

Some of Bultmann's arguments against faith's being a *Weltanschauung* are misleading insofar as they fail to state explicitly what he expressly allows elsewhere—e.g., when he says that “with respect to its content of ideas, [the word of God] is a possible world view” (NTM: 41). By this I understand him to mean that, although the word of God, or the proclamation, like the faith for which it calls, is not a world view, it nonetheless necessarily *implies* a world view that is correctly understood as such.

In arguing for the difference between Christian faith and pantheism, however, Bultmann takes no explicit account of this. In fact, for all he says to the contrary, he takes the difference in question to consist simply in pantheism's being a “world view,” while Christian faith in God is not. But by saying nothing about Christian faith in God's nonetheless necessarily *implying* a world view, he leaves the impression that faith, as he understands it, may be after all something very like Hare's *blik*, or Van Buren's “historical perspective,” in direct contradiction to his own insistence in the same context that faith's talk about God's acting is not only “a pictorial way of designating subjective experiences . . . but means to speak of an act in a fully real, ‘objective’ sense” (110 f.).

I hold, on the contrary, that Christian faith differs from pantheism not simply in this one respect, but in two: (1) in not itself being a world view; and (2) in nonetheless necessarily implying a world view that is distinct from pantheism's, in that it does not simply identify God and the world, but also distinguishes them. (Significantly, perhaps, Bultmann speaks not only of “pantheism,” but also of “pantheistic piety,” thereby at least appearing to suggest a parallel to the distinction I've just made between the nonpantheistic, [panen]theistic world view that Christian faith necessarily implies and Christian faith itself, which, like “pantheistic piety,” as distinct from “pantheism,” is not a theoretical world view, but an existential self-understanding, or understanding of existence.)

In this connection, I cannot but think of two other things that Bultmann says. One is his statement that “the paradox of theology” is that, “like all science,

it must speak of faith objectifyingly, in the knowledge that all its speech makes its point only in sublating the objectification" (Karl Jaspers and Rudolf Bultmann, *Die Frage der Entmythologisierung*: 96). The other thing is a passage in which he speaks of "the impossibility of speaking of God's action in general statements." Having allowed that one can, naturally, express the meaning, or sense, of the idea of God and of God's action in general statements, he nonetheless insists that "I can speak only of what God does here and now with me, of what God speaks here and now to me." Whereupon he adds: "Of course, even if we do not speak of God in general terms, but rather of God's action here and now on us, we must speak in terms of general ideas, for our language constantly employs ideas; but it does not follow that such utterances have the character of general statements" (*Jesus Christ and Mythology*: 66 f./GV 4: 176).

I can only suppose that "sublating" theology's necessary objectification is indicated because it can speak of faith only in terms of "general ideas," notwithstanding that its whole point in speaking—however indirectly—is not to talk about God and God's act in general, but to confront its hearer with the demand for decision in face of God and God's action here and now.

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