



The Last Chance: Roads of Freedom IV

By Jean-Paul Sartre

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The Last Chance brings to an English-speaking audience for the first time the unfinished fourth volume of Jean-Paul Sartre's hugely important Roads of Freedom cycle. Roads of Freedom is generally read and regarded as a trilogy, made up of Age of Reason, The Reprieve and Troubled Sleep. In fact, Sartre began a fourth volume and, although he never finished the work, two chapters, 'Strange Friendship' and 'Last Chance', were published in French by Gallimard after his death. Set in a German prisoner of war camp, these chapters continue the story of Roads of Freedom, exploring the interrelations of politics, responsibility, friendship and freedom – themes central to Sartrean existentialism. The Pleiade edition published by Gallimard included a previously unpublished interview with Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir's account of his plans for the fourth volume, and an introduction to the unfinished fragments by the editor, Michel Contat. All this material is now published here in this, the first English-language edition of a work that makes an enormous contribution to our understanding of Sartre's hugely influential cycle.

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The Last Chance: Roads of Freedom IV By Jean-Paul Sartre Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #1805593 in Books
- Published on: 2009-11-30
- Released on: 2009-11-30
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: .31" h x .70" w x 5.10" l, .59 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 232 pages

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Editorial Review

Review

"The publication of the fourth volume of Sartre's Roads of Freedom is a key contribution to the field of Sartre studies. English-speaking readers will here have access for the first time to the sequel to what they thought was a trilogy. It is an important sequel, as translator Craig Vasey so aptly shows. In these pages, the roads of freedom take an interesting turn, unveiling Sartre's own trajectory with regards to the concepts of freedom and commitment. Vasey's translation makes these texts available with a concern for accuracy and respect for Sartre's words. Further, this book complements Sartre's manuscripts with a scholarly apparatus that makes it more than a mere translation. This is a scholarly edition of the fourth volume that will shed a new light on Sartre's notion of freedom and how it ought to be pursued. A key reading for anyone interested in Sartre as a writer and/or philosopher." — Professor Christine Daigle, Brock University, Canada

"The English speaking world has had to wait nearly thirty years before obtaining access to Jean-Paul Sartre's *The Last Chance: Roads of Freedom IV*. Therefore, Craig Vasey's faithful translation represents an important contribution to a better and more complete understanding of Sartre's fictional world. It will also help English speakers to situate more clearly his literary production in the context of his complete writings and illuminate the directions in which Sartre attempted to find solutions for his tortured protagonists to the vexing problems of freedom, friendship and fate in a bewildering universe dominated by vicious and hostile ideologies." — Adrian van den Hoven, University of Windsor, Canada

Recommended by *New Statesman*.

'With explanatory notes and generous critical padding ... As a continuation of *Roads of Freedom*, Craig Vasey's gritty translation will be of most interest to students of Sartre; it offers only hints at the directions a fourth volume may have taken in story and style, but those familiar with the earlier instalments will find a few surprises among its reassembled shards.' - James Purdon, *The Observer*

'The quality of Sartre's writing, accomanied here by engaging essays and interviews, has never been more evident than in this excellent translation ... fresh, organic, and decidedly human.' - *The Guardian*

'*The Last Chance* is of huge importance to Sartre scholars for the moral, political and philosophical ideas it contains and for what it reveals about Sartre's post-war intellectual dilemmas ... Readers of the first three volumes will be thoroughly entertained by this incomplete but nonetheless revealing and powerful fourth installment.' - *The Philosophers' Magazine*

"Vasey presents the first English translation of the two parts of volume four of French philosopher Sartre's (1905-80) trilogy *Roads of Freedom*, and that is only the beginning of the confusion. The title *Les Chemins de la liberte* applies to the series of novels as a whole, he explains, but each of the five novels has its own title. These two final ones, *Strange Friendship* and *The Last Chance*, were published in 1981 by Editions Gallimard, Paris. Introductory material includes a 1945 interview, and comments Sartre made on the novels. The text is followed by critical essays on the two novels and the series." -Eithne O'Leayne, *BOOK NEWS, Inc.*

“The publication of the fourth volume of Sartre’s Roads of Freedom is a key contribution to the field of Sartre studies. English-speaking readers will here have access for the first time to the sequel to what they thought was a trilogy. It is an important sequel, as translator Craig Vasey so aptly shows. In these pages, the roads of freedom take an interesting turn, unveiling Sartre’s own trajectory with regards to the concepts of freedom and commitment. Vasey’s translation makes these texts available with a concern for accuracy and respect for Sartre’s words. Further, this book complements Sartre’s manuscripts with a scholarly apparatus that makes it more than a mere translation. This is a scholarly edition of the fourth volume that will shed a new light on Sartre’s notion of freedom and how it ought to be pursued. A key reading for anyone interested in Sartre as a writer and/or philosopher.” – Professor Christine Daigle, Brock University, Canada

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About the Author

Jean-Paul Sartre (1904-1980) was a French existentialist philosopher, dramatist, novelist and critic. He is widely regarded as one of the most important and influential European thinkers of the twentieth century. Craig Vasey is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Mary Washington, USA.

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