

When Bultmann says (*NTM*:155) that "'[r]eality' can be understood in a double sense" and then proceeds to distinguish between two different ways of understanding it—which in the case of history means understanding one and the same reality authentically, "as personal address," or inauthentically, "in an objectifying way," whence either "existentialist interpretation of history" or "objectifying observation of the historical past"—it seems to me he may be making something like the distinction I make between experiencing and understanding the one reality *in its meaning for me*—for my own self-understanding and life-praxis—and experiencing and understanding the same reality *in its structure in itself*.

But there is another important distinction that Bultmann is nothing like as clear about—namely, that between the ~~penultimate~~^{immediate} reality disclosed by understanding based on sense experience and the *ultimate* reality (including but not exhausted by the *strictly* ultimate reality) disclosed by understanding based on our nonsensuous experience. To understand the first in its structure in itself is to understand it in the way fully developed by the natural sciences, as well as by history in the sense of "objectifying observation of the historical past," whereas to understand the second in its structure in itself is to understand it in the way fully developed by transcendental metaphysics (including but not exhausted by *existentialist analysis*). On the other hand, to understand the first in its meaning for us is to understand it in the way fully developed by technology, whereas to understand the second in its meaning for us is to understand it in the way fully developed by morality or ethics and religion.

Bultmann is not as clear about this second distinction, I take it, because he fails to appreciate—and thus to recognize clearly and consistently—the possibility and the necessity of metaphysics alongside religion. Thus, for example, all that he's willing to allow in the way of metaphysics, beyond existentialist analysis, is clarifying the "*idea*" or "*concept*" of God, as designating, in effect, the meaning of strictly ultimate reality for us, as distinct from anything like clarifying strictly ultimate reality in its structure in itself.

Bultmann also seems to me to confuse—or to be in serious danger of confusing—understanding things in their structure in themselves, whether

scientifically or metaphysically, with understanding them "inauthentically," even though the only position consistent with his general principles requires one to distinguish clearly between them. What constitutes inauthenticity is not so understanding things simply as such, but doing so out of one's underlying anxiety and need for acceptance as though this were the only or the authentic way of understanding them. Thus if I use either science or metaphysics as part of my project as a self who understands himself inauthentically, then, but *only* then, they, too, become inauthentic—and, I might add, "*unsachlich* [unrealistic]" (cf. *GV* 2: 39, 53). But to speak of them as inauthentic simply in themselves is, by implication, to deny the doctrine of creation—or to confuse creation with *fallen* creation. This means, among other things, that, although there is indeed a "dialectical" relation between understanding things in their structure in themselves and understanding them in their meaning for us, there is no such relation—as Bultmann seems to say there is—between properly "inauthentic" and "authentic" modes of understanding.

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