

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

SARTRE AND THE JEWISH QUESTION

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ABSTRACT

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Sartre's Réflexions sur la question juive (RQJ) marks an important stage in the debate on the Jewish Question in France over the last hundred years.

'The Jewish Question' is an ambiguous term. We tackle problems of approach in Chapter I. To help identify the scope and specificity of RQJ, we distinguish between different facets of Judaism: *juiverie* (anti-Semitic perceptions of the Jew), *judaïsme* (certain beliefs and practices), *le Juif* (the existential Jew), and *judéité* (Jewish identity).

In Chapter II, we see that RQJ focusses on anti-Semitism and Jewish identity. Sartre reassesses and effectively broadens the terms in which the discussion might take place.

We consider Sartre's application of his phenomenological method in RQJ in Chapter III, discussing such concepts as original choice, emotion, the look, and bad faith.

In Chapter IV, we situate RQJ alongside a largely anti-Semitic Third Republic and Vichy debate on the Jewish Question. Sartre's analysis de-mystified features of *juiverie* prevalent at the time. It does not explain that collective anti-Semitism manifest in 1944, but does set its arrival into context.

We show how RQJ looks forward to Sartre's ideas on writer commitment, in Chapter V. Concerning its reception, many critics see in RQJ solely an analysis of anti-Semitism, or a reduction of the Jew to a passive manifestation of anti-Semitism. We highlight Sartre's consideration of the Jewish component, and the active -- indeed dynamic -- nature of his attitude towards Jewish identity.

In Chapter VI, we see RQJ as a pivot between the anti-Semitic Third Republic debate and the proliferation of genuine studies into *judéité* to come out of France since the War.

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DECLARATION

The following articles were published during, and arising out of, research undertaken on this thesis topic. Firstly, an article on Sartre's Réflexions sur la question juive, itself:

'The Non-Jewish Question',
Jewish Socialist, 8 (Winter 1986/7), 8-10.

Secondly, two articles on the recent resurgence of nationalism in France, during the 1980s:

'Le Pen: The Writing on the Wall',
Jewish Socialist, 9 (Spring 1987), 20-22.

'Who Supports Le Pen?',
Jewish Socialist, 13 (Summer 1988), 3.

*In diesen heil'gen Hallen
Kennt man die Rache nicht.*

Die Zauberflöte

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this thesis is to explore the significance of Sartre's contribution to the debate on the Jewish Question in France: his essay Réflexions sur la question juive.¹ More generally, we aim to highlight the existence, history and continuation of that debate, during and since the Third Republic. 1942 saw the publication not only of Camus' L'Étranger, but also Rebatet's anti-Semitic Les Décombres. Céline was not only the innovative stylist of Voyage au bout de la nuit, but also the author of the anti-Semitic Bagatelles pour un massacre. Finkielkraut is not only the universalist Parisian intellectual of today, but also the author of Le Juif imaginaire. Sartre himself is not only the author of L'Être et le néant but of Réflexions sur la question juive, too. We aim to draw attention to the particular nature of this debate; and to the position of Sartre's essay in relation to it.

Our thesis is that Sartre's essay represents a pivot between a Third Republic anti-Semitic debate on the Jewish Question and post-War existential enquiries into Jewish identity. We shall consider the debate on the Jewish Question in France both prior to, and following,

the publication of Sartre's study. We shall situate Réflexions (RQJ) within its ideological background, and also trace its influence.

Indeed, one original contribution we hope to make to both Sartrean studies and to studies of the Jewish Question is precisely that of situating RQJ within the context of the debate on the Jewish Question in France during the Third Republic, under Vichy, and since the War.

Sartre is a writer whose work cuts across conventional intellectual boundaries: fiction, drama, philosophy, political history, and journalism. One approach to studying Sartre is to evaluate different works within a given genre: his novels, philosophical writings, or plays. Another approach is to attempt to unite selected works, or the entire oeuvre, around a chosen theme. However, in this thesis, we shall largely concentrate on a single work: Réflexions sur la question juive.

This thesis on Sartre and the Jewish Question does not present a comprehensive history of the Jewish Question in France. Nor is it primarily concerned with substantive Judaism, itself. We do not cover the biblical, ethical, legal, mystical or theological traditions within Judaism, as dealt with, for example, by de Lange, in Judaism (1986).² Our scope is clearly defined. We cover a period of some hundred years, from the 1880s to the present. We shall primarily be concerned with the debate on the Jewish Question in France, and with Sartre's contribution to it. Nevertheless, since the relevance of that debate extends beyond France, we shall also take account of other perspectives, where a comparison is worthy of note. However, in France, the debate has been, and continues to be, one of particular interest, as we hope to show below.

In concentrating on RQJ, we deal specifically with Sartre's Existentialism of the 1940s. The Sartre of Réflexions was thirty-eight, and an essayist. He had just published his major philosophical treatise, L'Être et le néant, in 1943, to which, as we shall see in Chapter III, RQJ is closely linked. It is not our intention to present

this Sartre -- the Sartre of Réflexions -- as the definitive Sartre. His philosophical stances evolved significantly throughout his lifetime. Indeed, we shall also broaden the discussion to cover a wider area than Sartrean Existentialism of the 1940s. Sartre will be seen to tackle aspects of the mythology surrounding the Jewish Question. Réflexions also looks forward to Sartre's ideas on writer commitment of the late 1940s. More generally, we shall be concerned with a writer increasingly drawn towards moral concerns, and issues of social justice.

Our justification for covering the period in question is our finding that important aspects of Réflexions sur la question juive can be better appreciated if Sartre's study is placed within this broader context. To justify focussing attention on this one work, RQJ has not been the subject of a full-length published study. It has certainly attracted recent, and important, critical attention, in the form of articles in Études sartriennes by Hewitt and Meschonnic. We shall indeed take account of these articles. However, we feel that RQJ has been both neglected and, where attention has been paid to it, often misinterpreted. Anthologies of criticism on Sartre's works -- Kern's Twentieth Century Views and Les Critiques de notre temps et Sartre -- omit RQJ from consideration, perhaps deeming it a subject apart. We shall suggest in Chapter V that, at the time Sartre wrote RQJ, the Jewish Question had become a taboo subject. Has the Jewish Question again become taboo question? Even those writers and critics who have considered RQJ have sometimes misrepresented, or omitted from consideration, crucial aspects of Sartre's argument. We shall examine aspects of Sartre's argument over which there has been confusion, and hopefully clarify them. The Jewish Question is a subject about which there have been, and perhaps remain, many pre-conceptions. We shall show that one key feature of RQJ is that it attempts to break down some of these misconceptions. We hope that our findings set out in the following six chapters will justify such close attention to this single work.

To set out the direction this thesis will take, chapter by chapter, in Chapter I, we consider problems of methodology. We consider different definitions of the term 'Jewish Question'. We examine the possibilities and limitations of alternative approaches to the subject of the Jewish Question to that of Sartre. Then, we define the terms in which we shall approach the Jewish component of the subject. Finally, we note RQJ's situation in relation to literature on the Holocaust.

In Chapter II, we carry out a close reading of the text of Réflexions itself, to get to the heart of Sartre's thesis on the Jewish Question. We adopt a practical stance, working from an analysis of the text towards a hopefully clearer understanding of the author's treatment of the subject tackled. We concentrate on two key aspects of RQJ: its description of the relationship between anti-Semite and Jew; and its consideration of possible solutions to the Jewish Question.

In Chapter III, we trace aspects of Sartre's thesis -- his concepts of original choice, authenticity, and the look -- back to two of his philosophical works written prior to RQJ: L'Être et le néant (1943), and Esquisse d'une théorie des émotions (1939). We then consider Sartre's application of his Existentialist philosophy to the model of the Jewish Question.

In Chapter IV, we situate RQJ within the context of other studies on the subject undertaken by writers prior to Sartre's. We consider the background against which he wrote RQJ: the debate on the Jewish Question during the Third Republic and under Vichy; the Occupation, as seen through the eyes of Sartre himself; and the actual constitutional position of Jews under Vichy.

In Chapter V, we link RQJ to Sartre's notion of writer commitment. Then, we consider how readers have responded to RQJ, and, in particular, to Sartre's attitude towards the Jew.

Finally, in chapter VI, we briefly reflect on the ambiguous nature of the modern Franco-Jewish experience, and on some of the different

intellectual reactions that have resulted. We evaluate the specific contribution Sartre has made to the debate on the Jewish Question. We consider some of the universalist implications of the Jewish Question, and briefly look beyond RQJ to see how the debate has been carried forward by other writers.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

1. All subsequent references to RQJ relate to the Gallimard edition (Paris, 1954), in the collection Folio/essais, formerly Idées. Page references to subsequent quotations from RQJ are given in brackets in the text.
2. See Bibliography for publication details of this and subsequent works referred to, but not quoted from, in the text. Where relevant, the date of publication is nevertheless indicated in the text.

CHAPTER I

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'THE JEWISH QUESTION'

CHAPTER I

'THE JEWISH QUESTION'

1. FORMULATIONS OF THE JEWISH QUESTION

Sartre's inclusion of the term 'Jewish Question' in his title, preceded by the definite article, appears to evoke a commonly recognisable subject. Yet Sartre's use of the term 'Jewish Question' merits close attention. May we assume that a Jewish Question exists at all? If so, what is the Jewish Question? Is there just one, or are there many? Furthermore, what did that term mean to Sartre, in 1944, when he wrote RQJ? 'The Jewish Question' is a term that is often used without being clearly defined.

It is possible to argue that the so-called Jewish Question is merely a secondary manifestation of some other, primary phenomenon, religious, economic, or whatever. For example, a Marxist analysis of the Jewish Question, such as Léon's, might adopt such a viewpoint.¹ However, for his part, Sartre clearly perceives a Jewish Question to exist in its own right, in 1944. Given that a Jewish Question is perceived by Sartre and others to exist, as a primary phenomenon in its own right, we are justified in tackling such a question.

Yet how is this question to be formulated? As we shall show in Chapter IV, in our consideration of Third Republic formulations of a Jewish Question, this is an important consideration. Our formulation of a Jewish Question is as important as our approach to a Jewish Question, once formulated. Indeed, we might say that our formulation of a Jewish Question *constitutes* our approach to a Jewish Question.

Furthermore, how we formulate (and therefore approach) the Jewish Question, and to whom we attribute the cause of a Jewish Question coming into being, may partly be determined by how we perceive Judaism, and Jews. For example, one might attribute the origin of a Jewish Question to Jews themselves. One might formulate a Jewish Question in terms of 'the problem of the existence of Jews in society'. In which case, the Jew is the cause of a Jewish Question coming into being. Indeed, to take this logic one stage further, here, the Jew is perceived as to blame for the existence of a Jewish Question. In short, the Jew constitutes *a problem*. The Jewish Question is formulated in terms of the Jewish *problem*. Yet this is a potentially anti-Semitic formulation of the Jewish Question.

An alternative formulation is that the term 'Jewish Question' refers to the struggle of the Jewish people of the Diaspora² for social acceptance and political rights within a state not their own. In other words, the problems of social integration facing a stateless, minority cultural group. A Jewish Question could be formulated in terms of the problem of anti-Semitism in society, and the question of what to do to combat forces hostile to Jews within society.

Thus, a fundamental point underlying any discussion of the Jewish Question, and underlying this thesis, is that Sartre, or indeed any writer, does not tackle a pre-defined problem, a pre-existent Jewish Question, to which he brings a set of ideas, and, possibly, solutions. Instead, a writer on the Jewish Question formulates his own Jewish Question, thereby delimiting the boundaries in which the discussion will take place. In discussing the Jewish Question, Sartre thereby formulates a Jewish Question of his own. The Jewish Question is a subjectively formulated and variable concept. Furthermore, formulations of a Jewish Question may well depend on an individual's knowledge of Judaism, or identity as a Jew.

Judaism transcends state boundaries. Most formulations of a Jewish Question transcend the particular national experience of Jews in different countries of the Diaspora. However, some are of particular or

heightened significance to Jews in France. In addition, new Jewish Questions have emerged since Sartre formulated his in 1944. We would generally stress the ambiguity of the term 'Jewish Question'.³

In Chapter II, we shall consider the precise terms in which Sartre formulates his Jewish Question. Before doing so, we shall first consider possible alternative formulations of the Jewish Question to Sartre's. This will help us to at least negatively define the scope of Sartre's study. The following formulations are not wholly separate; some overlap. We shall only discuss them briefly. They lie outside the scope of this thesis, which is restricted to the scope within which Sartre himself chose to work. However, they will enable us to acquire a better appreciation of Sartre's specific formulation of a Jewish Question, while also serving to remind us of the ambiguity of the latter term.

One possible formulation is the national Jewish Question. This consists of a debate on the choice between self-government within one's own state, and existence as a community within a host nation.

Zionists proclaim that the true home of modern Jewry is within the politically defined boundaries of the modern Jewish state of Israel. In Der Judenstaat (The Jewish State), published in 1896, Herzl, the founder of modern political Zionism, argued that, rather than remain as unwelcome occupants on another's territory, the Jews should instead possess a land, and form a nation, of their own. Herzl advocated, and foresaw, the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine as a solution to the Jewish Question. The modern state of Israel came into being in 1948.

Diasporists proclaim the right to exist as Jews, as citizens of a non-Jewish state, dispersed around the world. Marienstras⁴ is one important proponent of the Diasporist case. In Être un peuple en

diaspora, he argues the need to distinguish between the Jews' *means of survival* -- the Jewish state, or the Jewish community within a non-Jewish state -- and *the point of survival*: in his view, the appreciation and transmission of a particular cultural experience.⁵

We need not concern ourselves with this debate on a national Jewish Question in detail. Our aim here is merely to draw attention to its existence.

What of RQJ, in relation to this national Jewish Question? Having written RQJ in 1944, before the foundation of the state of Israel, Sartre could not have taken account of an existent state of Israel, in Réflexions, as A. D. Cohen has unreasonably reproached him with failing to do.⁶ However, written after Herzl's The Jewish State, Sartre could have *envisaged* the establishment of such a state, and formulated a Jewish Question in national terms.

He chose not to. Sartre does not explicitly formulate a Jewish Question in terms of state versus community, Israel versus the Diaspora. Sartre himself specifies in RQJ that his formulation of a Jewish Question concerns the Jew in France:

Je préviens que je limiterai ma description aux Juifs de France car c'est le problème du Juif français qui est *notre* problème. (p. 73)

In effect, Sartre's analysis deals with the Diasporic Jew. Sartre is concerned with the Jew where he is at present, and not where he may or may not be in the future. He is concerned with the Jew insofar as he is apparently the source of social conflict.

Even when he goes beyond this analysis of anti-Semitism as an instance of social conflict, and discusses possible solutions to the Jewish Question, Sartre does not envisage a national solution, based upon the establishment of an autonomous Jewish state. Instead, he considers solutions to the Jewish Question which imply the Jew's continued presence as a citizen within the French state. When the modern state of Israel was established, Sartre recognised the

significance of the existence of such a state. Yet, in RQJ, he sees a solution, not in the establishment of an independent Jewish state, but partly in according full rights of citizenship to French citizens of Jewish abstraction (as the drafters of the 1789 Declaration of Human Rights had envisaged -- see Appendix I).

This may be indicative of a general hostility on Sartre's part towards the notions of the state and the delegation of individual responsibility. Prior to his 1960 Critique de la raison dialectique, and apart from a very early article published in 1927 entitled 'La Théorie de l'État dans la pensée française', Sartre did not devote significant attention generally to the purely theoretical notion of the state in his writings on the phenomenology of the oppressor. Sartre does tackle the theme of the state in relation to the oppression of blacks in his Morale, and -- with particular reference to the Jewish Question -- Stalinist anti-Semitism in his Critique. However, prior to 1960, he rarely delved into the domain of conventional constitutional theory. In a 1972 lecture given in Belgium, entitled 'Justice et État', and subsequently published in Situations, X, Sartre's hostility towards the notion of state justice (which he contrasted with what he termed 'popular justice') was evident. One reason for this apparent aversion to the theory of the state prior to 1960 may have been his difficulty in reconciling his Existentialist concept of individual responsibility with the collective structures of the state, and the alienation of individual responsibility the latter appeared to entail.

Sartre's lack of sympathy for the notion of the state is reflected in his study of the Jewish Question. In a 1969 interview on the Arab-Israeli conflict, Sartre was asked whether he felt Zionism was a suitable solution to the Jewish Question:

A mon avis, le sionisme a vécu. Une bonne raison à cela, c'est que, bien que les gens ne se soient pas guéris de leur antisémitisme, il n'y a pas actuellement de crise d'antisémitisme et il n'y en aura pas dans un avenir prévisible. Les Juifs de la diaspora préfèrent rester là où ils sont.⁷

Neither in Réflexions nor in the above statement does Sartre express great interest in the national formulation of the Jewish Question.²

In 1949, following the creation of a Jewish state in Palestine, Sartre wrote:

J'ai toujours souhaité et je souhaite encore que le problème juif trouve de solution définitive dans le cadre d'une humanité sans frontières mais, puisque aucune évolution sociale ne peut éviter le stade de l'indépendance nationale, il faut se réjouir qu'un État israélien autonome vienne légitimer les espérances et les combats des Juifs du monde entier.³

Perhaps this article sums up the dilemmas faced by an intellectual such as Sartre, opposed as he was to all manifestations of human oppression, yet equally aware that nationalism can impose, as well as relieve, such oppression.

Concerning Sartre's emphasis on the present, Diasporic situation of the Jew in France, Réflexions was to lose some of its relevance to its reading public soon after its publication. The establishment of the Jewish state in 1948 provided a scenario for Jewish existence not envisaged by Sartre in 1944. Nevertheless, RQJ retains relevance for the modern French Jew. A large Jewish community -- some 650 000⁴ -- has chosen to continue to live in France, and has to confront problems, albeit on a diminished scale, similar to those confronted by Jews, and discussed by Sartre, in 1944: the coming to terms with anti-Semitism in France, with the historical experience of Vichy (see Chapter IV), and its psychological legacy (see Chapter VI).

Whatever Sartre's stance on the national Jewish Question (which was subsequently to take the form of the Arab-Israeli conflict, examined below), his Jewish Question in RQJ, implicitly Diasporic, is nonetheless formulated outside the framework of this national Jewish Question.

Another Jewish Question not tackled by Sartre in any depth in RQJ concerns the question of religion. We might be tempted to assert that the Jewish Question concerns the survival of religion within an increasingly secular world. Yet would we be justified in reducing either Judaism or the Jewish Question to a question of religion? This presupposes that Judaism is solely a religion. Yet progressive -- for example, Reconstructionist -- attitudes towards Judaism acknowledge the existence of factors other than religion, within the Jewish experience.

The relevance of formulating a Jewish Question in terms of religion, in terms of theism versus atheism, has been called into question by the American theologian, Fackenheim. To him, the conflict between theism and atheism, between religious observance and secular assimilation, is a false dichotomy:

The Jew of today is committed to modern 'secularism', as the source of his emancipation; yet his future survival as a Jew depends on past religious sources. Hence even the most orthodox Jew of today is a secularist insofar as, and to the extent that, he participates in the political and social processes of society. And even the most secularist Jew is religious insofar as, and to the extent that, he must fall back on the religious past in his struggle for a Jewish future.¹²

He argues that this conflict lies within any given individual, rather than between different individuals of differing beliefs.

The question of the significance of religious belief within an increasingly secular society is indeed one which Jewish religious organisations and intellectuals in France, as elsewhere, have had to confront. However, this decline in religious observance extends beyond Judaism. There has been a widespread decline in religious observance. This is due in part to the assimilatory effect of universalist, secular education. In addition, demographic changes affecting Jewish communities have brought about a transition from the traditional close-knit street community to 'dispersion' throughout residential suburbs, separating the once tightly-knit communities.

Yet we do not talk of 'the Catholic Question'. There must be some factor other than religion which causes us to perceive a specifically Jewish Question. Thus, there is a strong case for examining a Jewish Question outside the terms of religion. Belief or non-belief in God, or belief in one God as opposed to another, are issues which have been discussed within the framework of a Jewish Question. Yet this debate both takes in, and extends beyond, the issue of religious belief. Concerning Sartre's formulation of a Jewish Question, he chose to formulate a Jewish Question outside this religious framework.

Another question Sartre omits from consideration in RQJ is that of state anti-Semitism, with its accompanying ideological implications. This concerns the conflict between a predominant state ideology and a dissenting group of minority cultural, religious, or political, specificity, in this case, the Jews. In Réflexions, Sartre avoids consideration of state anti-Semitism. Writing in the wake of a highly evident manifestation of state anti-Semitism, the Vichy regime, he nonetheless chose not to formulate a Jewish Question in such terms. He formulated a Jewish Question in individual and social terms. He thereby leaves himself open to the criticism (expressed by Hewitt, and discussed in Chapter V) that his analysis of anti-Semitism is limited, in failing to take account of a major twentieth-century manifestation of the phenomenon: the state as anti-Semite.

Sartre chose to work within, and was restricted by, the individualistic framework of his phenomenological method. Why did Sartre omit collective forms of anti-Semitism from consideration? Not because of any ignorance on his part as to the existence of state anti-Semitism. The evidence from other writings of his of the period suggests such an awareness. The memory of Vichy was fresh in his mind. Although we must in part look to his philosophical leanings of the period in order to answer this question, we shall in addition suggest a further explanation: that he was responding to the Third Republic

debate on the Jewish Question, which largely turned on a particular social perception of the Jew. In which case, his perception-based phenomenological method would be a highly appropriate tool with which to analyse this particular debate.

We shall return to this point in Chapter IV. However, as readers of RQJ, it is important to recognise from the start that, despite references in the text to the Vichy model of the state as anti-Semite, Sartre's *analysis* of the Jewish Question places us outside the realm of state ideology. Sartre is mainly concerned with an individual and social phenomenon.

We are gradually coming closer to identifying the scope of Sartre's study. A further formulation of the Jewish Question is the territorial question, the political and territorial Arab-Israeli conflict. We have argued that RQJ considers an essentially Diasporic Jewish Question. It tackles the situation of Jews as (French) citizens outside the confines of a Jewish state. We have noted that Sartre does not envisage a national solution to the Jewish Question in RQJ. Sartre's single reference to 'Israël' in RQJ (p. 15) denotes a people and a culture, and not the modern Jewish state.

It is worthwhile outlining Sartre's subsequent views on this subject, expressed some twenty years after the publication of RQJ, if only to further negatively define the latter work's scope, and therefore that of our forthcoming discussion.

Sartre adopted a partisan political stance on many of the major political issues of the post-War epoch: the Cold War, Algeria, Cuba, Vietnam, and many more. However, on the issue of the Arab-Israeli conflict, he remained neutral. Whereas many left-wing intellectuals supported the Palestinian cause -- for example, Genet¹³ -- Sartre took up a public stance of neutrality. At the time of the 1967 Six-Day War,

he wrote an introduction for a special issue of Les Temps modernes, 'Le Conflit Israélo-Arabe', devoted to the conflict. In his introduction, entitled 'Pour la Vérité', he asserted this position of neutrality, and the desire to listen, rather than speak.

Sartre was torn between his loyalty to two oppressed peoples in conflict with one another. Deeply affected by the treatment of Jews under Vichy, he was also subsequently to defend the anti-colonialist Arab cause during the Algerian War of Independence. Ben-Gal sees in Sartre's attitude to the Arab-Israeli conflict 'le déchirement d'un homme à deux fidélités'.¹⁴ In a 1966 interview, in which he refers to his concluding remarks in RQJ, Sartre himself alluded to this conflict of loyalty:

C'est que je me trouve déchiré entre des amitiés et des fidélités contradictoires. La situation de mes amis juifs pendant l'Occupation m'a découvert le problème juif en Europe en même temps que notre résistance commune au nazisme créait entre nous un lien profond. J'ai écrit après la libération ce que j'avais senti dans ces années de luttes: c'est que tant qu'un Juif sera menacé dans le monde, pas un Chrétien ne pourra se croire en sécurité. Il en résulte que mes amis et moi nous avons suivi passionnément, après la guerre, la lutte des Israéliens contre les Anglais. ('Jean-Paul Sartre et les problèmes de notre temps' (p. 4))

Sartre had supported the Jewish struggle in Palestine. However, he also subsequently supported the Arab cause in Algeria:

Mais, pareillement, la lutte contre le colonialisme nous a amenés pendant la guerre d'Algérie à nous déclarer solidaires des combattants du F.L.N. et à nouer des amitiés nombreuses dans les pays arabes; mieux, j'ai toujours pensé que le monde arabe ne pourrait lutter contre l'impérialisme qu'en resserrant son unité. (p. 4)

Sartre found himself in sympathy with two warring parties. This led to a conflict of loyalty between Jew and Arab, and between Israel and Palestine:

Nous nous trouvons donc, aujourd'hui que le monde arabe et Israël s'opposent, comme divisés en nous-mêmes et nous vivons cette opposition comme si c'était aussi notre tragédie personnelle. (p. 4)

This is not a conflict which Sartre resolved. In 1976, twelve years after refusing the Nobel Prize for Literature, Sartre was awarded, and accepted, a *Doctorat honoris causa* from the University of Jerusalem. Yet this does not entitle us to conclude that, friend of Israel as he was, he favoured the Israeli cause over that of the Arabs.

In the 1969 interview, Sartre called for Israeli restitution of the occupied territories, Palestinian recognition of the sovereignty of the State of Israel, and negotiations to solve the Palestinian question.¹⁵

In the same year, in his interview with Schwarz, Sartre stated:

Je considère le manichéisme comme un des plus graves dangers de la pensée de notre époque. C'est précisément notre affaire à nous, intellectuels, de le dénoncer.¹⁶

In other words, Sartre reasserted his position of neutrality, on the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Sartre's neutral stance on this territorial Jewish Question, uncommon among intellectuals of the political Left, and untypical of Sartre's generally partisan political attitude, may be an indication of the extent to which he had identified with the suffering of Jews under Vichy, as reflected in his decision to tackle the subject of the Jewish Question, in RQJ.

Sartre does not expressly discuss a territorial Jewish Question, in RQJ (although, again, Sartre's formulation of a Jewish Question implies a consideration of the Diasporic Jew in France). We might usefully distinguish between anti-Semitism and the political struggle between rival nationalisms. As with the religious formulation of a Jewish Question, it is reductive to formulate a Jewish Question in territorial terms. Again, in an effort to delimit the scope of Sartre's formulation

of a Jewish Question in 1944 in negative terms, the reader of RQJ does not perceive a conflict between Arab and Jew, but between anti-Semite and Jew.

The scope of Sartre's study of the Jewish Question is narrow. The above formulations of a Jewish question -- religious, national and political -- are all ones which Sartre could have adopted, though chose not to. Since 1944, further formulations of the Jewish Question in France have emerged. Again, for the purposes of negatively defining the scope of Sartre's, and our, study, we shall briefly take note of them.

We can today talk in terms of a cultural Jewish Question. Cultural differences between Sephardi Jews (from the Mediterranean and North Africa) and Ashkenazi Jews (from Eastern Europe) present a problem in contemporary France. Today, following successive waves of Sephardi immigration to France since 1948, in particular from the North African continent, the Franco-Jewish population contains approximately equal proportions of Ashkenazim and Sephardim.¹⁷ These cultural differences and discrepancies in educational standards sometimes divide the Sephardi community not only from mainstream French society, but from the Ashkenazi community as well. Sephardim are further alienated from the Arab population, from whose territories they emigrated (notably, following the 1967 Arab-Israeli War). A cultural Jewish Question has emerged, involving cultural differences and social tensions between Jew and Arab, Jew and Catholic, and also Jew and Jew.

This question has given rise to discussion. Memmi, for whom Sartre wrote the preface to his 'Portrait du colonisé précédé du 'Portrait du colonisateur' in 1957, tackled the Sephardi Jew-Catholic aspect of the subject in Agar, published in 1955. The novel provides a Sephardi perspective on this cultural Jewish Question. It considers the mixed marriage between a Sephardi doctor from Tunisia and his Catholic French wife. A cultural Jewish Question was also tackled in 1979 in a special

issue of Les Temps modernes, entitled 'Le Second Israël: la question sépharade'. More recently, Adler and Cohen have tackled the Ashkenazi-Sephardi question in Juif et juif: ashkenazes et sépharades aujourd'hui (1985).

Sartre does not explicitly formulate a Jewish Question in such terms, in his 1944 study. In stating this, we are not only helping to define the scope of Sartre's study in negative terms. We are also providing further evidence of the ambiguity of the term 'Jewish Question', and its capacity to evolve.

Before drawing to a close this consideration of the different formulations the Jewish Question is capable of taking, in an effort to pave the way for a detailed consideration of Sartre's thesis on the subject, we shall briefly mention one final subject of debate: that which reflects upon the role accorded to women in Judaism. Jewish women in France, as elsewhere,¹⁸ have raised a feminist Jewish Question.

In poetic mythology, the Jewess has been viewed with a combination of erotic fascination and revulsion. Baudelaire's allusion in Les Fleurs du mal to his 'affreuse juive' is an example of this perception of the Jewess.¹⁹

Judaism has traditionally been a patriarchal religion. God is the Father. In orthodox circles, education has traditionally been the preserve of males. During traditional religious services, the sexes are separated. The woman's role during such services is restricted. Jewish women are encouraged to think more about marriage, motherhood, and the home. Officially, women are 'relieved' of certain burdens. Effectively, theirs is, in the above respects, a second-class status.²⁰ It would be wrong to present the Jewess as a symbol of female oppression. On the contrary, she is also revered.²¹ Nevertheless, some progressive Jewish women, perhaps encouraged by changes in both

legislation and social attitudes (concerning abortion, contraception, and the family generally) have begun to challenge the patriarchal bias of Judaism.²²

Sartre does not raise a feminist Jewish Question in RQJ. Indeed, his lack of attention to the cause of the emancipation of women has been criticised. For example, his portrayal of women in his plays has come under fire from Bailey.²³ Indeed, Sartre wrote no work exclusively devoted to the subject of women. Simone de Beauvoir has confronted him with this fact, in an interview published in 1975:

Eh bien Sartre, je voudrais vous interroger sur la question des femmes; car, en somme, vous ne vous êtes jamais exprimé sur cette question, et c'est même la première chose que je voudrais vous demander. Comment se fait-il que vous ayez parlé de tous les opprimés: des travailleurs, des noirs, dans 'Orphée noir', des Juifs, dans Réflexions sur la question juive, et que vous n'ayez jamais parlé des femmes?²⁴

In reply, Sartre apologetically acknowledges the existence of a feminist question. He also argues that it is separate from the problem of class. (p. 123) This resembles his approach to the Jewish Question. He acknowledges a Jewish Question to exist, and he asserts that it can converge with, but also exists outside the terms of, class.

However, Sartre's attitude towards the role and status of women within Judaism lies outside his formulation of a Jewish Question in RQJ. The feminist Jewish Question provides us with an example of a formulation of a Jewish Question which is one facet of a wider issue. The debate on Jewish feminism, whatever its special features, is part of a wider debate.

Thus we can usefully distinguish between aspects of the Jewish Question which directly affect Jews (for example anti-Semitism); and social issues which have a bearing upon Jews, among others. The Jewish Question will be shown below to have repercussions beyond the realm of anti-Semite and Jew. Indeed, Groult goes so far as to suggest that Sartre's analysis of the Jew and anti-Semitism can be extrapolated

wholesale without losing any of its relevance to fit the model of women and female oppression.²⁵ We shall see that Sartre's formulation of the Jewish Question raises issues of particular concern to Jews, even if subsequently such issues are shown to also transcend Jews.

We can see that the concept 'the Jewish Question' is capable of many different formulations, some of which overlap. We would stress the ambiguity of the term, and the deceptive nature of the definite article placed before it, as, for example, in Sartre's title Réflexions sur la question juive. It is important to bear in mind that Sartre's formulation of a Jewish Question is one among many. Use of the term merits qualification. Precisely how one formulates a Jewish Question will also affect how one answers it.

We have effectively defined the scope of Sartre's study in negative terms. Sartre does not formulate a Jewish Question in RQJ exclusively in any of the above terms. We now have an idea of the territory RQJ does not cover.

How does Sartre formulate his Jewish Question? We shall see below that Sartre is interested primarily in anti-Semitism as an individual and social phenomenon; in different perceptions of the Jew; and in the question of Jewish identity in the absence of anti-Semitism.

2. APPROACHES TO THE JEWISH QUESTION

In Chapter IV, we shall consider anti-Semitic studies on the Jewish Question. To prepare the way, we shall now situate Sartre's contribution to the debate on the Jewish Question in France within the context of other, genuine studies. We shall consider the possibilities and limitations of some alternative approaches to the Jewish Question adopted by other writers. This is with a view to identifying the specificity of Sartre's approach, in Chapter VI.

Before doing so, however, we shall first take note of other writings by Sartre of the period, of direct or indirect relevance as far as the Jewish Question is concerned. Among Sartre's writings, RQJ is not the sole source of evidence we can look to, when considering the subject of Sartre and the Jewish Question, and we would do well to consider other allusions Sartre made to the Jewish Question in works other than RQJ, before turning to examine the latter.

In Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, published in 1948, Sartre claimed that it was impossible to write a good novel in praise of anti-Semitism, or generally, in praise of racism. (The comparison between anti-Semitism and racism, as forms of minority racial victimisation, is valid, in this context. However, the wholesale reduction of anti-Semitism to a sub-category of racism is to be avoided. Racism is only one facet of anti-Semitism, which is a complicated phenomenon, as we shall see throughout this thesis.) Sartre maintained that it is quite possible to write a good novel-- according, it must be said, to Sartre's subjective evaluation of what is, and is not, a good novel -- *against* racism, expressing, for example, a black American's hatred of the white racist:

On peut imaginer qu'un bon roman soit écrit par un Noir américain même si la haine s'y étale parce que, à travers cette haine, c'est la liberté de sa race qu'il réclame.²⁶

However, it is not possible, argued Sartre, to write a good novel *in favour of racism*, or, with particular reference to the Jewish Question, in praise of anti-Semitism:

Mais personne ne saurait supposer un instant qu'on puisse écrire un bon roman à la louange de l'antisémitisme. Car on ne peut obliger de moi, dans le moment où j'éprouve que ma liberté est indissolublement liée à celle de tous les autres hommes, que je l'emploie à approuver l'asservissement de quelques-uns d'entre eux. (p. 112)

We shall see in Chapter V that, to the Sartre of Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, literature is synonymous with human freedom (a concept to which Sartre refers repeatedly, though which he defines only in the most general of terms). The racist or anti-Semitic novel effectively calls for the suppression of universal human freedom. Thus, to Sartre, a good novel advocating the suppression of human freedom *for some* is a contradiction in terms.²⁷ For the Sartre of 1948, and of Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, it was not possible to write a good novel in favour of racism.

However, in the same year that RQJ was published, Sartre himself proved that it was at least possible to write a *bad* piece of imaginative writing *against* racism. In 1946, Sartre's play La P... respectueuse was published. In La P..., Sartre appears to draw an analogy between the sexual exploitation of the prostitute and the racial oppression of the negro. However, in dramatic terms, the play is unsuccessful. Its dialogue is often simplistic, and its characters are little more than stereotypes:

FRED: J'ai cinq domestiques de couleur. Quand on m'appelle au téléphone, et que l'un d'eux décroche l'appareil, il l'essuie avant de me le tendre.²⁸

Generally, it is hard to see in La P... an effective denunciation of racism, in the United States or elsewhere.

The comparison between RQJ and La P... is worthy of note, not least in view of their contrasting reception. As we have suggested, La P... does not stand as a significant achievement in the field of literature condemning racism. Nor has it given rise to significant critical debate on the themes it raises, or Sartre's stance in relation to them. In contrast, we shall see in Chapter V that RQJ has indeed given rise to such a debate, playing its part in re-opening a post-War discussion on the Jewish Question, and stimulating interest both in the debate in general, and in Sartre's particular contribution to it. RQJ has provoked substantial critical reaction, and continues to do so, to this day.

A further reason why a comparison between La P... and RQJ is of interest concerns Sartre's stance with regard to racism in the two works. In La P..., Sartre does little more than adopt a liberal stance on racism, condemning the racist, yet presenting the victim of racism in an almost angelic light. This is a stance which he actually criticises in RQJ. In contrast, in RQJ, Sartre transcends a liberal stance on anti-Semitism; not simply through his express condemnation of such a stance in the text, but through his analysis itself, and through the adoption of a radical attitude towards Jewish being. Unlike La P..., RQJ contains an effective denunciation of anti-Semitism in particular, and of racism in general.

We would argue that RQJ succeeds where La P... fails, in seeking to attack racism, and human oppression.

Apart from Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, Sartre also touches upon themes relating to the Jewish Question in his prose fiction: anti-Semitism, in the short story 'L'Enfance d'un chef', the last in the

collection entitled Le Mur; and the plight of Jews in France during the Munich crisis, in the novel Le Sursis.

In 'L'Enfance d'un chef', Sartre describes the progression which leads Lucien, the adolescent son of a factory boss, to become an anti-Semite. In this short story, we can find traces of Sartre's theory of emotion, published contemporaneously in Esquisse pour une théorie des émotions (1939). It also contains a foretaste of his later theories on essence and existence, set out in his major ontological work, L'Être et le néant. More significantly, for the purposes of this study, we can perceive links between Sartre's fictional portrait of the anti-Semite in the short story 'L'Enfance', and his portrait of the anti-Semite in the essay Réflexions, as Hewitt has done: 'Le "Portrait de l'antisémite" apparaît en effet comme l'explication non-fictive de l'antisémitisme fictif de Lucien Fleurier'.²⁹

One such link between 'L'Enfance d'un chef' ('LEC') and Réflexions sur la question juive lies in Sartre's claim, implicit in the short story 'LEC', and expressed directly in the essay RQJ, that the anti-Semite is one who has chosen to assume an *a priori* essential self, or character. In 'L'Enfance', the adolescent Lucien passes through a series of different, though, to Sartre, equally inauthentic, metaphysical awakenings. Following each consecutive 'awakening', he discovers himself to be essentially someone or something, an essential Lucien:

Je suis somnambule (p. 166)...Je suis grand (p. 172)...Je n'existe pas (p. 181)...J'ai un complexe (p. 188)...Je suis Rimbaud (p. 200)...Je suis un pédéraste (p. 209)...Je suis un déraciné (p. 231).³⁰

His final *prise de conscience* is his discovery that he is an anti-Semite:

Lucien, c'est moi! Quelqu'un qui ne peut pas souffrir les Juifs! (p. 248)

Lucien ultimately finds his 'real' self in his role as a hater of Jews.

The germ of this notion -- of an individual seeking out and finding an essential, immutable self through the choice to be an anti-Semite -- found in the 1939 short-story, is formulated in detail in Sartre's L'Être et le néant. It is developed more fully in RQJ. Here, one aspect of Sartre's theory of anti-Semitism is that the anti-Semite is not one who is driven to anti-Semitic beliefs by virtue of his personal experience of the Jew. Instead, in search of an *a priori* essence, he turns to anti-Semitism, in order to assume an essential self. (We shall consider this important aspect of Sartre's portrait of the anti-Semite in greater detail in Chapter II.)

A further example of an idea surfacing in the 1939 short story which Sartre returns to in RQJ involves Sartre's assertion at the beginning of Réflexions that the anti-Semite is one who has chosen to live on an emotional plane. This is also hinted at in the earlier short-story. In 'L'Enfance d'un chef', Lucien, the son of a factory boss, experiences anguish as he begins to become aware of his lack of identity with himself. He is subsequently shown to have recourse to anti-Semitic sentiments, in order to create a sense of identity with himself:

"Oh! pensa-t-il avec désespoir, ce que je les hais! Ce que je hais les Juifs!" et il essaya de puiser un peu de force dans la contemplation de cette haine immense. Mais elle fondit sous son regard, il avait beau penser à Léon Blum qui recevait de l'argent de l'Allemagne et haïssait les Français, il ne ressentait plus rien qu'une morne indifférence. (p. 245)

In Chapter II, we shall see that this summoning of an emotional state is an important aspect of Sartre's portrait of the anti-Semite, as set out in RQJ.

Sartre also maintains, in RQJ, that the anti-Semite adheres rigidly to his views, since he has chosen to be a person of strong views, whatever they may be, in order to be a person of strong views. Again, we find the same idea suggested in the earlier short story. Lucien admires one of his friends, Lemordant, who has strong convictions. Lucien wishes that he could have them to:

"C'est un type qui a des convictions", pensait Lucien avec respect; et il se demandait non sans jalousie quelle pouvait être cette certitude qui donnait à Lemordant une si pleine conscience de soi. "Voilà comme je devrais être: un roc." (p. 224)

We shall see below that Sartre develops this notion of the intellectually immutable anti-Semite more fully in RQJ.

From the above, we can note the existence of thematic links between Sartre's early short story and his later essay on the Jewish Question. In Lucien's search for an essential self; in his recourse to anti-Semitism as a means of feeling anger; and in his choice to be immune to rational persuasion, 'L'Enfance d'un chef' provides us with a foretaste of Sartre's subsequently formulated portrait of the anti-Semite in RQJ.

However, if Sartre touches upon themes in 'LEC' which he will subsequently develop in RQJ, what he does not do in the short-story, even in the most superficial way, is to home in on the Jew. Although 'LEC' touches upon certain themes relating to the Jewish Question, it does so only in the most general of terms, and is concerned with the anti-Semite only. It does not take account of the Jewish component of the question. We shall repeatedly emphasise that an important distinguishing feature of RQJ is Sartre's presentation of the Jew, and his attitude towards Jewish identity.

Sartre does briefly consider the Jewish component in Le Sursis. Written between 1943 and 1944, this novel briefly takes in the Munich crisis as seen through the eyes of Jews in Paris. In particular, the important, and often overlooked, theme of individual Jewish authenticity, developed more fully in RQJ, is briefly alluded to in the novel.

Here is not the place to discuss in detail Sartre's concept of the authentic Jew, as elaborated in RQJ. We shall do so in Chapter II. Indeed, Sartre's attitude towards the Jew has given rise to a critical debate which we shall examine in detail below, in Chapter V. However, since we are considering Sartre's allusion to an aspect of the Jewish Question in Le Sursis, we might briefly note that Sartre's authentic Jew is one who faces his situation as a Jew, and re-invents a mode of being as a Jew, starting from that situation. His inauthentic Jew is one who conceals that situation from himself, and seeks to escape from it.

Sartre's Le Sursis provides us with a fictional representation of what in RQJ Sartre describes as the inauthentic Jew. M. Birnenschatz looks at his daughter, and thinks:

La mère était grasse et molle avec de larges yeux apeurés et résignés qui le mettaient mal à l'aise, mais Ella tenait de lui et puis surtout elle ne tenait de personne, elle s'était faite elle-même et à Paris; je leur dis toujours: la race, qu'est-ce que c'est que la race, est-ce que vous prendriez Ella pour une juive, si vous la rencontriez dans la rue? Mince comme une Parisienne, avec le teint chaud des filles du Midi et un petit visage raisonnable et passionné, un visage équilibré, reposant, sans tare, sans race, sans destin, un vrai visage français.²¹ (p. 93)

Here, the voice is inauthentic to Sartre since it capitulates to certain myths prevalent at the time concerning the existence of alleged physical characteristics common to all Jews, myths which, we shall see, Sartre was keen to contest. Also, it shows a Jew seeking to pass off as an Aryan. That Jews hid their Jewishness from others under Vichy was a matter of survival. That they hid it from themselves was, to Sartre, a matter of authenticity.

Like 'LEC', Le Sursis does, however briefly, provide us with a fictional evocation of the Jewish Question. Unlike 'LEC', Sartre presents this theme through the eyes of the Jew. However, he does so only fleetingly, in keeping with the technique of simultaneity employed throughout the novel. While evoking the anti-Semite (in the person of

Lucien Fleurier) in the early short-story 'L'Enfance d'un chef', and while briefly alluding to the theme of Jewish authenticity and bad faith in the later novel Le Sursis, Sartre wrote no work of fiction exclusively devoted to the Jewish Question. Aspects of the Jewish Question, whether relating to either anti-Semite or Jew, or both, are treated thematically, and sketchily, in his afore-mentioned prose-fiction. They do not offer as detailed an analysis of the Jewish Question as that to be found in RQJ. For his major study of the Jewish Question, in RQJ, Sartre exploited the medium of the philosophical essay.

We now turn to consider possible alternative approaches to the Jewish Question to that adopted by Sartre. Historians have played a major role in documenting the Jewish Question. Such studies include histories of the Jewish people, and, within the context of a Franco-Jewish Question, histories of French Jews. Important histories of anti-Semitism have also been published since RQJ: Poliakov's Histoire de l'antisémitisme (1951) and Isaac's Genèse de l'antisémitisme (1956). In addition, historical accounts of the Occupation as it affected Jews in France continue to be published.

In an interview published in 1966, Sartre stated that he would have referred to works such as Poliakov's, were he to have written his study at a later date:

Si je devais reprendre mon essai, aujourd'hui, je m'inspirerais d'une série d'ouvrages remarquables -- comme l'Histoire de l'antisémitisme de Poliakov -- qui ont paru depuis.³²

While maintaining that certain of his conclusions in the 1944 essay would not have changed -- his portrait of the anti-Semite and his designation of the (in)authentic Jew -- he does acknowledge the contribution historians have made to the debate on the Jewish Question

since the War, and the need to include a historical perspective in approaching the Jewish Question.

As readers of RQJ, we may be tempted to situate Sartre's contribution to the debate on the Jewish Question within the context of post-War studies on the Jewish Question and the Jewish experience in general. If we do so, however, it is important to remember that many such studies were not available to Sartre at the time he wrote RQJ.

A Marxist historical approach to the Jewish Question is one alternative approach. We must distinguish between two types of study. Firstly, Marx's own pre-Marxist 'On the Jewish Question', of 1844, a two-part review of two studies by Bruno Bauer on the subject. Secondly, a Marxist analysis of the Jewish Question. A Marxist approach inserts the Jewish Question within the framework of a Marxist analysis of history. Thus, Léon, in La Conception matérialiste de la question juive (1946) described the Jews as a 'people-class'. Both Marx's at times blatant anti-Semitism, and the Marxist analysis of the Jewish Question, have attracted criticism among many Jewish writers. Marx's personal attitude towards Judaism, towards his own Jewishness, and towards the Jewish Question, is highly ambiguous. It has been perceived by many writers, including Misrahi (a former student of Sartre's), and Poliakov (author of an authoritative history of anti-Semitism), as anti-Semitic, and, further, as exemplifying the self-hating phenomenon of Jewish anti-Semitism.³³

Yet the Marxist perspective raises the important question of primacy. Is the Jewish Question one that merits treatment in its own right? Or is it a secondary manifestation of some primary phenomenon?

It may well be that a Jewish Question should not exist. However, the Holocaust occurred, and is neither anticipated, nor explicable, by the Marxist analysis. Furthermore, it is clear that a primary Jewish Question is perceived to exist in France, in different ways, by anti-Semites, Jews, and by Sartre himself. As we shall see in Chapter IV, there are special features concerning the Jewish Question, and in

particular, concerning the phenomenon of anti-Semitism, which justify our setting it apart from universalist theories of oppression, in addition to inserting it within them, as Léon does.

The Jewish Question both involves and transcends questions of oppression. It involves and transcends the problem of racism. Judaism is a religion, yet it also transcends religion. If economic circumstances have made an impact on Jewish history, Jewish culture, in the widest sense of that term, has survived independently of them. The Jew is both affected by social oppression and is an agent existing independently of such oppression.

Sartre himself does not adopt a Marxist approach to the Jewish Question in RQJ. He does refer to class briefly, perceiving anti-Semitism as a predominantly lower middle-class phenomenon. Furthermore, he does, ultimately, associate the end of anti-Semitism with the end of class. However, his overall analysis of the Jewish Question is not Marxist. Although he subsequently leaned towards the French Communist Party in the 1950s, and towards a reconciliation of Existentialism and Marxism in his 1960 Critique de la raison dialectique, RQJ is very firmly situated in his Existentialism of the 1940s.

In general, historical studies of the Jewish Question are important in that they document the existence and effect of anti-Semitism, in and beyond France. Yet they can also be limited, if they deal only with the effects of anti-Semitism, for example, its social consequences. We may become fully conversant with the history of anti-Semitism, with its social impact, yet still remain ignorant as to its origins.

Sartre does not consider anti-Semitism in terms of cause and effect. RQJ presents neither a history of the Jews, nor a history of the Jewish Question, either in or beyond France. The scope of Sartre's essay is, therefore, narrowly defined, as Sartre himself was subsequently to admit. It contains no historical Jewish dimension. However, what it does attempt to do is to explain, not the effect of anti-Semitism, as

histories of anti-Semitism may do, but its origins, and how a Jewish Question might come into being in the first place.

Sartre's approach to the Jewish Question is more psychological than historical. RQJ is a psychological study of anti-Semitism to the extent that, in it, Sartre studies functions of the human mind. Psychological studies of anti-Semitism -- again, published *after* Sartre's essay -- have often investigated what facets of the human personality are conducive to those authoritarian, irrational, and sadistic patterns of behaviour that may (though may not) coincide with anti-Semitic tendencies: for example, Milgram's Obedience to Authority (1975).²⁴

In Adorno's The Authoritarian Personality (1950), the collaborating team of psychologists themselves identify similarities between their conclusions and Sartre's. Hannush has also drawn attention to this.²⁵ One such resemblance concerns Adorno's conclusion as to the widespread susceptibility of individuals to patterns of authoritarian behaviour. Implicit in RQJ is indeed the notion that the anti-Semite is potentially anyone.

However, while Sartre and Adorno both adopt a psychological approach, and in some instances reach similar conclusions, their respective methods of collecting research data differ markedly. Adorno's statistics stem from evidence extracted from interviews and surveys scientifically processed. This stands in contrast to the evidence Sartre adduces in support of his case: subjective reflections and personal or borrowed anecdotes. Such anecdotes are hardly scientific. Yet Adorno's extensive use of scientifically obtained and processed statistical information leads to a display of data, the significance of which at times becomes obscure, by virtue of its sheer density. Sartre's method, however statistically unscientific, is more approachable, in this respect.

Psychological studies touching on the anti-Semitic component of the Jewish Question are important for the emphasis they place on individual mental processes. Studies of authoritarian human behaviour may shed light on one aspect of anti-Semitism. However, it is one aspect among many. Anti-Semitism cannot be reduced solely to a taste for authoritarian conduct. Furthermore, such psychological studies of anti-Semitism cannot take account of the Jewish component of the Jewish Question.

Nor does Sartre present a psychology of anti-Semitism in an effort to present anti-Semitism in terms of irrational impulses beyond an individual's control. In Chapters II and III, we shall see that what Sartre refers to as possible Jewish psychological syndromes -- self-consciousness, anxiety, and certain modes of escape -- are potential, but by no means inevitable, modes of being. He rejects the concept of essential, or fixed, psychological characteristics, be they anti-Semitic or Jewish. Thus, RQJ contains a psychological analysis of aspects of the Jewish Question, yet is also more than this. Sartre ultimately abandons psychology in favour of ethics.

A further possible approach to the Jewish Question is the adoption of a sociological approach. Indeed, sociological studies into post-War Franco-Jewish identity, such as Philippe's Être Juif dans la société française (1979) and Schnapper's Juifs et israélites (1980), provide an additional perspective from which to consider the Jewish Question. They examine different tendencies within French Jewry, in terms of collective outlook and way of life. On an individual basis, Finkielkraut's Le Juif imaginaire (1980) provides a case history of Jewish self-perception. Finkielkraut asks the question: how am I a Jew? He asks in the first person the question which Sartre effectively raises in the third person: how does a Jew become a Jew?

The sociological perspective has its advantages and its limitations (like all approaches), as Schnapper, an exponent of it, has recognised:

A condition de ne pas oublier les limites inhérentes à toute analyse sociologique, qui ne rendra pas compte de l'expérience religieuse, individuelle et collective, de se souvenir du caractère unique de l'histoire des Juifs dans l'Occident chrétien, à condition aussi que le sociologue garde présente à l'esprit la qualité des êtres humains et de leurs souffrances, il me paraît souhaitable d'aborder le problème des Juifs comme celui d'autres populations et d'autres conditions sociales. Le problème juif est aussi un problème sociologique.³⁶

Schnapper's sociological approach takes in 'la judaïcité française'. (p. 34) It is a study of the Franco-Jewish population as a collective, manifesting different trends.

In an interview given in 1939, five years before he was to write what was to be his major contribution to the debate on the Jewish question, Réflexions sur la question juive, Sartre referred to anti-Semitism in sociological terms. He described the existence of anti-Semitism in society as a 'normal' phenomenon, a structural constant like crime or suicide:

L'antisémitisme est en général un phénomène normal dans la société, comme est normal le crime, selon Durkheim. Ceci me paraît tout à fait indépendant du caractère des Juifs à l'égard desquels l'antisémitisme s'exerce. Une société a besoin à certains moments, de se définir 'contre' et la société non juive refuse généralement l'assimilation. Cependant, il me paraît que le phénomène auquel je fais allusion ne dépasse jamais certaines proportions que l'on pourrait déterminer par une étude scientifique comme constantes. La constante antisémitisme varie naturellement selon les pays. Elle est plus élevée, par exemple, en Allemagne qu'en France. Mais à certaines périodes il y a un développement anormal de l'antisémitisme, en tant que phénomène de compensation, apparition au caractère pathologique prononcé.³⁷

In terms of his treatment of the Jew, Sartre might appear to adopt a sociological approach. He appears to consider, not solely the

individual Jew, but also Jews insofar as they form, and conform to, certain behavioural patterns typical of a social group.

However, the important, ethical component of his analysis takes us beyond the realm of sociology. Furthermore, concerning his treatment of anti-Semitism, it is presented in RQJ as neither a social norm nor a pathological abnormality. By 1944, Sartre has come to see anti-Semitism in individual terms. With RQJ, we are far from Schnapper's perspective.

We have now briefly considered some alternative approaches to the Jewish Question: historical, psychological and sociological. Each one provides a distinct, while limited, perspective from which to survey the Jewish Question. Sartre's approach to the Jewish Question is phenomenological. We shall consider this term in more detail in Chapter III.

3. TERMINOLOGY

Having seen that formulations of, and approaches to, the Jewish Question can vary, we shall now turn our attention to the question of terminology. We shall concentrate on the precise terms in which Sartre tackled this subject, and consider the language we ourselves are to use, when discussing Sartre's thesis.

In particular, the terms 'Jew', 'Jewish', and 'Judaism' deserve consideration. When Sartre uses such terms, when Jews or anti-Semites use them, when we use them, what are they being used to denote?

Two ideas which are to be found surfacing amid the debate on the Jewish Question during the nineteenth century are that Judaism is solely a religion, or that the Jew is a manifestation of capitalism. Is Judaism solely a religion, or the Jew a capitalist? Certainly not as far as the Bund -- a mass, secular, Eastern European, Yiddish-speaking, non-Zionist, socialist workers movement -- was concerned. Such ideas conceal an anti-Semitic basis, and an ignorance of the full extent of the Jewish experience.

Given such distortions, we cannot proceed to an analysis of Sartre's study of the Jewish Question without first examining the term 'Jewish' in Sartre's title. If we are to enter into a debate on the Jewish Question, however formulated, and whatever our approach, we must first acknowledge the existence of alternative definitions of its Jewish component, and define our own terms. Just as we have paid attention to the issue of Sartre's particular formulation of a Jewish Question, so too should we consider the terminology with which a Jewish Question, once formulated, is to be discussed. Just as there are various formulations of a Jewish Question, so too is the term Judaism similarly capable of a wide variety of definitions. Indeed, we may ask: what is Judaism?

In fact, the reader of RQJ will notice that Sartre hardly uses the term *Judaïsme* at all. Instead, he refers most often to *le Juif*, or *les Juifs*. This suggests that he is interested primarily in the Jew as an individual, or, in Existentialist terms, in the consciousness or being of the Jew. He is less concerned with Judaism, a set of beliefs and practices. In common with many post-War writers on the Jewish Question in France, he is interested in the existential aspect of Jewish being.

In order to avoid over-simplistic and reductive references to 'Judaism', we shall distinguish between four facets of Jewish being. To help us to do so, we shall refer to a *Reconstructionist* approach to Judaism. Reconstructionism is relevant as far as Sartre's perception of Judaism is concerned, in that it adopts a progressive approach, acknowledging the many constituents of the Jewish experience. In singling out a Reconstructionist approach, we recognise that this is merely one of many possible approaches to defining Judaism we could have chosen to follow.

The founder of Reconstructionism is Mordecai Kaplan.³⁹ One significant aspect of a Reconstructionist definition of Judaism is that it attaches importance to different facets of Judaism, in addition to religion. Epstein defines Reconstructionism (with disapproval) as follows:

Inaugurated by Mordecai Kaplan (b. 1881) Reconstructionism is based on the proposition that the Jewish religion exists for the Jewish people and not the Jewish people for the Jewish religion. In the light of this proposition, Judaism is conceived merely as a civilization in which religion, though occupying an important place, is but one of the many forms in which a civilization expresses itself, like language, law, literature, and art.⁴⁰

Thus, Judaism is perceived, not as a *fait accompli*, but from various perspectives, both serving, and at the service of, those who adhere to its various beliefs and practices.

In our approach to Sartre's RQJ, we shall divide up the Jewish component of the Jewish Question into four distinct, yet overlapping,

sub-components: *juiverie*, *judaïsme*, *le Juif*, and *judéité*. *Juiverie* represents the sum total of anti-Semitic mythology surrounding the Jew. *Judaïsme* designates a religion, or a particular system of beliefs, precepts and rites. *Le Juif* designates the individual as opposed to the tradition, the practitioner of such beliefs as opposed to the beliefs themselves, the existential Jew. Finally, *judéité* designates Jewish identity, or Jewishness.

Thus, we shall not refer vaguely to the term 'Judaism', or to 'the Jews', or to 'Jews'. We shall break down the Jewish component into these four facets of Jewish being, while again stressing that this is merely one of a variety of approaches to the Jewish component which we could adopt. We shall incorporate these four facets of the Jewish component of the Jewish Question into our discussion, in order to express certain distinctions we wish to make. We have already noted that Sartre effectively, if not expressly, distinguishes between Judaism and the existential Jew, and chooses to concentrate on the latter. With this four-part approach to the Jewish component, we shall be able to appreciate with greater precision the various aspects of Sartre's analysis.

Concerning the first of our terms, Sartre actually uses the term *juiverie* in RQJ: 'Pour l'antisémite, ce qui fait le Juif c'est la présence en lui de la "*Juiverie*". (p. 44) Although Sartre only uses the term once, an analysis of *juiverie* is actually an important aspect of his study. *Juiverie* is that anti-Semitic perception of Jews which sees them as a nation's bankers, bourgeois capitalists, the personification of Evil, and the subverters of the state. *Juiverie* designates an arbitrarily pernicious, but more importantly for Sartre, essentially pre-defined, Jew. It is a complex concept to isolate, since it manifests itself in a variety of different guises. It can present itself as an apparently coherent intellectual thesis. Alternatively, as a mass of self-contradictory and irrational emotional responses. Manifestations of *juiverie* are characterised above all by their elusiveness and diversity. Although recurrent themes can be identified -- the myths of Jewish ubiquitousness, persecution, contamination, and

subversion -- there appears to be no single and consistent anti-Semitic perception of the Jew.

Vichy applied the criteria of religion, heredity, and race, in order to define the Jew. However, defining a Jew, and identifying a Jew so-defined, were to prove different. In the light of the intangibility and unfathomability of *juiverie*, the imposition of the yellow star can be seen as indicative of the gap between the anti-Semite's *idea* of the Jew, and the existential Jew encountered in the world; the gap between definition and identification; between *juiverie* and *le Juif*.

Consideration of this gap will be seen to be a significant feature of Sartre's analysis. The anti-Semitic state's inability to define and identify the object of its hatred adds weight to Sartre's general contention, expressed in RQJ, that anti-Semitism functions primarily in the mind of the anti-Semite, and not as a result of an actual encounter with the Jew in the world. Thus, if part of RQJ is concerned with a certain idea of the Jew, then we might name that certain idea of the Jew *juiverie*.

We are now in a position to distinguish between *juiverie* and the second of our terms, *judaïsme*. If *juiverie* concerns a distorted (Sartre would say, pre-reflective) perception of the Jew, our second term, *judaïsme*, designates a system of beliefs, common to a group of adherents. But what are those beliefs? How are we to define Judaism?

Although *judaïsme* is not as unfathomable a concept to define as *juiverie*, it does also present considerable problems of definition. This complex question is one which we can only tackle briefly. An in-depth and wide ranging discussion on Judaism obviously lies outside the scope of this thesis, which is largely concerned with questions of existential being and perception. However, some attempt to consider it

must be made. We shall briefly present certain different perceptions of *Judaism*, below.

One major problem, when it comes to defining Judaism, concerns the priority to be accorded to religion. We have already noted that Sartre, for his part, formulates a Jewish Question outside the terms of a debate on religion. We shall now consider some progressive definitions of Judaism, to obtain a clearer idea of the problems ahead.

Lévinas defines Judaism as fundamentally a religion, but also a culture, and a particular sensibility:

Avant tout une religion, système de croyances, de rites et de prescriptions morales, fondés sur la Bible, sur le Talmud, sur la littérature rabbinique...une culture, résultat ou fondement de la religion, mais ayant un devenir propre...une sensibilité diffuse faite de quelques idées et souvenirs, de quelques coutumes et émotions, d'une solidarité avec les Juifs persécutés en tant que Juifs.⁴¹

For Lévinas, while secular factors intervene, religion is the most important aspect of Judaism.

For Marmor, 'Judaism is both peoplehood and religion, civilisation and faith'.⁴²

De Lange, logically, places people before religion:

To be a Jew means first and foremost to belong to a group, the Jewish people, and the religious beliefs are secondary, in a sense, to their corporate allegiance.⁴³

Here, religion is one facet of Jewish being, rather than Jewish being being subservient to religion.

Neher presents a further example of the Reconstructionist case. He argues that a definition of Judaism must take into account people, religion, and history:

Le Judaïsme est une religion, certes, et à ce titre comporte une doctrine. Mais cette doctrine possède une caractéristique, qui lui vient d'une communauté d'hommes, les Juifs, qui en sont simultanément les invoqués et les porteurs.⁴⁴

Neher denies the supremacy of either theology over sociology, or sociology over theology:

Pas d'hégémonie d'une *théologie* pour connaître le judaïsme, certes. Mais pas davantage, pour le connaître, autocratie d'une *sociologie*. (p. 6)

He refers to an essentialist link between Judaism and the Jew (which, below, Sartre will be shown to challenge):

Judaïsme et Juifs sont liés essentiellement, je veux dire par essence. (p. 7)

He also, however, further refers to an existential link:

Judaïsme et Juifs portent avec eux, en eux, l'accumulation quantitative et qualitative d'une série d'événements passés, et la multitude imprévisible, mais inévitable, d'une autre série d'événements futurs. (p. 7)

However, Neher's comments exemplify the way in which Judaism can be broken down into various distinct, yet overlapping, sub-components. For him, there can be no Judaism without Jews, nor Jews without Judaism, nor Jews or Judaism without Jewish history.

Thus, even within the above, predominantly Reconstructionist definitions of Judaism, which represent only one (progressive) tendency among others within the framework of a debate on substantive Judaism, we can see that a range of definitions of Judaism exists, linked in particular to the question of the status of religion. Even within this brief outline, we can see that the problem of definition is a complex one, and cannot accurately be reduced to a single concept. The reduction of Judaism solely to a religion is therefore an oversimplification to be avoided. We have not come any nearer to defining what Judaism is. However, we have at least complicated the debate

sufficiently to rule out the recourse to oversimplistic definitions of Judaism.

In addition to considering *juiverie* (mythological, anti-Semitic perceptions of the Jew) and *judaïsme* (the system of beliefs and practices adhered to by Jews, however defined), we can also consider existential appraisals of the individual Jew: *le Juif*.

This pre-supposes that the Jew exists. As we shall see in Chapter II, the liberal -- defined by Sartre as the upholder of the abstract and universal Rights of Man -- denies that the Jew exists. He perceives no Jew, but only universal man. He therefore perceives no Jewish Question. This refusal to recognise the specificity of the Jew, however such specificity might be defined, has to be situated within the context of the sociological factor that Jews are perceived to exist -- whether by anti-Semites or by themselves -- and that a Jewish Question is similarly perceived to exist.

Given that the Jew is perceived to exist, when we refer to the individual Jew, to whom are we referring? As with our other two components of Jewishness -- *juiverie* and *judaïsme* -- *le Juif* can be defined in a variety of ways. To illustrate the ambiguity of the term *Juif*, Schnapper, in *Juifs et israélites*, (1980), designates three categories of Jew, based on research interviews investigating modes of Jewish self-perception: traditionalists, 'les pratiquants'; political activists (of whatever persuasion), 'les militants'; and assimilated Jews, 'les israélites'.

Thus, just as *juiverie* is unfathomable, and *judaïsme* capable of a wide variety of definitions, so too is the term *Juif* open to a wide variety of different interpretations. Again, we must take care, when we refer to the individual Jew, not to reduce that term to a single

entity. If RQJ contains an analysis of *juiverie*, it also considers *le Juif*.

In addition to *juiverie*, *judaïsme*, and *le Juif*, a fourth, and, for the purposes of this thesis, final, and important, sub-division of the Jewish component of the Jewish Question is *judéité*. This can be defined as Jewish self-perception, or Jewish identity. Like *juiverie*, it has particular relevance as far as Sartre's ontology is concerned.

In her sociological study of the Franco-Jewish community, Schnapper asserts the need to take account of this factor of self-perception:

Être Juif, c'est se dire Juif ou être dit Juif par les autres.⁴⁵

Accordingly, Jews are individuals who look upon themselves, or whom others look upon (an aspect of Sartre's analysis) as being Jews. This description of *judéité*, according to the criterion of perception, usefully takes account of two categories of 'Jew': those Jews who do not perceive themselves as such, despite fulfilling hereditary and other criteria; and those non-Jews who, having adopted certain religious, linguistic, ethical or ritualistic practices, identify with Judaism, despite their origins.

An example of the former category of 'non-Jewish Jew' is Finkielkraut. His Jewish identity takes the form of a lack, with which he cannot identify. He defines his Jewishness as a spatial and temporal absence, and a retreat into the past:

La judéité, c'est ce qui me manque, et non ce qui me définit; c'est la brûlure infime d'une absence, et non la plénitude triomphante de l'instinct. J'appelle juive, en somme, cette part de moi-même qui ne se résigne pas à vivre avec son temps, qui cultive la formidable suprématie de ce qui a été sur ce qui est aujourd'hui.⁴⁶

This self-negating perception of *judéité* is one example of Jewishness, indeed, one which echoes aspects of Sartre's ontological concept of nothingness. Extreme as it is, in its rejection of any positively definable Jewish identity, it is nonetheless one example of Jewish self-perception, and, within the criteria of *judéité*, wholly justifiable as an example of Jewish identity.⁴⁷ *Judéité* is the individual Jew's attitude towards Judaism, and towards his or her being as a Jew.

Thus, by breaking down the term 'Judaism' into these sub-divisions -- *juiverie*, *judaïsme*, *Juif*, and *judéité* -- we have sought to show that the Jewish component of the Jewish Question is complex, and irreducible to simplistic formulas. Each of these four facets of the Jewish component set out above are separate, though interlinked, facets of Judaism. Each one, taken alone, can be sub-divided, in turn, into a number of alternative sub-definitions. The reduction of Judaism to any single entity is therefore to be avoided. In order to consider Sartre's contribution to the debate on the Jewish Question in France, in order to enter into that debate ourselves, we need to qualify references to 'Judaism', as well as to 'the Jewish Question' itself. We cannot participate in this debate, less still make a worthwhile contribution to it, unless we have first reflected upon the meaning of such terms. As we shall repeatedly seek to show, one important and valuable feature of Sartre's study lies precisely in this re-evaluation of the terms with which discussion of a Jewish Question might take place.

The political framework of the Vichy régime was preceded by over half a century of Third Republic anti-Semitic propaganda, between the 1880s and the Occupation (see Chapter IV). The debate on the Jewish Question during this period, prior to the publication of Sartre's *RQJ*, was largely an anti-Semitic debate on *juiverie*.

A significant aspect of Sartre's RQJ lies in its designation, and de-mystification, of certain facets of *juiverie*; its differentiation between *juiverie* and *le Juif*; and, in more general terms, its transformation of the post-War debate on the Jewish Question in France, away from the Third Republic anti-Semitic debate on *juiverie* towards a genuine post-War debate on *judéité*.

Having designated four facets of the Jewish component of the Jewish Question, we shall seek throughout our thesis to identify precisely which manifestation(s) of Judaism Sartre is concerned with, at particular points in his analysis. These distinctions are important. As we shall see in Chapter IV, one technique of the anti-Semitic thesis on the Jewish Question consists in seeking to confuse them. We shall seek to identify precisely what aspects of the Jewish component Sartre tackles in RQJ, and what aspects he omits from consideration.

We suggest that Sartre's RQJ is directly or indirectly concerned with three of the above terms only: *juiverie*, *le Juif*, and *judéité*. RQJ is not a study of substantive Judaism. While we can criticise Sartre for omitting the subject of Judaism from consideration, criticism of RQJ as a critique of Judaism is misplaced. Sartre effectively de-mystifies anti-Semitic *juiverie*; considers the individual Jew; and tacitly opens a debate on *judéité*, which, we shall see below, has been taken further by many Franco-Jewish writers, since the War.

* * * *

However, this is to move ahead too quickly. Our task has been to draw attention to the importance of being aware of the terminology with which we discuss a Jewish Question. We should be sensitive to our own terminology, and to that of Sartre's study, if we are to participate in a worthwhile manner in this debate.

4. A NOTE ON THE HOLOCAUST

To complete this initial and brief exploratory journey around 'the Jewish Question', we shall situate Sartre's essay in relation to the Holocaust.⁴⁸ To anyone acquainted with the debate on the Jewish Question in France since the War, it might seem unthinkable to write a thesis on the subject, without taking the Holocaust as a major focus of attention. Certainly, most writers on the Jewish Question in the post-War context have asserted the centrality of this momentous historical event to their preoccupations. Its metaphysical ramifications may be compared to the natural disaster that befell Europe in 1775, in the shape of the Lisbon earthquake. Yet Sartre's essay was written in 1944, and he does not tackle the subject.

How much did Sartre know about the treatment of Jews in France under Vichy? Indeed, how much did anyone in France know?⁴⁹ Sartre was aware of the existence of the camps at the time of writing RQJ. In the text of Réflexions itself, and in other works by Sartre of the period, Sartre registers an awareness of the existence of the camps. Thus, in RQJ, in a passage relating to public discussion of the Jewish Question in France in October 1944 (a matter we shall return to in Chapter V), Sartre writes:

Aujourd'hui [October 1944], ceux d'entre eux que les Allemands n'ont pas déportés ou assassinés parviennent à rentrer chez eux. (p. 86)

He continues:

Va-t-on saluer le retour parmi nous des rescapés, va-t-on donner une pensée à ceux qui sont morts dans les chambres à gaz de Lublin? (p. 86)

Sartre was also aware at the time of writing RQJ of the treatment of Jews under Vichy.

Further evidence that, at the time of writing RQJ, Sartre knew of the phenomenon of the camps is to be found in his novel Le Sursis. This

second novel in the trilogy Les Chemins de la liberté, which homes in on the Munich crisis, was written between 1943 and 1944.⁵⁰ In Le Sursis, Sartre presents a Jewish character, a Monsieur Birnenschatz, who, in trying to convince a fellow Jew that the problems of the Jews in Germany are no concern of the Jews in France, makes the following reference to the camps:

Je vais te dire: je suis Français. Pas Juif, pas Juif français: Français. Les Juifs de Berlin et de Vienne, ceux des camps de concentration, je les plains et puis ça me fait rager de penser qu'il y a des hommes qu'on martyrise. Mais, écoute-moi bien, tout ce que je pourrai faire pour empêcher qu'un Français, un seul Français se fasse casser la gueule pour eux, je le ferai. Je me sens plus proche du premier type que je rencontrerai tout à l'heure dans la rue que de mes oncles de Lenz ou de mes neveux de Cracovie. Les histoires de Juifs allemands, ça ne nous regarde pas.⁵¹

Sartre was indeed aware of the existence of concentration camps in 1944, at the time he wrote RQJ.

However, was the full significance of such facts appreciated? An individual in possession of the facts might have simply not believed them. It is known that Jews themselves being held at the detention centre at Drancy (a suburb to the North of Paris) awaiting deportation to concentration camps, did not anticipate the fate awaiting them, even right up until the very last moment. Knowledge of the existence of the concentration camps, and an appreciation of the scale of the Holocaust, are to be distinguished. Wiesel makes this point repeatedly, throughout his non-fictional works,⁵² and he writes from a post-War perspective, having experienced the camps at first hand.

While aware of the existence of concentration camps, again, it does not follow that Sartre was also aware of what has only subsequently been termed 'the Holocaust'. We cannot equate Sartre's acknowledgement of the existence of the camps in his realist prose-fiction of 1944 with an appreciation of the scale and manner of implementation of what has only subsequently come to be known as 'the Holocaust'. Sartre did not choose to ignore the subject of the Holocaust in RQJ. Like many others, he was

probably unaware of the full significance of its barbarity, when he wrote RQJ, between October and December 1944: the extent of the atrocities, the manner in which they were carried out, and the attitude of those non-participants who looked on with approval or with indifference.⁵³ The question of what precisely 'what had happened' took priority over the question 'how could it have happened?'. To the reader of RQJ who looks in vain for a study of the Holocaust, this should be borne in mind.

The posing of a Holocaust Jewish Question is problematic, and beyond Sartre's, and therefore our, scope. Sartre did not raise a Holocaust Jewish Question in RQJ. RQJ does not take account of the phenomena of collective, mass, or totalitarian state anti-Semitism. Instead, Sartre examines anti-Semitism in individual terms. Had Sartre written on the Jewish Question in 1946, rather than in 1944, he might indeed have formulated it in different terms. However, the subject of our thesis is Sartre's study of the Jewish Question as set out in his Réflexions of 1944.

Nevertheless, if we examine the debate on the Holocaust following the War, we can draw a useful analogy with the debate on the Jewish Question, as Sartre found it, prior to 1944. One aspect of the contemporary debate on the Holocaust echoes the debate on the Jewish Question, as Sartre found it, in 1944. This involves the distinction between a genuine debate on how to interpret the Holocaust, carried out by philosophers, theologians, and historians; and a revisionist debate on the fact of its occurrence, carried out by pseudo-historians.

Recently in France, certain university theses and publications -- by, among others, Faurisson and Rocques -- have attempted to deny the Holocaust's occurrence, or minimise its actual scale. The academic credibility of such theses has been reviewed and revoked by the appropriate university bodies. Nevertheless, the revisionist Holocaust

debate presents a challenge to all those genuinely seeking to contribute to this debate, and understand the phenomenon debated. More significantly, for the purposes of this study, it also harks back to the debate on the Jewish Question during the Third Republic, to which Sartre's essay, we argue, responds.

On 15 June 1986, Henri Rocques was awarded a doctorate by the Arts Faculty of the University of Nantes, entitled Les "Confessions" de Kurt Gerstein. Étude des différentes versions. Édition critique. In it, Rocques sought to prove that Hitler's gas chambers never existed. However, the circumstances in which the thesis was defended were not in conformity with the appropriate academic regulations. Rocques' thesis had been formerly rejected by the University of Paris IV, before being submitted to Nantes. It was 'defended' in private, whereas French academic theses are traditionally defended in public, before an examining jury. Its title suggested a literary thesis, whereas its subject was in fact historical. It was presented to a department of French, not History, its actual academic terrain. It was passed by a Medieval specialist, not a modernist. On 2 July 1986, Rocques' thesis was declared null and void by the Minister for Research and Higher Education, M. Alain Devaquet, following an investigation into these 'irregularities'. Following a motion by the University Senate and a Declaration, Rocques' 'doctorate' was disowned by a listed number of university lecturers.⁵⁴

A second major case of revisionism concerns Robert Faurisson. On 29 December 1978, Faurisson, *maître de conférences* at the University of Lyon II, published an article in Le Monde in which he, too, claimed that the gas chambers were a myth, concluding:

L'inexistence des "chambres à gaz" est une bonne nouvelle pour la pauvre humanité. Une bonne nouvelle qu'on aurait tort de tenir plus longtemps cachée.⁵⁵

Hitler's gas chambers, Faurisson argued, never existed.

Thus, a pseudo-academic debate on the Holocaust has been initiated. It represents a form of pseudo-scientific anti-Semitism. We shall find

this form of anti-Semitism in the debate on the Jewish Question prior to 1944, also. A revisionist/counter-revisionist debate has resulted. The Faurisson article was followed by a response from the historian Georges Wellers.⁵⁶ In Paris, the counter-revisionist group of historians working on the review Le Monde juif, edited by Wellers, is currently engaged in defending the memory of the Holocaust against the revisionist onslaught. It devotes exclusive attention to the task of recording in precise detail the treatment of Jews in France under Vichy, publishing data on the logistics and bureaucracy of the Vichy regime.⁵⁷

In contrast, there exists a genuine literature of the Holocaust. Such genuine studies include subjective eye-witness accounts of life in concentration or labour-camps, written by survivors. Rousset's L'Univers concentrationnaire, and Wiesel's La Nuit, are two examples. Alternatively, they can take the form of general analytical inquiries into, and genuine interpretive studies of, the Holocaust phenomenon, its origins, and its implications; for example, 'A Season in Hell', a chapter in Steiner's In Bluebeard's Castle: Some Notes Towards the Re-definition of Culture, and Wiesel's collected essays, *inter alia*, Paroles d'étranger. In addition, many collective studies (often following symposia) have been published, in particular, in France and the United States. These are two countries where research into the subject of the Holocaust in particular, and the Jewish Question in general, since the War, has been prolific. Notable examples are 'Jewish Values in the Post-Holocaust Future: a Symposium', published by the review Judaism in 1967, and Auschwitz: Beginning of a New Era?: Reflections on the Holocaust, edited by Eva Fleischner (1977). We should also mention studies of the situation of post-Holocaust Jews: Cioran's 'Un Peuple de solitaires' (1956), and Lévinas's Difficile Liberté: essais sur le judaïsme (1976), both written from a French perspective; and Marmor's Beyond Survival: Reflections on the Future of Judaism, published in England (1982).⁵⁸

While the content of this debate on the Holocaust falls outside the scope of this thesis, the manner in which it has been conducted is of relevance. In fact, we can see the current revisionist debate on the

Holocaust as merely the latest manifestation of a long tradition of intellectual anti-Semitism in France. The distinction between the genuine and revisionist Holocaust debate provides us with a foretaste of a similar distinction we shall draw in Chapter IV. Namely, between a false debate on the Jewish Question which took place during the Third Republic and under Vichy; and the genuine debate which has taken place in France since the War, which, we shall argue, Sartre's essay helped to initiate.

Sartre does not situate his study within the sole context of such a polemic. While references to Third Republic anti-Semites and to Vichy are indeed to be found, they are sporadic. Indeed, RQJ can at times come across as a fairly abstract, general inquiry into anti-Semitism. Yet we shall seek to show, in Chapter IV, that Sartre's contribution to the debate on the Jewish Question can be usefully situated within the context -- not of the revisionist debate on the Holocaust which was to follow -- but of an anti-Semitic debate on the Jewish Question. Réflexions can be usefully situated within the historical context of the Vichy regime and the ideological context of Third Republic nationalistic and anti-Semitic literature on the Jewish Question.

Thus, Sartre himself does not discuss the Holocaust in Réflexions sur la question juive, which cannot be classified within the category of Holocaust studies. We should be departing too far from the scope of this thesis, were we to undertake an in-depth analysis of the complex problems presented by research into the Holocaust. However, while we shall not be expressly concerned with the debate on the Holocaust, we shall not be far from it. Indeed, we may learn more about the Holocaust by distancing ourselves from it, and examining the ideological climate which preceded it.

* * * *

We have now taken into account methodological factors with regard to the Jewish Question: scope, formulation, approach, and terminology. Having briefly considered alternative methodologies, it will now be our task to identify Sartre's formulation of, approach to, and choice of terminology to discuss, a Jewish Question. Our overall aim, we recall, is to draw attention to the importance of Sartre's contribution to the debate on the Jewish Question in France.

11. (Paris: Gallimard, 1983), p. 485. All subsequent references to this work are given in brackets in the text following the quotation.
12. 'Jewish Values in the Post-Holocaust Future: A Symposium', Judaism, 3 (Summer 1967), 269-73 (p. 270).
13. See Un Captif amoureux (1986).
14. 'Sartre a aimé les Juifs' (p. 16).
15. Interview with Claudine Chonez, Situations, VIII (p. 335).
16. Situations, VIII (p. 347).
17. This cultural question is less of a feature of British Jewry, with its predominantly Ashkenazi population.
18. For a British perspective, see 'New Outlooks for Jewish Feminists', Jewish Socialist.
19. 'Une nuit que j'étais près d'une affreuse juive...' (Paris: Garnier, 1964), p. 60.
20. Concerning the role of women in orthodox Judaism, see Gutwirth, Vie juive traditionnelle: ethnologie d'une communauté hassidique (1970), pp. 323-37.
21. See Albert Cohen's Le Livre de ma mère (1954), though, arguably, here she is still being revered as a *mother*.
22. See generally 'Femmes juives', in Combat pour la diaspora (1982), devoted to the feminist Jewish Question in France. See also Mergui's 'Émancipation et fidélité', in Combat pour la diaspora, 9-10 (1982), 98-102, and Lévinas's 'Le Judaïsme et le féminin', in Difficile Liberté: essais sur le judaïsme (1976), pp. 51-62, written from, respectively, Sephardi female and Ashkenazi male viewpoints. Mergui challenges, and Lévinas defends, the traditional role of women in Judaism.

23. "Théâtre qui se propose explicitement de 'forger des mythes' nouveaux, le théâtre de Sartre est, par ailleurs, le lieu de la réactivation d'un des plus persistants de tous les mythes, le mythe de la féminité. Tandis que le personnage masculin concrétise le célèbre postulat existentialiste: l'existence précède l'essence, son partenaire féminin propose une vérité de la femme: l'Éternel féminin." 'Le Mythe de la féminité dans le théâtre de Sartre', French Studies, 31 (1977), 294-307 (p. 294).
24. 'Simone de Beauvoir interroge Jean-Paul Sartre', L'Arc, 61 (1975). Reprinted in Sartre's Situations, X, pp. 116-32 (p. 116).
25. Ainsi soit-elle, Poche (Paris: Grasset et Fasquelle, 1975), p. 201.
26. Situations, II: Qu'est-ce que la littérature? (Paris: Gallimard, 1948), p. 112.
27. Steiner, describing Sartre's assertion as over-confident, cites Céline, and, more convincingly, Rebatet, as producers of texts of literary and intellectual merit espousing the cause of anti-Semitism. See 'Cry Havoc' in Extraterritorial: Papers on Literature and the Language Revolution (1975), pp. 45-55.
28. La P... respectueuse, suivi de Morts sans sépulture (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), I, 2 (p. 33).
29. "'Portrait de l'antisémite" dans son contexte: antisémitisme et judéocide', Études sartriennes, 1 (1984), 111-21 (p. 115).
30. 'LEC', in Le Mur, Folio (Paris: Gallimard, 1939), pp. 155-252.
31. All italics in this and subsequent quotations are those of the original author, unless otherwise stated.
32. 'Jean-Paul Sartre et les problèmes de notre temps', Cahiers Bernard Lazare, 4 (April 1966), 4-9 (p. 7).
33. See *inter alia* Misrahi's Marx et la question juive, and Poliakov's Histoire de l'antisémitisme (pp. 232-37). It has also been defended, for example, by Deutscher, in The Non-Jewish Jew and Other Essays, (1968).

34. Milgram conducted experiments in which he tried to gauge the possible link between obedience to authority and the human propensity to inflict punitive acts of sadism upon fellow human beings. For comment on Milgram's findings, see Magurshak, 'The "Incomprehensibility" of the Holocaust: Tightening up Some Loose Ends', (p. 240).
35. 'Adorno and Sartre: A Convergence of Two Methodological Approaches' (1973).
36. Juifs et israélites, Idées (Paris: Gallimard, 1980), p. 35.
37. 'Interview sur la question juive', Revue juive, 6-7 June-July 1947, 212-23. Quoted in Les Écrits de Sartre, p. 167, by Contat and Rybalka, who suggest that Sartre's apparently complacent attitude to the problem of anti-Semitism here can be explained by the date of publication.
38. La P... respectueuse, suivi de Morts sans sépulture (Paris: Gallimard, 1946), I, 2 (p. 33).
39. See 'The Principles of Reconstructionism and Some Questions Jews Ask' (1956), in Modern Jewish Thought: A Source Reader, pp. 150-57.
40. Judaism (London: Penguin 1959), p. 297.
41. Difficile Liberté: essais sur le judaïsme, Livre de Poche/Biblio essais (Paris: Albin Michel, 1976), p. 43.
42. Beyond Survival: Reflections on the future of Judaism (London: Darton, Longman, and Todd, 1982), p. 7.
43. Judaism (Oxford university Press, 1986), p. 4.
44. Clefs pour le Judaïsme (Paris: Seghers, 1977), p. 5.
45. Juifs et israélites, p. 44. See pp. 34-35 for her justification for using the lower case 'j' in 'juif', which we have changed to 'Juif' for reasons of consistency.
46. Le Juif imaginaire, Points (Paris: Seuil, 1980), p. 51.

47. We might do well to treat Finkelkraut's declared absence of a positive Jewish identity with caution. He is nevertheless to be found today writing under the auspices of the Colloque des intellectuels juifs de langue française.
48. Greek: *Holokautoma*, burnt offering. The attempted genocide of European Jewry by Nazi Germany.
49. Amongst recent studies of this question, Courtois and Rayski's recent (1987) Qui savait quoi?: l'extermination des Juifs 1941-1945 adduces documentary evidence in the form of dated clandestine tracts to prove that information on the atrocities being committed in the camps existed and had been circulated, and examines who had access to such information, where, and when.
50. Contat and Rybalka, Les Écrits de Sartre, p. 114.
51. Le Sursis, Folio (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), p. 96.
52. See, for example, the collection of essays published in 1982 entitled Paroles d'étranger.
53. See Léon Poliakov, Bréviaire de la haine: le IIIe Reich et les Juifs (1986).
54. See 'Motion du Conseil Scientifique de l'Université de Nantes' (2 June 1986) and 'Une Déclaration des universitaires nantais', reprinted in 'L'Affaire Rocques', Monde juif, 122 (April-June 1986), 49-79 (pp. 66-67).
55. "'Le Problème des chambres à gaz" ou "la rumeur d'Auschwitz"', Le Monde, 29 December 1978, p. 8.
56. 'Abondance de preuves', Ibid., p. 8. See also Wellers' 'Qui est Robert Faurisson?', Monde juif, 127 (July-September 1987), 94-116.
57. For further counter-revisionist studies, see, *inter alia*, Finkelkraut's La Négation du génocide (1982), Vidal-Naquet's Les Assassins de la mémoire: 'Un Eichmann de papier' et autres essais sur le révisionisme (1987), and Fresco's 'Les Redresseurs de morts' (1980).

58. This enquiry has produced some very different conclusions.

Wiesel advances the 'incomprehensibility theory': "What is called the literature of the Holocaust does not exist, cannot exist. It is a contradiction in terms, as is the philosophy, the theology, the psychology of the Holocaust. It negates all systems, opposes all doctrines. They cannot but diminish the experience which lies beyond our reach." 'Art and Culture After the Holocaust', in Auschwitz: Beginning of a New Era? Reflections on the Holocaust, edited by Eva Fleischner (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1977), 403-15, (p. 405). Wiesel's theory is based upon a distinction between knowledge of the relevant factual data and comprehension of its overall significance: "On ne comprendra jamais. On connaîtra peut-être un jour tous les aspects de ce projet démentiel, mais on ne comprendra pas." 'Pèlerinage au pays de la nuit', in Paroles d'étranger (p. 21). Here, the Holocaust symbolises a mystical gap between experience, comprehension, and linguistic expression, to which the only suitable response is silence. Yet paradoxically, Wiesel has, himself, contributed greatly towards the coming into being of such a literature, via his novels and, in particular, his essays.

Magurshak adopts a rationalist approach: "At present the Holocaust may be, in large measure, uncomprehended, but this in no way entails or even plausibly suggests that disciplined study is incapable of comprehending it. There is no good reason today that careful, exhaustive, historical, cultural, and psychological studies will not, at least ideally, yield a complete and coherent account which traces the course of events and the play of factors by which the atrocity came about. Like any event of similar magnitude, the mass annihilation of Jews, Gypsies and other enemies of the Reich rests upon a complex foundation of conditions which may never be completely excavated because of time limitations, lack of information, and a dearth of investigative insights: nonetheless, the investigator aims at an ideal completeness which indicates at least the possibility that more time, more information, and new theories will gradually diminish the relative incomprehensibility of this event." 'The "Incomprehensibility" of the Holocaust: Tightening up Some Loose Ends', Judaism (Spring 1980), 233-42 (p. 239).

Anti-thetical theological interpretations have been advanced. The Holocaust has been deemed to signify the death of God, finally discrediting the Judaic notion of a God-ordered world in which divine justice reigns. Conversely, with Job as a prime source of reference, it has been interpreted as a sign of Divine retribution for sins committed, God's existence actually re-affirmed by the Holocaust's occurrence, a necessary if horrific chapter in Jewish history. (See Steckel's 'God and the Holocaust', 1971)

However, Wyschogrod denies the Holocaust the role of theological sign: "I cannot see why, if I'm a secular Jew, a non-believing Jew, it is incumbent upon me to preserve Judaism because Hitler wanted to destroy it. What was incumbent upon me was to destroy Hitler, but once this is accomplished, the free choice of every individual is restored and no further Hitler-derived burdens rest on the non-believing Jew." 'Faith and the Holocaust', Judaism (Summer 1971), 286-94 (p. 289). The Holocaust neither affirms nor negates God's existence.

Grynberg, who draws attention to the risk of writers appropriating the Holocaust to vindicate pre-established ideological positions, arguably appropriates it himself, by stating that any doubting of its uniqueness is wrong. ('Appropriating the Holocaust', (1982))

Thus, theologians, mystics and rationalists present different perspectives on the Holocaust.

CHAPTER II

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SARTRE'S

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1. ANTI-SEMITE AND JEW

We shall now turn to consider in detail Sartre's analysis of the Jewish Question in 1944, as set out in Réflexions sur la question juive. Sartre begins Réflexions by expressing dissatisfaction with the terminology commonly employed in discussing the Jewish Question. (The significance of this will become fully apparent in Chapter IV.) He sets about a fundamental re-formulation of the terms of the equation. This initial emphasis on how the Jewish Question is to be discussed is an important feature of his study.

In RQJ, Sartre leans away from the view that anti-Semitism is a social norm, or an objectively recurrent historical constant. The Sartre of 1944 does not see anti-Semitism as solely conditioned by economic or other factors, an inevitable and cyclically recurrent fact of history:

Ce qui est ici essentiel, ce n'est pas la "donnée historique" mais l'idée que les agents de l'histoire se faisaient du Juif. (p. 17)

Sartre is keen to approach his Jewish Question -- the problem of the Jew's situation in a society in which Jews and anti-Semitism exist -- from a different standpoint.

Sartre draws a key distinction between the individual *anti-Semite* and the objective social phenomenon of *anti-Semitism*. To use the term anti-Semitism, which denotes an objective social phenomenon, to study the 'ism' of anti-Semitism, rather than the individual anti-Semite, appears to Sartre to objectify and de-personalise what in 1944 he saw as

a fundamentally subjective and inter-personal phenomenon. Thus, Sartre sets out to study the anti-Semite, rather than anti-Semitism.

Sartre rejects the idea that the anti-Semite should have the right to publicly express his hostility towards the Jew in the name of free speech, a value enshrined in the French Constitution of 1791 (see Appendix I). Sartre describes this tolerance of anti-Semitism as a liberal stance. The liberal, perceived with disapproval by Sartre, defends the right of all to hold, and publicly air, their views, whatever these views may be. From the beginning, Sartre is keen to reject the notion of the universal equivalence of all opinions. For him, anti-Semitism is not an opinion to be tolerated like any other. Such indiscriminating intellectual broadmindedness degenerates into a bland eclecticism. Sartre attacks it in RQJ, as he had parodied it via the character of the autodidacte, in his 1938 novel La Nausée.

Sartre does not see his disagreement with the anti-Semite as a conflict of opinion at all. To Sartre, anti-Semitism is the outward manifestation of a feeling, a *passion*, rather than the expression of a rationally-held conviction. He therefore rejects the notion that the anti-Semite should be granted the right to freedom of expression, like any one else:

L'antisémitisme ne rentre pas dans la catégorie de pensées que protège le Droit de libre opinion. (p. 10)

In expressing an emotion, rather than an opinion, the anti-Semite deprives himself of the right to freedom of speech, which one might ordinarily consider his due prerogative as a citizen of the state. Here, Sartre implies that anti-Semitism has certain special features which distinguish it from other forms of social oppression, rendering the Jewish Question worthy of special attention.

One might believe, Sartre hypothesises, that an individual could hold anti-Semitic views yet, in all other respects, be an ordinary, or even model citizen. Accordingly, it would be possible to be an anti-Semite 'by chance'.

However, Sartre is keen, at an early stage in his analysis, to refute the idea that anti-Semitism is an isolated, exceptional facet of an individual's personality, unrelated to the rest of his psyche as a whole. For Sartre, this notion of anti-Semitism -- as an a-typical, quirkish, gratuitous personality facet -- is unacceptable:

Nous commençons à comprendre que l'antisémitisme n'est pas une simple 'opinion' sur les Juifs et qu'il engage la personne entière de l'antisémite. (p. 38)

As we shall come to see in Chapter III (where we examine the philosophical theories upon which RQJ is based), for Sartre, each aspect of an individual's being represents a microcosm of the total self. Furthermore, the totality of an individual's being manifests itself in each separate act of that individual.

The first section of RQJ is devoted to a portrait of the anti-Semite.¹ This initial focus of attention on the anti-Semite is indicative of the importance Sartre attaches to the anti-Semite's role in Sartre's formulation of the Jewish Question. Unlike the anti-Semite, Sartre does not see the Jew as the cause of anti-Semitism, or the coming into being of a Jewish Question. Again, the particular significance of this counter claim will become more apparent in Chapter IV, where we investigate the background against which Sartre made it.

Sartre's fundamental thesis regarding the anti-Semite is that his anti-Semitism derives from an original choice of being: 'un choix libre et total de soi-même' (p. 18). Sartre sees the anti-Semite's specific attitude towards the Jew as only one feature of a more general response to himself, to the other, and to the world. Given this particular perception of human consciousness, Sartre's task will be to show how every facet of the anti-Semite's perception of himself and of the world reflects this original choice.

Sartre argues that the anti-Semite has made an original choice to adopt an essential model of being, which he uses to attribute meaning to what in Sartre's view is his fundamentally contingent existence. The anti-Semite considers himself to be essentially superior to the Jew. Writing from the perspective of his anti-Semite, Sartre asserts:

Je n'ai rien fait pour mériter ma supériorité et je ne puis pas non plus déchoir. Elle est donnée une fois pour toutes: c'est une chose. (p. 31)

Sartre argues that, unlike an individual who earns social status by making some recognisable contribution to society, the anti-Semite seeks to claim social superiority as a right. He claims it as an essence, by relegating an other, in this case, the Jew, to an essentially inferior level of existence.

Yet, Sartre claims, the anti-Semite's proclaimed essence is not an absolute, but a relative absolute, dependent on the Jew:

L'existence du Juif lui est absolument nécessaire: à qui donc, sans cela, serait-il supérieur? (p. 32)

Sartre claims that such is the anti-Semite's dependence on the Jew that if Jews did not exist, the anti-Semite would have to invent them. Sartre's anti-Semite therefore places himself in the contradictory position of believing in an essential self, yet only realising this essential self in relation to a perceived other. (We shall see examples of this in anti-Semitic writings in Chapter IV.)

A further important feature of Sartre's analysis lies in his assertion that the anti-Semite is one who has made an original choice to respond to the world emotionally, rather than rationally:

L'antisémite a *choisi* de vivre sur le mode passionné.
(p. 20)

The emotions he has chosen to 'feel' are those of anger and of hatred. Ordinarily, Sartre asserts, we summon an emotional state in response to some action affecting the self. In contrast, the anti-Semite actively seeks out those circumstances which enable him to live on an emotional

plane:

A l'ordinaire, la haine et la colère sont *sollicitées*: je hais celui qui m'a fait souffrir, celui qui me nargue ou qui m'insulte. Nous venons de voir que la passion antisémite ne saurait avoir un tel caractère: elle devance les faits qui devraient la faire naître, elle va les chercher pour s'en alimenter. (p. 19)

The anti-Semite's emotional state, his anger, is not a reaction to the Jew. It is an act which tends towards the Jew.

Furthermore, for Sartre, the anti-Semite is primarily interested in the emotional state itself, rather than in that which might be thought to enable the emotional state to come into being (the Jew):

A l'ordinaire on aime les *objets* de la passion: les femmes, la gloire, le pouvoir, l'argent. Puisque l'antisémite a choisi la haine, nous sommes obligés de conclure que c'est *l'état* passionné qu'il aime. (p. 20)

This is a significant point, within Sartre's analysis of the Jewish Question as a whole. For Sartre, the Jew is not of prime concern within the anti-Semite's perception of the world. The Jew provides the anti-Semite with a necessary subject-object relationship in order to achieve an end other than that of hatred of the Jew. He is the means by which the anti-Semite can feed his anger.

Sartre argues that the anti-Semite has also made an original choice to be terrifying:

Il lit dans les yeux des autres une image inquiétante qui est la sienne et conforme ses propos, ses gestes à cette image. Ce modèle extérieur le dispense de chercher sa personnalité au-dedans de lui-même; il a choisi d'être tout en dehors, de ne jamais faire de retour sur soi, de n'être rien sauf la peur qu'il fait aux autres. (pp. 23-24)

This is a form of being-for-others. We might say that, according to the anti-Semite's cogito, I am feared therefore I exist.

Sartre's anti-Semite has chosen to make a cult out of mediocrity. He finds protection amid the crowd, and flees what to Sartre is the solitude and anguish of individual consciousness:

L'antisémitisme est une tentative pour valoriser la médiocrité en tant que telle. (p. 26)

Intelligence is an individual faculty. The anti-Semite, in fleeing the anguish of individual consciousness, flees intelligence, and runs in search of the average, which he elevates into a positive value. He can therefore conceive of intelligence in pejorative terms as being 'Jewish'.

This cult of mediocrity enables him to adhere to an anti-Semitic collectivity:

S'il s'est fait antisémite, c'est qu'on ne peut pas l'être tout seul. (p. 25)

However, Sartre's anti-Semite is again in contradiction with himself, here. In choosing to be an anti-Semite, he seeks out both the exclusivity of the club, and the mediocrity and anonymity of the crowd.

Sartre's anti-Semite has further chosen to be a person of strong convictions. However, Sartre warns us not to confuse *strongly held convictions* with the anti-Semite's desire to be *a person of strong convictions*:

Ce n'est pas que sa conviction soit forte; mais plutôt sa conviction est forte parce qu'il a choisi d'abord d'être imperméable. (p. 23)

Fundamentally afraid of himself, and of exercising his powers of reason, he has chosen to adopt a rock-like, incontrovertible belief in the validity of his own convictions.

Sartre's anti-Semite has further chosen to accept a pre-reflective view of the Jew. We may be inclined to think of the anti-Semite as one who has come round to a hostile view of Jews, through some disagreeable personal experience of Jews in the world. Sartre rejects this view. To

him, anti-Semitism is a pre-reflective phenomenon:

Loin que l'expérience engendre la notion de Juif, c'est celle-ci qui éclaire l'expérience au contraire. (p. 14)

The anti-Semite has already developed a certain idea of the Jew he has chosen to hate:

Le Juif que l'antisémite veut atteindre ce n'est pas un être schématique et défini seulement par sa fonction comme dans le droit administratif; par sa situation ou par ses actes, comme dans le Code. C'est un Juif, fils de Juifs, reconnaissable à son physique, à la couleur de ses cheveux, à son vêtement peut-être et, dit-on, à son caractère. (p. 10)

This composite picture of the Jew -- as a dark, mysterious, bearded, scheming figure -- represents how the anti-Semite has chosen to imagine the Jew to be. (We shall explore representations in anti-Semitic writings of this mythical, anti-Semitic image of the Jew to which Sartre alludes, in Chapter IV.) For Sartre's anti-Semite, it is the idea of the Jew which is important, rather than any personal experience of actual Jews, encountered in the world. This is a useful theory, not least in that it provides one possible explanation as to the survival of anti-Semitism in those places where the Jew is physically absent.²

Sartre's anti-Semite has chosen to see the Jew as a thief, as stealer of the nation's assets, in order to achieve the status of dispossessed proprietor:

Beaucoup d'antisémites -- la majorité peut-être -- appartiennent à la petite bourgeoisie des villes; ce sont des fonctionnaires, des employés, de petits commerçants qui ne possèdent rien. Mais justement, c'est en se dressant contre le Juif qu'ils prennent soudain conscience d'être propriétaires: en se représentant l'Israélite comme un voleur, ils se mettent dans l'enviable position de gens qui pourraient être volés; puisque le Juif veut leur dérober la France, c'est que la France est à eux. Ainsi ont-ils choisi l'antisémitisme comme un moyen de réaliser leur qualité de possédants. (p. 29)

Here, anti-Semitism is a defence-mechanism against personal individual mediocrity.

Sartre's anti-Semite has chosen to adopt an over-simplistic view of morality. He divides the world into Good and Evil. He sees himself as the bringer of Good, and the Jew as the bringer of Evil. If the anti-Semite has to commit evil (be anti-Semitic), it is in the cause of doing Good, and ridding the world of Evil (the Jew). To Sartre, the anti-Semite concentrates on the task of seeking out 'Evil', since this is easier than challenging contemporary notions of 'Good'. However, once more, Sartre insists that the anti-Semite's attitude towards the Jew is only one aspect of a more general attitude towards the world:

L'antisémite ne recourt pas au manichéisme comme à un principe secondaire d'explication. Mais c'est le choix originel du manichéisme qui explique et conditionne l'antisémitisme. (p. 48)

The anti-Semite chooses to perceive the Jew as the personification of Evil, following an original choice to seek out a *scapegoat*.

Finally, Sartre's anti-Semite has made an original choice to adopt a Manichaeian view of history. He seeks to explain history, not in collective terms, but by blaming a particular minority group:

L'antisémitisme, phénomène bourgeois, apparaît donc comme le choix d'expliquer les événements collectifs par l'initiative des particuliers. (p. 43)

However, it is because the anti-Semite has chosen *a priori* to view history in individual terms that he can blame the Jew for the existence of various social and economic ills, at any given point in history.

Thus, Sartre's anti-Semite is one who has made an original choice to adopt a certain attitude towards himself, the other, and the world. Into this perception, the anti-Semite inserts the Jew, and a Jewish Question.

So far, we have considered Sartre's portrait of the anti-Semite. However, it is important to emphasise that RQJ is more than an analysis of anti-Semitism. If RQJ contains an original analysis of the anti-Semite, it also contains a challenging discussion on the situation of the Jew in France. We shall now consider Sartre's assessment of the role of the Jew within his formulation of the Jewish Question in RQJ. To return to our discussion on terminology in Chapter I, Sartre considers *le Juif*.

Sartre seeks to define the terms in which he will approach the Jewish component of the Jewish Question. Sartre does not ask: what is Judaism? Instead, he asks two apparently naive, yet fundamentally complex, questions:

Il convient donc de nous poser la question à notre tour: le Juif existe-t-il? Et, s'il existe, qu'est-il? D'abord un Juif ou d'abord un homme? (p. 69)

Does the Jew exist, and, if so, how? What makes a Jew a Jew?

Sartre proceeds to attempt to de-mystify what he sees as myths propagated by the anti-Semite, 'la mythologie antisémite' (p. 114), a mythology which we shall examine in greater detail in Chapter IV. To recall our discussion on terminology of Chapter I, Sartre first examines the phenomenon of *juiverie*, before turning to examine *le Juif*. During each step of his discussion, he will attempt to show that what the anti-Semite presents as an essentially pejorative Jewishness is explainable in other terms.

In his investigation into *juiverie*, Sartre de-mystifies the myth of the 'miserly Jew'. The anti-Semite accuses the Jew of being obsessed with money. Sartre explains this alleged essential Jewish attribute in terms of the Jews' historical persecution, and that Christian anti-Judaism which accuses the Jew of being the assassin of Christ. Deprived of the right to participate in the affairs of the state, Jews were pushed into usury, considered in the Middle Ages by the Church as 'un métier maudit, mais indispensable'. (p. 82)

Sartre further argues that if, today, some Jews place great store by the acquisition of material wealth, this represents a search to engage in some universal pursuit which renders the Jew the anonymous equal of the non-Jew, a consumer first, and a Jew second:

S'il préfère à toute autre cette forme de propriété l'argent, c'est qu'elle est universelle. Le mode d'appropriation par l'achat ne dépend pas, en effet, de la race de l'acheteur. Il ne varie point avec son idiosyncrasie; le *prix* de l'objet renvoie à un acheteur *quelconque*, défini seulement par le fait qu'il possède la somme marquée sur l'étiquette. Et lorsque la somme est versée, l'acheteur est légalement propriétaire de l'objet. Ainsi la propriété par achat est une forme abstraite et universelle de propriété qui s'oppose à l'appropriation singulière et irrationnelle par participation. (p. 154)

It is not money itself, but the social integration it buys within a society in which money is revered, which is significant, here:

L'argent est facteur d'intégration. (p. 156)

The Jew's desire for money implies recognition of the assimilating anonymity of money:

Il veut être riche *pour passer inaperçu*. (p. 157)

Thus, the bourgeois Jew's relationship with money within bourgeois society is paradoxical.

Here we find a syndrome of Jewish psychology which we shall see repeated again and again in Sartre's dialectic between anti-Semite and inauthentic Jew. Accordingly, the Jew is condemned by the anti-Semite, whatever he does. He is the 'miserly Jew' when he saves. He is 'the capitalist Jew' when he spends. The anti-Semite may accuse the Jew of being obsessed with money. Yet material acquisition may appear to the Jew to be the only way to acquire social status. When he acquires money, he is told that 'being like the rest' is something that cannot be bought.

Sartre also tackles the myth of the 'intelligent Jew'. Sartre's anti-Semite not only distorts the Jew's physical appearance, but also the Jew's intellectual capabilities. The anti-Semite has propagated the myth that the Jew is an abstract intellectual. Sartre sees a Jew's passion for reason, like the search for material wealth, as 'une évasion dans l'universel' (p. 136). It is a further attempt at a compensatory form of social integration.

The anti-Semite chooses to perceive the Jew as negative and contestatory, a cultivator of subversion, conspiratorial and scheming. Sartre asserts that the Jew indeed goes in search of argument and debate, but only to the extent that the anti-Semite has presented him with irrational arguments as to why he is different:

Contre le Juif, en effet, on a dressé les puissances irrationnelles de la tradition, de la race, du destin national, de l'instinct. (pp. 137-38)

The Jew seeks a universal passport to assimilation, which he finds via the pursuit of reason and the cultivation of intelligence. The Jew prefers a rationality which unites to an irrationality which divides:

Il se méfie de l'intuition parce qu'elle *ne se discute pas* et que, par suite, elle aboutit à séparer les hommes. S'il raisonne et dispute avec son adversaire, c'est pour réaliser au départ l'unité des esprits. (pp. 138-39)

The irrational anti-Semite breeds the rational Jew, whom the anti-Semite can then accuse of being 'intelligent'.

We recall that, in his portrait of the anti-Semite, Sartre portrayed the latter as one who had chosen to shun intelligence, and seek out the mediocrity of the crowd. Here, the myth is shown to be the result of a reversal, emanating from an original choice on the part of the anti-Semite:

L'antisémite reconnaît volontiers que le Juif est intelligent; il s'avouera même inférieur à lui sous ce rapport. Cette concession ne lui coûte pas grand-chose: il a mis ces qualités entre parenthèses. Ou plutôt elles tirent leur valeur de celui qui les

possède: plus le Juif aura de vertus plus il sera dangereux. Quant à l'antisémite, il ne se fait pas d'illusion sur ce qu'il est. Il se considère comme l'homme de la moyenne. (pp. 24-25)

It is because the anti-Semite chooses to be mediocre that he can accuse the Jew of being, in a pejorative sense, 'intelligent':

Pour l'antisémite, l'intelligence est juive, il peut donc la mépriser en toute tranquillité, comme toutes les autres vertus que possède le Juif: ce sont des ersatz que les Juifs utilisent pour remplacer cette médiocrité équilibrée qui leur fera toujours défaut. Le vrai Français enraciné dans sa province, dans son pays, porté par une tradition de vingt siècles, bénéficiant d'une sagesse ancestrale, guidé par des coutumes éprouvées, n'a *pas besoin* d'intelligence. (p. 26)

The anti-Semite chooses to actively shun intelligence. The pejorative attribution of 'intelligence' to the Jew is effectively a negative projection of the self.

This myth of the 'intelligent Jew' also illustrates what we can identify as a common progression: anti-Semitic myth -- inauthentic Jewish response -- reinforcement of anti-Semitic myth. This progression is not one which Sartre accepts as inevitable. He will be shown to suggest the possibility of a way out of this impasse, below. However, Sartre does suggest that it is common.

Sartre also de-mystifies the myth of the 'separatist Jew'. Sartre describes the reversal whereby, denied social integration by the anti-Semite, the Jew is accused of actively refusing to integrate into society, of positively choosing to remain apart. Sartre sees this accusation of social aloofness as a reversal:

C'est parce qu'on ne l'accueille jamais comme *un* homme, mais toujours et partout comme *le* Juif, que le Juif est inassimilable. (p. 121)

Sartre's italics are important. The Jew is greeted, not as a Jew, but as *the archetypal Jew*. It is not that the Jew chooses separatism. It is the myth of the archetypal Jew which isolates the Jew from others.

Sartre also tackles what he sees as the myth of the 'tactless Jew'. Sartre postulates that, to the extent that tact is an instinctual phenomenon, a mark of intuition, incapable of rational definition, the Jew may indeed ignore it:

Il y a donc chez le Juif une inclination marquée à croire que les pires difficultés se laissent résoudre par la raison; il ne voit pas l'irrationnel, le magique, la nuance concrète et particulière; il ne croit pas aux singularités de sentiments; par une réaction de défense fort compréhensible, cet homme qui vit de l'opinion que les autres ont de lui, essaie de nier les valeurs d'opinion. (p. 152)

However, this does not imply that the Jew is any more or less capable of discretion than any one else. Forced by the anti-Semite to seek out reason, the Jew merely accords a lower priority to the display of tact.

Sartre also analyses the myth -- perhaps the fundamental myth in anti-Semitic mythology -- of the 'guilty Jew'. The anti-Semite has propagated the myth, has even instilled in some Jews the belief, that they are to blame for the existence of certain specific social and economic problems. Sartre uses the language of the courtroom to describe the Jew's plight, comparing it to that of K, the character under accusation in Kafka's The Trial:

Comme le héros du roman, le Juif est engagé dans un long procès, il ne connaît pas ses juges, à peine mieux ses avocats, il ne sait pas ce qu'on lui reproche, et pourtant il sait qu'on le tient pour coupable. (pp. 106-7)

The Jew, the Accused, is forced to undertake a cross-examination of himself. Without evidence, the anti-Semite declares him guilty. The Jew is left with the anxiety of a verdict he cannot explain, but must endure.

Fundamentally, Sartre's anti-Semite claims that it is the Jew who is to blame for the existence of anti-Semitism in society, for his being anti-Semite, and for the existence of a Jewish Question. In contrast, Sartre uses his concept of original choice to counter the myth of the

guilty Jew. Sartre argues that it is not the Jew who causes an individual to become an anti-Semite. An individual becomes an anti-Semite through a certain perception of himself, of others, and of the world. Anti-Semitism transcends the Jew, and is just one facet of a more general choice of being.

Thus far, Sartre has sought to show that anti-Semitism is one facet of an original choice of being, and has also briefly analysed some myths propagated by the anti-Semite, concerning the Jew.

We now arrive at a possible conflict of perception: that between the anti-Semite's perception of the Jew, and the Jew's perception of himself. Sartre examines possible responses on the part of some Jews to this mythological image of the Jew that the anti-Semite has constructed.

It is at this point that extreme caution is required, since it is Sartre's analysis of the Jew (*le Juif*) which, we argue, has led some critics to misrepresent Sartre's views on Jewish being, as expressed in RQJ (see Chapter V). It is important to appreciate that Sartre does not regard the following Jewish psychological responses to the anti-Semite as constituting an *a priori* Jewish essence. He sees them as merely possible responses to anti-Semitic mythology among others. We would emphasise that Sartre is, at this stage in his analysis of Jewish being, considering what he terms the 'inauthentic Jew', the Jew in bad faith.

Sartre describes a progression of responses on the part of the Jew encountering the hostile gaze of the anti-Semite: *reflexivity, anxiety, and escape*.

In the light of the anti-Semite's evocation of these and other myths considered above, the Jew undertakes a self-examination to see whether

he actually corresponds to the image the anti-Semite presents of him. To return, once more, to our terminological distinctions of Chapter I, does *juiverie* accurately reflect *le Juif*?

An important element of Jewish psychology to Sartre is *réflexivité*, self-consciousness. He provides examples of this phenomenon. He cites the order passed under the Vichy regime (Eighth Order of 29 May 1942) according to which Jews (over the age of six) were obliged to wear the yellow star:

Ce qui paraissait insupportable c'est qu'on désignât le Juif à l'attention, c'est qu'on l'obligeait à se sentir perpétuellement Juif sous les yeux des autres.
(p. 93)

To Sartre, the wearing of the yellow star forced self-consciousness on the Jew.

Sartre further illustrates the phenomenon of reflexivity by suggesting how the Jew manifests his Jewish being in relation to others, in a variety of different social situations. Sartre describes that self-consciousness he suggests is felt by Jews who, when the fact of their Jewishness is revealed to them, become embarrassed. Sartre claims that, when alone among themselves, Jews lose their self-consciousness as Jews within a predominantly non-Jewish society:

En éliminant le témoin non-juif, ils éliminent du même coup la réalité juive.³ (pp. 122-23)

Similarly, Sartre argues, if a solitary Jew joins the company of non-Jews, he is not preoccupied by his Jewishness. However, Sartre continues, if a second Jew joins this gathering, the Jew is immediately reminded of the fact that he is a Jew. This reminder is one he may resent:

Il épie son coreligionnaire avec les yeux d'un antisémite. (p. 125)

When the Jew encounters another Jew in non-Jewish company, he is forced to confront his situation as a Jew. This creates self-consciousness.

The reflexivity felt by the Jew when faced with the hostile look of the anti-Semite, or the mirror-like presence of the other-as-Jew, leads to *anxiety*:

La racine de l'inquiétude juive c'est cette nécessité où est le Juif de s'interroger sans cesse et finalement de prendre parti sur le personnage fantôme, inconnu, qui le hante et qui n'est autre que lui-même, lui-même tel qu'il est pour autrui. (p. 95)

Sartre warns against confusing the particular anxiety experienced by the Jew with that general metaphysical anguish which, to Sartre, reveals to all consciousness its being in the world:

Il ne faudrait pas croire que l'inquiétude juive est métaphysique. On l'assimilerait à tort à l'angoisse que provoque en nous la considération de la condition humaine. Je dirais volontiers que l'inquiétude métaphysique est un luxe que le Juif, pas plus que l'ouvrier, ne peut aujourd'hui se permettre. Il faut être sûr de ses droits et profondément enraciné dans le monde, il faut n'avoir aucune des craintes qui assaillent chaque jour les classes ou les minorités opprimés, pour se permettre de s'interroger sur la place de l'homme dans le monde et sur sa destinée. En un mot, la métaphysique est l'apanage des classes dirigeantes aryennes. (p. 162)

Sartre perceives Jewish anxiety as a *social* phenomenon, not a metaphysical one. The Jew cannot speculate on metaphysics, on man's place in the universe, as long as his own individual place in society remains unstable. Sartre asserts the impossibility of such a Jew adhering to the Surrealist movement in France. He argues that the Surrealists were able to adhere to their movement for the very reason that Jews were not:

Le surréalisme, à sa manière, pose la question de la destinée humaine. Ses entreprises de démolition, et le grand bruit qu'il a mené autour d'elles, ce furent les jeux luxueux de jeunes bourgeois bien à l'aise dans un pays vainqueur et qui leur appartenait. (p. 163)

Here, Sartre overstates his case. Chagall was a Surrealist. However, the question of Sartre's attitude to Surrealism has been studied

elsewhere, and should not be allowed to send us off course.⁴ To follow through to the end of Sartre's logic, with no sense of national belonging, Jews could not identify with Surrealist goals:

Le Juif ne songe point à démolir, ni à considérer la condition humaine dans sa nudité. C'est *l'homme social* par excellence, parce que son tourment est social. (p. 163)

Sartre continues:

Son projet constructif de s'intégrer dans la communauté nationale est social. (p. 164)

On the contrary, the Jew seeks to convince others of his contribution towards the status quo:

Cette obligation perpétuelle de faire la preuve qu'il est Français entraîne pour le Juif *une situation de culpabilité*: s'il ne fait pas en toute occasion plus que les autres, beaucoup plus que les autres, il est coupable. (p. 105)

Thus, for Sartre, the *reflexive* Jew may become the *anxious* Jew.

We have seen that, for Sartre, the anti-Semite constructs and propagates certain myths concerning the Jew. This causes the Jew to continually reflect on his own identity and social status. This reflexivity causes anxiety.

Sartre further suggests that, at this stage, the Jew is faced with a choice as to how to respond to the anti-Semite, and to this anxiety. One possible option open to the Jew is to seek relief from this reflexivity and anxiety, and adopt one of a variety of *modes of escape*.

It is important to emphasise that the following modes of escape are, in Sartre's view, merely certain possible reactions on the part of the Jew to the anti-Semite's hostile look among others. Sartre also envisages a reaction to the anti-Semite based, not on escape, but on what Sartre terms an 'authentic' mode of Jewish being (which we shall consider below).

However, we shall begin by examining what to Sartre constitutes an *Inauthentic* Jewish response: modes of escape from the anti-Semite's look. Sartre sets out the main features of inauthentic Jews:

Ce qui les caractérise en effet, c'est qu'ils vivent leur situation en la fuyant, ils ont choisi de la nier, ou de nier leur responsabilité ou de nier leur délaissement qui leur paraît intolérable. (p. 112)

Thus, one possible reaction is for the Jew to seek to escape from this anxiety.

Yet this denial of one's situation, and the resultant necessity of conforming to an externally conceived image of oneself, only produces further anxiety:

Le Juif se met en état de complexe lorsqu'il choisit de vivre sa situation sur le mode inauthentique. Il s'est laissé persuader en somme par les antisémites, il est la première victime de leur propagande. Il admet avec eux que, s'il y a un Juif, il doit avoir les caractères que la malveillance populaire lui prête et son effort est pour se constituer en martyr, au sens propre du terme, c'est-à-dire pour prouver, par sa personne, qu'il y n'y a pas de Juif. (p. 114-15)

Sartre's inauthentic Jew is-for-others:

Ils [les Juifs inauthentiques] se sont laissé empoisonner par une certaine représentation que les autres ont d'eux et ils vivent dans la crainte que leurs actes ne s'y conforment. (p. 115)

Sartre suggests that this escape from anxiety can take different forms. One such form is the desire to seek out anonymity via assimilation. (Sartre implicitly draws an important distinction here between assimilation as a non-Jew, which the liberal advocates, and which Sartre rejects -- and integration as a Jew, which Sartre advocates.) Here, the Jew continually looks for recognition from the rest of society that he is 'normal':

C'est qu'il pense devenir "un homme", rien qu'un homme, un homme comme les autres. (p. 118)

Like the anti-Semite, the Jew seeks the anonymity of group conformity and acceptance. Yet he is continually assured by the anti-Semite that he is an alien.

Sartre considers different modes of assimilatory escape. One type of escape via assimilation lies, we have seen above, in the Jew acquiring material possessions capable of universal acquisition:

Il rentre dans l'anonymat; il n'est plus qu'un homme universel qui se définit uniquement par son pouvoir d'achat. (pp. 156-57)

Sartre continues:

Il veut acquérir par l'argent les droits sociaux qu'on lui refuse à titre individuel. (p. 157)

Materialism is thus one mode of assimilatory escape open to the Jew.

An alternative mode of escape is for the Jew to seek out reason and rational debate. This, too, places him on a universal plane:

Le rationalisme des Juifs est une passion: la passion de l'Universel. (p. 134)

The Jew hopes that, in pursuing the language and logic of the wider community, this will also be a step towards social acceptance:

Il se cultive pour détruire en lui le Juif. (p. 118)

However, to Sartre, both the acquisition of wealth, and the pursuit of reason, may conceal a more fundamental desire for assimilation, and constitute modes of escape.

In addition to taking the form of an escape into assimilatory anonymity, the inauthentic Jew's escape from anxiety may also take the form of a masochistic submission to the anti-Semite's demands:

Humilié, méprisé, ou simplement négligé, le masochiste a la joie de se voir déplacé, manié, utilisé comme une chose. Le désir de se faire traiter en objet. (p. 130)

The inauthentic Jew may be tempted to capitulate completely, in the face of the hostile gaze of the anti-Semite:

Cette tentation de se démettre de soi-même et d'être enfin marqué pour toujours d'une nature et d'une destinée juives qui le dispensent de toute responsabilité et de toute lutte. (p. 132)

The masochistic Jew escapes anxiety by denying his freedom of choice.⁶

Escape from anxiety can, alternatively, take the form of sado-masochism, the self-hatred which leads to the phenomenon of Jewish anti-Semitism. Here, the Jew actually assumes the role of anti-Semite. The Jewish anti-Semite, the anti-Semitic self-hating Jew, chooses to hate a mirror-like other, who causes him to be reminded of his anxiety. We recall Sartre's allusion to the embarrassment with which his Jew contemplated the arrival of a fellow Jew, in 'mixed' company. The anti-Semitic Jew hates he who forces him to confront both his choice of Jewish being, and the fact of his choice. The anti-Semitic Jew becomes an anti-Semite, out of anxiety at being a Jew.

All these forms of escape -- assimilation via the recourse to material wealth, or the pursuit of universal reason; the capitulation of masochistic passivity; and the recourse to sado-masochistic Jewish anti-Semitism -- are all inauthentic modes of escape, to Sartre.

Sartre summarises his description of the inauthentic Jew:

Tel est donc cet homme traqué, condamné à se choisir sur la base de faux problèmes et dans une situation fautive, privé du sens métaphysique par l'hostilité menaçante de la société qui l'entoure, acculé à un rationalisme de désespoir. Sa vie n'est qu'une longue fuite devant les autres et devant lui-même. On lui a aliéné jusqu'à son propre corps, on a coupé en deux sa vie affective, on l'a réduit à poursuivre dans un monde qui le rejette, le rêve impossible d'une fraternité universelle. (p. 164)

We recall Sartre's underlying thesis concerning the anti-Semite according to which it is not the Jew who creates the anti-Semite, but

rather the anti-Semite who creates himself, by virtue of an original choice of being. Sartre's inauthentic Jew is one who refuses to acknowledge that he can create himself, and agrees instead to be a creation of the anti-Semite.

Sartre has avoided defining or categorising the Jew. Sartre rejects various anti-Semitic myths, which purport to identify an alleged essential character, common to all Jews. He also rejects a definition of the Jew based on the latter's behavioural psychology in response to the anti-Semite. Sartre will also be shown, below, to reject what he terms the liberal definition of the Jew as a universal abstract. To Sartre, the Jew is neither mythical, nor psychologically defined, nor universal.

However, Sartre does consider the further possibility that there might be some other Jewish essence, distinct from the pejorative essence of the anti-Semite, but a Jewish essence nonetheless.

Sartre considers, but rejects, the possibility that race might be a factor linking all Jews. He rightly draws attention to the fact that, if all Jews are Semites, not all Semites are Jews. Jews do not constitute a single race, but several. (The reduction of anti-Semitism to a form of racism is therefore an over-simplification.) To Sartre, race does not constitute a Jewish essence, common to all Jews.

Sartre also rejects the idea that the Jew might be defined by the possession of certain physiological characteristics, particular to all Jews. Sartre argues that such characteristics are anatomical rather than hereditary. Since certain physical characteristics common to some Jews can also be found among non-Jews on an individual basis, and are not to be found among even a majority of Jews, such traits cannot be said to be typically Jewish. For Sartre, there is no essentially

Jewish physique. (In Chapter IV, we shall examine the background against which Sartre discussed this claim.)

Sartre also briefly considers the factor of religion. He combines consideration of religion with that of nation. He argues that when the Jews were dispersed into the diaspora, religion served to re-enforce the links between them, and eventually, religious observance came to act as a substitute for a Jewish nation:

Les Juifs qui nous entourent n'ont plus avec leur religion qu'un rapport de cérémonie et de politesse. (p. 79)

Spirituality has been replaced by ritual, behind which Sartre detects a more fundamental need:

Un sourd et profond besoin de se rattacher à des traditions et de s'enraciner, à défaut de passé national, dans un passé de rites et de coutumes. (p. 79)

Sartre therefore rejects the possibility that either nationality or religion is an essence common to all Jews.

He concludes:

La communauté juive n'est ni nationale, ni internationale, ni religieuse, ni ethnique, ni politique: c'est une communauté quasi *historique*. (p. 176)

In this discussion of Jewish essence, Sartre's thesis is at its weakest here, in its failure to distinguish between national and cultural history. Yet, we emphasise that Sartre is not concerned with *Judaïsme*. For reasons of ideological pragmatism and philosophical consistency, reasons which we shall examine below, Sartre is keen to reject altogether the notion of an *a priori* essential Jewishness. Sartre therefore rejects the possibility that any Jewish essence exists. Neither anti-Semitic myth, nor the psychological response to such myths by the inauthentic Jew, nor any other essence -- whether racial, physiological, religious, or national -- are capable of providing a

definition of what it is that makes a Jew a Jew, and encompasses all Jews. For Sartre, there is no such thing as an essential, *a priori* Jewish character.

Instead, Sartre suggests that what Jews do share in common is the *situation* into which they have been placed by the non-Jew.⁶ Jewish 'character' derives, not from some essential *a priori* Jewish essence, but from a commonly shared situation:

L'homme se définit avant tout comme un être *en situation*. Cela signifie qu'il forme un tout synthétique avec sa situation biologique, économique, politique, culturelle, etc. On ne peut le distinguer d'elle car elle le forme et décide de ses possibilités, mais, inversement, c'est lui qui donne son sens en se choisissant dans et par elle. Être en situation, selon nous, cela signifie *se choisir* en situation et les hommes diffèrent entre eux comme leurs situations font entre elles et aussi selon le choix qu'ils font de leur propre personne. Ce qu'il y a de commun entre eux tous n'est pas une nature, mais une condition, c'est-à-dire un ensemble de limites et de contraintes: la nécessité de mourir, de travailler pour vivre, d'exister dans un monde habité par d'autres hommes. (p. 72)

It is their situation that has welded the Jews together throughout history:

Ainsi, si l'on veut savoir ce qu'est le Juif contemporain, c'est la conscience chrétienne qu'il faut interroger. (p. 83)

Sartre sees the question of definition as a false problem. The important question is not 'what is a Jew?', but 'what have we made the Jews into?'. The raising of this question constitutes an important feature of Sartre's formulation of a Jewish Question.

What has made the Jew a Jew? Sartre replies: the Gentile. The Jew has existed as a perception of the consciousness of the Gentile, who confers on him an acquired otherness. It is not a Jewish character which is important, but the situation in which Jews have traditionally found themselves:

Ce n'est ni leur passé, ni leur religion, ni leur sol qui unissent les fils d'Israël. Mais s'ils ont un lieu commun, s'ils méritent tous le nom de Juif, c'est qu'ils ont une situation commune de Juif, c'est-à-dire qu'ils vivent au sein d'une communauté qui les tient pour Juifs. (p. 81)

What Jews share in common is their hostile situation:

Le seul lien qui les unisse, c'est le mépris hostile où les tiennent les sociétés qui les entourent. (p. 111)

This brings us to Sartre's often-quoted, and sometimes misrepresented, description of the contemporary French Jew:

Le Juif est un homme que les autres hommes tiennent pour Juif; voilà la vérité simple d'où il faut partir. (pp. 83-84)

The Jew *is* not. The Jew comes into being when perceived by the anti-Semite.

This deceptively simplistic formula encapsulates Sartre's description of the Jew in situation. We shall examine the way in which this assertion has been interpreted by critics in Chapter V. However, it is worth recalling the stage we have reached in Sartre's analysis. Sartre is still referring to his *inauthentic* Jew. The above does not represent Sartre's final word on the Jew. An important final stage remains to be examined.

2. A SOLUTION TO THE JEWISH QUESTION?

We shall now summarise those solutions to the Jewish Question discussed by Sartre in RQJ. Sartre considers those solutions he ascribes to the anti-Semite and the liberal, and then advances possible solutions of his own.

We shall begin by examining Sartre's attitude to the anti-Semite's and the liberal's solutions to the Jewish Question, as Sartre sees them: respectively, the eradication and the assimilation of the Jew. We shall consider these two solutions together since, for Sartre, in one crucial respect, they effectively bring about a similar situation, as far as the Jew is concerned.

The anti-Semite's proposed solution to the Jewish Question lies in the extermination of the Jew. This solution reached its ultimate form in the so-called 'Final Solution'. Sartre does not choose to attack this solution on moral grounds. Instead, he attempts to point out the irrationality of the anti-Semite's call for the Jew's destruction, within the internal logic of the anti-Semite's own view of the world. Sartre has already alluded to the paradoxically symbiotic relationship between anti-Semite and inauthentic Jew, which establishes an interdependence between the two. So dependent is the anti-Semite on the Jew for his consciousness of possessing an essential self that he could not allow the Jew to die without losing this relative essence. Thus, Sartre is able to reject the anti-Semite's solution to the Jewish Question -- the eradication of the Jew -- within the terms of the anti-Semite's own perception of the Jew, and of the Jewish Question.

Sartre's liberal proposes, apparently in contrast, that the anti-Semite should accept the presence of the Jew in society, in the name of the universal Rights of Man. Sartre's liberal advocates tolerance and assimilation, as a solution to the Jewish Question. The anti-Semite should tolerate the Jew; and the Jew should assimilate into society, renouncing his *judéité*. The liberal defends the Jew, not as a Jew,

but as a member of the human race, refusing to acknowledge the specificity of the Jewish situation. Seeing no Jew, the liberal sees no Jewish Question:

Il ne connaît pas le Juif, ni l'Arabe, ni le nègre, ni le bourgeois, ni l'ouvrier: mais seulement l'homme, en tout temps, en tout lieu pareil à lui-même. Toutes les collectivités, il les résout en éléments individuels. Un corps physique est pour lui une somme de molécules, un corps social, une somme d'individus. Et par individu il entend une incarnation singulière des traits universels qui font la nature humaine. (pp. 65-66)

Sartre's liberal acknowledges the Jew only as a microcosm of universal man, and is only to be tolerated as such:

L'individu n'est pour lui qu'une somme de traits universels. Il s'ensuit que sa défense du Juif sauve le Juif en tant qu'homme et l'anéantit en tant que Juif. (pp. 66-67)

Sartre's liberal calls for the Jew's assimilation, not integration, into society. He seeks to dissolve the Jew into a universal collective, devoid of any *judéité*. The liberal calls upon the anti-Semite to tolerate the Jew as a human being, rather than accept him as a Jew. He calls upon the anti-Semite to remember that the Jew is, after all, a human being, in spite of his being a Jew. He implicitly agrees with the anti-Semite that there is something wrong with the Jew. A touch of latent anti-Semitism lurks beneath this humanistic tolerance of the liberal's position, Sartre notes.

In one respect, Sartre sees no effective distinction between the anti-Semite's and the liberal's respective solutions to the Jewish Question:

Celui-là veut le détruire comme un homme pour ne laisser subsister en lui que le Juif, le paria, l'intouchable; celui-ci veut le détruire comme Juif pour ne conserver en lui que l'homme, le sujet abstrait et universel des droits de l'homme et du citoyen. (p. 68)

Sartre concludes that, in terms of the Jew retaining his Jewish identity, the liberal's *conceptual* destruction of the Jew differs little from the anti-Semite's *physical* destruction of the Jew. Both liberal and anti-Semite seek to bring about the disappearance of the Jew, as a Jew, from society. Neither recognise any right on the part of the Jew to exist as a Jew in society. To the anti-Semite, the Jew has no rights, either as a Jew, or as a citizen. To the liberal, the Jew has rights only as a human being, and not as a Jew.

Since, for Sartre, one aspect of the Jewish Question concerns the problem of the existence of anti-Semitism in society, he proceeds to ask how it might be possible to take effective action to solve this problem.

He attempts, momentarily, to link the phenomenon of anti-Semitism to that of class, claiming that the anti-Semite effectively transforms the class struggle into a struggle between Jew and non-Jew:

L'antisémitisme est un effort passionné pour réaliser une union nationale *contre* la division de la société en classes. (p. 180)

Sartre advocates a Socialist revolution, to bring about the end of both class and anti-Semitism. However, he suggests that to rely on the advent of an uncertain future occurrence in order to solve a pressing contemporary problem is 'une solution paresseuse'. (p. 182)

In the immediate future, he suggests various collective responses to anti-Semitism. Sartre considers that constructive legislation, prohibiting the defamation of social minorities, can play a role, but a limited one only:

Les lois n'ont jamais gêné et ne gêneront jamais l'antisémite, qui a conscience d'appartenir à une société mystique en dehors de la légalité. (p. 179)

The rational powers of legislation cannot ultimately be effective in combating what he sees as a fundamentally irrational phenomenon.

Sartre stresses that anti-Semitism is a problem for society at large to combat:

L'antisémitisme n'est pas un problème juif; c'est notre problème. (p. 184)

He advocates 'un libéralisme concret' (p. 177), thereby implicitly seeking to distance himself from his liberal's presumably abstract liberalism. This 'libéralisme concret' would involve rallying the support of those indifferent to the problem, establishing leagues against anti-Semitism, to be set up by both Jews and non-Jews, and generally presenting the image of a community committed to fighting anti-Semitism.

Sartre argues that those who assume the responsibilities of citizenship should benefit from the rights which emanate from that status. They should be able to do so, not as abstract members of society, but as citizens with rights, with specific racial or ethnic origins:

Toutes les personnes qui collaborent, par leur travail, à la grandeur d'un pays, ont droit plénier de citoyen dans ce pays. Ce qui leur donne ce droit n'est pas la possession d'une problématique et abstraite 'nature humaine', mais leur participation active à la vie de la société. Cela signifie donc que les Juifs, comme aussi bien les Arabes ou les Noirs, dès lors qu'ils sont solidaires de l'entreprise nationale, ont droit de regard sur cette entreprise; il sont citoyens. Mais ils ont ces droits à titre de Juifs, de Noirs, ou d'Arabes, c'est-à-dire comme personnes concrètes. (p. 177)

Sartre had become convinced of this, before the war.⁷ Sartre acknowledges the right of the Jew to exist as a Jew, and seeks to transcend the liberal's abstract stance. Sartre emphasises the long-term necessity of collective consciousness and action.

However, he notes that there remains the immediate problem of anti-Semitism in France. Despite having argued that anti-Semitism is a social problem which cannot be solved by the Jew alone, Sartre now returns to his individualistic perspective, asking what Jews themselves can do to combat anti-Semitism. He places great emphasis on the individual Jew.

Here, we return to Sartre's key, though often overlooked, distinction between the authentic Jew and the inauthentic Jew. Sartre designates a mode of individual authenticity, linked to his description of the Jew as a being in situation. Whereas, we recall, his *inauthentic* Jew sought to escape from his situation, Sartre's *authentic* Jew is one who chooses to face his situation as a Jew in society, and to return the hostile gaze of the anti-Semite:

L'authenticité, cela va de soi, consiste à prendre une conscience lucide et véridique de la situation, à assumer les responsabilités et les risques que cette situation comporte, à la revendiquer dans la fierté et la haine. (p. 109)

Authenticity for the individual Jew means choosing to confront his situation:

L'authenticité, pour lui [le Juif], c'est de vivre jusqu'au bout sa condition de Juif, l'inauthenticité de la nier ou de tenter de l'esquiver. (p. 110)

This entails recognition of the hostility facing him:

Ainsi le Juif authentique est celui qui se revendique dans et par le mépris qu'on lui porte. (p. 111)

Sartre's authentic Jew is not obsessed by the image others have of him, and nor does he try to conform to it. Instead, he chooses to acknowledge this situation:

Le Juif authentique abandonne le mythe de l'homme universel: il se connaît et se veut dans l'histoire comme créature historique et damnée; il a cessé de se fuir et d'avoir honte des siens. (p. 166)

He renounces the liberal's faith in the brotherhood of man, and

acknowledges the intolerable nature of his situation:

Il sait qu'il est à part, intouchable, honni, proscrit et c'est comme tel qu'il se revendique. Du coup il renonce à son optimisme rationaliste. (p. 166)

By actively acknowledging his situation, he effectively disarms the anti-Semite:

Il ôte tout pouvoir et toute virulence à l'antisémitisme du moment même qu'il cesse d'être passif. (p. 167)

Sartre's authentic Jew, once released from his social anxiety, is brought to realise the full extent of his human possibilities:

Le Juif authentique se fait juif lui-même et de lui-même, envers et contre tous; il accepte tout jusqu'au martyr et l'antisémite désarmé doit se contenter d'aboyer sur son passage sans pouvoir le marquer. Du coup, le Juif, comme tout homme authentique, échappe à la description: les caractères communs que nous avons relevés chez les Juifs inauthentiques émanent de leur inauthenticité commune. Nous n'en retrouverons aucun chez le Juif authentique: il est ce qu'il se fait, voilà tout ce qu'on peut dire. Il se retrouve dans son délaissement consenti, un homme, tout un homme, avec les horizons métaphysiques que comporte la condition humaine. (p. 167)

Not only has Sartre now liberated the Jew from all reductive attempts to categorise him. He has gone further, liberating him from all *a priori* description. Sartre argues that although the Jew can choose neither his situation, nor whether to be a Jew, he can choose his response to that situation as a Jew:

Être Juif, c'est être jeté, *délaissé* dans la situation juive, et c'est en même temps, être responsable dans et par sa propre personne du destin et de la nature même du peuple juif. (p. 108)

While Sartre's inauthentic Jew was a Jew-for-the-anti-Semite, his authentic Jew is a Jew-for-himself.

Sartre stresses that individual Jewish authenticity cannot of itself provide a social or political solution to the Jewish Question:

Le choix d'authenticité apparaît comme une détermination *morale* apportant au Juif une certitude sur le plan éthique, mais il ne saurait aucunement servir de solution sur le plan social et politique.
(p. 171)

However, Sartre argues that it might serve to bring about the conditions in which a solution to the Jewish Question might be found.

* * * *

To summarise Sartre's thesis on the Jewish Question in RQJ, Sartre begins his study by concentrating on the individual person of the anti-Semite. The anti-Semite expresses an emotion, not an opinion. He thereby foregoes the right to freedom of expression. He has made a fundamental choice as to how to perceive himself, the other, and the world. He has chosen to adopt an essential, unchangeable self. Rather than confront the Jew in the world, he has chosen to believe in a pre-reflective image of the Jew, and to perceive a world of Good and Evil, Gentile and Jew. Sartre draws an important distinction between the mythical Jew, and the Jew in situation. Sartre describes the self-consciousness of the observed Jew, the anxiety this produces, and the inauthentic modes of escape chosen by the inauthentic Jew as a release from this anxiety. Distinguishing between essence and situation, Sartre argues that there is no *a priori* Jewish essence. The Jew is one whom others look upon as being a Jew. Sartre rejects both the anti-Semite's call for the Jew's eradication and the liberal's call for tolerance. Sartre calls for collective action to combat anti-Semitism, and, on an individual basis, for the Jew to be authentic, face the hostile look of the anti-Semite, and re-invent a new mode of Jewish being.

This concludes our summary of Sartre's description of the interplay between anti-Semite and Jew; his portrait of the anti-Semite and

description of the Jew in situation; and his consideration of possible solutions to the Jewish Question.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I I

1. It was published separately as an article, 'Portrait de l'antisémite', in advance of Réflexions, in Les Temps modernes, 3 (December 1945) 442-70.
2. In parts of Poland, for example. See Lanzmann, Shoah (1985).
3. This unsubstantiated claim is of doubtful validity, unless 'la réalité juive' is interpreted to mean 'the Jew in the face of anti-Semitism'.
4. See Plank, who, in Sartre and Surrealism, explains Sartre's hostility towards the Surrealists in terms of the affinities Plank perceives between Existentialism and Surrealism. Other critics, too, have suggested that Sartre attacks movements, such as Surrealism (in RQJ, and more fully, in Qu'est-ce que la littérature?), or individual writers (Baudelaire) in which or in whom they claim Sartre saw affinities from which he sought to distance himself.
5. See Arendt's controversial views on the notion of Jewish passivity, in Eichmann in Jerusalem (1963), relating to the attitude of Jews towards their War-time fate.
6. Sartre subsequently uses this same distinction, between character and situation, with regard to the theatre, in 'Pour un théâtre de situations', La Rue, 12 (November 1947).
7. Simone de Beauvoir: "Moi, je pensais que les Juifs devaient être considérés comme ayant le droit de tous les citoyens, mais ni plus ni moins; vous, vous teniez à ce qu'il y ait des droits précis qui leur soient accordés: de parler leur langue, d'avoir leur religion, d'avoir leur culture, etc." Jean-Paul Sartre: "Oui. Ça me venait d'avant-guerre. Quand j'ai écrit La Nausée, j'ai vu un Juif dont on a souvent parlé ensuite, Mendel. Il avait parlé avec moi, et m'a convaincu. Moi je voulais faire des Juifs des citoyens comme les chrétiens, et lui m'a convaincu de la spécificité du fait juif et qu'il fallait donner aux Juifs des droits particuliers." Simone de Beauvoir, La Cérémonie des adieux suivi de Entretiens avec Jean-Paul Sartre août-septembre 1974, Folio (Paris: Gallimard, 1981), p. 553.

CHAPTER III

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THE JEWISH QUESTION AS MODEL

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1. SOURCES OF SARTRE'S METHOD

Sartre's arguments expounded in RQJ are linked to his philosophical preoccupations and writings of the period. We shall, therefore, now consider the sources of the methodological approach Sartre applied to the model of the Jewish Question. Réflexions represents the application of a philosophical method to a particular model. It is based upon theories Sartre expounded in L'Être et le néant (EN), published in 1943, a year before he wrote RQJ; and also upon his earlier brief study of emotion, Esquisse d'une théorie des émotions (ETE), of 1939. Sartre used the model of the Jewish Question to test out aspects of his ontology.

We shall now trace Sartre's analysis back to its theoretical base. An awareness of the philosophical background against which Sartre wrote his study of the Jewish Question can enhance our appreciation of the text, and perhaps cast light upon areas of uncertainty, confusion, and controversy, pertaining to it. More specifically, an awareness of the philosophical basis underlying RJQ may enable us to clarify the confusion that has arisen among many critics (and considered below in Chapter V) concerning Sartre's attitude towards the Jew.

Sartre's approach to the Jewish Question consists in focussing on individual consciousness and perception. How is a Jewish Question perceived by consciousness? How do the various actors involved in the question perceive themselves, the other, and the world?

In RQJ, Sartre does not look to the world in order to explain the Jewish Question. His study is not based on empirical research. He

does not collect data on the subject of 'the Jewish Question' (which, we have suggested in Chapter I, is an ambiguous term anyway) which he then proceeds to process. He does not look to the world in order to discover the 'facts' of the Jewish Question, however they might be collated, or subsequently interpreted. Instead, he applies a method, and formulates a Jewish Question of his own. Sartre's method is phenomenological. He is primarily interested in perception: in how phenomena appear to consciousness, and in how consciousness tends towards phenomena. Sartre attempts to focus on the Jewish Question through the 'eye' of the anti-Semite, and through the 'eye' of the Jew. Réflexions is linked to Sartre's theory of emotion, and to his concepts of original choice, situation, bad faith, and the look. Sartre constructs a system within which he inserts his Jewish Question. He carves out an analysis of anti-Semitism and of the Jewish Question within the framework of his philosophy.

In Esquisse d'une théorie des émotions, Sartre set out the factors which he considered needed to be taken into account, in order to study human existence in situation:

Une étude vraiment positive de l'homme en situation devrait avoir élucidé d'abord les notions d'homme, de monde, d'être-dans-le-monde, de situation.¹

This is reflected in Sartre's approach to the Jewish Question. He analyses the Jew's consciousness of his own being, his being-in-the-world, and his situation as a Jew in relation to the anti-Semitic 'other'.

Sartre's ontology is based on the notion that existence precedes essence:

L'existence de la liberté et de la conscience précède et conditionne leur *essence*.²

This will be applied to both the anti-Semite and the Jew as examples of the being of consciousness in situation.

Another important idea for Sartre is that all consciousness is intentional. This is based on Husserl's theory of intentionality, discussed by Sartre in his early article, 'Une idée fondamentale de la phénoménologie de Husserl: l'intentionnalité'.³ To Sartre, there is no hovering, independent, free-floating ego. Consciousness tends towards an object, which is something other than itself. These and other key aspects of Sartre's ontology are applied to the model of the Jewish Question, in RQJ.

We have seen the role emotion plays in Sartre's portrayal of the anti-Semitic Lucien, in the short story 'L'Enfance d'un chef'. In RQJ, the notion of the anti-Semite as one who has chosen to exist on an emotional level is also an important aspect of Sartre's thesis. Sartre actually begins his study with an evocation of what he sees as the emotional, irrational basis of the anti-Semite's perception of the Jew, and of the world generally. RQJ begins with the assertion that anti-Semitism is not a rational attitude adopted in relation to the Jew, defended by recourse to reasoned premise. Rather, Sartre sees it as an emotional state. Since *emotion* is an important feature of Sartre's portrait of the anti-Semite, we shall briefly consider the theory of emotion upon which that portrait is partly based.

In his Esquisse, which, according to Fell, breaks with widely accepted tenets of psychological theory,⁴ Sartre considers, and rejects, that psychological approach to emotion which studies it in a post-reflective, given world:

Ils [les psychologues] sont d'accord sur un principe essentiel: leur enquête doit partir avant tout des faits. (p. 7)

Sartre prefers to adopt an alternative, phenomenological approach. He defines the latter as follows:

La phénoménologie est l'étude des phénomènes -- non des faits. Et par phénomène il faut entendre "ce qui se dénonce soi-même", ce dont la réalité est précisément l'apparence. (p. 15)

Thus, concerning emotion, the phenomenologist studies emotions as acts of consciousness:

Une phénoménologie de l'émotion qui, après avoir "mis le monde entre parenthèses" étudiera l'émotion comme phénomène transcendantal pur et cela, non pas en s'adressant à des émotions particulières, mais en cherchant à atteindre et à élucider l'essence transcendantale de l'émotion comme type organisé de conscience. (p. 13)

Sartre prefers to study emotion through consciousness, not through its manifestations in the world. He is interested in emotion insofar as it constitutes an act of consciousness, tending towards an object.

Sartre is also interested in emotion insofar as it signifies something other than itself. To Sartre, emotions, like all phenomena, *signify*:

Pour le phénoménologue, tout fait humain est par essence significatif. Si vous lui ôtez la signification vous lui ôtez sa nature de fait humain. La tâche d'un phénoménologue sera donc d'étudier la signification de l'émotion. Que faut-il entendre par là? Signifier c'est indiquer autre chose; et l'indiquer de telle sorte qu'en développant la signification on trouvera précisément le signifié. (p. 16)

The task of the phenomenologist is to discover what this something else is. Thus, to extrapolate to RQJ, when the anti-Semite manifests his hatred of the Jew, this hatred signifies something other than itself.

To the Sartre of Esquisse, emotion also implies consciousness of the world:

L'émotion signifie à sa manière le tout de la conscience ou, si nous nous plaçons sur le plan existentiel, de la réalité-humaine. Elle n'est pas un accident parce que la réalité n'est pas une somme de

faits; elle exprime sous un aspect défini la totalité synthétique humaine dans son intégrité. Et par là il ne faut point entendre qu'elle est l'effet de la réalité humaine. Elle est cette réalité-humaine elle-même se réalisant sous la forme "émotion". (pp. 16-17)

Consciousness does not passively undergo emotional states, in reaction to the world:

L'émotion est une forme organisée de l'existence humaine. (p. 17)

Rather, it chooses emotion as a mode of being, to face the world. To Sartre, emotion also implies choice. Similarly, for the Sartre of Réflexions, anti-Semitism is not an opinion, but a passion. The anti-Semite chooses the emotions of anger and hatred. In hating the Jew, the anti-Semite is signifying something other than hatred of the Jew. That something is linked to an original choice of being which, we have seen, Sartre explores in RQJ.

For Sartre, emotion signifies that consciousness has understood the world. It is an act signifying comprehension of the difficulty of responding to the world. Recourse to emotion is a way of changing the world magically, for lack of an effective way of doing so:

La saisie d'un objet étant impossible ou engendrant une tension insoutenable, la conscience le saisit ou tente de le saisir autrement, c'est-à-dire qu'elle se transforme précisément pour transformer l'objet. (p. 43)

Sartre continues:

Dans l'émotion, c'est le corps qui, dirigé par la conscience, change ses rapports au monde pour que le monde change ses qualités. (p. 44)

Emotion is accordingly a compensatory act of consciousness. Unable to transform the world by our actions, we transform ourselves in relation to the world, instead. This notion of consciousness summoning emotion is hinted at in Sartre's earlier short story, 'L'Enfance d'un chef'. Lucien's emotions can be seen to be deliberate acts:

Lucien fit une scène et obtint la permission de sortir tous les samedis. (p. 224)

We recall that Sartre shows anti-Semitism being summoned in order to satisfy a desire to hate, elsewhere in his short story:

"Oh! pensa-at-il avec désespoir, ce que je les hais! Ce que je hais les Juifs!", et il essaya de puiser un peu de force dans la contemplation de cette haine immense. (p. 245.

To Sartre, emotion is a sign that consciousness has understood the world. To extrapolate to RQJ, Sartre claims that one does not become an anti-Semite in response to the Jew in the world. The anti-Semite's hatred of the Jew is a compensatory act of consciousness.

Sartre does not consider emotion to entail a temporary loss of 'self-control', on the part of consciousness. It does not imply bewilderment in the face of a confusing world. It implies an awareness of the difficulty of acting within it. Similarly, Sartre's anti-Semite does not suffer a momentary and involuntary loss of self-control, in expressing his hatred of the Jew. Faced with the existence of others, and with the difficulty of making a significant impact on the world via his acts, the anti-Semite makes a choice. Rather than transform the world, he transforms himself magically. Having chosen to be emotional, he then finds an object in the world to feed his choice: this object is the Jew. Sartre's anti-Semite therefore illustrates Sartre's theory of emotion: consciousness understanding the world, and choosing to attempt to counter its difficulty on a dimension other than that of action in the world.

If the anti-Semite has chosen to be emotional, the emotions involved include those of anger and hatred. To Sartre, anger represents a choice. The anti-Semite is not angry because the Jew is hateful. The anti-Semite finds the Jew hateful, because he has chosen to be angry. This phenomenological approach enables Sartre to shift emphasis away

from an anti-Semitic, essentialist perception of the Jew, which -- as we shall see in Chapter IV -- was a feature of many studies of the Jewish Question undertaken during the Third Republic.

Sartre is fundamentally interested in the relationship between perceiving subject and perceived object; and between perceived object-as-subject and perceiving subject-as-object. Sartre seeks to identify the anti-Semite's perception of the Jewish Question. The anti-Semite asks: what is it about the Jew that angers me so much, and causes me to become an anti-Semite? Sartre counters with a different question. He asks: what is it about the way the anti-Semite perceives the Jew that causes him to choose to hate the Jew, and become an anti-Semite?

In L'Être et le néant, Sartre links the emotion of hatred to consciousness's discovery of *the existence of the other*, the other's freedom, and the restrictions this places upon the freedom of the self:

L'occasion qui sollicite la haine, c'est simplement l'acte d'autrui par quoi j'ai été mis en état de *subir* sa liberté. (p. 462)

This is the discovery of the objectifying other, 'autrui comme sujet' (p. 323), and of the self-as-object for the other's consciousness, 'mon être-regardé' (p. 323). Sartre asserts:

Je suis regardé dans un monde regardé. (p. 316)

He continues:

Dans l'épreuve du regard, en m'éprouvant comme objectivité non-révlée, j'éprouve directement et avec mon être l'insaisissable subjectivité d'autrui. (p. 317)

The discovery of the other-as-subject, at the centre of a world in which I am an object of the other's consciousness, re-arranged and re-inserted within the framework of that other's perception of the world, is also the discovery of the existence of the other-as-freedom, and, importantly, of the limitations this places upon my freedom:

L'apparition d'autrui dans le monde corespond donc à un glissement figé de tout l'univers, à une décentration du monde qui mine par en dessous la centralisation que j'opère dans le même temps. (p. 301)

Hatred of the other signifies that consciousness recognises the existence of the other as a subject, objectifying in turn other subjects within its perspective of the world, and thereby limiting their freedom. To Sartre, hatred of the other signifies consciousness of the existence of others:

La haine est haine de tous les autres en un seul. Ce que je veux atteindre symboliquement en poursuivant la mort de tel autre, c'est le principe général de l'existence d'autrui. L'autre que je hais représente en fait les autres. (p. 462)

To Sartre, hatred is a vain attempt to blot out the other's consciousness:

La haine, à son tour, est un échec. Son projet initial, en effet, est de supprimer les autres consciences. (p. 463)

Yet hatred is bound to end in failure. It relates to the being of others, and to the fact of the being of others. Nevertheless, to Sartre, hatred is one reaction to the discovery of the other's freedom. Extrapolating to RQJ, in hating the Jew, the anti-Semite is expressing his recognition of the existence of the other (the Jew, the other-as-not-I) in the world, and the restrictions this imposes upon his freedom in it. Through his anti-Semitism, the anti-Semitic individual is expressing a reaction to his awareness of the existence of the other, and the implications this has for his freedom.

A further aspect of Sartre's ontology is *mauvaise foi*. Sartre applies this concept to the Jewish Question. His anti-Semite and his

inauthentic Jew are in bad faith. What does this mean, to Sartre? In EN, Sartre distinguishes bad faith from the lie:

Par le mensonge, la conscience affirme qu'elle existe par nature comme *cachée à autrui*. (p. 84)

In contrast:

Dans la mauvaise foi, c'est à moi-même que je masque la vérité (p. 84)

The liar and the lied to are different facets of myself. For Sartre, there is no Freudian unconscious to wrest responsibility away from me:

Le concept de base qui est ainsi engendré utilise la double propriété de l'être humain, d'être une *facticité* et une *transcendance*. Ces deux aspects de la réalité humaine sont, à vrai dire, et doivent être susceptibles d'une coordination valable. Mais la mauvaise foi ne veut ni les coordonner ni les surmonter dans une synthèse. Il s'agit pour elle d'affirmer leur identité tout en conservant leurs différences. (p. 92)

Our interest here, with regard to RQJ, lies not in Sartre's attitude towards the unconscious, but in his notion of escape:

L'acte premier de mauvaise foi est pour fuir ce qu'on ne peut pas fuir, pour fuir ce qu'on est. (p. 107)

It is as a mode of escape that we can recognise Sartre's notion of bad faith in his designation of the anti-Semite and the inauthentic Jew.

A further aspect of bad faith which recalls Sartre's portrait of the anti-Semite is the recourse of consciousness in bad faith to what Sartre terms '*l'évidence non persuasive*'. In bad faith, I reduce my demands for evidence to substantiate certain beliefs I am determined to hold:

La mauvaise foi dans son projet primitif, et dès son surgissement, décide de la nature exacte de ses exigences, elle se dessine tout entière dans la résolution qu'elle prend de *ne pas trop demander*, de se tenir pour satisfaite quand elle sera mal persuadée, de forcer par décision ses adhésions à des vérités incertaines. (p. 105)

This was a feature of Sartre's anti-Semite. Thus, the anti-Semite and the inauthentic Jew of RQJ reflect Sartre's concept of bad faith, set out in EN.

A major feature of Sartre's portrait of the anti-Semite is his insistence that anti-Semitism stems from an *original choice* on the part of an individual: a choice concerning the self, the other, and the world. In Réflexions, Sartre does not see anti-Semitism as an isolated phenomenon, a gratuitous aversion to a particular social group. He saw it as a manifestation of an individual's total view of the world. Thus, Sartre does not begin his study of the Jewish Question by concentrating on the Jew in the world, or even on the Jew's perception of him or herself as a Jew (although this is, indeed, considered subsequently). Nor does he set about a moral indictment of anti-Semitism, departing from a pre-established humanistic standpoint. Instead, he begins by studying the anti-Semite's perception of the world. Sartre transforms the problem of anti-Semitism into a question of how consciousness perceives the world.

In l'Être et le néant, Sartre expounds his concept of original choice, 'le choix fondamental'. To Sartre, consciousness implies choice. The aim of Existential psychoanalysis, as outlined by Sartre in EN, is to reveal an individual's original choice of being, as manifested in everything he is and does. Existential psychoanalysis traces a subject's self-defining fundamental project:

La réalité humaine, comme nous avons tenté de l'établir, s'annonce et se définit par les fins qu'elle poursuit. (p. 616)

To the Sartre of EN, man's every action signifies an original choice of being:

Si nous admettons que la personne est une totalité, nous ne pouvons pas espérer la recomposer par une addition ou une organisation des diverses tendances que nous avons empiriquement découvertes en elle. Mais, au contraire, en chaque inclination, en chaque tendance, elle s'exprime tout entière, quoique sous un angle différent. (p. 623)

He continues:

Nous devons découvrir en chaque tendance, en chaque conduite du sujet, une signification qui la transcende. (p. 623)

Man's fundamental project is revealed through his acts, and he defines who he will become through the choices he makes:

C'est donc plutôt par une *comparaison* des diverses tendances empiriques d'un sujet que nous tenterons de découvrir et de dégager le projet fondamental qui leur est commun à toutes -- et non par une simple sommation ou reconstitution de ces tendances: en chacune la personne est tout entière. (p. 623)

Choice is inevitable, since consciousness is fundamentally a lack of being, to be filled:

Le pour-soi choisit parce qu'il est manqué, la liberté ne fait qu'un avec le manque, elle est le mode d'être concret du manque d'être. (p. 624)

Freedom is synonymous with choice, which is the very definition of existence:

La liberté est surgissement immédiatement concret et ne se distingue pas de son choix, c'est-à-dire de la *personne*. (p. 627)

For Sartre, existence is synonymous with choice:

Il n'y a pas de différence entre exister et se choisir. (p. 632)

Analysing human action is a process of decipherment:

Le *principe* de cette psychanalyse est que l'homme est une totalité et non une collection; qu'en conséquence, il s'exprime tout entier dans la plus insignifiante, et la plus superficielle de ses conduites -- autrement dit, qu'il n'est pas un goût, un tic, un acte humain qui ne soit *révélateur*. Le *but* de la psychanalyse est de *déchiffrer* les comportements empiriques de l'homme, c'est-à-dire de mettre en pleine lumière les révélations que chacun d'eux contient et de les fixer conceptuellement. Son *point de départ* est *l'expérience*. (p. 628)

In order to understand a given subject, Sartre will not look to such factors as heredity, upbringing, background, or physiological constitution. It is not because a subject's father was an anti-Semite, or because he received an anti-Semitic upbringing, that an individual is an anti-Semite. Concerning a given subject, Sartre will seek to trace a fundamental project,

son rapport originel à soi, au monde et à l'Autre, dans l'unité de relations *internes* et d'un projet fondamental. Cet élan ne saurait être que purement individuel et unique. (p. 622)

Similarly, Sartre does not seek to identify a *syndrome*. To him, one cannot pin down a single common denominator to which human behaviour can be reduced, 'un terme abstrait et général' (p. 632). Instead, Sartre looks for

un choix qui reste unique et qui est dès l'origine la concrétion absolue. (p. 632)

Sartre equally refuses to resort to general explanations such as the libido, or the complex. A subject's fundamental project is uniquely individual:

Comme notre but ne saurait être d'établir des lois empiriques de succession, nous ne saurions constituer une symbolique universelle. (p. 633)

Instead, Sartre seeks to

réinventer une symbolique en fonction du cas particulier qu'il envisage. (p. 633)

Sartre suggests the possibility of an individual both making and revoking a choice. The being of matter cannot alter itself. Yet the being of consciousness can. Its essence is a lack of identity with itself. It is that which it is not, and is not that which it is:

Le choix est vivant et, par suite, peut toujours être révoqué par le sujet étudié. (p. 633)

Sartre seeks to identify a choice of being, not some natural and immutable state. If we now return to the Jewish Question, Sartre's method does not consist in seeking to discover the 'causes' of an abstract syndrome, 'anti-Semitism':

C'est une méthode destinée à mettre en lumière, sous une forme rigoureusement objective, le choix par lequel chaque personne se fait personne. (p. 634)

The specific merit of Sartre's method lies in its capacity to raise the question: why did X choose to become an anti-Semite, rather than Y.

Thus, Sartre's treatment of the Jewish Question is closely linked to his ontology. Like his theory of emotion, Sartre's concept of original choice places great emphasis on consciousness as an active force in the world. Sartre endows the individual with the capacity to act freely, within the constraints of a given situation. Sartre was subsequently to reflect further on the notion of value within his description of existence in Cahiers pour une morale, to reduce the significance he attached to individual choice and look to a rapprochement with Marxism in Critique de la raison dialectique (1960). However, RQJ is rooted in Sartre's Existentialism of the early 1940s. The era of RQJ reflects a phase during which Sartre is attempting to carve out an ethic of individual authenticity. We shall assess the value of this individualist approach to the Jewish Question, its strengths and its limitations, below.

2. METHOD AND MODEL

Sartre does not relate in any detail the experience of French Jews under the Vichy regime during the Second World War. Nor does he delve beyond Vichy, back into Jewish history. He does not seek to impart his 'knowledge' of the subject of the Jewish Question to the reader. Indeed, he has admitted that at the time he wrote RQJ he knew little of either Judaism or Jewish history, and worked from no informed source: 'J'ai fait la Question juive sans aucun document, sans lire un livre'.⁵ Sartre applies a method. In addition to writing about the Jewish Question, he writes about *writing about* the Jewish Question. He considers the terms in which a Jewish Question might be formulated, and the terminology with which it might be discussed.

The overall structure of Réflexions, and the comparative length accorded to individual sections, are worthy of note. Sartre divides his study into four un-headed sections of unequal length. He begins by considering the anti-Semite. He delays his analysis of the Jew until the third section. He devotes 157 pages to the anti-Semite and the Jew, and only sixteen pages to possible solutions to the problem. This is significant, since one fundamental choice made by the anti-Semite involves attributing the causes of a Jewish Question exclusively to the Jew: the myth of 'the guilty Jew'. Sartre's approach to the Jewish Question is different. Sartre focusses attention primarily on the consciousness of the anti-Semite, rather than on the alleged character of the Jew. Through this aspect of his approach alone, he marks himself off from much of the literature on the Jewish Question written during the Third Republic and under Vichy, as we shall see in Chapter IV.

Sartre follows a subjectively formulated line of argument. As readers of RQJ, we need to recognise that the sporadic 'cela va de soi' (p. 109), or 'la vérité simple' (pp. 83-84), indicating 'natural' logic or simple truths, are deceptive. Similarly, Sartre's title might be interpreted as suggesting that a single, definitive Jewish Question exists. Yet we suggested in Chapter I that use of the definite article

before the term 'Jewish Question' required qualification. In this respect Sartre's method ultimately undermines the very title of his study, in that its net effect is to broaden out the terms of the discussion, rather than narrow them down.

Sartre avoids what he implicitly perceives as the twin pitfalls of anti-Semitic condemnation and liberal benevolence. He does not moralise, either with regard to the anti-Semite or the inauthentic Jew. He does not condemn the anti-Semite's hatred of the Jew. He merely suggests its pre-reflective basis. Similarly, while Sartre undoubtedly prefers his 'authentic' Jew, he does not condemn his 'inauthentic' Jew. If the anti-Semite's perception of the Jew is pre-reflective, the inauthentic Jew is, potentially, the pre-authentic Jew. This does not preclude the notion of value from entering Sartre's analysis, evident in Sartre's implicit preference for his authentic Jew. Yet RQJ is moral without being moralistic.

We have seen that Sartre's portrait of the anti-Semite can be traced back to his concept of individual original choice. Yet Sartre also adopts a more collective approach, in his designation and de-mystification of certain myths propagated by anti-Semites. Sartre effectively de-mystifies what, in Chapter I, we termed *juiverie*: certain pejorative pre-conceptions concerning the Jew. This distinction between *juiverie* and *le Juif* is a significant achievement of his analysis. Generally, de-mystification of the conservative forces at work in society was perceived by Sartre, during the mid 1940s and subsequently, as an important task of the committed writer, as we shall see in Chapter V.

What of Sartre's proposed solutions to the Jewish Question? To talk of a solution to the Jewish Question brings us back to our discussion in Chapter I on formulations of the Jewish Question. One solves the Jewish Question one has formulated. Sartre looks for a solution within the terms of the Jewish Question he has formulated. He invents a solution to the Jewish Question by re-formulating the terms of the problem, and finding it 'from within'. Nevertheless, while noting the

potential limitations of Sartre's conclusions, the value of an analysis does not lie solely in the quality of its conclusions. The value of the questions Sartre raises may well outweigh that of the solutions he puts forward.

Sartre's application of his ontology to the model of the Jewish Question has attracted criticism. Writing in 1947, Rabi raises the question of the relationship between Sartre's method and his model:

Sartre nous apparaît trop souvent non pas comme le savant qui conclut du fait à la théorie mais comme celui qui subordonne le fait à la théorie.⁶

Does Sartre theorise, to the point of losing all relevance to the model under discussion?

In a comparative study of Sartre's and E. M. Cioran's essays on the Jewish Question, Marks claims that Sartre substitutes methodology for 'facts', describing RQJ as a 'technical exercise'.⁷ Sartre is perceived as the victim of a language game, trapped within the, to her, reductive confines of his own conceptual logic. According to Marks, his 'substitution of ideology for knowledge' leads to unscientific results.

Yet although RQJ's results should not be exempt from an evaluation as to their relevance to the model under analysis, Sartre's analysis is not flawed merely because it is not empirical. Indeed, we should not assume that the formulation of a Jewish Question, its 'facts', and the terminology with which it is to be discussed, are self-evident. We have suggested in Chapter I that there is no single, definitive formulation of the Jewish Question. One valuable aspect of Sartre's method lies in its challenge to conventional notions as to the 'facts' of the Jewish Question. Criticism of Sartre's method might usefully take account of the following factors: the strengths and limitations of other methodological approaches open to Sartre (see Chapter I); the results Sartre achieves by the application of his particular method to the model

under analysis (see Chapter II); and the existence and bias of other published research on the subject at the time (see Chapter IV).

Nevertheless, Sartre makes a number of generalisations which have attracted, or merit, criticism. His claim that the anti-Semite is necessarily mediocre (pp. 25-26) has been challenged by Rabi, who cites the case of Gide:

Le cas de Gide dément donc avec force l'affirmation de Sartre à savoir que l'antisémite se considère *comme un homme de la moyenne, de la petite moyenne, au fond comme un médiocre*. A cette époque Gide était en sa pleine maturité. (pp. 536-37)

We might add the names of Céline, Wagner, and many more. The possible compatibility of artistic sensibility with physical brutality, the capacity of the same individual to appreciate Bach and be a party to acts of barbarism, is a theme which runs through the works of Wiesel.

Sartre's claim that the anti-Semite is predominantly to be found amongst the non-property-owning, lower middle classes is also open to challenge. Without specific reference to Sartre, Adorno's team of psychologists, studying the authoritarian personality, nonetheless asserts:

We see no reason to suppose that the authoritarian structures with which we are concerned would be any less well developed in the working class than in other segments of the population.⁹

Indeed, manifestations of anti-Semitism in contemporary France suggest that the phenomenon does indeed transcend class.

Sartre's claim that the Jew could not be a Surrealist, since preoccupied by his social, as opposed to metaphysical, situation, can be refuted by reference to the case of Chagall. (On the other hand, were Jews like Chagall able to become Surrealists, precisely to the extent that they had abandoned their social anxiety at being Jews, or their Jewishness altogether?)

Thus, Sartre at times departs from his methodical approach, and overstates his case. The anti-Semite may not necessarily be mediocre or lower middle class, and the Jew may not necessarily be precluded from metaphysics. The citing of individual cases neither definitively vindicates nor discredits Sartre's case. However, these problematic aspects of Sartre's argument do enable us to define the contours of Sartre's study even more narrowly. We can now see that RQJ does not explain that anti-Semitism which can co-exist within a mind that also harbours great intellectual powers, or even genius.

Sartre's analysis is indeed limited by the methodological approach he chose to adopt, and from which he periodically departs. A further potential criticism is that the evidence he adduces to support his case is highly subjective. He constructs an argument based largely upon his ontology, which he seeks to validate by referring to his own, limited personal experience of Jews and anti-Semites, or to anecdotal references. References in RQJ to other research on the subject are not in-depth. This subjective aspect of RQJ has been a further source of concern to critics. Messchonnic notes the recourse to personal anecdotes or experience, when Sartre is in search of evidence to support his points:

"Un peintre m'a dit", "une jeune femme me dit" (p. 4)... "J'ai interrogé cent personnes" (p. 12)... "On m'a souvent cité beaucoup d'Israélites que" (p. 149)... "J'ai connu à Berlin (p. 54)."

Rachel Israel refers to Sartre's 'méconnaissance de l'histoire juive contemporaine'.¹⁰

In RQJ, Sartre presents us with a thesis which he seeks to substantiate via recourse to subjectively obtained and selectively presented evidence. In an interview given twenty years after RQJ's publication, in 1966, Sartre himself acknowledged some of the

shortcomings of his study. He asserted that, with the benefit of hindsight, he would have approached the subject differently in 1966:

Les insuffisances me sautent aux yeux. Je devais traiter le problème d'un double point de vue, historique et économique. Je m'en suis tenu à une description phénoménologique.''

Not only is Sartre's analysis limited by its individualistic approach; it is also highly subjective in terms of its sources.

Yet we should, in fairness, ask what other sources were available to Sartre? As we shall seek to show in Chapter IV, much of the literature written on the subject of the Jewish Question available in print in France at the time Sartre wrote RQJ consisted, not of genuine enquiries into the subject, but of anti-Semitic diatribes, which were hostile *a priori* to the Jew.

Furthermore, we argue that Sartre's ignorance of 'the facts' of the Jewish Question has its advantages. Sartre is able to approach the subject from a perspective free from certain pre-conceptions and terminological givens prevalent at the time. In Sartre, we have a writer -- neither a Jew, nor an anti-Semite -- who is prepared to re-appraise the terms in which a Jewish Question is discussed.

In the same interview, Sartre actually re-asserts his commitment to certain other aspects of his original thesis; in particular, his designation of a relationship between anti-Semite and inauthentic Jew:

Le lien du Juif et de l'antisémitisme reste le même parce que l'antisémitisme est toujours aussi virulent. Et je garderais ma distinction entre Juif authentique et Juif inauthentique. (p. 7)

This fidelity to his original concept of Jewish authenticity is of interest, given a tendency among many critics -- discussed in Chapter V -- to overlook this aspect of his argument.

Sartre does not look to any alleged physical or moral characteristics of the Jew in order to understand the anti-Semite. As we shall see,

this was the approach adopted by many writers on the Jewish Question during the Third Republic and under Vichy. Instead, Sartre examines the consciousness of the anti-Semite. Sartre does not look primarily to the Jew for the cause of a Jewish Question coming into being. He chooses to examine the anti-Semite's perception of the Jew. Understanding anti-Semitism necessitates being sensitive to the anti-Semite's perception of the world, rather than identifying some essential attribute among Jews.

Sartre's 1944 analysis of the anti-Semite preceded both his 1947 study of Baudelaire (Baudelaire) and his 1952 study of Genet, (Saint Genet, comédien et martyr). It effectively presents an early trial application of his concept of original choice to a subject. Sartre does not present us with a known subject, as he does in the afore-mentioned studies. Nevertheless, the anti-Semite does effectively become the subject under Existential psychoanalysis.

The term 'portrait', as used by Sartre in 'Portrait de l'antisémite', the title of a section of RQJ published separately in 1945, is potentially misleading. For Sartre, it does not refer to some immutable object. As with the Jew, Sartre is not seeking to portray a quintessential anti-Semite. On the contrary, for Sartre, to portray is to contest. We shall see in Chapter IV that the anti-Semite, through his designation of *juiverie*, had propagated a myth of the essential Jew. Sartre portrays neither an essential Jew, nor an essential anti-Semite. Georges Bataille, writing in a post-Vichy context, draws attention to the danger of doing so:

Il ne suffit pas, si l'horreur en doit être surmonté, de rejeter la faute sur une catégorie d'hommes exécrés. On renouvelle de cette façon la lâcheté antisémite, le truquage des boucs émissaires.¹²

One important consequence of Sartre's approach is that it actually universalises the phenomenon of anti-Semitism. Sartre's study avoids this 'scapegoat syndrome', with regards to both Jew and anti-Semite. Sartre does not seek to isolate and denounce an anti-Semitic minority. His anti-Semite is simply one who has made a certain choice.

Furthermore, Sartre's analysis is dynamic. The choice can be revoked. The anti-Semite is capable of changing his perception of the Jew, and his perception of himself.

The notions of *projection* and *reversal* are also implicit in Sartre's analysis, if we analyse the structure of Sartre's arguments. Sartre's anti-Semite is shown to project positive and negative aspects of his own chosen being onto the person of the Jew. Thus, the Jew is a thief, because the anti-Semite has chosen to adopt the role of dispossessed proprietor. The Jew is a rationalist, because the anti-Semite has preferred emotion to reason. The Jew is guilty, because the anti-Semite has decided that someone should be to blame. The Jew is intelligent, because the anti-Semite has chosen mediocrity. In short, he is a Jew, in that the anti-Semite has chosen to be an anti-Semite. We have argued that Sartre's attitude towards anti-Semitism is based, not on moral grounds, but on his ontology. *Juiverie* imposes too great a factitiousness on the Jew.

Sartre avoids idealistic and realistic perceptions of the Jew. Sartre does not perceive the Jew as purely an idea in the mind of consciousness. Nor does he perceive the Jew as a pre-existent being in the world, the holder of a given *a priori* essence. This is consistent with his general rejection of all *a priori* human essence in EN. In refuting the notion of an *a priori* Jewish essence, he does not single out Judaism especially, in this respect. He rejects the 'ism' of Judaism, not the Jewish component. That he has been perceived as doing so (see Chapter V) is perhaps linked to tensions and anxiety within sections of the Jewish community in France in the post-Vichy period which we shall consider below, in Chapter VI.

Is there a contradiction between Sartre's description of the Jew and his designation of Jewish authenticity? If the Jew is a being in situation, with no *a priori* essence, how can it be possible to be a Jew? When Sartre, in contrast to his liberal, opposes the Jew's assimilation, what is it he wants to save? Sartre appears to oscillate between a perception-based and an essentialist definition of the Jew.

In his 1980 interview with Benny Lévy, Sartre referred to this apparent contradiction:

Privé de caractères métaphysique et subjectif, le Juif ne pouvait exister dans ma philosophie en tant que tel. ('L'Espoir, maintenant... (III)', p. 124)

We return here to the factor of Sartre's ignorance of the Jewish component. Sartre is clear what the Jew is not. The Jew is not the mythological Jew, according to anti-Semitic tradition. However, Sartre appears not to have the vocabulary with which to suggest what the Jew might be, in positive terms. Jewish culture -- language, literature, ritual, and ethics -- is not discussed by Sartre. Yet arguably, it is not necessary for him to have done so. If we again return to our terminological discussion of Chapter I, when Sartre designates an authentic Jew, he is not designating an essence, but the possibility of creating a new identity, or *judéité*:

Il est ce qu'il se fait. (p. 167)

Thus, the Jew is a being in situation, capable of re-invention, like any other.

Perhaps in acknowledgement of the difficulties his concept of authenticity presented, Sartre was to comment further on his notion of Jewish authenticity in RQJ in interviews given following its publication. In December 1945, he maintained:

Je crois sincèrement que l'authenticité commence pour un Juif à partir du moment où il dit: Je suis juif, c'est-à-dire où il reprend à son compte dans une décision fière et résolue le caractère que les autres ont voulu lui conférer du dehors, et qui finit par le pénétrer jusqu'aux moelles, comme le regard d'autrui. C'est en tant que Juif et non pas seulement en tant qu'homme (c'est-à-dire en tant que cette situation séculaire a développé chez vous une culture, une conception du monde et des vertus particulières) que vous devez revendiquer votre égalité absolue avec les non-Juifs.¹²

Sartre stressed the importance he attached to the Jew's recognition and transcendence of his situation:

Je terminais en montrant ce que pouvait réclamer le Juif authentique, c'est-à-dire ses pleins droits comme Juif et comme homme, au lieu de tenter de masquer ses caractères. Ces caractères pour moi ne sont ni ethniques, ni physiologiques, ni religieux. Mais simplement la situation du Juif est d'être l'homme que les autres hommes désignent comme Juif. Et c'est vraiment une situation, c'est-à-dire qu'il ne s'agit pas pour un Juif de déclarer que cette attitude est absurde ou criminelle (encore qu'elle le soit) mais de dépasser par la lutte la condition que les autres lui font, en reconnaissant pleinement cette condition. (p. 142)

Sartre also emphasised that the Jew's first step towards being authentic consisted in recognising the specificity of the Jew's oppression:

Je faisais le portrait du Juif inauthentique (comme l'ouvrier qui voudrait nier sa condition d'ouvrier en s'embourgeoisant au lieu de réclamer sa libération à titre ouvrier, c'est-à-dire de dépasser sa situation par une attitude révolutionnaire qui implique la reconnaissance de cette situation). (p. 141)

Thus, for example, conversion to another religion, in order to bypass anti-Semitism (a common solution to the Jewish Question in the nineteenth century) or some other mode of escape, is not authentic to Sartre.

In 1966, Sartre emphasised the role of collective solidarity, when recalling his definition of the authentic Jew:

Un Juif est authentique quand il a pris conscience de sa condition de Juif et qu'il se sent solidaire de tous les autres Juifs. ('Jean-Paul Sartre et les questions de notre temps', p. 7)

Thus, Sartre has re-affirmed and sought to clarify his notion of individual authenticity, since 1944. Recognition of the Jew's situation is one important factor. Another is the choice to transcend that situation, by re-inventing a mode of Jewish being independent of the anti-Semite.

Sartre perceives an inter-personal dialectic between anti-Semite and inauthentic Jew. Sartre sees them as trapped in a subject-object dialectic. Accordingly, a solution to the Jewish Question begins with a re-assessment of the relationship between anti-Semite and Jew. Sartre's authentic Jew acknowledges that he exists, as a Jew, but rejects the anti-Semite's definition of him. He acknowledges that a Jewish Question exists, but not in the terms formulated by the anti-Semite.

* * * *

A parallel study of RQJ and Sartre's Existentialist writings of the period can enhance our appreciation of certain features of Sartre's study of the Jewish Question. Sartre's ontology certainly makes for an original portrait of the anti-Semite. Sartre's method is also limited, in that it takes in only the individual anti-Semite, and not the phenomenon of pathological anti-Semitism, nor that popular, state anti-Semitism responsible for the Holocaust. It does not tackle the very collective manifestation of anti-Semitism so vividly present at the time Sartre wrote his study. Yet, as we shall suggest in the following chapter, Sartre's study does deal with, and respond to, other issues relating to the Jewish Question at the time of writing. Furthermore, we would emphasise that RQJ is not solely an analysis of anti-Semitism, and should not be evaluated solely in such terms. It also covers Jewish identity in the face of, and in the absence of, anti-Semitism.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

1. (Paris: Hermann, 1965 [1939]), p. 17. Further references to ETE are given after quotations in the text.
2. L'Être et le néant, Tel (Paris: Gallimard, 1943), p. 318. Further references to EN are given after quotations in the text.
3. Situations, I, pp. 38-42.
4. Emotion in the Thought of Sartre (1965).
5. 'L'Espoir, maintenant... (III)', Interview with Benny Lévy, Nouvel Observateur, 802, 24 March 1980, 103-39 (p. 124). A controversial interview (see Chapter V), but this specific point is non-contentious.
6. 'Sartre, portrait d'un philosémite', Esprit, 138 (1947), pp. 532-46, (p. 540).
7. 'The Limits of Ideology and Sensibility: J.-P. Sartre's Réflexions sur la question juive and E. M. Cioran's Un peuple de solitaires', French Review (1971-72), 779-89 (p. 787).
8. 'The Measurement of Implicit Antidemocratic Trends', in The Authoritarian Personality (New York: Harper and Row, 1950), pp. 222-79.
9. 'Sartre et la question juive', Études sartriennes, 1 (1984), 123-54, (p. 125).
10. 'Au-delà de Réflexions sur la question juive', Nouveaux cahiers, 61 (Summer 1980), 12-14 (p. 13).
11. 'Jean-Paul Sartre et les problèmes de notre temps', Interview, Cahiers Bernard Lazare, 4 (1966), 4-9, p. 7.
12. 'Philosophie et religion', Critique, 12 (1947), 471-73 (p. 472).

13. 'Une lettre de Jean-Paul Sartre', Hillel, 3 (December 1946-January 1947), 29. Reprinted in Contat and Rybalka, Les Écrits de Sartre, pp. 141-42 (p. 141).

CHAPTER IV

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THE ANTI-SEMITIC BACKGROUND
TO RÉFLEXIONS

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1. THE ANTI-SEMITIC DEBATE ON THE JEWISH QUESTION

We now come to a major aspect of our thesis. For there are additional perspectives from which we can evaluate RQJ. Its philosophical resonances were profoundly relevant to the situation of Jews in post-Vichy France. We shall now insert Sartre's application of a phenomenological method to the model of the Jewish Question within a further context: the debate on the Jewish Question carried out during the Third Republic; and the experience of Jews under Vichy.

Here, the fundamental point we wish to make concerns the terms in which discussion of a Jewish Question was conducted. We suggest that, during the Third Republic, discussion of a Jewish Question largely took the form of an anti-Semitic debate on *juiverie*; and that Sartre's RQJ effectively marks a turning-point in that debate, regarding the terms in which the Jewish Question was to be discussed subsequently.

Did Sartre intend this, when he wrote RQJ? We should be aware of the 'intentional fallacy', the presumption that one can identify an author's motive for writing a particular work, perhaps with the help of extra-textual data. However, in the light of Sartre's own specific (albeit passing) references in RQJ to certain Third Republic anti-Semitic intellectuals -- such as Céline (p. 47), Drumont (p. 53) and Maurras (p. 48) -- it is justifiable to situate RQJ within the context of a tradition of anti-Semitic literature in vogue prior to its publication. Many aspects of Sartre's argument in RQJ can be appreciated more fully, if situated within the context of the (largely anti-Semitic) debate on the Jewish Question carried out during the Third Republic, and continued under Vichy, prior to publication of RQJ.¹ The significance of the

questions Sartre raises in RQJ, and the scope he restricts himself to, are also better appreciated, when set within this context.

A genre of sub-literature, the anonymous tract, often violently anti-Semitic, sprang up. The most famous example of this form of literature is Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion. This prophetic, anti-Semitic, anonymous tract contained a violent diatribe against an alleged world Jewish conspiracy. Its origins are obscure, but Protocols dates back to Tsarist Russia. One early Russian edition was distributed by Sergyei Nilus in 1905. Protocols has been repeatedly and widely republished in translation ever since. Within the specific context of the anti-Semitic debate on the Jewish Question in France prior to the War, the 1930s saw the publication of a new edition of the tract: "Protocoles" des sages de sion, translated by Roger Lamblin, in 1937.² Thus, this classic anti-Semitic tract re-surfaced in 1930s France to make its contribution to the debate on the Jewish Question.

A further example of the anti-Semitic tract published in France is the undated A-Bé-Cé-Daiure à l'usage des petits enfants qui apprennent à lire et des grandes personnes qui ne comprennent pas encore le français, a children's book of the alphabet, with anti-Semitic pictures by each letter.

Authorless, without substantiated references, such tracts were able to vilify the Jew without fear of either legal retribution or critical challenge. As such, they represent a form of sub-literature, and constituted one contribution to the anti-Semitic debate on the Jewish Question which took place during the 1930s and early 1940s in France.

However, not all anti-Semitic writings took the form of the anonymous tract. Many were distributed by reputable publishers. Publishing houses such as *Denoël*, *Bernard Grasset*, *Baudinière*, and *Les Documents Contemporains* were active in publishing collaborationist and anti-

Semitic works, or in re-publishing 'classic' anti-Semitic texts, such as Drumont's La France juive.

Furthermore, such publications were frequently written by well-known intellectuals. Among anti-Semitic writings published, or re-published, in France between the 1880s and the end of the Second World War, many famous names are in evidence. The works of Drumont, Céline, and Maurras, in addition to those of lesser-known writers such as Montandon, figure prominently, as Veillon's anthology of collaborationist writings in print during the Vichy regime shows.³ Hitler's Mein Kampf, written between 1924 and 1926, was also available in French translation in 1930s France.⁴ Thus, it is to the signed anti-Semitic thesis, as opposed to the anonymous tract, that we shall now turn.

In Chapter II, we considered Sartre's brief discussion of anti-Semitic mythology. We noted that a major aspect of his analysis of anti-Semitism involved the idea that anti-Semitism does not constitute a rationally-based opinion, but represents an emotional response to the world. Indeed, this constitutes the starting-point of Sartre's line of argument. Why did Sartre place initial emphasis on this aspect of the question? Perhaps because, during the Third Republic and under Vichy, many writers on the Jewish Question attempted to present anti-Semitism as a defensible intellectual thesis, a proposition which Sartre subsequently sought to overturn.

Firstly, not only was anti-Semitism presented as a defensible intellectual proposition; a particular line of argument was commonly employed to defend it. A particular method and logic of the anti-Semitic thesis can be identified. A study of anti-Semitic literature published in France during the Third Republic reveals a widespread attempt among participants in the debate on the Jewish Question to present a coherently argued, and at least internally logical, thesis. The anti-Semite presented a superficially rational case. If we examine

certain classic examples of the anti-Semitic thesis, published during the Third republic in France -- the works of Drumont, Céline, Maurras, and other, less well-known writers -- it is possible to identify a recurrent structure, a common pattern of logic. Whilst there are probably as many manifestations of anti-Semitism as there are anti-Semites, and despite the undoubtedly multi-faceted nature of the phenomenon of anti-Semitism, some common themes and similarities of approach can nevertheless be identified. Although not all anti-Semitic theses written during the period in question can be reduced to the following pattern of logic, we can nonetheless identify a frequently recurrent three-stage anti-Semitic approach to the Jewish Question.

An initial feature of the anti-Semitic thesis is to begin by purporting to isolate certain specifically Jewish traits. These physiological traits are attributed to the factor of race. Then, such specificity, once identified, is used as a basis upon which to set about a moral indictment of the Jew's influence on society. Finally, this moral indictment is, in turn, used as a basis upon which to justify the advancement of anti-Semitic solutions to the Jewish Question. We recall from Chapter II that an important feature of Sartre's analysis is his rejection of the concept of any *a priori* Jewish essence. In Chapter III, we traced this rejection back to Sartre's Existentialist writings of the period. Yet this rejection takes on additional significance, in the light of the logic of the anti-Semitic thesis, alluded to above. Let us now consider some examples of the anti-Semitic thesis.

One notable exponent of this three-stage anti-Semitic method was Georges Montandon. A Swiss doctor, an academic at the collaborationist École d'Anthropologie, and self-professed specialist in the field of what he termed 'racial ethnology', Montandon was made Director of the Institut d'Études des Questions Juives et Ethno-Raciales, in 1943. Here he was used by the Gestapo to adjudicate in cases where the classification of a given individual as a Jew or non-Jew for the purposes of Vichy legislation proved difficult to establish. In addition to his activities as a collaborator, Montandon was also the

author of a series of publications, purportedly conducting a scientific investigation into the racial characteristics of Jews. In one such study, Comment reconnaître le Juif?, Montandon sought to prove the existence of specifically physical and moral Jewish traits. He divides his study into two parts:

1. Caractères physiques du Juif.
2. Portrait moral du Juif.⁵

The opening section attempts to prove the existence of specifically Jewish features, with the help of photographic plates depicting facial profiles of different racial types. The second section contains a moral indictment of the Jew. The Jew is thereby presented as having an essential character, and as identifiable both in terms of physique and social influence. We can reduce the method of Montandon's anti-Semitic thesis to the following: the Jew is different, and his influence is pernicious; his influence is pernicious, because he is different.

A further example of this method of the anti-Semitic thesis is to be found in the classic nineteenth-century treatise written by Drumont, La France juive. Originally published in 1886, this anti-Semitic study of the Jewish Question was re-published in 1943, and provided a prophetic Third Republic vision to those collaborators in search of an anti-Semitic ideological precedent. Drumont divides his study of the Jewish Question into four parts, as follows:

1. Le Juif.
2. Le Juif dans l'histoire de la France.
3. Paris juif et la société française.
4. La persécution juive.

We can reduce the method of Drumont's anti-Semitic thesis to the themes of spatial and temporal Jewish contagion (both contemporary and historical), Jewish ubiquitousness, and persecution.

In the opening section of La France juive, devoted exclusively to a study of the Jew, Drumont, like Montandon, adopts the initial approach of attempting to identify the existence of specifically Jewish traits:

Il nous faut, au début de cette étude, essayer d'analyser cet être particulier, si vivace, si complètement différent des autres: le Juif. La tâche, au premier abord, paraît facile. Nul type n'a une physionomie plus énergiquement caractérisée, nul n'a conservé plus fidèlement la netteté de l'effigie première.⁶

Drumont assures the reader that there is none so immediately recognisable as the Jew. He sketches a portrait of the alleged traits of the archetypal Jew, whom, we recall, Sartre terms '*le Juif*', in RQJ. (p. 121) Drumont begins with the following general description of the Jew's psychological aptitude:

Le Sémite est mercantile, cupide, intrigant, subtil, rusé; l'Aryen est enthousiaste, héroïque, chevaleresque, désintéressé, franc, confiant jusqu'à la naïveté. Le Sémite est un terrien ne voyant guère rien au-delà de la vie présente; l'Aryen est un fils du ciel sans cesse préoccupé d'aspirations supérieures; l'un vit dans la réalité, l'autre dans l'idéal. Le Sémite est négociant d'instinct, il a la vocation du trafic, le génie de tout ce qui est échange, de tout ce qui est une occasion de mettre dedans son semblable. L'Aryen est agriculteur, poète, moine et surtout soldat; la guerre étant son véritable élément, il va joyeusement au devant du péril, il brave la mort. Le Sémite n'a aucune faculté créatrice; au contraire l'Aryen invente; pas la moindre invention n'a été faite par un Sémite. Celui-ci par contre exploite, agonise, fait produire à l'invention de l'Aryen créateur, des bénéfices qu'il garde naturellement pour lui.⁷

The fundamental message Drumont appears to be transmitting to the reader here is as follows: the Jew exists; and he is as you fear him to be.

These themes evoked by Drumont are familiar to us as readers of Sartre's Réflexions, and in particular, his analysis of anti-Semitic mythology. There, too, we find Sartre referring to the myth of the Jew's innate obsession with money, commerce and materialism:

Le Juif aime l'argent, dit-on. (p. 153)

Sartre also refers to the myth of the Jew's failure to contribute to society:

L'antisémite reproche au Juif de "n'être point créateur". (p. 137)

Drumont adopts the role of dispossessed proprietor alluded to by Sartre, who notes the myth of the Jew as parasitical stealer of the goods or ideas of the Aryan:

En se représentant l'Israélite comme un voleur... (p. 29)

Expressly or implicitly, directly or indirectly, RQJ tackles many of the themes to be found in actual anti-Semitic writings prior to its publication.

Yet, despite Drumont's earlier assertion that the Jew is essentially recognisable and pernicious -- in short, that the Jew essentially *is* a Jew -- we can see from the above that this is not the case. Drumont's Jew does not stand alone as the essential Jew. At each stage, he is contrasted with his positive counterpart: the Aryan. In fact, Drumont's Jew appears to be a negative projection of the Aryan. In seeking to designate an essential Jew, the anti-Semitic Drumont effectively reveals aspects of his own choice of being. Although Drumont claims that the Jew is recognisable in absolute terms, his ensuing argument presents a Jew in relative terms. The Jew is presented in relation to the (Aryan) anti-Semite, and constitutes a negative projection of the latter.

This accords with Sartre's assertion in RQJ that the anti-Semite needs the Jew as much as he hates him. Indeed, Sartre asserted that the anti-Semite needs the Jew *in order to* be able to hate. Sartre states that the anti-Semite is fundamentally one who is afraid:

L'antisémisme, en un mot, c'est la peur devant la condition humaine. (p. 64)

The Jew is the anti-Semite's diversion from himself. Seen within this context, Sartre's rejection of Jewish essence -- his demystification of the anti-Semitically perceived, essential and identifiable Jew, and his distinction between the essential Jew and the Jew in situation -- can be seen as a counterweight to such scientifically spurious essentialist theories, propagated by many writers of the period.

We can identify a third stage to the anti-Semitic method, in all its contradictions. Having firstly sought to establish the existence of specifically Jewish characteristics, and secondly sought to trace the pernicious influence of the Jew in society, the anti-Semitic participant in the debate on the Jewish Question then uses this as a basis for an assault on the Jew, and a justification for an anti-Semitic solution to the Jewish Question. The logic of the anti-Semitic thesis is thereby complete. Thus, according to Drumont, in persecuting the non-Jew, the Jew is responsible for the existence of anti-Semitism in society:

Les défauts du Sémite expliquent que l'antagonisme naturel qui existe entre l'Aryen et lui se perpétue à travers les siècles. (p. 16)

Here, we come to an important feature of the method of the anti-Semitic thesis: the reversal which consists in asserting that it is the Jew, and not the anti-Semite, who is the cause of anti-Semitism, and the cause of a Jewish Question coming into being. Sartre's study is again significant in that it challenges this assertion.

In Drumont's approach to the Jewish Question, we find an example of the method of the anti-Semitic thesis. The archetypal Jew exists and his character is evil; his influence is pernicious; and anti-Semitism is a justifiable and indeed inevitable response. The anti-Semitic formulation of a Jewish Question leads to an anti-Semitic solution to it, as we suggested in Chapter I. The Jew is the problem. To remove the problem, we must remove the Jew. Thus, the third and final stage of the anti-Semitic thesis is to conclude upon the necessity of anti-Semitic measures as a solution to the Jewish Question.

Indeed, the ideology behind Nazi policy concerning the Jew was not of exclusively German origin. The germ of the so-called Final Solution -- the extermination of world Jewry as a solution to the Jewish Question -- is to be found in many French writers: in Gobineau's theory of racial hierarchy; in the pathological, anti-Semitic ravings of Céline; and in the nationalistic anti-Semitism of Brasillach. In Drumont, too, we find the unequivocal call for the Jew to be driven out of France, and of Europe.

As early as the 1900s, anti-Semitic writers in France had called for the Jew's forcible expatriation. In RQJ, Sartre describes the anti-Semite as one who belongs to the non-property owning, lower-middle classes, who seeks to acquire the status of dispossessed proprietor, through his denunciation of the Jew. A French priest, Abbé Charles, provides an illustration of this. In the undated Solution de la question juive, published around the turn of the century, Charles sets out his plan for removing the Jew from France. Charles suggested that a list of all Jews living in France should be drawn up. Following a political campaign, the purpose of which would be to appeal to the electorate's anti-Semitic inclinations, all political rights should be withdrawn from Jews, who should immediately be re-patriated elsewhere. This represents a fairly accurate blueprint for what indeed was to happen during the 1930s and 1940s to Jews throughout Europe. Charles concludes his analysis with an allusion to his self-perceived status as dispossessed proprietor:

La colonie juive sera encore une fois "boutée hors de France". Et riches, libres, heureux dans notre belle patrie, nous reprendrons avec ardeur ses immortelles destinées.^e

This call for the Jew to be driven out of France can be interpreted as a cry against the principle of meritocracy, an aspect of anti-Semitism which Sartre alludes to in RQJ. Sartre draws upon anecdotal references to acquaintances who attribute instances of personal failure to the presence of Jews within society: a shopkeeper's loss of trade, an actor's failure to obtain a part, and a student's failure to pass a competitive exam. This 'Jewish conspiracy theory' may explain a

further facet of Sartre's analysis of anti-Semitism: anti-meritocracy. Again, we are in a better position to appreciate the relevance of particular aspects of RQJ when they are set against this anti-Semitic background.

The relevance, too, of Sartre's insistence on the fact that the Jew should be authentic, and remain a Jew (whatever that term implied to the individual concerned). This can usefully be placed within the context of attempts to appease the anti-Semite, on the part of some pre-War writers on the Jewish Question in France. Such writers appealed to the Jew to renounce his Jewishness, in order to solve the Jewish Question. If only the Jew could renounce that which made him a Jew, they argued, the Jewish Question would be solved, and anti-Semitism would cease. In 1938, in Le Problème juif, son acuité, sa solution définitif, Marcovici-Cléja advanced the thesis that a solution to the Jewish Question lay in the re-building of a Jewish state. However, concerning those Jews choosing to remain in France, he called for

une dissociation complète du principe national hébreu
et du principe religieux mosaïque'.⁹

This apparent compromise between anti-Semitism and tolerance of the Jew is illusory. It conceals the notion that the Jewish Question is caused by some defect within the Jew. It lends credence to the myth of the 'nation within a nation'. According to this myth, the Jew is necessarily torn between being a Jew and being a citizen of a non-Jewish state. He must therefore be forced to choose between one or the other. The Jew is to be tolerated within the French state only if he renounces that which makes him a Jew. Sartre's designation of individual Jewish authenticity thus takes on renewed significance, when placed within this context.

A recurrent feature of anti-Semitic writing of the 1930s and 1940s was the attempt to present the expulsion of Jews from France as a justifiable policy. In Les Raisons de l'antijudaïsme, Thomas attempts to justify the deportation of Jews, describing the policy as a punishment for their 'Jewish' ways:

Il n'est pas une nation de l'Europe qui ne soit obsédée, gênée, troublée, et, pour certaines, hier, gâtée par la présence des Juifs sur son territoire. Le Juif est un ferment qui engendre malaise, désordre, fièvres, haines inutiles, folie sociale, guerres extérieures ou civiles, tourments publics ou secrets. Une décision doit être prise en France aujourd'hui, comme en Allemagne, Italie, Hongrie, Roumanie: les Juifs et les métis juifs citoyens étrangers doivent être éliminés de notre pays.¹⁰

The Final Solution is presented here as the logical conclusion of the Jew's pernicious influence.

Some writers even went as far to suggest that 're-patriation' would actually be in the Jews' best interest. In La Question juive et sa solution, of 1939, Monteux advocated re-patriation of the Jews to socialist Russia. Although defending Jews against expressly pejorative anti-Semitism, as opposed to more indirect manifestations of the phenomenon, his attempt to justify deportation was still a capitulation to anti-Semitic ideals. Whatever the declared motive for expulsion, the effect of expulsion was to be the same.

Céline called for all Jews to be forced to take up position, defenceless, in the front line of the forthcoming war, and to be kept there throughout its duration, until slaughtered: 'Tous les Juifs en première ligne.'¹¹ Céline propagates the myth -- prevalent among much anti-Semitic writing of the period -- of the Jew as bringer of war. It is the Jew who is the cause of the war, and not the German:

Savez vous que toutes les guerres, et pas seulement la dernière, sont préméditées par les Juifs, réglées par eux longtemps à l'avance, comme papier à musique?
(Bagatelles, p. 206)

It is the Jew who is France's real enemy, and not the German. The Jew must therefore be made to assume the consequences of a war he himself has provoked. This illustrates once more the method of the anti-Semitic thesis we have found to be recurrent. The essential Jew is shown to exist, is denounced, and is to be punished.

Again, it is useful to compare this with Sartre's approach in RQJ. Sartre sought solutions to a Jewish Question other than those entailing the eradication, or *de facto* disappearance, of the Jew, as a Jew, from society. He does not hold the Jew as to blame for the existence of a Jewish Question. Sartre's approach to finding solutions to the Jewish Question, limited as his ultimate suggestions may appear to us today, can nevertheless be usefully set against the background of anti-Semitic solutions to the Jewish Question, widely advanced by writers prior to RQJ's publication.

As in the case of Céline, such writers carried considerable intellectual reputations with them into this anti-Semitic foray. Not all anti-Semitic studies were anonymous, or written by little-known writers. We have to be sensitive to the effect of intellectuals of some stature advocating an ideology of racist oppression. The responsibility of writers such as Céline in enthusiastically espousing Nazi anti-Semitism, and actually going beyond its already bestial limits, is arguably great. (The question of the writer's social responsibility, and, in particular, Sartre's own stance in relation to it, is one we shall consider in greater detail in Chapter V.) Thus, whatever its limitations, RQJ presents a scenario for Jewish being not envisaged by the anti-Semitic participant in the debate on the Jewish Question, prior to its publication.

The anti-Semitic thesis took on a logic of its own. Since, to the Barrès of Les Déracinés, milieu forms character, and since the Jew is without a native milieu, there is a certain logic in asserting that the Jew is not. However, despite its apparently methodical approach, despite its superficially coherent logic, the method of the anti-Semitic thesis could also quickly degenerate into self-contradiction, and precisely that irrational mode of thought described by Sartre at the beginning of RQJ. Thus, anti-Semitic literature portrays the Jew, in different instances, as avaricious capitalist -- and revolutionary subversive. It seeks to identify a quintessential Jew -- and it affirms that there is no such thing as a Jew. To the anti-Semite, the Jew is obsessively materialistic -- and he is obsessively intellectual.

Identifying such recurrent features of the anti-Semitic thesis can serve to enhance our appreciation of specific aspects of Sartre's study. Sartre suggests that anti-Semitism originates in the mind of the anti-Semite, rather than as a reaction to the person of the Jew. This assertion is significant, when set against Drumont's contention that the Jew is to blame for the coming into being of a Jewish Question.

The three stages of the anti-Semitic thesis to which we have referred are synthesised in the mind of Lucien Rebatet:

La juiverie offre l'exemple unique dans l'histoire de l'homme, d'une race pour laquelle le châtement collectif soit le seul juste. Ses crimes sont devant nous.¹²

Specificity -- moral indictment -- justifiable punishment. Let us concentrate on the initial, and fundamental, premise. The initial feature of the anti-Semitic thesis is to begin by attempting to identify specifically Jewish traits, whether racial, physiological, or other. This may explain Sartre's attempt to discredit the notion of a specifically Jewish essence. By insisting on the overriding importance of choice and situation, Sartre effectively discredited the concept of the essential Jew. RQJ can be seen, on one level, as an attempt to break down the anti-Semite's logic, and destroy its initial premise: the notion of an essentially-defined Jewish specificity, which, in its pejorative form, we have termed *juiverie*.

Many writers on the Jewish Question attempted to present a logical and coherent anti-Semitic thesis, attacking the Jew. In an apparent response to this, Sartre, from the very outset, asserts the emotional, and irrational nature of the anti-Semite's case. Thus, the first feature of literature on the Jewish Question during this pre-Réflexions period to which we wish to draw attention is its anti-Semitic bias, and its attempt to construct an intellectual thesis.

To appreciate the de-mystifying nature of Sartre's analysis, it is worth considering, in greater detail than Sartre does in RQJ, those anti-Semitic myths prevalent at the time. Having identified a positive attempt by the defender of the anti-Semitic thesis to apply a method and to construct a logical argument, we shall now consider one major and recurrent theme of anti-Semitic writings: the myth of the ubiquitous Jew. According to this myth, the Jew is in control of key sectors of the nation's public and private institutions.

It is again useful to refer back to Sartre's attitude towards the Jew. One fundamental question he raises in RQJ is: what is a Jew? We have referred to the anti-Semite's inability to answer this question satisfactorily. Convinced of the Jew's specificity, he nonetheless fails to provide satisfactory evidence to support such a conviction. To Brasillach, the Jew was the alien: 'Les Juifs sont des étrangers.'¹³ Yet the very concept of alien suggests something indefinable. In propagating the myth of the ubiquitous Jew, such anti-Semites were able to shift the attack on the Jew away from the essential, towards the spatial, dimension. Unable to answer the question 'what is a Jew?', the anti-Semite turned to another question: where is the Jew?

The reply was simple: the Jew is everywhere.

The titles of anti-Semitic journals of the 1930s illustrate contemporary myths relating to Jewish ubiquitousness. Je suis partout, edited by Robert Brasillach,

embodies the myth of Jewish ubiquitousness through its very title. La France enchaînée, the journal of Rassemblement Antijuif de France, similarly illustrates the myth of Jewish persecution of the Aryan.

The prevalence of the myth of the ubiquitous Jew is further illustrated by the holding of an anti-Semitic exhibition in Paris in 1941 under the auspices of the collaborationist Institut d'Étude des Questions Juives. It was entitled 'Le Juif et la France'. The cover

of the exhibition catalogue depicts a Jew, the archetypal Jew according to anti-Semitic myth: bearded, aged, ugly, thick-lipped, conspiratorial, clutching a globe.¹⁴ This implied that the Jew was everywhere, and that the world was under Jewish control.

The fourth and final section of Drumont's La France juive is entitled 'la persécution juive'. The persecuting Jew is everywhere. We suggested in Chapter II that, to Sartre, the anti-Semite projects reverse aspects of his own being onto the Jew. Drumont, in seeking to suggest the extent to which the Jew was 'persecuting' the Aryan, illustrates this phenomenon. We might usefully refer back to another of Sartre's arguments, namely, that the anti-Semite prefers the company of the mediocre group to the solitude of individual consciousness. To the anti-Semite, the Jew is deemed to exercise excessive influence in society, if not absolute control over it. This may be because the anti-Semite, in choosing to be mediocre, fails to have any such influence. The Jew is 'everywhere' because the anti-Semite is 'nowhere'.

Céline is another anti-Semitic participant in the debate on the Jewish Question in France to propagate the myth of the ubiquitous Jew. Indeed, Sartre briefly cites his case. Despite Céline's proclaimed aversion to the Jew, the word 'Juif' is to be found repeatedly, throughout the pages of Bagatelles. Sartre himself notes this, in RQJ:

Voyez Céline: sa vision de l'univers est catastrophique; le Juif est partout, la terre est perdue, il s'agit pour l'Aryen de ne pas se compromettre, de ne jamais pactiser. Mais qu'il prenne garde: s'il respire, il a déjà perdu sa pureté, car l'air même qui pénètre dans ses bronches est souillé. (p. 47)

Céline appears to be besotted by precisely that which he claims to prefer to shun.

In RQJ, Sartre selects certain common anti-Semitic myths: the myths of the 'miserly', 'intelligent', 'subversive', 'tactless', and 'guilty' Jew. However, his brief analysis does not take account of

the full extent of anti-Semitic mythology. To appreciate the relevance of Sartre's *situational* description of the Jew, it is, we stress, worthwhile examining such mythology in somewhat greater detail.

Céline's anti-Semitism was pathological, his attitude towards the Jew fundamentally irrational. In Bagatelles, he sees the Jew as depriving the Aryan of his national heritage. The France of 1937 has become 'une colonie juive'. (p. 263) In Céline's world, there is no sector of activity free from the contaminating presence of the Jew. There could be no more extensive collection of anti-Semitic mythology, and no better example of the myth of the ubiquitous Jew, than that found in Céline's Bagatelles pour un massacre. In it, Céline compiles a list of Jewish trusts which, he alleges, control key areas of French interests. So extensive is the list, so obsessive is Céline's belief in the ubiquitousness and persecuting omnipotence of the Jew, that it is worth quoting the relevant passage in full:

Trust des Banques et de l'Or, de l'Alimentation, des Articles de Paris, de la Fourrure, de la Confection et des Bas, des Pétroles et des Dérivés, de l'Ameublement, de la Chaussure, des Transports et Chemins de fer, de l'Électricité, de l'Eau et du Gaz, des Produits Chimiques et Pharmaceutiques, des Agences Télégraphiques, des Stupéfiants, des Armements, des Gaz de combat, des Grands Moulins, du Blé, de la Presse et du Journalisme, des Objets de Piété, de la Maroquinerie, de l'Industrie du Livre, des Magasins à Prix Uniques, des Théâtres (auteurs et salles), du Cinéma (Studios),¹ des Ventes (Bandes noires), de l'Automobile (en formation), des Éponges et Fibres pour Brosserie, de la Joaillerie, de la Spéculation Immobilière, de l'Usure et Escroquerie, des Stations radiophoniques, des Organisations Politiques, des Objets d'Art et Antiquités, des Maisons à succursales multiples, des Produits Photographiques, des eaux Minérales, des Sociétés Immobilières, des Grands Magasins, des Modes de Haute Couture, des Assurances, des Cuirs et Peaux, des Houillères, des Cellules et Moteurs d'Avions, des Compagnies de Navigation, de l'Optique Médicale, de la Bonneterie, de la Chemiserie, des Fonderies et Forges, des Matières Premières (trust mondial), des Grandes Brasseries, du Tourisme (Grands Hôtels, stations thermales, Casinos, etc.), des Raffineries de Sucre, des Adjudications Militaires, des Lampes T. S. F., des Professions Libérales (en formation), et Lisieux! et le Pape! (pp. 246-47)

National finance, culture, commerce, industry, the media, energy, the Vatican's -- in Céline's world, the Jew controls them all. He concludes his tirade by likening the French nation to a company, the shareholders of which are all Jewish, with French non-Jews being dominated financially and administratively.

Seen within the framework of this 'debate', Sartre's study can be seen as an attempt to de-mystify, *inter alia*, the myth of the ubiquitous Jew. Sartre distinguishes between the existential Jew (*le Juif*) and the mythological, essentially defined, allegedly ubiquitous Jew (*juiverie*). Herein lies much of the significance of Sartre's study. In fact, Sartre is less successful when he adopts the strategy of seeking to reply, in rational terms, to anti-Semitic myths. His analysis is less effective when he seeks to counter the myth of Jewish ubiquitousness, or financial persecution, by citing examples to support a counter-argument. An example of this anti-anti-Semitic literature is Reynaud's La France n'est pas juive, of 1886. This was evidently a response to Drumont's La France juive. Yet such attempts to answer anti-Semitic charges entail a discussion on the Jewish Question within the framework of the anti-Semite's own distorted formulation of it. Herein lies much of the importance of Sartre's designation of Jewish authenticity. Where Sartre can be seen to have successfully responded to anti-Semitic notions of *juiverie* prevalent at the time he wrote RQJ is where he raises the question of Jewish identity. He thereby places the debate on the Jewish Question onto a different footing, away from its previously anti-Semitic starting point. The anti-Semite had asked: where is the Jew? Sartre brings us back to the original question: what is a Jew?

Thus, we have identified a second recurrent feature of the anti-Semitic thesis: the myth of the ubiquitous Jew. We have sought to situate Sartre's RQJ in relation to this myth. Sartre's thesis on the Jewish Question stems, as we have seen in Chapter II, from his philosophical preoccupations of the period. However, it can also be

usefully set against the background of the anti-Semitic ideological legacy of the Third Republic and of Vichy.

A further feature of anti-Semitic writings of the inter-war years and under Vichy is the advent of the phenomenon of the anti-Semite as pseudo-scientist. In many cases, the anti-Semitic writer was a trained scientist. Both Céline and Montandon were doctors. Montandon subsequently chose to specialise in his own brand of racial ethnology. Both eventually chose to set aside the universalist pretensions of science for the particularist ends of Vichy. The anti-Semite sought to create a new, Aryan science, from which the Jew was to be excluded. Science was to be 'purified', partly by removing the Jew from all sectors of the state educational system, under the Vichy régime. This included the removal of the Jew from the teaching profession.¹⁷

A proliferation of pseudo-scientific research centres sprang up under Vichy, attempting to extend Nazi ideology into a pseudo-science. A pseudo-academic Institut d'Étude des Questions Juives was founded in May 1941, by Dannecker. In March 1943, it was re-named the Institut d'Étude des Question Juives et Ethno-Raciales, under Montandon. Its terms of reference were the pursuit of 'research' into the phenomenon of race. In the Summer of 1943, l'Union Française pour la Défense de la Race, formerly the Rassemblement Antijuif, took its place.

Precedents had already been set for the undertaking of such spurious research. In the mid-nineteenth century, Gobineau had alleged that the human species could be subdivided into a hierarchy of races, of varying degrees of advancement, or 'civilisation'. He placed the white races at the top of this racial hierarchy. In his Introduction à l'essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines, written between 1848 and 1851, Gobineau sets out the basis of his theory of racial hierarchy:

L'Histoire nous montre que toute civilisation découle de la race blanche, qu'aucune ne peut exister sans le concours de cette race, et qu'une société n'est grande

et illustre qu'à proportion qu'elle conserve plus longtemps le noble groupe qui l'a créé, et que ce groupe lui-même appartient au plus illustre de l'espèce.¹⁶

He suggested that the black and yellow races were inferior to the white. This was a theory which Montandon was later to exploit. Here, we note the phenomenon of collaborationist writers of the 1930s and 1940s in France drawing upon Third Republic ideological forebears, such as Drumont and, here, Gobineau.

What of the Jew, within this tripartite perception of the human species? Where was he to be situated, within Gobineau's theories on race? The Jew transcended the classifying criterion of colour. He could be white (European), black (African), or yellow (Chinese), there being no single Jewish race, as Sartre himself notes (p. 74).

All the more need for a distinction between Aryan and non-Aryan races. To the anti-Semite, the Jew was everywhere. Yet he could not be identified. Indeed, we might suggest that it was because he could not be identified that the anti-Semite chose to see him as this invisible yet ubiquitous, evil presence. The anti-Semitic theory of the essential Jew actually suggests a lack of any such essence, and the attempt to superimpose such an essence onto the person of the Jew. It may be the Jew's *very indefinability* which causes the anti-Semite to become obsessed with the Jew's identification and classification.

Céline, a trained doctor, abuses medical terminology, in Bagatelles pour un massacre, in seeing the Jew as a cancerous blight spreading across France:

Les Français n'ont plus d'âme, un cancer leur bouffe
l'âme, un cancer de muflerie, une tumeur maligne. (p.
112)

Having diagnosed the disease (the Jew), Céline proceeded to prescribe a cure (anti-Semitism).

Further down the road of pseudo-scientific research is Montandon's work in the field of racial ethnology, often expressed in pseudo-academic jargon. This involved the misappropriation of scientific terminology. Montandon attempts to lend credence to his anti-Semitic thesis via the adoption of the lexicon of the scientific research paper. In Comment reconnaître le Juif?, note the pretentious circumlocution for 'what the Jew looks like':

Nous avons rappelé, dans les premières lignes, *l'effet qu'il produit sur la rétine.*¹⁹

Using a selection of photographic plates depicting allegedly typical Jewish and Aryan facial profiles, Montandon then suggests the following specifically Jewish physiological characteristics:

Énumérons maintenant ses caractères les plus courants. Ce sont: Un *nez fortement convexe*, d'ailleurs de façon différente selon les individus, fréquemment avec proéminence inférieure de la cloison nasale, et ailes très mobiles; chez certains sujets de l'Europe sud-orientale, le profil en bec de vautour est si accusé que l'on pourrait croire à un produit sélectionné et qu'il ne s'explique que par le phénomène d'auto-domestication plus haut mentionné; des *lèvres charnues*, dont l'inférieure proémine souvent, parfois très fortement (il n'est pas illégitime d'y voir un résidu de facteurs négroïdes); des *yeux peu enfoncés dans les orbites*, avec, habituellement, quelque chose de plus humide, de plus marécageux que ce n'est le cas pour d'autres types raciaux, et une fente des paupières moins ouverte. Les trois organes que sont les yeux, le nez et les lèvres sont donc fortement 'chargés' et c'est la combinaison des caractères mentionnés de ces trois organes qui constitue principalement, avec une *légère bouffissure de l'ensemble des parties molles*, ce que nous avons appelé le masque juif. (p. 23)

Montandon's theories are dressed in a pseudo-scientific style, which disguises their unscientific basis.

That they echo and seek to develop Gobineau's afore-mentioned theories, concerning the superiority of the white races over the yellow and black, is suggested by the following:

Si un Juif présente de *fortes pommettes*, caractère nettement marqué chez les Jaunes, moyennement chez les Noirs et pas du tout chez les Blancs normaux, ce caractère, ainsi que *le rétrécissement de la fente des paupières* peut être mis sur le compte de connexions anciennes ou récentes avec les Jaunes. (pp. 24-25)

Thus we can draw the contours of a hundred-year pseudo-academic debate on the Jewish Question, from Gobineau to Montandon. A pseudo-scientific school sought to provide an academic background in harmony with the philosophy of the Third Reich, the legislation of Vichy, and the political and military reality of the Occupation.

Yet, like the tendency of the logic of the anti-Semitic thesis to degenerate into irrationality, this pseudo-scientific language, too, invariably degenerates into the virulent and manifest anti-Semitism its presence seeks to conceal. Thus, having sought to conceal his anti-Semitism behind what to the lay reader might have seemed authentically scientific terminology, Montandon then proceeds to designate 'une odeur juive' (p. 26). This implies the Jew's reduction to the level of a species of animal. He further claims, without any supportive evidence, that Jews are more likely to be the carriers of certain diseases -- diabetes, arthritis, and leprosy -- than non-Jews. The diseased former may transmit such diseases to the innocent and as yet uncontaminated latter. This, in passing, further illustrates the myth of contamination, of Jewish contagion, a recurrent component of the anti-Semite's thesis.

In Les Décombres, Rebatet writes of 'ces bêtes malfaisantes, impures, portant sur elles les germes de tous les fléaux'. (p. 566)

In Mauriac's Thérèse Desqueyroux, published in 1927, we find the same idea surfacing:

"Voyons, Thérèse, ne discute pas pour le plaisir de discuter; tous les Juifs se valent...et puis c'est une famille de dégénérés -- tuberculeux jusqu'à la moelle, tout le monde le sait".²⁰

Unlike Rebatet, Mauriac does not uphold this idea. However, it is of significance that he mentions it. The myths propagated by Third Republic anti-Semitic writings found their way into the public intellectual domain.

The significance of Sartre's mention, and rejection, of race as a potential common denominator among Jews can be better appreciated within the context of such pseudo-scientific research. In the light of this pseudo-scientific anti-Semitism, and its broader attempt to undermine the universalist principles of conventional science, Sartre's application of a philosophical method to the debate on the Jewish Question is relevant in itself.²¹ The anti-Semite had created a pseudo-scientific framework within which to study the Jewish Question, in isolation. In contrast, with RQJ, Sartre re-inserted the debate on the Jewish Question into the realm of a universal debate. The Jewish Question, too, could be considered within the terms of his ontology. That the result should be so original, with far-reaching implications, is a bonus. However, here we would draw attention to the mere *fact* of Sartre's application of his Existentialist philosophy to the debate on the Jewish Question.

We shall now draw attention to a fourth, and for the purposes of this thesis, final feature of anti-Semitic literature of this period: the underlying anti-intellectual implications of the anti-Semite's case. Sartre asserts in RQJ that the anti-Semite is afraid of individual consciousness. We further recall (from Chapter II) Sartre's reference to the anti-Semitic myth of the pejoratively 'intelligent' Jew. The anti-Semite is also an anti-intellectual.

This is indeed how Céline perceives the Jew. In Bagatelles, Céline twists the Jewish tradition of learning into a conspiracy: 'Les Juifs, ils étudient beaucoup, complotent sans arrêt'. (p. 48)

It is not incidental that Barrès, in his novel Les Déracinés, focusses on the *professeur de lycée*. Barrès sees in him the symbol of the values of the Republic, and the intellectual universality against which Barrès's nationalism sought to rebel. Barrès's anti-Republicanism is tied in with an accompanying anti-intellectualism, which manifests itself in his attitude towards the teacher.

Under Vichy, the Jew was quickly banned from the sphere of education. Vichy restricted the access of Jews to student places to 3% of the total annual registration. On 2 June 1942, Jews were denied access to all areas of professional state service, including teaching. In the same year, Malglaive, a collaborator making an appraisal of anti-Semitic legislation to date, considered the remaining 3% of Jewish students allowed to attend a state college. In Juif ou Français: Aperçus sur la question juive, he observes:

Il n'y a plus, désormais, de professeurs juifs...le sort des professeurs réglés, reste celui des étudiants.²²

Indeed, what use was it for Jews to hold a degree, when they were to be barred access to those professions traditionally open to the holders of such qualifications? This further illustrates a feature of the anti-Semitic thesis alluded to above: the internal logical coherence of anti-Semitic ideology. It also suggests the extent to which anti-Semitic ideology, in extending its influence to the field of education, was an anti-intellectual movement.

In Le Testament d'un anti-Sémite, Drumont provides a further example of the anti-Semite as anti-intellectual. To Drumont, the French press is dominated by the Jew:

Une Presse qui, sauf des exceptions bien rares, vit des subventions d'Israël.²³

Not only is the French press in the hands of the Jews, serving their interests. More fundamentally, the French language, itself, is infected by *juiverie*:

Le Juif, en effet, a créé pour la société singulière qu'il a fondée un vocabulaire tout spécifique, il a dénaturé le dictionnaire comme il dénature tout, il a fait de la fausse monnaie avec les mots comme avec les finances. (p. 69)

To be noted, in passing, is Drumont's own handling of language, notably, his exploitation of the ambiguity of the term 'société', both social and entrepreneurial. Where Wagner applied the contamination theory to the realm of music, perceiving a 'Judaicisation of modern art',²⁴ Drumont applied the contamination theory to the domain of language. The French language itself had become polluted by the Jew, and required purification.

In Plaidoyer pour les intellectuels, originally a series of lectures delivered in Japan in 1965, Sartre argued that the scientist faces a contradiction. He sees his universalist research applied in a particularist manner. His research is potentially of benefit to all, yet its fruits are channelled towards certain specific social and economic classes. To Sartre, the scientist is confronted with this contradiction between the potentially universal benefit of his research, and the specificity of its actual application in the world. To Sartre, the scientist who speaks out against this contradiction becomes an intellectual:

L'office de l'intellectuel est de vivre sa contradiction *pour tous* et de le dépasser *pour tous* par le radicalisme.²⁵

Applying this later theory of the intellectual to his earlier portrait of the anti-Semite, we might suggest that scientists such as Céline and Montandon, in contrast, adopted an anti-Semitic stance in applying their knowledge towards anti-universal ends. One aspect of their anti-Semitism was an underlying anti-intellectualism.

In Bagatelles pour un massacre, Céline claimed the right to give full vent in public to his anti-Semitism:

Pourquoi n'aurais-je pas le droit, dans mon pays, de hurler que je n'aime pas les Juifs... Nous sommes en fascisme juif. (p. 173)

The journal La libre parole, founded by Drumont, called out for the right to free speech, the right to openly denounce the Jew in public. This title implied that one should have the right to be publicly anti-Semitic. Such a sentiment helps to situate one aspect of Sartre's argument expounded in RQJ. Sartre expressly rejects this view from the beginning. To him, the anti-Semite should not have the right to express himself in public:

L'antisémitisme ne rentre pas dans la catégorie de pensées que protège le Droit de libre opinion.²⁶ (p. 10)

Sartre's opening remarks in RQJ arguably respond to the anti-Semitic participant in the debate on the Jewish Question. Again, we see the historical relevance and corrective nature of certain aspects of Sartre's arguments.

To conclude this section on the debate on the Jewish Question prior to RQJ, we have suggested that studies on the Jewish Question prior to Sartre's were predominantly anti-Semitic. The debate on the Jewish Question which preceded Sartre's contribution was largely an anti-Semitic debate on *juiverie*. It included theories of racial superiority, the conspiracy theory, the myth of a Jewish invasion, the subversion theory, and the persecution and contamination phobias. Sartre's RQJ can be seen as a notable response to this debate.

The method of the anti-Semitic thesis consisted in seeking to prove the existence of a specifically Jewish essence and a consequently pernicious influence on society, in order to provide a justification for anti-Semitic measures. Sartre rejected the concept of an *a priori* Jewish essence, and perceived the Jew in terms of situation, instead. In so doing, he undermined the foundations upon which the anti-Semite invariably built his case.

In addition, many anti-Semitic writers propagated the myth of the ubiquitous, omnipotent, persecuting Jew. Sartre transferred the debate back to the question of Jewish essence.

The anti-Semite sought to establish a pseudo-science, with the help of which the debate on the Jewish Question was to be isolated from general discussion. RQJ can be interpreted as a response to such pseudo-scientific theories. Many of the themes evoked by Sartre in his study (in particular concerning the question of Jewish specificity) are to be found among the writings of Third Republic and collaborationist anti-Semites. In applying aspects of his universalist ontology, Sartre effectively reinserted the Jew within the realm of universalist philosophical discussion, from which he had been excluded. The Jewish Question, too, could be used as a model with which to test out Sartre's ideas on existence.

Sartre's anti-Semite is an anti-intellectual, or, in Sartre's terms, adopts a pre-reflective attitude towards the Jew. Sartre reveals the anti-Semite as one who is afraid of the being of consciousness.

Sartre's thesis is, at least in part, corrective, as well as assertive, a pragmatic piece of writing. Indeed, in 1939, five years before he wrote RQJ, Sartre foresaw the need to adopt this pragmatic approach in response to anti-Semitic ideology:

Il existe certainement des traits propres aux Juifs. Mais nous sommes incapables de les fixer, dans l'impossibilité de déterminer dans quelle mesure ils sont dus à l'époque, aux conditions de vie ou à l'origine ethnique. Et toute tentative de vouloir isoler et définir ces traits est une concession à l'antisémitisme.²⁷

We might call this the historical and ideological pragmatism of Sartre's RQJ. Sartre's de-mystification of *juiverie* can be placed amid a background of entrenched anti-Semitic mythology, and seen as a corrective response to it.

We have suggested that Sartre discusses *le Juif*, rather than *judaisme*. Now we can assert that his study also takes in *juiverie*, that pejorative essence attributed to the Jew by the anti-Semite, and reflected in the anti-Semitic writings discussed above. Our terminological distinctions, while inevitably reductive, enable us here to clarify that confusion which the anti-Semitic participant in the debate on the Jewish Question in France deliberately sought to spread.

Sartre's Réflexions were written against a prevailing climate of anti-Semitism. Most writers discussing the Jewish Question between the 1880s and the end of the Second World War did so from a hostile, anti-Semitic perspective, *a priori*. Written at a time when the state itself was anti-Semite, RQJ functions on the level of de-mystification, as well as that of philosophical assertion. It de-mystifies aspects of anti-Semitic mythology. When set within this broader context, it highlights the distorted nature of the terms in which the debate on the Jewish Question had taken place. It is the combination of the timing of Sartre's analysis of anti-Semitism amid the post-Vichy era, its position with relation to Third Republic anti-Semitic writings on the Jewish Question, and the implications it has for Jewish identity which set it apart.

2. VICHY

We have considered the ideological background against which Sartre wrote RQJ. We shall now briefly examine the constitutional position of the Jew in France, under Vichy.

Despite the Occupation and subsequent post-War austerity, the mid 1940s, during which period Sartre wrote RQJ, are often considered in a romantic light, as far as Sartre and Existentialism are concerned: the *Café de Flore*, at Saint-Germain-des-Prés; the intellectual Left Bank; the new vogue of Existentialist philosophy; the discovery of Sartre's La Nausée and Camus's L'Étranger, of Sartrean anguish and Camusian absurdity; an atmosphere of seriousness, discovery, invention, and freedom. Guicharnaud, reminiscing, sets the scene which has now become a myth:

I cannot help feeling a sort of tenderness as I recall the immediate setting and the savor of this turning-point in our lives. For example, the smokey warmth of the *Café de Flore* on certain winter afternoons. Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir usually sat at the back, toward the right. With pipe or cigarettes, glass of tea or spirits, paper and pen, they wrote on (Being and Nothingness, She Came to Stay [L'Invitée by Simone de Beauvoir]). They were undisturbed there, and warm. One of us would enter, shake hands, chat with them for a moment and then settle down at another table, usually to write also. In the late afternoon Camus, coming from his work at Gallimard's, put in an appearance.²⁸

While, intellectually, times were exciting, we shall briefly consider the darker side of those years. A full investigation of the events which took place in Occupied France during the War -- the deportation of French Jews to concentration camps, and the active collaboration of the political and civil authorities -- is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nevertheless, we shall briefly look into the war context, Vichy legislation, its treatment of Jews, and Sartre's perception of the Occupation. We shall be considering the state as anti-Semite.

Sartre exploited his experience of the War to highlight aspects of his ontology. The resultant war journalism, while distinctly personal, does at times provide a fascinating perspective on the Occupation. It is relevant to his study of the Jewish Question, since the Vichy regime made the Jew its prime focus of attention.

In a memorable opening to an article on the Occupation, entitled 'La République du silence', Sartre asserts: never were the French so free as when they were under German occupation. Sartre described occupied France as a 'Republic of silence'. The Occupation made Sartre aware of, or reinforced his belief in, the importance of individual action, as far as the collective was concerned:

Puisque le venin nazi se glissait dans notre pensée, chaque pensée juste était une conquête; puisqu'une police toute-puissante cherchait à nous contraindre au silence, chaque parole devenait précieuse comme une déclaration de principe; puisque nous étions traqués, chacun de nos gestes avait le poids d'un engagement.²⁹

In acting, each individual acted for all. Sartre achieved a heightened awareness of each individual's responsibility in the world, towards himself, and towards others. The Occupation revealed and enhanced Sartre's awareness of collective existence.

The Occupation also brought to the surface certain moral dilemmas. Although in his Cahiers pour une morale Sartre describes the problem of resistance versus collaboration as 'un choix moral concret' (p. 14) -- for which there was only one authentic choice, that of resistance -- in his war journalism, such ethical dilemmas were presented in a less clearcut manner. In 'Paris sous l'occupation', Sartre perceived a strange cleavage between the idea of war and his experience of it:

Cet aspect tout inoffensif que nous offraient à chaque instant les soldats qui flânaient dans la rue.³⁰

Sartre found it difficult to reconcile the knowledge that the Occupying German forces were 'the enemy' with the actual physical presence of German soldiers on the streets of Paris:

La consigne que nous nous étions donnée une fois pour toutes: ne jamais leur adresser la parole. Mais en même temps, devant ces soldats égarés, une vieille serviabilité humaniste se réveillait, une autre consigne qui remontait à notre enfance et qui nous enjoignait de ne point laisser un homme dans la peine. (p. 20)

The very concept of an enemy appeared absurd. In vain would he try to summon up sufficient hatred to enable his emotions to coincide with his confused state of mind:

On essayait de retrouver sur ces visages inexpressifs et familiers un peu de la férocité haineuse que nous avions imaginée pendant la nuit. En vain. Pourtant l'horreur ne se dissipait pas; et c'était peut-être le plus pénible cette horreur abstraite et qui n'arrivait à se poser sur personne. Tel est en tout cas le premier aspect de l'occupation: qu'on s'imagine donc cette coexistence perpétuelle d'une haine fantôme et d'un ennemi trop familier qu'on n'arrive pas à haïr. (p. 23)

To Sartre, war did not only impose new social problems. It also had a revelatory role. It highlighted what to Sartre were fundamental aspects of human existence:

L'exil, la captivité, la mort surtout que l'on masque dans les époques heureuses. ('La République du silence', p. 12)

The Occupation enhanced Sartre's perception of the *a priori* contingency of existence.

France's military defeat, the re-writing of the Constitution by the Vichy regime (Law of the Constitution, 10 July 1940), and the handing over of political control to the occupying Germans, caused some French intellectuals to adapt to the prevailing ideological climate. In the decision to collaborate, and therefore become an anti-Semite, Sartre sees an individual, rather than a class, decision. In 'Qu'est-ce qu'un collaborateur', he argues:

La collaboration est un fait de désintégration, elle a été dans tous les cas une décision individuelle, non une position de classe. Elle représente à l'origine une fixation par des formes collectives étrangères d'éléments mal assimilés par la communauté indigène.³¹

Like his anti-Semite, Sartre's collaborator has made a choice:

Si les collaborateurs ont conclu de la victoire allemande à la nécessité de se soumettre à l'autorité du Reich c'est qu'il y avait chez eux une décision profonde et originelle qui constituait le fond de leur personnalité: celle de se plier au fait accompli, quel qu'il fût. (pp. 51-52)

Sartre's collaborator is one who has chosen to bend in support of the prevailing status quo, whatever its periodic fluctuations.

Sartre wrote of the equality of fear which, to him, made the Resistance a true democracy:

La Résistance fut une démocratie véritable: pour le soldat comme pour le chef, même danger, même responsabilité, même absolue liberté dans la discipline. ('La République du silence', p. 14)

To Sartre, in curtailing individual freedom, the Occupation actually served to highlight its importance, and appeared to vindicate certain of his ontological insights.

Sartre's own activities during the Occupation, and in particular, his resistance record, have recently aroused controversy. In fact, biographies of Sartre (by Simone de Beauvoir, Contat and Rybalka, and Cohen-Solal) reveal that little to do with Sartre's public life has not aroused a degree of controversy. Michel Contat, one of Sartre's close collaborators, has publicly criticised Sartre's lack of direct involvement in the Resistance:

Sartre et Merleau-Ponty ont manqué de leur simple devoir d'hommes quand les devoirs cruciaux s'imposaient aux intellectuels qui défendaient la liberté dans leurs écrits.³²

Malraux, too, had reproached Sartre his lack of involvement in the resistance during the war. Sartre, himself, admitted to being 'un écrivain qui résistait et non pas un résistant qui écrivait.'³³

Furthermore, whilst avoiding the temptation to over-simplistically identify autobiographical references, we might in passing note that guilt at this lack of direct action is a major theme of Sartre's later play Les Mains sales. Published in 1948, here we see a powerful representation of a conflict within the intellectual between words and action, which the pragmatic party leader Hoederer attempts to resolve in the mind of the idealistic and guilt-ridden party secretary, Hugo, by asserting:

HOEDERER: Mieux vaut un bon journaliste qu'un mauvais assassin.³⁴

Sartre has stated, with justification, that, in order to operate effectively, the Resistance had of necessity to be limited to a minority. Yet this does not explain Sartre's position outside that minority.

In the light of this charge of war-time passivity, it is worth calling to mind the links we have drawn between RQJ and the Third Republic debate on the Jewish Question. One underlying aim of this thesis is to draw attention to the significance of RQJ within this context. Surely, the act of writing Réflexions, which effectively undermined the ideological basis of Nazism, constituted an act of intellectual resistance as important as that of direct physical action, even if its repercussions were to be less apparent. Nazism was an ideological, as well as a military, force. Indeed, the latter was based upon the former. As we have seen above, an ideological war, waged not merely on the Jew, but on the principle of scientific universality itself, had been fought by anti-Semitic writers of the Third Republic, and under Vichy. On this ideological front, Sartre's contribution to the war effort was surely significant, and deserves acknowledgement.

It is important to recall that Sartre wrote on the subject of the Jewish Question in the wake of a regime which had singled out the Jew as an alien, to be stripped of all civic, political and human rights. The reader of RQJ may forget this. References to Vichy are indeed to be found in the text. However, the tone of Sartre's essay is more philosophical than historical. Indeed, one feature of Sartre's RQJ is the apparent neutrality of its tone. This does not mean that Sartre's perspective either is, or could be, 'objective'. However, the moderate tone of RQJ is remarkable, when one considers the circumstances in which it was written. Let us consider the opening sentence of RQJ:

Si un homme attribue tout ou partie des malheurs du pays et de ses propres malheurs à la présence d'éléments juifs dans la communauté, s'il propose de remédier à cet état de choses en privant les Juifs de certains de leurs droits ou en les écartant de certaines fonctions économiques et sociales ou en les exterminant du territoire ou en les exterminant tous, on dit qu'il a des *opinions* antisémites. (p. 7)

It is difficult to believe, when reading this 'if-clause', that Sartre was writing in 1944, at a time when Vichy legislation had actually been put into practice. We might therefore recall the precise circumstances in which Sartre's study of the Jewish Question was published and read.

The following references to the original wording of anti-Semitic legislation enacted and implemented under Vichy provide us with an insight into the everyday life of Jews in France during the Occupation. However, in another sense, the picture provided is not necessarily an accurate one. The wording of such legislation tells us nothing of the manner in which it was implemented in everyday life. The Jew's official constitutional status under Vichy was undoubtedly wretched. The treatment of Jews at the hands of the German and collaborating French authorities was certainly more so. Nevertheless, let us take note of the Jews' official constitutional position under Vichy, the backdrop against which Sartre wrote RQJ.

In 1930s Germany, legislation similar to that subsequently decreed by the Vichy regime had been passed. This experience of transforming

the institutions of the state into a totalitarian and anti-Semitic bureaucracy served as a blueprint for Vichy legislation discriminating against Jews in France and overseas French territories. Such legislation was drafted at the Commissariat aux Questions Juives. It took effect as from 20 May 1940. The last law was passed on 5 June 1944. During this period, the Jew was progressively and relentlessly deprived of all rights.

Before the process of déjudaïcisation could be carried out, as we saw in Chapter I, preliminary laws attempted to define and classify Jews. Laws passed on 27 September 1940, 3 October 1940, 26 April 1941, 2 June 1941, and 24 March 1942 attempted to define the Jew in legal terms. Vichy resorted to various criteria: race, religion, or parentage. Initially, the criteria applied to define the Jew were religion and heredity:

Sont reconnus comme Juifs ceux qui appartiennent ou appartenaient à la religion juive, ou qui ont plus de deux grands-parents (grands-pères et grands-mères) juifs. Sont considérés comme Juifs les grands-parents qui appartiennent ou appartenaient à la religion juive.³⁵

A further, racial criterion was subsequently adopted (Law of 3 October 1940), in order to define the Jew in satisfactory legal terms:

Est regardé comme Juif, pour l'application de la présente loi, toute personne issue de trois grands-parents de race juive ou de deux grands-parents de la même race, si son conjoint lui-même est juif. (p. 19)

In cases of doubt, and in the absence of papers to substantiate an individual's claim, Montandon, to whose pseudo-academic theories on Jewish specificity we alluded above, would interview and examine an individual personally, in order to pronounce them a Jew or an Aryan.³⁶ As we suggested in Chapter I, the anti-Semitic state (like the anti-Semitic intellectual) found it difficult to define its enemy. Nevertheless, definition of the Jew was one of the first tasks of the Vichy regime (just as we have seen that it was the first task of the proponent of the anti-Semitic thesis).

Next, a census of the Jewish population in France was carried out (Law of 2 June 1941, no. 2.333). Then, the freedom of movement and activity of Jews was progressively cut back. By early 1942, their freedom of movement had been restricted to the day-time only:

Limitation des heures de sortie

Il est interdit aux Juifs d'être hors de leurs logements entre 20 heures et 6 heures.³⁷

However, once legally defined, the Jew had to be publicly recognisable. From June 1942, the wearing of a yellow star was imposed on all Jews over the age of six:

Signe distinctif pour les Juifs

Il est interdit aux Juifs, dès l'âge de six ans révolus, de paraître en public sans porter l'étoile juive.

L'étoile juive est une étoile à six pointes ayant les dimensions de la paume d'une main et les contours noirs. Elle est en tissu jaune et porte, en caractères noirs, l'inscription 'Juif'. Elle devra être portée bien visiblement sur le côté gauche de la poitrine, solidement cousue sur le vêtement.³⁸

A further decree, no. 1077, 11 December 1942, made it compulsory for all Jews to have the word *Juif* stamped on their national identity card. This deprived them of their political status as French nationals.

Subsequent laws prohibited the Jew from holding any form of public office, from entering the professions (teaching, law, medicine, pharmacy and dentistry, among others), or the armed forces; forced Jews to declare and surrender all personal interests and holdings; and gave notice that they were to be placed in special camps. Laws were passed affecting the freedom of the press, the status of Algerian Jews, Jewish-owned businesses, tenancy, the circulation of capital, property transactions, and the freezing and sequestrating of assets. Regarding access to state education, we have already alluded to the imposition of a 3% quota on Jewish students.³⁹ Such legislation even extended to a ban on participation in the performing arts:

Les Juifs ne peuvent pas tenir un emploi artistique dans des représentations théâtrales, dans des films cinématographiques, ou dans des spectacles quelconques, ou donner des concerts vocaux ou instrumentaux. (Decree no. 1301 of 6 June 1942, Journal officiel, 11 June 1942)

An order (8 July 1942) further banned Jews from attending such performances.

Having considered the legislation itself, what of its effect? Precise statistics reflecting the experience of Jews under Vichy are not easy to collect. Nevertheless, this is a task to which many historians have devoted their time. Klarsfeld, of the Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine⁴⁰ has advanced the following estimates concerning the implementation of the Final Solution on French territory. Concerning the number of Jews deported from France, Klarsfeld estimates:

76 000 Juifs ont été déportés ainsi que 4 400 enfants de 6 à 12 ans et 4 350 enfants de 13 à 17 ans; au total près de 11 000 enfants. Plus de 9 700 personnes âgées de plus de 60 ans ont été également déportées. Environ 42 000 déportés ont été immédiatement gazés dès leur arrivée au camp d'extermination. Il n'y avait que 2 450 survivants en 1945; moins de 3% des partants.⁴¹

Concerning the nationality of those deported, he suggests:

Les apatrides ex-Polonais étaient les plus nombreux parmi les déportés (26 000); puis les Français (24 000), les Allemands (7 000), les Russes (4 500), les Roumains (3 000), les Autrichiens (2 500), les Grecs (1 500), les Turcs (1 300).

Concerning the fate of deportees, once captured, and the identity of those responsible for their capture:

Auschwitz a été la destination de 67 convois sur 72 qui ont quitté la France entre le 27 mars 1942 et le 17 août 1944. 43 convois en 1942, dont 33 entre le 17 juillet et le 30 septembre; pendant 11 semaines de concours massif de la police et de l'administration de Vichy dans les deux zones, 3 000 Juifs ont été déportés par semaine. La très grande majorité des

Juifs de France ont été appréhendés au cours de rafles menées par des forces de police françaises.

Such figures, inevitably approximate, are among the most accurate estimates available.

A detailed analysis of the afore-mentioned Vichy legislation falls outside the scope of this thesis. However, relating to topics already discussed, we note in passing that we can see in Vichy legislation the transformation into law of the anti-Semitic myths concerning the Jew's alleged stranglehold on the French nation. The myth of the ubiquitous Jew is transformed into legislation banning the Jew from all social participation. The ideology was transformed into law. Vichy legislation also illustrates how the anti-Semite's logic can be externally irrational, yet internally coherent. In singling out the Jew, Vichy legislation was irrational. Yet, if we set aside the basic irrationality of anti-Semitism, within the terms of its own logic, the Vichy state set up an internally coherent set of laws. The legislation removing political and civic rights from all Jews took on a logic of its own. Cross references to sections and sub-sections of former laws passed were drafted with precision. The bureaucracy of Vichy was a coherent one, were one to overlook the overriding irrationality and barbarism the overall direction of the system was taking.

If we examine the actual wording of the legislation, although it was drafted expressly with the Jew in mind, aiming gradually to remove all political rights from the Jew, we find that it does not present a clear idea as to who Jews were, or how they might be identified. Convinced of the Jews' pernicious influence in society, and of the need to legislate against them, the drafters of Vichy legislation seemed curiously uncertain, when it came to defining the Jew. Who was the Jew? The Jew was one whose parents or grandparents were Jews. Alternatively, the Jew was a member of the Jewish race, as defined by the spurious theories of pseudo-ethnologists. The legislation betrays a basic uncertainty on the part of the anti-Semite concerning the definition and identification of the Jew. What is Judaism? We can identify a notable feature of anti-

Semitism, in the very drafting of this legislation. Anti-Semitism focusses attention upon a group which it can define only in the vaguest of terms.

Situating Réflexions within its historical context, we can put forward an additional hypothesis, concerning the possible significance of Sartre's designation of individual Jewish authenticity. To be a Jew in Occupied France meant to recognise that the fate of the German Jew was to become the fate of the French Jew, and eventually, any other perceived social group singled out for discrimination and persecution. Sartre alludes to this negatively, in his novel Le Sursis, via the inauthentic Jew, Birnenschätz. His response to the growing anti-Semitism in France is to assert his patriotism and deny his Jewishness: 'Les histoires de Juifs allemands, ça ne nous regarde pas'. (p. 96) Sartre's designation of the authentic Jew, his call to the Jew to recognise the fact that he is, or is perceived to be, a Jew, carries with it political resonances related to the circumstances of the Jew in Occupied France. Thus interpreted, Sartre's call for authenticity ultimately has to do with an awareness of collective struggle as well as choosing to be a certain type of Jew.

* * * *

Sartre's portrait of the anti-Semite is, as we have seen, primarily an individualistic one. One apparent paradox of RQJ is that it deals with an individual phenomenon -- the individual anti-Semite -- whereas it was the collective state anti-Semitism of Vichy which was oppressing the Jew at the time. Where it is not the individual other, but the state itself which is the anti-Semite, what relevance does Sartre's analysis of anti-Semitism retain? This is a question which we shall have to return to, below.

Yet on one level, Sartre's study of the Jewish Question -- his analysis of anti-Semitism, his investigation into the situation of Jews,

and his designation of authenticity -- provides an effective response to the anti-Semitic intellectual and constitutional background against which he wrote RQJ: the Third Republic debate on the Jewish Question, and Vichy. Seen within this context, far from ignoring the phenomenon of state or mass anti-Semitism, Réflexions arguably builds up to it, and sets it into context.

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

1. See La France de l'Affaire Dreyfus à nos jours, Catalogue No. 1 (Paris: Bibliothèque du Centre de Documentation Contemporaine Juive, 1964).
2. In Britain, a translation by Victor Marsden had been published in 1936.
3. La Collaboration (1984).
4. Nouvelles Éditions latines, and also Fernand Sorlot.
5. (Paris: Nouvelles Éditions Françaises, 1940).
6. (Paris: Ernest Flammarion, 1943 [1886]), p. 3.
7. Ibid., pp. 9-10.
8. (Paris: La Renaissance française, [?]), p. 232.
9. (Paris: Centre de recherche de solutions du problème juif), p. 41.
10. (Paris: Les Documents contemporains, 1942), p. 209.
11. Bagatelles pour un massacre (Paris: Denoël, 1937), p. 77.
12. Les Décombres (Paris: Denoël, 1942), p. 566.
13. 'Les Français devant les Juifs', Je suis partout, 17 February 1939, p. 1.
14. Catalogue de l'Exposition "Le Juif et la France". Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, Paris. Archive number: 82.
15. See Lucien Rebatet, Les Tribus du cinéma et du théâtre (1941).

16. A reversal of the phenomenon of papal anti-Semitism.
17. Circular dated 21 October 1940, Vichy. Reprinted in Les Juifs sous l'occupation, pp. 25-26.
18. (Paris: Nouvel Office d'édition, 1863), p. 376.
19. My italics, pp. 22-23. Noted by Veillon, in La Collaboration, p. 234.
20. Livre de poche (Paris: Bernard Grasset, 1927), p. 57.
21. Although Léon, in 1942, distinguishing between 'bourgeois' science and Marxist science, argues that far from opposing conventional science, such pseudo-scientific studies actually represented its logical conclusion: "La prostitution véritable de certains 'savants' au racisme montre un spectacle rare de déchéance de la dignité humaine. Ce n'est là d'ailleurs que l'aboutissement de la déchéance complète de la science bourgeoise qui déjà, sous la démocratie, n'était rien moins qu'objective." La Conception matérialiste de la question juive (Paris: Études et documentation internationales, 1980 [1946]), p. 158.
22. Juif ou Français: Aperçus sur la question juive (Vichy: Centre de Propagande de la Révolution Nationale, 1942), p. 185.
23. (Paris: E. Dentu, 1891), p. 58.
24. Das Judentum in der Musik, (1850). Translated by B. de Trèves, Le Judaïsme dans la musique (Paris: Muller & Scie, [?]), p. 8.
25. Idées (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), p. 82.
26. Sartre, here, is effectively designating the boundaries of a law of defamation.
27. Revue juive de Genève, 6-7 (June-July 1947), 212-13. Reprinted in Contat and Rybalka, Les Écrits de Sartre, pp. 167-68 (p. 168).
28. Jacques Guicharnaud, 'Those Years: Existentialism 1943-1945'. Yale French Studies, 16 (Winter 1955-56). Reprinted in Sartre: A Collection of Critical essays, Twentieth Century Views, edited by Edith Kern (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1962), pp. 15-20 (p. 16).

29. Lettres françaises, 9 September 1944, p. 1. Reprinted in Situations, III (Paris: Gallimard, 1949), pp. 11-14 (p. 11).
30. France libre, 15 November 1944, pp. 9-18. Reprinted in Situations, III, pp. 15-42 (p. 19).
31. République française, 8-9 (August-September 1945). Reprinted in Situations, III, pp. 43-61 (p. 46).
32. 'Les Philosophes sous l'occupation', Le Monde, 28 June 1985, p. 16.
33. Interview with John Gerassi, cited by Contat and Rybalka in Jean-Paul Sartre: Oeuvres romanesques, Pléiade (Paris: Gallimard, 1981), p. LVIII.
34. VI, 2, Folio (Paris: Gallimard, 1948), p. 219.
35. Article 1, Order of 27 September 1940, Les Juifs sous l'Occupation: Recueil des textes officiels français et allemands 1940/1944, (Paris: Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine/Association "Les Fils et Filles des Déportés Juifs de France", 1982), p. 18.
36. The testimonies of Jews who underwent such interviews suggest that Montandon's powers of identification were none too accurate.
37. Article 1, Order 6, Journal officiel, 9 February 1942. Reprinted in Les Juifs sous l'Occupation, p. 139.
38. Articles 1 & 2, Order 8, 29 May 1942. Ibid., p. 155.
39. Law of 21 June 1941, Journal officiel, 24 June 1941.
40. Founded by Isaac Schneerson in 1943, to enable historians -- often former deportees themselves -- to collect and record all acts of persecution suffered by Jews in France during the Occupation.
41. 'Post-face', Les Juifs sous l'Occupation, no page number.

CHAPTER V

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RÉFLEXIONS,
WRITERS
AND READERS

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RÉFLEXIONS, WRITERS, AND READERS

1. WRITER COMMITMENT

There is a further perspective from which we can consider RQJ. If Réflexions reflects a decision to respond to a contemporary social issue, such a decision was not taken arbitrarily. It represents a deliberate choice on Sartre's part to adopt a particular attitude towards his own epoch, and towards his role as a writer. We shall therefore now discuss Réflexions in relation to Sartre's ideas on writer commitment of the 1940s.

Sartre's decision to write about the Jewish Question can be linked to ideas he subsequently expressed, notably in Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, but also in other articles published during the mid to late 1940s, concerning the writer's role in society. A more thorough consideration of Sartre's theory of commitment is beyond the scope of this thesis, and has already been undertaken elsewhere.' However, we shall briefly mention some of Sartre's ideas on writer commitment published soon after RQJ. This will help to situate Sartre's decision to write RQJ within the general context of his theory of writer commitment.

In RQJ, Sartre notes an embarrassed silence in the French press concerning the Jewish Question, in 1944:

Va-t-on saluer le retour parmi nous des rescapés, va-t-on donner une pensée à ceux qui sont morts dans les chambres à gaz de Lublin? Pas un mot. Pas une ligne dans les quotidiens. C'est qu'il ne faut pas irriter

les antisémites. (p. 86)

Anti-Semitism, it seemed, had survived the War.

Sartre's view is shared by Rabi, who, writing a year later, in 1945, also notes an apparent lack of public concern over, or desire to discuss, the problem:

Après avoir été entre la vie et la mort, vous ne trouvez pas cela absurde? Aucune parole ne vient. La consigne, dans la presse, est de faire le silence.²

An embarrassed silence reigned over the subject of the Jewish Question. It appeared to have become a taboo subject.

This reluctance on the part of the press to publicly discuss the treatment of Jews under Vichy, and assess their post-Vichy situation, was not confined to France. In England, too, the subject of the Jewish Question appeared to be equally embarrassing in some quarters, as the following review of the original English translation of Réflexions³ indicates:

It is better that no more books should be written on the subject of anti-Semitism. Certainly good will is wanted, but also silence is wanted. We know very well what we should do, and we must do it, and so do the Jewish people, and so must they; there is not this black and unvarying hatred but only the mutual difficulties of an adjustment that is morally and practically necessary. Words do not help; good will and silence are best, and good behaviour.⁴

This last view, that 'words do not help', is particularly noteworthy as far as Sartre's views on literature are concerned, as we shall see below.

Sartre notes this silence over the Jewish Question in 1944 with regret. In contrast to the above reviewer, Sartre, implicitly through Réflexions, and expressly through Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, argued very strongly that words *could* help. His publication of a study devoted to the particular subject of the Jewish Question can be

interpreted, within this context, as effectively contributing towards breaking that embarrassed silence, and raising the taboo Jewish Question.

In his essays on commitment, Sartre raised the question of the writer's role in society, discussed the specificity of the printed word, the justification for writing, the involvement of the reader in the process of writer-reader communication, and the potential and actual public targetted by the writer.

The titles of a speech given by Sartre at U.N.E.S.C.O. in 1947 ('La Responsabilité de l'écrivain) and an article published in Les Temps modernes in 1948 ('Écrire pour son époque') provide a succinct summary of Sartre's subsequent ideas on writer commitment. RQJ looks forward to Sartre's prescription that the writer should acknowledge his social responsibility and write for his own time. Such commitment to his age, and sense of social responsibility, are characteristic of the author of Réflexions, and provide a further framework within which to situate RQJ.

In 'Présentation des Temps modernes', an introduction to the review Sartre founded in 1945, Sartre suggested that a writer who chose to keep silent in the midst of oppression was effectively lending tacit support to such oppression, and, in effect, helping to maintain it:

L'écrivain est *en situation* dans son époque: chaque parole a des retentissements. Chaque silence aussi.⁵

To Sartre, to keep silent over the treatment of Jews under Vichy was, in effect, to condone such treatment, through an attitude of passive acquiescence.

To illustrate Sartre's notion of writer commitment, to evoke its relevance to Sartre's decision to raise the subject of the Jewish Question when he did, it is useful to refer to Julien Benda's ideas on

the status of the intellectual, expressed twenty years prior to the publication of RQJ. Sartre's ideas on writer commitment contrast sharply with Benda's thesis on the prerogative of the cleric.

In 1927, in La Trahison des clercs, Benda had drawn attention, with disapproval, to what he perceived to be the contemporary intellectual's abandonment of his class. To Benda, the cleric's true vocation consisted of withdrawal from matters temporal, and contemplation of matters spiritual and eternal. Benda defines in more positive terms what he sees as the true prerogative of the cleric:

L'idéal politique inscrit dans la Déclaration des Droits de l'Homme ou la Déclaration américaine de 1776 présente éminemment un idéal de clerc.⁶

Benda's cleric thus resembles Sartre's liberal in RQJ, the upholder of the Rights of Man. Benda accused the cleric of having betrayed this vocation:

Les hommes dont la fonction est de défendre les valeurs éternelles et désintéressées, comme la justice et la raison, et que j'appelle les clercs, ont trahi cette fonction au profit d'intérêts pratiques. (p. 63)

For Benda, it is the prerogative of a particular group of intellectuals to remain detached from society.

Subsequently, in the same year that Sartre wrote RQJ, 1944, Benda published a work in total conformity with his belief in intellectual withdrawal. Exercice d'un enterré juif (Juin 1940-Août 1941) was published at a time when a clearly perceivable form of oppression was in evidence in France. The Vichy régime specifically singled out Benda, who was himself a Jew. Yet, in Exercice, Benda chose to turn away from the social and political realities of his epoch, and instead stand aloof in contemplation of what he termed 'the science of mankind':

Dois-je rappeler que mon mobile en de tels écrits n'est point le vain plaisir de traiter de ma personne, mais l'espoir de verser à la science de l'Homme une observation exacte.⁷

Benda refers to the Occupation in the following, almost nonchalant, manner:

Je suis poussé à rédiger ces pages parce que, grâce à une solitude quasi totale que m'imposent depuis quatre ans les circonstances... (p. 7)

This 'circumstantial' view of history in the making contrasts with Sartre's notion of the writer committed to changing his epoch and fighting all contemporary manifestations of oppression.

Regarding their respective attitudes to their own epoch, the Sartre of Réflexions and the Benda of Exercice are far apart. Indeed, Benda can be said to be Sartre's inauthentic Jew, in refusing to face his situation as a Jew. Yet this is to hang Benda by Sartre's rope. Our main concern here is to outline Sartre's ideas on writer commitment relevant to our discussion, not to evaluate them.

Although the perspectives of Sartre and Benda on the role of the intellectual in society are far apart, Sartre's interest in the political issues of his time awakened at a relatively late stage in his life. Before the war, Sartre admits to having taken little interest in politics, not bothering to vote (as opposed to abstaining after the War), and taking little part in collective activities generally. Interviewed by Contat in 1975, he recalls:

Avant la guerre, je me considérais tout simplement comme un individu, je ne voyais pas du tout le lien qu'il y avait entre mon existence individuelle et la société dans laquelle je vivais. Au sortir de l'École normale, j'avais bâti toute une théorie là-dessus: j'étais l'"homme seul", c'est-à-dire l'individu qui s'oppose à la société par l'indépendance de sa pensée mais qui ne doit rien à la société et sur qui celle-ci ne peut rien, parce qu'il est libre. Ça, c'est l'évidence sur laquelle j'ai fondé tout ce que je pensais, tout ce que j'écrivais et tout ce que je vivais avant 1939. Durant toute l'avant-guerre je n'avais pas d'opinions politiques et, bien entendu, je ne votais pas.^e

Socially and politically, Sartre appears to have been content to adopt an individualist, anti-bourgeois role before the War.

With the War, Sartre came to appreciate his historicity, the value of collective action, the need to reassess his values as an intellectual, his responsibilities as a writer, and explore the full potential of his chosen mode of expression. Sartre's call for writer commitment -- for the writer to become involved in the contemporary social issues of his time -- was largely born out of his experience of the War.

In 1945, in 'La Nationalisation de la littérature', Sartre wrote:

Nous sommes des gens pressés. Nous avons hâte de nous connaître et de nous juger. C'est qu'il s'est fait, au cours de ces vingt dernières années, un progrès important de la conscience occidentale. Sous la pression de l'histoire nous avons appris que nous étions historiques.⁹

A sense of urgency and of mission on Sartre's part comes over strongly, here.

In 'Présentation des Temps modernes', of 1945, this sense of urgency can again be detected:

Nous ne voulons rien manquer de notre temps. (p. 13)

Sartre urges contemporary writers to avoid what he calls 'la tentation de l'irresponsabilité', and instead become involved in the issues of the day.

Another significant aspect of Sartre's ideas on writer commitment of the 1940s is the notion that each individual contributes to the making of history, and to the formation of a given society's self-awareness and collective memory:

Nous savons que le plus intime de nos gestes contribue à faire l'histoire, que la plus subjective de nos opinions concourt à former cet esprit objectif que l'historien nommera l'esprit publique de 1945. ('Présentation', pp. 40-41)

Thus, the War revealed to Sartre, and Sartre used the War to highlight, the need for both individual responsibility and collective awareness and action.

Sartre came to reject Benda's call for a class of intellectuals to withdraw from the world in contemplation of the a-temporal. In Qu'est-ce que la littérature? (QL?), he described Benda's *clerc* as intellectually aloof and socially irresponsible:

S'agit-il de se faire le gardien des valeurs idéales, comme le *clerc* de Benda avant la trahison, ou bien est-ce la liberté concrète et quotidienne qu'il faut protéger, en prenant parti dans les luttes politiques et sociales? (p. 114)

In 1965, in Plaidoyer pour les intellectuels, Sartre tried to define what an intellectual is, describe the function of intellectuals, and discover to what extent the writer can be considered an intellectual. He noted a reproach commonly levelled at intellectuals:

L'intellectuel est quelqu'un qui se mêle de ce qui ne le regarde pas. (p. 12)

In Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, Sartre looked forward to a time when intellectuals as a class would cease to exist, and this charge of 'meddling' would no longer apply. Sartre advocated the democratisation of the intellectual's role as denouncer of injustice.

One function of Sartre's committed writer is to convince the reader of his responsibility towards society:

La fonction de l'écrivain est de faire en sorte que nul ne puisse ignorer le monde et que nul ne s'en puisse dire innocent. (QL?, p. 74)

Far from forming part of an elite minority, far from being an abstract and contemplative *clerc*, Sartre's intellectual is anyone who reflects on his or her role in society. Sartre rejected Benda's division between the cleric and the rest of society.

Furthermore, to Sartre, the dichotomy which Benda drew between the temporal and the spiritual is an unnecessary one:

En prenant parti dans la singularité de notre époque, nous rejoignons finalement l'éternel. ('Présentation', p. 15)

The cleric stands back to contemplate society from a distance. The committed writer is, in contrast, very much concerned with, indeed immersed in, the social and political issues of his epoch. Benda's *clerc* therefore provides us with a useful contrast to Sartre's committed writer, the comparison between the two enhancing our appreciation of Sartre's ideas on writer commitment.

Yet just as Fackenheim drew attention to the dangers of constructing an irrelevant dichotomy between theism and atheism, when discussing Judaism, so, too, we might be wary of constructing a similarly false dichotomy between Sartre and Benda, concerning the question of the status of intellectuals in society. What is striking about Benda's position is not the stance he adopts, but the archaic terms in which he formulates his case. We can perceive a transformation of the terms in which this debate on the role of intellectuals was carried out, just as we can perceive a similar transformation of the terms in which the Jewish Question has been debated in France, since the War. Our main point is to draw attention to the links between Sartre's decision to write RQJ and his later ideas on writer commitment.

RQJ can further be perceived as an attack on a certain type of liberal humanism, as well as an attack on anti-Semitism. In Réflexions, through the person of the liberal, and subsequently in Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, Sartre attacks that form of humanism which, making tolerance its main objective, assimilates all values and opinions as equally worthy of expression:

L'humanisme républicain, qu'on enseignait dans les écoles, faisait de la tolérance la première des vertus; on tolérait tout, même l'intolérance. (QL?, p. 245)

Sartre is addressing the liberal humanistic writer, as well as the anti-Semitic writer, in Réflexions.

In Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, Sartre also discusses what it is that distinguishes the written word from other forms of communication, such as painting or music. He concludes that what distinguishes the written (published) word from other basic units of artistic expression (the musical note, or the stroke of a paint-brush across a canvas) is that it is capable of designating precise concepts to the reader.

To extend Sartre's argument to the debate on the Jewish Question, Jewish, for example, Yiddish, music can evoke moments in Jewish history. One example is the song from the ghetto. Yet beyond its evocation of a certain mood and a certain epoch, such music can go no further. It cannot provide a framework within which discussion of a Jewish Question might take place. Music can evoke a mood, and arouse thoughts and emotions within the listener. Words have the unique capacity to create precise concepts. This is not to place modes of artistic expression within a hierarchical classification as to their value. It is to recognise the specific capabilities of these different modes: music, art, and writing. For Sartre, only words have the capacity to represent reality, and the power to change it. Therefore, he argues, why not exploit the specific potential of words to the full?

Whilst he undoubtedly overstates his case, and is positively demagogic in aspects of his theory of literature (notably, in his dismissive attitude towards poetry and Surrealism), Sartre is writing very much from the perspective of his own epoch, as he himself had advocated. Seen within this context, many of his points are effectively made.

Sartre's committed writer is knowingly, indeed intentionally subjective, inevitably restricted by his commitment to his own time:

L'écrivain engagé sait que la parole est action; il sait que dévoiler c'est changer et qu'on ne peut dévoiler qu'en projetant de changer. Il a abandonné

le rêve impossible de faire une peinture impartiale de la Société et de la condition humaine. (p. 73)

However, the writer has a special conscience-raising role, a role that some critics, for example, Yéfime, have recognised in Sartre himself, as the author of Réflexions:

Ce n'est donc pas assez d'être reconnaissant à Jean-Paul Sartre d'avoir éveillé des consciences...¹⁰

Sartre contends that to write is effectively to act; provided that writers avoid 'la tentation de l'irresponsabilité', and address the readers of their own age, as opposed to the literary historians of a future one.

Again, Sartre can be accused of overstating his case. Sartre himself was later to admit his own, 'sinful' yearning for immortality via the pen. However, situated within the, to him, frustrating context of Benda's perspective on the position of the writer in society, the virulence of Sartre's reasoning is perhaps understandable.

For Sartre, it was not just that the content of literature, the 'what is written', should be a call to freedom. The very fact of writing itself, involving a partnership between the writer and the reader of mutual intellectual interest, a pact of generosity, inevitably implied such freedom. How, Sartre asks, can literature possibly be used to advocate the enslavement of others, when the very act of writing and reading implies the freedom of others?

La liberté d'écrire implique la liberté du citoyen.
On n'écrit pas pour des esclaves. (QL?, p. 113)

To Sartre, the production and consumption of literature constitute an expression of human freedom. Such freedom constituted the committed writer's basic subject-matter. Thus, to Sartre, literature (which we have interpreted above broadly to extend beyond the definition of imaginative writing) is an appeal to the reader's sense of freedom.

Sartre defines one task of the committed writer as that of destabilising those myths propagated by conservative forces within society:

L'écrivain donne à la société une conscience malheureuse, de ce fait il est en perpétuel antagonisme avec les forces conservatrices qui maintiennent l'équilibre qu'il tend à rompre. (QL?, p. 129)

For Sartre, commitment does not entail the writer seeking to convert the reader to his or her own political views. It entails encouraging the reader to become aware of a political role. It further entails the adoption of a certain attitude towards one's epoch; choosing one's public by choosing one's subject; appealing to the reader's sense of freedom; and thereby suggesting the importance of the freedom of others.

Sartre's ideas on writer commitment, briefly discussed above, are linked in part to the historical circumstances in which they were formulated. The passion with which Sartre expressed his convictions, and his recourse to overstatement in seeking to prove his case, may explain certain exaggerations.

Sartre was subsequently to modify his views on writer commitment. In an interview with Madeleine Chapsal published in 1960, Sartre regretted that he had not been able to bring about social and political change on a scale he had envisaged in his publications of the mid to late 1940s. Sartre confessed to having gone through what he described as 'l'apprentissage de l'impuissance':

J'ai fait l'expérience dès ma jeunesse jusqu'à maintenant de la totale impuissance.¹¹

It is worthwhile treating such an absolute statement with caution. The intellectual impact of Sartre's writings on his own and subsequent generations, within and beyond France, may be hard to gauge; but it is

certainly considerable. Yet whatever Sartre's actual achievements as a committed writer seeking to bring about social and political change, the above comments do reflect a more disillusioned later Sartre to that of the 1940s proponent of commitment.

Looking back from the vantage point of the late 1970s, Sartre also referred to the discovery of what he describes as his 'neurosis' concerning writing:

A ce moment-là, des tas de modifications se sont faites chez moi, et en particulier j'ai constaté que j'avais vécu dans une véritable névrose, depuis le moment où j'avais commencé à écrire, même avant, depuis neuf ans, jusqu'à 50. La névrose était au fond que -- comme le faisait Flaubert par exemple à son époque -- je considérais que rien n'était plus beau ni supérieur au fait d'écrire, qu'écrire c'était créer des oeuvres qui devaient rester et que la vie d'un écrivain devait se comprendre à partir de son écriture. A ce moment-là, en 1953, j'ai compris que c'était une vue absolument bourgeoise.¹²

He also confessed to having committed that 'sin' he had so strongly criticised in other writers during the 1940s: that of writing for posterity:

J'ai versé dans mon goût d'écrire, mon désir de survie. De survie littéraire, bien sûr. (Chapsal interview, p. 32)

Thus, Sartre has, in hindsight, qualified his earlier views on writer commitment and literature.

Yet he was not to wholly abandon his 1940s stance. He was also to say of his notion of commitment, in hindsight:

Si la littérature n'est pas *tout*, elle ne vaut pas une heure de peine. C'est cela que je veux dire par 'engagement'. Elle sèche sur pied si vous la réduisez à l'innocence, à des chansons. Si chaque phrase écrite ne résonne pas à tous les niveaux de l'homme et de la société, elle ne signifie rien. (Chapsal, p. 15)

Despite subsequent disillusionment, Sartre continued to stress the role of de-mystification, as far as the writer was concerned:

Le vrai travail de l'écrivain engagé, je vous l'ai dit: montrer, démontrer, démystifier, dissoudre les mythes et les fétiches dans un petit bain d'acide critique. (Chapsal, p. 35)

In this respect, despite Sartre's confessed 'apprenticeship of impotence', and his discovery of his writing 'neurosis', there is nevertheless a degree of continuity between RQJ, Sartre's subsequently formulated ideas on writer commitment, and this later stance.

Generally, Sartre's publication of a study on the Jewish Question -- the fact of its publication, the timing of its publication, and its implicit call to human freedom -- can be usefully situated within the context of these ideas on writer commitment. Following the War, Sartre developed a sense of responsibility as a writer: to his epoch, to those around him, and to his craft. In publishing RQJ, he broke a taboo, demystified an ideology, spoke out in favour of an oppressed group, took human freedom as his subject, and tackled a subject of immediate concern to his epoch. The existence of an anti-Semitic mythology enabled Sartre to take on the role of demystifier. The oppression of the Jew enabled Sartre to tackle the subject of freedom.

We can see in the Sartre of RQJ an embodiment of Sartre's notion of the committed writer. We have only briefly discussed the question of the writer's role in society, and Sartre's views on the subject. Yet we have been able to link Sartre's decision to write RQJ with his subsequently-formulated ideas on writer commitment. We have not sought to evaluate Sartre's theory of commitment. However, within the precise context of the debate on the Jewish Question in France, given the significance of Sartre's contribution to that debate, we can see in RQJ a vindication of Sartre's position, at least within these narrow terms.

2. CRITICAL REACTION

Given Sartre's insistence on the importance of the reader in the process of the creation and consumption of literature, we can raise the further question of the relationship between writer and reader, and the impact writing has on its public. In his 'Présentation des Temps modernes, Sartre wrote:

Tout écrit possède un sens, même si ce sens est fort loin de celui que l'auteur avait rêvé d'y mettre. (pp. 11-12)

In 1948, Sartre's political drama, Les Mains sales, was to provide a vivid illustration of this, provoking a violent and diverse critical response. Published writing does not exist in a vacuum. By definition, it falls into the public domain. For the Sartre of Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, the writer does not merely write for him or herself. The act of writing implies an all-important additional link in the chain: the reader. A major aspect of Sartre's theory of literature, therefore, concerns the role of the reader. We shall now consider initial reaction to RQJ when it was first published, and subsequent responses to it.¹³

Réflexions was written between October and December 1944, and finally completed by Sartre while at La Pouéze. Sartre was 39 and had just abandoned a career in teaching in order to concentrate on his writing.¹⁴

The manuscript of Réflexions was not originally published in its entirety. Sartre was advised to hold back publication of that part of RQJ which dealt in detail with the Jew, and, in particular, with the question of Jewish essence. Sartre mentions this in a letter to a Jewish intellectual, who, according to Contat and Rybalka, was probably Robert Misrahi or Albert Memmi:

Il est toujours difficile, lorsqu'on n'est pas soi-même en danger, lorsqu'on n'a pas connu soi-même l'humiliation et l'angoisse des persécutions, de donner des conseils et de juger. Aussi lorsque mes amis juifs me demandèrent de supprimer les 50 pages où j'exprimais cet avis, je l'ai fait sans protester: c'était à eux, non à moi, de juger ce qui était pour eux le meilleur.¹⁵

Thus, the first section of RQJ, a fifty-seven-page portrait of the anti-Semite was initially published separately in 1945. It took the form of an article, appearing in the first issue of Les Temps modernes, the journal founded by Sartre in the same year. Its title was 'Portrait de l'antisémite'.¹⁶

Sartre's consent to delay publication of the third section of RQJ concerning the Jew may be explicable, at least in part, by the historical context in which RQJ was published, and the circumstances in which French Jews found themselves following the war. This may suggest a concern on Sartre's part for his reading-public, and an anticipation of the impact his book was likely to have. The section on the anti-Semite was potentially less controversial than the section on the Jew. To publish, in the aftermath of the War, a radical enquiry into the nature of *judéité*, going as far to ask: 'Does the Jew exist?', may have seemed to Sartre, or to those advising him, an act of insensitivity. If Jews had been, and were being, deported and exterminated en masse, they had very definitely been perceived to exist as Jews.

When RQJ was finally published in its entirety in France,¹⁷ it contained four sections: a long first section, the earlier-published portrait of the anti-Semite; a short section on a liberal approach to discussion of the Jewish Question; and two sections on who Jews are, how they might be defined, and how the Jewish Question might be solved.

We shall now try to assess RQJ's impact on its reading public in France, at the time of, and since, its publication. Whilst it may be oversimplistic to evaluate a piece of writing exclusively according to its initial or subsequent public reception (the 'affective fallacy'), it is nevertheless useful to take into account the factor of reader-response. Indeed, Sartre himself states as much, in Qu'est-ce que la littérature?. Furthermore, given the challenge to its readers that RQJ presents, some attempt to gauge reader-response is appropriate.

Who read Réflexions, when they were first published? French Jews accounted for a large proportion of RQJ's public, judging by critical response. There is little evidence that anti-Semites read Sartre's study. We know that Céline, who had written three-hundred pages of anti-Semitic ravings in Bagatelles pour un massacre did read RQJ.¹⁸ However, his only interest lay in a passing reference to him in RQJ: 'Si Céline a pu soutenir les thèses socialistes des nazis, c'est qu'il était payé.' (pp. 47-48) Céline did not formulate any coherent criticism of Sartre's ideas, in his response.

In writing RQJ, Sartre implicitly raised the question as to how the surviving French Jew might respond to his situation in post-Vichy France. In a later interview, given in 1969, Sartre formulated this question expressly:

Comment un Juif de trente ans peut-il encore vivre en France après ce qu'il a vu?¹⁹

Writing in 1982 of the situation facing French Jews in the aftermath of Vichy, Claude Lanzmann, director of the Holocaust film Shoah, raises the same question, one that his generation were forced to tackle:

Comment continuer à vivre en ce pays parmi ces hommes et ces femmes, nos compatriotes, dont nous savions qu'ils avaient au moins accepté, dans leur majorité immense, que pendant quatre années nous fussions devenus "autres", exclus de cette communauté nationale à laquelle -- sans que rien se soit vraiment passé dans les profondeurs -- on nous réintégrait soudain. Il est clair que je ne parle ici ni de ceux qui nous traquèrent ni des justes qui nous aidèrent -- aurions-nous sans eux survécu? -- mais de la grande masse des

indifférents qui s'étaient accommodée de notre banissement, de notre exil intérieur ou de notre disparition.²⁰

How indeed, asked both Sartre and Lanzmann, were Jews to respond to such a situation?

Lanzmann actually draws attention to the contribution Sartre's RQJ made towards his coming to terms with his situation as a Jew in post-Vichy France:

Sartre nous réconcilia tout à la fois avec la France et avec notre situation de Juifs. La parution des Réflexions sur la question juive, ce petit livre didactique, éducatif au sens fort du mot, étonnamment timide en certaines de ses parties si on le relit aujourd'hui (cette timidité même permet de mesurer le chemin parcouru -- quel chemin en effet!) fit plus que toutes les lois, toutes les réparations et toutes les victoires pour nous libérer de la peur, de la honte, pour nous permettre de nous sentir chez nous en France tout en nous restituant l'orgueil d'être Juifs. (p. 1710)

For him, and, he argued, for others in his situation, RQJ represented a gesture of recognition and of concern, enabling him to come to terms with life in post-Vichy France. According to Lanzmann, RQJ made a significant impact on its readership.

What of subsequent generations of readers of Réflexions? To those of Lanzmann's generation, Sartre's call for the Jew to be authentic, to face and transcend his situation as a Jew, was a shot in the arm. However, it did not have the same powerful effect on readers of the post-Lanzmann generation. Thus, while Finkielkraut describes RQJ as 'un texte fascinant, fondamental et salutaire'²¹, he also recalls the paradoxical resonances Sartre's call for authenticity had for him when he first read it. Unlike Lanzmann, he had grown up after the War, and had not experienced its traumas at first hand:

Comme j'aimais Sartre, alors, avec quelle volupté gourmande je m'emparais du vocabulaire dont il gratifiait mon expérience...il me disait avec une rigueur irrécusable que j'étais un Juif *authentique*, que j'*assumais* ma condition, et qu'il me fallait du

courage sinon de l'héroïsme pour revendiquer aussi haut et aussi fort mon appartenance à un peuple honni. Les termes choisis par Sartre m'intoxiquaient littéralement...Entre ce que je croyais être et l'existence que je menais en vérité, il y avait un fossé que comblait l'enchantement de la prose sartrienne. J'étais un jeune Juif rangé, gentiment installé dans le confort d'une révolte sans péril et d'un nomadisme abstrait, mais je n'en éprouvais aucun malaise. Sartre me donnait le moyen de me sentir méritoire, il me soufflait les mots de ma propre célébration. Sans avoir rien fait pour, j'entrais en possession d'une histoire extraordinaire, et par surcroît, j'avais le droit de trouver cela difficile! (p. 16)

Finkielkraut's reaction to RQJ perhaps reflects not only the generation of French Jews to which he belongs. Different individuals within the same generation having undergone the same experience may respond to it differently. We must also take account of Finkielkraut's own idiosyncratic *judéité*.

Nevertheless, here we have two highly different personal reactions to RQJ, on the part of French Jews of different generations. To Lanzmann, RQJ had a profoundly uplifting effect, in terms of morale. To Finkielkraut, it recalled the phantom nature of his own Jewish identity, and actually appeared inauthentic. Despite its universalist implications, and continuing relevance today, RQJ primarily addressed the French Jew of 1946. This is in keeping with Sartre's personal view that the writer should write for his own time, rather than for posterity.²² Sartre's summons to the Jew to be authentic was made to a specific group of readers within a particular situation, and may have had less relevance outside that context. Nevertheless, in terms of its intellectual repercussions, we shall argue in Chapter VI that RQJ is of relevance today.

We shall now consider attempts at a more general critical response to RQJ, as opposed to the subjective impressions of individual readers. Messhonnig evaluates the contribution RQJ has made to the debate on the Jewish Question. He rightly draws attention to the important place it occupies today, in the opening words of his article:

On ne peut sans doute plus considérer la question juive sans passer par la réflexion de Sartre. ('Sartre et la question juive', p. 123)

Subsequent writers on the Jewish question, in particular, though not exclusively, in France,²³ have frequently taken up a stance on the Jewish Question in relation to Sartre's. Whether hostile, indifferent, sympathetic, or critical, theirs is nevertheless a stance relative to his. Numerous references in books, journals and the Franco-Jewish press generally testify to the fact that Sartre's study has become a landmark in the history of studies into the the Jewish Question, the phenomenon of anti-Semitism, and the Jewish condition.

Aronson asserts that Sartre's writing of RQJ 'revealed for the first time his deep attachment to the oppressed'.²⁴

In an allusion to the Dreyfus affair, A. D. Cohen considers the Sartre of RQJ to have assumed 'the mantle of Zola'. ('Anti-Semitism in France', p. 14) Several critics note the worthiness of Sartre's intentions, in defending an oppressed minority, and in stirring consciences.

Sartre's essay embarrassed some. We recall the review of the original English translation of Réflexions,²⁵ in which S. Smith writes: 'It is better that no more books should be written about the Jewish question.' ('The Jewish Question', p. 772)

Neher, while considering RQJ a reductive analysis, nonetheless notes with approval Sartre's notion of projection:

Des réflexions comme celles de Sartre, si incomplètes soient-elles, montrent bien que l'antisémitisme n'est pas inhérent à la condition juive, qu'il est la

projection dans le Juif, au-dedans du Juif, de l'image que les autres se font du Juif. (Clefs pour le judaïsme, p. 17)

This qualified support for RQJ is typical of much RQJ criticism.

A hostile response, however, has come from Jehouda, not surprisingly since, for him, 'l'antisémitisme est un phénomène qui sévit dans l'inconscient chrétien'.²⁶ He criticises the limited value of Sartre's proposed solutions to the Jewish Question ('il n'apporte aucune solution constructive' (p. 263), and attacks what he describes as 'l'antisémitisme de salon que dénonce Sartre'. (p. 264)

Writing from the perspective of an American Jew in 1948, reviewing an American translation of RQJ²⁷, Rosenberg evokes RQJ's relevance to its epoch, and its timely ideological pragmatism. Referring particularly to RQJ as an analysis of anti-Semitism, he asserts:

Not that the battle against anti-Semitism is over, of course. But Sartre's study cannot play the same part in it at this date and in this country. Hence we are not tempted to ask, "Is it useful?" rather than. "Is it true?"²⁸

The above critic distinguishes between what, in Chapter IV, we termed the corrective (to Rosenberg, 'useful'), as opposed to its assertive ('true') side.

In a more recent appraisal, though restricted to one aspect of Sartre's analysis -- his portrait of the anti-Semite -- Hewitt draws attention to one shortcoming of Sartre's analysis of anti-Semitism which we alluded to in Chapter I: Sartre's failure to take account of other forms of anti-Semitism. Hewitt distinguishes between 'l'antisémitisme républicain' and 'l'antisémitisme judéocide'. Anti-republican anti-Semitism is an expression of an underlying aversion to the universalist and egalitarian ideals of the Republic. In contrast, genocidal anti-Semitism is a phenomenon transcending what Hewitt takes to be the anti-republican anti-Semitism considered by Sartre:

Ce qui intéresse Sartre, c'est l'antisémite minoritaire dans un cadre libéral qu'il choque et qu'il exploite, qu'il affiche l'antisémitisme *distingué* de la grande bourgeoisie ou la vulnérabilité haineuse de la foule petite-bourgeoise. Dès que cette minorité devient majoritaire et que son antisémitisme se transforme en politique de l'État, soit en Allemagne nazie, soit en Union Soviétique sous Staline, soit dans la France de Xavier Vallat et de Darquier de Pellepoix, les deux Commissaires aux Affaires Juives de Vichy, le phénomène échappe aux cadres préétablis par l'analyse sartrienne. ("Portrait de l'antisémite" dans son contexte: antisémitisme et judéocide', pp. 118-19)

He concludes:

L'analyse de Sartre se fige dans une historicité limitée à la France de la Troisième République et ne comprend pas les grandes persécutions de l'ère hitlérienne. (pp. 120-21)

Hewitt sees Sartre's perspective on anti-Semitism as limited, failing to take account of the phenomena of state and genocidal anti-Semitism. We acknowledge and share this criticism.

However, we have drawn attention to the significance of RQJ as far as the debate on the Jewish Question prior to its publication is concerned. If RQJ does not tackle Vichy, it does tackle its ideological roots. Furthermore, we have also stressed that RQJ is not solely an analysis of anti-Semitism. Sartre's attitude towards Jewish identity *in the absence of anti-Semitism* constitutes the second stage of his thesis. Sartre is concerned with *judéité* as much as he is concerned with *juiverie*. More than a denunciation of social oppression, RQJ also enquires into the potential for Jewish being in its absence.

To move from these general appraisals of RQJ by its various reviewers to some more specific points, one main focus of attention among many critics of RQJ has been the question of Sartre's attitude towards

Judaism and the Jew. Many critics raise the question as to whether Sartre recognises the Jew as a free existing agent at all, or whether, to him, the Jew exists only negatively, or dialectically, in response to the anti-Semite's oppressive look.

To carry this one stage further, many critics have interpreted RQJ as constituting a negation of Judaism and the Jew. The interpretation that Sartre does *not* recognise any positive Jewish reality, any form of Jewish identity, however defined, unlinked to the phenomenon of anti-Semitism, is one that has been widely advanced. Contat and Rybalka, in Les Écrits de Sartre, note a tendency among some Jewish critics to praise Sartre for his portrait of, and implicit attack on, the anti-Semite, but criticise what they perceive to be his reductive definition of the Jew. Sartre's attitude towards the Jew has been interpreted by many critics as reducing the latter to a mere manifestation of anti-Semitism, Sartre refusing to recognise either the substantive religious and cultural aspects of Judaism or what we have termed *judéité*, Jewish identity. Sartre's attitude towards the Jew is not necessarily perceived as hostile, but, nonetheless, negative.²⁹

Religious Jews criticised Sartre's refusal to take into account the religious basis of Judaism. Mandel notes Sartre's lack of enthusiasm to even consider a religious Jewish question:

Quant à la réalité religieuse juive, elle n'a même pas assez de relief aux yeux du philosophe pour être seulement niée. Cela est inexistant pour lui, selon toute évidence.³⁰

Even setting aside the religious content of Judaism, Mandel still sees Sartre as failing to take into account any other positive manifestation of Jewish identity. He perceives no recognition on Sartre's part of a distinct Jewish culture or historical experience, in a positive sense:

Il y a, donc, dans le postulat sartrien, une négation catégorique de l'être juif en tant que ressortissant d'une culture et héritier d'une histoire. (p. 48)

He concludes:

Or, ce que précisément le Juif authentique, ou celui qui voudrait le devenir sur l'instigation même de l'auteur des Réflexions, ne peuvent pas accepter, c'est ce catégorique refus d'envisager la sphère pourtant réelle où le Judaïsme représente, pour les Juifs, plus et autre chose qu'un sobriquet du voisin, que l'on affiche par sentiment de défi. La grande lacune de Sartre, en l'occurrence, c'est son manque presque total d'expérience d'une dimension juive organique, et partant vraiment authentique. (p. 48)

To Mandel, Sartre's Jew is exclusively a negative Jew, created by the anti-Semite.

Rachel Israel provides a further example of this appraisal of Sartre's attitude towards the Jew:

Si ces dernières [Réflexions sur la question juive] opèrent indéniablement une réduction de l'être-juif, elles réussissent néanmoins pleinement ce à quoi elles prétendaient: démonter les mécanismes de l'antisémitisme. ('Au-delà de Réflexions sur la question juive', p. 12)

RQJ is perceived as a successful study of anti-Semitism, but insensitive to the Jewish component of the Jewish Question.

Schnapper, in Juifs et israélites, is another writer to attribute to Sartre the notion of a Jew defined solely according to the other:

La définition du Juif exclusivement par la conscience des autres me paraît liée à une expérience d'un type particulier de Juifs, que je qualifie d'*israélites*, acculturés aux valeurs communes des intellectuels français, souvent depuis deux ou trois générations. Or, les autres types de Juifs assument et affirment une conscience pleine ou affaiblie d'un judaïsme vécu, fait de parts variables selon les individus et les groupes de croyances métaphysiques, de pratiques quotidiennes, d'une culture, du sentiment de participer à l'histoire ou au destin d'un groupe humain spécifique. En dehors des *israélites*, qui ne gardent aucune connaissance et conservent, au plus, une solidarité assumée ou subie avec les persécutés et parfois un sentiment diffus du destin qu'ils attribuent à leur "hérédité juive", tous les Juifs de

France conservent à des degrés variés quelque chose d'un de ces éléments. Rien n'autorise à les négliger et à donner au terme de Juifs la seule définition réductrice de Juifs-pour-les-autres. (pp. 40-41)

Again, Sartre is perceived as denying the Jew a positive identity.

Arendt also interprets Sartre's Jew in these terms:

L'"existentialisme" sartrien a défini le Juif comme celui qui est considéré et défini comme Juif par les autres.³¹

Sartre's Jew is perceived as a passive entity.

Rosenberg, too, sees Sartre's Jew as exclusively the product of the anti-Semite:

Here in America, where Jews are not the only 'foreigners', nor the only target of racialism, it should be clear that being singled out by an enemy is not the cause of our difference from others, is not what makes us Jews. (p. 18)

He asserts the positive side of being a Jew, in contrast, he feels, to Sartre.

The above writers all attribute to Sartre a negative perception of the Jew, and criticise this perception. Does Sartre's Jew exist independently of his anti-Semite? Whatever Sartre's intentions, or indeed our own reading of RQJ in Chapter II, Sartre has been widely *perceived* as refusing to acknowledge the Jew in positive terms, and accordingly criticised. Bearing in mind Sartre's own emphasis on the importance of the reader, expressed in Qu'est-ce que la littérature?, this perception-factor is important as far as Sartre himself is concerned, however accurate or distorted such perceptions may be, and whatever our capacity to gauge their degree of accuracy or distortion.

A minority of critics have seen beyond Sartre's negative designation of an inauthentic Jew (defining himself by his reaction to the anti-Semite), and refer not only to Sartre's inauthentic Jew-for-the-other, but also to Sartre's tacit challenge to the Jew to be authentic, a Jew for-himself.

Thus, Misrahi draws attention to the fact that Sartre's assertion 'C'est l'antisémite qui crée le Juif' comes after, and relates to, his description of the *inauthentic Jew*:

Que signifie donc alors la fameuse phrase: 'C'est l'antisémite qui crée le Juif'? phrase qu'on isole toujours de son contexte pour lui faire exprimer une doctrine de l'illusion mensongère qui n'a jamais été celle de Sartre. Précisons que cette phrase se trouve située à la page 185, c'est-à-dire après l'analyse des conduites de fuite par lesquelles le Juif inauthentique se constitue, et avant l'analyse simplement allusive du juif authentique.³²

This is a vital point, and Misrahi's view is clearly upheld by the evidence in the text.³³ Thus, when Sartre referred to the anti-Semite creating the Jew, according to Misrahi, he was referring to the inauthentic Jew. Sartre did not rule out the possibility of an authentic Jewishness based upon self-definition. Indeed, he allows for it.

Yéfime also detects a positive message, as far as Sartre's Jew is concerned:

A la victime, voici le seul conseil qu'il peut donner: afin d'échapper à la fatalité, le Juif doit renoncer à être la 'chose' marquée par l'antisémitisme, et reconquérir sa liberté. C'est-à-dire, s'accepter comme Juif, et renonçant à la passivité, *se faire Juif* "lui-même, envers et contre tous". ('Sartre: RQJ', p. 170)

Like Misrahi, Yéfime reads a positive message into RQJ.

Another positive interpretation of Sartre's attitude towards the Jew comes from Lanzmann, who alludes to the dynamic component of Sartre's analysis:

Sartre nous avait aussi enseigné ceci qui est capital envers lui: sans dire lesquels, sans se mêler de nos choix, il recommandait aux Juifs d'inventer eux-mêmes librement les chemins de leur authenticité. ('La Reconnaissance', p. 1711)

Far from being a negative conception of the Jew, Sartre's rejection of essence is perceived by this minority of critics as dynamic.

Thus, we have presented two opposing sides of a conflict of opinion concerning Sartre's attitude towards the Jew. Sartre has been widely perceived as denying the Jew any positive right to exist as a Jew. Yet a significant minority of critics have taken a different view. To come down off the fence, having considered the evidence presented by the above critics, and that to be found in the text itself, we support the minority view according to which Sartre does not reduce the Jew to a manifestation of anti-Semitism. While rejecting the concept of an *a priori* (Jewish) essence, Sartre does allow for the possibility of a positive form of Jewish identity. To apply our own terms, Sartre does not acknowledge *judaïsme*, but he actively encourages *judéité*. He does not define what form this Jewish identity might take. Indeed, how could he, when, according to his own logic, the authentic Jew re-creates himself, for himself. However, he most definitely allows for it.

Concerning the scope of Sartre's RQJ, we have suggested that Sartre tackles *juiverie* and *le Juif*, and also lays the way open for a discussion on *judéité*. However, he does not tackle the subject of *judaïsme*. Thus, the question of Sartre's attitude towards substantive Judaism, a subject about which he knew little, and did not tackle, may be parenthesised. However, we would argue that an allowance for some form of *judéité* lies at the very heart of his notion of authenticity.

Although reader-perception of Sartre's attitude towards the Jew deserves attention, also of importance is the philosophical basis underlying Sartre's thesis. It is here that close attention to Sartre's

text itself, and a knowledge of its philosophical basis, ideally come together. It is not the 'Jew' in Judaism that Sartre feels philosophically obliged to reject. Rather, it is the 'ism'. The perception that Sartre has singled out, and chosen to refuse to acknowledge, substantive Judaism, is therefore made in ignorance of that philosophy which forms the basis of Sartre's thesis.

There has been a tendency to see RQJ as mainly a study of anti-Semitism. Rachel Israel's view -- that the value of RQJ lies mainly in its analysis of anti-Semitism -- typifies this view. Yet we must take care not to overlook Sartre's discussion on Jewish being. We have emphasised that Sartre's study is equally concerned with the Jew, and with *judéité*.

Even where there has been acknowledgement of the fact that Sartre is concerned with the Jew, as well as with the anti-Semite, there has been a further tendency to attribute to Sartre the notion that Jewish being is solely a negative manifestation of anti-Semitism, and cannot exist outside the framework of such oppression, the Jew dissolved into nothingness when liberated from the anti-Semite's hostile stare.

This is actually a fair assessment of part of Sartre's philosophical argument. However, it is only one stage of it. Homing in on one aspect of Sartre's analysis, many critics perceive Sartre to be saying that anti-Semitism creates the Jew, and therefore that without anti-Semitism, there would be no Jews. Indeed, Sartre does appear to say this:

C'est l'antisémite qui fait le Juif. (p. 84)

And further:

Le Juif est un homme que les autres hommes tiennent pour Juif. (pp. 83-84)

Yet, alone, these are slogans. We must take care not to interpret the above phrases outside their surrounding context, either in the text, or

within the context of Sartre's analysis as a whole. Let us look in full at the passage which has given rise to so much controversy:

Ainsi si l'on veut savoir ce qu'est le Juif contemporain, c'est la conscience chrétienne qu'il faut interroger: il faut lui demander non pas "qu'est-ce qu'un Juif?" mais "qu'as-tu fait des Juifs?". Le Juif est un homme que les autres hommes tiennent pour Juif: voilà la vérité simple d'où il faut partir. En ce sens le démocrate a raison contre l'antisémite: c'est l'antisémite qui *fait* le Juif. Mais on aurait tort de réduire cette méfiance, cette curiosité, cette hostilité déguisé que les Israélites rencontrent autour d'eux aux manifestations intermittentes de quelques passionnés. (pp. 83-84)

One aspect of Sartre's argument has been widely quoted out of context: out of its context within its precise occurrence in the text, and in relation to Sartre's argument as a whole. A catch-phrase has been taken to represent Sartre's thesis on the Jewish Question. It is in fact one stage in that thesis.

Sartre's recourse to slogans which simplify and reduce what are complex arguments may be partly to blame. Hostility towards Sartre's thesis may in part be explicable by this apparently simplistic formula. Sartre's somewhat flippant assertion -- that the Jew is one whom others look upon as being a Jew -- is in fact the result of a complicated analysis. However, considered alone, out of context, it can appear naive and dismissive, and lead to a distortion of Sartre's overall argument. This may well have alienated some Jewish readers of Réflexions.³⁴

Yet criticism of Sartre's description of the Jew may also be indicative of the extent to which Sartre had hit upon sensitive questions of self-definition and perception, with regard to Jewish identity. Such questions may have been, and indeed may remain today, difficult to tackle. Seen in this light, a hostile response to Sartre's thesis is perhaps to be expected.

Sartre does not see the Jew in negative terms. He sees his inauthentic Jew in such terms. Importantly, he envisages an *authentic* Jew, as well:

Le Juif authentique *se fait juif* lui-même et de lui-même, envers et contre tous... il est ce qu'il se fait, voilà tout ce qu'on peut dire. (p. 167)

Thus, we would stress that RQJ is very much concerned with the Jew as a positive agent, and does not constitute a reduction of Jewish being to a purely negative phenomenon.

Shortly before Sartre died, the question of his attitude towards Judaism was again raised, in the last in a series of three interviews, 'L'Espoir, maintenant...', accorded to Benny Lévy (alias Pierre Victor), in 1980.³⁵ Lévy interviews a Sartre whose position with regard to Judaism has been perceived by some as having changed significantly.

Mandel, who, in 1962, had reproached Réflexions its refusal to acknowledge a Jewish essence, sees in the Lévy interview a sign that Sartre had undergone a late change of heart, with regard to Judaism:

Réflexions sur la question juive, oeuvre dont on sait à présent que Sartre, en dernière analyse et en dernier lieu, renia comme insuffisante dans ses postulats et sa donnée. Eu regard à la datation de ce repentir, peu de temps avant sa disparition, il est peut-être permis de considérer la mise au point comme ayant valeur de testament.³⁶

Similarly, Wiesel notes:

A l'époque de ses Réflexions sur la question juive, il n'avait rien compris au fait juif parce qu'il n'avait pas accès aux sources, il ignorait l'existence d'une grande littérature juive comme le Talmud ou la Kabbale. A la fin de sa vie, il a admis s'être trompé sur sa conception de la judéité et je le respecte pour cela. (Elie Wiesel: qui êtes-vous?, p. 111)

Lévy's Sartre now appears ready to recognise aspects of Judaism which he had at least parenthesised in RQJ. Was Sartre, after all, prepared to accept the substantive basis of Judaism? Let us consider the evidence.

In the interview, Sartre is reported as saying that, following the Liberation, he acquired a greater awareness of Judaism, through his contact with such people as Lanzmann, his adopted Jewish daughter, Arlette Elkaïm-Sartre, and Lévy himself. He discusses monotheism, and messianism, seeing in the latter 'une recherche de l'éthique' (p. 135), which he deems to be of relevance as far as non-Jews are concerned. He admitted to recognising a Jewish culture, 'une réalité juive par-delà les ravages de l'antisémitisme' (p. 123), and a Jewish history, 'une unité réelle des Juifs dans le temps historique'. (p. 126)

The authenticity of these interviews, and therefore the validity of the above assertions, has been disputed. Some have read into them the manipulating hand of a dominating secretary (Lévy) putting words into the mouth of a weak and dying man. Sartre's health was indeed poor, as Simone de Beauvoir has related, in La Cérémonie des adieux (1981).

Annie Cohen-Solal draws attention to the complex relationship between the aging Sartre and his younger secretary: 'Philosophe affaibli et handicapé, face à philosophe activiste'.³⁷

According to Cohen-Solal, Robert Gallimard, the publisher, expressed surprise at the lack of formality between Sartre and Lévy during the interview: 'Sartre ne tutoyait personne'. (p. 635) Thus, Sartre's alleged late change of heart concerning certain aspects of Judaism is open to doubt.

Yet is there anything radically new in Sartre's reported statements? We might reflect upon the extent to which Sartre's position constitutes a radically new position, at least with regard to the question of Jewish identity. We have stressed that Sartre allows for this already in RQJ.

Nevertheless, before rejecting the Lévy interview too quickly, we might also consider the evidence of Sartre's adopted Jewish daughter, Arlette Elkaim-Sartre. She has maintained that Sartre was indeed beginning to develop further his 1940s position on the Jewish Question, towards the end of his life:

He was beginning to realise that there was a positive reality to Jewishness apart from anti-Semitism.³⁸

Yet this is only what we have been affirming all along: that, in RQJ, Sartre recognises *judéité*. Misrahi notes as much:

Sartre affirme aussi: "La réalité juive doit rester dans la révolution, elle doit y apporter la force de la morale." Qu'est-ce à dire? D'abord, que la réalité juive existe: c'était déjà le cas dans RQJ. ('Sartre et les Juifs', p. 10)

Sartre lacked the vocabulary with which to develop further his ideas on Jewish identity. The religious, secular, linguistic, cultural, political and literary heritage of Judaism was foreign to him. Yet his study clearly points in this direction.

Doubts over the authenticity of Sartre's final interview on the Jewish Question in 1980 remain. An evolution in Sartre's attitude towards the Jewish condition may well have taken place. However, we do have the evidence in the text of RQJ itself to show us that Sartre's alleged change of attitude is largely in line with his 1944 position.

* * * *

Critical reaction to Sartre's RQJ has been plentiful and varied. It has taken the debate on the Jewish Question forward, beyond Sartre's contribution. We have argued that Sartre does not (as has been widely perceived) deny the Jew a form of *judéité*. On the contrary, he allows for it. Sartre is not concerned with substantive Judaism, a subject about which he knew little, in 1944 or in 1980. In one sense, this is

of little importance. It is for the Jew to take the debate on identity forward, not Sartre. Sartre gave the Jew the means by which he might do so.

Much has been made of Sartre's attitude towards the Jew, in criticism of RQJ. Yet we would argue the need to focus attention on other aspects of Sartre's study: the historical significance of RQJ as a corrective to anti-Semitic propaganda; its implications regarding the debate on writer commitment; its insights into the phenomenon of anti-Semitism; and Sartre's implicit call in RQJ for a debate on Jewish identity. Whatever the perceived ambiguities of Sartre's attitude towards the Jew, and the limitations of Sartre's analysis of anti-Semitism, RQJ has still made a significant contribution to the debate on the Jewish Question in France. It remains to consider further the nature and extent of this contribution, below.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

1. See, *inter alia*, Whiting's 'The Case for "Engaged" Literature', and Belvin's 'The Problem of the Literary Artist's Detachment as Seen by J. Benda, J.-P. Sartre and Thierry Maulnier'.
2. 'État du judaïsme français', Esprit, 114 (1945), 480-90 (p. 489).
3. Portrait of an Anti-Semite, translated by Erik de Mauny (London: Secker and Warburg, 1948).
4. S. Smith, 'The Jewish Question', Spectator, 10 December 1948, p. 772.
5. Temps modernes, 1 (October 1945), 1-21. Reprinted in Situations, II, pp. 9-30 (p. 13).
6. Pluriel (Paris: Grasset et Fasquelle, 1975), p. 65.
7. (Genève-Paris: Trois Collines, 1944), p. 8.
8. Nouvel Observateur, 23 and 30 June, 7 July 1975. Reprinted as 'Autoportrait à soixante-dix ans', in Situations, X, pp. 133-226 (pp. 176-77).
9. Temps modernes, 2 (November 1945), 193-211. Reprinted in Contat and Rybalka, Les Écrits de Sartre, pp. 33-53 (p. 40).
10. Esprit, 135 (July 1947), 168-70 (p. 170).
11. Les Écrivains en personne (Paris: Julliard, 1960). Reprinted in Sartre's Situations, IX (Paris: Gallimard, 1972), pp. 9-39 (p. 25).
12. Sartre, Un film réalisé par Alexandre Astruc et Michel Contat (Paris: Gallimard, 1977), p. 111.
13. See Joseph Sungolowsky, 'Criticism of Anti-Semite and Jew' (1966), for a survey of the first twenty years of RQJ criticism.

14. Jean-Paul Sartre: Oeuvres romanesques, p. lx.
15. 'Une Lettre de Jean-Paul Sartre', Hillel, 3 (December 1946-January 1947), 29. Reprinted in Contat and Rybalka, Les Écrits de Sartre, pp. 141-42 (pp. 141-42).
16. 3 (December 1945), 442-70.
17. (Paris: Éditions Paul Morihien, 1946). RQJ has also been translated into English, German, and Hebrew.
18. 'A l'agité du bocal', Oeuvres de Louis-Ferdinand Céline (1967), pp. 415-17.
19. (Interview with Arturo Schwarz, L'Arche, 152, 25 October 1969. Reprinted in Situations, VIII, pp. 347-70 (p. 370).
20. 'La Reconnaissance', Temps modernes, 429 (April 1982), 1709-15 (p. 1709).
21. Le Juif imaginaire, p. 17.
22. Are the two incompatible? We recall Sartre's subsequent admissions of failure to keep to this dictum himself.
23. For a recent German perspective on RQJ, see: Babylon, Beiträge zur jüdischen Gegenwart, 'Aus den Arsenalen: Eine Debatte über Jean-Paul Sartres Schrift zur Judenfrage', 2 (1987), 72-115.
24. Jean-Paul Sartre: Philosophy in the World (New York: Verso, 1980), p. 116.
25. By Eric de Mauny, Portrait of the anti-Semite (London: Secker and Warburg, 1948).
26. L'Antisémitisme, miroir du monde (Genève: Synthesis, 1958), p. 264.
27. By George J. Becker, Anti-Semite and Jew (New York: Schocken Books, 1948). Part of the latter was initially serialised in Commentary, (April, May, June, 1948).

28. 'Does the Jew Exist? Sartre's Morality Play About Anti-Semitism', Commentary, 1 (January 1949), pp. 8-18 (p. 9).
29. Conversation with Albert Memmi, 5 April 1988, Paris.
30. 'Retour aux Réflexions', L'Arche (February 1962), p. 48.
31. Sur l'antisémitisme (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1973), pp. 18-19.
32. 'Sartre et les Juifs', Nouveaux Cahiers, 61 (Summer 1980), 2-12 (p. 4).
33. Other aspects of Misrahi's interpretation of RQJ in the above article are more subjective.
34. Perhaps Sartre's frequent recourse to, and the public's focus of attention on, popular slogans to summarise key philosophical points ('L'enfer, c'est les autres', in his 1944 play Huis clos, is a further example) in other works has served to hinder, rather than aid, comprehension of his ideas.
35. See also Lévy's later article, significantly entitled 'Sartre et la judéité', Études sartriennes, 2-3 (1986), 139-49.
36. 'Sartre et les Juifs', Information juive, 303 (June 1980), p. 2.
37. Sartre 1905-1980 (Paris: Gallimard, 1985), p. 633.
38. Stuart Charmé, 'Sartre's Jewish Daughter: An Interview with Arlette Elkaïm-Sartre', Midstream (October 1986), 24-28 (p. 27).

CHAPTER VI

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SPECIFICITY AND UNIVERSALITY
OF THE JEWISH QUESTION

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1. AMBIGUITY OF THE MODERN FRANCO-JEWISH EXPERIENCE

We have examined different approaches to the Jewish Question, considered the text of Réflexions itself, its philosophical basis, its ideological background, its link with Sartre's ideas on commitment, and its reception. We shall now draw attention to the specificity and ambiguity of the modern Franco-Jewish experience.

France today contains the largest Jewish community -- 650 to 660 thousand -- of any European state, excluding the Soviet Union.¹ This population is bound together by a diverse network of religious, educational, social and political institutions.² However, it is not the size of France's Jewish community that makes the contemporary Franco-Jewish situation particularly worthy of study, and the debate on the Jewish Question in France of particular interest. Rather it is the ambiguous nature of its modern historical experience.

France has transmitted contradictory signals to its Jews. These range from the declarations of good intent of the Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen of 1789, to the legislative barbarism of Vichy.³ From the theoretical bestowal of political rights on all French citizens, including Jews, to the removal of those rights during the 1940s. Anti-Semitism has been a constant companion of the Republic. France remains a country torn between the humanistic ideals of the French Revolution and the reality of a perpetually latent xenophobia.

French nationalism and anti-Semitism have invariably gone hand in hand, over the last hundred years. The turn of the century saw the

Dreyfus affair, revealing the existence of anti-Semitism amid the highest echelons of the state.⁴

In hindsight, that individual case can be seen as a forewarning of the wave of mass anti-Semitism that was to sweep across Europe during the 1930s and 1940s, the discriminatory legislation passed under Vichy, and the deportation of Jews en masse to labour, concentration and death camps.

According to a United Nations report, anti-Semitism quickly re-emerged in post-War France with the appearance of associations such as Les Amis de Robert Brasillach, and journals such as Le Maréchal, Lectures françaises.⁵

The early 1950s saw the rise of the *mouvement poujadiste*, founded by Pierre Poujade, who set up the U. D. C. A. (l'Union de Défense des Commerçants et Artisans de France). This was an anti-intellectual, pro-colonialist, nationalist movement of anti-Semitic tendencies.

Concerning a more recent manifestation of anti-Semitism in France, the 1980s have seen a resurgence of French nationalism, and its accompanying racist and anti-Semitic fervour, fuelled by economic problems. This led to a significant nationalist presence in the French National Assembly following the 1986 Legislative Elections. A change in the electoral system, reducing the electoral hopes of minority parties, may not eradicate such fervour, even if it appears to suppress it temporarily.⁶

The disparity between the extreme poles of the modern Franco-Jewish experience -- the consecutive acquisition and denial of civil and political status -- has brought about a malaise. Jews have been consecutively integrated within, and alienated from, French society over the last two hundred years. At no time has their social status been more ambiguous, has the contrast between acceptance and rejection been more stark, than since the War. The post-War Jew in France, having perhaps assumed that his political rights were acquired once and for

all, and anti-Semitism officially outlawed by the state, may well muse on the paradox of the conflicting signals of 1789 and of Vichy. Finkielkraut argues:

Avec la plupart de leurs contemporains, les Juifs nouvellement émancipés tenaient pour acquise l'inscription de la Raison dans l'histoire. (p. 89)

In a similar vein, Steiner observes:

We have as yet been unable to come to grips with the Holocaust because we cannot understand how European civilisation could have marched triumphantly through Enlightenment to the Holocaust.⁷

Part of the modern Franco-Jewish malaise is, we argue, born out of the contradiction between these extreme poles.

We suggest that the ambiguity of the modern Franco-Jewish experience has given rise to an identity crisis. Sartre's RQJ effectively anticipated this crisis. This identity crisis can be seen to manifest itself via the intellectual concerns of Franco-Jewish writers, and via that tension and insecurity, and desire for collective unity, which characterises sections of the contemporary Franco-Jewish community, particularly in metropolitan France.⁸ While aspects of Sartre's analysis of *judéité* were to become irrelevant to some of Finkielkraut's generation, Sartre's study may well have come back into its own, as far as present-day French Jewry is concerned. Indeed, we shall argue that it has much to say to the Jew of today.

France is certainly not the only country of the Diaspora where contemporary Jewry is facing an identity crisis, as de Lange has noted.⁹ Nor is Judaism the only religion to be presently facing a crisis of faith. The problem of how to maintain religious values amid an increasingly secularised society is common to most Western religions. Yet in the United States, for example, this identity crisis among Jews, as manifested through the writings and preoccupations of intellectuals, has tended to express itself in theological and historical terms: how to come to terms with the reality of the

Holocaust; how to re-insert that major historical event of the 1940s within the theological terminology and general sensibility of modern Judaism?¹⁰

In France, however, in addition to this theological debate, an existential identity crisis on the part of the individual French Jew can be observed. This contemporary Franco-Jewish identity crisis is acknowledged, even by those who frown upon it, and see it as a distraction from the study of substantive Judaism. Thus, Trigano, while disapproving of this interest in *judéité* (as opposed to *judaisme*), nonetheless acknowledges 'la crise actuelle de la judéité.'¹¹ We can find further evidence of this identity crisis by examining the writings of Franco-Jewish writers since the War, and by examining other social manifestations of the Franco-Jewish community's existence. Sartre's assertion in *RQJ* that the Jew could have little time for metaphysics as long as his social status was insecure provides an accurate description of the situation of contemporary metropolitan French Jewry, where social tensions are high.

One consequence of the tension felt within the Franco-Jewish communities of the metropolis has been a search for collective security, and a concern for social difference. Sartre's own concept of *réflexivité* may provide an explanation of this. Some Jews may have sought to construct an identity out of *difference*. Finkielkraut provides a personal testimony of this phenomenon:

Proclamer mon identité juive: pour avoir la sensation d'exister; pour m'arracher au lieu commun; pour ne pas être le truchement interchangeable de la parole majoritaire. Je n'avais qu'un seul objectif -- la différence. (*Le Juif imaginaire*, p. 128)

Perplexed by the disparity between *juiverie* and *le Juif*, the Jew has turned instead towards difference. Henceforth, the Jew is a Jew, not via his beliefs, practices, or identity, but via the distinction between who is, and is not, a Jew: a form of *differential essence*. This differential form of Jewish identity is clearly a reaction to, and is based upon, anti-Semitic hostility. The anti-Semite maintains that

the Jew is different. The Jew determines to base an identity on that very difference. Sartre's study has much to say about this phenomenon.

For many intellectuals, the aftermath of Vichy has been an intellectual malaise. Simone de Beauvoir expresses this malaise, in her diaries:

Dès le lendemain de la libération, on découvrit les salles de torture de la Gestapo, on mit au jour les charniers. Bianca me parla du Vercors; elle me raconta les semaines que son père et son mari avaient passées, cachés dans une grotte; les journaux donnèrent des détails sur les massacres, sur les exécutions d'otages; ils publièrent des récits sur l'anéantissement de Varsovie. Ce passé brutalement dévoilé me rejetait dans l'horreur; la joie de vivre cédait à la honte de survivre.¹²

For the post-Holocaust Jew, the guilt at personal survival has been all the more acute. Finkielkraut's assertion of the phantom nature of his Jewishness is possibly a manifestation of an ensuing identity crisis:

Pensez donc: avec le judaïsme, j'avais reçu le plus beau cadeau dont puisse rêver un enfant de l'après-génocide. J'héritais d'une souffrance que je ne subissais pas; du persécuté je gardais le personnage mais je n'endurais plus l'oppression. Je pouvais jouir en toute quiétude d'un destin exceptionnel. Sans m'exposer à un danger réel, j'avais la stature d'un héros; il me suffisait d'être juif pour échapper à l'anonymat d'une existence interchangeable et à la platitude d'une vie sans événement. (pp. 13-14)

Here is the dilemma of what Finkielkraut calls 'the imaginary Jew', conscious of a phantom persecution, known, but not experienced; conscious of a phantom cultural identity, definable only by its indefinability and absence.

Post-War Franco-Jewish writers write of an ordeal, the psychological effects of which continue to reverberate. Assessing the immediate post-War situation in 1945, Rabinovitch expresses the isolation of the Jew in France:

Jamais plus nous ne serons comme les autres. Nous ne pouvons oublier. Nous n'oublierons jamais. Nous avons été 'la balayure du monde'. Contre nous chacun avait licence. Et c'est cela, mes amis, qui nous sépare de vous dans la liberté retrouvée, comme nous avons été séparés de vous sous l'Occupation. Nous sommes, désormais, des SÉPARÉS. Et nous sommes aussi les martyres, c'est-à-dire les témoins, les témoins de l'abjection humaine.¹³

He concludes:

Au sein de la communauté française, nous nous sentons, aujourd'hui, terriblement isolés. (p. 490)

Such feelings of alienation and apartness mark the starting point of the post-War experience for Jews in France.

In Chapter IV, we noted the contradictory logic of the anti-Semitic thesis. In Finkielkraut's view, it is impossible for the Jew to satisfy the anti-Semite's irrational and contradictory demands:

Ce n'est pas *malgré* leurs efforts de normalisation, ainsi qu'on le croit communément, que les Juifs subirent l'épreuve du génocide, c'est *en réponse* à cette tentative même. Plus ils se déjudaïsaient et plus ils faisaient peur. (p. 88)

For the anti-Semite, the Jew can do no right:

L'assimilation fut donc cet étrange procès où les accusés comprenaient à l'envers l'acte d'accusation qu'avait dressé leurs juges. Ils croyaient comparaître pour judaïsme excessif, et c'est de leur volonté d'intégration que l'on faisait un crime: ainsi les prévenus aggravaient-ils leur cas dans la manière même dont ils assuraient leur défense. (pp. 88-89)

Finkielkraut concludes:

A la fois inassimilables et trop assimilés, les Juifs ont payé d'une même mort ces deux accusations contradictoires. (p. 95)

The Jew has tried to rationalise anti-Semitism. Yet, accused of separatism as a Jew, and of subversion as a citizen, promised

integration yet in reality alienated, he cannot appease the anti-Semite. Indeed, for the latter, the Jew exists in order to enrage him.

An existential identity crisis has resulted. Sartre's RQJ tackles this crisis. It effectively raised the question which was to become so significant among post-War Jewish intellectuals: how is it possible to be a Jew in post-Vichy France? It is here that Sartre's designation of Jewish authenticity takes on additional relevance. Sartre calls upon the Jew to refuse to be in relation to his oppressor. Sartre's call for authenticity is limited by its individualism (just as his description of the Jew is reductive, in its emphasis on *judéité* as opposed to *judaisme*). However, its advantage is that it casts aside the notion of the Jew-for-the-anti-Semite, and allows the Jew to become a Jew for himself.

We have argued that the ambiguity of the modern Franco-Jewish experience has instilled a malaise within the Jew in France. This in turn has led to an identity crisis. Yet one consequence of the resulting identity crisis has been a rich and diverse intellectual reaction. A group of writers (though not a school), the works of whom transcend genre, can be perceived. The phenomenon of the Franco-Jewish intellectual has emerged, in the guise of writers such as Finkielkraut, Lévinas, Bernard-Henri Lévy, and many more. Such Franco-Jewish intellectuals perceive themselves to exist, hence the annual Colloque des intellectuels juifs de langue française.

Such writers are characterised by two factors. Firstly, by their individual Jewish identity and collective solidarity, linked to their common preoccupation with the existential status of the Jew in France since the Revolution.

Secondly, by their recourse to the French language as a means of expressing that preoccupation. Wiesel has commented:

L'anglais est ma langue de tous les jours. Mais le français est ma langue littéraire au plus haut sens du terme. Écrire mes livres en français est pour moi un véritable défi.¹⁴

Yet why should Wiesel, a refugee from Sighet, Transylvania (now Hungary) and concentration-camp survivor, having roamed restlessly since the War -- geographically, between France, Israel, and the United States; linguistically, between Hebrew, Yiddish, English and French; and perhaps, above all, metaphysically, between orthodox Judaism and the concentration camp -- choose the French language, one that is not his mother tongue, in order to relate that experience? The fact that he arrived in France following the Liberation is not a satisfactory explanation, alone. Perhaps the French language carries resonances of particular sensibility to post-War Jews. The words *déportation*, *résistance*, *libération*, and *collaboration*, in French, carry connotations which their English equivalents do not. The French language may have become an important medium for the expression of contemporary *judéité* -- for expressing what it means to an individual to be a Jew in the post-Holocaust world.

The post-War Franco-Jewish identity crisis has manifested itself in part intellectually. Such intellectual reactions to the psychological legacy of Vichy and the Holocaust have been diverse. Since the War, France has seen a revival of interest in all aspects of Judaism. This revival, while common throughout the Diaspora¹⁵, has been especially significant in France.

In particular, a challenging debate on Jewish identity has opened up, and continues today. *Judéité* in contemporary France is characterised by strength of expression, and variety of voice. Along with North America, France is now an important centre for research into the modern Jewish experience. There has been a proliferation of publications tackling all aspects of Judaism and Jewishness. The Franco-Jewish press is diverse, in content, format, and political, religious and cultural affiliation.¹⁶

In addition to a proliferation of studies into Jewish identity, to some extent reflecting the social anxiety of the existential Jew, there has also been a renewal of interest in the theological, philosophical, and practical tenets of substantive Judaism. This can be detected in the appearance of Jewish and Hebraic Studies departments within state universities, the number of theses tackling Jewish subjects, the success of collections such as *Judaïsme-Israël*, published by Stock, the founding of the review Pardès, and the growth of Jewish study groups throughout France.¹⁷

A more extreme form of this return to substantive Judaism has taken the form of a reaction in favour of greater conformity with past tradition, and a retreat into the security of orthodox religious doctrine. The post-War French Jew has also looked to religion for an identity. Writing of the general Diasporic context, Marmor notes a retreat into the protective certainty of orthodoxy, 'the retreat into the past which characterises the post-Holocaust generation'. (Beyond Survival, p. 12)

Dresner, assessing the current state of Hasidic research, notes a similar increase in interest in orthodoxy. He attributes such interest to two factors: the Holocaust, and what some Jews perceive to be 'the failure first of technology and then of culture (literature -- art -- music) as substitutes for religion'.¹⁸

In 'Déracinement et enracinement: le hassidisme', an essay which penetrates into the mystery, seclusion, and above all, consciousness of an orthodox Hasidic community (at Williamsburg, Brooklyn), Wiesel describes the ethos behind this 'retreat into the past':

Les gens, ici, oeuvrent, prient et rêvent dans une sorte de ghetto situé dans le temps plutôt que dans l'espace... Pour les hassidim, le temps n'existe pas vraiment: ils vivent dans la légende et non dans l'histoire. Peu importent les dates du calendrier, ils suivent la même voie ancienne. La même foi les anime, la même enceinte les enferme. Les siècles et leurs bouleversements, les gouvernants et leurs desseins n'ont pas prise sur eux. Entre le hassid contemporain et ses précurseurs, la similitude est

plus réelle qu'entre un hassid et un non-hassid... Comme jadis, ces hassidim sont concernés seulement par ce qui les touche de près. Déçus par le monde, ils s'en détachent... Vivant en vase clos, ils sont à l'abri des tentations et des changements que connaît le monde extérieur. La révolte, la contestation, n'ont pas cours ici. Nul ne songe à vouloir changer la société ou l'homme. Cela est l'affaire de Dieu. L'individu n'est pas censé Lui forcer la main.¹⁹

While this retreat into orthodoxy is a phenomenon which is widespread throughout the post-Holocaust Diaspora, the post-War rush of publications investigating Jewish identity has been particularly pronounced in France. If there has been a general post-War revival of interest in *Judaïsme* throughout the Diaspora, the parallel debate on *Judéité*, on Jewish identity, has been particularly lively in France.

Wiesel provides us with a symbol of the contemporary crisis of values among post-War French Jews, following their ambiguous historical experience. Originally from Transylvania, he was uprooted from his native country, and from his cultural and religious upbringing. He feels compelled to communicate his experience as a concentration camp prisoner. Yet he feels unable to communicate that experience through language in a way in which it might be fully appreciated. Metaphysically (as Sartre himself suggested of the Jew), he is restricted, perhaps even imprisoned, by his traumatic experience. Yet he has undoubtedly been enriched and stretched by it, also. He travels in exile across a number of different foreign countries, thinking and writing in a variety of different foreign languages, uprooted physically and intellectually. Above all, he appears torn between his religious faith and the indelible impression made upon him by an all too man-made history. At the same time, he is cut off from man by his religion -- and cut off from his religion by man. Wiesel is alone. Contemplating the Hasidim in Brooklyn, a former Hasid himself, he can only express his alienation from their outlook, too: 'Pour eux, tout continue car rien n'a changé; pour moi, tout a changé.'²⁰ Whilst his voice fluctuates between the rational and the mystical, it is a voice which has done more than most to express the estrangement and metaphysical isolation of the post-War French Jew.

The Jew's ambiguous situation in France has given rise to an identity crisis, which has led, in turn, to a debate on Jewish identity. RQJ effectively marks one of the first contributions to this post-War debate.

2. THE SPECIFICITY OF SARTRE'S RÉFLEXIONS

One underlying aim of this thesis has been to seek to identify the specificity of Sartre's contribution to the Jewish Question. We are now in possession of sufficient data to attempt to tackle this question.

It is worthwhile recalling what Sartre does *not* accomplish with his study, first. We noted in Chapter I that the subject of the Holocaust fell outside the scope of Sartre's study of the Jewish Question. Nor should we look to RQJ for a consideration of substantive Judaism. Nor, indeed, will we find in it a truly comprehensive analysis of anti-Semitism, and of the diverse forms it is capable of taking: the Christian anti-Judaism of Abbé Charles' Solution de la question juive; the mythical, prophetic anti-Semitism of Protocols of the Learned Elders of Zion; the nationalistic anti-Semitism of Brasillach's 'Les Français devant les Juifs'; the pseudo-scientific, racial anti-Semitism of Montandon's Comment reconnaître le Juif?; the pathological anti-Semitism of Céline's Bagatelles pour un massacre; and the state anti-Semitism of Nazi Germany or Vichy France.

What is the specificity of RQJ? We would argue that RQJ has made a major contribution to the debate on the Jewish Question in France. Sartre succeeded in transforming the terms in which discussion of a Jewish Question might take place. Much of the originality of Sartre's study lies in the fundamental naivety of the questions it raises. Such questions concern the psychology of anti-Semitism, and the possibilities of Jewish identity, both in the face of, and in the absence of, social oppression. How does an individual become an anti-Semite? How is it possible to be a Jew? The interrogative register in Sartre's RQJ is important. In addition, the very fact of raising a Jewish Question, where other writers had failed to, and at the time he did, is significant.²²

RQJ captured the tone of the post-War Jewish experience. We base such an assertion on the evidence set out in Chapter IV, situating RQJ

within its ideological context, and that of Chapter V, situating RQJ in relation to its reception. Indeed, it is possible to perceive certain affinities between Judaism and Existentialism. Both assert that man can change himself and the world through his actions. Yet there are also fundamental and irreconcilable differences between the two. Existentialism asserts that there is no order in the world other than that which consciousness provides. Judaism asserts that there is order in the world through God's divine purpose. Sartrean Existentialism, as expounded in L'Être et le néant, is an ontology, providing no clearcut moral precepts to be followed (although in his Cahiers pour une morale, Sartre does devote attention to ethics). In contrast, ethical precepts lie at the very heart of biblical Judaism. In the light of these differences, how is it that certain features of Sartre's ontology fitted the model of the Jewish Question so well?

We can find two reasons for this. In 1946, Sartre's emphasis on brute existence was in tune with the modern Franco-Jewish experience. For the French Jew reading Réflexions in the aftermath of Vichy and the Holocaust, *existence, survival*, was the fundamental reality. Jankelevitch, addressing the Colloque d'intellectuels Juifs de langue française, asserts:

Nous n'avons en commun que d'être ici les uns et les autres, des survivants. Tout ce qui nous est le plus commun, le plus essentiel, vous en conviendrez, c'est d'être vivant.²¹

The twin reality facing Jews in Europe in 1945 was survival and death: existence and non-existence. The terms of Sartre's Existentialist analysis of the Jewish Question were therefore strikingly appropriate to the situation confronting Jews in post-Vichy France. Reactions such as that of Lanzmann are indicative of this.

Secondly, given the existence of anti-Semitic perceptions of the Jew (*juiverie*) prior to Sartre's study, the phenomenological approach, with its emphasis on the perception of phenomena by consciousness, also contributed towards some keen insights into the Jewish Question.

Concerning the specificity of Sartre's description of the Jew, we recall that Sartre's pre-authentic Jew is one whom others look upon as being a Jew; that a caricatural, mythological image of the Jew had been propagated during the Third Republic by many writers debating the Jewish Question; and that attempts to define the Jew -- whether pejoratively (by the anti-Semite), benignly (by the liberal), or subjectively (by Jews themselves) -- proved problematic. Sartre enables the Jew to transcend the above scenarios. Sartre avoids two extremes. He does not classify the Jew, as *juiverie* does. Indeed, he liberates the Jew from reductive definitions. Nor does he suggest that there is no such thing as a Jew, that the Jew comes into being solely when perceived by the (anti-Semitic) other. To Sartre, it is not the Jew who provokes anti-Semitism, and nor is the Jew responsible for the existence of a Jewish Question. Sartre's philosophical rejection of Jewish essence does not signify that, for him, the Jew cannot exist as a Jew. His description of the Jew challenges the Jew to re-invent a mode of Jewish being, independent of the inauthentic Jew's being-for-the-other. Sartre's study both corrects anti-Semitic approaches to the Jewish Question, and transcends the liberal attitude.

If there are special features of Sartre's perception of the Jew, there are also special features of his formulation of a Jewish Question. In Chapter I, we stressed the ambiguity of the term 'Jewish Question'. We also emphasised that an analysis of the Jewish Question is necessarily related to how the latter is formulated. What of the specificity of Sartre's formulation? Sartre asks: how does an individual become an anti-Semite? What is a Jew? How can we solve the problem of anti-Semitism? What has anti-Semitism to do with the Jew?

To situate RQJ within the debate on the Jewish Question in France over the last hundred years, the fact that RQJ was published at all, when it was, is of significance in itself, quite apart from the particular merits of the analysis it contains. Sartre broke the 1944 taboo surrounding the subject of the Jewish Question. In so doing, he

paved the way for a debate on the Jew's situation in post-War France which continues to this day.

Another significant aspect of Sartre's study is that it explores how a Jewish Question might come into being. This is important. The anti-Semitic thesis can be identified partly through its accusation that the Jew is to blame for the coming into being of a Jewish Question. Sartre reverses this thesis. He asserts, on the contrary, that it is the non-Jew who creates a Jewish Question. RQJ had a corrective role to play in the debate, as well as an assertive one.

Sartre challenges Jews, anti-Semites, and liberals to re-consider their respective stances. Sartre's challenge to the anti-Semite is : how have you come to be an anti-Semite, and what has the Jew to do with your choice? His challenge to the liberal is: in the face of anti-Semitism, can you still assert that the Jew and a Jewish Question do not exist? Finally, his challenge to the Jew is: how are you to be a Jew in France today? Can you avoid liberal assimilation and find an identity for yourself other than an inauthentic existence as a Jew-for-the-other?

The debate on the Jewish Question in France during the Third Republic, prior to the publication of Sartre's RQJ, had been largely an anti-Semitic debate on *juiverie*. One special feature of RQJ was that it set about discussing a Jewish Question in terms which were not hostile to the Jew *a priori*. It is, in addition, remarkable that Sartre, applying the tenets of a philosophical system, and with little knowledge of the subject under discussion, was nevertheless able to produce so many insights into the Jewish Question.

Réflexions is linked to Sartre's philosophical outlook of the period of the mid-1940s. It can be usefully situated against the anti-Semitic ideological background against which it was written. It can also be seen to look forward to Sartre's ideas on the function of the writer in society. Sartre's study of the Jewish Question is, itself, a conception of the world. Sartre existentialises the Jewish Question. He discusses

it within the framework of his ontology. However, this does produce a remarkable analysis. Sartre raises fundamental questions concerning social identity, which both contribute towards, and transcend, the debate on the Jewish Question. The overriding originality of *Sartre's* study, its distinguishing factor, is that it broadens the terms in which the debate on the Jewish Question might be conducted.

3. THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE JEWISH QUESTION

We shall now consider to what extent, if at all, aspects of the Jewish Question can be interpreted as paradigms for other areas of human experience. Universality and specificity are two features of Judaism, and it is important to take account of both. The Jewish Question provided a useful model for Sartre to test a methodology. In addition, we can also consider its paradigmatic value. Care must be taken neither to reduce the totality of the Jewish experience to an ideology -- for example, a religion, or an economic class -- nor extend it way beyond its sphere of relevance. Our brief consideration of varying perceptions of the term 'Jewish Question' in Chapter I should cause us to take care, when attributing paradigmatic status to the Jewish Question. We have seen that the term 'Jewish Question' has been formulated in a variety of ways by different writers, over the last hundred years. The Jewish Question may be seen as a paradigm of the way we attribute meaning to the world, in order to justify pre-established ideological stances. Yet, while needing to exercise caution, there are nevertheless facets of the Jewish Question which can serve as a paradigm.

Anti-Semitism is too recurrent a feature of history for it not to constitute a manifestation of some long-standing, dormant, and periodically re-awakened undercurrent of dissatisfaction within the human mind. Furthermore, in Judaism, we are confronted with the model of a cultural experience which has survived amidst human oppression, and which transcends the boundaries of language and nation. We may see in anti-Semitism a symbol of the rejection of the other. We may see in Judaism a symbol of man's ability to survive such rejection. In short, we may appreciate the universality of the Jewish Question.

There are indeed grounds for extrapolating from the subject of the Jewish Question, and Sartre's treatment of it to other areas of human experience. We recall from Sartre's Esquisse d'une théorie des émotions that Sartre's phenomenological method treats phenomena as signs, not as

facts:

Pour le phénoménologue, tout fait humain est par essence significatif...Signifier c'est indiquer autre chose'. (p. 16)

Indeed, in RQJ itself, Sartre invites us to consider the universalist implications of the Jewish Question. Accordingly, Sartre looks for something other than anti-Semitism in the anti-Semite's attitude towards the Jew:

Le phénomène premier est donc l'antisémitisme, structure social régressive et conception du monde prélogique. (p. 173)

For Sartre, anti-Semitic perceptions of the Jewish Question are manifestations of a more general, retrograde, pre-logical perception of the world.

Sartre perceives universal implications arising out of the Jewish experience:

Cette espèce d'hommes qui *témoigne de l'homme* plus que toutes les autres parce qu'elle est née de réactions secondaires à l'intérieur de l'humanité, cette quintessence d'homme, disgraciée, déracinée, originellement vouée à l'inauthenticité ou au martyre. (p. 165)

The Jew is a witness to humanity. Sartre is not alone in asserting this. According to Rachel Israel:

La condition juive se situe au coeur de la problématique humaine universelle, et aussi à sa pointe, en forme de paradigme. ('Au delà de RQJ', p.14)

Thus, both Sartre and other participants in the debate on the Jewish Question perceive universalist implications to that debate.

Perhaps the fascination the Jewish Question exerts over writers like Sartre can be partly explained in terms of a possible reciprocity between Jew and intellectual. Cioran cites the following saying:

Les peuples ressentent envers les Juifs la même animosité que doit ressentir la farine contre le levain qui l'empêche de reposer.²³

Here, the Jew is said to symbolise the restlessness of consciousness. That self-critical, analytical aspect of consciousness is denounced as either 'Jewish' or 'intellectual'. A society may perceive its intellectuals and its Jews, as Baudelaire perceived his Jewess, with a similar combination of fascination and revulsion.

If Sartrean Existentialism captured the tone of the post-War Jewish situation, on an individual basis, are there any affinities between Sartre and the Jew (apart from the possible Jew-intellectual reciprocity alluded to above)? In Les Mots, Sartre himself has hinted that there may be:

J'ai cent fois entendu les antisémites reprocher aux Juifs d'ignorer les leçons et les silences de la nature; je répondais: "En ce cas, je suis plus juif qu'eux". Les souvenirs touffus et la douce déraison des enfances paysannes, en vain les chercherais-je en moi. Je n'ai jamais gratté la terre ni quêté des nids, je n'ai pas herborisé ni lancé des pierres aux oiseaux. Mais les livres ont été mes oiseaux et mes nids, mes bêtes domestiques, mon étable et ma campagne; la bibliothèque, c'était le monde pris dans un miroir; elle en avait l'épaisseur infinie, la variété, l'imprévisibilité.²⁴

We might further allude to a common passion for learning. Also, to a common situation as social scapegoats, Sartre having stated: 'La célébrité pour moi ce fut la haine'.²⁵ We might also refer to their common reflexivity. The school report given by one M. Olivier, of the ten-year-old Sartre -- 'Doit s'habituer à penser davantage' -- is ironic in hindsight, given the intellectual Sartre was to become. However, we must take care here in drawing such parallels. We are in danger of constructing an essential Jew. Sartre justifiably sought to avoid doing this, and we would do well to do likewise.

The Jew in the world illustrates the alienation of consciousness from other consciousness, and its lack of identity with itself. The Jew is an example of non-being. The Jew is not. He or she comes into being

in situation. The Jew's indefinability reflects what is, to Sartre, man's lack of an *a priori* essence. We have shown, in Chapter IV, that the method of the anti-Semitic thesis invariably entailed initially designating an archetypal Jew. Despite this, or possibly because of it, it may be Jew's *very indefinability* that renders him an object of the anti-Semite's hatred. It may be the Jew's conceptual elusiveness, his indefinable otherness, which causes fear, and the attempt to superimpose essential characteristics upon that phantom being. The Jew may have become man's scapegoat for his fear of unknown aspects of his own being. In which case, the Jew could stand as a paradigm of Sartrean concepts of non-being, as well as model to illustrate them.

The Jewish Question may be taken to epitomise the conflict between the drive of progressive modern political movements towards universalist egalitarianism and the right of minority groups to retain their cultural specificity. Marienstras has termed the loss of such minority cultural identity *ethnocide*:

En apparence, l'ethnocide se fait sans qu'on y songe.
Il est inscrit dans les structures de la société
majoritaire et dans sa volonté affichée ou secrète.
Il est aussi doux que la perte de la mémoire, aussi
fatal et nonchalant que le temps qui passe.²⁶

Is it true that the Jew must choose between universal human progress and being a Jew? Need there be a conflict of interest or of loyalty between political equality and cultural specificity? This recalls the anti-Semite's ultimatum that the Jew must choose between being a citizen and being a Jew. Hence the title of Malglaive's anti-Semitic study of the Jewish Question, Juif ou Français? Aperçus sur la question juive. In contrast, Sartre, and many post-War Franco-Jewish writers following him, see no such conflict. This tension between universality and specificity is to be found within Judaism itself, as well as around it. The Jewish Question is of relevance to all minority groups, to their cultural specificity and group identity.

The Jewish Question can be seen as a paradigm of human oppression. Sartre's study of anti-Semitism can be used to analyse the problem of

racism as it affects groups other than Jews, and extrapolations made to racism affecting other ethnic minorities, or majorities (with the qualification that anti-Semitism is both a manifestation of racism, and transcendent of it). At the very end of Réflexions, Sartre suggests the wider significance of fighting against the oppression of the Jew:

Il conviendra de représenter à chacun que le destin des Juifs est son destin. Pas un Français ne sera libre tant que les Juifs ne jouiront pas de la plénitude de leurs droits. Pas un Français ne sera en sécurité tant qu'un Juif, en France et dans le monde entier, pourra craindre pour sa vie. (p. 185)

Sartre asserts that the Jewish Question concerns Jews and non-Jews. It is not a problem limited to those immediately affected. Oppression is the concern of those free from oppression. The oppression of one group is a threat to the freedom of all. Thus, a solution to the Jewish Question has repercussions which extend beyond solely settling the problem of the status and identity of Jews in society. Sartre's treatment of the Jewish Question homes in on both the specificity and the universality of the Jewish Question.

4. BEYOND RÉFLEXIONS

It now remains to look forward beyond Sartre's Réflexions. RQJ represents a starting-point for a debate on Jewish identity, or *judéité*.

We may (schematically) designate two extreme attitudes towards the Jewish component of the Jewish Question. For the anti-Semite, it is the Jew who is to blame for the existence of a Jewish Question. An anti-Semitic approach to the Jewish Question consists in designating a mythical Jew, who is then denounced. Sartre de-mystified the anti-Semitic myth according to which the Jew is to blame for the coming into being and subsistence of a Jewish Question. In anti-Semitic writings of the Third Republic and under Vichy, this idea was central to the anti-Semitic thesis. Sartre de-mystified the myth of 'the guilty Jew'.

For the liberal, there is no Jewish component involved in the Jewish Question at all. Sartre's liberal sees no Jew, and therefore no Jewish Question. Sartre rejects the liberal's attitude, equating it with the anti-Semite's, in terms of their common denial of *judéité*. The liberal attitude is nevertheless useful, as Sartre himself acknowledges. It constitutes the Jew's basic line of defence against oppression. The Jew's last resort is to claim his political and civic rights as a citizen of the Republic. Thus, Zola, in defending Dreyfus, could write:

Ah! cette unité humaine, à laquelle nous devons tous nous efforcer de croire, si nous voulons avoir le courage de vivre, et garder dans la lutte quelque espérance au coeur!²⁷

The 1789 Declaration of Rights proclaimed the Jew to be equal with the non-Jew in the eyes of the Republic. The Vichy regime dismantled the Constitution of 1791. Sartre's Réflexions can be interpreted as calling for the restoration of those minimum political and social rights to the Jew once more. However, although the Rights of Man are the Jew's (and any oppressed group's) fundamental constitutional protection against persecution, they are not his road to freedom. The

liberal view does not constitute a radical way forward, with regard to solving the Jewish Question.

Having invoked the liberal stance to defend the Jew, does Sartre ultimately transcend it? Lang argues that he does not:

There is the possibility that, in reviewing the history of anti-Semitism, we find that the Jew has been an "accidental" object -- that, for every occurrence of anti-Semitism, the onus placed on the Jew by the anti-Semite could as readily have been placed on somebody else or perhaps on no one at all; that there was *nothing* decisive about the role of the Jew in his historical context, whether religious, economic, psychological, which affected that selection; thus, that the anti-Semite's choice of the Jew as an object (and, so, the phenomenon of anti-Semitism) was arbitrary or accidental. This is a conclusion to which the examination of anti-Semitism *might* lead, and certain accounts (for example, Sartre's in The Anti-Semite and Jew where the Jew is represented as the object of a free-floating "bad faith") seem finally to come down to this. ('Anti-Semitism: A Jewish Question', p. 70)

Setting aside Lang's reduction of Sartre's Jew to 'the object of a free-floating "bad-faith" -- an interpretation we have already discussed, and cast doubt upon, in Chapter V -- these comments are nevertheless of great interest. In investigating the Jewish Question, Lang distinguishes between releasing the Jew from the role of scapegoat, and totally absolving the Jewish component from any investigation:

The question of what it is in the Jew that has marked the occasions of anti-Semitism cannot be postponed until the character of anti-Semitism itself is identified. (p. 71)

She concludes:

It is too important to be left to the treatment of the anti-Semites. (p. 72)

For Lang, the Jewish Question is neither the Jew's fault, nor not his fault. Liberal over-protectiveness of the Jew precludes radical

investigation of the Jewish Question as much as anti-Semitic mythology does. What of Sartre's stance?

In correcting anti-Semitic attributions of the origin of a Jewish Question to the Jew, does Sartre go over to the other extreme, and remove the Jewish component totally from discussion? Were he to have done so, however worthy his intentions, he would have effectively de-mystified one (anti-Semitic) myth, and replaced it with another. Sartre is keen to save the Jew as a Jew, whereas the liberal saves the Jew as a human being. What does this distinction amount to, in concrete terms? Is Sartre's position distinguishable from that of the liberal?

RQJ is not solely an analysis of anti-Semitism. It is also an investigation into Jewish identity. Sartre's designation of authenticity is significant, here. More than a portrait of the anti-Semite, RQJ also lays down a challenge to *judéité*. Sartre does transcend the liberal approach, by challenging the Jew to re-invent a form of *judéité*. This is a challenge which perhaps only Jews themselves, and not Sartre, could take up. However, it is a challenge implicit in RQJ.

It has been taken up by many writers. We have drawn attention to the flurry of interest in Jewish studies since the War. Sartre's study has enlivened the debate on the identity of the post-Vichy Jew. One writer to have gone beyond Sartre's approach is Marienstras. Sartre described the (pre-authentic) Jew as one whom others look upon as such. Marienstras challenges the need to 'objectively' define a social group at all, once it perceives itself to exist, and satisfies certain minimum criteria. He advocates a self-perceiving description of the Jew. The criteria for recognising a particular social group should not be an 'objective' perceiver's capacity to define and classify the group. It should be that group's subjective self-perception as an existent group:

Je ne chercherai pas à savoir -- car il y a trop de haine et d'arrogance dans une telle curiosité -- si ce groupe est un peuple, une nation, une tribu, une ethnie, une classe, une caste, une secte, un fossile ou un vertige. Ni si l'obstination qu'il met à s'éterniser convient au progressisme du moment. Il me

suffit que le groupe existe, qu'il travaille à maintenir, à renouveler, à recréer son identité, et qu'il ne le fasse pas exclusivement en parasite. La volonté de vivre n'a pas à prouver son droit à la vie. ('Les Juifs de la diaspora, ou la vocation minoritaire', p. 61)

This call for the invention of a new Jewish identity, beyond the confines of state, religion, or economic history, this plea for Jewish culture to manifest itself in all its diversity, carries the debate on the Jewish Question forward beyond Réflexions.

* * * *

There are indeed many questions RQJ appears to leave unanswered. For example, consideration of the phenomena of state anti-Semitism and mass anti-Semitism. Perhaps for reasons of historical pragmatism, and on account of the restrictions of his philosophical outlook of the period, Sartre does not cover all aspects of the Jewish Question. Indeed, what study can?

Nevertheless, despite Sartre's apparently narrow scope, RQJ may also be a means to understanding areas outside its immediate field of vision. We noted in Chapter I that the Holocaust is a subject which Sartre does not cover. Yet, with Sartre's Réflexions, we may, indirectly, come nearer to appreciating the dimensions of that event and its legacy in this post-Holocaust era.

Sartre usefully disentangled many distorting threads previously interwoven into the debate on the Jewish Question in France. RQJ can be seen as a pivot between the pre-War Third Republic anti-Semitic debate on *juiverie* and the post-War debate on *judéité*. It paved the way for a new generation of Franco-Jewish writers to set about discussing the Jewish Question in new and challenging terms, following the War. Sartre's questions are more important than his answers. Through the questions he raises, through his designation of individual

authenticity, today we can take Réflexions sur la question juive as the starting-point for a discussion on the Jewish Question, free from some of the distortions that were once prevalent. In reassessing what it means to be a Jew in contemporary society, or indeed the member of any other minority social group, we may find that Réflexions retains much of its relevance today.

NOTES TO CHAPTER VI

1. As opposed to (thousands) 410 in Britain, 80 in Hungary, 60 in Rumania, 41 in Belgium, 39 in Italy, 34 in Germany, 30 in Holland, 21 in Switzerland, 18 in Turkey, 16 in Sweden, 13 in Austria, 13 in Czechoslovakia, 10 in Spain, 7.5 in Denmark, 7 in Bulgaria, 6 in Greece, 6 in Poland, 6 in Yugoslavia, 1.3 in Finland, and 1 in Luxemburg. Quid 1986 (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1985), p. 491. For France, Quid gives the figure of 650, and Guide du judaïsme français (Paris: Judéo Scopie, 1987) 660.
2. For a factual general survey of the contemporary Franco-Jewish community, see Guide du Judaïsme français (1987).
3. See Appendices I and II. The 1789 Declaration of Rights was subsequently placed at the head of the French Constitution of 3 September 1791. Modified versions of human rights declarations have appeared as preambles to successive French Constitutions between 1791 and 1958, except during the Vichy régime of Marshall Pétain, which substituted the rights of 'Travail, Famille, Patrie' for those of 'Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité'.
4. For pro and anti-Dreyfusard stances, see Zola's L'Affaire Dreyfus: la vérité en marche, and Drumont's Les Juifs contre la France.
5. Maurice Vanikoff, 'Les Croix gammées à l'O.N.U.', Vie Juive 56 (September-October 1960), 7-14 (p. 13).
6. Anthony Blend, 'Le Pen: The Writing on the Wall' (1987). See preliminary Declaration to this thesis.
7. 'Jewish Values in the Post-Holocaust Future', Judaism 3 (Summer 1967), 266-99 (p. 274).
8. See, generally, 'Les Treize Questions que se posent les Juifs de France', L'Arche (1985).
9. See his epilogue: 'The Crisis of Contemporary Judaism', in Judaism (pp. 138-50), for a useful summary of the issues in a general, Diasporic context.

10. See Whitfield, 'The Holocaust and the American Jewish Intellectual' (1979).
11. La Nouvelle Question juive (Paris: Gallimard, 1979), p. 17.
12. La Force des choses I, Folio (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), p. 23.
13. 'État du Judaïsme français', Esprit, 114 (1945), 480-90 (p. 488).
14. Cited by Rabi, in 'Le Phénomène Wiesel', Sillages 2 (April 1980), p. 139.
15. See M. Davis and others, Le Renouveau de la culture juive (1968).
16. See Guide du judaïsme français (pp. 225-28).
17. Solomon Malka, 'Le Retour aux textes', L'Arche, 374 (June 1988), 93.
18. 'Introduction: Heschel as a Hasidic Scholar', in A. J. Heschel, The Circle of the Baal Shem Tov: Studies in Judaism, edited by S. Dresner (University of Chicago Press, 1985), pp. vii-xlv (p. x).
19. Paroles d'étranger (Paris: Seuil, 1982), pp. 154-65 (pp. 155-60).
20. 'Déracinement et enracinement', p. 165.
21. Cited by E. Lévinas, 'La Renaissance culturelle juive en Europe continentale', in Davis and others, Le Renouveau de la culture juive (Brussels: Institut de sociologie de l'Université libre de Bruxelles, 1968), pp. 21-34 (p. 23).
22. We can draw an analogy here with Arendt's controversial study Eichmann in Jerusalem (1963), which suggested that Jews passively accepted their War-time fate, and of which Lang writes: "Arendt -- for the first time, it seemed -- raised the question of how the reaction of the European Jews to the intentions of the Nazis affected those intentions. We need not accept her conclusion that the Jews were guilty of complicity in their own destruction to recognize that the question to which she gave it as an answer is important for understanding the events of the holocaust." 'Anti-Semitism: A Jewish Question', Judaism (Winter 1977), 68-72 (p. 72). Whatever the value of the conclusions ultimately drawn, Sartre and Arendt raised questions of importance, avoided by others.

23. 'Un peuple de solitaires', in La Tentation d'exister (Paris: Gallimard, 1956), pp. 69-103 (p. 81).
24. (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), p. 44.
25. Quoted by de Beauvoir, in La Force des choses I, p. 70.
26. 'Les Juifs de la diaspora, ou la vocation minoritaire', Temps modernes, 324-26 (August-September, 1973), 455-91. Reprinted in Être un peuple en diaspora, pp. 61-98 (p. 62).
27. 'Pour les Juifs', Figaro, 16 May 1896. Reprinted in L'Affaire Dreyfus: la vérité en marche (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1969), pp. 57-62 (p. 62).

CONCLUSION

CONCLUSION

Sartre's study of the Jewish Question offers some keen insights into the situation of Jews in France since the Revolution. Existentialism provided Sartre with a useful vehicle with which to analyse that situation. This is due to the emphasis it places on perception and existence. Sartre suggests that a vital element of anti-Semitism is the anti-Semite's perception of the Jew. Sartre's anti-Semite does not perceive an existent Jew. He conceives of an essential Jew. The emphasis Existentialism places on brute existence was also particularly appropriate, as far as the post-Holocaust Jew was concerned. Sartre's study also has its limitations: it concentrates on individual, as opposed to collective, anti-Semitism, and does not take account of Jewish culture and history. Nevertheless, Sartre's method does raise important questions and highlights many pre-conceptions concerning the Jewish Question, prevalent prior to 1944. During that period, the debate on the Jewish Question had not been a genuine one. It had been largely anti-Semitic. Following the war, it seemed that this *faux débat* was going to be replaced by silence.

Sartre broke this post-war silence over the treatment of French Jews under Vichy, and as citizens of the Republic, generally. He paved the way for the introduction of a new vocabulary into the debate on the Jewish Question, even though he may not have possessed that vocabulary himself. Today's observer of the Franco-Jewish intellectual scene may be impressed by its diversity of expression, indeed, by the existence of that very vocabulary Sartre's study heralded.

What is the Jewish Question? How does anti-Semitism come into being? How is it possible to be a Jew today? The simple yet fundamental questions Sartre raises in RQJ, concerning social oppression and the right to group identity, continue to be of relevance to Jews today, and, by implication, to other minority social groups.

Has the situation of Jews in France improved, since Sartre's study was published? Recent political trends suggest that anti-Semitism in France is still prevalent, and that the Jew's ambiguous situation in France remains. Yet Jews in France owe much to Sartre. Lanzmann's article on RQJ, 'La Reconnaissance', is an acknowledgement of this debt. Sartre showed Jews how to extricate themselves from an anti-Semitic perception of themselves. The Jewish reader of RQJ today need no longer ask: what is wrong with me, what is there in me which causes anti-Semitism? RQJ constitutes an *intellectual liberation* of the Jew from his anti-Semitic oppressor. In encouraging the re-creation of a specific Jewish identity, Sartre sweeps away the myth of the guilty Jew, and the need for the individual Jew's self-denial, and ultimate collective demise.

Finally, we have fulfilled our fundamental aim of highlighting a turning point in the debate on the Jewish Question in France: the publication of Jean-Paul Sartre's Réflexions sur la question juive.

The task of examining in detail how that debate has been carried forward by the current generation of Franco-Jewish writers falls within the scope of further study, which we hope this thesis may help to precipitate.

APPENDIX I

*

DÉCLARATION DES DROITS DE L'HOMME
ET DU CITOYEN DU 26 AOÛT 1789

Source: Les Constitutions de la France depuis 1789, edited by Jacques Godechot, (Paris: Garnier-Flammarion, 1979), pp. 33-35.

Les représentants du peuple français, constitués en Assemblée nationale, considérant que l'ignorance, l'oubli ou le mépris des droits de l'homme sont les seules causes des malheurs publics et de la corruption des gouvernements, ont résolu d'exposer, dans une déclaration solennelle, les droits naturels, inaliénables et sacrés de l'homme, afin que cette déclaration, constamment présente à tous les membres du corps social, leur rappelle sans cesse leurs droits et leurs devoirs; afin que les actes du pouvoir législatif et ceux du pouvoir exécutif, pouvant être à chaque instant comparés avec le but de toute institution politique, en soient plus respectés; afin que les réclamations des citoyens, fondées désormais sur des principes simples et incontestables, tournent toujours au maintien de la Constitution et au bonheur de tous. — En conséquence, l'Assemblée nationale reconnaît et déclare, en présence et sous les auspices de l'Être suprême, les droits suivants de l'Homme et du Citoyen.

ARTICLE PREMIER. — Les hommes naissent et demeurent libres et égaux en droits. Les distinctions sociales ne peuvent être fondées que sur l'utilité commune.

ART. 2. — Le but de toute association politique est la conservation des droits naturels et imprescriptibles de l'homme. Ces droits sont la liberté, la propriété, la sûreté et la résistance à l'oppression.

ART. 3. — Le principe de toute souveraineté réside essentiellement dans la Nation. Nul corps, nul individu ne peut exercer d'autorité qui n'en émane expressément.

ART. 4. — La liberté consiste à pouvoir faire tout ce qui ne nuit pas à autrui : ainsi, l'exercice des droits naturels de chaque homme n'a de bornes que celles qui assurent aux autres membres de la société la jouissance de ces mêmes droits. Ces bornes ne peuvent être déterminées que par la loi.

ART. 5. — La loi n'a le droit de défendre que les actions nuisibles à la société. Tout ce qui n'est pas défendu par la loi ne peut être empêché, et nul ne peut être contraint à faire ce qu'elle n'ordonne pas.

ART. 6. — La loi est l'expression de la volonté générale. Tous les citoyens ont droit de concourir personnellement, ou par leurs représentants à sa formation. Elle doit être la même pour tous, soit qu'elle protège, soit qu'elle punisse. Tous les citoyens, étant égaux à ses yeux, sont également admissibles à toutes dignités, places et emplois publics, selon leur capacité et sans autre distinction que celle de leurs vertus et de leurs talents.

ART. 7. — Nul homme ne peut être accusé, arrêté ni détenu que dans les cas déterminés par la loi et selon les formes qu'elle a prescrites. Ceux qui sollicitent, expédient, exécutent ou font exécuter des ordres arbitraires doivent être punis; mais tout citoyen appelé ou saisi en vertu de la loi doit obéir à l'instant : il se rend coupable par la résistance.

ART. 8. — La loi ne doit établir que des peines strictement et évidemment nécessaires, et nul ne peut être puni qu'en vertu d'une loi établie et promulguée antérieurement au délit, et légalement appliquée.

ART. 9. — Tout homme étant présumé innocent jusqu'à ce qu'il ait été déclaré coupable, s'il est jugé indispensable de l'arrêter, toute rigueur qui ne serait pas nécessaire pour s'assurer de sa personne doit être sévèrement réprimée par la loi.

ART. 10. — Nul ne doit être inquiété pour ses opinions, même religieuses, pourvu que leur manifestation ne trouble pas l'ordre public établi par la loi.

ART. 11. — La libre communication des pensées et des opinions est un des droits les plus précieux de l'homme; tout citoyen peut donc parler, écrire, imprimer librement, sauf à répondre de l'abus de cette liberté dans les cas déterminés par la loi.

ART. 12. — La garantie des droits de l'homme et du citoyen nécessite une force publique; cette force est donc instituée pour l'avantage de tous, et non pour l'utilité particulière de ceux à qui elle est confiée.

ART. 13. — Pour l'entretien de la force publique, et pour les dépenses d'administration, une contribution commune est indispensable; elle doit être également répartie entre tous les citoyens, en raison de leurs facultés.

ART. 14. — Les citoyens ont le droit de constater, par eux-mêmes ou par leurs représentants, la nécessité de la contribution publique, de la consentir librement, d'en suivre l'emploi, et d'en déterminer la quotité, l'assiette, le recouvrement et la durée.

ART. 15. — La société a le droit de demander compte à tout agent public de son administration.

ART. 16. — Toute société dans laquelle la garantie des droits n'est pas assurée, ni la séparation des pouvoirs déterminée, n'a point de constitution.

ART. 17. — La propriété étant un droit inviolable et sacré, nul ne peut en être privé, si ce n'est lorsque la nécessité publique, légalement constatée, l'exige évidemment, et sous la condition d'une juste et préalable indemnité.

APPENDIX II

*

EXTRACTS OF VICHY LEGISLATION

Source: Les Juifs sous l'occupation: Recueil des textes officiels français et allemands 1940/1944, (Paris: Association "Les Fils et Filles des Déportés Juifs de France"/Centre de Documentation Juive Contemporaine, 1982 [1945])

LOI du 3 octobre 1940 portant statut des Juifs

Nous, Maréchal de France, chef de l'Etat français,
Le conseil des ministres entendu,

Décrétons :

Art. 1^{er}. — Est regardé comme juif, pour l'application de la présente loi, toute personne issue de trois grands-parents de race juive ou de deux grands-parents de la même race, si son conjoint lui-même est juif.

LOI du 2 juin 1941 remplaçant la loi du 3 octobre 1940 portant statut des Juifs

Nous, Maréchal de France, chef de l'Etat français,
Le conseil des ministres entendu,

Décrétons :

Art. 1^{er}. — Est regardé comme juif :

1^o Celui ou celle, appartenant ou non à une confession quelconque, qui est issu d'au moins trois grands-parents de race juive, ou de deux seulement si son conjoint est lui-même issu de deux grands-parents de race juive.

Est regardé comme étant de race juive le grand-parent ayant appartenu à la religion juive ;

2^o Celui ou celle qui appartient à la religion juive, ou y appartenait le 25 juin 1940, et qui est issu de deux grands-parents de race juive.

**Huitième Ordonnance, du 29 mai 1942,
concernant les mesures contre les Juifs**

En vertu des pleins pouvoirs qui m'ont été conférés par le Führer und Oberster Befehlshaber der Wehrmacht, j'ordonne ce qui suit :

§ 1

Signe distinctif pour les juifs

I. — Il est interdit aux juifs, dès l'âge de six ans révolus, de paraître en public sans porter l'étoile juive.

II. — L'étoile juive est une étoile à six pointes ayant les dimensions de la paume d'une main et les contours noirs. Elle est en tissu jaune et porte, en caractères noirs, l'inscription « Juif ». Elle devra être portée bien visiblement sur le côté gauche de la poitrine, solidement cousue sur le vêtement.

LOI n° 1077 du 11 décembre 1942 relative à l'apposition de la mention « Juif » sur les titres d'identité délivrés aux Israélites français et étrangers

Le chef du Gouvernement,

Vu les actes constitutionnels 12 et 12 bis ;

Le conseil de cabinet entendu,

Décète :

Art. 1^{er}. — Toute personne de race juive aux termes de la loi du 2 juin 1941 est tenue de se présenter, dans un délai d'un mois à dater de la promulgation de la présente loi, au commissariat de police de sa résidence ou, à défaut, à la brigade de gendarmerie pour faire apposer la mention « Juif » sur la carte d'identité dont elle est titulaire ou sur le titre en tenant lieu et sur la carte individuelle d'alimentation.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Where appropriate, the original date of publication is indicated, in square brackets. Items marked 'C.D.J.C.' are to be found among the archives of the Centre de Documentation Contemporaine Juive, Paris. In the case of certain entries, the French, not British, translated edition of a work is given, since our thesis is concerned with the debate on the Jewish Question as it took place in France.

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