

Being religious is explicitly understanding oneself in a certain way and leading one's life accordingly. But is explicitly understanding oneself in a certain way and leading one's life accordingly being religious—as it seems to me Gamwell, for one, wants to say?

My answer is, No, not necessarily. Why not? Because being religious is explicitly understanding oneself in a certain way and leading one's life accordingly *thanks to the mediation of some religion or—in the unique case of the founders of the religion—thanks to the mediation of the explicit primal source authorizing it*. I have to put it this way because to say simply that one is religious thanks to the mediation of some religion paradoxically excludes the founders of the religion from being religious in the same way, their self-understanding and life-praxis not being even conceivably mediated by the religion of which they are precisely—the founders! Thus, for example, true as it is that I am a Christian in the sense of a "disciple at second hand" (Kierkegaard) as and because I explicitly understand myself and lead my life accordingly thanks to the mediation of the Christian religion, this could not possibly explain why those who are properly called "apostles" in the sense of "disciples at first hand" are also—and preeminently!—Christians. They are Christians in the unique sense in which they are so thanks to their immediate authorization by Jesus who is called the Christ precisely because he is the explicit primal ontic source authorizing the Christian religion as well as their faith and witness.

Being religious, then, depends not only on explicitly understanding oneself and leading one's life in a certain way, but also on doing all this in *the* way either explicitly authorized *immediately* by the explicit primal source of some religion or else explicitly authorized by that same source *mediately* through the religion that it also authorizes.

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