

From some of his discussions of the term, one might well suppose that "κοσμος" (or "world") for Bultmann has two main uses: (1) its use in the Greek sense to mean "the world-all ruled throughout by divine powers"; and (2) its use in the New Testament to mean "the human world," of which what is called "this world" is the inauthentic modification, meaning "the sphere of everything that human beings think, plan, and will in their cares and wishes, in their lusts and busyness, in their pride and arrogance," and thus "the spiritual sphere by which every person is encompassed from the outset, with its judgments and prejudices, its evaluations and strivings" (GV 2: 68).

But there is at least one discussion where Bultmann recognizes yet a third use of the term, also distinct from its Greek use and characteristic of the Bible. "According to the Old Testament view," he says, "human beings stand over against the world; for them, it is, first, the sphere of their dominion to which they are appointed by God, and then, further, the world that encounters them, that brings them their destiny. Thus raised out of the world, they nonetheless belong with it over against God; the world is God's creation and they are creatures among creatures, and the world is their home precisely as creation" (203). Clearly, it is this third use of the term that is most directly clarified by Heidegger's concept of "being-in-the-world [*In-der-Welt-Sein*]," although "the one [*das man*]" obviously serves to clarify the other, second use that is prominent in the New Testament. q. GV, 3:2

It occurs to me, in this connection, that, in this third use, the meaning of "world" is completely relative to human existence and experience, specifically, our *empirical* experience of reality and the understanding based on it, somewhat in the way in which Bultmann typically uses the term "God" to mean something equally completely relative to human existence and experience, although, in this case, our *existential* experience of "a reality that is other than or transcendent of the world of beings [*eine Wirklichkeit jenseits der Welt des Seienden, also eine transzendente Wirklichkeit*]," understood, however, strictly in its meaning for us, as distinct from its structure in itself ("Die protestantische Theologie und der Atheismus": 376 f. ). The one thing Bultmann says that might suggest a slightly different reading is the distinction he makes between the world's being the sphere of human beings' dominion and its being something that encounters them, that

brings them their destiny. But, clearly, a world understood in its meaning for us, even if in its existential meaning for us rather than its empirical meaning, is still a world completely relative to us.

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