

Theology, like philosophy, is a matter of fully, i.e., critically, reflective self-understanding—with the difference that, whereas the object of philosophy is constituted by human existence simply as such, the object of theology is constituted by specifically Christian existence. Thus, whereas philosophy is critically reflective *human* self-understanding, theology is critically reflective *Christian* self-understanding.

But philosophy, like theology, is, in principle, a hermeneutical undertaking insofar as it pursues its objective by way of critical interpretation of human culture and religion in general just as theology pursues its objective by way of critical interpretation of Christian religion and culture in particular. Consequently, both fields of study, in their respectively different ways, are directly concerned with existentialist, as distinct from existential, understanding, in that they are directly concerned with the *possibility* of authentic self-understanding or of Christian self-understanding, as distinct from any *actualization* of this possibility, including the philosopher's or the theologian's own.

This means, among other things, that there are really four, not three, levels that need to be distinguished in carrying out the analysis proper to either field of study. Thus, in carrying out philosophy's analysis, one must distinguish not only (1) the *formulations* of things to be believed (*credenda*) and the *prescriptions* of things to be done (*agenda*); (2) the *things to be believed* and the *things to be done* themselves; and (3) the *actual self-understanding* that implies both kinds of things, but also (4) the *possibility* of such a self-understanding, which, has the same necessary implications. And so, too, *mutatis mutandis*, in carrying out the analysis proper to theology.

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