

It is essential to the distinction of logical-ontological type between any property and its particular instances that the instances can exist (or occur) only contingently. And yet it is logically possible to distinguish between the property "divinity" and its particular instances, the while excluding polytheism even as a possibility by affirming radical monotheism instead—understanding by "radical monotheism" the position that one and only one divine individual exists, or even could exist, necessarily.

The key to making this distinction lies in recognizing that the particular instances of properties are not enduring individuals, but rather momentary events (or "states" of individuals).

In any case, the property "divinity" (= "supreme greatness" = "unsurpassability" = "all-worshipfulness") cannot be instantiated merely contingently but must be instantiated necessarily. In other words, the intensional class of its particular and therefore contingent instances must be, not merely contingently, but necessarily, a nonempty class. Although any of the instances, or "states," instantiating the property occurs, and must occur, contingently, that there are *some* such instances, and that any two of them are "genidentical," in the sense of being in personally ordered sequence with one another as states of one and the same divine individual, can and must be necessary.

Of all that ~~that~~ exists, what, if anything, might not have existed?

Of all that exists, everything might not have existed except "something" and what it necessarily implies—namely, the one divine something inclusive (actually or potentially) of all the many (actual or potential) nondivine somethings. Although particularization of mere somethingness—divine or nondivine—is and must be contingent, in that every step from the most universal property of somethingness toward its particularization is and must be contingent, it is not contingent but necessary that *some* contingent particularization of somethingness—divine and nondivine—occur.

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Hartshorne says that existence generically is "the self-identity of [God's] all-participating life." "God is . . . more or less self-evidently contained in the mere idea of one's own existence, . . . not merely as cause of our 'coming to be' but as constitutive of the very meaning of 'coming to be.' . ." (*MVG*: 279 ff.).

The first statement is simply the conclusion of the reasoning summarized above; i.e., "existence" is evidently but another way of saying "somethingness," which is there defined as, in effect, the self-identity of the one divine something as inclusive (actually or potentially) of all the many (actual or potential) nondivine somethings. But what about the distinction made in the second statement between God's being *cause of our coming to be* and being *constitutive of the very meaning of our "coming to be"*? Is it the same as, or is it different from, the distinction I commonly make between God's being *the ground of our being*, by making our being really possible in fact as well as in principle, and being *the ground of our meaning*, by making our being really real and everlastingly significant? The two distinctions, I take it, are essentially the same. To exist, or to be something, is to exist, or to be something, for God. God exists, or is something, for God; and everything other than God exists, or is something, for God—if, indeed, it exists, or is something, at all.

Hartshorne says in the same context, "[W]e do not 'act' in a public sense (in the sense in which 'reality' is not a solipsistic concept), that is, we do not really act, except as we act upon God, no matter what else we act upon. It is [God's] response to us that makes our act real, in the sense in which we can call the acts of others also real, and that is the sense of 'reality.'" I take it that this statement fully confirms the essential identity of Hartshorne's distinction with mine. To say that God is constitutive of the very meaning of our "coming to be" is only verbally different from saying either that to exist, or to be something, is to exist, or to be something for God or from saying that what we are and do is really significant only because we act upon God and of God's response to us.

By the way, it would have been better had Hartshorne written: "We do not 'act' in a public sense, that is, we do not really act (in the sense in which 'reality' is not a solipsistic concept), except as we act upon God," etc.