

Metaphysics is a matter of self-understanding—and that in a twofold sense.

First of all, in the sense that the understanding of ultimate reality that it is the business of metaphysics to formulate clearly and coherently at the level of critical reflection and proper theory is the understanding always already given in and with any self-understanding and life-praxis, implicit or explicit, authentic or inauthentic. But, then, secondly, in the sense that the metaphysician's task at the level of critical reflection and proper theory is to understand her- or himself, i.e., what she or he, like every other human being, always already understands, implicitly or explicitly, authentically or inauthentically, at the level of self-understanding and life-praxis.

It is in this second sense, of course, that Hartshorne can say that metaphysics is entirely a matter of self-understanding, because either the believer or the unbeliever is simply confused or deceived about what she or he always already believes or does not believe. But, aside from the fact that Hartshorne would almost certainly agree that metaphysics is a matter of self-understanding also in the first sense, this first sense is certainly no less important than the second; for at stake in so understanding metaphysics is nothing less than strictly upholding "the ontological difference," and thus an understanding of metaphysics as in every way an *ontological*, in no way an ontic, undertaking.

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