

One of the things I learned from my *Auseinandersetzung* with Post (Letter to Gamwell, 31 July 2005) is that and how the relation between, in my terms, "the structure of reality in itself" and "the meaning of reality for us" can and should be understood as instancing what he calls "the determination relation." This is to say that the structure of reality in itself "determines" the meaning of reality for us, in the sense that descriptive truths about its structure allow for one, and only one, distribution of truth-values over normative truth-claims about its meaning.

But if I'm right that "the determination relation" can be understood in the genuinely nonreductive sense in which Post himself wishes to understand it if, and only if, it is, in a sense, mutual or symmetrical, or at least implies (as the emergent evolutionists argued) "dependence" of the lower level *on* the higher as well as "involvement" of the lower level *in* the higher, then there is presumably a sense in which the structure in itself that meaning for us "involves" (or by which it is, in Post's term, "determined") in turn "depends" on that meaning for us.

Just what all follows from this that may be theologically relevant remains to be looked into. But it seems clear enough that, if this is indeed the nature of the relation, there can be no good reason to think that my use of the distinction between "structure in itself" and "meaning for us" "reduces" faith, or religion, to metaphysics, or effects a similar reduction of symbolic, or nonliteral, language, including myth, to literal language. Thus, for example, the possibility and the point of an "immanent," "essential," or "ontological," doctrine of the trinity, distinct from, and irreducible to, any properly metaphysical understanding of God, as well as any merely "economic" doctrine, could be made a good deal clearer and more acceptable than I have up to now managed to make it.

As for the apparent difficulty of defending my kind of pluralistic inclusivism in the theology of religions, while also saying, as I've said, that descriptive truths about the structure of reality in itself allow for "one, and only one," distribution of truth-values over normative truth-claims about its meaning for us, I judge it to be no more than apparent. Verbal, and even conceptual, differences are one thing, real differences, something else.

And my contention that there can be more than one true religion is entirely compatible with reality's having only one structure in itself and, therefore, only one real meaning for us, however differently that one meaning may be conceived and symbolized, and however many the suggestions and the vehicles of suggestions, and therefore the basic proposals, for understanding it.

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