind of sauce I can eat» will meaningfully promote my freedom (notebook, page 331). The early view was that if there is no qualitative difference between the selection types, then it is impossible to recognize oppression and compulsion.

Sartre implicitly responded to the above criticisms in Anti-Semitic and The Jew and the Notebook, arguing that oppression does not lie in lack of choice, but in being forced to choose between bad and inhumane choices (Notebook, p. 334 -5 pages). For example, Jews in anti-Semitic society are forced to choose between self-disclosure or caricature self-identification (Anti-Semite and Jew, pp. 135 and 148). Sartre took the labor contract as an example in Critique to illustrate that choice is not synonymous with freedom (Critique, p. 721-2). A poor person who accepts low-level and low-paying jobs in order to meet basic needs can choose-she may starve to death or accept low-level jobs-but her choice is inhumane. He did not claim that a dispersed social structure like poverty has a personal literal meaning, but the class structure is «destiny», and we can talk convincingly about the social forces that impose causality and make us «slaves» (Critique, p 332).

Throughout the political period, Sartre developed his view of material freedom by comparing free men with slaves. Although Sartre's concept of slavery came from Hegel, unlike Hegel, Sartre diagnosed textual cases like the slavery of movable property in the United States. Sartre follows Hegel and portrays slavery as a form of «non-mutual recognition» in which one person is dominant psychologically and physically. He believed that the slave was free because he was dominated by his master (notebook pages 325-411). Therefore, material freedom requires freedom without domination or coercion. He added that in the master-slave relationship, the self-concepts of the victim and the offender are intertwined and distorted. Both sides are «malicious»; neither of them fully understand their freedom. Although both the offender and the victim were malicious, only the slave was physically coerced (notebook, p. 331).

Conclusion. Sartre's contribution to the political philosophy of the 20th century was enormous. Sartre has developed a unique political vocabulary that combines the personal salvation of authenticity with calls for systematic social change. Like Hegel, Sartre also believes that freedom is the core normative value, and strives to harmonize the pursuit of personal freedom with the needs of social systems. Sartre's analysis of colonialism, racism and anti-Semitism eloquently bridged the gap between theory and practice, and greatly enriched the scope of traditional Marxism. If it makes sense, Sartre will have long been regarded as a systematic political philosopher and keen social critic.

The 1969 article entitled «Two Concepts of Freedom» written by Isaiah Berlin provides one of the most detailed accounts of the liberal tradition in politics. He considered most philosophers who deal with the concept of freedom, and divided their ideas into two categories: negative and positive freedom. However, Berlin did not consider the existential concept of freedom. Because Jean-Paul Sartre's «Being and Nothingness» deals almost entirely with the issue of freedom, one must wonder why freedom was omitted and whether it is acceptable.

References

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