

*On the Concept of Re-presenting the Possibility of Authentic Existence*

1. If it is true, as I should maintain, that any proper metaphysics implies that a certain self-understanding is both possible and alone authentic, then one could plausibly argue that any proper metaphysics simply as such implicitly re-presents a possibility of existence—specifically, what it necessarily implies as *the* authentic such possibility.

2. But there is a distinction to be made that this argument may obscure—namely, between re-presenting a possibility of existence, on the one hand, and re-presenting the general truth that there is such a possibility, on the other. What a proper metaphysics does is, not so much the first as the second: in re-presenting all general (*sc.* completely universal, or transcendental) truths, it also implicitly re-presents the general truth that there is a certain possibility of understanding oneself that is the only authentic such possibility. But, although this might reasonably be held to be an *indirect* re-presentation of the authentic possibility of self-understanding, it is to be distinguished from a *direct* re-presentation of such a possibility, the second alone being, properly, the re-presentation of the possibility of authentic existence.

3. Thus it will hardly do to allege that the claim that Jesus decisively re-presents the possibility of authentic existence reduces Jesus to nothing more than the symbol of a general truth. If, or insofar as, Jesus may be properly said to be the symbol of anything, he is the symbol, instead, of an existential possibility—not merely of the general truth that there is such a possibility. And this can be said even though any re-presentation of the possibility of authentic existence, such as Jesus can be said to be, necessarily implies the truth of certain metaphysical beliefs, among which is the general truth that the possibility re-presented is indeed possible, and is alone authentic.