

If it is correct to say that, in Bultmann's view, existentialism—for all of its differences from idealism(-humanism) and naturalism—is also an instance of what he means by "world view" (= *Weltanschauung*), then, taking into account what he says about our "double possibility" of understanding ourselves as moderns either naturalistically or idealistically (*NTM*: 5 f.), one may infer that he, in fact, allows for at least *three* distinctively modern world views—viz., existentialism as well as naturalism and idealism(-humanism). (In other contexts, he also speaks of "subjectivism," "positivism," "relativism," and "nihilism" as all distinctively modern phenomena—the first having a precedent in ancient sophism. But whether, or in what sense, he would consider any of these also an instance of "world view," as distinct from the denial of the possibility of such a thing, is not clear from what he has to say about them.)

This means, then, that all three of these modern world views—existentialism no less than naturalism and idealism(-humanism)—have one and the same "common basis," which they necessarily presuppose. This basis is constituted by, "in the first place, the world picture formed by modern natural science and, in the second place, our own self-understanding, according to which we each understand our self to be a closed inner unity that is not open to the interference of supernatural powers" (6). Consequently, one need not be either a naturalist or an idealist(-humanist) in order to have a distinctively modern world view that presupposes both the world picture of modern science and the invulnerability of human existence to supernatural interventions. One can just as well be an existentialist and still make both of the same presuppositions.

Moreover, one presumably has good reason, in Bultmann's view, to prefer existentialism to both of its modern alternatives. It is, to a greater degree than either of them, "legitimate," and thus "right," if not also "true," by the criterion that "[a] 'Weltanschauung' . . . is the more legitimated the more it expresses the historicity of the human being" (*History and Eschatology*: 148 f.).

Significantly, however, Bultmann does not appear to have felt anything like the same importance or urgency for contemporary theology to

engage in critical discussion with naturalism that he obviously felt in the cases of both existentialism and idealism(-humanism) (*GV*, 3: 193 f.). The reason for this, possibly, is that, in such discussion with idealism(-humanism), theology is faced with a new form of "the old problem of the relation of law and gospel" that could scarcely even arise in a discussion with naturalism.

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