

1. According to Hartshorne, "Philosophy is reasoning about fundamental beliefs or first principles." But, he adds, "philosophers should deal with beliefs, not primarily as advocates or opponents of particular beliefs, rather as elucidators of them. Above all, philosophers should explore conceptual possibilities for believing. What creeds people actually believe is their affair; but philosophers can show them (a) what more or less reasonably could be believed and (b) upon what grounds. So long at least as they disagree as radically as they now do, philosophers are in no position to tell anyone what beliefs should be adopted. However, they can exhibit candidates for reasonable belief among which choices may be made. The religious fanatic or prophet who says, 'This you must believe,' is the opposite of a philosopher, except in this, that at least the fanatic is concerned with belief. And the philosopher who is more than a mere technician has this concern also. But he is not the final arbiter, rather the clarifier or intellectual explorer, of belief possibilities." Thus, in Hartshorne's view, the philosopher's task is the "task of investigating belief options" ("Analysis and Cultural Lag in Philosophy": 105).

2. This seems to me to say about philosophy and the philosopher what I am concerned to say about theology and the theologian. This would be true, at any rate, if by "fundamental beliefs," and, therefore, "belief options," Hartshorne could be fairly interpreted as meaning "self-understanding" and, therefore, "options for self-understanding." That he could be so interpreted is, I believe, clear enough. For he is quite clear that "philosophers seek wisdom" and that "wisdom implies both knowledge and a right sense of values" ("The Nature of Philosophy": 7). This certainly appears to approximate what I mean when I insist that philosophy is more than ^a ~~an~~, although it includes, metaphysics, insofar as philosophy is concerned with the meaning of ultimate

reality for us, and thus ^{also} with our authentic self-understanding, not merely with the structure of ultimate reality in itself. Indeed, I could fully agree with Hartshorne that wisdom includes a right sense of values, because, in my view, philosophy's concern with authentic self-understanding includes ethics.

3. Does this mean, then, that the theologian can be described as an elucidator, or clarifier, or intellectual explorer of "belief possibilities"? Yes, it does, as should be clear enough in the case of the philosophical theologian, who is simply the philosopher with respect to the question he or she asks, if not also with respect to the answer that he or she gives to this question. But it should also be clear in the case of the Christian theologian as soon as the "belief possibilities" in question are understood to be possibilities with respect to believing Christianly. For the Christian theologian is as little the final arbiter of Christian beliefs as the philosopher is of fundamental beliefs in general. As a matter of fact, I should say that, even if there were to be something like a theological consensus, it still would not become the theologian as theologian to become the advocate or opponent of particular beliefs, as distinct from being the elucidator of them. To this extent, then, I go farther than Hartshorne does in distinguishing theology's task to validate (or invalidate) the validity claims expressed or implied by Christian witness from the task of the religious believer or witness (although I should not suppose the class of such to include only fanatics or prophets, since it may very well include the church's official magisterium!).

4. If I have any more or less important differences from Hartshorne, they lie at two points. First, as I have made clear, e.g., in "The Task of

Philosophical Theology," the philosopher has resources other than the three singled out by Hartshorne. In addition to his or her own experience with life, intellectual history, and logical analysis, the philosopher has, above all, the evidence to which Whitehead rightly says our first appeal must be made, namely, common human experience as expressed in culture and especially language. Relative to this, indeed, "intellectual history" has only a secondary evidential force. Second, I should make more than Hartshorne does of the fact that each human being is to some extent given [^] and called to be a philosopher as well as the believer whose options for belief the philosopher investigates. "What then is the role of the professional philosopher? I suggest that it is to clarify the philosophical options, the possible doctrines, and possible arguments by which they can be supported or opposed. . . . Professional philosophy furnishes the nonprofessional with ideas, reasons, arguments, out of which his responsibility is to select and assimilate whatever he finds helpful. The disagreements among philosophers rule out any dictatorial role in society. . . . In philosophical matters, as in religious, each is on his own" ("The Nature of Philosophy": 15 f.). In response to questions, Hartshorne further clarified this to mean "only that each must take his chances with his own judgment, since the experts do not agree. One either chooses an expert to trust, or tries to decide the issues directly" ("The Centrality of Reason in Philosophy": 1). Clearly, this whole discussion prescind from the distinctive role of the lay philosopher qua philosopher, focusing, as it does, on the one hand, on the expert or professional philosopher and, on the other hand, on the believer ^{or disbeliever} _^ in, advocate for, or opponent of, fundamental beliefs. Thus Hartshorne can say, "In

primitive stages of culture the need for philosophical reflection is met by proverbial wisdom and religious indoctrination absorbed in childhood and youth. In more complicated civilizations the variety of religions and traditions leads many to doubt the validity of any tradition, and once this stage is reached philosophical reflection is bound to occur" ("The Nature of Philosophy": 14). But, clearly, the need for philosophical reflection as such, given Hartshorne's own characterization of it as the investigation, or intellectual exploration, of belief options, could never be met by proverbial wisdom and religious indoctrination. The point, rather, is that under the conditions described, no such need is felt. On the other hand, the many who are led to doubt the validity of any tradition, under other social-cultural conditions, include lay as well as expert participants in the task of philosophical reflection.