

1. There is a distinction to be made between even the axioms or first principles or metaphysics, on the one hand, and the necessary presuppositions of human existence and all existence, which it is the business of metaphysics to explicate, on the other.

2. Still, it is the business of metaphysics to make these necessary presuppositions explicit in its axioms or first principles, even as it is the business of religion to explicate their meaning for us.

3. Any such explication, however, religious as well as metaphysical, is subject to rational criticism, just as, on the other hand, what any such explication has to do with—its object, if you will—is nothing contingent or merely factual, but that which is necessary or transcendental, be it *metaphysical-transcendental*, because the *structure* of ultimate reality in itself, or rather *existential-transcendental*, because the *meaning* of ultimate reality for us.

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