

What is the relation between (1) the purely formal conceptuality/terminology that I have held to be required if different religious and existential positions are to be critically interpreted and their claims to validity critically validated; and (2) a transcendental metaphysics such as I have also held to be both possible and necessary? Are they one and the same thing? Or are they related analogously?

I hesitate to say that they are one and the same because religion as well as other existential positions is one thing, metaphysics, something else. Thus, while religion concerns itself with the meaning of ultimate reality for us, metaphysics is concerned with the structure of ultimate reality in itself. Of course, the first concept necessarily implies the second, since to think and speak about the meaning of ultimate reality for us is to think and speak about the structure of ultimate reality in itself, even if symbolically rather than literally. But the converse implication does not hold: one may very well think and speak about the structure of ultimate reality in itself by abstracting from all thought and speech about the meaning of ultimate reality for us. It would seem to be the case, then, that while the purely formal conceptuality/terminology required for interpreting and validating religious and other existential positions necessarily implies a transcendental metaphysics, the two things cannot be one and the same. On the contrary, the first includes concepts/terms, such as "the meaning of ultimate reality for us," or "the implicit primal source of authority," or "the decisive representation of the meaning of ultimate reality," that go beyond, even as they surely imply, the proper concepts/terms of a transcendental metaphysics.

But if the two things can hardly be one and the same, are they related analogously? I incline to think they are.

One reason for thinking so is that, while the purely formal conceptuality/terminology has to do with the meaning of ultimate reality for us, it is in its own way abstract rather than concrete in having to do with the *structure* of such meaning as distinct from the meaning itself. Without in any way answering the existential question about such meaning, it clarifies the necessary conditions of the possibility of any such answer, thereby providing the concepts/terms in which both to interpret it and to validate its claims to validity. To this extent, its concepts/terms are evidently similar to those of a

transcendental metaphysics even while also being different from them, and, therefore, the two sets of concepts/terms are in the exact sense analogous.

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