

"[What existentialist interpretation means by human existence] is in no way 'the inner life of a human being,' which can be understood apart from all that is other than it and encounters it (whether the environment, fellow human beings, or God). This may indeed be how psychology of religion, say, considers human existence, but it is not the way of existentialist analysis. For such analysis seeks to grasp and understand the actual (historical) existence of human beings, who exist only in a context of life with 'others,' and thus in encounters. Existentialist analysis endeavors to develop an appropriate conceptuality for just such an understanding" (89)

"[M]y existential life . . . is realized in decisions in face of encounters" (112). "[H]uman being is . . . in a genuine sense historical being, which has its experiences in its encounters with others" (113). "[E]xistential self-understanding takes place only as my own particular self-understanding in existential decision. In my existential self-understanding I do not understand in general what existence is (that would be existentialist understanding), but I understand myself in my concrete historical here and now, in my concrete encounters" (116). "[I]n existential self-understanding the self understands itself at the same time as it understands what encounters it, whether other persons or the world. As a historically existing self, I am not isolated either from my world or from my own past and future, which in a certain way belong to my world" (116).

"[H]uman beings are historical beings whose life consists in decisions in concrete situations, and they possess the knowledge of God not in timeless theories about God's being, but only when they know themselves in the light of a transcendent reality and thus become aware that they are both graced and claimed by this reality in their very existence" ("Protestant Theology and Atheism": 333).

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