

# THE NOTION OF AUTHENTICITY AND JEAN PAUL SARTRE: A CONCEPTUAL INQUIRY

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## Abstract:

The paper attempts to assess Sartre's concept of Authenticity to reconstruct it from a more contemporary perspective of the political ethics of Authenticity. Authenticity existentially means self-critiquing, intimate relationship with oneself which places the self in a radically negotiable distance from society, Nature and the cosmic beyond. Existential thinkers from Soren Kierkegaard to Nietzsche, Jaspers, Buber, Heidegger, and Sartre discuss authenticity as the deciding factor of the existential and moral particular of experiences. The existentialist ideal of Authenticity adds more social and cross-cultural meaning when it comes to the relatively new, contemporary perspective of the political ethics of Authenticity. The study aims at the reconstructive mapping of the thickening of the concept of authenticity also in the later Sartre, which radically negotiates the concept of freedom. Therefore, the present paper makes an effort to look into the conceptual swing of the Sartrean existentialist ideal of authenticity from the point of view of the argument of the political ethics of authenticity, as it is necessitated by the inevitability of a cultural/praxeological critique.

**Key Words:** *Existentialism, Authenticity, Being, Nothingness, Bad Faith, Collective Authenticity, Political – Ethical Authenticity, Praxeology.*

## Introduction:

Existentialism as a philosophical movement was one of the major inspiring and popular traditions of Western Continental Tradition of Philosophy. Lucien Goldmann defines it as follows, 'Existentialism is a philosophical movement which attempts to explain Being or Totality from the perspective of the individual, with the consequence that the individual's consciousness is privileged and reality subjectivized'<sup>1</sup>.

Jean Paul Sartre is considered as the most noted Existentialist Thinker who popularized the Existentialist Movement both philosophically and literally in the Post Second World War Period of Western Philosophy. As a philosopher, playwright, author, and novelist, he is best known as one of the leading founders of Existentialism (atheistic) in the 20th century. Herbert Marcuse passionately shares with us that 'In his famous preface to Fanon's *Wretched of the Earth*, in his declarations against the colonial wars in Vietnam and San Domingo, Sartre has fulfilled his promise of a 'morality of liberation'. If, as he fears, he has become an institution in which conscience and truth have found refuge'<sup>2</sup>.

Being a philosopher, Sartre has given a clear and a multidimensional view on specific areas like Phenomenology, Existentialism and Humanism with a view to establish or determine the meaning of existence. Philosophy of J. P. Sartre approaches radical creativity and guiding vision of an authentic life. His Philosophy makes a revolutionary approach to the modern civilization and also of a meaningful life. The creative and ideological legacy of his philosophy are rationally portrayed by his dialogical gist in the form of philosophical concepts, such as, the concepts of Anguish, Bad Faith and Authenticity, which are unique in the domain of philosophy.

Sartre makes use of the Phenomenological Method, which portrays an unprejudiced and a very careful description of the phenomena of conscious experience. After having inherited the philosophical heritage of Phenomenological Method from the German philosopher Edmund Husserl, Sartre used it with creative skill in three successive and remarkable publications viz.: *Esquisse d'une théorie des émotions* (1939; *Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions*), *L'Imaginaire: Psychologie phénoménologique de l'imagination* (1940; *The Psychology of Imagination*) and *L'Imagination* (1936; *Imagination: A Psychological Critique*). But it was above all in *L'Être et le néant* (1943; *Being and Nothingness*) that Sartre established himself as a philosopher of remarkable depth and originality. Sartre regards human consciousness, or no-thingness (*néant*), in opposition to being, or thingness (*être*). Consciousness is not-matter and by the same token successfully avoided all determinism. The message, it contains with all the implications is a positive one; yet the constant reminder that human endeavour is and remains useless makes the book historical as well.

As mentioned above, Sartre's philosophy started with the phenomenology of Husserl and then moved on to the Existentialism of Heidegger. Sartre's main contribution in the form of writings can be divided into two major phases, The early or pre-war and late or post-war. Writings of pre-war reflect his philosophical contribution. In pre-war works like *Nausea* (*La Nausée*, 1938) and *Being*

<sup>1</sup> Goldmann Lucien et al., *Towards a New Philosophy*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977). xiii).

<sup>2</sup> Herbert Marcuse, *From Luther to Popper*, Trans. Joris De Bres, (London: Verso 1983)1988. p. 190.

and *Nothingness* (*L'Être et le Néant*, 1943) Sartre's view on individual consciousness, imagination and psychology were written very exclusively in these books. Sartre's primary motive behind these works was to defend the creativity and to discredit determinism, contingency and freedom of human action. Sartre's political writings started in earnest after World War II. While in the decade 1950's Sartre turned towards Marxist Ideology and eventually published the *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Vol. I (1960), a huge and systematic account of how history witnessed class struggle. This work, while presenting a new critical theory of society truly based on a synthesis of sociology and psychology. It qualifies Sartre's earlier, more clear view of existential freedom. Moreover, this massive work also reflects Sartre's concern over the social matters. "In *Critique*, social groups are divided into four main types: fusing groups, pledge groups, organizations, and institutions"<sup>1</sup>. The final systematic work given by him, *The Family Idiot* (1971), truly expresses his real and most popular views on the relation between particular individuals and common social wholes.

### Sartre's Concept of Authenticity – The Problematic:

Authenticity existentially means self-critiquing, intimate relationship with oneself which places the self in a radically negotiable distance from society, Nature and the cosmic beyond. Existential thinkers from Søren Kierkegaard to Jaspers, Buber, Heidegger, and Sartre discuss authenticity as the deciding factor of the existential and moral particular of experiences. The concept of authenticity according to these thinkers envisions a constant journey of oneself towards the bottomless bottom of subjectivity<sup>3</sup>.

The paper attempts to revisit Sartre's concept of Authenticity to reconstruct it from a more contemporary perspective of the ethics of Authenticity. The existentialist ideal of Authenticity adds more social and cross-cultural meaning when it comes to the relatively new, contemporary perspective of the ethics of Authenticity. The study aims at the reconstructive mapping of the thickening of the concept of authenticity, which still radically negotiates the concept of freedom.

The present paper records and registers the conceptual swing of the Sartrean existentialist ideal of authenticity from the point of view of the argument of the ethics of authenticity, as it is necessitated by the inevitability of a cultural/praxeological critique.

**Authenticity – The Concept and Definition:** Etymologically the term authenticity has been originated from "the Greek *authentikos*, derived from the noun *authentes*, 'doer, master', which was built from two parts, from *autos*, "self", and *hentes*, Worker, doer, being".<sup>4</sup> The term "authenticity" takes on a variety of distinct connotations in various disciplines. They can, however, have three distinct meanings. The first interpretation is based on seminal philosophical writings spanning from the Ancient Greeks (Aristotle, Socrates) through Existentialists, as well as classic twentieth-century studies particularly critical theory. It defines authenticity as the alignment of an entity's inherent ideals with its exterior manifestations. The second interpretation derives from early work in the cognitive sciences on categorization and schemas, as well as from seminal sociological work on institutional categories. It defines authenticity as an entity's adherence to the standards of its social category. The third interpretation is grounded in psychological essentialism and semiotics research. Authenticity is defined as the relationship between an entity and a person, place, or time. In summary, authenticity's three distinct definitions refer to consistency, conformity, and connection.

In philosophy, to be "authentic" is to be "of uncontested origin or authorship," but it may also mean to be "true to an original" or "reliable, accurate portrayal" in less strict philosophical contexts. An "authentic" statement implies that the item in question really exists and it is really the person who it claims to be. When talking about authenticity as a human quality, the line between genuine and derivative becomes murkier. Since this is the case, the issue arises: What does it mean to genuinely reflect one's self?

When it comes to the concept of authenticity, several problems emerge because of philosophical, epistemological and moral concerns. On the one hand, being one's own self is impossible to avoid since anytime one chooses or acts, one is one's true self. Conversely, we may believe that parts of the ideas, choices, and acts we do are not really our own and therefore, do not accurately reflect who we are as individuals. The question is no longer metaphysical, but rather one of moral-psychology, identity, and accountability. When used in this latter meaning, the term refers to a person who acts on the basis of wants, motives, ideals, or beliefs that are not simply hers, but also represent who she truly is. Apart from being a point of contention in philosophical discussions, authenticity is a ubiquitous ideal that pervades social and political thought. Indeed, a defining aspect of modern Western intellectual growth has been the emergence of what has been dubbed the "era of authenticity." Thus, comprehending the idea entails delving into its historical and philosophical roots, as well as the way it affects current cultures' socio-political outlooks.

The Oxford English Dictionary defines the noun authenticity as 'the quality of being authentic, or entitled to acceptance, 1. as being authoritative... 2. as being in accordance with fact... 3. as being genuine... 4. as being real'<sup>5</sup>. Authenticity, in these senses, as pointed by Eric Nicholson is "often cannot be deciphered by the human eye alone. Often additional information is required or questions must be asked and answer to determine authenticity. The Question of authenticity, and the degree to which they can be answered,

<sup>3</sup> Pius V Thomas, "Between Authenticity and Otherness", Salesian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences, Vol.1, No.2. (2010): 93-102.

<sup>4</sup> Somogy Varga, *Authenticity as an Ethical Ideal*, (Routledge studies in philosophy, 2011), 1.

<sup>5</sup> The Oxford English Dictionary

vary from medium to medium. Whether these questions result in a decisive absence or presence or an uncertainty, the authenticity of a painting, a work of literature, a body, an experience, or a discourse all affect the way humans react to it. Authenticity affects value, meaning and interpretation, acceptance, and human reaction to objects. Questions of authenticity relate not only to aesthetics, but also to philosophy and politics"<sup>6</sup>.

According to existentialists, being authentic means living in accordance with one's values and desires despite external pressures to fit in. Psychologists, existentialist philosophers, and artists all use the term authenticity to describe a personality trait. After being thrown into an absurd world (without values or meaning), the conscious self must come to terms with the fact that it was not created by him or her, and as a result must deal with forces and influences that are both different from and other than the Self. It is considered bad faith in human relations when someone lacks authenticity in their dealings with other people and with oneself. Walter Kaufmann compiled a canon of existentialist philosophers, including Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard (1813–1855), German philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889–1976), and Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980). According to these thinkers, the conscious self-reconciles itself with existence (being and existing) in an absurd, materialist world populated by external forces and intellectual influences distinct from and distinct from the Self.

To put it another way, personal authenticity refers to how someone acts and changes based on the influences of the outside world on their inner selves. Authenticity in art is a term used by artists to describe a piece of art that is true to the artist's vision. Psychologists use the term "authenticity" to describe someone who lives their life in accordance with their innermost values, such as their true self and family ties, rather than the external demands of society.

The Greeks were the first to use the term "authenticity" in their writings. "Authenticity has been a part of western thought since antiquity"<sup>7</sup>. Socrates, for example, emphasised the significance of self-awareness and introspection, saying, "The life that is not examined is not worth living." Even when it came to action, Aristotle focused on living according to one's 'daimon' or "true self," rather than the other way around. For a happy and moral life, it was critical to be consistent in one's actions and true self. Later philosophers drew inspiration from these early ideas.

Kierkegaard advocated for becoming "what one is" during the Existentialist era. Heidegger (1962) and Sartre (1943) stressed the importance of individual agency and exercising the authority in a society full of seemingly infinite alternatives to choose to be one's own. A growing body of research suggests that people in modern societies with fewer commonly shared values, such as religions or other traditions that guide individuals toward appropriate action and a meaningful life, have turned inward to find meaning in discovering their true selves, which is why contemporary scholars believe that discovering one's true self is important. Naturally, it is worth noting that the influence of these classical philosophers has spanned not only intellectual but also literary fields.

#### **Authentic and Non-Authentic Existence:**

The true life relies on self-analysis. They have several qualities, although being separate from inauthentic life. As a human person, you have a direct connection to the things around you that you use as tools for your existence.

Second, the idea that each scenario is one of an infinitely many diverse ways to express existence within a predetermined framework. When you're in this scenario, you're in a position of inadequacy, hardship, and great poverty in the grand scheme of things. The real life, on the other hand, differs from the inauthentic one in many ways. It's characterized by the drabness of a phony existence. To live a "faceless and featureless" (das Mann) public ego (the one-among-many) is to live a "faceless and featureless" (das Mann) public existence. Because of this, human life grows disconnected from itself and finally loses its potential.

According to Martin Heidegger, a great Existentialist who thought deeply on the concept of authenticity, authentic living is unique from regular life on a fundamental level. When faced with a tough situation, living honestly means acknowledging that Dasein is the one who must make decisions based on his potentialities. Then, authenticity means claiming myself in my own unique manner. It conveys one's I-hood and provides one with a distinct identity. The faceless "they" that characterizes collective awareness is replaced with the "I." Authentic life declares the individual's practical distinctiveness. Dasein is held accountable for his deeds. To live honestly, then, is to exist; this, in turn, means to stand out, that is, to be beyond the nameless masses, to emerge from the reality in which we find ourselves, and to embrace our condition with all of its limits. Existing entails both standing aside (withdrawing) and standing out. After everything is said and done, the critical issue is whether the so-called true creature can accomplish it alone.

#### **Sartre's Concept of Authenticity:**

The challenge of determining what one should do, which course of action is more suitable than the other and how a man should live a better life has been an enduring one. Sartre is preoccupied with the question of how we should live. For the better part of the last two centuries, moral philosophy has been dominated by arguments between two opposing perspectives. On the one hand, some philosophers have argued that certain behaviors are essentially good or bad.

<sup>6</sup> Erin Nicholson, <[www.Chicago.university.Authenticity.Html](http://www.Chicago.university.Authenticity.Html)>

<sup>7</sup> Somogy Varga, *Authenticity as an Ethical Ideal*, Routledge studies in philosophy, 2011, 14

Deontologists say that I should carry out my obligations and abstain from those that are not. I should be directed by a focus on the inherent nature of the deed. The majority of philosophers who identify themselves as Consequentialists have argued against this stance. Consequentialists say that we should choose our acts based on the consequences of the many options available to us. The controversy between deontologists and consequentialists is not only a philosophical one. It can also be a point of contention on what should be done.

Sartre's radical alternative to both consequentialism and deontology is introduced here, an alternative that places the centre of moral judgement on wholly distinct things. Rather of emphasizing on the distinctions between deontologists and consequentialists, we should instead focus on their commonalities. Though they disagree on how to evaluate activities, they agree on the need of focusing our attention on actions for determining what defines moral worth. This may seem self-evident: morality is concerned with right and wrong, and actions determine which are right and which are bad. However, there is another approach to ethics in general. Rather than focusing on the activities themselves, we may evaluate the agents that carry them out. Concentrating on agents rather than acts is not a novel strategy in and of itself.

Sartre, on the other hand, takes a decidedly anti-virtue ethics stance. Sartre cannot accept any of these lists as his own with a little thinking. Sartre maintains that it is always up to each of us to decide how we will live. This is not to argue, however, that Sartre abandons the duty of moral judgement or lacks the capacity to judge between people's choices. Sartre's appraisal of these alternatives is facilitated by the fact that it is up to each of us to determine our own values, what makes a virtue for us and what creates a purpose for action.

The early part of Sartre's concept of authenticity problematizes it as it refers to our intrinsic ability to delude ourselves as 'poor faith' in Being and Nothingness. Our predisposition to feel we are not who we really are; that we have no other alternatives, and hence behave in an inauthentic way, is known as bad faith. Bad faith, according to Sartre, is a rejection of our inherent freedom. "It is a contradictory, baffling, and ultimately psychotic effort at self-deception, despite the fact that it may be a common occurrence in many people's lives." When we confront obstacles, we must all cope with our fear and loneliness. Existential autonomy is a substructure of Sartrean autonomy. "That is, we are free because we are not a self (an in-itself), but a presence-to-self,"<sup>8</sup> Judaken explains. This indicates that we are "other" to ourselves.

He uses the example of a waiter who believes that waiting tables is his fate. The lesson here is that blaming others or societal forces for who we are or what we do may be soothing, but it is a rejection of our freedom and authenticity. Because of the preceding, the inner gap reveals not only the non-identity for itself and its temporality, but it also creates what Sartre refers to as "freedom as the definition of man." However, our freedom is inversely correlated to our degree of accountability. Meaning we are accountable for "our" world because it is the sphere of meaning in which we operate. This means we are also responsible for everything included inside it and have the ability to create anything from it depending on our values and standards.

Since its inception, Sartre's concept of authenticity has been seen as the only source of worth in life. However, others have argued that it is nothing more than a pointless way of being. As a phenomenological concept, however, it alludes to the uncertainty we may experience when we take on a new identity and so no longer feel like ourselves. This involves staying true to one's self while also seeking to meet the needs of one's own life and personality. "That is just the way I am" is a form of self-deception or bad faith, just like all forms of determinism, because both imply lying to oneself about the ontological fact of one's non-self-coincidental nature and avoiding coincidental responsibility for "choosing" to remain that way, Anderson argues. "To put it another way, no matter what our social or professional standing, conventional systems, or practical involvements, no matter how hard we try, we can never pretend we don't know who we are and that we don't care about what is going on around us"<sup>9</sup>.

Sartre's ethics of authenticity perhaps is at its brightest in 'Existentialism Is a Humanism'. Therefore, let us explore the lecture's point in further depth. Sartre elucidates his ethics through the use of a well-known example: the instance of a pupil who sought assistance from him during the war when France was occupied by German army. This young man was caught between two mutually irreconcilable choices. On the one hand, he intended to travel to the United Kingdom in order to join the Free French Forces. If he pursues this line of action, he may be able to fight for France's liberation and revenge his elder brother's murder during the German invasion of 1940. On the other hand, he could stay with his mother, who was still grieving the loss of his brother and was living separately from his collaborationist father. He was well aware that his departure would devastate his mother. He also realized that if he struck off for Britain, he risked becoming trapped in Spain forever or being assigned to office duties for the FFF. As a result, he found himself confronted with two diametrically opposed forms of action: one tangible, immediate, and directed at a single individual; and the other an action oriented towards an immeasurably broader objective, a national collectivity, but ambiguous –

<sup>8</sup> Judaken, Jonathan, *Race after Sartre: Antiracism, Africana Existentialism, Postcolonialism*. (Suny Press, 2008)

<sup>9</sup> Anderson Thomas, *Sartre's Two Ethics: From Authenticity to Integral Humanity*. (Open Court, Chicago, USA, 1993).

and liable to be defeated en route. Simultaneously, he was torn between two sorts of morality: on the one hand, a morality based on compassion and personal devotion; on the other hand, a morality with a broader reach but questionable validity. He was forced to make a choice between the two. Sartre then issues a challenge to more established moral systems: address this young man's problem in a logically justifiable manner. Sartre himself explores and evaluates two alternative approaches to the Dilemma, one Christian and one Kantian.

Sartre asserts that Christian teaching teaches us to 'act with charity, love your neighbor, deny oneself for others, choose the difficult path, and so forth'. Will this advice be beneficial? Sartre expresses reservations. Rather than resolving the issue, he contends, this counsel just raises new ones and leaves us in the dark about how to address them. Which group of people should this young guy aim his neighborly affection toward: his mother or his fellow citizens? Who is due further charity? Which others should he deny himself for? Which path is the most difficult? Sartre contends that there is no way to address these problems in advance. Thus, Christian teaching leaves us exactly where we were before, in just the circumstance that existentialists believed we were constantly in: forced to choose without explanation, justification, or justification for our choice.

The failure to act, even if possible, means that the reality is not sufficiently unpleasant to warrant change: it says that the work required to alter the world is not worth the potential advantages. By choosing not to act, I have made an as firm decision as if I had taken any other course of action. As a result, we cannot absolve ourselves of the profound burden of choice. It is always up to us to make a choice and to select the values that will justify our choice. We make our choice independently, without rationale or justification. Sartre's guidance to his pupil expressed this reality: "I needed just one response. Because you are free, you must select – that is, innovate."<sup>10</sup>

### **Socio-political Existence and Collective Authenticity:**

Clearly, compared to bees and herd animals, humans are a significantly more political species. The fact that humans are the only animals capable of speech proves that nature is not a waste. Speech reflects both the good and the bad, the right and the unjust, in the world. As contrast to other animals, only humans have a sense of right and wrong, among other attributes, and it is through cooperation in these areas that a family or city comes to be.

As social creatures, humans, like bees and herd animals, prefer to live in groups. People, unlike bees and herd animals, are capable of verbal communication, which the ancient Greeks called "logos." Both speech and reasoning are included within the umbrella of the logos phrase, as previously said. In this context, it's obvious that speech and reason are intertwined: the duty of speech is to reveal what is beneficial and destructive, exhibiting what is good and evil, fair and unjust, since speech is given upon humans by nature. These insights allow for peaceful coexistence as well as the pursuit of justice as an essential part of living the good life for which we were all created. The capacity to speak and reason as understood by Aristotle is absent in other social creatures, such as honeybees, goats, and cows. Naturally, they don't require that kind of expertise. They may live together without agreeing on what is right and wrong or enforcing rules to assure equal treatment. Men, on the other hand, are unable to do so in either a good or bad way.

Therefore, as we have seen, Individual Authenticity is a problematic issue in earlier Sartre. It is in many occasions observed that it leads to bad-faith. According to Golomb "The Authentic Stance is in fact sober realization that one's search for Authenticity cannot be realized because one never owns one's transcendent self"<sup>11</sup>. So, a move for authentic life leads the man towards collective struggle and open up the possibility of collective Authenticity.

Sartre in his Anti-Semite and Jew made contribution to achieve collective Authenticity. According to Sartre, "Authenticity manifests itself in revolt, and is not to be achieved merely by the admission that they are Jew"<sup>12</sup>. As Dunchu observes, "The dawn of collective authenticity for the Sartrean man manifest itself in two ways. First, he becomes authentic in his struggle to reconstruct the social fabric which is not conducive to authenticity. Second, he becomes of real brotherhood based on freedom with other people in an authentically reconstituted society"<sup>13</sup>.

Although in earlier Sartre the others are regarded as obstacle for individual freedom but later the Sartre accommodate the other as because all are struggling for same necessities of achieving authenticity. As Golomb puts it "Mutual generosity, respect and

<sup>10</sup> J.P.Sartre, *Existentialism is Humanism*, Trans. Philip Mairet, 1946.

<sup>11</sup> Golomb, Jacob, *In Search of Authenticity from Kierkegaard to Camus*, (Routledge: London, New York, 1995)

<sup>12</sup> J.P.Sartre, *The problem of Method*. Trans. Hazel Barnes, (London: Methuen, 1963), 156

<sup>13</sup> Denchu Jose G. Decino, *Jean Paul Sartre-Collective authenticity: Sartre's Political Project*, Kindle Edition, 2020.

genuine feelings cement such relations. I choose to help other become authentic by not trying to dominate her and by regarding her as an autonomous person who can act simultaneously as object and subject in relation to myself. The other's otherness is accommodated but not assimilated in myself and my life"(Barrett,2003). The later Sartre admit that the human praxis is the factor that brings relationship with others. It is the same human praxis that make it possible for the modes of production, class formation and even formation of history. Sartre writes, " our comprehension of the other is never contemplative; it is only a moment of our praxis, a way of living- in struggle or in complicity- the concrete, human relation which unites us to him"<sup>14</sup>.

The stated goal of Sartre's work was to protect existentialism against a variety of criticisms. For its opponents, the philosophy of Existentialism was seen as a philosophy of "quietism of despair," or a philosophy that discouraged individuals from stealing any action since it was seen as a philosophy of passivity. It was also criticised for being too cynical and ignoring the positive aspects of human nature. From another angle, Marxists and Christians both contended that existentialist philosophy overlooks human unity due to its emphasis on individual choices. Another set of detractors said that existentialism permitted the most heinous acts to be perpetrated in the name of existential freedom. "Everyone is free to do whatever he wants and will be incapable of criticising anybody else's point of view or behaviour," existentialists reasoned, since they declined the idea of "God-given" moral precepts (p.24).

A major part of Sartre's argument against these allegations is his investigation into the notions of abandonment, pain, and despair. For him, these phrases have a distinct meaning; he employs them as technical terms, and their connotations are substantially different from those in common use. 'Sartre feels that, despite their negative connotations, these three words contain a positive and hopeful component that a cursory reader of the text may overlook.

### **Otherness as Modern Aspect on Ethical Problems:**

From a contemporary point of view, the difficulty with the ideal of authenticity is that it is difficult to articulate as an ideal. An inability to participate in arguments—either supporting or criticizing—a person's views, values, and so on is a part of the principle of respecting others' lives since they are others' lives. The consequence is "soft relativism," which is so-called because it reaches relativist conclusions without resorting to debate. The provocative concept of 'Identity and Otherness' sheds new light on an important contemporary aspect of ethical debates. Postmodern ethical studies entails more than a rejection of conventional current modes of moral expression. Additionally, there is a desire for them to be re-examined and addressed. The phrase "new approach" relates to the idea that ethical debates about human society, research, development, and new technologies should take into account variedness. As a result of this, it is more important to emphasize that most of the visible differences between human beings are a result of cultural norms rather than natural differences, and that everyone, regardless of their specific differences, possesses one or more universally recognized as precious characteristics.

There are almost no reason to stay in a particular location in today's dynamic present globalized world, liberalization, and mass communication, all of which are characterized by mobility, and issues such as "who are we?" and "where did we come from?" become increasingly pertinent and pressing. It is no surprise that these same issues arise in the context of contemporary ethical conceptions, which are often dubbed 'postmodern' owing to their goal to demonstrate thinking that transcends the concept of modernity and is predicated on the rejection of a 'uniform' worldview.

However, the concept of authenticity has become a radical ethical ideal that attempts to address the issue of how to live a happy life/meaningful in current times, while being overshadowed by this intertwining of fear and want. Thinkers like, Theodor W. Adorno (The Jargon of Authenticity) discusses authenticity as a problematic manner of coping with the normative gaps created by modernity. In search of solutions to the issue of how to live a decent life, the language of authenticity has become what the idea of independent subjectivity was to early modernity in our current cultural milieu. The "era of autonomy," which stressed the individual's self-governing powers, has given way to "the age of authenticity," as Charles Taylor (Charles Taylor, Ethics of Authenticity) put it.

### **Conclusion:**

Though Authenticity, for Jean-Paul Sartre, was not an essential concept of freedom and living a meaningful life, he in his second phase of Existential – Humanist- Dialectical Materialist phase of theorization, points out that the authentic life necessitates accepting the truth of our freedom and taking responsibility for our choices has a socio-political dimension. In other words, the later Sartre more authentically designates Authenticity as intimately associated with the ideal of political freedom:

It happens so because while Sartre in his Being and Nothingness, was being pessimistic for realization of authenticity, when he comes to his conceptual phase of The Problem of Method, Sartre attempts at establishing a more deeply standing concept of ethics. It is according to Hazel Barnes, "we will have to grant that Sartre has fulfilled his promise- to show how the free individual described in Being and Nothingness may commit himself meaningfully in the world"<sup>15</sup>.Again, "the ethics of a philosophy of freedom is not

<sup>14</sup> J.P.Sartre, *The problem of Method*, 9.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.,26

possible in a society where men are not free”<sup>16</sup>. So, collective authenticity is possible only in a society where freedom of every individual have respect. According to Denchu, “That man is free, then is the starting point of the Sartrean struggle for collective authenticity. Indeed, it is possible for man to fight for his political freedom if he is not free and does not recognize his freedom in the first place. Moreover, for a society to suppress the freedom of the individual, it is necessary that such a society seeks its justification in the false premise that man is not free”<sup>17</sup>. Sartre himself says, “To be sure, man can only be enslaved because he is free”<sup>18</sup>. According to Denchu, in Sartre’s earlier writings, Sartre tends to absolutize the freedom of the individual by claiming that in all instances, man is confronted with choices. At the extreme, we can always choose whether to submit or die”<sup>19</sup>. But in his *The Problem of Method*, Sartre, has changed earlier stand and strengthen his claim for political freedom that opens up the way for collective authenticity.

According to Sartre “Each man is defined negatively by the sum total of the possible which are impossible for him;...And the most individual possible is only the internalization and enrichment of the social possible”<sup>20</sup>. Thus, the authentic individual in order to resist his/her suppress freedom, engage to eliminate this suppression by preparing project. “Men defines himself by his project. This material object perpetually goes beyond the condition which is made for him; he reveals and determines his situation by transcending it in order to objectify himself by work, action and gesture”<sup>21</sup>.

Sartre further achieves this by bringing in the idea of political-ethical authenticity as the possibility of collective authenticity. Marxist influence provides Sartre to develop the collective authenticity for his view of political freedom. “Marxism in the nineteenth century is a gigantic attempt not only to make History but to get a grip on it, practically and theoretically, by uniting the worker’s objective reality. At the end of this effort, by the unification of the exploited and by the progressive reduction of the number of classes in the struggle, History was finally to have a meaning for man”<sup>22</sup>. Sartre also viewed that the basis of society must be philosophy. Where by philosophy Sartre means “first of all a particular way in which the ‘rising’ class becomes conscious of itself”<sup>23</sup>. This reflects Sartre’s intension for reorientation of philosophy for social need to address social repression. According to Denchu, “There is thus a need for a reorientation of the philosophy governing a society if that same society becomes repressive”<sup>24</sup>. In the eyes of Sartre Marxism of this time fails to view the real condition of man therefore it is necessary to introduce his existential approach to retain man’s freedom to the Marxist approach. As Sartre said “We were convinced at one and the same time that historical materialism furnished the only valid interpretation of history and that Existentialism remained the only concrete approach to reality”<sup>25</sup>. So, it is clear that existentialism of Sartre and Marxism agree that man and the world both are intelligent.

Further, in his book, *collective Authenticity: Sartre’s Political Project*, Denchu “writes the futility of the search for authenticity in early Sartre become an occasion to look for a feasible venue for authenticity. An initial act of failing does not make one a failure. Confronted with an impossibility of individual authenticity, the Sartrean man then continues to explore other venues for authenticity. He then finds refuge in an attempt to surpass the given situation and be dialectically related with it so much so that while he embraces the limitation brought about by his world, he persists in fighting for his subjectivity. Thus, open before him the collective

<sup>16</sup> Denchu Jose G. Decino, *Jean Paul Sartre-Collective authenticity:Sartre’s Political Project*

<sup>17</sup> Sartre,J.P., *The problem of Method*, 95

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 150

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 3-4

<sup>21</sup> Denchu Jose G. Decino, *Jean Paul Sartre-Collective authenticity:Sartre’s Political Project*

<sup>22</sup> Sartre,J.P., *The problem of Method*, 30

<sup>23</sup> Denchu Jose G. Decino, *Jean Paul Sartre-Collective authenticity:Sartre’s Political Project*

<sup>24</sup> Stuart Zane Charme.,*Vulgarity and Authenticity: Dismensions of otherness in the world of J.P.Sartre*, (Massachusetts: univ. of Mass. Press,1991),11

<sup>25</sup> Sartre,J.P., *The problem of Method*, 156

authenticity”<sup>26</sup>. As Golomb writes, “we cannot change the ontological impossibility of authenticity, but we can do our best to weaken the social forces that perpetuate our tendency to live in bad faith”<sup>27</sup>.

According to Dunchu, “The dawn of collective authenticity for the Sartrean man manifest itself in two ways. First, he becomes authentic in his struggle to reconstruct the social fabric which is not conducive to authenticity. Second, he becomes of real brotherhood based on freedom with other people in an authentically reconstituted society”<sup>28</sup>.

Although in earlier Sartre the others are regarded as obstacle for individual freedom but later Sartre accommodates the other as because all are struggling for same necessities of achieving authenticity. As Golomb puts it “Mutual generosity, respect and genuine feelings cement such relations. I choose to help other become authentic by not trying to dominate her and by regarding her as an autonomous person who can act simultaneously as object and subject in relation to myself. The other’s otherness is accommodated but not assimilated in myself and my life” (Barrett, 2003). The later Sartre admit that the human praxis is the factor that brings relationship with others. It is the same human praxis that make it possible for the modes of production, class formation and even formation of history. Sartre writes, “ our comprehension of the other is never contemplative; it is only a moment of our praxis, a way of living- in struggle or in complicity- the concrete, human relation which unites us to him”<sup>29</sup>.

The Paper, therefore, suggests that the concept of Existential Authenticity churns out ‘Political and Ethical Authenticity’, which is more of praxeological and reflexive Authenticity, which poses still a serious area of encounter with the philosophical/Existential engagements with the Self and the other.

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<sup>26</sup> Denchu Jose G. Decino, *Jean Paul Sartre-Collective authenticity:Sartre’s Political Project*

<sup>27</sup> Stuart Zane Charme.,*Vulgarity and Authenticity: Dismensions of otherness in the world of J.P.Sartre*, 11

<sup>28</sup> Denchu Jose G. Decino, *Jean Paul Sartre-Collective authenticity:Sartre’s Political Project*

<sup>29</sup> Stuart Zane Charme.,*Vulgarity and Authenticity: Dismensions of otherness in the world of J.P.Sartre*,11