

1. According to Hartshorne:

(i) "metaphysics may be described as the study which evaluates a priori statements about existence";

(ii) "a priori statements about existence" are those which contradict no conceivable observation<sup>s</sup>;

(iii) "observations" here are not restricted to those which human beings might perform;

(iv) nevertheless, "human beings must be able to conceive the observations."

(v) This is possible because "we can in principle conceive-- though not imagine--experiences [and thus observations] radically different from any we could possibly have."

(vi) Thus verifiability can well serve as "a criterion of general meaning" (as distinct from empirical meaning, for which the only criterion can be "observational falsifiability"), provided it is "sufficiently liberalized to include non-human and superhuman experiences."

(vii) But even by thus allowing "conceivable divine experiences to count we do not take away all cutting edge from the criterion"; for if we could not observe the actualization of an alleged possibility (e.g., "There might have been nothing" or "God doesn't exist"), no more could God observe it.

Thus "not every verbally possible statement is made observationally verifiable by even the most generous notion of 'observation.'"

(ix) Nevertheless, what is excluded from God's conceivable experiences or observations is nothing but "the genuinely nonsensical or contradictory."

2. The question is whether this view of the scope of experience as

including God's experiences--though, significantly, only so far as they themselves are conceivable from the standpoint of human experience is a sufficiently restrictive understanding of experience to qualify as "naturalistic." My impression is that the answer is affirmative.

3. N.B. The nonexistence of God (properly defined) is utterly unverifiable. For no conceivable human experience could verify it--it being part of the meaning of God's existence that it must be compatible with all experiences, human or otherwise; nor could any conceivable divine experience verify it.