

Theism is the belief that there is a common ideal or meaning that is the standard for evaluating all special purposes or goods, all of which are to be understood as special cases of it. But this belief implies, in turn, that there is a common character pervading all reality that alone can provide the necessary ground of that common ideal or meaning.

Even to ask the existential question, however, presupposes that there is a common ideal or meaning that provides the standard for evaluating all special purposes and goods. And this presupposition, in turn, necessarily implies that positivism must be false in denying that there is also a common character pervading all possible reality and grounding the common ideal or meaning.

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The effect of positivism is to deny that there is any completely universal ideal pervasive of all experience and thought, so that all we're left with—in addition to science and technology—is our own language-practices and our own value preferences, such as they may be.

Post, however, for all his thoroughgoing empiricism, argues against any such denial by defending the determinacy of values generally along with that of truth. Nygren, on the other hand, accepts positivism's denial, even going so far as to allow that science and technology themselves rest on logically necessary presuppositions that are, finally, precisely matters of our own language-practices and value preferences.

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