

In correcting some of my formulations concerning the unique authoritativeness of human reason over all supposed authorities" (29 March 1999), I speak of human reason as "more exactly, the *noetic*, as distinct from the *ontic*, implicit authorizing source."

While this is correct enough as far as it goes, the qualification "*human* reason" is important. Why? Because, while human reason is certainly not the *ontic*, but only the *noetic*, implicit authorizing source, the tradition in which the meaning of "reason" has been discussed rightly allows that "reason" (*logos, ratio, die Vernunft*) has an *ontic* as well as a *noetic* reference, and even that it is possible and necessary to distinguish an eminent or *divine* reason (*Logos, Ratio*). Therefore, while human reason is uniquely authoritative only as the *noetic* implicit source of authority, eminent or, symbolically speaking, *divine* Reason is uniquely authoritative precisely as the *ontic* implicit source.

I should say that the *ontic* source of authority that, symbolically speaking, I may call "*Reason*" is to be spoken of literally, not simply as "reality," but as the "*structure* of reality," ontological as well as *ontic*, allowing that "reality" has and must have structure in itself as well as content, quality, or value in itself, in order also to have meaning for us. Thus its meaning for us is the meaning of its content in itself *and* its structure in itself for beings who live understandingly, or—to say the same thing in different words—who are endowed with human reason, or at any rate with reason in some form appropriate to a noneminent or nondivine being.

On some other occasion, I need to work out more fully the connections mentioned or suggested here among my several distinctions between "structure and content," "structure and meaning," "reason and experience," "intelligibility and mystery," "abstract and concrete," and so on.

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