



# BULLETIN

*The North American Paul Tillich Society*

**Volume XXXVIII, Number 4**

**Fall 2012**

Editor: Frederick J. Parrella, Secretary-Treasurer

Religious Studies Department, Santa Clara University

Kenna Hall, Suite 300, Room H, Santa Clara, California 95053

Associate Editor: Jonathan Rothchild, Loyola Marymount University

Assistant to the Editor: Vicky Gonzalez, Santa Clara University

Production Assistant: Alicia Calcutt

Telephone: 408.554.4714/ 408.554.4547

FAX: 408.554.2387 Email: fparrella@scu.edu

Website: [www.NAPTS.org/](http://www.NAPTS.org/) Webmeister: Michael Burch, San Raphael, California

---

## In this issue:

- Program for the Annual Meeting of the North American Paul Tillich Society and the AAR Group: Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture—Friday, November 16 to Tuesday, November 20, 2012, Chicago, Illinois.
- News about the Annual Banquet of the Society, Friday, November 16, 2012
- Tillich Papers Reorganized
- New Publications on Tillich or by Members of the NAPTS
- In Memoriam: Gabriel Vahanian
- “Absolutes, Relativism, and Teaching *Dynamics of Faith*” by Derek R. Nelson
- “Tillich on Eros and Logos and the Beauty of Kant” by Brandon Love
- “God as Still Living: An Analysis of Paul Tillich’s Concept of the Divine Life in Light of Mark Taylor’s Infinitization of the Finite” by Adam Pryor
- “A New Human Being: The Religious Dimensions of Secularism in Cuban and Soviet Moralities” by Rose T. Caraway

Welcome to Chicago, location of the annual meeting of the North American Paul Tillich Society and the meeting of the American Academy of Religion Group, “Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture.” The schedule of meetings for both groups follows. You will also find information about the annual banquet of the North American Paul Tillich Society. On Friday evening, November 16, 2012, please plan to join the Society for the annual banquet. See all the information on the location, the guest speaker, and reservations on page 3. The officers of the Society look forward to seeing and greeting many of you at both the academic sessions and the dinner. Once again, we are honored to have

as our special guest, Dr. Mutie Tillich Farris of New York City.

**NORTH AMERICAN PAUL TILlich SOCIETY  
ANNUAL MEETING**

**FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16, 2012**

**P16-102 North American Paul Tillich Society  
Friday - 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM  
McCormick Place East-259**

**Theme:** Tillich at the University of Chicago  
Frederick J. Parrella, Santa Clara University,

*Presiding*

Peter Slater, University of Toronto  
*Tillich's Political Theology and Global Religious Outlook*

Christian Danz, Universität Wien  
*Paul Tillich and the Non-Christian Religions*

Jean Richard, University of Laval  
*An Ontologisation of History in Tillich's Systematic Theology? Focus on Chicago*

**P16-202**

**North American Paul Tillich Society**  
**Friday - 1:00 PM - 3:30 PM**  
**McCormick Place North-227A**

**Theme:** Tillich and Pedagogy  
Echol Nix, Furman University  
*Presiding*

Jari Ristiniemi, University of Gävle  
*Tillichian Pedagogy and New Learning Situation: Information Learning, Integral Learning and Self-Determination*

David H. Nikkel, University of North Carolina, Pembroke  
*Teaching Two Classics in Religion/Theology and Culture*

Donald W. Musser, Stetson University  
*Teaching Tillich to Undergraduates*

**P16-309**

**North American Paul Tillich Society**  
**Friday - 4:00 PM - 6:30 PM**  
**McCormick Place East-259**

**Theme:** Tillich on Being  
Duane Olson, McKendree University  
*Presiding*

Steven Jungkeit, Harvard University  
*Geographies of the New Being: Dislocation and Subcultural Life in Paul Tillich's Theology*

Devan Stahl, Saint Louis University  
*Paul Tillich, Liberal Protestantism and the*

*Future of Bioethics*

Courtney Wilder, Midland University  
*Tillich and Intellectual Disability: Adequacy of Accounts of Faith*

**Annual Banquet of the North American Paul Tillich Society**

Friday, November 16, 2012

7:00 PM – 10:00 PM

*See below for details and reservations.*

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2012**

**North American Paul Tillich Society**  
**Saturday - 7:00 AM - 8:30 AM**  
**Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors**  
**Location:**

The Essex Inn  
800 South Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60605  
312.212.8194/ 877.679.0658

**P17-105**

**North American Paul Tillich Society**  
**Saturday - 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM**  
**McCormick Place South-404BC**

**Theme:** Tillich and Culture  
Robison B. James, University of Richmond  
*Presiding*

Thomas G. Bandy, Thriving Church Consulting, LLC  
*Religion and Culture*

Verna Marina Ehret, Mercyhurst University  
*Stemming the Tide of Idolatrous Culture*

Linda A. Mercadante, Methodist Theological School, Ohio  
*Alternative Spirituality, Alternative Theology: The Beliefs of the "Spiritual but not Religious"*

**P17-114****North American Paul Tillich Society****Annual Business Meeting****Saturday - 11:45 AM - 12:45 PM****McCormick Place South-104B**

President Courtney Wilder, Midland University,

*Presiding**Please make every effort to attend this meeting.**Thank you.***AAR: TILlich: ISSUES IN THEOLOGY,  
RELIGION, AND CULTURE GROUP****SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 18, 2012****A18-281****Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture  
Group****Sunday - 3:00 PM - 4:30 PM****McCormick Place North-128**

**Theme: Christology in Barth and Tillich.** This panel session stages an encounter between Karl Barth and Paul Tillich on the central question of Christology. Bruce McCormack (Princeton) will present the major paper with responses from Robison James (Richmond) and Tom Greggs (Aberdeen).

Frederick J. Parrella, Santa Clara University,

*Presiding***Panelists:**

Bruce McCormack, Princeton Theological Seminary

*Presenter*

Robison James, University of Richmond

Tom Greggs, University of Aberdeen

*Respondents***MONDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2012****A19-321****Tillich: Music and Religion Group and Tillich:  
Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture Group****Monday - 4:00 PM - 6:30 PM****McCormick Place West-184A**

**Theme:** Music and Ultimate Concern: Engaging Paul Tillich, Music and Theology

Sharon Burch, Interfaith Counseling Center

*Presiding*

Arguably, no theologian has been more influential for the dialogue between religion and the arts than Paul Tillich, and yet Tillich wrote surprisingly little about music. This session explores the intersections between Tillich's thinking and work in music and religion, probing how music's relation to ultimate concern can be thought of outside religious settings. The papers examine the possibilities for music as a form of constructive theological reflection—as a form of "unwritten theology" and as a theonomous possibility of prophetic performance and mystical re-union. A mix of theoretical and applied engagements, illustrative examples range from jazz fusion, the collaborative blog site [rockandtheology.com](http://rockandtheology.com) and the 2008 New York Philharmonic tour to North Korea.

Russell Re Manning, University of Aberdeen

*Unwritten Theology: Notes Towards a Tillichian  
Theology of Music*

Laura Thelander, Colledgeville Institute

*Prophetic Performance and Mystical Re-union:  
Considering the Theonomous Possibilities of  
Music*

Meredith Holladay, Baylor University

*Music as Theology: Using Tillich's Theology of  
Culture to Understand the Prophetic and Theo-  
logical in Popular Music*

Loye Ashton, Tougaloo College

*Rock, Reason, and Revelation: Tag-Teaming  
Tillich at Rockandtheology.com***AAR Group Business Meeting:**

Russell Re Manning, University of Aberdeen

*Presiding***TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2012****A20-128****Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture  
Group****Tuesday - 9:00 AM - 11:30 AM****McCormick Place West-182****Theme:** The Radical Tillich

Russell Re Manning, University of Aberdeen

*Presiding*

Paul Tillich famously remarked to Thomas Altizer that “the real Tillich is the radical Tillich.” In some ways this is surprising, given Tillich's public distancing of himself from radical "death of God" theology, and yet the idea of Tillich as "radical" theologian raises provocative and compelling questions about the nature of his own thought and his place within twentieth-century theology. It also opens up striking new perspectives for the contemporary reception of Tillich. The papers in this session explore the idea of the Radical Tillich, engaging themes including Tillich's relation to death of God theology, impurity in Tillich's thought, Tillich's understanding of “philosophical theology” as compared to that of Paul Ricoeur, Tillich's radical ontology in dialogue with Pentecostalism, and Mary Daly's reception of Tillich as "the patriarch with good ideas.”

Michael Sohn, University of Chicago  
*Paul Tillich and Paul Ricoeur on the Meaning of “Philosophical Theology”*

Wolfgang Vondey, Regent University  
*Spirit and Nature as Ultimate Concern: Tillich's “Radical” Ontology in Conversation with Contemporary Pentecostalism*

Christopher Rodkey, Lebanon Valley College and Pennsylvania State University, York  
*Pirating Paul Tillich, the Patriarch with Good Ideas: Mary Daly and the Radical Tillich*

Daniel J. Peterson, Seattle University  
*A Radical Restrained: Paul Tillich and the Death of God*

**Editor's Note:** Please try to attend as many sessions of the AAR Tillich Group as possible.

### HARVARD PAPERS REORGANIZED

The Paul Tillich papers, located in the Andover-Harvard Theological Library at Harvard Divinity School, have recently been reorganized, and a new description of them has been written. The updated finding aid can be viewed [here](http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/deepLink?_collection=oasis&uniqueId=div00649):  
[http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/deepLink?\\_collection=oasis&uniqueId=div00649](http://oasis.lib.harvard.edu/oasis/deliver/deepLink?_collection=oasis&uniqueId=div00649)

### THE ANNUAL NAPTS BANQUET

The annual banquet of the North American Paul Tillich Society will be held this year in the **Park East Gallery** on the second floor of the **Essex Inn**.

The Essex Inn  
800 South Michigan Avenue  
Chicago, Illinois 60605  
312.212.8194/ 877.679.0658

This hotel is number three (3) on the AAR map.

**Our Distinguished Speaker:** Guyton B. Hammond, Professor, Virginia Technical University, Emeritus. The title of Dr. Hammond's address is:

*Experimenting in Correlation: Personal and Theoretical Aspects*

- The price of the banquet is 55 USD. Please have a check or cash ready for the secretary treasurer at the dinner. Credit cards cannot be accepted.
- *This does not include cocktails, wine, or beer. All alcoholic beverages must be paid for separately.*

**For reservations:** contact Frederick J. Parrella, Secretary Treasurer, NAPTS, at:  
—Home Phone: 408.259.8225  
—Cell and Text: 408.674.3108  
—Email: [fparrella@scu.edu](mailto:fparrella@scu.edu)  
—Fax: 408.554.2387  
—US Mail: Frederick J. Parrella  
Religious Studies  
Santa Clara University  
Santa Clara, CA 95053

*Please join us for an evening of good food and lively conversation!*



This is an extensive finding aid; to facilitate searching it, there are links in the left-hand column to make it easier to navigate. Note that you can expand the Container List to move around the series more easily.

This finding aid gives detailed information about the collection, which includes drafts of some of Tillich's major publications, sermons, addresses, lectures, and articles. The collection also includes: Tillich's early student notebooks, which represent his

work at the Universities of Marburg, Frankfurt, and Berlin; his class notes and lecture notes from theological courses; and his World War II radio broadcasts.

The new finding aid includes references to a number of things that were not listed in the previous finding aid. This includes 100 boxes of correspondence from friends, colleagues, institutions, and dignitaries, as well as letters from people from all walks of life. About 100 of these letters were written in response to an article Tillich wrote for the *Saturday Evening Post* in June of 1958, entitled "The Lost Dimension in Religion."

Photographs have also been added, and they include images of Tillich's parents, his sisters, his aunt, and other relatives; his university days (which include many images of his schoolmates); World War I (which documents his time as chaplain in the German army from 1914 to 1918); his teaching career in Germany and in the United States; his colleagues; trips he took to the American Southwest and to Japan; plus many formal and informal portraits of Tillich.

A personal series was also added. This series contains a 1905 German police report for the then 19-year-old Tillich for disturbing the peace with his loud singing (he was ordered to pay a fine of three marks); many honorary degrees; handwritten reports and notes from Tillich's time as chaplain in World War I; poems by Tillich, his wife Hannah, and others; a silver family chalice engraved with the date October 1, 1885; the Hanseatic Goethe Prize; and the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (Grand Cross and Knight Commander's Cross).

Related collections have been separated from the Tillich pages:

— [Hannah Tillich Papers](#)

— [Robert C. Kimball Papers](#) (Kimball was executor of Tillich's literary estate, 1959-87)

— [Literature about Paul Tillich](#)

Please contact [Fran O'Donnell](#), curator of manuscripts and archives at the library, with any questions (617.496.5153).

Andover Harvard theological Library  
45 Francis Avenue  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138  
617.495.5788

#### NEW PUBLICATIONS

Stone, Ron. *Faith and Politics: Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich at Union Seminary in New York*

*City*. This book will be available at the AAR meeting in Chicago. At 560 pages, it will retail for 45 USD in cloth, but it is now available on Amazon.com for a pre-publication order at 29 USD.

Galles, Paul. *Situation und Botschaft. Die soteriologische Vermittlung von Anthropologie und Christologie in den offenen Denkformen von Paul Tillich und Walter Kasper*. Tillich Research Vol. 3. Berlin/Boston 2012.

*Theology and Natural Science. International Yearbook for Tillich Research*, Vol. 7. Ed. b. C.

Danz, M. Dumas, W. Schüßler, M.A. Stenger, E. Sturm. Berlin and Boston, 2012.

Danz, Christian. "Christologie als Selbstbeschreibung des Glaubens. Zur Neubestimmung der Christologie bei Karl Barth und Paul Tillich," in: *Kerygma und Dogma* 58 (2012), S. 132-146.

Dienstbeck, Stefan. *Transzendente Strukturtheorie. Studien der Systembildung Paul Tillichs* (Forschungen zur systematischen und ökumenischen Theologie, Bd. 132), Göttingen 2011.

Oliana, Guido. *Gesù, la domanda, e Cristo, la risposta. Il metodo della correlazione nella teologia cristomorica di Paul Tillich* [Jesus, the Question, and Christ, the Answer. The Method of Correlation in the Christomorphic Theology of Paul Tillich], Antolini, Tione di Trento 2011.

Oliana, Guido. *Il progetto teologico di Paul Tillich. La sfida del "coraggio di essere" e del "realismo credente"* [The Theological Project of Paul Tillich. The Challenge of the "courage to be" and "believing realism"], Antolini, Tione di Trento 2012.

#### *A few words on the last two books:*

(1) *Method of Correlation in the Christomorphic Theology of Paul Tillich* presents some traits of the reception of the method of correlation in the North-American context. The study is carried out under the perspective of the Christological dimension of the method, *crux interpretum*. The study underlines a twofold dimension of the reception of the theology of Tillich.

On one side, we have a strongly critical appraisal, with a fundamentally negative assessment of Tillich's project. In the last analysis, this approach is directly or indirectly influenced by the orthodox or neo-orthodox perspective, which could generally be characterized as the Barthian perspective. According to this view, the Tillichian alleged *a priori* philosophical-ontological approach seems to condition the freedom of God's self-revelation and thus jeopardize

the substance of theology. In this view, the category of correlation is considered victim of the so-called the “ontology of synthesis” of Hegelian extraction, due to a mere *dialectical interpretation* of the relationship between *essence* and *existence* as philosophical categories, which try to interpret our complex human situation in the world.

On the other side, we have a more positive and constructive interpretation, which shows how Tillich has critically overcome the Hegelian “ontology of synthesis” with the category of the Christological paradox. The latter tries to make sense not only of the dialectical view, but also of a *paradoxical interpretation* of the relationship between *essence* and *existence*.

The solution of this dialectical-paradoxical interaction between essence and existence seems to be found in what the title of the study would like to convey. In his historical experience, Jesus Christ as *Jesus* lived and solve the paradox of existence in becoming the question par excellence, thus representing and interpreting all possible existential problems-questions of humanity. This side of the coin is expressed by the Jesus’ Marcan cry on the cross: *Eloi, Eloi, lema sabachthani* [*My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?* (Mk 16:)].

In his historical experience, Jesus Christ as *the Christ* could overcome the despair, to which the existential question would naturally lead, thus bringing the possibility of essence in the context of existence by freely denying, through his death on the cross, his self-referential protagonism, thus making his finitude infinite. On the sacrifice of the cross, Jesus Christ made himself transparent to the unconditional God by becoming and expressing himself as the New Being, the Christ, the anointed one, thus affirming the victorious meaning and power of being of God in the Spirit. This side of the coin is expressed by the Lucan surrendering attitude of Jesus: *Father, in your hands I commend my spirit* (Lk 23:46). In the New Being human beings are thus enabled to become New Beings in their turn.

The recent reinterpretation of the theological project of Barth, in particular by Eberhard Jüngel (1933-) and his school, as highlighted by the theological school of Milan, especially by Giuseppe Noberasco (cf. *Il soggetto sorpreso, Parola rito cultura dopo K. Barth*, Cittadella Editrice, Assisi 2009), seems to vindicate the Barthian project, perhaps too unilaterally restricted by the Tillichian interpretation. If the problematical Tillichian relationship (according to some critics) between Jesus and Christ is re-

visited in the light of this new interpretation of Barth, it could be creatively enlightened and maybe integrated. This re-visitation could perhaps make the method of correlation more faithful to the *unity-distinction relationship* stated by the Council of Chalcedon.

The volume closes with a hint to Joseph Ratzinger’s contribution towards a possible solution of the dichotomy between the Barthian and the Tillichian perspectives of correlation, giving perhaps a more integrated view of such correlation, which Paul Tillich would certainly and humbly have accepted as an improvement of his attempt.

(2) *The Theological Project of Paul Tillich. The Challenge of the “courage to be” and “believing realism”* is a sort of companion to the first volume. The book is intended to fulfill three basic objectives: (1) to present an orthogenetic study of the method of correlation of Tillich, so that one may understand its origin and development during the life of the author; (2) to attempt a critical systematic synthesis of the variegated dimensions of the Tillichian “symphony”; and (3) to try an actualization of the theological heritage of Tillich, so that one may see and experience its relevance and existential appeal as far as “courage to be” and “believing realism” are concerned.

The Tillichian approach indirectly challenges the vision of the Church in our contemporary world. The Church would find its sense when she becomes a “travelling companion” of human beings. Forcing an apologetic vision of the Church to prove its relevance and value can nowadays become risky, if the Church does not accept to become a humble “disappearing” into the dough of the world, as the seed of grain must rot and die in the soil to produce a rich harvest (cf. *Jn* 12:24). The contemporary person accepts the Church as mother sister, companion or family of God, when in Christ she becomes an efficacious sign of that God, whom Alfred North Whitehead beautifully qualifies as “the great companion—the fellow sufferer who understands” (*Process and Reality*, 1979, 351).

#### IN MEMORIAM

**P**rof. Gabriel Vahanian, 1927-2012, was a French Protestant Christian theologian who was most remembered for his pioneering work in the theology of the “death of God” movement within academic circles in the 1960s, and who taught for 26 years in the United States before finishing a prestigious career in Strasbourg, France. At Syracuse University,

Dr. Vahanian was on the faculty of the Religion Department from 1958-1984 and held the posts of Eliphalet Remington Professor of Religion (1967-1983) and Jeannette K. Watson Professor of Religion (1973-1984). He played a central role in developing the department's graduate programs and was a major intellectual influence on generations of faculty and students. His daughter, Noelle Vahanian, and son-in-law, Jeffrey Robbins, later earned Ph.D.s in the department in 1999 and 2001.

Professor Vahanian's detailed obituary appeared in the *New York Times* on September 8, 2012. See: <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/09/09/education/gabri-el-vahanian-85-death-of-god-theologian-dies.html>

### **ABSOLUTES, RELATIVISM, AND TEACHING *DYNAMICS OF FAITH***

DEREK R. NELSON

If you were alive when President Kennedy was shot, you probably remember where you were when it happened. If you're reading the Bulletin of the North American Paul Tillich Society, you probably remember where you were the first time you sat down to read Tillich's masterful little book, *Dynamics of Faith*. I definitely remember it well. It was the third or fourth book of the semester in a class called "Contemporary Theology" taught by the Barthian, but sympathetic-to-Tillich, theologian William Placher. The experience of reading it was really quite transformative for me. I suspect in a number of your cases, the same is true. It remains the one book of Tillich's dogmatic theological writings, in addition to *The Courage to Be* and perhaps his sermons, to which a broad swath of people can deeply relate.

I have spoken over the last few years with a number of colleagues in a variety of contexts about *Dynamics of Faith* (I mean the book by that title, though, I guess, also the actual dynamics of faith...). Many of them, most a generation or so older than me, recounted a very similar experience when they each read the book for the first time as an undergraduate. The similarities between their stories were eerie. And the story they told actually closely resembles the experience I had as an undergraduate, in perhaps my second or third religion class. The pattern goes something like this. A relatively pious youth, who believes the basic things they learned about Christianity and who has a kind of general interest in knowing more, starts the academic study

of religion at college. Crisis ensues. The historical-critical study of the Bible terrorizes the naïve literalist. Comparative analysis of the world's religions shows similarities so keen that one wonders how every religion but one's own can be good and *wrong*.

Or alternately, a student has secretly harbored suspicions all through one's upbringing that some of this stuff can't quite be true. Isn't creation incompatible with evolution? Is it bad that when I pray, I wonder if there's actually anyone or anything out there listening to me? Many members of bygone generations (and, admittedly, not a few of the present younger ones) felt that their faith disallowed asking the pivotal questions. Doubt was incompatible with faith. Since faith was epistemic certainty despite a lack of evidence, then any uncertainty in the believer had to be regarded as betrayal. When Tillich reframes faith in terms of ultimate concern, and makes the questioning of every concern's ultimacy ingredient to the dynamics of our experience of faith, we breathed a sigh of relief. Critics who accused this Lutheran theologian of advocating "justification by doubt" went too far. Tillich's way of finding praise for honest, if temporary and episodic, doubt, was experienced as liberation by us who fretted over the uncertainty we felt in our heart of hearts.

Besides doubt, Tillich gave us language that made sense about the "absolute." Tillich witnessed the utter devotion of many people of his day to a cause of their choice that was, at best, of penultimate concern. Chief among these "idols" was the nation-state, which elicited total devotion and came to resonate with the echoes of Ultimacy. And when he came to the United States and experienced for the first time a repressive Protestant fundamentalism, he made similarly persuasive critiques about the problems of confusing the Word with its Speaker, or misrelating a being to Being. In such a setting, then, a book like *Dynamics of Faith* functions primarily as a *relativizing antidote to absolutizing tendencies*. Those who have completely devoted themselves to some "concern" are chastened to ask whether that concern (or as H. Richard Niebuhr comparably put it, that "center of value") is truly ultimate or not.

For at least these two reasons—the vindication of the language of doubt and the relativizing of dangerous absolutes—many religion professors, I gather, have stuck with assigning to their students the same Tillich book that shaped their own approach to religion. *Dynamics of Faith* still sells like

proverbial hotcakes. It is currently about 7,000<sup>th</sup> on the list of bestsellers on amazon.com. I confess to feeling jealous, since none of my books has ever gotten above 100,000, and one is languishing around the 2.5 million most-purchased mark. Oh well.

But this begs the question of whether *The Dynamics of Faith* still works, and, if so, whether it works in the same way. Are the issues in our students' generation similar enough to those of Tillich's first audience for his answers to make sense? The method of correlation depends on a careful, and accurate, analysis of the ruptures in human existence, such that the *depositum fidei* can properly be mined for the correlative responses. I believe that in important ways, the presuppositions and, as Jean-François Lyotard would put it, the "meta-narratives" of our students' generation, are so different that we in fact need to re-think how we teach *Dynamics of Faith*.

Many of us who teach undergraduates have noticed that a kind of cultural shift has happened among our students. Rather than being prone to absolutize the penultimate, the tendency seems to be to quite the opposite. There is a kind of latent predisposition to relativize everything. For a number of reasons, some of them very good ones, undergraduates today are demonstrably less likely to think in terms of absolutes, be they moral, epistemic, or metaphysical. Undergraduates today belong to what Mark Bauerlein (perhaps excessively) calls "The Dumbest Generation," or what sociologist Christian Smith refers to as "Souls in Transition." For today's undergraduates, depth of commitment is less important than breadth of experience. The legitimacy of perspectives other than one's own practically disallows the category of "the ultimate" to be used at all. Since I know Christian Smith's work best, I will use his findings briefly to illustrate my point. Smith has been conducting a multi-year study of attitudes toward religion and faith in teens and twenty-somethings. One of the most disheartening, but empirically corroborated, findings is the rather sophomoreic *relativism* of the subjects interviewed: "That might be true for you, but..."; their *functional individualism* about moral issues: "I personally don't think you should..."; and a general loss of high regard for *virtue*. What's more, evidence of virtually no civic engagement in today's teens and young adults makes excessive nationalism seem not only foreign, but also downright nonsensical.

So, the certitude of faith is not an overriding concern for students. The dangerous tendency toward nationalism is not a concern. The notion of

something being truly ultimate, and thus exclusive of other contestants for ultimacy, is practically abhorrent. So the three main presuppositions I was depending on to set up Tillich's analysis, *just did not apply*. This, I hope is clear, will have significant consequences for the way that we need to approach our teaching.

Pedagogies in religion have commonly been built primarily to widen the horizons of the provincial mind. Fundamentalist tendencies are to be assumed, and the role of the teacher is to call into question their underlying premises. Ricouer's vocabulary for this approach is that of a "first naïveté," interrupted by "critical consciousness," which is then ideally replaced by a second naïveté. When teaching religious ethics under such a model, a useful beginning text might be something like Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*, which tries to show the contingency, arbitrariness, and irrationality of a wide array of moral practices and ideals. Everything is called into question. The value of such a text, in our traditional model, is exactly to provoke objection.

If the problem, however, is not so much a narrow-minded provincialism as it is rather a loose, formless, "any option is just as good as another" nebula, then perhaps our strategies for teaching ought to be different. A better objective might be to find ways to deepen and hone responsible commitment, rather than finding ways of debunking, relativizing, and marginalizing it. At this point, I suggest that Tillich can be of some help, but in ways that depart from the kind of approach that worked for me as a student, and the way it may have worked for you. I would like to offer some thoughts on two ways that *Dynamics of Faith* can actually be a very effective teaching tool for the present generation, if used in different and creative ways than those we would expect to work based on our own experiences.

Before I do this, a quick note about my context. I taught for six years at an undergraduate liberal arts college in Western Pennsylvania. About one-third to one-half of our students are in the first generation of their families to complete college. The population is relatively homogeneously Christian in background, but not particularly devout in practice. The college is historically affiliated with the Lutheran church, but the large majority of students come from other denominations, the plurality Roman Catholic. Students are required to take a course in interpreting the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, where they are introduced to modern critical study of the Bible. Many of

them enjoy the experience, and seek to take another course in religion. One common place for them to end up is in a class I have taught many times the last few years, Introduction to Method and Theory in Religion. The course is a survey seminar, with a book assigned in psychology of religion, sociology of religion, religion and textual analysis, and so on. The first time I taught it, I used *Dynamics of Faith* as the opening text, certain it would be a hit. It flopped. For reasons related to the diagnosis I mentioned earlier from Smith, Bauerlein, and others, it just did not resonate with students. I am sure part of the fault lies with me, but it seemed like I was trying to force my students into having the same kind of experience with the book that I had. In the many times I have taught the course since, I have experimented in lots of ways, and here are the two that are worthy of reflection.

The first strategy has been, much to my surprise, to make the third chapter, rather than the canonically accepted first, the key to the book. Chapter 3 is the one on “Symbols of Faith.” For some reason, and I have confirmed this with several colleagues at other schools, today’s teenaged or early-twenties student resonates with this material extremely well. You will hear much more about symbol in Tillich (at a much, much more sophisticated level) from other papers in this session. What I wish to highlight is simply that in my teaching experience, the notion of abiding, organic, and participatory language for a symbol feeds an incredible hunger my students have. Let me reflect very briefly on those features of Tillich’s notion of symbols of faith—abiding, organic, and participatory.

First: *abiding*. This speaks directly to experience in the blindingly fast-paced life our students have lead. I thought I was actually “up” on my pop culture references when I mentioned a song by Usher in class once. A student looked at me incredulously and said, “Dr. Nelson, that song was from, like *March*.” It was May when I said this. Another student wrote something in a Facebook status update. The student’s name, Tyler, was assumed to be the subject of the sentence in the status update. It was something like... “Tyler is hungry for lunch.” When Facebook first came out, a person’s name and “is” were the only way status updates could be worded, until a change was made in 2009. Tyler’s next status update said something like “Yeah—a throwback, Old-School Facebook update!” Really? Throwback? Old school? From 2009? In a context like this, Tillich’s language of abiding, meaningful symbolic language

is gospel fresh air. Second—*organic* and *participatory*. A generation that has grown quickly accustomed to self-organization and is suspicious of traditional patterns of communicative authority will jump at this one. Wholesale conventions of language are now regularly adopted in a matter of days. UrbanDictionary.com, Wikipedia, and other websites reinforce the notion that language is meaningful if, only if, and exactly how, we say it is. My new iPhone now auto-corrects standard English words into text message abbreviations for me, even when I have gone to the trouble of typing out the whole word already! The idea that symbolic, and thus faith-worthy, language is also this kind of organically derived, mutually shared practice is welcome, and a thought provoking exercise, for my students. With that content given to “symbol” and with the conceptual array of Tillich’s notions of symbols, myth, and faith firmly in place, suddenly “God as the primary symbol of faith” becomes not just understandable, but incredibly attractive (I mean in an intellectual sense, not necessarily in the sense of a personal attraction to Christian faith). Now the ultimate *as ultimate* has some teeth, some sizzle.

This leads me to my final point about teaching *Dynamics of Faith* in the present generation. Another very helpful exercise has been to call into question the widely held assumptions among these “souls in transition” regarding the Absolute. The method and theory course I mentioned often has a unit on literature as a vehicle for studying religion, and a book that has really brought the Absolute to life is Annie Dillard’s *Holy the Firm*. This is true partly because this book is exquisitely fine, and partly, I think, because Dillard is from Pittsburgh, like many of my students, and they are shocked that something so good could come from home. On elegant page after elegant page, Dillard shocks readers with the perfect contingency of the *everyday*, of the senselessness of painful life, of the horror we rightly feel in the face of injustice. She rends our hearts with the story of little Julie Norwich, pun intended (I think) who is a burn victim. Dillard leaves us clamoring for answers, adrift on a sea we deeply hope has a bottom shallow enough for an anchor to find it. The last part of the book gives us a glimpse of such a place. She calls the deep-down, unknowable-but-still rock-solid substance buoying our lives “Holy the Firm.” And Holy the Firm, whatever it is, is at base in touch with the Absolute. Finally, there is a mooring. Finally, there is a place to stand, at least for a moment. So pairing the text *Holy the Firm* with

*Dynamics of Faith* helped my students to appreciate the latter immensely. Having a vision in mind of the unconditional as safe haven rather than as finger-wagging denouncer helped them to enter Tillich's world of thought with much greater ease. It helped them to grant Tillich the benefit of the doubt long enough for him to make the moves that he makes in relativizing dangerously absolutizing tendencies.

The diagnosis of current social trends in undergraduates today that I have reported here is far too briefly summarized to be persuasive for you, I am sure. And, of course, your contexts will be different, and the strategies you employ for teaching Tillich

different as well. I think the point remains true, however, that the contexts in which he wrote, and more important, the presuppositions that Tillich and his original readers shared, are now largely gone. However, those of us who imbibed and were nourished by Tillich's analysis in *Dynamics of Faith* do not need to give up on that great little book. Instead, we need to pay attention to our own contexts, and find new and creative ways that Tillich's voice can be heard and appreciated by a new generation.

### TILlich ON EROS AND LOGOS AND THE BEAUTY OF KANT

BRANDON LOVE

#### Introduction

This paper is an attempt to advance the argument presented by Chris Firestone at the North American Paul Tillich Society meeting at the 2008 American Academy of Religion in Chicago, entitled "Tillich's Indebtedness to Kant: Two Recently Translated Review Essays on Rudolf Otto's *Idea of the Holy*."<sup>1</sup> In that essay, Firestone points out the relationship between Paul Tillich and Immanuel Kant by way of Tillich's appropriation of Rudolf Otto and Otto's Kantian examination of religious experience. Firestone claims, "Schelling was not the only late Enlightenment influence of...constitutive significance upon Tillich. The philosophy of Immanuel Kant was just as influential, perhaps more so."<sup>2</sup> Drawing upon two recently translated articles from Tillich in the early 1920s, "The Category of the 'Holy' in Rudolf Otto," and "Rudolf Otto-Philosopher of Religion,"<sup>3</sup> Firestone supports his rather bold claim with a threefold argument:

(1) the groundwork of Tillich's theology can be shown to emerge in response to Otto's philosophy of religion, (2) Otto's philosophy of religion is best understood as an extension of the critical philosophy to religion, and (3), Tillich's theology is likewise best understood as a theological response to the philosophy of Kant.<sup>4</sup>

Along similar lines, the purpose of the present paper is to show that the aesthetic theory of Immanuel Kant is one of the seminal elements underly-

ing and uniting the Tillichian concepts of Logos and Eros. I argue that these concepts have a relationship of necessary dependence upon one another in Tillich's thought that is only readily apparent when seen in the light of certain elements of Kant's *Critique of Judgment*, which underlie aspects of the Tillichian conceptual framework. This paper is thus a preliminary and somewhat exploratory examination of the relationship between Tillich's concepts of Eros and Logos as they relate to Kant's theory of beauty.

Before the rationale behind this claim is unpacked, a disclaimer is in order. First, it needs to be noted that, while I am here affirming Firestone's claim that Kant is a significant and constitutive influence upon Tillich, I in no way intend to discount the impact of Schelling's philosophy on Tillich's thinking in these areas. To the contrary, I readily affirm Schelling's influence on Tillich, but in affirming the influence of Schelling, I think it inevitable that one also affirm, by extension, Tillich's indebtedness to Kant. For Schelling's objective idealism is indebted to, and even shaped by, Kant's subjective idealism. As Christian Helmut Wenzel has pointed out,

Both Schelling and Hegel were strongly influenced by the works of Kant, including his third *Critique*. Both referred to its sections 76 and 77 and pointed out the fundamental importance of the general ideas they contained. Schelling took from Kant the idea that both organisms and works of art must be understood teleologically, and in his own philosophy aesthetic insights were superior to theoretical and practical ones.<sup>5</sup>

My goal is to show that the impact of the third *Critique* is not limited to Hegel and Schelling, but extends to Tillich—whether mediated through objec-

tive idealists, such as Schelling, or directly, given that Tillich was himself a theologian writing in the wake of Kant, and is not merely, as many see him, one writing in the light of Kant which is blocked by the Schellingian shadow.

In order to show where Kant's third *Critique* has had an impact on Tillich's thinking, I will need to forego much of the groundwork for demonstrating the Kant-Tillich relationship and begin with certain assumptions in-hand concerning Tillich's indebtedness to Kant based on the work of Firestone along with Stephen Palmquist. Firestone claims that Tillich, as a theologian, is an interpreter of Kant, and that as an interpreter of Kant is in the same vein of interpretation as Palmquist. However, while Firestone deals with Tillich in relation to Kant's Critical program as a whole, I am mainly focusing on Tillich in relation to what Palmquist has termed the Judicial Standpoint of Kant's philosophical system—or the third *Critique*.

### An Overview of Kant's System

I begin with a brief outline of Kant's philosophical system and explain the role of the judicial standpoint therein. In the First *Critique*, Kant lays out his philosophical system with a set of three questions.<sup>6</sup> The first of these is "What can I know?" which Kant says is theoretical; the second is "What ought I to do?" which is practical; and the third is "What may I hope?", which Kant says is both theoretical and practical inasmuch as it is an attempt to bridge the gap between the two. However, in his *Logic*,<sup>7</sup> he adds a fourth question and a further explanation. The new question is "What is man?" which, for Kant, is overarching the other three, and hence, his entire philosophical system. Kant elaborates on these four questions in his 1793 letter to Carl Friedrich Staudlin. Here, Kant says of the three initial questions, "A fourth question ought to follow, finally: What is man?... With the enclosed work, *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone*, I have tried to complete the third part of my plan."<sup>8</sup>

This third question, the question of hope and the answer Kant gives for it, is the most relevant for the purposes of this paper. The reason for Kant's third (and fourth) question is the "fact/value" divide. The epistemological question gives us "facts," while the ethical question gives us "values." The question of hope arises because things are not the way they ought to be; the facts fail to line up with the values. Because of this, there seems to be no rational pur-

pose to life, especially in light of human moral striving. This problem emerges in Kant's philosophy because of the great tension between the different standpoints Kant uses in the first and second *Critiques*. The first *Critique*, in answer to the epistemological question of humanity (What can I know?), examines the nature of knowledge in relation to pure or theoretical reason. The second *Critique*, in answer to the ethical question of humanity (What ought I to do?), examines the nature of the moral law in relation to practical reason. A tension emerges when we examine this relationship in light of the fact that moral goodness does not lead to happiness or justice in this life. In other words, rarely if ever do the facts line up proportionately with values. What this means for Kant is that the Highest Good is not realized in this life, at least as far as we are able to see or know. In response to this tension, Kant proposes an aesthetic theory based on his third question (What may I hope?) in which beauty acts as a kind of bridge for the divide between nature (facts) and freedom (values).

Kant's theory of beauty is situated within a four-fold distinction between the agreeable, the beautiful, the sublime, and the good. For Kant, these are the four types of aesthetic judgment or ways of experiencing delight. Kant spends the bulk of his examination of aesthetic judgment looking at the beautiful and the sublime; however, due to issues of space, I will limit my comments to the former. For Kant, beauty bridges the gap between nature and freedom or between facts and values through the experiences of beauty. Beauty is felt as an experience of the meaning and purpose underlying the world. However, this feeling of purpose is internal and subjective rather than external and objective.

Kant divides beauty into four "moments." These moments are *disinterested delight*, *subjective universality*, *purposiveness without a purpose*, and *necessary delight*. As Kant explains, in the second moment beauty presents itself as being subjectively universal. In other words, I feel as though everyone ought to agree with my judgment of beauty even though I know full well that it is unlikely that everyone will agree with me. Be this as it may, the moment of beauty that has real significance to the question of a fact-value bridge is the third—what Kant describes as a feeling of "purposiveness without a purpose." This synthetic concept provides a kind of one-way bridge between theoretical and practical reason where the human subject can feel unity, experience hope and harmonize reason.

Now, despite its ability to bridge theoretical and practical reason, the bridge that beauty provides is still decidedly one way. Upon reflection over any singular experience of beauty, we find that the purposiveness that we feel cannot be put into words that endure and that are communicable to others. It is for this reason that Palmquist has claimed that Kant's first attempt to bridge the fact/value divide failed. Palmquist summarizes: "[I]t is not entirely clear just how [the Judicial standpoint of Kant's Critical system] satisfies the 'hope' in which human reason has special interest. Thus, although Kant has successfully shown how aesthetic and teleological judgment can bridge the gap between [the theoretical and practical standpoints], the bridge he has built is not nearly as strong or secure as might be desired."<sup>9</sup> However, Kant was not unaware of this insufficiency in his system, and for this reason he turned to religion in the *Religion* text and the *Opus postumum* in order to resolve it. The fact that Kant completes his judicial standpoint by turning to religion will be helpful to remember as we continue, given Tillich's theological concerns—although the specifics of Kant's turn to religion are not of central concern for our current study.

### Eros and Logos

Now, as we transition directly into Tillich's work, it is worth noting that there are many ways in which Tillich is related and indeed indebted to Kant, as is true for a good many philosophers and theologians who write in the post-Kantian milieu. However, this is especially true for Tillich, who made his career as a theologian by interpreting Kant in every step of his theological enterprise. Here are just a few examples: Tillich's conception of his task as a theologian is based upon Kant's distinction between the philosophy and theology faculties in his *Conflict of the Faculties*. Tillich's explanation of the Moral Imperative is mainly a synthesis of Kant's three forms of the Categorical Imperative, and Tillich's conceptions of Natural and Revealed Religion (expressed in his theological circle) are based on Kant's *Religion*. However, I will here limit my discussion to Kant's notion of beauty and its relation to the concepts of Eros and Logos in Tillich.

Tillich claims that every theology must meet two formal criteria: (1) "The object of theology is what concerns us ultimately;" and (2) "Only those statements are theological which deal with their object in so far as it can become a matter of being or not-

being for us."<sup>10</sup> In explaining these criteria, Tillich says that they are inseparably related but not identical, inasmuch as the second is an extension of the first. This extension is dependent on the relationship of being and meaning in Tillich's thought. If something is a matter of being or not-being for us, it is also necessarily a matter of meaning or meaninglessness for us. This is an existential claim, but it must not be relegated merely to the existential realm. It is also an ontological claim. For Tillich, our participation in being is what gives us meaning as humans. My claim is that Tillich bases his notion of our participation in being (by means of Eros and Logos) as our inner, existential meaning or purpose on Kant's concept of beauty as inner purpose without external purpose.

Obviously, Tillich borrows the concepts of Logos and Eros from Greek thought. However, as he does with virtually all of his borrowed ideas, Tillich puts a fresh meaning on these concepts. In the case of Logos, Tillich expands this concept to include ontological, universal reason; it is this reason that shapes reality and gives it meaning. For Tillich, Logos is not only related to the Christ symbol, but also stretches further to cover the very nature of reason as the element of meaning in the world. Logos is the element of Tillich's conceptual framework that allows us both to participate *in* and be estranged *from* being-itself. Obviously, if two things have no common element, then there is no way in which they can be said to be estranged from one another. Estrangement involves both similarity and difference. The difference is the cause of the estrangement in light of the common, unifying element. In this regard, Tillich's Logos corresponds to theoretical reason in Kant's fact/value divide. Logos, as theoretical reason, is what gives meaning to the world and allows us to have awareness of our place in the world. In this way, it is both the common element and a major source of estrangement. We are able to participate ontically in the world via Logos or theoretical reason. Without this initial participation in the world, we could not either have estrangement or have hope to overcome the estrangement.

The reason that Logos is a main element of our estrangement is that Logos and theoretical reason are finite. As such, it shows us our position in relation to the world. Something infinite cannot be aware of such a place in relation to the world precisely because there is no such a place with reference to infinitude. This is how God as being-itself is able to be our source of theoretical reason. We are aware of our

place in the world, our finite place. This awareness is a major source of our estrangement. However, God cannot be said to be estranged from us; we are estranged from God. Being-itself cannot be estranged from beings; only beings are estranged from being-itself. We must keep in mind that this estrangement is made possible only by our initial participation in being-itself. Theoretical reason makes us aware that we are different from the world, resulting in estrangement. However, it is our common element that allows us to be reunited to the world. Being-itself has no limits, so it can undergo no estrangement. On the other hand, our limits are the source of our estrangement. Logos is no different in this respect. Our human reason contains a Logos element. Through this, we are able to participate in being-itself ontically. However, the limits of our reason cause us to be estranged from being-itself at the point that reason stops. In this sense, we are merely becoming rather than being.

In sum, just as with Kant's fact/value divide, the very element that allows us to have awareness and participation is at the same time the cause of our estrangement. Our reason tells us that there must be a Highest Good in which the facts and values are aligned; however, reason shows us that this is not the case. In this way, reason leaves us longing for what we are only aware of because of reason itself. In the same way, the finitude of the Logos principle causes us to have awareness that the highest good in a Tillichian sense, namely, our participation in being-itself, is not realized.

Tillich offers two solutions to this problem of estrangement. The first deals with Eros in relation to the reunion of the estranged, while the second deals with the Logos principle when expressed in a particular way. These two attempts on the part of Tillich to transcend the cleavage between beings and being-itself corresponds to Kant's two attempts to bridge the fact/value divide. Tillich's attempt to use Eros as the reunifying bridge corresponds to Kant's attempt to use beauty as the bridge for theoretical and practical reason. Furthermore, Tillich's use of Logos as revelation when displayed as ecstatic reason corresponds to Kant's turn to religion in order to fix the rickety bridge of hope built by the third *Critique*.

The other relevant aspect of Tillich's attempt to overcome our estrangement, with which we will concern ourselves presently, lies in his conception of Eros as the reunion of the estranged. In this reunion, the two parties must have some element in common,

as we have seen. They must also have differences, in order to account for the estrangement. For Tillich, Eros is the drive of the estranged towards reunion. It is the experience of having an obstacle standing between the lover and the beloved along with the process of trying to overcome that obstacle. In the case of our estrangement from God as being-itself, we are attempting to overcome our finitude. However, this is obviously an impossible task but, for Tillich, it is a task that is necessary as long as we find ourselves in this state of estrangement. As outlined above, Kant turns to experiences of beauty in order to bridge the fact/value divide. The main way in which he does this is in his concept of beauty as purposiveness without a purpose. In this, as we have seen, Kant claims that we have experiences in which the beauty of the object we perceive leads us to conclude that there is both meaning and purpose in the world, even though no such meaning or purpose can be found in theoretical reason. For both Kant and Tillich, the gap is bridged by a feeling of something, namely, beauty or love respectively, that cannot be expressed or comprehended by theoretical reason. In this way, they are able to transcend the limits of theoretical reason in order to bridge the gap. However, as the above quote from Palmquist shows, something more is needed, as the bridge is still somewhat rickety in relation to reason itself.

For both Kant and Tillich, the problem arises due to the weakness of theoretical reason. Ironically, both thinkers turn to the needs of reason for the solution. Kant first turns to feelings of beauty in order to bridge the fact/value divide, while Tillich turns to the concept of revelation as reason in ecstasy.<sup>11</sup> So, both thinkers turn, in one aspect, to experiences that are felt but cannot be explained in attempting to bridge the gap by bypassing or transcending theoretical reason, while they, in another aspect, turn to face reason head-on in an attempt to overcome the divide by simply moving one of the sides closer to the other in a certain area. Both thinkers attempt to do this with theoretical reason in relation to religion or revelation. For Kant, we must align ourselves with the ideal of perfect humanity in order to change our moral disposition so that we may have hope of the highest good being realized in relation to practical reason and immortality. For Tillich, the turn is to revelation as ecstatic reason. In revelatory experiences, we are able to encounter Ultimate Reality in a real way. Now, admittedly, this is done via symbols for Tillich, but this is still a result of the finitude of theoretical reason itself. Furthermore, this is not so

problematic, given that symbols not only point to, but also participate in the reality to which they point. In this way, Tillich's usage of symbol is not unlike Kant's use of the postulates of practical reason when they are used to meet the needs of theoretical reason.

<sup>1</sup> Chris L. Firestone, "Tillich's Indebtedness to Kant: Two Recently Translated Review Essays on Rudolf Otto's *Idea of the Holy*" in *Bulletin of The North American Paul Tillich Society* vol. XXXV no. 2, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Firestone, "Tillich's Indebtedness to Kant," 3.

<sup>3</sup> In Chris L. Firestone, *Kant and Theology at the Boundaries of Reason* (Aldershot, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2009).

<sup>4</sup> Firestone, "Tillich's Indebtedness to Kant," 4.

<sup>5</sup> Christian Helmut Wenzel, *An Introduction to Kant's Aesthetics: Core Concepts and Problems*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing Ltd., 2005), 143.

**GOD AS STILL LIVING: AN ANALYSIS  
OF PAUL TILlich'S CONCEPT OF THE  
DIVINE LIFE IN LIGHT OF MARK  
TAYLOR'S INFINITIZATION OF THE  
FINITE**

ADAM PRYOR

What does it mean in Christian theology today to have an understanding of our God as "living"? This question is much larger than what I will be addressing, but I believe it is immensely important and shapes our theological imagination in surprising ways. This is a question that is deeply rooted in scriptures, sacramental theology, soteriology, and as my own question indicates, the doctrine of God.

While I cannot probe the depth and breadth of what it means to think in general about God as living here, I will be analyzing two thinkers, Paul Tillich in the first volume of his *Systematic Theology*, and Mark C. Taylor in his *After God*. They represent the complexity of characterizing what this symbol might mean where distinctions between the religious and the secular can no longer be held in differential opposition. Towards this aim I will briefly highlight critical features of themes that each thinker relates to the concept of a living God, with special regard for the finite and the infinite. This will be followed by a constructive explication of three sites of potential conflict between these two thinkers—ground and abyss, implicit trinitarianism, and self-world ontology—that probe what theological space might re-

<sup>6</sup> Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, B 833.

<sup>7</sup> Kant, *The Jäsche Logic* in *Lectures on Logic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 26.

<sup>8</sup> Kant, "Letter to Carl Friedrich Staudlin," in *Correspondence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 11:428-430.

<sup>9</sup> Stephen Palmquist, *Kant's System of Perspectives: An Architectonic Interpretation of the Critical Philosophy* (Lanham, MD.: University Press of America, 1993), 310.

<sup>10</sup> Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 12, 14.

<sup>11</sup> Kant, in *Religion*, turns to reason's need for moral faith, which finds its culmination in the idea of the perfect human being (the prototype of perfect humanity).

main for a contemporary revision of what it means to think of God as living.

**Tillich's Living God**

In his *Systematic Theology*, Tillich begins his discussion of the meaning of God through a phenomenological description: God is humankind's ultimate concern—the answering correlate to the implied question of our finite being. There is, however, a tension between what is "ultimate" and what is "of concern" that Tillich identifies as "an inescapable inner tension in the idea of God."<sup>11</sup> The index of our concern, our ability to be concerned, is in direct correlation to the concreteness of the object of our concern. For a universal concept to be of concern at all requires that it be represented through finite, concrete experiences. In contrast, for something to be truly ultimate it must transcend everything finite and concrete. As this transcendence occurs, however, that which is ultimate becomes increasingly abstract. Thus, here is the inner tension of our being ultimately concerned: if God is what concerns humankind ultimately, then as God is identified with and through finite and concrete experiences, our concern is increasingly engaged to the diminishment of realizing the ultimacy of God; vice versa, as the finite is transcended in realizing the ultimacy of God, the concreteness that fosters our concern is diminished. This is the basic problem of the doctrine of God and emphasizes the existential quality of humankind's relation to God's ultimacy.

I want to suggest that Tillich's description of God as living points to a unique position with regard to this tension between ultimacy and concern. To call God living is to take the first step in overcoming the unapproachable ultimacy of God as being-itself. As Tillich writes:

Since God is the ground of being, he is the ground of the structure of being. He is not subject to this structure; the structure is grounded in him. He is this structure, and it is impossible to speak about him except in terms of this structure. God must be approached cognitively through the structural elements of being-itself. These elements make him a living God, a God who can be man's concrete concern. They enable us to use symbols which we are certain point to the ground of reality.<sup>2</sup>

God as living, as symbolically manifest in the ontological elements, is a symbol that posits a real ground for further symbolization. A living God is the first move towards concreteness beyond the abyss of ultimacy. Without a living God there would be no sense of a creative ground that is simultaneous with abysmal transcendence. This can be made clearer by investigating further what Tillich means by God as Living.

For Tillich, to understand this symbol is to understand life as the actualization of the polar elements of his ontology. Life is the process in which potential being becomes actual being and can be symbolically applied to God as the ground of life. While the polar elements stand in constant tension in their everyday, finite, existential reality, God's ultimacy as the ground of being unites these polarities. Thus, where *God* is conceived in individuation, dynamics, and freedom, these subjective elements are seen in symbolic unity with their objective counterparts, participation, form, and destiny.<sup>3</sup>

There is an important caveat to be made in this characterization. For Tillich the polar elements apply to symbolizing God as living because they point to *qualities* of being not *kinds* of being.

The basic ontological structure of self and world is transcended in the divine life without providing symbolic material. God cannot be called a self, because the concept 'self' implies separation from and contrast to everything which is not self. God cannot be called the world even by implication. Both self and world are rooted in the divine life, but they cannot become symbols for it. But the elements which constitute the basic ontological structure can become symbols

because they do not speak of kinds of being (self and world) but of qualities of being which are valid in their proper sense when applied to all being and which are valid in their symbolic sense when applied to being-itself.<sup>4</sup>

The fundamental self-world structure of Tillich's fourfold ontology is rooted in the divine life, but to make these kinds of being symbolic for God risks positing God as a being and not being-itself. The divine life is a unity of subject and object that cannot be adequately thematized by a symbolic instantiation of this structure.

We should also emphasize the distinction Tillich makes in the quote above between the "proper" and the "symbolic" sense of the elements as qualities of being. The proper sense always refers to the existential situation between humankind and God that gives rise to the polar elements themselves: the proper sense is that which is derived from the question of being that, via the method of correlation, is partnered with the answer of God as being-itself. Vast stretches of theological error arise from directly constructing the proper sense of the polar elements in an account of the doctrine of God. Since God is not subject to the distinction in kinds of being (self and world) that structure the elements in Tillich's construction of ontology, the "proper" use of the elements applied to God will inevitably result in subjecting God to the distinction in kinds of being that God as being-itself envelops. The symbolic sense of the elements dissociates from their "proper" thematization in terms of the self-world structure; this dissociation is critical to allowing the tension of the polar quality of the elements to be overcome.<sup>5</sup>

Tillich calls the unity of the ontological elements spirit. This spirit is contrasted with 'Spirit,' whereby he notes that "Spirit is the symbolic application of spirit to the divine life."<sup>6</sup> In this way life as spirit embraces a unity of the polar elements where neither is absorbed by its correlate; this spirit is the *telos* or fulfillment towards which life is driven. To say "God is Spirit means that life as spirit is the inclusive symbol for the divine life."<sup>7</sup>

It is in terms of the ontological unity indicated by "spirit" and "life" as applied to God via the symbolic sense of the elements that Tillich posits a preparation for his own understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity and an understanding of the relationship between the finite and the infinite in the divine life.<sup>8</sup> It is important to reiterate his emphasis that this preparation for the doctrine of the Trinity is not an explication of the Christian understanding of

the Trinity itself. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity must proceed from Christological dogma; however, the Trinitarian principles can be addressed as “moments within the process of the divine life.”<sup>9</sup> As such, to assert that the life of God is life as spirit means that the living God is always a unity of the power and meaning, divine depth and *logos*, that are related elements of the human intuition of the divine. Power and meaning as the actuality of God deepen the sensibility already expressed by “ultimacy” and “concern” in the phenomenological account of God. Power points to the ultimate basis of God as God—the intensity of the ground of being that without structure and meaning is an overwhelming chaos, even demonic. Meaning points to the possibility of God being our concern—the concrete symbolization that makes access to God tenable. The Spirit is the actualization of these two principles. This should come as no surprise since life in the spirit involves overcoming the polar tension between the ontological elements through their mutual instantiation; divine life in the Spirit involves an analogous actualization of power and meaning—two terms that seem to stand as ultimate expressions of the ontological elements. These “trinitarian principles appear whenever one speaks meaningfully of the living God.”

Finally, this account of God as living and the Trinitarian principles it entails also speaks to the relation of the finite and the infinite. The divine life is infinite, but not in contrast to the finite. The infinity of the divine life takes the finitude (and the non-being entailed by finitude) into itself as it transcends the distinction between potentiality and actuality. Indeed, the infinite united with the finite in the divine life seems to again parallel the relation of power and meaning from the Trinitarian principles. The infinite in power, depth, and ultimacy that transcend all characterization are given structure by the finite, meaning, *logos*, and concern that makes the divine abyss into a creative ground.

### **Taylor’s Infinite Rhythms of Finitization and Infinitization**

Taylor formulates his theory of religion in terms of the schemata of complex adaptive systems. These schemas are approximations or models that provide information about the environment for such a system. Notably schemata provide a means for the complex system to not only identify and subsequently recognize regular environmental patterns in a static way, but the schemas are generated to be

both dynamically employed in anticipating outcomes within the environment and plastic enough to be modified in light of changing environmental circumstances.<sup>10</sup>

The importance of these schemata and complex adaptive systems for Taylor’s work is vast, but we might note at least four critical features that make them methodologically ripe for his approach and are worth noting in light of our purposes here. First, complex adaptive systems need not be conscious. With a sufficiently nuanced understanding of the mathematical implications of the relation between noise and information, the occurrence of schemata can be demonstrated in even basic non-linear systems. Second, this realization about schemata in light of nonlinear systems indicates the relational facet of schemata: there is mutuality between variously intersecting schemata as successful schemata increase the scope of information they assimilate. Schemata must be figured in terms of interdependent networks. Third, as the definition of schemata entail, there cannot be separation of theory and praxis as schemata figure their environment. As Taylor puts it quite clearly, “descriptive representations provide models of the world that serve as models for activity in the world.”<sup>11</sup> Finally, there is an iterative, triadic quality to the dynamics of schemata that makes complex adaptive systems isomorphic across their instantiating media. Taylor describes this as the fractal quality of schemata in complex adaptive systems: there is a repeating structure that occurs at different operational levels.<sup>12</sup>

Perhaps it is this iterating isomorphism that is most important in our effort here to offer an account of Taylor’s approach to generating a theory of religion as a schema of complex adaptive networks. The iterating isomorphism he identifies builds on his particular deconstructionist reading of the either/or logic of Kierkegaard in differential relation to the both/and logic of Hegel. The deconstructionist and poststructural *différance* of Derrida is refigured so that the differentiating relation can yield more than its repeated cultivation; this refiguring specifically entails not assuming (with deconstructionist post-structuralism) that all systems are totalizing. Instead, Taylor is proposing that the differential relation of *différance* points towards schemata of complex adaptive systems that model an eternal figuring, disfiguring, and refiguring that avoids hegemonically oppositional difference in either/or logic or totalities in both/and logic.<sup>13</sup>

By contrast, Taylor advocates a neither/nor logic that he associates with schemata instead of strict binaries or dialectics. This neither/nor logic does not in opposition force the choosing of one of its paired elements nor synthesize to a more fundamental unity through the sublation of both elements. The neither/nor logic attempts to hold onto the persistent quality of playful relationality that is critical to the deconstructionist movements of *différance*, while allowing for a constructive moment (i.e., the figuring of schemata) that prevents *différance* from regressing to mere oppositional difference. Still, what does this really mean? I think it is instructive to look at Taylor's conception of being "after God" and the relation of the finite and the infinite to clarify the neither/nor logic.<sup>14</sup>

For Taylor, an aim of his analysis is to recognize the finitude implicit to every conception of God. This finitude is expressed by a god's determinate being, the content that sets the god in opposition to the world and constitutes the dualisms of either/or and both/and logic. Taylor is pressing for a constructive vision of religion that moves through this dualistic quality that limits any conception of God—a vision of religion without or after God.

"After" is understood in two senses: "On the one hand, to come after is to be subsequent to what previously has been, and on the other hand, to be after is to be in pursuit of what lies ahead."<sup>15</sup> To be "after God" is both to press beyond the necessarily finite understanding of God as construed via determinate being and to recognize what these renderings of God pursued. Taylor entitles this the Infinite, which is composed of oscillating rhythms: finitizing the infinite and infinitizing the finite.

The finitizing of the infinite figures the schemata that lend life meaning and purpose. These forms function as screens or filters that bring order to chaos by creating a world that provides temporary stability. The more effective schemata are, however, the more rigid they become until security breeds a certainty that turns destructive...The infinitizing of the finite disrupts, dislocates, and disfigures every stabilizing structure, thereby keeping (the) all in play.<sup>16</sup>

This oscillating rhythm characterizes a triadic, or Trinitarian, movement of the operational logic of the Infinite. The Infinite is the originary abyss after God that is the edge of order and disorder from which creative states are figured, disfigured, and refigured. This sets the context for Taylor's assertion that "God is not the ground of being that forms the foundation

of all being but the figure constructed to hide the originary abyss from which everything emerges and to which all returns. While this abyss is no thing, it is not nothing—neither being nor nonbeing, it is the anticipatory wake of the unfigurable that disfigures every figure as if from within."<sup>17</sup>

### A Constructive Rendering

First, it should be clear from the quote above that there is a radical disagreement between Tillich and Taylor with regard to the conception of God as the ground of being. I think it is fair to claim that by Taylor's perspective any "ground of being" theology goes too far in the direction of finitizing the infinite. This capitulation to finitude threatens to prevent our theological imagination from grappling with the awe-inspiring power of the Infinite as the abyss that is neither being nor nonbeing.

We might consider carefully Taylor's formulation on this point a radicalization of Tillich's own insistence that God is being-itself and not a being. In pressing after God, Taylor is considering the Infinite as that which is not only beyond particular beings but also beyond the distinction between being-itself and non-being altogether. Moreover, the abysmal and creative double relation of beings to being-itself in Tillich (i.e., participation in the power of being-itself but in a way whereby beings are infinitely transcended by being-itself) might also find a radicalized parallel in Taylor's work. Certainly the abysmal quality of the Infinite can be understood as a heightening or radicalization if it is interpreted as moving a step further than Tillich's distinction between particular beings and God as being-itself. However, the creative quality persists insofar as human creativity participates in the operational logic of the Infinite; our facilitation of the emergence of new phenomena and schemata participates in the actualization of the disfiguring and refiguring of the Infinite.<sup>18</sup> While I do not want to undercut how drastically different these characterizations are, if they can at least be conceived as being of the same ilk I believe this makes it more feasible to allow insights from Tillich's rich symbolic oeuvre to inform the meanings constructed by figuring or finitizing a schema for the Infinite. Tillich's non-oppositional reading of the finite and the infinite—in that the infinite includes the finite within itself (even the non-being of the finite)<sup>19</sup>—makes this connection tenable.

Second, there is a parallel or a kind of mirroring in the Trinitarian elements of Tillich's living God and Taylor's fractal, isomorphic logic of the Infinite. More specifically, Tillich's abyss of the divine as power, fullness of content as meaning and *logos*, and the Spirit as their union in actualization tracks well with Taylor's order, disorder, and creative emergence. The first two elements of each triad are more obvious in their similarity; what I want to focus on is this parallel between Tillich's notion of Spirit mirroring Taylor's creative emergence.

What is interesting about this final element in each Trinitarian understanding is that it is the site where life's meaning—its teleological or religious meaning—is figured. For Tillich, we have already described this quite clearly above: Spirit symbolizes divine life through life as spirit—actualization finding teleological fulfillment. For Taylor, life encapsulates the process of creative emergence. Far from being only biological (though he focuses a great deal on thermodynamic interpretations of life's principles and origins), life points to the cultivation of interaction between various complex adaptive systems (i.e., life includes interconnected networks of the biological, social, economic, political, and technological, et. al.). This networked interaction creates increasing complexity, which yields the destabilizing disorder allowing for creative emergences that generate newly figured schemata for temporary order that, with subsequently increasing complexity, will begin this cycle again. Life, as this process of creative emergence, is both auto-telic and auto-poietic. This means that life's aim is itself and its formation occurs spontaneously from the oscillatory rhythms of the Infinite.<sup>20</sup>

Thus, for Taylor we might claim that life in actualizing itself actualizes the Infinite; further, the very process of life's actualization is its own fulfillment. We should dwell on this point for a moment because I believe it is of immense importance. Autotelic processes appear to have a pride of place in Taylor's approach. God, art, and life—all examples of these processes that have themselves as their own end—can each indicate the perpetual becoming of the Infinite that oscillates between its moments of infinitization and finitization. They are schemata that can order our encounter with the world when understood as complex adaptive systems that are non-totalizing and decentered structures.

The differences here are important to articulate. Take, for example, a concept so crucial to Tillich's systematic theology, such as finite freedom. It seems

to be without a corollary in Taylor's approach because there is no unfulfilled life. If life's *telos* is itself, its own generation and maintenance, then the quality of life that is implicit to Tillich's understanding (life not only as being and existing, but being and existing in a specific kind of way—as resisting non-being and wrestling with finitude) is at first glance absent in Taylor's approach. It points to a broad issue in the interaction of these two thinkers: how in light of the important autotelic features in Taylor are the qualitative and symbolic features of Tillich—that specific way of being or living—preserved. Or, need they be preserved?

I believe this is a point where Tillich's insights can make Taylor's work more robust. Tillich notes the following in opening his Trinitarian characterization to the finite and the infinite.

Through the Spirit the divine fullness is posited in the divine life as something definite, and at the same time it is reunited in the divine ground. The finite is posited as finite within the process of the divine life, but it is reunited with the infinite within the same process. It is distinguished from the infinite, but it is not separated from it. *The divine life is infinite mystery, but it is not infinite emptiness.* It is the ground of all abundance, and it is abundant itself [emphasis mine].<sup>21</sup>

In an analogous way, we might seek to deepen Taylor's concept of the Infinite through life as a finite instantiation that preserves the mystery of the Infinite *while also yielding content*. To this end, I would suggest that if life actualizes the Infinite and has its own actualization as its *telos*, then we might estimate that those features that maximize the production of life by enhancing its ability to move through the Trinitarian logic of the Infinite would correlate to Tillich's concept of life as spirit—which is also the symbolic grist for understanding God as living.

What might this look like? I would suggest Taylor's and Tillich's work on these concepts might be integrated in terms of seven points. (1) In deference to our initial point above, we would need to strike Tillich's "ground of" language (i.e., God as ground of being or ground of life) that Taylor would argue foundationally limits the ultimacy of the abyss of the Infinite as beyond being and non-being. (2) We can allow autotelic concepts, such as God and life, to stand as schemata that figure the finitizing and infinitizing moments of the Infinite—giving content to the Infinite and actualizing it. (3) The divine life,

God as Living, would schematically estimate the maximization of life or life as spirit. (4) This Living God could never be the static overcoming of the tension between infinitization and finitization, but dynamic, becoming schemata that is always “after,” in Taylor’s sense, the shifting existential situation of life’s continuing creative emergence in new autotelic forms. (5) Such a conception avoids Tillich’s concern that an ontological doctrine of God’s becoming will fall prey to a process of fate or accident in that schemata as related to complex adaptive systems are neither fateful nor accidental but aleatory. (6) Tillich’s ontological elements in this schema could still provide a basic set of existential tensions, wherein God as Living is not a model of perfected actualization to be emulated, but a partner for leading us beyond the brink of figuring one polar element too fervently amidst the vicissitudes of life. (7) We could remove the language of the Infinite in Taylor’s characterization and replace it again with a God who is beyond being and non-being as the oscillating partner to the rhythms of life’s autotelic and autopoietic creative emergence.

Finally, I want to conclude with three implications of this effort at harmonizing elements of Taylor and Tillich with regard to discourse about life, God, and God as living. First, I hope it is immensely clear that this is a constructive effort surrounding only one very specific piece of the highly interconnected theological thinking we find in Tillich’s systematic theology. In no way do I intend this as an update that might be slipped seamlessly into the rest of Tillich’s doctrinal considerations in the *Systematic Theology*. Second, and in a related vein, while I have largely focused on the relation of Taylor’s Infinite to the power of the abyss in the Trinitarian facets of Tillich’s formulation of God as Living, the role of the *logos* has been largely passed over. While the *logos* at work in the Trinitarian principles of the Living God may be able to square with the figuring and disfiguring schemata of Taylor, the articulation of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity and the uniqueness of Christ as the New Being would require a more extended analysis and is potentially irreconcilable. If it is to be reconciled, the uniqueness of Jesus as the Christ would have to be reconciled with the decentralizing vision of *logos* that is at work in Taylor’s account and its implications for a plurality of schematizing *logoi*.

Third, and perhaps most challenging of all, is to re-imagine the place of self and world in terms of the schema of an oscillating relation between life

and God. For Tillich, we have already indicated that the distinction in kinds of being (self and world) can yield no thematic material for an understanding of God as living; only the categories of being have this symbolic potential because any thematization of self and world would have made God a being and not being-itself. All that can be said on Tillich’s account is that self and world precedes all other ontological structures and is in its totality accounted for in God as being-itself. However, if God as living is reconceived along the lines of Taylor’s Infinite and becomes the partner of life’s figuring and disfiguring, then we might expect that even in this most primordial ontological structure of the process of actualization, there would be a disfiguring: the ontological foundation of self and world would be rent into neither self nor world—it would be after ontology. The autotelic living thing would need to include an account of its own disfiguring; it would need to be a non-totalizing subject relationally bound to its world. This non-totalizing, relational binding together understood as neither self nor world would reflexively point to the relational binding of God and the living expression of the emergent creativity of the Infinite. Whatever refiguring of self and world might take place would also serve as an analogous expectation for a refiguring of God and living things.

---

<sup>1</sup> Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 211.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:238.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:241–244.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:244.

<sup>5</sup> As an instance of this see the description Tillich offers of the doctrine of God as becoming. *Ibid.*, 1:247.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:249.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:250. We might also note what Tillich writes just before this to introduce the section: “God as living is God fulfilled in himself and therefore spirit. God *is* spirit. This is the most embracing, direct, and unrestricted symbol for the divine life. It does not need to be balanced with another symbol, because it includes all the ontological elements.” (249).

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:250–252.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 1:250.

<sup>10</sup> Mark C. Taylor, *After God* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 13–14.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 17 (original emphasis).

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 16–23.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 298–312.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 345–347. The material from these pages will be used ubiquitously throughout the rest of this section of the paper.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 345.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 347.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 345.

**A NEW HUMAN BEING: THE RELIGIOUS  
DIMENSIONS OF SECULARISM IN CUBAN  
AND SOVIET MORALITIES**

ROSE T. CARAWAY

### Introduction

I would like to talk with you all today about the notion of hope and its relationship to social change under the context of Cuban and Soviet Marxisms. In particular, I am interested in the fluid boundaries between the “sacred” and the “secular” that we find in Cuban and Soviet moralities, within their Revolutionary calls for the development of a “New Man” (Cuba) and a New Human Being (Soviet Union). Although not without their differences—particularly with respect to their historical trajectories and the relationship between Church and State—Cuba and the former Soviet Union shared an ideological as well as economic relationship.

At an economic level, Cuba imported approximately 85% of its material resources from the Soviet Bloc. It also created a similar Revolutionary economic structure: highly centralized, focused upon the rational control of natural resources in conjunction with industrialization and development, and an explicit focus upon “educating the new socialist citizen.” Cuban and Soviet moralities also shared a common goal: the attempt to transform human nature through the transformation of the larger society. Indeed, I believe this is the crux of the matter that Tillich refers to within *The Socialist Decision* (1932 [1971]), in his analysis of the tensions and conflicts within the socialist vision of human nature. The central problem is the following: “When socialist theory asserts that it is the transformation of the social situation that will transform human beings, it avoids the question of how a transformed social situation is possible without the transformation of human beings” (74). This is precisely where boundaries are blurred between the explicitly religious and the “secular.” When we speak of the transformation of human nature, we are engaging in a discussion of

<sup>18</sup> Compare Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 1:237; and Taylor, *After God*, 346.

<sup>19</sup> Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 1:252.

<sup>20</sup> Taylor, *After God*, 320 & 343.

<sup>21</sup> Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, 1:251.

prophetic expectation (Tillich), of a hope in a radically different reality beyond the present.

### When Is socialism Religious?

It is important in a discussion of Cuban and Soviet socialisms that we examine Tillich’s analysis of religious socialism. He points out that, “socialism is religious if religion means living out the roots of human being” (79). But this concept of religion, he argues, is different from the concept of religion assumed within certain socialist programs that have tended to conceptualize religion as a private affair. This may have been the case in Germany with the Erfurt Program; however, it might not be universal. It is interesting to note Fidel Castro’s discussions with the Liberation Theologian Frei Betto:

I’m rather well versed in Christian principles and in Christ’s teachings. I believe that Christ was a great revolutionary. That’s what I believe. His entire doctrine was devoted to the humble, the poor; His doctrine was devoted to fighting against abuse, injustice and the degradation of human beings. I’d say there’s a lot in common between the spirit and essence of His teachings and socialism (Castro and Betto 1987: 35).

I would argue that Fidel Castro is not critiquing more immanent and prophetic definitions of religion; what he is critiquing are more transcendent views of religiosity that have been used to defend or uphold unequal distributions of power. More prophetic and immanent versions of Christianity (such as liberation theologies) do resonate with socialist calls for a “new human being” within society. It is a decidedly immanent—and not transcendent—hope for the creation of a new human being that permeates both Cuban and Soviet moralities. My qualitative research in Cuba indicates that the Revolutionary hope within Cuban socialism ran squarely up against the problem that Tillich discusses: “Socialism does not believe that this [new] social order is already present as an invisible working harmony...[it] must direct its faith toward a future that stands in complete contradiction to the present” (69).

If the post-Soviet experience has been anything, it has been a lesson in contradictions: the continuing discourse (at least in the Cuban case) of a fully realized socialism “at some point in the future” alongside an increasingly globalized market economy and a shrinking state sector. I refer to this as the “crisis of Cuban utopias,” which has manifested itself in—among other ways—profound confusion with the Cuban populace: “who are we, and where are we going?” When the Soviet Union began to undergo *perestroika* (reconstruction) and *glasnost* (opening) in the late 1980s, those under Soviet socialism at the grassroots and everyday level asked themselves similar questions. They were suddenly forced to contemplate the end of the previous socialist system—a complex ideological and economic system that sought to transform not only the economic means of production, but also the nature of human beings themselves.

### A New Human Being

In Cuban and Soviet moralities, the “New Man” or “New Human Being” should work not for the pursuit of individual material wealth, but for the benefit of the larger society as a whole. Marx, of course, distinguished between different types of labor: alienated (capitalist context) and “full,” in the sense of human beings realizing their full and complete potential. Marcuse (1957) interestingly contends that Soviet work morale collapsed this distinction between different types of labor; in practice, this resulted in elevating *any* type of work in which individuals happened to find themselves (or is put in place by authorities) to an ontological status. In the Cuban case, literacy and education were (and are) absolutely integral to the creation of a “New Man.” In Denise Blum’s (2010) words, Cuba has sought to “educate the new socialist citizen.” In 1961 the Cuban state instigated a national literacy campaign that not only sought to achieve nation-wide literacy, but also to instill within the Cuban populace the idea that any and every Cuban could achieve the seemingly impossible (Arnové and Graff 1987:175). Thus, a well-educated and literate populace became an integral part of the Revolutionary process, and this was directly tied to Cuban personal, and collective and national identities. This seems to coincide with Tillich’s analysis of the rationalist interpretation of human nature, and how this relates to human consciousness: “The human consciousness itself, as the central authority, creates the world that it knows

and rules. This cannot be done immediately or at one stroke. It occurs only through a gradual process...” Tillich rightly notes that education plays a crucial role in this process; however, the modern, progressive view of education contains within itself a belief in an “invisibly working harmony,” that “substance can be apprehended through form, through pure reason” (73).

### The Crisis of Utopias and Hope

In Cuba, the idea that human beings could achieve the “seemingly impossible” was severely challenged after the fall of the Soviet Bloc. Unlike the former Soviet Union that underwent a profound period of *perestroika* (reconstruction) and *glasnost* (opening) in the late 1980s, Cuba’s restructuring of its economy has resulted in a *doble moral*: a dual economy and a double-consciousness. In an effort to prevent complete economic collapse after Cuba lost the 85% of its imports from the Soviet Union, the Cuban government announced in September 1990 the inevitability of a “Special Period in a Time of Peace”—the need for certain austerity and rationing measures. Cuban society, in other words, was called upon to sacrifice even more than usual in order to keep socialism intact. Alongside these calls for austerity and sacrifice, the Cuban economy began opening itself up to foreign direct investment and international tourism. Flashy billboards and “dollar stores” catering to foreign tourists were right alongside signs that continued to proclaim Revolutionary slogans such as “Vamos Bien” (We’re doing OK!)

At the grassroots level, the ramifications of the Special Period were devastating and confusing; Cuban sociologists, in remarking on the period, argue that it amounted to more than simply a drop in G.D.P; it marked the very subjectivity of the Cuban populace. How did it do this? Distinctions between socialist moralities of human transformation and the buying and selling of labor and commodities collapsed. On the one hand, Cuban Revolutionary discourse had emphasized the need to create a “New Man” who would work for moral rather than material incentives. The Special Period crisis led to cracks within the larger socialist morality precisely because there were competing messages regarding the nature of what Cuban society, and human nature, should be.

This is what I refer to when I say that Cuba underwent a “crisis of utopias.” I believe that Darren Webb was correct in his work on *Marx, Marxism,*

and *Utopia*, when he noted that Marx had rather harsh critiques of utopianism, and that we should be wary of labeling Marx himself as utopian. Indeed, one would be hard-pressed to find any systematic or completely full account of communism, and in particular the “higher stages” of communism; it is the human subject that Marx is particularly concerned with. However, I would also agree with Tillich’s key assertion that “Marxism, in spite of its hostility to utopianism, has never been able to defend itself against the suspicion that it has a hidden faith in utopia. The prophetic expectation of the end is consistent: it looks forward to a miracle of nature that transforms human nature as well as nonhuman nature, and thus it creates the presuppositions for a reign of righteousness” (73). Cuban and Soviet moralities both contained a key element: faith in human progress, in the ability of human beings to realize their full potential mainly through an inherent love of work. The fall of the Soviet Bloc and its economic aftermath posed serious challenges and limits to this morality. Cuba witnessed an increase in prostitution, alcohol and drug abuse, apathy and disillusionment, and unfortunately even suicide. These issues ran squarely up against the ideal of Cubans being able to work actively within human history—not

for the sake of material gain, but for the larger welfare of society. Interestingly, it was precisely during this time that Cubans made what I would call a “transition” from “no religion” to religion: they became disillusioned with the Revolutionary hope, but embraced a new kind of explicitly religious hope.

### References

- Arnove, R. F. and Harvey J. Graff. 1987. *National Literacy Campaigns: Historical and Comparative Perspective*. New York: Plenum Press.
- Betto, F. and Fidel Castro. 1987. *Fidel and Religion: Castro talks on Revolution and Religion with Frei Betto*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Blum, D. 2011. *Cuban Youth and Revolutionary Values: Educating the New Socialist Citizen*. Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Marcuse, H. 1958. *Soviet Marxism: A Critical Analysis*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Tillich, P. 1971. *The Socialist Decision* (New York: Harper and Row).
- Webb, D. 2000. *Marx, Marxism, and Utopia*. Aldershot, Hants, England; Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate.

## *The Officers of the North American Paul Tillich Society*

### **President**

Courtney Wilder, Midland University

### **President Elect**

Echol Nix, Furman University

### **Vice President**

Duane Olsen, McKendree University

### **Secretary Treasurer**

Frederick J. Parrella, Santa Clara University

### **Past President**

Russell Re Manning, University of Cambridge

### **Board of Directors**

#### **Term Expiring 2012**

Robison James, University of Richmond

Matthew Tennant, Oxford University  
Gregory Walter, St. Olaf College

#### **Term Expiring 2013**

Nathaniel Holmes, Florida Memorial University  
Bryan Wagoner, Harvard University  
Wesley Wildman, Boston University

#### **Term Expiring 2014**

Marc Dumas, Université de Sherbrooke  
Janet Giddings, Santa Clara University and San  
Jose State University  
Marcia MacLennan, Kansas Wesleyan  
University

**PLEASE REMEMBER TO PAY  
YOUR DUES FOR THE YEAR  
2012 IF YOU HAVE NOT  
ALREADY DONE SO.  
THANK YOU.**

