

**Reflective Essay** (Word Count = 699):

My submission is an extended version of a final paper that was written for Dr. Ian Moore's Fall 2021 course on Heidegger. An area of focus in the course that caught my attention was section 74 of Heidegger's *Being and Time*, which suggested that authenticity could be pursued collectively by a group of people (Dasein). In our class discussion of section 74, many had a difficult time understanding it, with some arguing that it was contradictory with prior sections of *Being and Time*. I found this idea of collective authenticity intriguing, particularly because it seemed to substantially pivot away from the praises of rugged individualism often found in Western cultures, a praise which I realized might be improperly imported into understandings of existential authenticity. Thus, for the final paper, I decided to take up the question of how collective authenticity could be understood through the philosophy of *Being and Time*. My initial research focused specifically on secondary book chapters and journal articles by Heideggerian scholars that gave specific focus to section 74 as well as to other prominent concepts in *Being and Time* that related to authenticity.

I eventually came across a notable article that articulated how such existential discussions in *Being and Time* could be applied towards contemporary understandings of education and race. I found these applied focuses very interesting, and they specifically reminded me of significant ideas that I had encountered in my limited independent readings of the less prominently discussed philosopher of color Frantz Fanon, known for his political philosophy on race and 20th century colonialism.

From this, I became deeply curious to see whether Fanon's decolonial philosophy could contribute to this understanding of collective authenticity. I was able to easily gain print access to three of Fanon's most acclaimed primary texts from the shelves of the library main stacks, as

well as many secondary books focusing on Fanon's decolonial thought and political biography. These easily accessible resources allowed me to independently develop a rich and informed familiarity with a lesser known philosopher whose thought I had never received any formal education in. Additionally, on top of giving relevant insights for the paper topic itself, the secondary sources allowed me to identify *The Wretched of the Earth* as the primary source that was the most relevant piece to focus on for my topic.

Thus, the unexpected connections encountered in initial research, and the library resources that allowed me to pursue the goldmine of relevance that discussions on Fanon, race, and neocolonialism had for my topic, allowed my focus to organically evolve into a more encompassing one that synthesized the understandings of collective authenticity found in Heidegger and Fanon. This incorporation of Fanon allowed me to more explicitly highlight how this existential discussion on authenticity provides important political insights to issues of race, culture, gender, and sexuality that are still faced in our oppressive and neocolonial 21st century society. It also supplemented my addressal of *Being and Time*'s potential problematic connection to Nazism<sup>1</sup>.

LibGuides access to the Philosopher's Index and PhilPapers databases was particularly important for this project. They allowed me to find sources that focused on the specific philosophical terminologies, such as those of *Being and Time*, that were relevant to my discussion. When a full text was unavailable, I not only searched for other pieces by the author, but also looked into other authors in the text's journal issue that seemed to have similar focuses. This allowed me to find a valuable published roundtable transcript between three closely related Fanonian scholars.

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<sup>1</sup> Please see footnote #3 on p.2 of my project for further and important discussion on this.

I aimed for the majority of sources to be recent, less than 10 year old publications, and favored those that also engaged with other philosophers besides Heidegger/Fanon in their discussions so that the project could establish connection with a greater diversity of philosophical viewpoints. While many sources supplemented my own points and argument, I also implemented opposing interpretations of *Being and Time* that my paper could directly engage with. To responsibly engage with *Being and Time*, I implemented a source that directly discussed its potential problematic connection to Nazism. This supplemented both my acknowledgement of this important Heideggarian conversation, as well as my attempt to counter supremacist ideology through the paper's Fanonian elements.