

“Man makes himself”—how so?

It seems to me that there is *a double sense* in which a woman or a man makes her- or himself: (1) by *subjectively* actualizing authentic or inauthentic existence, wherein, paradoxically, she or he is, so far as authentic, made by another as well as and prior to, and as the necessary condition of the possibility of, making her- or himself; and (2) by *objectively* actualizing her- or himself in relation to the specific natural and cultural environment that is her or his environment.

By virtue of this distinction, one can take account of: (1) the cultural relativity even of the primary and secondary objectifications of existence as such—in religion and philosophy; and (2) the factual, as distinct from the metaphysical, character of the human decision for both authenticity and truth, i.e., for trust and loyalty, on the one hand, and for belief, on the other. Although what religion and philosophy have to do with is not factual, or is so only in a unique sense, the having to do with this nonfactual, or uniquely factual, is itself entirely factual, both subjectively (= existentially) and objectively (= reflectively).

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