

When Hartshorne allows that "[w]hat in a sense does come first [*sc.* before metaphysics] is civilized living" (*PCH*: 684), he sounds a lot like Whitehead. But what, exactly, is to be understood by "civilized living"?

If it means, simply, living somehow understandingly, and therefore self-understandingly and through life-praxis mediated by culture—all well and good. But if "civilized" is used, as it often is, eulogistically, to refer rather to one particular way, or stage, of living understandingly in terms of culture, then "civilized living" can be said to come first only in the sense that it, like any other way of living understandingly, belongs to the "variety of expression" on which philosophy and metaphysics, as "a secondary activity," have the task of critically reflecting.

5 February 1998