

H agrees with Wittgenstein (and disagrees with Quine) that the distinction between conceptual and factual questions is ultimate, if "factual" means empirical in a roughly Popperian sense.

But Wittgenstein, like many of his interpreters, would presumably deny that there could be merely conceptual or nonempirical, nonfactual, reasons for asserting the existence of anything, except, possibly, elements of an abstract system like the real numbers. H contends, on the contrary, that "it is not existence but only what [he calls] actuality that in principle, and always, transcends conceptual necessity. That a definable or identifiable idea is somehow instantiated in concrete actuality is . . . its 'existence,' but just how or in what concrete form it is actualized is [its] 'actuality.' That, for example, the idea of concrete particulars is somehow instantiated [is] a nonempirical truism or necessity, and . . . that the definition of 'God' is similarly existential a priori. But this a priori validity applies only to the somehow actualized, not to the how, or in what concrete form, abstract idea (whether deity, or concrete particularity, as such) is concretized. On the highest level of abstractness merely being somehow instantiated is noncontingent" (*Insights and Oversights*: 297).

In H's view, then, "the real issue concerning metaphysics" is this "distinction between existence and actuality, or the indefinite 'somehow instantiated' and the particular how of instantiation; and also the related distinction between ultimate abstractions (such as concreteness as such) and more specific abstractions that are only contingently instantiated in that their being instantiated imposes limitations on the instantiation of other specific abstractions" (*Ibid.* : 297 f.). Whereas the instantiation of "concreteness" excludes nothing—"except bare nothing itself, and that is only a word that has lost its meaning," the instantiation of more specific abstractions excludes the instantiation of yet other abstractions comparably specific. As Bergson argued, "nothing" has only relative

uses. Therefore, to exclude nothing is not to exclude at all. On the other hand, contingency is competitiveness, mutual exclusiveness between possibilities equally positive.

The distinction between conceptual and transconceptual (because empirical or factual) truths is not eliminated by insisting, as H does, that "necessarily instantiated" is a conceptual truth applicable to "abstractions of the highest rank of generality" (*Ibid.*: 298). On the contrary, H simply adds to the distinction, on which he and Wittgenstein presumably agree (against Quine), between conceptual and merely factual or empirical, the distinctions between "necessarily and contingently (if at all) instantiated concepts," which can also be expressed by the distinction between "noncompetitive or nonexclusive concepts and competitive or exclusive concepts."

As for Wittgenstein's claim that "all necessary propositions say the same thing—that is, nothing," H insists on adding the word "contingent." Thus in his view, while all strictly necessary propositions (using only extreme abstractions) say the same thing, namely, that some extremely general ideas are necessarily actualized somehow, "they all imply the metaphysical essence of reality, what will be and must have been, no matter what, or in all possible cases" (*Ibid.*: 298).