

What am I getting at, really, in distinguishing between a claim to be substantially true and a claim to be formally true?

Heretofore, I've understood the difference warranting this distinction to be the difference between being true and being the criterion by which what is true is to be determined. But, clearly, anything that is substantially true is capable of functioning as a (or the) criterion for determining what is true.

Anyhow, "criterion" is at home in the context of *normative* authority only, whereas the issue I'm presumably getting at is not only normative but also causative—an issue of *causative* as well as normative authority, even if, in any case, an issue of *authority*.

I once defined "canon" as irreplaceable witness, in the sense of the witness immediately authorized by some explicit primal source of authority that, as such, is historical as well as transcendental. This implies that any explicit primal source of authority is itself "revelation," in the sense of special/decisive revelation. As such, it, too, is irreplaceable—indeed, the irreplaceable act/content of the irreplaceable witness, to which the latter's act/content are the irreplaceable and therefore primary response.

Could it be, then, that what I'm really getting at in distinguishing between a claim to be substantially true and a claim to be formally true is the difference between being replaceable and irreplaceable?

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