THE ANALYIS OF AUTHENTICITY IN JEAN-PAUL SARTRE'S PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract: The definition of authenticity is still debated among philosophers and remains mainly obscure in the views of the majority of people. Our culture, for example, has believed for generations that one should "be oneself," an imperative known as authenticity. The term 'authenticity' refers to an agreement between how something appears and what it actually is in all its applications. It implies something true and permanent. Furthermore, the ideal of "being oneself" necessitates the possibility of being "not oneself," which makes it difficult to imagine how any individual could be anything other than who they are. Jean-Paul Sartre describes authenticity as an ideal ontological state. It is an approach to the predicament and absurdity of human existence as political, social, and metaphysical beings. At the core of Sartre's conception of freedom is the notion of 'radical freedom,' which holds that humans have the capacity to choose whatever life they wish to live, but such a choice is equally forcefully and tied to responsibility. Humans must be able to bear the consequences of their choices in order to be authentically free. Sartre finds such freedom both liberating and frightening. This freedom places upon us the value of introspection, personal choices and the potentially transformative power of accepting the right to live as we choose. This study analyses the ethical relevance of Sartre's concept of authenticity. We argue that, for authenticity in people's lives, freedom in their daily endeavors and solidarity in their social and personal lives are indispensable. We pursue this inquiry by distinguishing between authenticity and concepts such as bad faith. We maintain that authenticity must account for personal liberation from the entanglement of societal norms and conventions that may sometimes limit our human potential and creativity. Accordingly, we contend that we can be ourselves by acting in accordance with our necessary dispositions in a given context.

Keywords: Authenticity, Freedom, Existentialism, Phenomenological, Ontological, Bad Faith, Moral Relativism

Introduction

Sartre explicates authenticity via negative. He employs ideas that are opposed to authenticity to explain authenticity. In this, he draws inspiration from the works of his predecessors, particularly Martin Heidegger. Rather than discussing authenticity, he talks about what is inauthentic by seeing through his existentialist philosopher predecessors. Consequently, comprehending the notion of authenticity put forward by Sartre requires comprehending the ideas he raises about the inauthentic human, built through his predecessors. Bad faith, which encompasses other related notions like freedom and responsibility, is one of Sartre's most commonly used concepts.

1.1. The Notion of Authenticity

Authenticity is a commonly used notion. However, interrogating through its exact meaning is not the case. While this notion may have different meaning depending on one's point of view, existentialist's philosophy in general, and Sartre philosophy in particular has a specific meaning, reflecting the elements of autonomy, freedom, will to power, and personal fulfillment. Accounts of existentialists perspectives in the 19th and 20th century, and contemporary philosophers will be treated first as the basis to understand Sartre.

Existentialists Perspectives

The existentialists, notably Friedrich Nietzsche and Søren Kierkegaard in the 19th century; and Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone De Beauvoir, and Albert Camus in the 20th century, did not see the process of realizing one's human freedom and taking ownership of oneself as an easy task. Rather, human agents were seen as being condemned to freedom, and the only practical way to deal with this human fate was to make every effort to live authentically as much as possible. Here below are some few chosen existentialist philosophers and their views on authenticity.

Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855)

Kierkegaard's philosophy emphasizes the importance of choice, which is a notable characteristic of existential philosophy. His use of *Either/Or¹,* for example, highlights the critical choice between authentic life (the oral and religious lifestyle he advocates) and inauthentic lifestyle. This is not just a choice; the decision that one makes will shape their identity-who they really want to be. Kierkegaard advocates an authentic and ideal way of living which transcends the ethical mode of existence. He asserts that, to achieve this goal of authenticity, one must risk paradoxically becoming oneself in order to fully become oneself, requiring self-transcendence of religious conversion.[2]

Kierkegaard's critical stance toward a particular social reality and an essentialist trend in philosophical thought is linked to his writings on authenticity and his claim that each of us must "become what one is."[3] Kierkegaard asserts that the quest for authenticity begins with an existential crisis, particularly when we are forced to deal with outside forces that encourage us to lead inauthentic lives.[4] These difficulties cause us to examine our true selves and consider what we "really" want to become or be.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

Nietzsche's idea of authenticity portrays that authenticity is becoming who or what you are. As Hanne emphasizes, according to Nietzsche, "the heroism of authenticity lies in the effort to surmount ourselves, to become masters of our lives. We have to conquer many inclinations in ourselves that make us slaves: narrow-minded creatures full of "ressentiment" towards those that dominate us. We need the courage to follow the will to power that drives us to reign, to strive for domination of weaker souls…"[5] It is ultimately up to us to spend our lives in a way that brings us satisfaction. Inauthenticity can lead us to follow false authorities.

According to Nietzsche, authenticity is heroic when it aims to overcome oneself and take control of one's life. We must overcome numerous tendencies within ourselves that turn us into slaves: we are conceited beings who harbor "resentment" toward those who rule over us. We need to have the courage to follow our will to power that drives us to rule and to follow our desire for dominance over weaker souls, as Nietzsche depicts in *Zarathustra.* In the end, how we choose to live our lives in a way that fulfills us is up to us and us alone. The temptation to follow false authorities is enticed by inauthenticity. In *Schopenhauer as educator,* Nietzsche asserts quite forcefully:

No one can build for you the bridge upon which you alone must cross the stream of life, no one but you alone. To be sure, there are countless paths and bridges and demigods that want to carry you through this stream, but only at the price of yourself; you would pawn and lose yourself. There is one single path in this world on which no one but you can travel. Where does it lead? Do not ask, just take it.[6]

Nietzsche is well aware of how difficult it can be to live authentically and give our characters a distinct style. Therefore, according to his philosophy, "authenticity is not a manifestly viable norm, but rather a kind of regulative

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[1] Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling Repetition*, ed. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, trans. Edna H. Hong (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983), 38,57, 71, 73.

[2] Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling Repetition,* 49, 56, 74.

[3] Søren, Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to "Philosophical Fragments", Vol. 1*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992 [1846], p. 130.

[4] Søren, Kierkegaard, *The Present Age: And of the Difference between a Genius and an Apostle.* New York: Harper & Row, 1962, p. 65

[5] Hanne Laceulle, "Authenticity," JSTOR (Transcript Verlag, 2018), 199. https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv8d5tp1.10.

[6] Friedrich, Nietzsche. *The Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche. Vol. 2, Unfashionable Observations. 2*. Translated by Richard T Gray Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press; Cambridge, 1998, p. 174.

and corrective ideal"[7] Being who we are is an ongoing process as a normative moral ideal. We will encounter new situations throughout our lives that require us to assess who we are and possibly revise our goals.

Martin Heidegger (1889-1976)

Martin Heidegger's idea of authenticity can be traced from his conception of Being-onto-death. Humans being aware of their finitude causes a deep existential anxiety that makes them want to run away from it. Heidegger refers to this as *Das Man* or "They," the impersonal, anonymous domain of social convention, as the usual means of escape."[8] The result of this immersion is inauthenticity and self-loss, or the inability to fulfill our own responsibilities for our own existence in the face of death. Conversely, Heidegger thought that being authentic requires to bravery face this inescapable aspect of being human.[9]

1.1.1. Contemporary Philosophers Perspectives

Gerald Dworkin in *The Theory and Practice of Autonomy* (1988) creates a novel understanding of autonomy. Nowadays, the concept of autonomy has become essential to political and moral philosophy, especially in the field of practical ethics. Dworkin explores the meaning and nature of autonomy and applies the idea to a number of real-world moral dilemmas, including paternalism, entrapment by law enforcement, and proxy consent in the context of medicine. In the book, he asserts that being authentic means that, persons define their nature and take responsibility for the person they are.[10]

The possession and effective use of a "repertory of coordinated skills that make up autonomy competency" as well as "the collocation of attributes that emerges as a person successfully exercises autonomy competency," according to Diana Meyers, are prerequisites for autonomy.[11] The focus is still in autonomy requiring the authenticity of self, while the definition of authenticity is very vague: "Action spring from the depths of the individual's being; when he or she does what makes sense in terms of his or her own identity;" not so influenced by others that her choices seem a committee project; and lives in harmony with her convictions and inclinations." All these are signs of authenticity.[12]

Charles Guignon, *On Being Authentic* identifies two primary components to the project of authenticity. He contends that, in order to connect with your true, inner self, you must first take the effort to untangle yourself from the web of social gaming and follow the herd. This work necessitates a deep inward turn, regardless of whether self-examination is referred to as "introspection," "self-reflection," or "meditation." The first part of the authentic endeavor is predicated on the idea that each of us possesses a substantial self, endowed with qualities that are both uniquely our own and immensely significant as a source of guidance for our lives. The second part of the authenticity project is living in a manner that expresses the genuine self you came to know via the process of inward-turning. It is assumed that social life is inherently false or dishonest, which is why it is so necessary to know who you are and to be that person in whatever you do.[13]

In *The Ethics of Authenticity*, philosopher Charles Taylor explains this concept in further detail. Taylor notes that in ancient, premodern societies, people typically discovered their identities by learning how to fit into the larger cosmic order and the context of society.[14] Discovering one's position in such a setting offered the person a sense of what is worthwhile to pursue in life. It also provided a foundation for understanding what one ought to do and how one was doing.

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[7] Jacob, Golomb, *In Search of Authenticity*. Routledge, 2012, p. 81.

[8] Heidegger. *Being and Time*, p. 127.
[9] Heidegger. *Being and Time*, p. 254
[10] Gerald Dworkin, *The Theory and Practice of Autonomy* (Cambridge University Press, 1988), 20, 108.
[11] Diana T Meyers, *Self, Society, and Personal Choice* (New York: Colombia University Press, 1989), 92.
[12] Diana T Meyers, *Self, Society, and Personal Choice*, 8.
[13] Charles Guignon, *On Being Authentic* (London; New York: Routledge, 2004), 75.
[14] Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1991), 3.

With the emergence of the contemporary worldview, the previous framework for judging behavior has given way to a perspective where personal accountability and career decision-making are seen as essential. In today's world, finding one's path in life does not necessarily mean understanding one's birth circumstances or place in it. Instead, it means learning about the opportunities that exist, understanding one's own needs, interests, and desires, and selecting a course based on these factors. With this philosophy of life, it is not about "doing what one does" or "following the flow," but rather about understanding what you want and being able to make your own decisions.[15] We agree with Guignon, who asserts that Being independent, self-sufficient, and in charge of one's own destiny is the main challenge facing modernity. The dignity that comes from being a boundless, masterful, autonomous self is what we aspire to in life, not honor as it has been traditionally understood.[16]

Charles Taylor in the *Ethics of Authenticity* encourages us to address the moral and political dilemmas of our day and to fully embrace the difficulties of modernity, while some criticize the fall of Western culture into relativism and nihilism and others hail the trend as a freeing form of development. The idea of authenticity and self-fulfillment, which seems to undermine the entire legacy of shared values and social engagement, is thought to be at the core of the modern malaise. Despite his awareness of the risks, Taylor is slower than others to discount modernity's quest for self-realization. He suggests that cultural pessimism be put on hold.

1.2. Jean-Paul Sartre's Account on Authenticity

Authenticity is the recurrent theme in Jean-Paul Sartre's philosophical writings. When discussing existence in the human world, in particular Sartre makes references to the idea of "authenticity." According to him, authenticity is summed up as one's way of living. He explains this by citing the concept of consciousness and asserting that man is nothing else but what he makes of himself. According to Sartre, consciousness is a state of existence where there is a separation between the self and the object. Having a healthy sense of self and other is necessary for living an authentic life. He believed that accepting responsibility for one's decisions and deeds and the idea of freedom were essential components of authenticity. He held that all humans are inherently free, and that this freedom entails a responsibility. Authenticity is therefore, accepting full responsibility for one's decisions and embracing one's freedom rather than fleeing responsibility or living in a bad faith (*mauvaise foi*).

1.2.1. Authenticity and Human Condition

In his earlier writings, Sartre saw human relationships as intolerable; but in his later works, he defines authenticity in terms of others and the respect for their freedom. Beginning from his early work in *The War Diaries* (1939-40). Jean-Paul Sartre asserts that, authenticity "…can be understood only in terms of the human condition, that condition of being thrown into situation."[17]

He goes on to say…

> To be authentic is to realize fully one's being-in-situation, whatever this situation may happen to be: with a profound awareness that, through the authentic realization of the being-in-situation, one brings to plenary existence the situation on the one hand and human reality on the other. This presupposes a patient study of what the situation requires, and then a way of throwing oneself into it and determining oneself to 'be-for' this situation.[18]

His perception of the human condition, his phenomenological ontology, his explanation of the human project, and the manner in which human reality confronts its condition are all closely related to his understanding of authenticity. Freedom characterizes human reality, which implies that it is never anything without motivating itself to be it. It is nothing more than a gratuitous void that falls into the world without foundation. Mankind's reality, numbed by this gratuitousness, longs to be its own foundation. Throughout all of human reality's undertakings, he seeks, not to preserve himself . . . nor to increase himself, but to found himself.

[15] Charles Guignon, *On Being Authentic,* 76-77.
[16] Charles Guignon, *On Being Authentic,* 77.
[17] Jean-Paul Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40*, trans. Quintin Hoare (New York: Verso, 1999), 53.
[18] Jean-Paul Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40*, 54.

The search for a foundation requires that, "one assume that which one found." Assumption precedes foundation, as intuition which reveals what one is founding. One assumes in order to make "use of what one is assuming." Therefore, one assumes "in order to be found." And to assume here means to "adopt as one's own, to claim responsibility."[19]

Sartre further asserts that, "assumption presents itself as a value of authenticity which bids human freedom to do what it is doing. Consciousness self-motivates itself. All that happens to it must happen by its own doing."[20] Here it implies one is the author of his own choices. Therefore, the first assumption that human reality can and must make, when looking back on itself, is the assumption of its freedom expressed by the formula "*one never has any excuse.*"[21] He goes on to say that, "it is a question not just of recognizing that one has no excuse, but also of willing it. One bears the responsibility of everything."[22] "But if I admit and wish never to have any excuse, my freedom becomes mine, I assume forever that terrible responsibility."[23]

To be authentic for Sartre, therefore, "is to realize fully one's being in situation, whatever this situation may happen to be: with a profound awareness that, through authentic realization of the being in situation one brings to plenary existence the situation on the one hand and human reality on the other."[24] In simple words we may say that, it is to realize and take responsibility for, one's being in a situation, whichever it may be.

1.2.2. Authenticity and Being for Itself

Sartre's idea of being-for-itself (*être-pour-soi*), which relates to the ability of humans to be self-aware and self-reflective, is closely related to his concept of authenticity. In order to be authentic, one must reject preconceived roles or identities that are imposed by others or society and instead participate in a continuous process of self-examination and self-creation. Being authentic necessitates a constant struggle with one's freedom and a readiness to consciously mold one's life via decisions.

Human reality is considered "a being which is what it is not and which is not what it is."[25] The terms consciousness[26] and being-for-itself[27] (*I'etre pour-soi*), which Sartre frequently used interchangeably with the term "human reality," are usually defined in the same way. Put another way, being for-itself, or human reality as for-itself, cannot be said to have identity in direct opposition to being in-itself as "*être en-soi.*" It is not sufficient to claim that being-for-itself is just what it is,[28] like, say, a chair. Human reality is more of a lack "for itself," and… "what it lacks is a certain coincidence with itself."[29]

1.2.3. Authenticity and Anguish

When one realizes they are radically free and have no set purpose or meaning in life, they may experience existential anguish. Being authentic means facing this anguish. When forced to make decisions without external guidance or support becomes painful.

According to Sartre, what makes each human unique is their capacity for freedom, which is expressed to us in anguish. He states that "anguish is the reflective apprehension of freedom by itself"[30] and that "there is no difference between the being of a man and his being free."[31] So, in a way, we are anguish, but as humans, we want

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[19] Jean-Paul Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40*, 112-113.

[20] Jean-Paul Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40*, 113.

[21] Jean-Paul Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40*, 113.

[22] Jean-Paul Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40,* 113.

[23] Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40*, 114

[24] Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40*, 54

[25] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), 63,58.

[26] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 70.

[27] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* lxv.

[28] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 74.

[29] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 95.

[30] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 39.

[31] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 25.

to escape this anguish. Attempting "to apprehend ourselves from without as an Other or as a thing"[32] is another method we try to escape this anguish. "The flight from anguish is only a mode of becoming conscious of anguish... anguish can be neither hidden nor avoided."[33] It is deceitful to believe that I can hide my anguish, or even try to do so. This endeavor aims to transform my identity as a human being into an object, a "thing."

1.2.4. Authenticity has no Middle Ground

Authenticity, Sartre asserts that, "is achieved as a group, one either is or is not authentic.[34] There is no middle estate, meaning it cannot be divided. But that does not imply that when one attains authenticity, one has it once and for all. Because human reality is free, the present has no purchase on the future nor the past on the present. Every situation is new and requires "new authenticity to be invented."[35] Sartre finishes by saying, the desire to acquire authenticity is the desire to see things more clearly and not to lose that clarity.[36] And this desire he insists is something better than nothing.

1.2.5. Authenticity as True Fidelity

Authenticity involves being true to ourselves, living our freedom and not refusing our human reality. Sartre asserts that, "authenticity requires suffering, out of fidelity to oneself and fidelity to the world. For we are free to suffer and free not to suffer. We are responsible for the form and intensity of our suffering."[37]

The 'Faith' of 'Bad Faith,'[38]Sartre asserts that the fundamental reason why bad faith is a "true problem" is because it is "faith." If "certainty" is to be understood as "the intuitive possession of the object," then we are not dealing with certainty here.[39] On the other hand, bad faith is belief if "belief" is defined as "the adherence of being to its object" when the object is either "not given" or "given indistinctly." This is because the core issue with bad faith is a belief issue.[40] Since we are aware of our attempts to lie, our question about whether bad faith can include lying to oneself then becomes, in essence, a question about whether and how it is conceivable to believe (have faith in) one's own would-be falsehoods to oneself.

And Sartre now informs us that bad faith chooses carefully what exactly its conditions are in both its initial purpose and its entry "into the world." As it understands that "faith is decision and that after each intuition, it must decide and will what it is."[41] It therefore puts itself forward "in the firm resolution not to demand too much, to count itself satisfied when it is barely persuaded, to force itself in decisions to adhere to uncertain truths."[42] This indicates that even when bad faith recognizes the evidence, it accepts beforehand that the evidence will not fulfill it.

1.3. Bad Faith

Sartre's notion of bad faith provides us with an exciting and highly efficient explanation of how people deceive themselves. According to Sartre, the fact that we may always choose to be someone other than who we are presents us with the opportunity and temptation to lie to ourselves. This freedom, however, can also be an immense burden since it can cause us to feel both at comfort and anxious. Humans have a dual nature of freedom known as transcendence-facticity in Sartre's language. This metastable concept is one of the basic instruments of bad faith but not the only one as Sartre asserts.[43]

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[32] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 43.
[33] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 43.
[34] Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40*, 219.
[35] Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40*, 196.
[36] Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40*, 221.
[37] Sartre, *War Diaries: Notebook from a Phoney War 1939-40*, 51.
[38] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 67-70.
[39] Ronald Santoni, *Bad Faith Good Faith and Authenticity in Sartre's Early Philosophy* (Temple University Press, 2010), 38.
[40] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), 67.
[41] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 68.
[42] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 68.
[43] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* trans. Hazel Barnes (New York: Philosophical Library, 1956), 144.

Humans are not fundamentally transcendent, unlike other divine entities. They possess bodies and some "factual" features that are unchangeable and not entirely within their control. This is our "Facticity," a phrase that Sartre once more appropriates from Heidegger. Heidegger uses the term "facticity" strictly to describe our thrownness, or the reality that we exist even though we have not made the decision to do so.[44] Sartre's contribution is that he expands Heidegger's application of the phrase. According to Sartre, our facticity includes not only the fact that we were cast into this world but also the manner in which we were cast, being middle-class, white, male, and medium-height; in other words, everything about us that we have not chosen or are unable to change.[45] What acts as bad faith is "to affirm their identity while preserving their differences" this "affirms facticity as being transcendence and transcendence as being facticity."[46]

Sartre defines bad faith as lying to oneself, and he wants us to distinguish it from lying in general.[47] He further asserts that we can agree that lying is a negative attitude. However, this negation solely targets the transcendent; it has no bearing on consciousness per such. The fundamental idea of a lie is that the person telling it truly possesses all of the information about the truth they are concealing. Men do not tell lies about things they do not know or are ignorant of.[48] Of course, acting in bad faith conceals or distorts the truth, just like lying to oneself. "What changes everything is that in bad faith it is from myself that I conceal the truth."[49]

The concept of bad faith, according to Sartre takes four forms as explained here below:

1.3.1. Belief in Absolutes and Determinism

Belief in determinism is one type of bad faith. Some people attempt to deny the existence of human freedom because they are terrified by its truth. As a result, they create the determinism theory. The conviction in human nature is one of the examples. It is a kind of determinism where man tries to deny the existence of his freedom. Rather than accepting the existence of freedom and taking responsibility for who they are and what they do, they blame it on human nature and absolute powers. Sartre however, rejected this idea and denied the existence of absolutes.[50]

1.3.2. Spirit of Seriousness (l'esprit de sérieux)

This is bad faith that "views man as an object and subordinates him to the world. It thinks of values as having an absolute existence independent of human-reality."[51] These fits with Plato's rational worldview, according to which man's essences exist before him. When someone hides behind this kind of bad faith, they believe that nature has already made all of the moral decisions for them, saving them from the pain and burden of making their own.

1.3.3. Adherence to Social Norms

This type of bad faith involves passively repeating the same behavioral pattern over and over again in an effort to fit in or follow social norms. This is what a philosopher Martin Heidegger refers to as kind of living "inauthentic life."

1.3.4. Refusal to Make Decision

Sometimes we are faced with circumstances that call for us to make a decision right away. In these cases, we often try to avoid or back off making this decision by convincing ourselves that things are not actually as bad as we believe they are.[52] This is especially true when the decision would have an unpleasant outcome. Since the act of not making a decision is a decision in and of itself, acting in this way is self-deception.

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[44] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson (Malden Blackwell, 2013), 212.

[45] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness*,169, 652, 687.

[46] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 56.

[47] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 48.

[48] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 48.

[49] Ronald Santoni, *Bad Faith Good Faith and Authenticity in Sartre's Early Philosophy* (Temple University Press, 2010), 29.

[50] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 39.

[51] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 831.

[52] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness,* 142, 157.

1.4. Authentic Existence in Sartre

Man is condemned to freedom according to Sartre. Accordingly, man should act and create values for himself for action that enables him to live. Therefore, since man is free, then, he must take responsibility for the actions he performs.

According to Sartre, freedom is unavoidable or inescapable. It is a real aspect of the human experience. Freedom's inescapability does not imply that every person can make any decision they like. Because it defines who we are, freedom, according to Sartre, cannot be avoided. This unavoidability or inescapability implies that we must exercise responsibility in our decision-making. Even when we choose not to make a decision, we are still exercising our freedom and unintentionally making a choice; conversely, when we choose not to make decisions, we have made a decision.

Again, the concept of freedom necessitates the concept of responsibility. We are responsible for our choices if we have the freedom to make them in life. Therefore, the potential for a real or authentic human life is tied to freedom. Sartre asserts that the manner of choosing, rather than the what is chosen, is what matters. Therefore, accepting the responsibility that comes with freedom and realizing its inescapability are necessary for living an authentic life. Since freedom is linked to responsibility, it is impossible to avoid anguish that may result from freedom's inescapability. So, in order to be free and take action, anguish is necessary.[53] This anguish as contended by Copleston, is akin to the state of mind experienced by a man standing on the precipice who feels both attracted and repelled by the abyss.[54]

As part of our existential situation, living authentically poses challenges. It is realizing that we have to always make choices and be responsible for them. To further this thought, three important points are explained here below:

1.4.1. Anguish

To existentialists, of which Sartre is a leading protagonist, man's anguish is the result of a committed man realizing that he is not only the person he chooses to be, but also a legislator who chooses what humanity as a whole should be. Such a man is compelled to face his immense and complete responsibility.[55] Accordingly, Sartre maintains that awareness of man's total freedom and responsibility is accompanied by anguish. When man realizes that he has absolute freedom to lead his life and that there is a possibility of failure sometimes, he falls into agony. Everybody feels this agony because it is a fundamental aspect of being human according to the existentialists.

1.4.2. Abandonment

Sartre explains abandonment as: "we ourselves, decide our being."[56] Sartre further asserts;

> …there is no determinism – man is free, man is freedom. Nor, on the other hand, if God does not exist, are we provided with any values or commands that could legitimize our behavior. Thus, we have neither behind us, nor before us in a luminous realm of values, any means of justification or excuse. – We are left alone, without excuse. That is what I mean when I say that 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.[57]

Therefore, each person is left alone to act. There is nothing to pressure him to do so, for his he condemned to be free and responsible for it.

1.4.3. Despair

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[53] Frederick C Copleston, *19th and 20th Century French Philosophy* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, Plc, 2003),358.
[54] Frederick C Copleston, *19th and 20th Century French Philosophy* 358.
[55] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, 25.
[56] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, p. 34.
[57] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, 31.

As for despair, Sartre argues that despair means: "we limit ourselves to a reliance upon that which is within our wills, or within the sum of the probabilities which render our action feasible. Whenever one wills anything, there are always these elements of probability."[58] In other words, probabilities rather than necessary laws characterize human agency because no one can foresee with certainty how an agent will act. Because of the uncertainty associated with this state, it is called "despair."

1.5. Evaluation of Sartre's Concept of Authenticity

Sartre's idea of authenticity, which emphasizes individual responsibility and the necessity of acting in line with one's own ideals, has important implications for ethics. An authentic person accepts responsibility for their decisions and acts, which holds them accountable for the results, including how their choices affect other people and the wider community.

Because people may have conflicting and differing ideas about what is "right" and "wrong" when it comes to the same issue, Sartre's preference for the individualized ethical system could result in a moral truce. Needless to say, Sartre would have to offer some advice on how to ease this probable tension.

His emphasis on personal responsibility, can also be detrimental since it can breed moral relativism or a lack of empathy for other people. However, we contend that, Sartre's authenticity does not mean total disregard for other people and that, exactly because they are true to themselves and their values, authentic people are more inclined to be concerned about other people. As Sartre asserts that being authentic means facing one's own anxieties and limits, therefore, it can increase empathy and compassion for other people too.

In a world where social conventions, cultural narratives, and outside forces frequently prescribe how people should spend their lives, Sartre's idea of authenticity challenges people to reconsider these present routes. It emphasizes how crucial it is to constantly exercise one's independence, take personal responsibility and be self-aware in order to shape one's identity and existence.

Despite criticisms, Sartre's idea still resonates with people who want to live a more meaningful and self-determined existence free from the restrictions of bad faith and social pressure. This in turn will make people happy in their lives and face challenges especially in areas that require them to act authentically by being true to themselves.

Conclusion

Authenticity is a recurring issue in Jean-Paul Sartre's philosophical writings. While discussing life in the human world, Sartre makes reference to the idea of "authenticity." As we have analyzed, according to him, being authentic is summed up as how one is living. Authenticity is living a life consistent with one's personal endeavors. Although it is highly regarded, it is a manner of being that is difficult to attain and uphold due to external pressures from society and individual fears and anxieties. Living in bad faith is contrary with authentic living.

Most of existentialist's views prioritize individualistic self-fulfillment and avoid imposing limits to the personal strong views on autonomy's fundamental features. They challenge the whole idea of objective truth. They both maintain that human agents are condemned to freedom, and the only practical way to deal with this fate is to make every effort to live as authentically as possible. The existentialist perspective on authenticity is particularly important to this study. Identifying existential vulnerability as a key aspect of authenticity suggests that developing a positive attitude towards it might be an essential part of self-realization.

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[58] Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, 35.

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