



An atheist for atheism's sake knows no God as the wholly Other — or as that which makes man quite another — because he views himself as God. An atheist for God's sake on the other hand, destroys all images, traditions, and religious feelings of his own that unite him with God in an illusive fashion; and he does so for the sake of the inexpressibly living, wholly different God. His atheism is negative theology.

~Jurgen Moltmann

8. Concerning the Warrant of Theology

Concern for the warrant of an utterance arises with the perception that there is something at stake which will be decided or disposed in the utterance. This is the general way in which utterances emerge out of the matter-of-fact to become present-at-hand and is an instance of the general fact of care as an existentials of Dasein. The way Heidegger explains it, "Care, as a primordial structural totality, lies 'before' every factual 'attitude' and 'situation' of Dasein, and it does so existentially *a priori*; this means that it always lies *in* them."¹ There is no question of warrants until one is confronted with an utterance that stands out *as decisive* for the world that comes to presence through the primordially-given structural totality of care, and becomes questionable by virtue of its presence-at-hand. In that case, all interested parties seek to satisfy themselves that the utterance in question is both possible and meaningful. An inquiry into warrants formally clarifies the basis of an utterance and makes way for further questioning or elaboration. Every decisive utterance must be ready to answer a warrant call, Anthony Flew suggests in "Theology and Falsification," even though there are certain to be differences of opinion on what constitutes philosophical defensibility.² It is perhaps an indication of the inherent decisiveness of theology that the theological discourse has frequently been presented with warrant calls. It is also an indication of the nature of religion's presence-at-hand that Flew can conflate the truth criteria of philosophy and religion.

In asserting that all decisive utterances must be ready to answer a warrant call, only one claim is being made here concerning the standpoint from which the call may issue or the standards by which the reply will be judged: formally, all warrant calls originate in questions of truth as *adaequatio intellectus et rei*. While not occupying himself much with the term *intellectus*, Heidegger makes use of this formula in *Being and Time* in a way that dovetails with the reading of the term proposed in Chapter VII above; for his own purposes, he suggests an unconventional interpretation of *adaequatio* that leads him to abandon the reading of the word as "agreement in particulars" and instead think of it primarily as naming a kind of relation of entities grounded in Being, the knowledge of which "... demonstrates itself *as true*."³ Further, says Heidegger,

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What gets demonstrated is the Being-uncovering of the assertionWhat is to be demonstrated is not an agreement of knowing with its object, still less of the psychical with the physical; but neither is it an agreement between 'contents of consciousness' among themselves. What is to be demonstrated is solely the Being-uncovered of the entity itself— *that entity* in the "how" of its uncoveredness. This uncoveredness is confirmed when that which is put forward in the assertion (namely the entity itself) shows itself *as that very same thing*. "*Confirmation*" signifies *the entity's showing itself in its self sameness*.⁴

Warrants are determinations that what-is will be confirmed as it is, not necessarily that knowledge will match up with prior convictions. A warrant is an explication of the basis of that discourse in which the basis of the discourse shows itself to be viable. Today, perhaps the most common type of warrant call in thoughtful conversation originates in analytic philosophy; while this type of warrant call is neither the only possible way to question the foundations of an utterance nor the only appropriate one, it is one that is often heard and one that could conceivably be directed at the present project. Though warrants have been most prominently discussed in the conversations of analytic philosophy, warrant calls are by no means restricted to that specialty. The warrant calls of analytic philosophy appear to have their primary use in matters of logical consequence and empirical falsifiability, that is, whenever the notion of truth-as-agreement operates. In the limited sphere of these types of questions, a warrant call is the beginning of establishing to which domains a present-at-hand statement belongs or can belong, an operation which consequently determines meaningfulness, truth, or falsity of the statement virtually in advance, viz. according to the positivistic assumptions that apparently operate throughout analytic philosophy. We do not have to accept all of analytic philosophy's assumptions here to make use of some of its procedures regarding warrants.

Even though analytic philosophy's warrant calls seem to have their greatest utility in science and law, one of analytic philosophy's classic cases involves theological metaphysics. It deals with theology's presumed warrant to speak of God and it illustrates both the strength and weakness of conceiving warrants in terms of agreement as the refinement of powers of discrimination goes hand-in-hand