

Perhaps a happier, because less confrontational, way of making my case would be to allow *precritical* as well as properly *critical* senses of "theology," "philosophy," "metaphysics," and so on.

Thus, for example, instead of distinguishing, as I usually do, simply between "witness" and "theology," I could first distinguish between witness and theology on the primary level of living understandingly, where theology consists in the *precritical* reasoning immediately involved in bearing witness; and only then distinguish, second, between both witness and theology on the primary level and theology on the secondary level, where theology consists in the properly *critical* reasoning involved in both critically interpreting the meaning of bearing witness and critically validating the claims to validity made or implied in bearing it.

In similar ways, I could take better account than I have of the common distinction between "philosophy of life" as a matter of the primary level and "philosophy (proper)" as a matter of the secondary level, as well as the distinction Hartshorne makes at one point between "way-of-life-metaphysics" and "intellectual metaphysics" ("Emptiness and Fullness in Asiatic and Western Thought": 419).

Of course, making something very like this distinction is nothing new to my thinking and writing. Indeed, I make it in so many words already in my *Auseinandersetzung* with Hough and Cobb, when I distinguish between a "critical reflection" that is a reflection *in* faith as well as *on* faith and a critical reflection that is a reflection *on* faith, but not *in* it, because it allows for critically invalidating as well as validating *all* the claims to validity made or implied in bearing the witness of faith, including the claim to credibility or truth (*Doing Theology Today*: 74 ff.). "In the final analysis, then," I conclude, "the question is not whether we may properly use the term 'theology' and its cognates in a strict as well as a broad sense; the question is what we are to mean as and when we so use them. Are we to mean only such 'critical reflection' as is possible to Christians understanding and thinking *as* Christians? Or are we to mean the critical

reflection that is necessary if Christian claims to truth or credibility, not to mention appropriateness or fittingness, are themselves to be critically validated?" (76).

But more than that, I have recognized all along, at least since *The Reality of God* (28 f.), that, in all of the different fields of reasoning or argumentation oriented by, and corresponding to, our vital interests and questions, there are two kinds (better: levels) of such reasoning. Therefore, while it was indeed Habermas who subsequently confirmed the importance of this distinction, and to whose way of making it I am keenly conscious of being indebted in all of my more recent work, it has been explicitly anticipated in my thinking from its formative stage on.

In any event, I see nothing in allowing such a distinction that would compromise what I want to say; and allowing it may have a certain strategic or tactical advantage in making my case. On the other hand, considering that I have—in effect, and even in so many words—already long made the distinction, I can't be too optimistic about the difference that making it now is likely to make.

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