

## Kierkegaard and Sartre on God and Authenticity

**Amirabasa Alizamani**

Associate professor of Philosophy of Religion, Tehran University

**Alireza Faraji\***

Ph.D. in Philosophy of Religion

\*Corresponding author, e-mail: farajireza25@yahoo.com

### **Abstract:**

To evaluate and judge the notion of humanity, one has to use logic and logical criteria, since every notion's delimitation in logic requires an exact definition to be offered. And it is by definition that one can distinguish between one particular notion or extension and other notions and extensions. Different definitions have been suggested of the nature of humanity throughout the history of ideas every one of which casts light on an aspect of human existence. The intricate and deep nature of human being may have been the main obstacle in the way to an exact definition of human being. The past masters have defined man as a rational animal; i.e. man is inside the family of animals but an animal that have the power of thinking. Human rationality is not merely a matter of speaking, but rather it covers his all internal and external aspects. Since man is consisted of mind and body. Contemporary thinkers have left behind the traditional definition of man and approached him from different perspectives. In any case, what is important for us is human being's humanity.

On the other hand, the notion of humanity has always had an inseparable relationship with ethics. Needless to say, moral rules and maxims comprise a set of determinate oughts and ought-nots which should be adopted and followed by every human individual if s/he seeks to reach happiness. These moral rules are sometimes associated with religious and divine concepts which include a faith background and sometimes they go shoulder to shoulder with the rational rules where there is no occasion for extra-rational elements. One of the fundamental notions of ethics is authenticity, or to put it otherwise, how a man is authentic? What are the criteria of an authentic man? Authenticity can be verbally analyzed to the following notions:

- 1- Authenticity in the sense of having a determinate family background.
- 2- Authenticity in the sense of having a steady and impenetrable structure
- 3- Authenticity in the sense of having a sound understanding of our own human status and living in a way that deserves this sense of humanity.

Considering the fundamental principles of humanity which have their origin in morality, our notion of authenticity in this essay is what the third definition suggests. On the other hand, due to the unmanageable scope of history of ideas we have chosen two thinkers from one

philosophical tradition who despite their shared intellectual affiliation behold the world from different horizons. Soren Kierkegaard (1813-1846) the Danish existentialist thinker stands on the one hand, who gives the central position to human subjectivity and believes that the key to salvation is the honest encounter with God and always sees himself exposed to hard examinations and regards authenticity the result of individuation, on the other hand stands Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980), the French existentialist thinker and literary figure, who believes human truth reveals itself in the escape from bad faith (self-deception) and the cure to this bad faith is being an individual in society.

**Key words:** God- authenticity- faith- atheism-Kierkegaard-Sartre

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