



# BULLETIN

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### DUES AND ANNUAL MEETING

With the summer issue of the Bulletin, it is time to pay dues once again. For those receiving the Bulletin by mail, please fill out the dues form, indicating changes in address, and send your check to:

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- For those members receiving the Bulletin electronically, the last page, p. 40, contains the dues information that must be remitted with your check. Please print it out and return it. If you are receiving a hard copy, simply tear off the back page.
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date. This applies only to non-residents of the United States.

- Kindly remit your dues now, while it is on your mind. Many thanks for your timely cooperation.

### Annual Meeting

Please mark your calendars for the annual meeting in Chicago on October 31, 2008. The AAR Meeting and the sessions of the Tillich Group, "Paul Tillich: Religion, Theology, and Culture," will take place from November 1<sup>st</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup>. The annual banquet will be held on Friday, October 31, All Hallows Eve.

**Note:** the Fall issue of the *Bulletin* will contain the complete program and the assigned rooms for all the Tillich sessions. Banquet location and speaker will also be announced.

### Website

The Society needs a new webmeister. For many years, we have been housed through the Yale University School of Law. Our webmeister there has been promoted and cannot no longer work on the website. *Volunteers who are tech-savvy are needed.*

*A small stipend is available for anyone interested.* Let's hope we can have a new person in charge of NAPTS.org by the end of the annual meeting. The editor is very grateful to Kevin Bailey for all he has done to help the NAPTS.

### NEW PUBLICATIONS

Dourley, John. *Paul Tillich, Carl Jung and the Recovery of Religion*. New York: Routledge, 2008. Tillich and Jung shared the common conviction that cultural religion (Christianity) had lost its spiritual vitality. Both worked to restore a living personal and cultural spirituality to their society. Tillich did this with the recovery of a radical sense of immanence, which would restore the validity of religion as the precondition to restoring the credibility of Christianity. Jung did the same by identifying the common source of all religions in the unconscious and arguing that this source now sponsored a religious sense that would move through the monotheisms but supersede them in the more inclusive embrace of an evolving Spirit. In the end, Jung's strategy is the more radical. John Dourley is Professor Emeritus of Carleton University, Ottawa, and a member of the faculty of the C. G. Jung Foundation of Toronto.

Slater, Peter. "Religious and Theological Dialectics: Kierkegaard and Tillich." *Toronto Journal of Theology* 24, 1 (2008): 1–22.

Wariboko, Nimi. *God and Money: A Theology of Money in a Globalizing World*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2008.

This book uses Tillich's trinitarian principles as a framework to interpret national and global monetary systems. In particular, the study analyzes the dynamics at work in the global monetary system and argues that the monarchical-currency structure of the dollar, euro, and yen may be moving toward a trinitarian structure of a democratic world currency. It then makes a case for a single global currency in the place of the dollar, euro, and yen, which have dominated the global trade and payment system for too long. Wariboko is the Katherine B. Stuart Associate Professor of Christian Ethics at Andover Newton Theological School, Newton, Massachusetts.

Please send information on any new publication on Tillich's thought or about any other subject written by members of the NAPTS to the editor. Thank you.

### NEWS NOTES

#### The Paul Tillich Lecture at Harvard

On Monday, May 5, 2008, the Paul Tillich Lecture was held at the Harvard Divinity School. The Topic was "Science, Faith, and the Dialogue of Cultures: Islamic Perspectives." The distinguished speaker was Bruno Guiderdoni, an astrophysicist and Director of Research at the National Center for Scientific Research of France, Director of the Lyon Observatory, and Cofounder and Director of the Islamic Institute of Advanced Studies in Paris. Dr. Guiderdoni is a founding member of the International Society for Science and Religion at Cambridge, U.K., and has served on the Board of Advisors of the John Templeton Foundation and Judge of the *Templeton Prize for Progress on Discoveries about Spiritual Realities* from 2003 to 2005. Raised in a Christian family, Dr. Guiderdoni's own spiritual quest led him to embrace Islam in 1987.

The respondents to Dr. Guiderdoni's presentation were Howard A. Smith, Senior Astrophysicist at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, and David C. Lamberth, Associate Professor of Theology at the Harvard Divinity School.

#### The Pauck Collection Opens at Princeton

On 23 May 2008, the Princeton Theological Seminary Libraries hosted a celebration in honor of the official opening of the "Wilhelm and Marion Pauck Manuscript Collection." Dr. Stephen Crocco, chief librarian, introduced the first speaker, Mrs. Marion Hausner Pauck, independent scholar. Professor Hans Hillerbrand, church historian, discussed church history, historical theology, Lutheranism, and Wilhelm Pauck's contribution to 20th century historical theology. Dr. Kenneth Henke, reference librarian, gave a lively description of the collection, which spans from 1901 to the present day. And finally Dr Clifford Anderson, Archivist, spoke some closing words. There was a banquet to celebrate the opening from 6 pm to 10 pm. The joyful, harmonious gathering was attended by students of Dr. Pauck, staff members of the library, and personal friends of Mrs. Pauck, e.g. Mrs. Elisabeth Niebuhr Sifton, Mr. Christopher Niebuhr, and Mr. Hugh Van Dusen.

Qualified scholars are now able to apply in order to work in the collection.

## ZIONISM IN THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN MARTIN BUBER AND PAUL TILlich

ANNE MARIE REIJNEN

Are you not like the Ethiopians to me, O people of Israel? says the Lord. Did I not bring Israel up from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir? <sup>1</sup>

Ten kabs of beauty descended to the world, nine were taken by Jerusalem and one by the rest of the world.<sup>2</sup>

### **Preliminary: Zionism and the Jewish-Christian Tradition**

It is both excruciating and crucial to examine the idea of Zion—the belief in a place particularly invested with divine purpose—because of the intrinsic importance of this theological *topos* for the Jewish commonwealth and for Christianity. In the plain words of Stephen Sizer, Zion is “the land of Israel or more specifically, Jerusalem. It is at the heart of the Zionist dream, where land, city and temple are once more restored to the Jewish people, either inaugurated by the Messiah or brought about by human effort.”<sup>3</sup> The same author also offers a definition of Zionism: “the movement for the return of the Jewish people to their ancient homeland and the resumption of Jewish political sovereignty in the land of Israel centered on Jerusalem as their eternal and undivided capital.”<sup>4</sup>

The practical consequences of this belief have the power to polarize, feeding extremes of love and of hate. Notions such as ancient homeland or eternal capital are vigorously contested by the Palestinian Arab people and their numerous friends. Liberal Christians steer away, I believe, from Zion as *theologoumenon* because they find political Zionism so unpalatable. Yet, through a strange wrinkle of history, Christian (theological) Zionism was born before its Jewish (theological-political) counterpart! Now I do not usually favor the expression “Jewish-Christian,” because the hyphen requires many qualifications, but this may well be the one topic where it does apply. If we understand Zionism—Christian and Jewish—as the belief in the singular destiny of a (chosen) people, it expresses the yearning for the tangible signs of God’s kingdom, of a messianic era starting from *the holy mount* (Zion). And it remains a moot question for Christians whether Jesus, whom

we confess as the Christ, is as Son of David defined by this particular messianic pattern. What is undisputed is that the quandary of Jewish identity is bound to the destiny of the land of Israel, both intimately and externally; this sense of *being bound to* encompasses the entire gamut of passionate identification with, and outright rejection of, Israel as “Jewish homeland.” It is probably the voices of fiction that are best suited to describe the scale of contradictory emotions and thoughts, as one can appreciate in the masterful narratives of Philip Roth. One alter ego of the writer, Nathan Zuckerman in the novel *Counterlife*, on traveling to Israel to rescue his brother who has become a kibbutznik, offers this down-to-earth definition: “Inasmuch as Zionism meant taking upon oneself, rather than leaving to others, responsibility for one’s survival as a Jew, this was their brand of Zionism.”<sup>5</sup> Such a pragmatic understanding, with an emphasis on self-determination and sovereignty and therefore on the activity of the human agent, stands in stark contrast with Christian (evangelical) variations on the theological themes of divine providence and election, where the activity of the divine agent demands the passivity of the believers.

In this paper I would like to do justice to the protracted “agony” (in the sense of inner struggle) of two liberal thinkers and believers over the *skandalon* of particularism: Martin Buber, who wrangled with Zionism from his youth to his death in Jerusalem (June 13, 1965), and Paul Tillich who gave an account of the way his own mind changed regarding Zionism, as a result, among other things, of his conversations with Buber, during four decades, ending in Jerusalem. The dilemma posed by Zionism, as a practical proposition or an utopian ideal, illustrates the quandary of these two thinkers. “Essence is the trouble and the beauty,” one commentator said of Buber’s thought; it applies equally to Tillich, in my opinion. The eternal destiny of the Jewish people and the enduring meaning of a promised land are *essentialist* tenets; yet Buber and Tillich, from the time of their shared experience within religious socialism, could not restrict themselves to a meta-historical interpretation of history. They could not excuse themselves from the kairos when it seemed on the verge of becoming realized, nor look away when the vision turned into a nation-state—the dream into a nightmare, as some would say today. John Dewey epitomized the liberal mindset when, asked about his religious ideas, he wrote that he was

“skeptical about things in particular” but that he had “faith in things in general.”<sup>6</sup> By contrast, Zionism, I believe, constitutes a stumbling block since it requires faith about a thing in particular. Martin Buber, who had ceased to be a member of a Zionist organization while he was still a young man, never let go of Zionism both as a powerful essentialist article of faith and as a concrete undertaking.

### 1. Lyrical and Critical: Martin Buber’s Brand of Zionism

I have chosen to start this inquiry with Buber, because of his seniority—he was older than Tillich by 8 years. Also, apart from the incontrovertible chronological datum, Buber enjoyed an early and quite considerable celebrity while he was still a young man; in 1909, when he addressed audiences of Jewish students in Prague, Vienna, and Berlin, he was, at 31, widely known and respected. It is not surprising, therefore, that one encounters more references by Tillich to Buber’s work and person than the other way around. Such lopsidedness is common in the epistemological asymmetry of many Jewish-Christian dialogues, since it is the Christian partner who seeks, through the confrontation with the Jewish counterpart, to understand her or his own identity and to vindicate it, while the reverse is not, generally, the case.

Buber’s Zionism is both lyrical (mystical) and critical (prophetic). The lyrical temperament runs freely in the earlier texts, and is bridled in progressively; later, the critical voice intrudes more often. Buber’s position is in fact critical in two directions: “I shall try to extricate the unique character of Jewish religiosity from the rubble with which rabbinism and rationalism have covered it”<sup>7</sup>—the kind of axiom which provokes displeasure in several, opposing audiences. Thus, Buber confronts two mentalities as destructive or dissolving, threatening the spirit of creative and authentic “sense of wonder and adoration”<sup>8</sup>: literalness (or rabbinism) and liberalism (in the sense of a rationalistic, merely humanistic understanding of religion). It is in his critique of rabbinism where he seems to be most polemical: “You who take refuge behind the bulwark of the law in order to avoid looking into God’s abyss.”<sup>9</sup>

Now there are many ways to be a Jew, including by living an “outlaw Judaism,” that is, not living according to the mitsvot of the Torah and the Halacha; the diatribe of Buber is a typically *prophetic* statement that fits in the whole of Judaism as a *spiritual process*. It of course becomes more ambivalent

when we recognize the proximity with some old Christian commonplaces about Jewish legalism and ritualism. One senses, in the *Jewish* tributes to Buber, that he had been distrusted by some of his Jewish colleagues because some Christians—including Paul Tillich as I shall try and show shortly—liked him, for what may have been, in part, the wrong reasons! Their dialogues, Tillich says in his tribute to his old friend, “were conversations between a Jew and a Protestant who had both gone beyond the boundaries of Judaism and of Protestantism, while at the same time remaining Jew on the one hand and Protestant on the other.”<sup>10</sup> While such believing without belonging may be achieved by a Christian (Protestant), it does not capture, I think, the way Buber as a Jew thought about his faith and the long friendship may well have rested on a fertile misunderstanding.<sup>11</sup>

I would like to show the *lyrical* temperament of Buber’s early Zionism, illustrated by visionary moments such as the following.

Only when Judaism once again reaches out, like a hand, grasping each Jew by the hair of his head and carrying him, in the tempest raging between heaven and earth, toward Jerusalem, as the hand of the Lord once grasped and carried Ezekiel, the priest, in the land of the Chaldeans—only then will the Jewish people be ready to build a new destiny for itself where the old one once broke into fragments.

In Philip Roth’s hard-nosed narrative, Zuckerman’s brother Henry is the one who speaks in this vein; he goes to Eilat on a snorkeling trip and visits Jerusalem, where he wanders around Mea Shearim.

I was sitting in the sunshine... And when I heard them, there was a surge inside me, a realization – at the root of my life, the very *root* of it, I was *them*; I always *had* been them. Children chanting away in Hebrew, I couldn’t understand a word of it, couldn’t recognize a single sound, and yet I was listening as though something I didn’t even know I’d been searching for was suddenly reaching out for me.<sup>12</sup>

Buber’s lectures in to the German-speaking Jewish students of the Diaspora in 1909 to 1911 “were not academic exercises; he was sounding a *shofar*,” as Roger Kamenetz notes in his Foreword.<sup>13</sup> In my opinion, it is a kind of rhetoric the later Buber would avoid, but not a sentiment he would ever disavow. In an anthology called *The Zionist Idea*, Arthur Hertzberg classifies Buber’s contribution to the movement under the heading “Religious Nationalists, Old and

New,” along with Rabbi Abraham Isaac Kook (1865-1935); this is not inappropriate, albeit reductionistic, for Buber’s ideas are also cognate with the other categories, e.g., “Zionism of Marxist and Utopian Socialists.” In his life-long quest, Buber is also related to other “Intellectuals in Search of Roots,” such as Bernard Lazare and his contemporary Edmond Fleg. Finally, he owes a great debt to the towering figures of Ahad Ha-Am (Asher Zvi Ginsberg) and to Berdichevski, presented in Hertzberg’s anthology as Agnostic Rabbis.<sup>14</sup> Buber had started out at the University of Vienna in 1896 and studied in Leipzig, Zurich, and Berlin; he became a Zionist in 1898 and soon founded the Zionist organization in Leipzig and, at the University, the Jewish students’ club. He actually worked in Vienna with Theodor Herzl for a few months but by the end of 1901 they parted ways. By contrast with the political Zionism of Herzl, Buber from then on considered himself more a cultural and spiritual Zionist. On finally emigrating to Palestine in 1938, he joined with Judah Leon Magnes (1877-1948) and other “pacifists” in advocating a bi-national state, that is an Arab-Jewish compromise. (Note that the term “pacifist” in this context is used by the chronicler of the *Zionist Idea* as derogatory.)

I suggest that one gets a better view of Buber’s place in the spectrum at the time by reading the account by Rachid Khalidi, chair of Arab Studies at Columbia. In his historical analysis of the struggles for competing statehoods, *The Iron Cage*, published in 2006, he writes:

In 1937 most Zionist thinkers accepted [the recommendation of the Peel commission] that the country be partitioned to make possible the creation of a Jewish state.... In their public statements these leaders gave little attention to the formal place to be given to Arabs in the Palestine/ Israel of the future, except perhaps a tolerated minority after the Jews had eventually become a majority in the country as a result of unrestricted immigration. An influential minority of Zionist leaders, led by Ze’ev Jabotinsky...were coldly realistic and much more forthright: There is no choice: the Arabs must make room for the Jews in Eretz Israel. If it was possible to transfer the Baltic peoples, it is also possible to move the Palestinian Arabs.<sup>15</sup>

Khalidi notes that in an unpublished memo of 1941, Ben Gurion seemed to agree, privately, with this analysis: “It is impossible to imagine evacuation of

the Arab population without compulsion, and brutal compulsion.”

At the other end of the political spectrum, Khalidi continues his retelling, “a few leading Jewish thinkers such as Judah Magnes and Martin Buber advocated a bi-national state, because they saw the inherent injustice, and the ultimately tragic consequences for both peoples, of trying to carry out the full-scale Zionist program of creating a Jewish state in an overwhelmingly Arab country. Nevertheless, they did not flesh out what that formula might mean in practice, nor did they convince large numbers of Jews in Palestine of the force of their arguments.”<sup>16</sup> Khalidi goes on to remind readers of the Resolution 181 of the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1947 which called specifically for the establishment of a Jewish State alongside an Arab State, and a Special International Regime for the City of Jerusalem; this, he writes, constitutes the basis of Israel’s international legitimacy and standing.

*I am writing the draft of this paper in Lebanon, where I could not enter if I visited Israel previously; the windows of the library overlook the buildings of Beirut gutted by the summer war of 2006, ten minutes from the Jewish neighborhood that is empty and destroyed but for the ruins of the synagogue, whose very name is erased from the map of the city. Over breakfast, I read in this morning’s papers that the Jewishness of the state of Israel is disputed (November 2008). The press here speaks not only of the Occupied West Bank, but also of Occupied Jerusalem. Next to me as I write these sentences, within inches of my computer, a Palestinian student is reading about “the building of the partition wall, the land-grab which is perpetrated under the cloak of defending security.”*

As Buber writes: “True, it is a difficult, a tremendously difficult undertaking to drive the plowshare of the normative principle into the hard sod of political fact; but the right to lift a historical moment into the light of what is above history can be bought no cheaper.”<sup>17</sup> Elsewhere, Buber writes: “as long as such a spiritual reality lives, history should be responsible to it, rather than that it should be responsible to history.”<sup>18</sup>

Buber interpreted the entire existence of the Jews as *galut*, as exile. The loss of Jerusalem after the Bar Kochba insurrection in 135 CE entailed a tragedy; what made it into a drama (providence, destiny) is the particular calling of Israel to be both a creed and a nation, as he explains in a lecture for the

Frankfurt Lehrhaus in 1934. The calling expresses what Tillich defines as “meaning.” Buber said:

Within that general insecurity which marks human existence as a whole, there has since that time lived a species of man to whom destiny has denied even the small share of dubious security other beings possess.... We have only *one* way to apprehend the positive meaning of this negative phenomenon: the way of faith. From any viewpoint other than faith, our inability to fit into a category would be intolerable.... But from the viewpoint of faith, our inability to fit into a category is the foundation and meaning of our living avowal of the uniqueness of Israel.... Israel will not fit into the two categories most frequently invoked in attempts at classification: ‘nation’ and ‘creed’.... Nations and creeds differ in the same way as history and revelation. Only in one instance do they coincide. Israel receives its decisive religious experience *as a people*. The community of Israel experiences history and revelation as one phenomenon, history as revelation and revelation as history.... The unity of nationality and faith which constitutes the uniqueness of Israel is our destiny, not only in the empirical sense of the word; here humanity is touched by the divine. There is no re-establishing of Israel, there is no security for it save one: it must assume the burden of its own uniqueness; it must assume the yoke of the kingdom of God. Since this can be accomplished only in the rounded life of a community, we must reassemble, we must again root in the soil, we must govern ourselves. But these are mere prerequisites! Only when the community recognizes and realizes them as such in its own life will they serve as the cornerstones of its salvation.<sup>19</sup>

In his book *Israel and Palestine*, written in Hebrew in 1944 and published in English (from the German) in 1952, Buber makes it clear that he considers the religious interpretation of Zionism not as one of several other readings: to attempt to secularize it, in order to reduce it into a form of nationalism, is to put into jeopardy the whole undertaking. “A people like other peoples, a land like other lands, a national movement like other national movements—this was, and still is proclaimed as the postulate of common sense against every kind of ‘mysticism.’ And from this standpoint the age-long belief that the successful reunion of this people with this land is inseparably bound up with a command and a condi-

tion was attacked....” Further on, Buber gives the following unequivocal warning: “If Israel renounces the mystery, it renounces the heart of reality itself. National forms without the eternal purpose from which they have arisen signify the end of Israel’s specific fruitfulness.”<sup>20</sup>

## 2. Paul Tillich, Zionism, and the Dialogue with Judaism, mainly through Martin Buber

I have found five fragments in the Tillich opera that speak explicitly about Zionism; as is well established, Tillich’s knowledge and appreciation of Judaism is mediated largely through his knowledge and appreciation of the person and work of Buber, which is not unproblematic of course. In chronological order, the texts are “An Evaluation of Martin Buber. Protestant and Jewish Thought” in *Theology of Culture* (1950), a translation of a 1948 article, “Martin Bubers dreifacher Beitrag zum Protestantismus.”<sup>21</sup> The second text is “Jewish Influences on Contemporary Christian Theology,” a conference paper for the Park Avenue Synagogue which appeared in *Cross Currents* in 1952. The third is called “Meine veränderte Stellung zum Zionismus,” found in the volume *Impressionen und Reflexionen*;<sup>22</sup> it was a paper given on January 21, 1959, for a Jewish-Christian Colloquium in Chicago on the topic of the “Rebirth of Israel in Near East.” The fourth was written after Tillich’s trip to Israel: “Eindrücke von einer Israelreise” (1963).<sup>23</sup> Finally, the eulogy “Martin Buber, eine Würdigung anlässlich seines Todes” (1965),<sup>24</sup> published in English in *Christian News from Israel*.

According to the text I mentioned earlier, “Christologie und Geschichtsdeutung,” prophecy “simultaneously struggled for time against space and for monotheism against polytheism; and so the Jewish people became the people of time, necessarily provoking the attacks of all people who are bound to space and consciously or unconsciously defy the meaning of history. Christian interpretation of history is possible only on the basis of prophecy, implying consequently a sacramental element—Christ, the center of history, *has come*—and a prophetic element—Christ, the end of history, *is coming*.”<sup>25</sup> We ask ourselves: does it follow from this analysis that Zionism betrays the struggle of time over space? For Tillich seems to believe that the common *essence* of both the Jewish destiny and of Christianity resides in the permanent struggle of time over space. The original schism between Church and Synagogue was caused by the decision to cling to the particular-

ism of the Torah, which could not become the universal law for all the nations. This marks the “fall” of Judaism, the loss of its original freedom. But the Christian faith is also vulnerable to the sirens of nationalism and tribalism. Thus the prophetic call out of the narrowness of spatiality into the realm of time serves as an indispensable protection against “back-sliding” into the recurrent demonizing tendencies within the church, especially in the national or established varieties.

Tillich struggled with the problem of Israel’s loss of space (*galut*), asking himself whether the Zionist reclaiming of Israel’s national “space” was a betrayal of the spiritual calling of Israel to be the people of time. When he considers how his mind has changed with respect to Zionism, he describes the following insight: “by attempting to force every Jew to perform this prophetic role, I was usurping the role of divine providence and committing a kind of metaphysical unfairness.”<sup>26</sup> As a consequence, Tillich became an active member of the (Zionist) “Palästina-Kommittee”; but in his mind, the acceptance of the right to political self-determination entailed the loss of the spiritual ideal. “The situation in Israel, that is, the state, cannot be viewed as the ‘promised land’.... As a nation, Israel should not be identified with ‘the people of time.’”<sup>27</sup> In fact, Tillich’s concept of prophecy allows for the dialectical coexistence of a sacramental element and an eschatological element, both for a substantive interpretation and an apocalyptic one—Christ *has* come and Zion *was* set apart; Christ *is coming* and in Zion, the nations *will* come and learn the will of God. In Tillich’s vision, objects and events are sacramental if and when in their being they manifest simultaneously what is beyond being.<sup>28</sup>

When Paul and Hannah discover the reality of Israel as a country, the impressions are complex. Leaving aside some interesting remarks about the Jesus of history, I would like to concentrate on Tillich’s appraisal of the reality of Israel. He gives short shrift to the traditional arguments—debunking as spurious, in turn, the religious loyalty of the average citizen, the entitlement derived from an earlier occupation, and the purported necessity of living on the very soil of Israel. But in his closing words the vision still beckons, no less fascinating for all its ambiguity: “One must demand of Israel that it remain committed to the prophetic principle of Judaism, even if in there is an infinite chasm between its reality and the realization of the principle. Even though the realization is fragmentary and ambiguous, it

could remain, in the future, as a unique symbol of hope beyond the realization in this con.”<sup>29</sup>

### 3. Coda

Buber developed a global philosophy of history not unlike the vast panorama envisioned by Augustine, whose *City of God* is both a vindication of human history and the trumpet call to be mindful of God’s ultimate purpose. The purpose of human beings, unlike that of ants or termites, is not to build, destroy and rebuild civilizations like ant-heaps. Through the fragile and beautiful undertakings of human agents, it is the Divine Architect who works towards that City where they will all have their permanent abode.<sup>30</sup> One is also reminded of Tillich’s description of the historical view of being, in contrast to the circular view, the eternal recurrence of the same. “To see reality historically, means to see it essentially out of balance.... The lack of balance in reality in the historical view is not an objective occurrence but directed tension, hastening toward something unrealized which shall be realized. Tension can be described as ‘being in advance of oneself’.... There is a tension in ourselves driving us always from remembrance to expectation, from past to future....”<sup>31</sup> Further on, in the same text about the theological categories underlying the interpretation of history within religious socialism, “Christologie und Geschichtsdeutung” (1929), Tillich broached a fundamental problem: “It seems to be obvious that directed time and meaning belong together. Meaning, however, is not a fact objectively ascertainable. The irrevocable direction of time points to a meaning, but it does not guarantee fulfillment of meaning....”<sup>32</sup> Only the decision about the Christological question, to wit: whether God’s purpose does indeed reveal itself particularly in one human destiny can guarantee this fulfillment, according to Tillich. But, I submit, a Zionist reading of the following statement by Tillich is entirely possible as well! “The question about history or about time, which has a definite direction and a meaningful end, therefore, coincides with the question about a *concrete reality in which the contradictions of meaning* are regarded as overcome, in which the possibility of final senselessness is removed.”<sup>33</sup> In short, Tillich concludes, “There is no concrete interpretation of history without faith.”<sup>34</sup>

The Middle East, the context in which I revisit these pages of the early German Tillich at the time of his commitment for religious socialism, is rife with different, sometimes conflicting interpretations

of history which fuel the life of faith communities: Armenian, Shiite, Jewish, Christian to name but a few. Tillich also enumerated groups whose historical consciousness is constituted by particular events and places, remembered and envisioned. "Thus the center of history for the Jews is the exodus from Egypt and its main event, the treaty with God on Mount Sinai; for the Persians, the appearance of Zarathustra, and for the Moslems, Mohammed's flight from Mecca to Medina; for the Rationalist who is awaiting the third age, the beginning of the autonomous attitude in the period of the Enlightenment; for the Marxist, the appearance of the proletariat as the social class in which all classes are abolished in principle...."<sup>35</sup>

Zionism accepted, refuted, and transformed is more than one among many subjects; it is a prism through which the connection between the Second and the First Testaments are interpreted, it is a *litmus* test for our most deeply held beliefs about universalism and particularism, about belonging and justice, about the rights of peoples and national destinies. Here tragedy and irony abound. For instance, Buber's views of a spiritual Zionism seem to amount to a de facto *repudiation* of political Zionism and this would place him in the proximity of orthodox religious opponents of Israeli state policies; yet his peculiar form of "outlaw Judaism," namely his rejection of the prescriptions of the Halachah, would make him persona non grata in their midst too, as shown for instance in the scathing comments by Yeshayahou Leibowitz.<sup>36</sup>

Paul Tillich at first held the conventional view that the Christian faith calls forth, prophetically, from the ties of nationalism, of blood and soil. Through his encounters with Buber, he came to perceive the legitimacy of a moderate Zionism, the right of the people Israel to a sovereign state on the biblical land of their first settling. Some thoughtful Christians, especially those of the Reformed family, dispute the identification of Zionism (Christian or Jewish) as a theological motif: there are no things such as holy places. I am still troubled and perplexed by the matter.

<sup>1</sup> Amos 9, 7 (NRSV)

<sup>2</sup> Talmud, *Kiddushin* (Consecrations), 49b (version: Soncino, tr. Isidore Epstein)

<sup>3</sup> Stephen Sizer, *Christian Zionism. Road-map to Armageddon?* (Leicester: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 267

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Philip Roth, *Counterlife* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1986), 53.

<sup>6</sup> Quoted by Paul Starr, *Freedom's Power. The True Force of Liberalism* (New York: Perseus, 2007), ix

<sup>7</sup> Martin Buber, "Jewish Religiosity", *On Judaism*, 81

<sup>8</sup> ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 137

<sup>10</sup> Paul Tillich, "Martin Buber: eine Würdigung anlässlich seines Todes (1965)", *Begegnungen. Paul Tillich über sich selbst und andere*, GW XII, p. 322.

<sup>11</sup> See also Anne Marie Reijnen, "Paul Tillich et Martin Buber: entente et malentendus", *Etudes Théologiques et Religieuses*, 1999/1, 77-93.

<sup>12</sup> Philip Roth, *Counterlife*, 60

<sup>13</sup> Roger Kamenetz, Foreword, *On Judaism*, p.xiii

<sup>14</sup> Arthur Hertzberg, *The Zionist Idea. A Historical Analysis and Reader* (New York: Doubleday, 1959)

<sup>15</sup> Rashid Khalidi, *The Iron Cage. The Story of the Palestinian Struggle for Statehood* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2006), 187, footnote 11.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 210

<sup>17</sup> Martin Buber, "Judaism and Civilization", in *On Judaism* (New York: Schocken Books, 1967), 200

<sup>18</sup> Martin Buber, *Israel and Palestine: the History of an Idea* (New York: Strauss and Young, 1952 (Jerusalem 1950)), XII.

<sup>19</sup> Martin Buber, "The Jew in the World", address delivered at the Lehrhaus in Frankfurt on the Main in 1934, in Hertzberg, *op cit.*, 453-457.

<sup>20</sup> Martin Buber, *Israel and Palestine* (London: Horovitz, 1952), xiii.

<sup>21</sup> GW VII

<sup>22</sup> Paul Tillich, *Impressionen und Reflexionen*, GW XIII (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1972), 403-408.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 517-528

<sup>24</sup> *Begegnungen*

<sup>25</sup> 264

<sup>26</sup> « Meine veränderte Stellung zum Zionismus », *op. cit.*, 407.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 407-408.

<sup>28</sup> Paul Tillich, "Natur und Sakrament" (1930) *Theological Writings*, MW/HW, vol 6 (New York Berlin de Gruyter, 1992), 162



<sup>29</sup> Paul Tillich, « Eindrücke einer Israelreise » (1963), *Impressionen und Reflexionen*, 528.

<sup>30</sup> Henri-Irénée Marrou, *Saint Augustin et l'augustinisme*, Paris: Seuil, coll. Maîtres spirituels.

<sup>31</sup> Paul Tillich, *The Interpretation of History* (New York: Charles Scribner's and Sons, 1936), 244-245

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 247.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 248 (emphasis mine).

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 256.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 257-258.

<sup>36</sup> See the newspaper article by Yeshayahou Leibowitz, "On the so-called Jewish-Christian Heritage" in *Ha-Aretz*, autumn 1968, and Anne Marie Reijnen, "Contre Leibowitz: les origines juives du christianisme", *Cités 34, L'héritage judéo-chrétien, mythe ou réalité*, 75-85 (forthcoming).

Editor's note: the following three papers from the joint meeting of the NAPTSS and the Polanyi Society will also be published in *Tradition and Discovery*, the journal of the Polanyi Society later this year.

### MICHAEL AND PAULUS: A DYNAMIC UNCOORDINATED DUO

DURWOOD FOSTER

1. Polanyi and Tillich are congruent *and* divergent heroes in modernity's ongoing struggle for meaning, especially with a Christian twist. They are indeed a dynamic duo but never gelled as they might, which challenges us, their societies, with unfinished business. Born six years apart, Tillich first in 1886, they share bourgeois middle Europe in harrowing transition from 19<sup>th</sup> Century progressivism through scientific upheaval, social convulsion, and Nazi barbarism, under threat of which the targeted Jew and the distrusted academic (first to meet decades later) emigrate to England and America. Both devote serious attention to socialism, but come to eschew Marx as well as Soviet oppression. In Eliot's postwar wasteland they join—philosopher-scientist and philosopher-theologian—the insurgency of humanist existentialism against objectivist scientism, as titanic new ethnic and global energies start to seethe. From early on, Tillich the Christian strikingly appreciates Judaism, while Polanyi the Jew receives baptism and saliently intones Christian faith (which may be the reason Jewish thought stays cool to him). In 1914 our duo enter the military of the Central Powers, as chaplain and medic respectively. Ailing, discharged early, they return to their research. Tillich, the burgeoning Berlin Privatdozent, startles his profession with the "Idea of a Theology of Culture," 1919, just as Polanyi receives a Karlsruhe Ph.D. and emigrates from Hungary, a

promising new hands-on talent in German physical chemistry. He corresponds with Einstein and will awaken thoughts of a Nobel, yet feels increasing pan-disciplinary duty to "Science and Society." It becomes his transcendental "calling" to restore the humanity of knowledge and reinsure the significance of culture.

2. In 1923, Tillich publishes a system of all the Wissenschaften. Three years later his "Religious Situation" critiques every cultural domain as enthralled by "self-sufficient finitude" through which, however, the Transcendent is perceived to break anew. This book classically models theology of culture until (arguably) upstaged by a more provocative work, Polanyi's Gifford Lectures of 1951 (i.e., "upstaged" substantively though Polanyi never appropriates Tillich's *idea* of such a theology). Tillich meanwhile mainly addresses church theology, the counterpart to that of culture. In the same year as Part One of *Personal Knowledge* there emerges Volume One of the Systematics. Each magnum opus, Tillich's *Systematic Theology* and Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge*, aims to overcome malignant loss of meaning in modern life. For Polanyi the problem's core is the ideal of impersonal detachment pervading science and epistemology, typified by La Place in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century and Skinner now. There results from this ideal of positivist objectivism, which Polanyi rebuts as untenable, not only undermining of ethics and religion but also conceptual abolition of the free person and free society. Tillich's overlapping diagnosis of the human predicament (elaborately rethinking original sin) is much more complex but by 1951 has come to *include* a critique of that "controlling" knowledge which denies pervasive participation of the subject and reduces the human to manipulable objectivity. The stage is set for our duo to meet, and Richard Gelwick gets Charles McCoy to arrange this in Berkeley during Tillich's Earl Lectures of February 1963.

3. To use Polanyian parlance, several documentary sources crucially comprise the subsidiary matrix focusing on the “Berkeley Dialogue” at the Claremont Hotel, which lasts about an hour and a half on the evening of February 21. (The hotel is not actually in Berkeley, but just over the Oakland line.) It seems pertinent to recall that in *Personal Knowledge* a decade earlier, Polanyi had named Tillich his favored theologian [pp. 280, 283n.], citing from *Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality* and *ST I* the coupling of doubt and faith and critique of fundamentalism. More recently, he was troubled in reading *Dynamics of Faith* [1958] by Tillich’s “separate dimensions” strategy for avoiding conflict between science and faith. Hereto see Polanyi’s article, “Science and Religion: Separate Dimensions or Common Ground?”, in *Philosophy Today* VII, (Spring, 1963) 4-16, written right after the Berkeley encounter. Contrary to Tillich, Polanyi affirms (p. 4) his own belief “that our knowledge of nature has a bearing on our religious beliefs; that, indeed, some aspects of nature offer us a common ground with religion.” (Bob Russell, on our panel, will recall how such a belief later moved some of us in Berkeley to found under his lead the Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences.) Here indeed is one of the *big* issues between Polanyi and Tillich, but it was left very much unpacked on February 21. For what actually transpired that night between them, the most essential record is Richard Gelwick’s 1995 article in *Tradition and Discovery* XXII, 1, which includes Polanyi’s four and a half page summary of the conversation. Regretfully there is no resume by Tillich, though some weeks later in two letters to Polanyi [included in Gelwick, op. cit.], he is pleased by how much they agree and notably with Polanyi’s assertion that Tillich has “fought for the purification of faith from religious dogmatism” while Polanyi supplemented “this by purifying truth from scientific dogmatism.” Tillich adds that Polanyi has excellently shown “the continuity between the different types of knowledge” and then in the second letter identifies the essay to which he refers Polanyi in the conversation as “Participation and Knowledge: Problems of an Ontology of Cognition,” his contribution to the *Festschrift für Max Horkheimer zum 60. Geburtstag* [published in *Sociologica*, pp. 201-9, hrsg. Adorno and Dirks, Frankfurt a.M., 1955, bound in *Frankfurter Beiträge zur Soziologie*, Bd. 1.] This statement has been put on the website as the most axial “subsidiary clue” to the interface from Tillich’s side. With these sources I would further

place the second of Tillich’s Earl Lectures, “The Nature of Present Day Thought: Its Strangeness to Traditional Christianity” [available in the published lectures, *The Irrelevance and the Relevance of the Christian Message*, Pilgrim Press, 1996, pp. 23-41.] Polanyi heard Tillich deliver this lecture just prior to their conversation, but did not (I understand from Richard Gelwick) attend any other of Tillich’s formal presentations that week—including the Wednesday afternoon lecture at UCB on “Science, Philosophy and Religion,” which (from a remark attributed to him in Polanyi’s summary), Tillich might be taken to assume Polanyi did hear. (By the way I cannot locate any extant text of this lecture.) Finally, as to salient documents bearing on the Claremont Hotel encounter, it seems pertinent to cite Tillich’s statements in his letter to Polanyi of May 23, 1963 [Gelwick, op. cit.] that he first envisaged an epistemological “hierarchy of involvement and detachment” when he wrote *System der Wissenschaften* (1923) and that he has “carried it through rather fully” in the forthcoming third volume of the *ST*. This clearly implies that an assessment of where Tillich stood and came to stand vis-à-vis the Polanyian epistemological project also calls for a close look at both those works.

4. However, the first document of interest in our case to examine is doubtless Tillich’s essay “Participation and Knowledge,” regarding which he makes his most meaty intervention during the Berkeley conversation and then follows up in the second letter to Polanyi with bibliographic data and the promise of help if needed in finding the piece. The *Frankfurter Beiträge* were in fact hard to access, and I understand Polanyi never did get to read what Rob James has called Tillich’s “little gem” of epistemology. [James’s enthusiastic look at the essay in his *Tillich and World Religions* (Mercer University Press, 2003) pp. 55 ff., is very much worth consulting]. Ironically, Tillich could have given far simpler directions to the document. It was widely available (in a German translation of the original English) in Band VI of his *Gesammelte Werke*, 1961. Like Karl Barth, Paulus could not recall where to find all he had published! It is even more ironic, though, that the pith of what Tillich had to say epistemologically, so far as it bears on the Polanyi project of establishing personal participation in *all* cognitive domains, *had already been before Polanyi* when he read *ST I*. This we know from Polanyi’s article (referred to above) in *Philosophy Today* wherein the author, after citing what he does not like from *Dynamics of*

*Faith* (viz., the “separate dimensions” strategy), says the following in Footnote 1: “The present paper responds to this statement [from p. 81 of DF] and more directly to recent lectures [sic] at Berkeley in February, 1963. The following formulation that comes nearer my own position (to which my attention has been called) can be found in *Systematic Theology* 1 (which we recall was cited in *Personal Knowledge* as a favored theological source), p. 97: ‘The element of union and the element of detachment appear in different proportions in the different realms of knowledge. But there is no knowledge without the presence of both elements.’”

5. We find ourselves knee-deep here in the question: How does Tillich’s “Participation and Knowledge” of 1955 differ from the epistemology formulated in ST I, 1951 (especially pp. 94-100, dealing with the cognitive function of existential reason)? One might presume there is variance, given the four-year hiatus in publication—for Tillich’s detailed conceptualization continuously mutated. But in this respect, something does not meet the eye, namely that Tillich’s PK (not to be confused with Polanyi’s!) originated precisely at the time ST I was coming out. The impression given in Polanyi’s summary of the Berkeley meeting [see Gelwick, *op. cit.*] that Tillich says he did the piece while “still in Germany” (i.e., before emigrating in 1933) is quite misleading; Tillich must have said something like “for a German publication.” Peter John, to whose voluntary labors as emanuensis to Tillich (despite the latter’s discouraging attitude) we are manifoldly indebted, has preserved a very early (and obviously not entire or ungarbled) version of the PK essay from its provenance in the spring of 1951. It seems that in the late winter of that year it was Tillich’s turn to give the paper for a club of philosophers who met monthly for dinner and discussion at Columbia University. Obviously, he drew from thematization in press for ST I, which would appear in May, no doubt using a compressed outline as was his wont. Soon thereafter (April 30), Peter John was among a group of students at a Tillich open house to whom Paulus presented a redaction of what he had shared with the group of philosophers, with their salient responses. True to form, Peter preserved a shorthand account showing many of the elements reformulated and polished a few years later for the Horkheimer Festschrift.

6. While the final version of Tillich’s PK still largely coincides with ST I, there is one new idea: a proposal in the third paragraph from the end as to

how knowledge can include, besides the moment of separation, also the moment of union which transcends the subject-object structure. The key, he says, is temporal alternation.

It is the time difference between the moment of uniting participation and separating objectivation which makes religious and—in some degree—all knowledge possible. This does not mean that a former participation is remembered and made an object of cognition. But it does mean that the moment is present in the cognitive moment and vice versa. Participation still persists in the moment of cognitive separation; the cognitive encounter includes moments of predominant participation, which I have called the perceptive moments, as well as moments of predominant separation, which I have called the cognitive moments. These alternate and establish in their totality a cognitive encounter. This is the situation in all realms, and it is the structure which makes religious knowledge possible” [Main Works, I, 389.]

Do we find anything like this elsewhere in Tillich? One has to think a moment, but then yes, we do, in ST III’s elucidation of the mystical element in a Protestant theology determined by faith. “The question which arises,” declaims Tillich, “...about faith and mysticism in Protestant theology is that of the compatibility and, even more, the interdependence of the two. They are compatible only if the one is an element of the other; two attitudes toward the ultimate could not exist beside each other if the one were not given with the other. This is the case in spite of all anti-mystical tendencies in Protestantism; there is no faith (but only belief) without the Spirit’s grasping the personal center of him who is in the state of faith, and this is a mystical experience, an experience of the presence of the infinite within the finite. As an ecstatic experience, faith is mystical, although it does not produce mysticism as a religious type.... The same is true from the other side. There is faith in mystical experience.” [ST III, p. 242.] Here Tillich desists from the “temporal alternation” floated in PK. His thinking of “one within the other” suggests rather the “eschatological panentheism” affirmed at the very end of ST III (p. 423). However, temporal movement reappears when normative Protestant mysticism is described as “every serious prayer leading into contemplation” (ST III, p. 192). In contemplation, “the paradox of prayer is manifest, the identity and non-identity of him who prays and Him who is prayed to: God as Spirit (Ibid.). What is

notable in wrestling with these matters, in relation to Polanyi's epistemological project, is Tillich's evident awareness of a cognitive bifocality fusing—without being abolished—into a unity. One term is more participatory, the other more detached. At the much more primitive stage of PK preserved by Peter John [p. 3 of his transcription], Tillich gets into heated discussion with Prof. Hendel of Yale as to how cognition “must participate in terms of the presence of sense impressions, otherwise we cannot have even controlling knowledge.” I am sure Polanyi's ears would have pricked up at that! His “tacit dimension” theory compasses sensation far more thoroughly than does Tillich, but it is surprising how much the two of them, mutually unaware, fished in the same waters.

7. This pertains not only to cognition's sensory or “material” component but also to what Aristotle further taught Western philosophy to call the “formal” and the “final” aspects of any causative transaction. Note in Tillich's published PK what he dubs the “structural presuppositions of experience” [*Main Works*, p. 384]. “There is, he insists, despite the disputes over particular renditions of these—whether by Plato (the ideas), Kant (the categories), Husserl, Schuler, or whomever—“an irreducible though indefinite minimum” of such presuppositions in every cognitive encounter. They comprise a medium of inescapable participation of the subject in the object of knowledge and vice versa. Math and logic are of course in the front rank here, without which the “hardest” of the physical sciences would dissolve. Actually, from early on, Tillich is as aware of this as is Polanyi. We could certainly wish, at this precise apposition, that the latter somehow would have read the former's *System der Wissenschaften* in 1923! Beyond the PK text, Peter John reports Tillich relating, at that open house in 1951, that some of his philosophical acquaintances, apparently in the club that met monthly at Columbia, had urged him now to turn his creative powers, still at high tide, to a major work in epistemology. Having completed the arduous task of getting ST I into galley proofs, if he plowed on with the system he faced the controverted terrain of Christology and Pneumatology where he was less systematically *au courant*. Besides, he seems to have experienced a somewhat galling frustration in not having secured yet better underpinnings in the philosophy of cognition, where he once scintillated prodigiously. Hence, the somber remark of Paulus remembered by Sarah Terrien: “I will be damned for my mystical theory of knowledge.” Til-

lich asked the students in his home that evening, says Peter, after they heard the resume of PK, what *they* thought he should do. It was a typical gesture of the theological giant. But the seminary students, of course, were way out of their depth. Providence decreed, if partly by default, that the *magnum opus* should be completed. Maybe it was, as some thought might be true of Barth's *Kirkliche Dogmatik*, that the Lord God could not bear to miss the dénouement of such magisterial constructs. In Tillich's case, at least here on earth, most would rejoice that the ST got finished. Yet who can doubt who has read both Tillich and Polanyi that, in epistemology and the whole gamut of culture as well, something still profoundly needed could have commenced to flower had the one's immense gift for the philosophical conceptualizing somehow melded with the other's prophetic genius in empirical scientific and cultural diagnostics. Suppose after that April evening, which Peter John was privy to, Paulus had tabled the ST and gone to Britain to hear Polanyi deliver the Gifford Lectures. Suppose Michael, settling in Berlin to do science at the Faber Institute in the '20s, had also walked blocks away to the Kant Gesellschaft and let his irrepressible mind ingest disparate yet dynamically pairable Tillichian stem cells? Dream on, ye fatuous! Or maybe get busy, for the need—our cultural crisis, darkened by deadly feud with fanaticism—is no less ominous.

8. We have gotten ahead of ourselves. Because it is so important also to Polanyi, I want to bring out Tillich's emphatic recognition for *all* knowledge of the determining valuational Gestalt. In society as well as the individual or the research team, knowing is always established and sustained, expanded or corrected, within a contextualizing tradition. Meaning, devolving from ultimate valuation and commitment, shapes the whole matrix within which physics as much if not more than theology transpires. This is the zone of the Aristotelian “final” or teleological cause, which as modernity unfolds, Francis Bacon and Galileo, unknowingly preparing for Laplace and Skinner, will bracket for untrammelled study of nature. Polanyi as physical chemist (*ipso facto* becoming philosopher too) blows here a shrill whistle and engages the now humongous phalanx of purposeless objectivism in no-holds-barred dissent. After much earlier lightning flashes, this begins to happen programmatically, I take it, by the time he writes the lectures for *Science, Faith and Society*, 1946. [Cf. Moleski/Scott, *Michael Polanyi*, 2005, pp. 200, 258, 100, 154, *passim*]. It gains a grand if sprawling frui-

tion, of course, in the Gifford Lectures, 1951-2. Tillich's contemporaneous ST I, wherein Polanyi found salient points of agreement, contains upfront the following pregnant passages.

In every assumedly scientific theology there is a point where individual experience, traditional valuation, and personal commitment must decide the issue.... If an inductive approach is employed, one must ask in what direction the writer looks for his material. And if the answer is that he looks in every direction and toward every experience, one must ask what characteristic of reality or experience is the empirical basis of his theology. Whatever the answer may be, an a priori of experience and valuation is implied.... In both the empirical and metaphysical approaches, it can be observed that the a priori which directs the induction and the deduction is a type of mystical experience. Whether it is 'being-itself' (Scholastics) or the 'universal substance' (Spinoza), whether it is 'beyond subjectivity and objectivity' (James), or the 'identity of spirit and nature' (Schelling), whether it is 'universe' (Schleiermacher) or "cosmic whole' (Hocking), whether it is 'value creating process' (Whitehead) or 'progressive integration' (Wieman), whether it is 'absolute spirit' (Hegel) or 'cosmic person' (Brightman)—each of these conceits is based on an immediate experience of something ultimate in value and being of which one can become intuitively aware [pp. 8-9].

9. In these passages, Tillich is talking focally about religion and theology, but it is clear what he says intends to apply to cognition generally. He repeats this in the PK essay. When did he begin to think this way? Here let me cite from *System der Wissenschaften* thematization, which is the obvious pre-formation of what was just quoted from ST I three decades latter. "Erkannt ist, was als notwendiges Glied einem Zusammenhang eingeordnet ist" [Main Works, p. 115]. The necessary *Zusammenhang*, if it too shall belong to knowledge, must finally fit into an all embracing system, and:

*Die lebendige Kraft eines Systems ist sein Gehalt, sein schöpferisches Standpunkt, seine Urintuition. Jedes System lebt von dem Prinzip, auf das es gegründet und mit dem es erbaut ist. Jedes letzte Prinzip aber ist der Ausdruck einer letzten Wirklichkeitsschau, einer grundlegenden Lebenshaltung. So bricht durch das Formalsystem der Wissenschaften in jedem*

*Augenblick ein Gehalt hindurch, der metaphysisch ist, d.h. der jenseits jeder einzelnen Form und aller Formen liegt, und darum nie nach Art einer falschen Metaphysik selbst eine Form neben anderen sein kann. Das Metaphysische ist der lebendige Kraft, der Sinn und das Blut des Systems [p. 118].*

By no means had Tillich always so envisaged the basic layout of knowledge. In this frenetically creative phase of his maturation, spurred by favorable attention from Ernst Troeltsch, conceptual breakthroughs were attaining warp speed. Only four years earlier, in the thunderclap that first gained him wide attention, he opened his lecture "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture" by contrasting the "empirical sciences" with the "systematic sciences of culture" in just the way Polanyi would later indict as nefariously deceptive. "In der Erfahrungswissenschaften," avers the opening sentence of that lecture, "ist der Standpunkt etwas, das ueberwunden werden muss," whereas, continues the next paragraph, "in den systematischen Kulturwissenschaften...gehört der Standpunkt des Systematikers zur Sache selbst" [Main Works 2, p. 70]. In other words, at this point Tillich was quite aware that both participation and detachment were integral to (what he later mainly calls) the *Geisteswissenschaften*, but he does not yet see what Polanyi would become particularly concerned to drive home, viz., that participation (or indwelling, or a matrix of personal/subjective presuppositions) is pervasively involved also in the natural (also dubbed empirical) sciences, including the so-called "hardest" of them. However, the text of *Das System der Wissenschaften* shows that Tillich just four years later had wised up—at least to some extent—to what was to be the Polanyian insight. This is further confirmed in Tillich's Marburg *Dogmatics* of 1925, which he sometimes spoke of as the ST's beginning [Cf. *Dogmatik*, ed. W. Schüssler, pp.100, 238, *passim*]. "Bei naeherem Zusehen ergibt sich... dass diese drei Gruppen (the mathematical, empirical, and *geistestwissenschaftlich* sciences) gar nicht so radikal geschieden sind, dass jedes Element in jeder mehr oder weniger vertreten ist" [p. 100]. It is also fully reflected in *The Religious Situation's* overview of science [Die religiöse Lage der Gegenwart, 1926, trans. 1930].

10. Polanyi's summary of the Berkeley dialogue shows he is emphatically unsatisfied with Tillich's attempt to envisage participation also in the natural sciences [Cf. Gelwick's article referenced above.] But how well has he understood Tillich's attempt? I

do not see how we can ever know, but *prima facie* he seems to misrepresent Tillich in the opening assertion that “The method of absolute detachment you [i.e., Tillich] ascribe to science in contrasting it with philosophy and religion is a method which scientists falsely ascribe to themselves.” (If Gelwick is right, that Polanyi did not attend the afternoon lecture at UC Berkeley on Science, Philosophy and Religion, then Tillich must have lent him the text before the dialogue commenced. I have already noted I cannot now discover anything about this text—even whether it existed; it seems if it had it would be in the Harvard archives). But can we believe that at UCB that afternoon, before what was said to be the largest audience ever to crowd the gym, Tillich would have diverged drastically from what had been for decades his standing view? Well, he did presentations in public that sometimes foreshorten his complex positions, and there are many oddities in what has come down to us about the whole affair. Why, for example, would Tillich parry Polanyi’s opening thrust the way he does—i.e., by reminding that his lecture had also noted the wider responsibility of scientists for our shared world—if the lecture had more relevantly addressed Polanyi’s pivotal concern? Polanyi’s following intervention justifiably dismisses Tillich’s riposte as irrelevantly adducing a “dual function” (the social responsibility of scientists). Of course, we must not forget we are enclosed here within Polanyi’s notes, which hardly can accurately embody all Tillich said. The plain truth is we never can precisely know what went back and forth that evening between our dynamic duo, but it is uncontestedly about as uncoordinated as one can get.

11. It is disappointing that Tillich knows nothing about Polanyi. Further, it is hard to avoid concluding, in spite of epistolary courtesy, that he also failed to learn anything from the interface. Renate Albrecht had reason for not mentioning Polanyi among the many “Encounters” of Tillich she records in Volume XII of the *Gesammelte Werke [Begegnungen, 1971]*. The Paucks similarly did not regard anything that happened in Berkeley in 1963 as deserving notice in their account of Paulus’s life [*Paul Tillich, I, 1975*]. ST III, when it appears the following summer, does show passages we might argue are tintured in a Polanyian manner, except for knowing they were in press when our heroes met—and that, as seen, propitious Tillichian soil for them existed earlier. Tillich never did become privy to Polanyi’s courageous and brilliant expeditions in the infrastructure of empirical science. He never grasped, or even confronted in its

prime thrust, the theory spelled out in *The Tacit Dimension*. Nor could Tillich assimilate Polanyi’s completely un-intimidated attitude of bearding practitioners of science in their own den. He felt keenly his lack of credentials—which Polanyi had—to debunk scientific dogmatism at the laboratory level. Besides, Tillich, especially as he aged, was almost overly “nice,” close sometimes to being unctuous. Note his saying (in Polanyi’s resume) that when philosophers like Nagel “would accept none” of the PK essay’s inclusion of participation in every branch of knowledge, he “did not dare to pursue it further.” Even though what he states here (i.e., what Polanyi says he states) is rather misleading, since he had long previously held and kept right on holding there is participation in all knowledge, the utterance is *attitudinally* true to Tillich. It resonates completely with his deference vis-à-vis Martin Buber, Hans Reichenbach, and others when they visited Union during my student days there. (I think what Tillich must actually have said to Polanyi is illumined by Peter John’s report from the open house [cf. supra]). After the presentation of PK at UC Berkeley in early 1951, some friends of Tillich urged him to shelve the ST and undertake a major work in epistemology, but Ernest Nagel, who had great prestige around New York City and certainly with Tillich, advised against it. Though a stringent positivist, Nagel fraternized genially with Rabbi Louis Finkelstein and others in the local theological community.

12. How could Tillich be so nescient of Polanyi prior to the meeting? Was not this the Paulus justly famous since the 20s for an almost too watchful eye on contemporary culture, especially philosophy, with which to “correlate” his theological work? Yes, but it seems even would-be polymaths can overbook. For one thing, Tillich’s speed in English never matched what it was in German; he concentrated on learning to write. Meanwhile a spate of invitations had pulled from every direction since *Time*’s cover (ca. 1950) christened him “Mr. Theology.” But for the last years pressing anxiety to complete the system overhung everything, as his angina pectoris worsened. He *did* for that matter read valiantly—Heidegger, Whitehead, Hartshorne, recently Teilhard, even novels like *1984, de rigueur* scholarly papers for meetings and dissertations, always trying as well to scrawl a personal word on the term papers his assistants graded. On the other hand, for whatever reasons, at Union in the mid 50s Polanyi’s work was hardly known by anyone. Before I left in 1953, the only sounding of his name I ever heard was by

Aristotelian expert Richard McKeon of Chicago. He had to spell it as he told Rabbi Finkelstein and his steering committee of the Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion of this “Hungarian scientist now living in Britain” who argued Aristotle’s *pistis* (in the *Prior Analytics*) was a skeleton in the closet of modern natural science. Some at Union would have picked up on a possible relation to the *Credo ut intelligam* of Medieval Christian theology, but Tillich was not one of those. I don’t know when he may first have heard of Polanyi, but it was relatively late, after becoming preoccupied with ST II and III and all the folderol of moving to Harvard and then Chicago. Then, following the Berkeley dialogue, Tillich had but a short time to live. He returned to Chicago absorbed in his history of religions teamwork with Mircea Eliade, worried at East Hampton about glitches in the English text of ST III as he tried to oversee its German translation, kept frenetically responding to multifarious initiatives, including a post at New York’s School of Social Research, and barely mustered strength for that notable swan song lecture in Chicago. There was just no chance to mull over Polanyi. Among my puzzlements about the tangled skein of how come and what if is why the Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion did not seek out Polanyi, as his interests and qualifications were very much in their ball park. From about 1940 they had a cosmopolitan program going annually in New York to which he could have spoken very incisively, and then a much more receptive Tillich would perforce have become aware of him. Did the animus toward Polanyi (e.g. in British analytic philosophy), or his endorsing Jewish *assimilation*, also poison more distant waters? (Even today one notices, in the quite recent Oxford Companion to Philosophy, edited by Ted Honderich, there is, for all the hundreds of modern trivia, no entry at all for Polanyi.)

**13.** All the initiative for and in the Berkeley encounter was taken by Polanyi. He had been significantly impressed by Tillich’s writing for at least a decade. But, that being the case, why is *he* as unsteeped as it seems he is in the complexity of Tillich’s thought? Polanyi was a phenomenally omnivorous reader. Why would he not have digested, if not earlier then down at Stanford where he was spending the semester, Tillich’s treatise on the sciences? (I happen to know it was in the library there.) Even closer in, why would he not have carefully re-read ST I, which he praised in his Gifford Lectures? During or after the encounter, he tells us in the *Phi-*

*losophy Today* article, someone had to call his attention to the passage from that volume that he acknowledges is closer to his own position. In fact, many passages in the volume resonate quite deeply with Polanyi’s concern and “calling.” Here is one further example (from pp. 98-9):

Most cognitive distortions are rooted in a disregard of the polarity which is in cognitive reason. This disregard is not simply an avoidable mistake; it is a genuine conflict under the conditions of existence. One side of this conflict is the tension between dogmatism and criticism within social groups. But there are other sides to it. Controlling knowledge claims control of every level of reality. Life, spirit, personality. Community, meanings, values, even one’s ultimate concern, should be treated in terms of detachment, analysis, calculation, and technical use. The power behind this claim is the preciseness, verifiability, the public approachability of controlling knowledge, and, above all, the tremendous success of its application to certain levels of reality. It is impossible to disregard or even to restrain this claim. [The last clause here is *not* acceptable to Polanyi, and yet the resistance and frustration he experiences in pursuit of his “calling” exemplify its truth—or let me rather say its partial truth. For Tillich himself is pursuing the same calling—and so are others like Karl Jaspers and Buber, and the cause has never been altogether lost.] The public mind is so impregnated with its methodological demands and astonishing results that every cognitive attempt in which reception and union are presupposed encounters utter distrust. [Shall we here call Prof. Nagel to the stand?] A consequence of this attitude is a rapid decay of spiritual (not only of the Spiritual) life, an estrangement from nature, and, most dangerous of all, a dealing with human beings as with things. In psychology and sociology, in medicine and philosophy, man has been dissolved into elements out of which he is composed and which determine him. Treasures of empirical knowledge have been produced in this way, and new research projects augment those treasures daily. But man has been lost in this enterprise. That which can be known only by participation and union, that which is the object of receiving knowledge, is disregarded. Man actually has become what controlling knowledge considers him to be, a thing among things, a cog in the dominating machine of production and

consumption, a dehumanized object of tyranny or a normalized object of public communications. Cognitive dehumanization has produced actual dehumanization.

This is vintage Tillichian theology of culture. Polanyi's distinct and original voice harmonizes well with it, and we can be gratified and hopeful in the power of their modulated consonance. But any actual duet to come forth from our duo is one we shall need ourselves to arrange.

14. Alas, these two "kings of high C" never get to sing together. When they meet in Berkeley, why does Polanyi (once again if we follow his resume, our sole definitive source, unless Richard Gelwick will correct it) so aggressively pin Tillich to the wall with *his* summation of the latter's position? And why then follow with a staccato recital of his own views? Why not ask Tillich whether he has him right? Polanyi's impatience does show a throbbing earnestness we cannot but salute. On to the *Sache selbst!* Still, might we not have expected a more scrupulous prior review of his favored religious thinker? And why no reference at least to the Earl Lecture given just several minutes before, which Polanyi came to hear, and in which Tillich had indicted "Skinnerism's" turning persons into things as the current extreme of "calculating reason" run amok [*Irrelevance*, pp. 25, 31, *passim*]? A focus on this point alone would show the inadequacy of casting Tillich simply as the seminary teacher countering fundamentalism, vastly important as that is. True, Paulus seems to acquiesce in this settlement with Polanyi, like a harried businessman "agreeing quickly with the adversary" so as to get on with his main agenda. But there are bones to pick that Wednesday evening that are still far from ever having been stripped clean. One we already noted is that Tillich does not perceive how manifoldly and thoroughly the empirical sciences, in their experimental infrastructure and their existential underbracing and control, *depend tacitly upon a fiduciary matrix* of social and personal preconditions. On the other hand he is awed by the achievements of science while being unexposed to the sweaty disconnects and seat-of-one's-pants guesswork that Polanyi knew all too well. Of course even more than Tillich, Polanyi also reveres science, but he can and does loudly sound the note as well that in monotone was projected by the book *Science is a Sacred Cow* (by Anthony Standen, 1950). This was a kind of book Paulus tended to deprecate.

15. Unaware of the weight of Polanyi's scholarship, Tillich could have gotten the impression his interlocutor was too exercised, not to say obsessed, by his pivotal insight, however correct and important it doubtless was. We have no objectively intended utterance to the point from Paulus; the courteous blandishments can hardly count. Certainly he would have deemed it too simple to ascribe our universal human malaise *only* to the false ideal of objectivity, since for him the human predicament was compounded transcendently of unfaith, hubris, and concupiscence—this being our fallenness or sinfulness—continuously issuing in more concrete configurations and specific actions of estrangement. Not that Polanyi really was so tunnel-visioned! The grounding and range we know from *Personal Knowledge*—as well as (post-Tillich) *Meaning* with its incisive address of the whole scope of culture—would have doubtless evoked even in a preoccupied Paulus much more hermeneutic alacrity. It is a shame to have to say the Claremont Hotel dialogue of our dynamic duo was largely a reciprocal fizzle, and yet for Polanyi too it seems to have pretty well finished turning him off to Tillich, with whom once he had been coming on so strongly. I can find no subsequent expression of interest in Paulus other than the *Philosophy Today* article, which is mainly predicated on Polanyi's disenchantment with *Dynamics of Faith*, published in 1958. His disillusion—re his own cutting edge—probably began whenever it was he perused that work. His deep respect for the "upper story" of Tillich's theology apparently stayed in place, even while he pigeonholed Paulus off to the side of the axial quarrel with science. In any case animadversion to the "separate dimensions" strategy [cf. Par. 3 above] for mutually pacifying religion and science seems in Berkeley to have gone on engrossing his attention in a practical parallel to Tillich's overloaded agenda. He likewise does not appear to have learned anything new about his interlocutor by coming up from Stanford that day, *or* later—settling instead for the rhetorical concord of his tackling scientific false consciousness and Tillich religious fundamentalism. This is all the further borne out if Richard Gelwick is correct that Polanyi never did get around to looking up the Horkheimer festschrift essay. But for me, the principal earnest of it is the fact that, in *Meaning* crucially, the theophilosophical work in which Polanyi has latterly become interested is that of emergent evolution and Whitehead. There are sanguine reasons why he would have, as we shall see below. But, as he obviously did not realize, there



was much more in Tillich too that might have creatively boosted the project to which he was called.

16. In the resume, after Polanyi presents his position, Tillich inquires, "Is this view based on Gestalt psychology?" Far from just making apt conversation, as it might appear, the specificity of the question is loaded with residual Tillichiana. In *System der Wissenschaften*, Paulus had proposed Gestalt psychology as the pivot to overcoming the stultifying conflict of methods especially within the "sciences of being" vis-à-vis the "sciences of thought." It seems worth our while to adduce here further the flavor and stringency packed into this 1923 volume which I continue so much to wish that our same-year Hungarian immigrant to Berlin had somehow managed to ingest—or, indeed, even more, *emulate* with a comparable "Systematik" of the sciences. Tillich was not out simply to arrange concepts but was intent on solving live problems:

Nachdem im Vorhergehenden die seinswissenschaftliche Systematik positiv begründet ist, möge ein Blick auf den Stand der Debatte zeigen, dass unsere Auffassung im Stande ist, die aktuellen Probleme zu lösen. Es ringen gegenwärtig miteinander eine methodische und eine gegenständliche Richtung. Die methodische Richtung, die mit erkenntnistheoretischem Idealismus verbunden ist, teilt die Wissenschaft ein in *Natur- und Kulturwissenschaften*. Die gegenständliche, *erkenntnistheoretische* realistisch, teilt ein in *Natur- und Geisteswissenschaften*. Für die erste *Richtung* gehört die Psychologie zu den Naturwissenschaften, da sie methodisch wie diese, nämlich generalisierend verfährt. Für die zweite Richtung ist die Psychologie Grundlage der Geisteswissenschaften, da sie mit ihnen den gleichen Gegenstand, das geistige Leben bearbeitet. Die Stellung der Psychologie ist also das Kriterium beider Richtungen. Dadurch gewinnt dieser anscheinend so formalistischer sein höchst reale Bedeutung. In ihm entscheidet sich das Schicksal der Geisteswissenschaften, die Auffassung des Geistes und der Kultur. Ist die Psychologie grundlegende Geisteswissenschaft, so verliert der Geist seinen individuell einmaligen Charakter, er wird aus einer schöpferischen Folge zu einem Strukturgesetz; das Denken zerstört das Sein, die rationale Form siegt über den Widerspruch des irrationalen Gehaltes. Dem entgeht die methodische Richtung, aber sie selbst leidet an zahl-

reichen Mängeln. Sie unterscheidet nicht die seinswissenschaftliche Historie von den reinen systematischen Geisteswissenschaften und treibt diese gleichfalls zu einer rationalistischen Auffassung, in welcher der schöpferische Charakter des Geistigen verloren geht. Sie wird aber auch dem Einwand nicht gerecht, den die gegenständliche Methode erhebt, dass Psychologie etwas anderes ist als physikalische Naturwissenschaft; sie kann es nicht, denn sie übersieht das zentrale Gebiet der Gestalt-Wissenschaften, in deren Mitte die Psychologie steht. Sie ist endlich unfähig, den historischen Elementen in der physikalischen und organischen Gruppe gerecht zu werden, da sie die historische Methode auf die Kulturwissenschaften einschränkt und den Unterschied von autogenen und heterogenen Methoden nicht kennt. Die Wirklichkeit ist reicher, als dass sich zwei Methoden in sie teilen könnten und gerade die Methode der Gestalten, die im Streit um der Methoden vergessen wurde, ist die eigentlich zentrale und konkrete Methode: Die Methode, die der denkgeformten Wirklichkeit gemäss ist und die darum im Stande ist, das Problem der Methode zu lösen" [MW 1, p. 140].

Architectonic grounding, particularly in psychology, was ever a large resource in Tillich's ongoing career, re-anchored in enduring friendships with the Gestalt neurophysiologist Kurt Goldstein and such psychotherapists as Harry Bone, Karen Horney, and Rollo May. Fructifying insights devolved not only for depth psychology but also Paulus's fresh thinking in ST III regarding the wholeness and centeredness of personal life—thus fortifying him to stand up to B. F. Skinner during the Harvard professorship. An inestimable catalysis to the co-thinking he did in those very late years with Goldstein and others might have but sadly did not come from Michael, for whom similarly we may desiderate more helpful "think tank" context than he appears to have garnered from fellow scientists or philosophers (with the beneficent exception of Marjorie Grene, Bill Scott, and a few others).

17. At the Claremont Hotel, Tillich's rich background goes untapped. Polanyi has started the bidding and remains completely in charge. When asked about Gestalt psychology, he acknowledges its initial significance for his "way of discovery" (to use Richard's fine phrase) but immediately conveys his severe disappointment with the tack taken by Wolf-

gang Köhler, the name most of us readily associate with the Gestalt movement. This could have opened the door for a truly basic *Auseinandersetzung* between our dialoguers, one with immense import for the Polanyi project and also for Tillich's theology. The crux of the issue is the causal role of purposive freedom in the cognitive process. In other words, we are propelled headlong here into the solar plexus of Aristotle's grammar of causality—the fourth or final (teleological) cause. Köhler's experiments with apes learning to join sticks to reach food had promisingly cued Polanyi toward his climactic insight into tacit knowing [cf. PK, Torchbook ed., pp. 340-1, *passim*]. In *Tacit Dimension*, the most succinct statement of his flagship theory, Michael favorably refers to Hans Driesch, noting that "Biologists who recognize the basic distinction between mechanistic and organismic processes consider living functions to be determined at all stages by a combination of a mechanism with organismic regulation." Note how close we are to the terrain of Tillich's ruminations in the long passage just cited (Par. 16) from *System der Wissenschaften*. "Gestalt psychologists," Polanyi continues, "have often suggested that the processes of regulation are akin to the shaping of perception, but their insistence that both perceptual shaping and biological regulation are but the result of physical equilibration brought this suggestion to a dead end" [Anchor Books, 1967, pp. 43-4]. Köhler, and in Polanyi's generalization the whole school, had capitulated to impersonal physical determinism. This is *not* how Tillich saw the situation in 1923 when he firmly held "jede Gestaltwirklichkeit ist eine Einheit von äquivalenter und produktiver Kausalität [ibid., 145], *nor* does it cohere with the viewpoint of such neuroscientists as Goldstein, by whom Tillich felt aided and abetted in depicting human being as finite freedom. Maybe the general situation had considerably worsened by 1963, with Crick and Watson, for instance, simply taking for granted that "religion was a mistake," or Stephen Weinberg announcing "the more we understand the universe the more meaningless it becomes." But whatever may have been happening in Gestalt theory—or later in Prigogine; Eccles. Wilber *et alii*—it is noteworthy that Polanyi and Tillich solidly agree the meaningful creativity of human personal and cultural life is urgently challenged by current science's reductionist causal determinism. They agree *de facto*, that is. Polanyi has no inkling of how much the preceding, or how surprisingly some of the very late, thinking of Tillich may agree with him.

**18.** There at the hotel, why doesn't Paulus just tell him? We already spoke to this, but more needs saying. Increasingly, as I go on re-imagining the dialogue I poignantly regretted having to miss, I am very glad I was not there. Paulus was winded, done in from a grueling day of orating and interacting. He was set back on his heels by Michael's pent up steam. He was 75, with a heart condition. As someone who always spoke from notes, his mind was juggling possible tacks to take on the morrow to round out the final Earl Lecture. Then, as Polanyi approaches the end of *his* concentrated allocution, he reasserts the fixed idea that Tillich completely acquiesces in the false ideal of strictly detached scientific knowledge. This was precisely the kind of point at which Paulus would always emit a sigh too deep for words and simply shut up. The only thing left to do was keep smiling and get some relevant reading into Michael's hands, as the follow-up letters attempt. Fine. But there is still more that *could* explain the muteness of Tillich if the foregoing were insufficient, and these not yet mentioned factors considerably thicken the plot left over for us, the societies, to untangle.

**19.** The first of these more subterranean items is the great disparity between the meaning of *faith* for Polanyi and its meaning for Tillich. At first blush, Polanyi's meaning is the more commonplace. It is more or less what Aristotle meant by *pistis* 2300 years ago; namely, a conviction that lacks certainty. A synonym for this meaning of faith is belief. (In German there is in effect only one word—Glaube—for the English pair.) As Polanyi says in the next to last paragraph of his resume, "it is of the essence of knowledge to be held to be true by a man's mental effort." But this meaning of "faith" (which as here put could also be expressed as effortful, *Fuerwahrhalten*, in German) is exactly what Tillich tried strenuously to insist religious (and Christian) faith is *not*. *Dynamics of Faith* (on another but not unrelated aspect of which Polanyi had gotten hung up) from stem to stern tries to drive home an absolutely pivotal difference between belief (conviction lacking certainty about a matter of fact) and faith (being grasped by "God" or ultimate concern). Ironically, the smudging and even widespread modern obliteration of this difference sometimes seemed comparable in Tillichian diagnostics to the false ideal of detachment in Polanyian. For Paulus, as he says in his *magnum opus*, authentic faith is always and only "the state of being grasped by that toward which self-transcendence aspires, the ultimate in being and

meaning” [ST III, p.131.]. Above (especially par. 8), I compared Tillich’s long-standing recognition of a “mystical a priori” in all systems of thought to Polanyi’s insight into faith being presupposed by science. But even though it creates a hermeneutical circle analogous to that of Christian theology, Tillich never calls this *a priori* faith. We also have seen throughout this discussion that subjective “participation” was ascribed in some degree by Paulus to all cognitive domains. But again, he never calls this participation faith. Now there were around Union Seminary when I was there (1946-53), various versions of the idea “that every worldview rests ultimately on a faith.” Augustine’s *nisi credideritis non intelligetis* or the medieval motto *credo ut intelligam* were cited in support, and it was taken to be an apologetic corollary of this truth that one might not need worry about critical attacks coming from alien faith systems—which meant in effect coming from anywhere, since there was really no neutral science ungrounded in a faith. I was reminded of this attitude some time ago in the Polanyi Newsletter by the slant of Evangelical Biblical Professor Esther Meek, who wanted to claim support from Michael Polanyi in not having to worry about radical criticism. There is a problem here to which we shall have to speak before concluding, but for the moment I want simply to bring out that Tillich was *not* among those who espoused this kind of apologetics. Several times in my hearing, he made clear his unhappiness with it. I hasten to add I personally feel he never cogently established mutual exclusion between faith and belief, even though it was axiomatic for some of his utmost theological concerns. It is no wonder so many, including his would-be friend, Polanyi, have been incredulous or uneasy about Paulus’s edict of total separation of faith from the “preliminary” findings of science. In any case, coming back to the Berkeley dialogue, the profound problematic that looms in and under their disparate notions of faith—though Michael is quite unaware of it—would have been all too palpable to Paulus, and very understandably would have clinched his motivation at 10 PM or so to call it an evening.

20. Our interest, of course, is not chiefly in why Tillich (normally powerful in dialogue, as Richard says) clammed up that evening, but in the substantive issues inhering then and now in his face-off with Polanyi. Therefore, we are impelled on from divergence of faith and belief to a therewith-entangled *aporia* that is if anything even more challenging through the whole history of theology and philoso-

phy. *This is the role of freewill in cognition.* From Socrates to Scotus, Augustine to Arminius, Calvin to Kant, Jansenism to the Jesuits: it is all over the map and then some! Let me say for myself that Polanyi’s handling of this enigma [epitomized, e.g., in *The Tacit Dimension*, Anchor Book ed., pp, 42-5] has been groundbreaking. I deem his envisagement of the emergent causality of purposive commitment to be the most significant element in what he calls the “from-to” sequence from a “fiduciary matrix” of subsidiary clues to the focality of accomplished knowing. It picks up in a fresh, empirically convincing way from Peirce, James, and so many others a full parsing (which is impossible here) would require. As for Tillich, trying to discern how cognition, freedom, and faith converge in the hemispheres of his cerebrum is indeed a formidable task. There is first the fact that Paulus is always amphibious, always “on the boundary” or going back and forth across it—the boundaries here being saliently those between science, philosophy, and theology. But in addition to territorial adaptations there occur in Tillich major changes over time, and, *mirabile dictu*, one was just then underway as our duo sat together in the Claremont. To say the great systematizer was constantly evolving is heresy to some interpreters, though I salute it as a corroboration of his remarkable openness—one thing about him that never changed. From early on there is plenty in Tillich’s utterances re science and philosophy wherewith to support a robust yet sensible doctrine of human freedom. Up to a point, this is likewise true of his theology. As bearing on the human factor, in any dimension but the vertical, we have the deciding self-center. Then, in the dipolar structural ontology, dynamics, individuation, and freedom are equally enfranchised with form, participation, and destiny. Paulus would never have wanted to retract *System der Wissenschaften’s* definition of freedom as “*das individuell Schoepferische*” [MW, p. 144] or that work’s culminating mandate that “*Nur in der vollkommenen Einheit von Theonomie und Autonomie kommt die Wissenschaft, wie jeder sinnerfuelle Akt, zu ihrer Wahrheit*” [p. 262]. One can only conclude that a hefty *part* of his conceptual viscera could and did buy Michael’s insight that willing commitment is integral to knowing the truth (with unavoidable risk of falling into error). But Michael construed this as what *faith* was about, and here Paulus had a massive block. In spite of his scientific, philosophical, and human espousal of freedom, a prime taproot of his spiritual being *von Haus aus*

(very literally when we think of “Vaterchen,” his authoritarian dad) was the venerable Christian and especially Lutheran principle that “faith is not a human act” [ST II, p. 178] but rather entirely a work in us of divine grace. Tillich saw this as indispensable to St. Paul’s “justification by faith alone” which Luther had made the “article by which the church stands or falls.” In the Marburg *Dogmatik* of 1925, Paulus went so far as to deny that even the humanity of Jesus contributes anything to our salvation. “*Das in Jesus Christua erchienene Heil ist allein durch sich selbst bedingt. Seine Wirkung ist unabhaengig von jeder durch den Menschen geschaffenen Voraussetzung, sowohl vor wie nach seinem Durchbruch*” [p. 375]. This was his determined orientation over against any qualification by liberals like Brightman or Hartshorne. His celebrated message, “You are Accepted,” gained its force precisely through the “in spite of” of *our* total lack of a reciprocating condition. It was predicated indispensably—so one would have thought—on “the basic theological truth that in relation to God everything is by God” [ST III, p. 135].

21. Something strange, however, was going to happen shortly, and it must have been fermenting that night in Berkeley. When ST III appeared in the late summer of 1963, there surfaced about 20 pages from its end the unprecedented Tillichian motif of *essentialization*, which thereafter arguably dominates the dénouement of Paulus’s whole *magnum opus*. [Cf. my article “Tillich’s Notion of Essentialization,” in *Tillich-Studien*, vol. 3, ed. G. Hummel and D. Lax, 2000, pp. 365-83.] I am still trying to pin down exactly when, how, and why this novel epiphany in Tillich’s text occurred. As of now, it cannot be ruled out that the encounter with Polanyi was causally involved.] The word was borrowed from Schelling, but “essentialization” [German *Essentifikation*] was used by Tillich to express ontological fructification significant for God that is achieved by finitely free creatures. “The world process means something for God,” he can now intone (almost as if proleptically privy to Polanyi’s *Meaning*, pp. 162-3, written a decade after Paulus’s death.) God “is not a separated, self-sufficient entity who, driven by a whim, creates what he wants and saves whom he wants. Rather, the eternal act of creation is driven by a love which finds fulfillment only through the other one who has the freedom to reject and to accept love” [ST III, p. 422]. It is this amplifying of his thinking—after prolonged jousting with process thought—that justifies Tillich finally

dubbing it “eschatological panenthesism” [op. cit., p. 421]. Charles Hartshorne noted the change [in Charles Kegley, *The Theology of Paul Tillich*, rev., 1982, pp. 230-31], but the only Tillich scholar (of whom I am aware) to anticipate my own perception of a “radical reversal” in Paulus was Alex McKelway (in his 1964 overview *The Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich*, p. 244). My point about the whole matter at this particular juncture is in the first instance merely that internal seismic rumblings around the issue of human “vertical freedom” (freedom toward God) may well help explain Tillich’s somewhat unusual taciturnity at the Claremont Hotel dialogue—or should we almost say monologue? Be that as it may, the substantive importance of the issue in itself puts it on the overarching agenda of sorting out where the contacts and disconnects of our dynamic duo leave us today.

22. It is exceedingly interesting that Polanyi, continuing his aggressive reading in all cultural directions, had delved hungrily—by the time *Meaning* appeared—into Peirce, James, and Whitehead, endorsing their “looser view of teleology” as a desirable alternative to what he had come to see as “the Good forcing itself” on everything else [*Meaning*, pp. 162-3]. This was a decade after Tillich’s death, and it seems a shame Michael could not have known about “essentialization” bursting on stage at the very end of Paulus’s concluding and to his own mind most authoritative testament, which the ST indisputably was. I have the impression that following their time together, except for the courtesy of two letters, Polanyi never read another line of Paulus. I greatly wish I had more access to Michael’s candid reaction to the theological opportunities and occasions that had reached out to him through the ’30s and ’40s as well as thereafter. He seems (in the Scott/Moleski chronicle) to have keenly appreciated initially and then been rather frustrated by the British group convened by J. H. Oldham. Was he disappointed by its Barthian ethos, which far less than Tillich was prepared to accord any theological significance to human enterprise? One thing is unmistakable: *Polanyi was unswervingly inspired by the sacredness of human freedom*, whereas Christian theology has no such consistent score sheet. By 1966, in *The Tacit Dimension*, Michael is convinced modernity’s dilemma cannot be resolved “by the enfeebled authority of revealed religion”; the reciprocating split between critical cynicism and moral fanaticism (which has hounded humanity since the Enlightenment) must first be healed on secular

grounds [Anchor Book ed., p. 62]. Is this in part fallout from his Tillichian disillusion? I continue to ponder such imponderables. It is upbeat in any case that Michael, in a theological coda to his own swan song [*Meaning*, p. 215], manages to hit a surpassingly high note, or actually a chord, which is quite reminiscent of Reinhold Niebuhr and Tillich where they harmonized. Even before his Gifford Lectures, a *cantus firmus* for Polanyi had been the Pauline rendition of the Christian moral vision. His valedictory summation of this is as good theology as Reinie or Paulus ever wrote.

Perhaps it has been the clear moral call of Christianity that has left behind in us a distillation which causes us to burn with... hunger and thirst after righteousness. If so, it should be possible for us to find in this same Christianity the antidote for [the] poison of moral perfectionism; for what this religion has also told us is that we are inescapably *imperfect* and that it is only by faith and trust in the all-encompassing grace of God that we can project ourselves into that supreme work of the imagination—the Kingdom of God—where we can dwell in peace and hope of the perfection which is God’s alone and thus where we can, in a wholly inexplicable and trans-natural way, find our hunger and thirst after righteousness satisfied at last—in the midst of all our imperfections. As Saint Paul tells us his God told him: ‘I will not remove your infirmity. For my strength is made perfect in weakness.’

23. I like to think this poignant paragraph speaks for Polanyi himself, and yet it is not his very last word. He goes on to represent also the wider cultural *oikumene*, those who stand outside the Christian or any religious stance, affirming our world’s need—which has meanwhile become all the more dire—for tolerance and mutual understanding “within the free society,” as in our common yet so differentiated humanity we seek universal truth [ibid., pp. 215-6]. Michael seems in fact to espouse this Christianly uncommitted stance, as though he is “on the boundary” and/or crossing over. We have here, of course, the unfathomable problem of how Harry Prosch’s editing may have shaped the text. Even so, I cannot believe it stretches things to see a parallel between Michael’s farewell witness and that of Paulus, in his October 1965 Chicago address on “The Significance of the History of Religions for the Systematic Theologian” [*The Future of Religions*, ed. J. Brauer, 1966, p. 94]. Tillich too remains “rooted in his own

experiential foundation,” which is Pauline Christianity, while urging upon all the endeavor to formulate our roots in “universally valid statements” with “openness to spiritual freedom both from one’s own foundation and for one’s own foundation.” Just a few months earlier, in his eulogy for Martin Buber [GW, XII, pp. 320-3], precisely that commitment to openness had been identified as what Paulus would most hope to emulate in his own life. I argued last year, in a paper for the Tillich group in Washington, that in that eulogy it comes to light that Paulus’ concept of sainthood is best of all fulfilled in Buber. I believe, however, that had Paulus known Polanyi better he might well have canonized him too. For all their missed connections, there winds up being an amazing compatibility between them.

24. Note, for instance, how Polanyi and Tillich both posit a double registry—a dipolarity—of the ultimate fulfillment of meaning. Despite their uncoordination, they both finally embrace fully the *indicative* of unconditional divine grace and the *imperative* of free human creativity summoned to serve beauty, truth, and good in what Rilke calls “*die wunderbare Stadt der Zeit*.” This corresponds to what Christianity names (perhaps nowadays too obsolescently) “justification” and (perhaps nowadays too moralistically) “sanctification.” The general history of religion mirrors variously the same problematic, and so (one can hardly not infer) does the human plight to which religion speaks. There is on the one hand a need for indiscriminating and absolute Divine help, and on the other a finite but still radical need for creative human effort *to be needed* and appreciated. In no theology has the integration of “grace and works” ever been completely or unparadoxically achieved, even while disputes about their relationship have instigated terrible religious hostility. I frankly think Polanyi could have helped Tillich as much or more than Kurt Goldstein did on the dynamics *in faith too* of cognitive commitment, after Paulus at the last moment was ready for such help. Our duo also share a profound instinct with Karl Barth to “Let God be God”—to honor the unfore-thinkable Divine mystery, even in their mutual devotion to intense ratiocination. They affirm categorically the *symbolic* character of religious language. Surely Polanyi would agree with Tillich’s mature insistence that the only non-symbolic statement we can make about God is that “everything we say about God is symbolic” [ST II, p. 9], even though, like Buber, Michael has no taste for ontological language and the partially desymbolizing constructs

(such as “being-itself” or “the infinite”) to which Paulus has recourse in relating Christian witness to the wider world.

24. An outcome of the “Berkeley Dialogue” might be seen as Polanyi’s proposal he and Tillich should thenceforth focus respectively on combating objectivism in science and fundamentalism in religion. Though Tillich gave his nod to the formula, it seems in fact merely to signify the mutual resignation of our duo that each would go his own way inattentive to the other. That was as it had been previously—entirely for Tillich and really, *so far as concerns objectivism in science*, entirely for Polanyi too, since Michael was indebted to Paulus at key theological points but never looked into his sweeping study of science. Then, after the Berkeley encounter, as we already noted, other than parting courtesies they paid one another no heed. But quite apart from their not tuning in to each other, we need to ask *what did Polanyi and Tillich actually do about the twin demons of scientism and fundamentalism?* Surveying this adequately extrudes way beyond my present contract and is an ongoing challenge to both our societies. Still, we cannot ignore what to begin with makes our duo dynamic, and I first note yet another irony in the whole tableau—specifically in their recipe of divided tasks. For though they put it the other way around, *fundamentalism was arguably more Polanyi’s problem than Tillich’s, and scientism (or the false ideal of detached objectivity) was at least as much Tillich’s problem as Polanyi’s.* Thus the divisional formula of concord they floated after the Berkeley meeting was intrinsically nonsensical. Happily, they both *did* go on counteracting both the more cultural abscess (scientism) and the more formally religious one (fundamentalism).

25. Tillich’s teaching pulls the rug from under fundamentalism in his categorical premise that religious knowledge is altogether symbolic. Then he also removes from faith anything to be fundamentalist about—by insisting its cognitive aspect, being a matter of ultimate concern, can in principle neither rest upon nor be threatened by the preliminary concern operative in empirical science (including especially historiography, the principal test case in Tillich’s arguments with peers, but also cosmology, and psychology where formidable challenges loomed). But Tillich never spent any time contending with fundamentalists, who avoided him and Union like the plague. Also, the idea, which he himself wafted to Polanyi, that he ever told students what to put in next Sunday’s sermon, is completely fatuous. His

insistence that “the biggest barrier to religious understanding is literalism” (often reiterated orally and frustratingly eluding me for documentation) fell equally on the ears of orthodox, liberals, neo-orthodox, and scientistically brainwashed seekers—and was as pertinent to their respective confusions as it was to fundamentalism. A striking example here is Albert Einstein, who was notably, albeit gently, critiqued by Paulus for literally rejecting the Personal God [“The Idea of the Personal God,” *Union Theology Seminary Quarterly Review*, II, 1, 1940, pp. 8-10]. Though it was hardly appropriate for Polanyi to assign our duo to the separate operational theatres he did, Polanyi himself does seem to have received direct help from Tillich in steering his own religious way around the shoals of fundamentalism. His reiterated envisagement “of an indeterminate meaning which floats beyond all materially structured experiences ultimately pointing at unsubstantial existence” [Document X, p. 4] was his (ontologically unsophisticated) way of expressing the Tillichian symbolism culminating in being-itself. However, Michael consistently deplores fundamentalism also because it violates his norm of scientific integrity in defying the consensus of expertise he would rely upon to establish empirical probability. (The best statement I have found of this is in *Meaning*, Chapter 12, “Mutual Authority.”) Now in spite of partial dependence on the notion of symbol shared with Tillich, Polanyi—as was noted above in Paragraph 3—became aware in reading *Dynamics of Faith* that he seriously differed with Paulus regarding faith’s relation to science. Michael did *not* believe the two could be totally separated. Already in PK, apparently unaware his thought is here contrary to Tillich’s, Polanyi writes, “an event which has in fact never taken place can have no supernatural significance; and whether it has taken place or not must be established by factual evidence” [p. 284]. After all, it is not enough simply to reveal the overreaching of scientism. Increasingly Michael seems concerned with the intrinsic plausibility of faith. Toward the end of *Meaning*, note how he desiderates empirical and philosophical support from emergent evolution and cosmic teleology. Thinking along these lines inevitably brings one onto Tillichian-avoided terrain where, unless one becomes a fundamentalist, collision with fundamentalism must occur. Michael, of course, was not about to become one or acquiesce in anybody doing so. But it is this would-be militant presence, so to speak, in the theatre of operations where faith *can* conflict with or receive support from science,

that leads me to say—if we *had* to choose one of our duo to battle fundamentalism—the more plausible choice is arguably Polanyi. I say this partly because, along with many others who have carefully studied Tillich’s position on faith and science, I am not convinced these can be so cleanly disjoined as Paulus asseverates—in historiography, cosmology, or psychology. And I also would put Michael in top command here because (presupposing what he shares with Tillich) I find his mandate of universal openness to expert testing and consensus to be the most plausible antidote we actually have to fundamentalism at ground level. I believe Ian Barbour’s appealing redefinition of objectivity, which I personally adopted decades ago, is largely inspired by Polanyi, viz., that post-critical objectivity has to mean “inter-subjective testability and commitment to universality” [Barbour, *Issues in Science and Religion*, p. 177]. This is our motive, is it not, in coming to the AAR, aside from fun with friends?

**26.** The other battlefield, scientific objectivism, is an arena where *prima facie* Polanyi might seem almost a shoo-in to head the fighting, especially to hear him tell it, and if the only alternative is Tillich. But, as we saw, Polanyi is unaware of the case for Tillich in regard to science. On alternatives, we are of course talking here of our duo henceforth dividing *their* efforts, prescinding from a much larger field that could not exclude contemporaries like Buber, Marcel, Berdyaev, Shestov, and numerous others, not to mention the capital figures like Whitehead, Wittgenstein, and Heidegger. Tillich especially used to mention Bergson and Simmel, and James seemed more and more important. All these fecund minds do bear relevantly on the “sclerosis of objectivity,” to use Jaspers’ incisive phrase. With due allowance for the fact that Paulus and Michael were addressing just their own division of labor, there *is* something a little unreal in their rhetoric (“You have done for science what I have done for religion,” etc.)—one more, perhaps, of the oddities which stud this intermezzo. For one does not sense hubris, I think, in either of our duo. They are too consecrated to their calling. While Polanyi is naturally more surefooted in the forward trenches of experimental work and its logical calculus of uptake, and while no one can rival his pioneering expose of scientific pretense, Tillich offers a magisterially comprehensive and deeply anchored matrix in which to unpack, diagnose, and treat the pathology of egregious and culturally tyrannical cognitive detachment. The suasive holism of his vision transcends necessary critique in trans-

parency to the gracious Unconditioned manifest as universal cruciform Love. As the current world crisis widens under simultaneous onslaught of cynical reductionism and all too credulous fanaticism, can we even think of dispensing with the services of either of our doughty duo? As I cannot imagine trying to do philosophy without *both* Plato and Aristotle, I adamantly refuse to furlough either Paulus or Michael to some more circumscribed task. As for Tillich, it is just now becoming clear how very much unfinished business there is in the full outworking of energies, horizons and strategic shifts so richly packed into his intellectual estate. The early and the late phases of it—not to speak of the thick 1923 study of science—have not been at all adequately assessed. There is a specific crying need to pick up the sharp pang Paulus felt when he was tempted, as Peter John reports from that 1951 open house [above, Par. 7], to shelve ST and undertake a major work in epistemology, of which the PK essay is a suggestive nucleus. I have just been zestfully re-awakened to Polanyi, and if I could only have back my worthy colleague Charles McCoy, I would never tease him again for ranking Michael the greatest mind since Plato. That may be slightly exaggerated, but who cares? We need to have our consciousness raised. Polanyi has been shamefully ignored by the philosophical and theological gatekeepers. He is an extremely potent catalyst and resource, not only for going on further with Tillich but in marshalling the best aid we can get to deal with the Richard Dawkins, Sam Harris, and all the varied legions who reductively deny or uncritically bloat the possibility of meaningful faith to light our human future. In his last Berkeley lecture following the Claremont encounter, Paulus pleads with us all “to fight an uphill battle” [*Irrelevance*, p. 63] and at the end of *Meaning* thirteen years later Michael says “We do not see the end in sight” [p. 214].” It is challenging, and it may be daunting, but with our dynamic duo we do not despair.

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Coming in the Fall Bulletin: the complete NAPTS and AAR Tillich Group schedules, and any papers not submitted until now. There will also be a brief tribute to Kirster Stendahl.

## THE CHRISTIAN ENCOUNTER OF PAUL TILlich AND MICHAEL POLANYI

RICHARD GELWICK

Two intellectual giants of the 20th century met in Berkeley on February 21, 1963 to discuss the nature of faith and believing in Christian faith.<sup>1</sup> For both Paul Tillich and for Michael Polanyi, engaging major thinkers in conversation about issues of faith, meaning, and society is a central part of their way of knowing and doing. *Tillich in Dialogue* is certainly more than a book title and is truly representative of the formal as well as the informal nature of Tillich's theological work.<sup>2</sup> Similarly conviviality is practiced and taught by Polanyi as a central part of his scientific and philosophical work, as noted in Scott and Moleski's biography of Polanyi and Ruel Tyson's sketch of Polanyi's life from his mother's intellectual salon to the scientific institute.<sup>3</sup> Polanyi is a person who actively engages students and leading thinkers in order to confront the pressing questions of meaningful belief and action in a world beset by doubt. The records of Polanyi's correspondence preserved at the University of Chicago show an interdisciplinary and superstar range of correspondence and associations that compares with Tillich's lively and extensive personal outreach.<sup>4</sup>

### The Christian Context of Polanyi's Meeting with Tillich

The context of the encounter of Tillich and Polanyi is important. Tillich is giving the Earl Lectures at the Pacific School of Religion on the theme of "The Irrelevance and Relevance of the Christian Message." Tillich's appeal to the morally earnest and civil rights minded student body at Berkeley is massive. During the Earl Lecture series, Tillich takes time during the afternoon before his second evening lecture to go a block away from the First Congregational Church where the Earl lectures are being given to speak to students and faculty at the University of California Harmon gymnasium. Tillich's appeal is so great that the gymnasium is estimated to have been packed with over 6,000 persons filling the bleachers, the basketball court, all standing room and even the stage around the speaker's platform. Tillich's Pacific School student host and guide for the week, James A. Stackpole, reports that there were nearly as many persons listening outside on loud speakers as there were inside.<sup>5</sup> Among the stu-

dents in the audience is Mario Savio who in 1964 would arise as the voice of the Berkeley student protest for free speech and academic freedom.<sup>6</sup> A year later, in 1964, Savio and other free speech student leaders would miss a scheduled weekend meeting with Tillich at Santa Barbara because they were in jail for protesting against University anti-freedom of speech policies.

I remember the Harmon gymnasium speech vividly. Seeing Tillich in that arena addressing probably the largest audience in America ever to hear an *avant garde* liberal German theologian seemed like a second coming of a Schleiermacher-type speaking to the cultured despisers of religion. For an hour, Tillich addresses the rapt audience on "Science, Philosophy and Religion." Typically, he uses his two contrasting definitions of religion as ultimate concern and religion as the life of a particular social group.<sup>7</sup>

But we are now so removed from the event of Tillich and Polanyi meeting that we almost forget their common ground: the importance of the meaning and the communication of Christian faith. Looking back at many years of Polanyi scholarship that has obscured and clouded Polanyi's Christian involvement and has treated him primarily as a philosopher or marginal Christian, today's topic takes us back to Polanyi basics. *Therefore, I want my first proposition to be that Polanyi's meeting with Tillich is a meeting about the hegemony of the mistaken understanding of science as strictly detached and impersonal knowledge affecting the vitality and relevance of the Christian faith.*

Since his beginning years as a medical doctor on the way toward doing physical chemistry with brilliance, Polanyi is searching for his beliefs on liberal social, political, and economic reform and a basis of hope for humanity after World War I. Paul Tillich, only two years older than Polanyi, shares with him both the political and economic turbulence of post-World War I Germany and Europe and later the rise of totalitarian states in Germany and the Soviet Union. Each follows the deep furrows of his family background. Tillich creatively develops his theology of culture out of his Lutheran background and university philosophical and theological studies. Polanyi moves from the liberal political and religious background of his Jewish heritage to seeing Christianity as having given to the world the ethics of the prophets and Jesus. He sees in Christianity an ethical basis for human cooperation, and questions the rightness and value of a separate Jewish state in Pal-



estine.<sup>8</sup> In 1917, Polanyi's spiritual quest appears in his paper entitled "To the Peacemakers."<sup>9</sup> Later in 1944, he describes "The Peacemakers" to Karl Mannheim as "an attack on the materialist conception of history."<sup>10</sup> Polanyi sees the peacemakers in Stockholm as dealing with the distribution of territories but missing the central problem that competing sovereign states are the causes of the war. He sees that the underlying assumptions of nationalism are a quasi-religion. As a better alternative, Polanyi calls for the formation of "a supranational community in which the rights of sovereignty are to take second place to international cooperation toward a new age of wealth and well being."<sup>11</sup>

In addition, during the First World War, Polanyi belongs to a circle with George Lukacs, Bela Balzacs, Karl Mannheim, and others who read Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky, and at different times later in his life Polanyi speaks of the influence of Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky on his faith. Besides these literary influences in such intellectual circles, there is a mixture of political proposals for social reform that goes from individual initiatives to government planning. So his movement toward Christian faith is a gradual aligning of himself with intellectuals who are trying to establish grounds for believing in and following transcendent ideals of the human spirit and civilization.

When Polanyi is negotiating with the University of Manchester to move to a new post in physical chemistry there with larger and better facilities than any other school in England and The Kaiser Wilhelm Institute in Berlin, it is Walter Moberly, vice-chancellor of Manchester, who finally gets Polanyi to leave. Not incidentally, Moberly is a leading and senior figure in the Student Christian Movement in Britain and wrote *The Crisis in the University* that became an international manifesto on the importance of a university education that involves study and understanding of religion, particularly Christianity, in the modern university.<sup>12</sup> In Polanyi's quest he joins Christian thinkers in England in The Christian Frontier Council and in The Moot, both led by Joseph Oldham, one-time head of the International Missionary Council and a founding leader of the World Council of Churches. The Moot particularly becomes a major connection with Christian theologians and supports his belief in the reality of spiritual ideals. In this way, Polanyi's mind increasingly indwells a Christian view of history and hope, and he begins writing and thinking in terms of faith and

reason, the predicament of human finitude, and the Pauline paradigm of grace and faith.<sup>13</sup>

In 1917, applying for a position in physical chemistry in Munich, Polanyi tries to make his best case as a Hungarian and includes a statement that as to religion he is formerly a Jew and presently without a church affiliation and would be willing to join any Christian denomination that his superior might suggest.<sup>14</sup> Two years later, Polanyi moves to Karlsruhe in Germany, becomes an Austrian citizen, and is baptized a Roman Catholic. Then in 1921, he marries Magda Kemeny, a Hungarian Roman Catholic from Budapest whom he meets in Karlsruhe. So Polanyi's Christian allegiance seems to be both practical and theological. It is practical in the sense that Christian identity opens opportunities in the face of growing anti-Semitism; theological in the sense that Polanyi's deepest longings for the spiritual, political, and economic renewal of Europe seem to lie in a Christian image of humanity called out of its fallen nature to achieve greatness in doing good in spite of the difficulties.

In February of 1963, when this important dialogue occurs at the Earl Lectures of the Pacific School of Religion, I am working with Polanyi at The Center for Advanced Studies in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford as the beginning of my doctoral research on his epistemology and its implications for Christian theology.<sup>15</sup> In the fall of that year, Polanyi gives The Terry Lectures at Yale. As part of my working with Polanyi, I proofread the lectures before they are given. These lectures were the first draft of what becomes Polanyi's summarizing and incisive book, *The Tacit Dimension*.<sup>16</sup> Notably, The Terry Lectures is the same platform where Tillich delivered earlier his perhaps most famous book, *The Courage to Be*.<sup>17</sup>

Using Tillich's mode of speaking, I am claiming that Polanyi has an ultimate concern about the understanding and articulation of religious faith, particularly the western heritage of Christian faith, in a world dominated by scientism. Polanyi is fifty miles away at Stanford. He is approaching his 72<sup>nd</sup> birthday in 18 days. His books, *Science, Faith and Society*, *Personal Knowledge*, and his work on the *Tacit Dimension* all state his concern to restore the capacity of humanity to have faith in the ideals of our religious heritage.<sup>18</sup> Polanyi's concern is no mere curiosity about hearing Tillich. It is not for lack of things to do in the San Francisco Bay area. He has heard Tillich, read, used, and understood very well parts of Tillich's writing, particularly volume one of *Systematic Theology* and *Dynamics of Faith*.<sup>19</sup> It is

*atic Theology and Dynamics of Faith*.<sup>19</sup> It is because of Polanyi's knowledge of and interest in Tillich's thought that I tell him that Tillich will be giving the Earl Lectures. Polanyi asks if he would be able to meet with Tillich. It so happens that the faculty chair for the Earl Lectures that year is my doctoral advisor, Charles McCoy. Arrangements are made by having McCoy come to the Center for Advanced Studies at Stanford and lunch with Polanyi and Robert McAfee Brown of the Stanford University Religion Department. Polanyi's purpose in talking with Tillich is about the critical issue of how to understand the role of faith within both science and religion, particularly the Christian religion. Polanyi's visit to hear Tillich lecture and to talk with him is very deliberate, intentional, and significant in understanding Polanyi's religious outlook. Polanyi sees in Tillich a theologian akin to his own programmatic work of trying to purge science of a dogmatism that cuts off science from its own intrinsic nature and its relation to a wider realm of moral and spiritual guidance.

Two months later after his meeting with Tillich, Polanyi gives an address at Pacific School of Religion developing his concerns in the conversation with Tillich following the Earl Lectures. The title of the address, "Science and Religion: Separate Dimensions or Common Ground?" denotes his great concern with Tillich's thought.<sup>20</sup> In the address, Polanyi shows his own connection with Christian faith. Polanyi claims that for scientists to have a reasonable view of the universe they must have "a theory of knowledge which accepts indwelling as the proper way for discovering and possessing the knowledge of comprehensive entities."<sup>21</sup> Comprehensive entities, we will eventually see, has a connection with Tillich's ontology. But for the moment, we need to notice the relevance that Polanyi asserts here when he goes on to say: "I believe also that this may open up a cosmic vision which will harmonize with some basic teachings of Christianity."<sup>22</sup> At stake for Polanyi in the dialogue with Tillich is helping Tillich to see that religion, of which Christian faith is the example, is tied to the scientist's ability to make discoveries about reality. Both science and religion for Polanyi have their depth or significance by their bearing on truth about reality. This relation of knowledge and ontology is one of the most basic questions Tillich and Polanyi could discuss which will lead to my second proposition.

### On Comparing Tillich's and Polanyi's Ontology

Scholars of the work of Paul Tillich will find in Tillich's paper in the Horkheimer Festschrift much that is familiar. I think that one reason why he may have recommended it to Polanyi is that it very concisely summarizes his basic thoughts on epistemology and ontology without Polanyi's having to search through his systematic theology. As we will see, Tillich discusses the structure of knowing in terms of the basic polarities of self and world that he did in his systematic theology. In this way, Tillich goes much further in his analysis of being than Polanyi does in organizing as much as a philosopher can the categories necessary for analyzing being. Polanyi confines himself mainly to the bearing of knowledge of the truth on reality, the issue that for Polanyi is at stake in the freedom of human beings to be creative and to have a progressive and socially constructive society. For both Tillich and Polanyi, the ontological issue in the status of knowledge reflects their European experience of totalitarian ideologies. How can we in a world of supposedly increasing knowledge become so destructive and what can we do to deal with it?

So for people fresh to or unacquainted with Polanyi, you meet in him not a philosopher whose tools come mainly from the history of philosophy. Even so, Polanyi is European educated in a selective and experimental *gymnasium* in Budapest and raised in a very cosmopolitan, literate, and *au courant* family; he was prepared to move easily in his life to tackling major theoretical problems in physical chemistry, economics, government planning, and theory of knowledge. This breadth of background makes him, like Tillich, a person who reads his world with scope and in this generalizing and ranging interest addresses basic issues for human life today.

When Polanyi takes up the problem of the relation of knowing to the truth about reality, he is not an instructor about ontology as Tillich is. One of the helpful aspects of Tillich's work is that he is an instructor not only on the frontier issues of our time but he is also a guide to the history of western thought. As you read him, you get an education in both this history as well as its relevance to the present. Polanyi plunges into his problem of theory of knowledge assuming a lot of background in science, philosophy, humanities, and political and economic history. *Therefore, my second proposition is that Tillich and Polanyi compare well on the basic issue of the ontological relation of the knower to the*

known but they do so as philosopher-theologian and scientist-philosopher. This difference and likeness makes them able to connect with each other and to offer help to each other. It also helps their work to reach further in the science and religion dialogue.

There are two more comments about comparing their ontologies that I notice. One is the constancy of the dualities of the polarity of self-world in Tillich and the from-to structure of knowing in Polanyi. Here is a point of common agreement between Tillich and Polanyi though formulated in very different idioms. We will see this as we proceed.

The other comment already suggested by their difference in backgrounds is that Polanyi, besides indicating that his theory of knowledge leads to an "ontology of commitment," also develops another linguistic denotation for ontology in his use of the words "comprehensive entities."<sup>23</sup> These two denotations, "ontology of commitment" and "comprehensive entities" point to extensive areas where Polanyi's work may complement our traditional use of ontology in philosophy. By "ontology of commitment," Polanyi means accepting as our human condition that we are "called," or "thrown into being" in Heideggerian terms, to rely upon standards of our self and cultural heritage to exercise responsible judgment with universal intent. Packaged in this language Polanyi is speaking to our need to serve the truth as we can find it in a changing world with immense potential and hazard.

For the person looking for familiar ontological locutions in Polanyi, you might not immediately notice them, although his discussion of epistemology is a discussion of how we know the aspects of reality that we claim to know in everything—the humanities, sciences, and arts. Because Polanyi finds knowing to be an activity of the self and all received knowledge, skills, practices, concepts, records, traditions, and models, etc., to be known only by the action of the self in the world, he turned to a verbal formulation that describes knowledge as knowing. This point is fundamental to Polanyi's outlook. What is knowing? For Polanyi it is the action of the self engaging the world and relying upon the flood of clues coming into our self and shaping them into meaningful patterns. He got his suggestion for this approach from Gestalt psychology but he radically changed its implications by giving credit to the individual self for reaching out, receiving, and integrating the flood of clues into patterns. The nature of this view is that it talks about reality through the process of "comprehension." To comprehend is

rooted in the Latin *com* for "with" and *prehendere* "to grasp." When Polanyi talks about what we know about aspects of reality, he also often uses the term "comprehensive entities." As Phil Mullins has recently shown, comprehensive entities is a formulation that allows Polanyi to give credit to the rich variety of and unfolding character of reality.<sup>24</sup> In short, Polanyi talks less about *ontos* or being than comprehensive entities. I think this change in language, along with Polanyi's more scientific examples, may be one of the ways that the ontological issues in the science and religion dialogue could be promoted. With these suggestions on making comparisons, we now turn to the missing link, the Horkheimer paper, in the attempt of Tillich to share with Polanyi about a theory of knowledge, which gives Tillichians and Polanyians the opportunity to decide more intelligently on their relationship.

### Tillich's Horkheimer Festschrift Paper

Responding to Polanyi during their conversation, Tillich tells him that in a paper he gave years ago on an ontology of cognition, he tried to make a point similar to Polanyi's idea of personal knowledge but Ernest Nagel and others in philosophy of science would have nothing to do with it. Due to confusion on where the paper was published, it only recently was found in English but in a German periodical. When we examine Tillich's paper, it does seem that Tillich had reached a point in his analysis of the subject-object polarity of all knowing that is similar to Polanyi on the structure of knowing and the fundamental role of the person in it. Tillich's position is also one that would challenge Nagel's analytic philosophy of science. *Therefore, my third principal proposition is that Tillich's epistemology is like Polanyi's in his concern to show that for ontological reasons all knowledge including science is a personal achievement and intellectual commitment.*

In Tillich's paper, the personal participation of the knower in attaining knowledge is emphatic. He demonstrates it in several ways: (1) the polarity of subject and object seen in the very act of asking about being; (2) the polarity of the individualized self and its taking part in that about which it asks; and (3) the relation of cognitive attitudes to levels of being. The levels of being are also threefold: first, inanimate matter or things that relate to each other by replacing or resisting each other—this category suggests physical and chemical reactions of com-

pounding and dissolving; second, animate matter which produces each other or inheres in each other substantially—this category suggests biological processes of evolution and inheritance; third, conscious matter which relates to other matter by encounter—this category suggests the meeting of beings who are aware of each other. These three classes of ‘beings’ roughly parallel the stratification of reality in Teilhard de Chardin and in Polanyi. Further, a conjunction of Tillich’s thought with Polanyi’s appears here when Tillich points out that the coming together in cognitive encounter is joint participation in a common situation.<sup>25</sup> This point puts Tillich closer to Polanyi’s concern for the common ground of both science and of religion. One of the grand problems between science and religion is the debate over whether their knowing allows for common ground. We also see in Tillich’s terms of separation and of participation in the cognitive act similarity to Polanyi’s “from-to” structure in knowing as seen in Polanyi’s terms of the “proximal” and “distal” poles of knowing.<sup>26</sup> If a Polanyian like myself is trying to share with someone else Polanyi’s formulation of knowing, Tillich’s discussion of the subject and object polarity of individualization and participation and the levels of being also shows very quickly and cogently why knowing cannot be detached. Though there are differences, Tillich’s paper sets out very clearly and briefly why any knowing without participation is fundamentally or ontologically mistaken.

Having done the structural analysis of knowing and as a polarity, Tillich goes directly to the critical issue in the debate about participation, detachment, and controlling knowledge. Here his attention turns to what degree the knower participates in what is known. Tillich finds the degree of participation is on a scale between “controlling knowledge” and “existential knowledge.”<sup>27</sup> In both poles of knowledge, controlling and existential, there is an element of separation and of participation. Speaking of scientific knowing Tillich finds it at two points. First, it is in the categorical structure of knowing as a polarity. But second, it is in the very nature of the scientific process of discovery. Tillich’s words on discovery sound almost like Polanyi’s descriptions of a scientist’s passionate attraction to the pursuit of truth as he approaches a discovery. Tillich says about the give and take of scientific work: “It is the desire to participate in that which is real and which by its reality, exerts an infinite attraction on that being who is able to encounter reality as reality. Participation in

that which has the power of being the really Real gives fulfillment to him who participates in it.”<sup>28</sup> So while there may be a difference between controlling knowledge and existential knowledge or “saving knowledge,” Tillich finds a very strong element of participation in the scientific pole as well as the existential one that denies a strict impersonal detachment.

Now from this basic paralleling of Tillich with Polanyi, I want to name quickly some other similar points in support of my third proposition about their similarity. Both Tillich and Polanyi agree that knowing between the subject and the object changes with different forms of encounter.<sup>29</sup> One of the problems of empiricism is that it can never find the structural presuppositions of experience because it lacks the ontological understanding of the polarity of self and world.<sup>30</sup> In other words, empiricism alone reduces experience without including the self that is a part of the experience. This weakness, Tillich, comments, led to the development of phenomenology that helped to regain the subject-object distinction and the subject as important to understanding cognition. Then Tillich makes a statement about cognitive encounter that drives home Polanyi’s “personal knowledge.” Tillich says: “In this respect, participation seems to be absolutely predominant over separation. The subject is a part of the process in which it not only encounters the object, but also encounters its own encountering.”<sup>31</sup> Tillich then goes on to notice how disturbing this participation is to the idea of detached verification model because it seems too subjective and undermines independent judgment. The fear of subjectivity leads Tillich to one of the key points in Polanyi’s discussion with him, the relation of participation of the cognizing subject to the object of knowing by “controlling knowledge.” Tillich says that even at the scientific pole there is a major element of participation. Compared with Polanyi, the role of the subject is often described in science as missing so extremely that Polanyi thinks scientific accounts of the emergence of life have the oddity that they do not include the emergence of a person who develops theories that there is evolutionary emergence.

Despite the richness of Tillich’s discussion of an ontology of cognition, I must go on to see their similar standing regarding religion as brought out in Tillich’s discussion of knowledge and commitment in his *Horkheimer Festschrift* paper. Tillich again shows that knowing is a participation and in the history of religion knowing has had the meanings of

mystical union, sexual intercourse, and knowledge that is not *epistémé*.<sup>32</sup> So religious knowledge though deeply involving remains knowledge. Tillich says “It is not qualitatively different from knowledge in all other realms....”<sup>33</sup> The problem is when we make controlling knowledge “by a kind of methodological imperialism” the standard for all knowledge. Then, existential knowledge and cognitive commitment become meaningless concepts. What Tillich means by existential knowledge and cognitive commitment is crucial to Polanyi’s criticism, and we will turn to that next. So far we have seen that Tillich in this paper has a strong sense of participation of the knower in all knowledge and that he sees well the mistakes of science or “controlling knowledge” thinking it is detached and the only valid form of knowledge.

When it comes to religious knowledge, Tillich calls it “existential knowledge,” “saving knowledge,” and “cognitive commitment.”<sup>34</sup> Here Tillich becomes theological by seeing primary religious knowledge going beyond the subject-object polarity that he has been using.<sup>35</sup> In religious knowledge, Tillich saves the deity or otherness of God as God or the ultimacy of the ground of being by showing that the object of religious knowledge cannot be the same as an object in the subject-object polarity of things or beings in the world or it would make God into an object as in conventional theism. So how can this be possible? Tillich says that because: “...knowledge is an ‘ontic relation’... it is subject to the categories of being, above all to time. It is the time difference between the moment of uniting participation and separating observation which makes religious, and in some degree, all knowledge possible.”<sup>36</sup> What I understand this statement to mean is that in the moment of religious encounter, there is a union or ecstasy that goes beyond the polarity of subject and object. Religious knowledge is not a remembered moment, but a moment of what Tillich elsewhere called the “eternal now.” What we are doing here in discussion is cognitive encounter with poles of participation and of separation, and Tillich seems to say here concerning knowledge and commitment that in the immediacy of religious experience the person is so grasped that the polarity is temporarily suspended.

By now, it ought to be agreed that despite Polanyi’s coming to Tillich with concern about differences between Polanyi’s asserting that Tillich has separated science and religion too much, there is basically a significant compatibility. Dealing with knowledge, Tillich has a “scale” of difference of

participation of the knower in the known between his “controlling knowledge” for science and his religious knowledge. Also, neither one tries to place them at completely opposite poles or to equate completely scientific or religious knowledge. Polanyi in later years formulates in his and Harry Prosch’s book *Meaning* his view of science as “self-centered” integrations of clues about nature. “Self-centered” integrations refer not to a moral condition of selfishness but to the locus and the intrinsic interest of our clues as we seek meaning.<sup>37</sup> In science, the meaning is focused as away in some feature of nature and the clues about it are very much subsidiarily indwelt, of less intrinsic interest, and centered in the self. The scientist is not as interested in the clues in themselves as they impact on her body as in their joint meaning that lies in their integrated appearance. Polanyi’s typical example is the recognition of a physiognomy in which the various clues that impact our neurosensory system such as color, shape, and texture are centered in the self and the meaning of them is in the gestalt of the physiognomy that is at the focal pole of knowing. In religion and works of art, the way clues that give meaning is contrasting to scientific knowing in that they are “self-giving” in the way the self surrenders to them for meaning. Symbolization through stories, rituals, memories within us “carry us away.”<sup>38</sup> Instead of being focused on them as away, they are focused as moving us within as persons. It is not the bread on the altar, the light of the candles, the familiar sounds all of which could be measured, but their joint meaning within us that is of intrinsic interest and move us deeply. Now ask in Polanyian terms, “What is the meaning of what Tillich calls ‘cognitive commitment’?” Is it not also like Polanyi’s “being carried away,” as Tillich suggests in his description of being grasped so that the whole person is lifted beyond the polarities of objectivity and subjectivity? Or ask in Tillichian terms, “What is the meaning of what Polanyi calls being ‘carried away’?” Is it not also having “ultimate concern”?

### **The Creative Tension Between Tillich and Polanyi**

When we compare Tillich and Polanyi on scientific and religious knowledge, the basic formulations seem similar though built on different frameworks. Tillich works with philosophical terminology and Polanyi works with terms from Gestalt psychology. Tillich’s arguments appeal from the force of phi-

losophical argument about human experience. Polanyi's argument appeals from repeated empirical examples in science and then continuing their application to works of art, myth, and religion. When one looks at the combination of these two modes of discourse, it shows there may be two mutually supporting approaches to one common problem that could be combined for the sake of a greater goal, the relevance of religious faith, and particularly the Christian faith, out of which background Tillich and Polanyi formulate their proposals.

But having found this much similarity in Tillich and Polanyi, what are we to make of Polanyi's claims that Tillich has placed science and religion in separate dimensions instead of on common ground?<sup>39</sup> Are the differences between Tillich and Polanyi substantial? One part of the answer seems to be what part of Tillich Polanyi is emphasizing. Polanyi refers to volume one of *The Systematic Theology* and *Dynamics of Faith* in his address on "Science and Religion, Separate Dimension or Common Ground?" Polanyi does state that he is much more in accord with Tillich's other statement in *The Systematic Theology* where Tillich says there is an element of union and of detachment in every form of knowledge.<sup>40</sup> The objection in Polanyi's address, however, is against what Tillich says in *Dynamics of Faith* where Tillich does say:

If tomorrow scientific progress reduced the sphere of uncertainty, faith would have to continue its retreat—an undignified and unnecessary procedure, for scientific truth and the truth of faith do not belong to the same dimension of meaning. Science has no right and no power to interfere with faith and faith has no power to interfere with science. One dimension of meaning is not able to interfere with another dimension.<sup>41</sup>

It seems that there are two different domains in this statement, one for science and one for religion, yet I find that, with care for what Tillich and Polanyi are saying over all, it is not as oppositional as it seems. In fact, I think Polanyi's own theory of knowledge as well as Tillich's supports both. Further, they both need each others' comments in order to deal with a common problem, the hegemony of the scientific model of detached objective knowledge.

Taking Tillich first, there is clearly a distinction between scientific knowledge and religious knowledge. In this passage just quoted, Tillich uses the word "faith" as a term for religion as ultimate concern, but I am going to use "religion" to keep the domains of knowledge clearer and to allow for a

later comment on the presence of faith in all knowing. Immediately, we know from comparing Tillich and Polanyi that they are similar on the knower participating in all types of knowledge. We also know that they both distinguish scientific and religious knowledge with their own distinctive terminologies and theories. In Tillich, there is science as controlling knowledge and in Polanyi, there is science as self-centered integrations. In Tillich, there is religious knowledge as cognitive commitment and in Polanyi, there is religion as self-giving integrations.

There is also similarity in Tillich and in Polanyi in seeing that one of the major challenges to religious faith is the way in Tillich's words the standard of controlling knowledge in science imperializes and becomes the pattern for all knowledge thereby making saving knowledge meaningless. Even so, I think Polanyi is trying to go further in this criticism about the imperialism of science than Tillich does. Tillich in his criticism of contemporary culture is certainly alert to and deeply critical of the hegemony of the scientific outlook and is insightful in analyzing it as horizontally going ahead endlessly in space and time, controlling reality and nature, quantifying and managing everything as numbers, and converting reason from a principle of knowing to a method of control.<sup>42</sup> The reason I say that Polanyi goes further is that his analysis of the reign of scientific objectivistic knowing takes a deeper account of this impact on our culture than Tillich does. *Therefore, my fourth proposition is that Polanyi's analysis of the bearing of the model of strictly detached scientific knowledge upon our society is significantly more comprehensive than Tillich's analysis is.*

When Tillich tells Polanyi about his paper on "Participation and Knowledge" and says that Ernest Nagel would have none of it, it discourages Tillich from pursuing the issue further as a battle that needs to be waged. Tillich did what recent and contemporary theology has mainly done in facing the challenge of the model of objective detached knowing. He disagreed with it, made his case, and continued his teaching within the circle of theology. The problem with this approach is that it means despite Tillich's greatness as a theologian of culture and correlating Christian faith with contemporary culture, his criticism leaves the culture of science as the reigning standard of knowledge. Polanyi is much more aggressive. In 1959, four years before the Tillich and Polanyi dialogue, Polanyi attacked C. P. Snow's book, *The Two Cultures*, for mistaking the gap between science and the humanities as the key to our

problems today.<sup>43</sup> Snow's thesis is that our culture suffers because of a separation of science and of the humanities, and the world suffers because the humanists know so little about the principles of science. In contradiction, Polanyi argues that a major part of the predicament of our world comes from the dominance of science over all thought. Improvement of science education for humanists would do little, Polanyi argues, to help the world. A keen statement of Polanyi's shows the force of his argument:

...the principles of scientific rationalism are strictly speaking nonsensical. No human mind can function without accepting authority, custom, and tradition: it must rely on them for the mere use of a language. Empirical induction, strictly applied, can yield no knowledge at all, and the mechanistic explanation of the universe is a meaningless ideal. Not so much because of the much invoked Principle of Indeterminacy, which is irrelevant, but because the prediction of all atomic positions in the universe would not answer any question of interest to anybody. And as to the naturalistic explanation of morality, it must ignore, and so by implication deny, the very existence of human responsibility. It too is absurd!<sup>44</sup>

The problem of our culture and the need for our capacity to believe in truth greater than what can be known in science and to which metaphor, art, myth, and religious knowledge point us is why Polanyi is concerned with Tillich's statements in *Dynamics of Faith* about separate dimensions for science and religion. Separate domains allows science to escape facing that its theory of knowledge is mistaken and it misleads the world into thinking that our greatest knowledge is based on what can be verified by the ideal of strict detachment.

This issue is connected with a basic issue in the science and religion dialogue, the pursuit of truth. Polanyi agrees with Tillich's point that there is a difference between "observing a fact and speaking of a symbol...and... that in consequence the meaning of similarly worded statements may lie in dimensions which bypass each other."<sup>45</sup> Later in 1975, in his and Prosch's book, *Meaning*, Polanyi illustrates such differences as in praying "Our Father who are in heaven" but believing nothing literal about where God is or God's identity as a super parent. Tillich's contribution to helping to expose the confusion of literal rendering of religious symbols and of language is to Polanyi, one of Tillich's great contributions. It is certainly one of the major barriers to an

intelligent science and religion dialogue. Polanyi, however, thinks the issue of truth in science and religion cannot be adequately helped by separating them from common ground.

Polanyi's argument is extensive on this point and finally circular, as he admits. Here I want to state it only briefly that for Polanyi truth is the external pole of belief with universal intent.<sup>46</sup> Beliefs are made up out of our experience and out of a rich background of living in a world. Beliefs are our way of bodily indwelling the world and making sense out of it. Under the hegemony of the ideal of detached objective knowledge, science has made nonsense out of the levels of the world by limiting our realm of beliefs to the materialist explanations of physics and chemistry and leaving out a host of non-material coefficients such as the skills and arts of knowing and the general authority of science as a community in evaluating and articulating science.

Nevertheless, science itself has produced the panorama of evolutionary biology and the emergence of human life with the capacity to make moral judgments. Humans are called by this vast evolutionary development described by science to accept the responsibility of seeking the truth and stating their findings. But science as defined by an ideal of strict detachment or controlling knowledge has no basis for upholding scientific rationality, morality, or religious standards to guide us. The crisis faced by Immanuel Kant and a host of others about how to uphold science, morality, and hope for human purpose in the face of the modern scientific revolution remains. Dismissal of all beliefs that may be doubted until confirmed by scientific standards of strict detachment remains a challenge of our time. In short, the bearing of truth on the nature of science, moral problems, and the meaning of human destiny of our planet shows the need for a comprehensive theory of knowledge that not only criticizes but replaces this mistaken ideal of strict detachment. This accomplishment is the one that Polanyi proposes to do through his theory of personal knowledge based on tacit knowing.

In this connection, it ought also to be observed that the meaning of the polymath life of Polanyi is missed if you do not discern in it a person driven to leave one field for another, from medicine to physical chemistry to economics and social thought and finally to philosophy. Polanyi's abilities as a polymath are dazzling. More significant is his drive for meaning for the sake of humanity that led him from

one field to another. His example asks us to take risks in order to know the truth.

Before concluding, one more creative tension exists between Tillich and Polanyi. In Tillich, there is a greater sense of distance between the knowing subject and its object. Tillich, having denoted the openness to encounter and participation in cognition, goes on to speak about cognition necessarily having "separation, self-containment, and detachment."<sup>47</sup> This formulation contrasts with Polanyi's more linking epistemological conception in which the object of knowing is comprehended as focally at a distance while in actuality it is also tacitly internal.<sup>48</sup> Polanyi explains the sense of distance by the way we indwell the internal clues of perception in our tacit knowing. In Polanyi's model of knowing, there is the profound sense that when we look at the stars, they are both within us subsidiarily in the impacts of their light on our neurosensory system as well as the distant twinkle in the sky that is our focus. While this difference between Tillich and Polanyi may seem minor, it could be significant in a way pointed out by Marjorie Grene and Phil Mullins. What they both see in Polanyi that is missing in Heidegger is a sense of the biological world. What Grene and Mullins claim that the Heideggerian turn away from the Cartesian view of consciousness is not radical enough because it does not stress embodiment enough. They turn to Polanyi's kinship with the thought of Merleau-Ponty as a more realistic account of lived being-in-a world.<sup>49</sup> The thrust of this distinction leads in Polanyi toward a sense of reality that has an indeterminate and novel quality that cannot be categorized or contained. This more pluralistic nuance about reality in Polanyi than being in Heidegger's and Tillich's terms probably bears on the nature of discovery. While both Tillich and Polanyi share roots in phenomenology and existentialism, the issue about the hazard and risks of faith goes beyond the inherent dubiety in faith to the inherent openness of the cognitive object. So for Polanyi, one of his stakes in the discussion with Tillich is about how the scientist is seriously involved in intense risk in believing in the discovery of a new aspect of reality when it conceivably might be false. To Polanyi, scientific discovery would not occur if scientists did not commit their selves to the possibility that reality is surprising and revealing even while it is rational and intelligible. If that working attitude is lost in science, science becomes sterile and uncreative.

## A Concluding Note

I began this paper with an emphasis on the Christian context of the meeting of Tillich and Polanyi. I hope that I have been able to show that both Tillich and Polanyi were aligned in the need to make religion and especially the Christian faith relevant to our time in terms of the problem of the detached ideal of knowledge. Because both Tillich and Polanyi dared to try to renew the depth and relevance of science and religion they have been doubted as good Christians. Both have been questioned for not being theists since they reject the proposition that God exists since God cannot be made into an object. Both have been questioned on whether or not they believed in the divinity of Christ. In short, they are not orthodox. It seems to me that one has to take a word from each one on what their loyalties were about. In Tillich's terms, one is a Christian who receives the Christ event that brings the New Being into history. In Polanyi's terms, we are what we indwell and focus upon. For him, it was the task of how a civilization inspired by what he once called "a crucified God" can regain its ability to believe.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> There is a disagreement between Charles McCoy's date, Feb. 21, 1963 on this meeting with the date, Feb. 20 on Paul Tillich's typed notes for his address to the University of California. Polanyi in his notes says "Points from a conversation with Paul Tillich on Feb. 21, 1963. I was asked to discuss with him his University Lecture on 'Religion, Science, and Philosophy' and his second Earl Lecture on 'The Irrelevance and Relevance of Christianity' both delivered on that day." See *Tradition & Discovery*, XXII, No. 1, 1995-96, pp. 5,14.

<sup>2</sup> See Brown, Mackenzie D., *Ultimate Concern, Tillich in Dialogue*, New York, Harper & Row, 1965.

<sup>3</sup> Scott, William T. and Moleski, Martin X., *Michael Polanyi, Scientist and Philosopher*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2005; Tyson, Ruel, "From Salon to Institute: Convivial Spaces in the Intellectual Life of Polanyi," *Tradition & Discovery*, XXXII, No. 3, pp.19-22; Polanyi, Michael, *Personal Knowledge*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1958, Chapter 7, "Conviviality," pp 203-248.

<sup>4</sup> For the range of Polanyi's intellectual and spiritual outreach see John M. Cash, "Guide to the



Papers of Michael Polanyi," *Tradition & Discovery*, XXIII, Number 1, 1996-97, pp. 5-47.

<sup>5</sup> Personal correspondence, Oct. 4, 2007. Stackpole thought it was 8,000 but review of the seating at Harmon at that time suggests that it would have been more likely 6,000.

<sup>6</sup> From 1963-66 while writing my dissertation, I knew Savio as campus minister for the Northern California Conference of the United Church of Christ at the University of California at Berkeley and with the United Ministries working with the students during the Free Speech Movement. I recorded Mario Savio on tape in the men's room of Sproul Hall during the student sit-in. Savio's tape was transcribed and first published in *Humanity, An Arena of Critique and Commitment*, No. 2, December, 1964, for which I worked under my doctoral advisor, Charles McCoy. Savio's article, "An End to History," is in Lipset, Martin Seymour and Wohlin, Sheldon S., (eds) *The Berkeley Student Revolt*, New York, Doubleday, 1965, pp.216-219.

<sup>7</sup> Typed copy, Richard Gelwick received 1963 either from Charles McCoy at Pacific School of Religion or Joann Nash, Westminster House at University of California at Berkeley.

<sup>8</sup> Polanyi, Michael, "Jewish Problems," *The Political Quarterly*, XIV, January-March, 1943, pp. 33-45, and Knepper, Paul, "Polanyi, "Jewish Problems" and Zionism," *Tradition & Discovery*, XXXII, Number 1, pp. 6-19.

<sup>9</sup> Scott and Moleski, p. 45.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>12</sup> 1949, 1951, London, SCM Ltd. On p. 240 Moberly refers to Polanyi as follows: "That is the State is not morally free to mould the university to its will, nor is the university morally free to go its own way at its own pleasure. Their relation will only be healthy when both recognize a higher loyalty. Similarly Professor Michael Polanyi has pointed out that the basis of the intellectual conscience of the scholar or the scientist is his sense, in discovery, of making contact with a spiritual reality by which he is controlled. Professional tradition may be corrupt. But it is properly rooted in access to spiritual reality and in a consequent moral compulsion. *Hier stehe ich und kann nicht anders*. His claim to freedom is in the name of this, more fundamental, allegiance. He makes it not as a gifted or privileged, but as a dedicated person. The university must be free, as the Church must be free, to obey

God rather than man." This theme remained constant in Polanyi's thought until the end of his life.

<sup>13</sup> Another example of this underlying drive in Polanyi's philosophical work is seen in an address in England, "Can Science Bring Peace?" in *The Listener*, April 25, 1946, where Polanyi suggests that before religion can guide humanity again on a cultural scale there will have to be a reform in the public outlook that reduces human nature and morality to materialist levels.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>15</sup> Completed 1965. *Michael Polanyi: Credere Aude, His Theory of Knowledge and Its Implications for Christian Theology*, University of Michigan Microfilms.

<sup>16</sup> Garden City, New York, Doubleday and Company, 1966.

<sup>17</sup> New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952.

<sup>18</sup> *Science, Faith and Society*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1946, *Personal Knowledge*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1958.

<sup>19</sup> Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1951 and New York, Harper and Brothers, 1952. For Polanyi's discussion of Tillich's theology see *Personal Knowledge*, p. 283.

<sup>20</sup> *Philosophy Today*, VII, Spring, 1963, 4-14

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p.11.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>23</sup> On ontology of commitment see *Personal Knowledge*, p. 379ff and on "comprehensive entities" see Phil Mullins, "Comprehension and the 'Comprehensive Entity': Polanyi's Theory of Tacit Knowing and Its Metaphysical Implications," *Tradition & Discovery*, XXXIII, No. 3, 2006-2007, pp. 26-43.

<sup>24</sup> Mullins, *op. cit.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 202-203.

<sup>26</sup> *The Tacit Dimension*, p. 10-11, *et passim*.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid*, p. 204-205.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 203-204 and Polanyi, *Meaning*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1975. Chapter 4 *et passim*.

<sup>30</sup> *Main Works*, p.203-204.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 207-209.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 204-205, 207-209.

<sup>35</sup> I qualify Tillich's religious knowledge here with the word "primary" because it seems he means

an experience about which reflection and discourse in theology occurs secondarily.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

<sup>37</sup> *Meaning*, pp. 74-75

<sup>38</sup> *Meaning*, p. 180

<sup>39</sup> "Science and Religion: Separate Dimensions or Common Ground," *Philosophy Today*, VII, Spring, 1963, pp. pp. 4-14.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, Note 1, p. 14.

<sup>41</sup> Pp, 81-82.

<sup>42</sup> Paul Tillich, "The Nature of Present Day Thought and Its Strangeness to Traditional Christianity," Earl Lecture 2, 1963, Transcription, El Cerrito Hillside Church, El Cerrito, California, pp. 1-2.

<sup>43</sup> Polanyi in "The Two Cultures," reprinted in Grene, Marjorie (ed.) *Knowing and Being*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1959, pp. 40-46.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

<sup>45</sup> "Science and Religion: Separate Dimensions or Common Ground," p. 4.

<sup>46</sup> *Personal Knowledge*, p. 284, *et passim*, and 308-312.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>48</sup> *The Tacit Dimension*, p. 11 *et passim*.

<sup>49</sup> Mullins, Phil, "Comprehension and the 'Comprehensive Entity'" "Polanyi's Theory of Tacit Knowing and Its Metaphysical Implications," *Tradition & Discovery*, XXXIII, No. 3, 2006-2007, p.36.

<sup>50</sup> *Personal Knowledge*, p. 199.

**RESPONSE TO ROBERT JOHN RUSSELL,  
DURWOOD FOSTER,  
AND RICHARD GELWICK**

DONALD MUSSER

Since about 1975 I have been a member of both the North American Paul Tillich Society and the Michael Polanyi Society—a dues paying member, most years, like a non-resident church member, one who attends society meetings sporadically. Seldom have I been more avid to attend and to participate as a respondent to this unique joint session. When Walt Gulick invited me, I did not have to reflect on taking on another new and unplanned task; rather, I immediately consented.

A bit of autobiography will help you understand why. In the mid-1970s, at the ripe old age of thirty-two, my wife and I packed up our four-year old daughter, our seven year-old hound dog, and drove our aging Ford Torino from a pleasant pastorium in Pittsburgh to a small apartment in a three-story walk-up in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood. For the next seven years I spent most of my time indwelling the writings of Michael Polanyi and Paul Tillich.

On the one hand, I read Tillich with University of Chicago theologian Langdon Gilkey, one of Tillich's Union Seminary students. Behind his back and out of earshot, some students called Langdon "Tillkey." I often corrected the critics by contending that "Tillbuhr" would be more accurate. On the other hand, I became a mentee to the Lutheran first-name in science and theology, Philip Hefner of the Lu-

theran School of Theology at Chicago, as well as a young associate of Ralph Wendell Burhoe, future Templeton Award winner and co-editor with Hefner of *Zygon: Journal of Science and Religion*.

During those idyllic years I wrote five seminar papers and a doctoral thesis on Michael Polanyi's epistemology. Through courses with Gilkey and as a teaching assistant to Hefner and Joseph Sittler, and with a dash of spice from Carl Braaten who introduced me to the influence of Martin Kahler on Tillich, I also imbibed the ontological world of Paulus, often with an Old Style in hand.

At the time I was not focally aware that I was being prepared for a thirty-year career as a teacher, researcher, and author who frequently, even always, was indwelling the insights of the two luminaries we engage today. This short trip through my own life provides you, then, with the reasons I am so pleased to be a part of this convivial gathering.

My deep appreciation goes to our convener, Walter Gulick, who in a *kairic* moment asked me to be a respondent, which, unknown to him at the time, even tacitly, led me to an ecstatic revelation about my intellectual identity, after all these years. I confess this truth today, publicly, for the first time: *Ich bin ein Tillanyian!* Walt, thank you for catalyzing my way to this discovery of my true being. I have accepted my acceptance as a Tillanyian.

I now turn to my responses. First, I want to attend briefly to Robert John Russell's fine presentation of the influence of Polanyi on a number of theologians, most who are vitally engaged in the conversation between science and theology. I would like to suggest that a fruitful way of engaging Polanyi and

theology would involve asking variations of the question: How is Polanyi's thought used in theology? One way to pursue an answer might be a comparative study of the way Polanyi is brought into theological discourse. I think, for example, that a comparison of the use of Polanyi between, say, a Barthian like T. F. Torrance with a theologian like myself or Richard Gelwick who find Tillich's method and epistemology commensurate with Polanyi would be worth undertaking.<sup>1</sup>

Now, let me turn to Durwood Foster's fascinating reflections on the Polanyi-Tillich conversation and subsequent interchanges of 1963. Let me first characterize Foster's fascinating piece as refreshing, vivid, erudite, emotive, and bold! Foster, for example, states: "Paul Tillich knows nothing about Michael Polanyi." And, he refers to their conversation as "a reciprocal fizzle." And, further, he complains that Polanyi's thought has been "shamefully ignored" by philosophers. He also avers that a subtle prejudice obtained against the Jewish Polanyi because of his baptism as a Roman Catholic. Foster's style in his essay embodies the "genes" of "personal knowledge" in his dialogical treatment of our duo.

I concur with Foster that Polanyi was shortsighted to conclude in his essay, "Science and Religion: Separate Dimensions or Common Ground?"<sup>2</sup> that Tillich sees science and theology as independent of one another. Although Tillich says as much in *The Dynamics of Faith*, Tillich has a much richer position as our read of his paper for this session shows clearly.<sup>3</sup> Based upon that essay and Parts Four and Five of his *Systematic Theology*, among others, I am quite certain that Tillich would today embrace what Ian Barbour terms the attitude of "dialogue" and even "integration" with regard to science and theology.<sup>4</sup>

Despite our disappointment that the "uncoordinated duo"<sup>5</sup> did not seriously engage one another in the 1960s, our session today could, and I hope it does, bring them into conversation as we continue to think through their works.

Richard Gelwick's paper takes us down memory lane and refreshes us with regard to the context and content of the Tillich-Polanyi nexus. Even more importantly for the theologian, Gelwick enunciates and supports four theses that, taken together, beg for the intellectual engagement of the two thinkers, the philosopher-theologian Tillich and the scientist-philosopher Polanyi. Although I believe they can be brought into fruitful dialogue on numerous topics, let me suggest one. Theologians, like natural scien-

tists, belong to professional groups who authorize, or do not authorize, the results and conclusions of their research. If, I suggest, theologians became acquainted with Polanyi's delineation of what he calls "the republic of science," and applied ideas from the dynamic structures of scientific investigation, they would find an attractive parallel in Tillich's notion of the "participation" of the theologian in the knowing process.

I am not quite convinced of Gelwick's claim about the import of the "Christian" context of the 1963 encounter of the two. He strongly affirms Polanyi's commitment to the Christian faith. In my reading of Polanyi, I do not find him seriously confessional with regard to faith. And, even, if he considered himself a Christian, I find little solace in that as a theologian. Whether a Christian or not, Polanyi's thought, especially his epistemology, bears our attention as it is as an important resource for our thinking.

Finally, picking up on Gelwick's other emphasis when he references the "context" of their meeting in February in California in 1963, I would like to urge that our two thinkers are as contemporary as ever in the troubled "context" of our world today. The issues that confront the planet, the human race, and all living creatures can be illumined through their multifaceted writings. Attention, for example, to the contemporary "moral inversion" of truth (a Polyanian topic) and the "heteronomy" of thought (a Tillichian notion) is sorely needed to combat unbridled authoritarianism, unselfish ambition, and vacuous claims to certainty, from both the "right" and the "left."

Lest I turn this podium into a pulpit, and since my time has elapsed, let me close by citing some concluding remarks in an essay I wrote in a 1986 essay that was based upon an oral presentation I made at a conference at Hope College in Holland, Michigan, on the centennial of Tillich's birth. I said that Tillich's view of reason has the structural framework to buttress an ontology and epistemology that are dynamic and not static, subject to rational assessment, and personal or participative. With the following words I then concluded that Polanyi's theory of personal knowledge is a promising candidate: "Polanyi...developed an epistemology and a correlative ontology (a stratified universe) that provide the beginnings for a constructive philosophy that awaits development and application to theology."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See my essay "Theological Reasoning: A Tillichian Perspective," *Soundings* LXIX (Winter, 1986): 423-435.

<sup>2</sup> In *Philosophy Today* 7 (Spring, 1963): 4-14.

<sup>3</sup> "Participation and Knowledge: Problems of an Ontology of Cognition," *Main Works / Hauptwerke, Vol 1/Bd 1: Philosophical Writings / Philosophische*

*Schriften*; Ed. by Wenz, Gunther. Berlin and New York: De Gruyter, 1989, 382-389.

<sup>4</sup> See Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion*, pp. 36-38.

<sup>5</sup> Foster's term for them.

<sup>6</sup> Musser, "Theological Reasoning," pp. 113-114.

WERNER SCHÜSSLER AND ERDMANN STURM  
**PAUL TILlich: LEben, WERK, WIRKUNG**

REVIEWED BY  
MARION HAUSNER PAUCK

[*Editor's note:* Jean Richard wrote a review article on this book in the Winter 2008 issue of the *Bulletin*, volume 34, number 1.]

There seems to be no end to the publication of books about Paul Tillich's life and thought. This newly published book by the industrious Protestant Erdmann Sturm and the gifted Roman Catholic scholar Werner Schüssler is a tightly packed overview of Tillich's life, work, and influence. The co-authors have divided the work unevenly, assigning a mere 25 pages to Tillich's life and more than 225 pages to Tillich's thought and influence. There are ample footnotes and a long, valuable bibliography.

The section on Tillich's thought is divided by subject matter or topics rather than by dates, although occasional and important dates are supplied. For example, some chapter headings read as follows: Philosophy of Religion, Theology of Culture, Religious Socialism, with references to Tillich's writings within each section. This makes the reader feel from time to time that Tillich's thought was created in a vacuum and not in a specific place or to a special audience for a particular reason, even though Dr. Schüssler supplies us with such information occasionally. This also means that there is considerable moving back and forth in time. Yet those familiar with Tillich's thought will find it stimulating and interesting to encounter his ideas in a new setting. There is no question but that Schüssler has worked exceedingly well to include the most important ideas and give them their proper setting. And in doing things his way he has also given us a reference book to consult whenever we need one.

Unfortunately, the uneven division of life and work gives one pause. In no other contemporary

theologian/ philosopher's case are work and life so entangled as in Paul Tillich's, but one would never guess it as one reads this work. Indeed, there is almost nothing to read under the section titled "Life." We do not read about Tillich's parents, except very briefly; their enormous and startlingly different effect upon Tillich is not explored. Nor do we read about Tillich's school chums, his most cherished friendships, his years in the Wingolf, nor even much about his experience in the First World War. And the one place where Dr. Sturm might have brought Tillich to life, he quotes indirectly from a full length biography<sup>1</sup> but so briefly and out of context, leaving the false impression that what was written there applied to the post war years only instead of an entire lifetime.

Where is the Tillich a few of us still living knew personally? Where is his generosity, kindness, friendliness, awkwardness, even his roving eye and his chuckle when one caught the roving? None of these or other aspects of his complicated nature—including the gift of time he used to explain in great detail a passage or an idea in his thought that a student failed to understand—are present. Where is the human being who loved applause and who worked himself into a state of anxiety before each lecture, before each sermon, not for applause but only to share ideas with another human being? Where is the grandfather who quietly listened to his tiny granddaughter talk about a caged lion and say with great compassion how terrible that must be for such a beautiful animal? Tillich, the human being, cannot be found in the pages of this book.

Is this because the authors did not know him personally? Or is there some unwritten law that prevents some German scholars from writing about private matters? As we know, in the post World War One years in Berlin, things were wildly different. Can it be that some Germans today are so conservative they dare not even mention love fulfilled or love gone sour in human terms? The section on "Life" might as well have been titled "Thought" because of the multiple references to Tillich's thought and ca-

reer. There is no flesh and blood human being here; there is a paper-maché cut out instead. Therefore, we are saddened.<sup>2</sup>

The section on Tillich's "Thought" is well organized and covers an enormous amount of material but it is insufficiently set in historical context. Again Tillich is treated like a God instead of a human being. And one is left with the impression that Tillich never left Germany; there is little mention of the American scene and its influence upon Tillich; e.g., his participation in theological conversations, including those with the Niebuhr brothers, Wilhelm Pauck, and James Luther Adams. After all, it was through these colleagues and friends that he learned to know America. There is no reference to his *Systematic Theology* and specifically how it took another form because of the American context. He wrote it in East Hampton in his early years in America when he had small classes and nothing much to do. Nor is it mentioned anywhere that the openness of the American scene inspired him to write a systematic theology of the sort he himself said he would never have written had he remained in Germany.

Dr. Schüssler is a fine scholar, very careful indeed. He includes as many references to organizations, to persons who played a role in Tillich's life as possible. He refers finally to specific theologians, including women, who have been influenced by Tillich's thought. And we applaud him for that. Yet he gets some facts wrong. Several are important enough to mention: Paul Tillich was not the most famous and influential theologian in America of his time. Reinhold Niebuhr, who appeared twice on *Time* magazine's cover, was the most famous Protestant theologian and it was not until after Niebuhr's strokes that Tillich was thrust into national and international fame.

Dr. Sturm, also a careful scholar, has also made a mistake: it was not Rollo May who inspired Tillich's most successful work, *The Courage to Be*, making him known beyond the confines of the academic world, it was W. H. Auden, the great English poet whose work *The Age of Anxiety* influenced both May and Tillich. May was a student of Tillich's, not the other way around. We were there when these things happened; we were there when these words were said.

Finally, Schüssler reports that on the occasion of Tillich's last lecture at the University of Chicago, Tillich claimed that he would rewrite his entire *Systematic Theology* on the basis of the seminar he and Mircea Eliade had taught together. But Schüssler

fails to note that years later Eliade revealed in his published diary that Tillich telephoned him that very night to retract his words, to say they were nonsense, and to apologize for them.

Bowing to the industry of Professors Sturm and Schüssler and acknowledging their excellent choices in publishing new items for the Tillich student to see, I nevertheless feel compelled to walk through a door opened by Professor Friedrich Wilhelm Graf, the prolific and respected German historian and theologian whose review of the same book must have shocked the co-authors and readers unfamiliar with (or indifferent to) the personal life of Paul Tillich.<sup>3</sup>

I myself welcome Professor Graf's comments for several reasons: Many German scholars have for decades hidden the truth and hidden from the truth of Paul Tillich's private life. They have pretended it did not exist. Some have ridiculed those of us who have in the most diplomatic way written about such private matters. They successfully blocked Hannah Tillich's book, *From Time to Time* from publication; in this book she expressed her suffering because of her husband's infidelity and affirmed her love for him nevertheless. And even when her book became available in German, the majority of German scholars tried to explain it away as an act of vengeance. Does this mean that then and now many Germans have not accepted the dark side of Tillich? If so, they have not understood Tillich's thought at all. The careful reader of Tillich's essay "On the Boundary," a work that introduced him to the American public, reminds one of his openness about himself, revealing also his complicated mind and spirit, showing the many ways he was torn from one side to another. We surely do not need to know what specifically went on behind closed doors; this is sheer voyeurism. The fact is that Tillich was a womanizer who was also a bit perverse—Marquis de Sade influenced him to some extent. But he was also one who did not force himself upon every woman in his path. He permitted each to make decisions on her own and accordingly had many chaste friendships with women. Tillich, moreover, did not claim that in order to be a good Christian one must be absolutely faithful to one's wife. Indeed, his Freudian side felt it might be dangerous to deny oneself. We may reject his way of life but we cannot say that his life was different from his thought.

Paradoxically, Tillich was completely faithful to his friends. In the years following the trauma of the First World War, he worked out what he called his

“erotic solution,” and the unusual, unconventional, and nonconformist pattern he created for himself, which at first provided him with escape from the demands of the law, then gradually became a new law for him. Both his marriage and his personality remain paradoxical. Yet we can perhaps “solve” the paradox: precisely those weaknesses within himself to which he had ultimately to become reconciled in exceedingly painful fashion made him so believable, fascinating, and elusive as a productive thinker and as a human being.

In his old age, Tillich concluded that love was tragic and marriage sad. His self-doubt was great. He wrote, “I speak of the ecstasy of living that includes participation in the highest and the lowest of life in one and the same experience. This demands courage and passion but it also can be a flight from God.” Was his way, he wondered, “a flight from God”? Was his way of saying “yes” to life “in spite of the insecurities of daily existence and the breakdown of meaning” the right way? The self doubt and conflict about which he was remarkably clear and conscious lasted until his dying day, and against the background of that consciousness the words of what many regard as his greatest sermon take on poignant meaning. Titled “You Are Accepted!” and on the original manuscript in his own handwriting are the words “For Myself! 20 August 1946.” It was his sixtieth birthday, and he wrote: “Grace strikes us when we are in great pain and restlessness. It strikes us when we walk through the dark valley of a meaningless and empty life.... It strikes us when, year after year, the longed for perfection of life does not appear, when the old compulsions reign within us as they have for decades... Sometimes at that moment a wave of light breaks into our darkness, and it is as though a voice were saying, ‘You are accepted, accepted by that which is greater than you, and the name of which you don’t know.... Do not seek for anything, do not perform anything; do not intend anything. *Simply accept the fact that you are accepted!*’”<sup>4</sup>

Graf, although he did not know Tillich personally, has reminded German readers in his review of this book of what can be found in Pandora’s box, the very thing Tillich feared might happen. His thought may once again be judged as “unchristian,” and may be forgotten; ironically his greatest fear was that his thought might indeed be forgotten. Not so for the many Roman Catholic scholars and priests one has met in America, in Germany, and Austria. Their conviction is that what was important about Tillich were his ideas. And whether he liked women or not makes no difference to them. For the Protestants, things are a bit more complicated; we knew a brilliant woman who threw all of Tillich’s books away after she read Hannah Tillich’s book, and we knew and know others who were indifferent. There is no telling how people will react but is not the truth better than a lie?

Theologians and philosophers are not saints and I believe we have no right to expect them to be. We do have a right to know when their private lives and their public morality are in total opposition one to another. But we cannot always be sure even of that. And if we find out there is a gap between being and thinking we can still allow ourselves to learn from the words of those who are especially gifted. In this context, Tillich, a child of his time, may remain on the boundary where we originally met him, and if we do not like what we see we can always walk away. But facing the truth, slippery as it sometimes seems to be, is a great deal better than hiding from it!

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<sup>1</sup> W. and M. Pauck, *Paul Tillich: His Life and Thought* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 85-93.

<sup>2</sup> The birth of Tillich’s only son, Rene Stefan Tillich on 7 June 1935, is not mentioned at all.

<sup>3</sup> Wilhelm Graf, “Wie man das Chaos bändigt. Die Peitsche und der religiösen Sozialisismus des Paul Tillich.” *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, December 2007.

<sup>4</sup> Pauck, *Paul Tillich: His Life and Thought*, 85 – 93.

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