



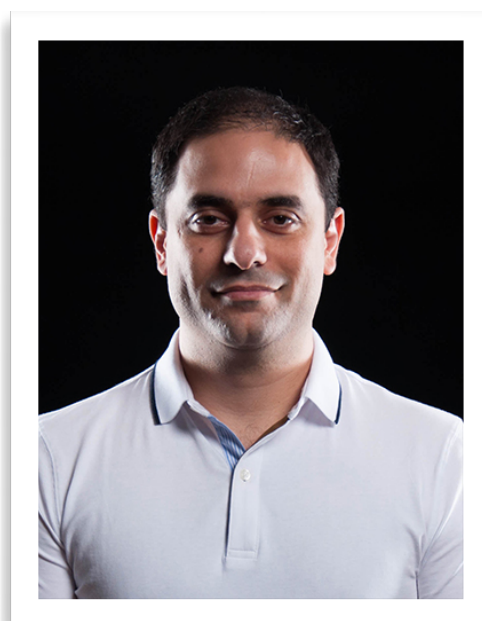
UCDAVIS

ECS 88 – Winter 2026

[Week 6]

EXISTENTIALISM

Mohammad Sadoghi



Mohammad Sadoghi
Exploratory Systems Lab
Department of Computer Science



Subjectivity is Truth

Existence

inwardness
(faith)

Essence

Principle of
Sufficient Reason

Subjective
(belief)

Why Vote?

Objective
(belief)

thrown absurdity anxiety

Lived
Forward

Radical Freedom
(condemned)

Understood
Backward

Authenticity

Good Faith
(creating values)

Leap of Faith
(choice)

Bad Faith
(conforming to values)

Meaning

suicide

to be lived

Responsibility

not to be solved

groundlessness

Human world
(intersubjectivity)

It is perfectly true, as the philosophers say, that **life** must be **understood backwards**.
But they forget the other proposition, that it must be **lived forwards**.

It is with **subjectivity** that **Christianity** is concerned,
and it is only in subjectivity that its **truth exists**, if it exists at all;
objectively, Christianity has **absolutely no existence**.

Subjectivity is truth.

An **objective uncertainty**, held fast in an appropriation-process of
the most **passionate inwardness**, is the truth, the highest truth there is for an existing person.

Having to exist with the help of the **guidance of pure thinking** is
like having to travel in Denmark with a small map of Europe
on which Denmark is no larger than a steel pin-point – indeed, even more impossible.

Faith begins precisely where **thinking** leaves off.

Søren Kierkegaard

[Journals and Notebooks, p. 179; Concluding Unscientific Postscript, p. 116, p. 203, p. 182, p. 310; Fear and Trembling, p. 82]

Life is not a problem to be **solved** but a mystery to be **lived**.

Gabriel Marcel
[The Mystery of Being, p. 117]

Existence precedes **essence**.

In **choosing** for himself he **chooses** for all men.

If a voice speaks to me, it is still **I myself** who must **decide** whether the voice is or is not that of an angel.

Man is **condemned** to be **free**; condemned, because he did not create himself, yet is nevertheless at liberty, and from the moment that he is **thrown** into this world he is **responsible** for everything he does.

What is more, to say that we **invent values** means neither more nor less than this: life has **no meaning** a priori ... value is nothing more than the meaning that we **give** it.

By subjectivity we also mean the **intersubjectivity** which constitutes the **human world**.

Jean-Paul Sartre
[Existentialism Is a Humanism, p. 22, p. 24, p. 29, p. 30, p. 43, p. 23]

The waiter in the café engages in a **play-acting**; his movement is ‘a little too precise, a little too rapid’...
he is in **bad faith** because he attempts to be nothing but a waiter,
denying the freedom that makes him more than that.

Freedom is what we do with what is done to us.

To **be man** is to reach toward **being God**. Or, if you prefer, man fundamentally is the **desire to be God**.

Jean-Paul Sartre
[Being and Nothingness, p. 59, p. 485, p. 566]

One is not **born**, but rather **becomes**, a **woman**.

Simone de Beauvoir
[The Second Sex, p. 283]

There is but one **truly serious philosophical problem**, and that is **suicide**.
Judging whether life is or is not **worth living** amounts to
answering the fundamental question of philosophy.

The **absurd** is born of the confrontation between the **human need** and
the unreasonable **silence** of the world.

The **struggle** itself toward the heights is enough to fill a man's heart.
One must imagine Sisyphus **happy**.

Albert Camus
[The Myth of Sisyphus, p. 3, p. 28, p. 123]

Man is always more than he **knows** of himself.

Karl Jaspers
[Philosophy of Existence, p. 71]