

Hartshorne says that metaphysics concerns itself with “the ultimate invariant, in the sense of the common factor, of reality, present throughout all changes, past or to be anticipated.” But, then, he adds, “It is, however, rather an infinite flexibility than a rigid inflexibility. It is really an infinite creative and cognitive power and comprises an unimaginably vast range of possibilities. . . . It forbids nothing, save nonsense, or what appears to be something but is not, such as unthinkable confusion or unthinkable monotony.”

I have at least two problems with this. First, “rather than” is hardly appropriate to or consistent with Hartshorne’s theory of “*dipolar* theism,” or “*dual* transcendence.” If his theory is correct, it must be as true to say that “the ultimate invariant” is “a rigid inflexibility” as that it is “an infinite flexibility”—and vice versa. Second, “the ultimate invariant” is more properly said to be “an infinite creative and *consummative* power,” “cognition” being simply a special case of “consummation,” and so a “local,” not a “cosmic,” variable. As such, it can be predicated of “the ultimate invariant” only analogically in a broad sense, i.e., metaphorically or symbolically, not literally or “analogically” in Hartshorne’s strict (but really pseudo-) sense.

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