

On "Logical" in a Broad Sense

Hartshorne speaks of metaphysical questions as being "pseudo-factual, or in a broad sense logical," and says that "Not, 'Does [God] exist with some world or other [?],' but only, 'With what world?' is the empirical or observational question. The rest is logic, in a broad sense, not fact" (NTOT, 89, 102).

Question: What is "logic in a broad sense," or "in a broad sense logical"?

Answer: Transcendental conditions of the possibility of fact, or of the factual.--The point is that there are certain necessary implications of any fact, or of anything factual, that can be denied only at the price of self-contradiction, or incoherence, in the sense that the fact of the denial implicitly asserts these implications even while what is denied by the denial explicitly denies them. "Logic in a broad sense," then, is a way of saying that every fact necessarily presupposes a nonfactual but existential context, which must be implicitly asserted by any factual assertion whatever, even one that explicitly denies this same context. For as itself a fact, the denial implies as the necessary condition of its possibility the same existential context necessarily implied by any and all facts whatever, even merely conceivable facts. In this sense, "self-understanding is the issue." "It is a conceptual question, a question of self-understanding, clarity, and consistency" (88, 85).