



BULLETIN

The North American Paul Tillich Society

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THE 2014 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NAPTS IN SAN DIEGO

A Reminder: The annual meeting of the North American Paul Tillich Society (NAPTS) will take place all day Friday, 21 November, and Saturday morning, 22 November, 2014. The banquet will be held on Friday evening. As always, the meeting takes place in connection with the Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR) in San Diego, California, 22-25 November 2014. In addition to the annual meeting and banquet of the NAPTS, there will be sessions of the AAR Group, “Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion and Culture.” Our President Elect, Dr. Charles Fox, is the Program Chair of the annual meeting this year. Anyone wishing to contact Dr. Fox about the Society’s program may do so at:

Dr. Charles Fox

chaswfox@hotmail.com

The AAR Tillich Group’s co-chairs are:
—Dr. Sharon Peebles Burch—Interfaith Counseling Center—spburch@att.net
—Prof. Stephen G. Ray, Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary—stephen.ray@garrett.edu.

The following information is from the AAR website:

Annual Meetings Program Book Is Online

Online Program Book can be found on the AAR website at http://papers.aarweb.org/program_book
Check out the *Online Annual Meetings Program Book*. The 2014 AAR Annual Meeting is packed with excellent programming. See a session you just can’t miss? There is still time to register and register for the Annual Meeting in San Diego, held this year

from November 22-25.

The *Program Book*, featuring the complete program listing and room locations, will be mailed to all Annual Meetings registrants in late September. The *Online Program Book* is now available. You must be registered for the Annual Meetings by **September 18** to receive the print version of the *Program Book*. If you register after 9/18, you may pick up a print version at the meeting.

**THE ANNUAL MEETING IN SAN DIEGO:
THE NAPTS PROGRAM**

P21-102

Friday - 9:00 AM-11:30 AM

Omni-Gaslamp 5

North American Paul Tillich Society

THEME: TILlich AND CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH INTERESTS

This session of the Paul Tillich Society explores the relation of Tillich's thought to the contemporary research interests of Tillich scholars.

Bryan Wagoner, Davis and Elkins College
Presiding

Duane Olson, McKendree College
Tillich and John Muir's Wilderness Mysticism

Rachel Sophia Baard, Villanova University
Tillich's Method of Correlation: Its Continuing Relevance

Russell Re Manning, University of Aberdeen
Tillich, Sex, and Ambiguity: Reflections on MacKinnon's Reflections on Tillich

Recommended Reading:

Donald MacKinnon, "Tillich, Frege, Kittel: Some Reflections on a Dark Theme (1975)," in *Explorations in Theology*, vol. V (London: SCM Press, 1979), 129-137.

Rachel Sophia Baard, "Tillich and Feminism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, edited by Russell Re Manning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 273-287.

Echol Nix, Furman University
Tillich's Idea of the Kingdom of God with Reference to the Church as Spiritual Community

Recommended Reading:

Review the relevant sections of Vol. III of the *Systematic Theology*.

P21-210

Friday - 1:00 PM-3:30 PM

Omni-Gaslamp 5

North American Paul Tillich Society

THEME: TILlich'S SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY FIFTY YEARS LATER

This session of the Paul Tillich Society will explore the method and structure of Tillich's Systematic Theology fifty years after its completion.

Echol Nix, Furman University
Presiding

Rob James, University of Richmond, Emeritus
How Tillich's Theological Method of the 1920's Clarifies What He is Doing in the ST

Recommended Reading:

- (a) Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, I, 66-68, the last five paragraphs of the Introduction (i.e., sec. 13 thereof, "The Theological System."), with attention to the deceptively brief footnote on page 66.
- (b) Tillich, *The System of the Sciences*, trans. Paul Wiebe, pages 149-54. [translation of *Das System der Wissenschaften* (1922), as in GW I, 222-26.]
- (c) Tillich, *The Philosophy of Religion*, trans. J. L. Adams and C. Fox, 30-37. [translation of *Religionsphilosophie* (1925), as in GW I, 299-303.]
- (d) Visionary Science: A Translation of Tillich's "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture [1919, 1922]" with an Introductory Essay by Victor Nuovo, page 21. [For the German, cf. MW/HW, II, 71-72, paragraphs 4-6 of that work.]

Durwood Foster, Pacific School of Religion, Emeritus
Tillich's Unsteady Affair with the Notion of Being-Itself

Recommended Reading:

"Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," reprinted in *Theology of Culture*, and the various sections of ST I where references are made to the idea of "being-itself."

Peter Slater, Trinity College, University of Toronto
Tillich on the Ambiguity of Religion, Spiritual Presence, and the Fragmented Realism of the Kingdom of God in History

Recommended Reading:

Systematic Theology Vol. III, 128-137, re sacramental encounters; pp. 264-282, re theonomy and humanism; pp. 329-333, re bearers of history; and pp. 381-385, re the Kingdom and Nirvana.

Marc Dumas, University of Sherbrooke

The Problem of Existence: The Structure of Alienation and Overcoming it through Jesus as the Christ

Recommended Reading:

Three brief sections of ST II: in the Introduction, part B.3, pages 13-16; in the section on "Existence and the Quest for the Christ," part D, pages 59-78; in the section on "The Reality of the Christ," the last part, entitled "The New Being as the Christ as the Power of Salvation," pages 165-180.

P21-315

Friday - 4:00 PM-6:30 PM

Omni-Gaslamp 5

North American Paul Tillich Society & Reinhold Niebuhr Society

THEME: A REVIEW OF *POLITICS AND FAITH: NIEBUHR AND TILlich AT UNION SEMINARY IN NEW YORK* BY RONALD STONE

This session will review the recent volume by long-time Tillich Society member, Ron Stone, dedicated to the interactive relation of Paul Tillich and Reinhold Niebuhr during their time together at Union Theological Seminary.

Duane Olson, McKendree College

Presiding

Panel of Reviewers:

Kevin Carnahan, Central Methodist University, and
President of the Niebuhr Society

Robin Lovin, Center of Theological Inquiry,
Princeton

Jonathan Rothchild, Loyola Marymount University

Marion Pauck, co-author of *Paul Tillich: His Life and Thought*

Ron Stone, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

Emeritus

Responding

Recommended Reading:

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

P22-107

Saturday - 9:00 AM-11:30 AM

Hilton Bayfront-Sapphire H

North American Paul Tillich Society

THEME: THE PHILOSOPHICAL ROOTS OF TILlich'S THOUGHT

This session on The Philosophical Roots of Tillich's Thought explores the impact on Tillich of both the German Classical philosophical tradition in the early 19th century, and the work of Heidegger down to 1930.

Christian Danz, University of Vienna

Autonomy and Freedom: Tillich's Reception of the Thought of Fichte

Recommended Reading:

Danz's contribution to Russell Re Manning, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*

Marc Boss, Institute protestant de théologie,
Montpelier and Paris

The Religion of Kant Reinvented by Fichte, Schelling, and Tillich

Recommended Reading:

Brandon Love, "Tillich on Eros and Logos and the Beauty of Kant," *Bulletin of the North American Paul Tillich Society*, vol. 38, no. 4 (Fall 2012) 10-14; recommended by Marc Boss who does agree with the author

Marc Boss, "Paul Tillich and the Twentieth Century Fichte Renaissance: Neo-Idealistic Features in his Early Accounts of Freedom and Existence," in the *Bulletin of the North American Paul Tillich Society*, vol. 36, no. 3 (Summer, 2010).

**THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE NAPTS
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
AND
THE BUSINESS MEETING**

- The Board of Directors, in recent years, has met in one of the restaurants of the convention hotels in order to reduce the exorbitant breakfast bill when the Board meets in a formal meeting room. This system has worked out very well, and the location of the board meeting on Saturday morning at 7:00 AM will be announced at the sessions on Friday and at the banquet on Friday night.
- The business meeting this year presents a more complex problem. Because of a misunderstanding in the reservations process, no room was reserved for the business meeting. The President Elect and the Secretary-Treasurer are hopeful that the room used for the Saturday morning session will be available afterward. If not, we will look for any available room. The officers apologize for any inconvenience.

**THE ANNUAL MEETING IN SAN DIEGO—THE
AAR GROUP PROGRAM
TILlich: ISSUES IN THEOLOGY, RELIGION
AND CULTURE**

A22-340

**Saturday - 4:00 PM-6:30 PM
Convention Center-30C**

THEME: EXPLORATIONS OF CONTEXTUAL
THEOLOGY

Sharon Peebles Burch, Interfaith Counseling Center,
San Anselmo, CA
Presiding

In 1951, the year that Volume 1 of Paul Tillich's *Systematic Theology* was published, his "method of correlation", that is, the idea that all theology reflected the social, cultural, economic and ethical matrix in which the theologian, church leader, and/or preacher participated, was accepted as a valid theoretical statement. Over the past 60 years, the theory he outlined has become embodied in what is known as "contextual theology," that is, theology that is specifically aware that it reflects the cultural, social, ethical, and economic reality of the existential situation of particular groups. How is Tillich's insight endorsed, changed, complemented, and/or rendered

inaccurate by these theologies? In this series of papers, Tillich's insight is assessed by how it is reflected in contemporary work.

Victor Ezigbo, Bethel University

Paul Tillich, Method of Correlation, and Contextual Theology: Construing "Human Context" as an Indispensable Source of Theology

In his discussion on the "method of correlation," Paul Tillich aimed to facilitate a dialogical discussion between theology and human existential situation. As such, Tillich is hailed by many as the forerunner of "contextual theology." I will show that while the Tillichian method of correlation may have nudged some theologians towards the path of contextual theologizing, it lacked the flexibility to constellate two essential constants required for constructing contextual theologies. The first constant is the use of the human context as an *indispensable source* and not merely the recipient of theology. In contextual theology, the human context informs and conditions the content of theology. The second constant is the necessity for a theological mindset that allows theology to engage in a dialogic discussion with other disciplines with the purpose of learning from their interpretations of human situations and not merely to exchange ideas.

Stephen Butler Murray, Ecumenical Theological Seminary

Alienation, Liberation, Survival: Paul Tillich's Theological Anthropology as Source for Black and Womanist Theologies

It is remarkable that so many black and womanist theologians find Tillich to be a valuable, reliable source for their constructive theology. On the surface, Tillich would seem to represent the masculine, white, socially and economically privileged, European-oriented theologian whose very contextuality would normally lend an aura of suspicion to those regarding Tillich from a liberationist perspective. Rather than regarding Tillich with the sort of skepticism that often is accorded to Barth, Bultmann, and their ilk, black and womanist theologians often embrace Tillich's theology as not only amicable, but relevant to their own theological ruminations. This paper seeks to explore how black and womanist theologians appreciate Tillich's work because of the circumstances and choices of his life, whereby he had a personal understanding of alienation and exile,

a comprehension that translated into his theological discernment of the human situation as defined by struggle within alienation from self, God, and world.

Jamall Calloway, Union Theological Seminary
The Ontological Fire of Tillich and Baldwin

Paul Tillich and James Baldwin can be read as two thinkers interested in the same conversations on ethics and culture. Tillich, unfortunately, has been thrown into the dustbin of history too soon for our own good. His theo-ethical insight and method of correlation is needed in our current conversations concerning justice, ethics and imagination. Meanwhile, writer James Baldwin has recently re-emerged as a central figure in black theology's discourse concerning race, spirituality, sexuality and nationhood. Like Tillich, Baldwin's theo-ethical voice is also needed in our current conversations on race and culture in America. Using the method of correlation can explain the overlapping of these two unlikely thinkers. It will help illustrate how their theo-ethical thoughts can be useful to help concretize Tillich and display the theological undergirding Baldwin.

Bryan Wagoner, Davis and Elkins College
Theonomy and Religious Socialism

Although Tillich critiques the instrumental rationality characteristic of modernity, he asserts that reason and critique can – and indeed must – be grounded in a metaphysical or religious presupposition; his ideal is 'theonomous' reason. Theonomy is not simply the acceptance of a divine law; it rather reunites reason with its ultimate ground. Tillich advocates theonomy in the guise of religious socialism as a means of advancing the critique of bureaucratic reification of human subjects and the corresponding demand for social justice. Theonomy uniquely animates religious socialism, which appears to be a newly viable option for progressive believers in the 21st century.

Business Meeting (immediately following):

Sharon Peebles Burch, Interfaith Counseling Center,
San Anselmo, CA
Presiding

A23-140
Sunday - 9:00 AM-11:30 AM

Convention Center-29A

THEME: A CONTRIBUTION TO POLITICAL AND CULTURAL THEOLOGY? PAUL TILlich'S METHOD OF CORRELATION

Frederick J. Parrella, Santa Clara University
Presiding

Paul Tillich's involvement in the political and cultural milieu of his time is well documented, and its influence on his scholarly work was extensive. His "method of correlation," described in the first volume of his *Systematic Theology*, published in 1951, helps explain why prejudice and injustice, often so implicit to the existential situation that they go unnoticed, are unwittingly perpetuated by theologians and others. The papers in this session describe how Tillich's perspective helped the presenters identify, assess, and address specific imbalances.

Marijn de Jong, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Ulrich Schmiedel, University of Oxford
Compromised Correlations: Experience and the Concept of Correlation Today

Paul Tillich's method of correlation has come under pressure. David Tracy summarizes the critiques, stating that Tillich's "correlation" is not correlational enough. It juxtaposes the sources of theology like key and keyhole.

In response to the critiques, we focus on Tillich's concept of experience. Whereas Tillich seeks to safeguard the transcendent from the immanent by reducing faith to a formal as opposed to a material concept, we advocate a hermeneutical concept of experience that allows for a relationship between the transcendent and the immanent. For how is correlation possible if the transcendent is beyond the immanent?

We argue that the encounter between the transcendent and the immanent "compromises" the content of both sources of theology. Hence, what theology can correlate are the ambiguous accounts of the compromised relationship between the transcendent and the immanent. Hence, we advocate a revised method of correlation that remains relevant for theology today.

Daniel Miller, Landmark College
Democracy and Deicide: Paul Tillich's Principle of Correlation as a Resource for Political Theology

The modern democratic structuring of the social poses significant challenges for political theology, owing to the fact that democracy can be understood as the final culmination of a process of secularization or social deicide. One response to the theological challenges posed by democracy is straightforward rejection. This is reflected in Graham Ward's rejection of democracy and his elaboration of an explicitly theocratic alternative. Such a response, however, represents a problematic and counterproductive rejection of contemporary culture as such. As an alternative, this paper argues that Paul Tillich's concept of correlation provides a valuable resource for developing an alternative political theology. On the political-theological model proposed, modern democracy represents the implicit cultural question to which theology must respond. A democratic structuring of the social calls for a theological reassessment of the notion of sovereignty as such. The paper concludes by outlining a model of sovereignty understood in terms of contingent incarnation.

Eric Weed, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary

The Demonic of Christianity: Tillich's Concept of the Demonic and the Deconstruction of Religious Racism

In this paper I seek to recapture the theological connection between the early Tillich and contemporary elements in the field of theology. I will do this by applying Tillich's method of correlation and his concept of the demonic to white supremacy in the U.S. I will commence this paper with a brief discussion of Tillich's method of correlation and how he understands the demonic, particularly in his early works. I will then proceed to show how Tillich practically used both concepts in his wartime radio assessments critiquing the Nazi regime. In the final section I will shift to how the method of correlation and the demonic are relevant to theology and society in the contemporary U.S. context, specifically in the analysis of and deconstruction of white supremacist Christianity.

Christophe D. Ringer, Christian Brothers University
Paul Tillich, Charles Long, and the Religious Situation in America

In *The Religious Situation*, Paul Tillich argues that the "spirit of capitalist society" is a religious symbol

representing the ultimate and most fundamental attitude toward the world. The religious and theological relevance of global capitalism is its character as absolutely concrete and universal. It is the structure of social relations that sustain life and the institutions that give it meaning. Tillich claims that our religious situation is discerned through the society in which one lives. This paper theorizes the use of Charles Long to discern the religious situation in America and to attend to the silences of persons on the underside of capitalism. Charles Long's concept the arche or the religious depth of America serves to contextualize Tillich's concept of the religious situation. Together, these thinkers provide important resources for interpreting the religious and theological significance of American political economy.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Weaver, Matthew Lon, ed. *Applied Christian Ethics Foundations, Economic Justice, and Politics*, with an Afterword by Ronald H. Stone. Lanham, MD, Boulder, CO, and New York: Lexington Books, 2014.

The contents include:

- Introduction by Matthew Lon Weaver
- "Social Christianity, Niebuhrian Realism, and the Protestant Mainline" by Gary Dorrien
- "Paul Tillich and the Frankfurt School" by Guyton B. Hammond
- "Toward a Constructive 'Religious Realism': Robert Bellah and Reinhold Niebuhr" by Harlan Stelmach
- "Drones and Christian Morality" by Ronald H. Stone
- "Paul Tillich and the Lingering Possibility of Prophetic Activity" by Randall K. Bush
- "Recent Books about Reinhold Niebuhr and Reflections on His Relevance Today" by Charles C. Brown
- "Calvin for Today: Breaking Out of the Iron Cage" by Matthew Lon Weaver
- "The Life and Practice of an Ethicist" by Ronald H. Stone
- "Cowboys, Indians, and Ethicists: A Conversation Stimulated by Robert Warrior" by Carol S. Robb
- "Justice, Power, and International Organizations" by Randall W. Stone
- "Redeeming Democracy: The Continuing Paradox of African American Faith-Based Politics" by Samuel K. Roberts

- “The Church Reformed and Always Resisting: Ronald H. Stone and Presbyterian Social Witness” by Christian T. Losso
And other fine essays.

PAUL TILlich LECTURE

30 APRIL 2014

HARVARD MEMORIAL CHURCH

“TILlich, BONHOEFFER, AND THE FUTURE OF JESUS CHRIST”

JAMES CARROLL, AUTHOR AND
COLUMNIST, *THE BOSTON GLOBE*

Auschwitz and Hiroshima changed everything. Adolf Hitler ordered theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, imprisoned in Auschwitz, to be hanged a few weeks before the end of WWII. Bonhoeffer had been part of the Nazi underground resistance. He had opposed the Nazi's materialism and anti-Jewish racism because they undermined the Christian principles that had been the foundation of Western civilization. He coined the term “religionless Christianity” in response to the established church's support of the Nazis.

Paul Tillich, 20 years Bonhoeffer's senior, was the first non-Jew whom Hitler fired by dismissing him from his position as head of the philosophy department at the University of Frankfurt. Tillich's *Christian Socialist Party* had opposed the Nazis. He then taught at Union Theological Seminary in New York City and later became a University Professor at Harvard, where he became internationally known.

For Tillich, God was not an invincible tyrant who controlled everything and everybody, turning humans into objects. Nietzsche in 1883 had declared that this kind of God is dead. (Richard Dawkins in describing God as a control-freak in his *God Delusion* (2006) had apparently not read Nietzsche). Tillich believed God was the ground of all being, the “God above the God of Theism.” Our finite minds cannot comprehend the infinite mind of God. That is

why we need Jesus, the Son of God, who was fully human and divine.

In Carroll's book, *Christ Actually: The Son of God for the Secular Age* (to be published in November 2014), Jesus' divinity as Son of God made him unique in human history. Jesus exemplified the divine potential within each of us, and this makes us different from other creatures. Jesus' resurrection overcame death, from which the Roman Empire derived its power. “Death is swallowed up in victory” (I Cor 15:54). For Tillich, “Love is stronger than death. It creates something new out of the destruction.”

For Tillich, the Divine reality could only be expressed through symbols. However, Carroll said the symbols are not fixed. Matter used to be thought of as unchangeable, but Einstein's $E = mc^2$ showed us that matter, m , can be transformed into energy, E , and vice versa. This is how nuclear bombs get their power. Science regards matter as composed of atoms, which are mostly empty space. Their tiny nuclei are surrounded by clouds of electrons that have particle as well as wave properties. Clouds used to be a symbol of heaven. Our ability to store computer information in “the cloud,” that is everywhere and nowhere, shows the reality of the immaterial.

“I am,” said Jesus. “And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven (Mk 14:62).” The first Christians like St. Paul believed in his lifetime that Jesus Christ would return to rule the Kingdom of God on earth. St. Paul was wrong, but the expectation of Christ's return to earth gives life meaning and purpose. For Tillich, the Kingdom of God was the end and goal of history. For Carroll, the restoration of Jesus as the Son of God is needed to transform our “religionless Christianity.” (Recording available:

http://harvardmemorialchurch.org/media/tillich_lecture/04.30.14_tillich-lecture_carroll.mp3)

Paul H. Carr

Santa Clara, CA 95053

REMINDER ON DUES

If you have not paid your 2014 dues, please do so at your earliest convenience. Dues may be sent to:

Professor Frederick J. Parrella
Religious Studies Department
Santa Clara University
500 East El Camino Real

- Regular membership: 50 USD
- Student membership: 20 USD
- Retired members who cannot pay the full amount are welcome to send whatever they can afford.

Thank you!

**NO SHALLOW BEAUTY: A
REINTERPRETATION OF
ANTHROPOCENTRISM IN PAUL TILlich'S
THEOLOGY OF NATURE**

SAMANTHA LYON

“Nearly all the great memories and longings of my life are interwoven with landscapes, soil, weather, the fields of grain and the smell of the potato plant in autumn, the shapes of clouds, and with wind, flowers, and woods” (Tillich 1966, 17-18).

This passage, taken from his autobiographical work *On the Boundary*, gives insight into Paul Tillich's romantic and aesthetic appreciation for the natural world. While much of Tillich's language regarding his relationship with nature is often classified as romantic,ⁱ his comprehension of nature moves beyond its sensory appeal. Michael Drummy, in his book *Being and Earth*, poetically articulates Tillich's bond with nature, “For Tillich, the world of nature was, above all, *vital and real*. He discovered in his encounter with the natural world, as he did in the experience of being human, both harmony and terror, both *logos* and abyss, both depth and form, both the divine and the demonic” (Drummy 2000, 61-62). Similar to the way Tillich describes the polar character of the structure of being, he acknowledges the depths of being in both human and non-human realities. In light of his opinion on technology, his theology on the multidimensional unity of life, and his perspective on the relationship between humanity and nature with regards to salvation, the claims of classical anthropocentrism leveraged against Tillich do not hold. Instead, Tillich's theology of nature falls into the category of enlightened anthropocentrism, asserting a passionate regard and valuation of the natural world.

Sparked by Lynn White Jr.'s essay, “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis,” in 1974, Christian theology was awakened to its imbedded anthropocentrism in its relationship to the non-human world. White implicated Christianity based on two premises: the biblical assertion of humans' dominion over nature and Christian theology's distinction between humans and other animals based on the presence of a “soul” (White 1967). White's critique is aimed at an extreme form of anthropocentrism that takes the non-human world into account solely for utilitarian purposes (what I will refer to as classical anthropocentrism). Since

White's accusations, Christian ecological theology has taken up the task to discover moments in Christian theological history that refute White's assertions. And in the same breath, it has attempted to create and highlight theologies that include the earth in a more egalitarian framework.

Much of the current field of ecological theology has been shaped by these arguments and continues to hold that in order to solve the ecological crisis anthropocentrism must be eradicated. Prominent theologians, such as Rosemary Radford Ruether in ecofeminist thought and John Cobb in process theology, contend that anthropocentrism is at the heart of the ecological crisis and abundant in traditional Christian theology to this day.

Based on the premises initially laid out by White, Paul Tillich's theology of natureⁱⁱ has been deemed as anthropocentric.ⁱⁱⁱ An example of this analysis comes from Drummy's book, where in his section of critique and evaluation, Drummy apologetically points out that Tillich never managed to break free “from his deliberate emphasis on things human” (Drummy 2000, 117). He goes on to say that the inherent anthropocentrism should not be the final criteria upon which Tillich's theology of nature is judged, but should be overlooked in order to appreciate the depths of Tillich's sacramental theology toward nature (*Ibid.*). While ecotheologians have been accurate in their diagnosis of society, the labeling of Tillich as a full-fledged, classical anthropocentrist does justice neither to his theology nor to its capability to speak to individuals and communities about the ecological crisis.

While the demise of this extreme human-centeredness is crucial for the current and future state of the world, a more nuanced understanding of anthropocentrism could be a potentially positive step for the ecological crisis. I suggest that Tillich falls under the category of enlightened anthropocentrism (Krebs 1999, 137) and his theology as such could serve as a pragmatic move towards a solution for the ecological crisis where egalitarian ecocentrism has fallen short.

The term “enlightened anthropocentrism” comes from Angelika Krebs's *Ethics of Nature: A Map*. Krebs identifies two substantially opposed movements within ecological theology: anthropocentrism (instrumental value for nature) and physiocentrism (absolute value for nature) (*Ibid.*). Between these two extremes in the spectrum of ecological ethics lies enlightened anthropocentrism, which Krebs

states “does not reduce nature to an instrument for human pleasures but accords nature various kinds of eudaemonic intrinsic value: aesthetic intrinsic value, *Heimat* value, sacredness” (*Ibid.*). For the purposes of Tillich’s theology of nature, Krebs’s connection to sacredness serves the connection well. Tillich does not ascribe to blatant anthropocentrism as the utilitarian use of nature, but understands and appreciates the non-human world for its sacramentality.

Before launching into specific details of Tillich’s theology, it is important to note that a theologian during Tillich’s time saying anything of significance on the relationship between humanity and nature was almost unheard of. The need for any ecological awareness was only brewing at the end of Tillich’s career. Thus, for Tillich to have several essays and specific portions of his *Systematic Theology* dealing with the human-nature relationship is quite impressive. Any ecological theology produced today is inevitably framed with the rhetoric of climate change and ecological exploitation. In a sense then, Tillich’s theology of nature may be more “organic” or “pure” because it arose out of sheer reverence for the non-human world, as opposed to arising out of fear of the ecological crisis. His moment in history allowed for him to write without the frame of impending doom.

“Separated from the soil by a machine”: Technology^{iv}

While much of Tillich’s theology contains reverence for the natural world, three facets of Tillich’s theology, in particular, point toward a more inclusive understanding of nature than he is often credited. The first of these facets comes from Tillich’s theology of culture, specifically in the form of his opinion on technology. Tillich takes a staunch stand against the post-Kantian Protestant theology that offered nature up to the natural sciences and technology. This is manifest in his critique of Ritschlian, Calvinist, and Puritan theologies, which Tillich claimed were allies in viewing nature as “something to be controlled morally and technically” (Lai 1999, 236). Tillich understood technology as a source of estrangement both in interpersonal relationships and in humanity’s relationship with nature. He writes in his sermon, “Nature, Also, Mourns for a Lost Good,”

This technical civilization, the pride of mankind, has brought about a tremendous devastation of original nature, of the land, of animals, of

plants. It has kept genuine nature in small reservations and has occupied everything for domination and ruthless exploitation. And worse: many of us have lost the ability to live with nature. We fill it with the noise of empty talk, instead of listening to its many voices, and, through them, to the voiceless music of the universe. Separated from the soil by a machine, we speed through nature, catching glimpses of it, but never comprehending its greatness or feeling its power (Tillich 1955, 79).

Tillich explicitly defends the integrity of nature against manipulation by technology for human purposes. While he does not reject technology entirely, as technology is a product of human achievement, he questions how that technology should be used (Lai 1999, 236).

Admittedly, Tillich understood humanity to be the “[beings] in whom all levels of being are united and approachable” (Tillich 1951, 168). Tillich’s reverence for the human species is revealed in his epitomizing description of their capabilities. However, Tillich invested humanity with a great sense of responsibility, which emerges in this critique of the use of technology. Such advances should not be used to exploit but to protect and save (Tillich 1963b, 55). Tillich implicates humanity in extending its power and capabilities too far when he cites a quote from Schelling,

For in nature too the deepest ground is melancholy. Nature, also, mourns for a lost good. Can we still understand the meaning of such half-poetic, half-philosophic words? Or have we too much secluded ourselves in human superiority, in intellectual arrogance, in a domineering attitude toward nature? We have become incapable of perceiving the harmonious sounds of nature. Have we also become insensitive to the tragic sounds? (Tillich 1955, 82).

While humanity may occupy a specific place in the natural order of the world, as we will see more clearly in the next section, this does not grant license to act without conscience. Tillich clearly expected individuals and communities to be mindful of the non-human world and their own place and relationship to it.

“Genesis of stars and rocks”: The Multidimensionality of Life^v

In the beginning of his third volume of the *Systematic Theology*, Tillich addresses the metaphor of

“levels” claiming that the “hierarchy” constructed within our typical description of nature does not account for the potentiality expressed in all of the world. He states,

The ontological concept of life underlies the *universal* concept used by the ‘philosophers of life.’ If the actualization of the potential is a structural condition of all beings, and if this actualization is called ‘life,’ then the universal concept of life is unavoidable. Consequently, the genesis of stars and rocks, their growth as well as their decay, must be called a life process. (Tillich 1963a, 12)

It is this point that launches Tillich into a discussion on the use of dimensions to describe the different forms of life within reality. In using the metaphor of dimensions, the realms are able to interact with, and have an impact on, one another unlike the more separated and delineated “levels.”

He distinguishes these realms as inorganic, organic, and spirit. The inorganic dimension of life undergirds all that exists. Tillich explains, “For the inorganic has a preferred position among the dimensions in so far as it is the first condition for the actualization of every dimension” (Tillich 1963a, 19). The inorganic dimension serves as the basis for the other two dimensions, in that the organic and spirit cannot exist without the presence of the inorganic dimension (*Ibid.*). The organic dimension encompasses the traditionally held understanding of “life,” in both vegetable and animal forms, “characterized by self-related, self-preserving, self-increasing, and self-continuing *Gestalten* (“living wholes”)” (*Ibid.*, 20). The dimension of life as spirit is only present in the human species and “comes to full actualization as the historical dimension” (Drummy 2000, 78). Spirit is not added to the inorganic and organic from an external source, but emerges from within these two dimensions as the “*power* of life” (Tillich 1963a, 21). For Tillich, the dimension of spirit is all encompassing and is fully realized in humanity (*Ibid.*, 25).

Tillich’s distinction of humanity from the realm of the organic points to his anthropocentric tendencies. However, two nuances in his theology move him away from the extreme anthropocentrism initially critiqued by White. The first is his usage of the metaphor of dimensions. Tillich intentionally frames his discussion of nature with the understanding that each dimension of life is interconnected and influenced by the others. He is dedicated to dissolving the hierarchical structures that separate the human and

non-human world intellectually. Secondly, he indirectly acknowledges his own human-centeredness when he asserts,

It is the universal character of actual being which, in the philosophies of life or process, has led to the elevation of the category of becoming to the highest ontological rank. But one cannot deny that the claim of the category of being to this rank is justified because, while becoming includes and overcomes relative non-being, being itself is the negation of absolute non-being; it is the affirmation that there is anything at all... It is questionable, however, whether the words ‘becoming’ and ‘process’ are adequate for a view of the dynamics of life as a whole. They are lacking in a connotation that characterizes all life, and that is the creation of the new. This connotation is strongly present in reverences to the historical dimension, which is actual—even if subdued—in every realm of life, for history is the dimension under which the new is being created. (Tillich 1963a, 25-26)

Tillich recognizes the inadequacy of prior theologies to account for life outside of human existence. This passage is an example of Tillich’s attempt to incorporate the entirety of existence. He further does this in his theology of salvation, which will be attended to next.

“World means nature as well as man”: Salvation^{vi}

However, it is important to understand Tillich’s conception of sacramentality within nature before addressing such claims. He sees the entire natural reality as an opportunity to experience the sacred. H. Paul Santmire states it well, “According to this theology, the presence of the Divine is to be found not only in what traditionally has been called the sacraments but, through the ecstasy of faith, in, with, and under the whole constellation of natural reality” (Santmire 1985, 141).

In order to fully account for the role of nature in salvation, it must be established that nature is also subject to the conditions of existence like humanity. While it is not expressed in the same existentialist terms, the destruction witnessed in nature is a testament to the estrangement that exists in the natural world. The symbol of the “fall,” which serves as a marker for the division between essence and existence, includes nature, resulting in the death and decay exhibited in the natural world. While my own conceptions of ecology make me hesitant about Til-

lich's anthropomorphic descriptions of nature, he sees the seemingly violent patterns of behavior in nature as forms of estrangement from the ground of being.

In his essay "Nature and Sacrament," Tillich describes nature sacramentally as both realistic and historical. He asserts that this is necessary in order to understand nature in light of salvation. First, Tillich introduces a concept he calls "new realism" which unites the medieval and modern ideas of realism. He states, "The power and meaning of nature must be sought within and through its objective physical structures" (Tillich 1948, 101). The power of nature comes from the realm prior to the differentiation of subjectivity and objectivity. This is a difficult concept for humanity to grasp in that the terms used for the structures of power and meaning must be accurately comprehended as such. Humanity must think "nonsubjectively" and "nonobjectively," despite having minds that traditionally function in subjective and objective categories (*Ibid.*, 102).

Secondly, sacraments are historical in that they must be understood in light of the New Being in Jesus as the Christ. In this way, nature participates in historical time, in that there are unrepeatably and irreversible events. It is through these two attributes, realistic and historical, that Tillich asserts that nature holds "transcendent power and meaning" (*Ibid.*).

It is through this sacramental quality that nature is bound up in the history of salvation. It becomes "liberated from its ambiguity...and its demonic quality is conquered in the New Being in Christ" (*Ibid.*, 103). This turn, for Tillich, is often used as a mark of anthropocentrism, in that Tillich binds the salvation of nature with the salvation of humanity. Pan-chui Lai in his article, "Paul Tillich and Ecological Theology," centers Tillich's theology of nature on the participation of nature in the process of the fall and salvation. Because humans have finite freedom, Tillich states that humans are responsible for the transition from essence to existence (Lai, 1999, 238). And because all dimensions of reality are united in humans, nature is bound up in that transition as well. Thus, it follows that because humans are responsible for the state of existence, they are also responsible for the salvation of the whole world.

While this appears as a completely anthropocentric conception of the fate of the world, Tillich is sure to widen the scope. He states, "For there is no salvation of man if there is no salvation of nature, for man is in nature and nature is in man" (Tillich 1955, 84). While the two entities, humanity and na-

ture, are not independent from each other—separating nature from humanity would assert nature's inherent worth beyond its relationship to humanity, a viewpoint often advocated by ecocentric theologians—Tillich's move in linking humanity's fate to the realm of nature is major step away from anthropocentrism. Tillich makes very clear in "Nature, Also, Mourns a Lost Good," "The Bible speaks again and again of the salvation of the *world*, as it speaks of the creation of the *world* and the subjection of the *world* to anti-Divine forces. And *world* means nature as well as man" (Tillich 1955, 77). While Tillich does maintain most of his focus in the second volume his *Systematic Theology* on human estrangement and the doctrine of Christ, he asserts salvation on a cosmic level: "The universe will be reborn into a new eon. The function of the bearer of the New Being is not only to save individuals and to transform man's historical existence but to renew the universe" (Tillich 1957, 95). Tillich goes on to define the renewing of the eon, which brings the holistic view of salvation full circle. "The present eon in its totality, including individuals, society, and nature, is perverted. A new eon, a new state of things in the universe, must be asked for" (Tillich 1957, 111). Humanity and nature are bound together in the salvific narrative within existence. While the theology initially appears as anthropocentric, a closer look reveals that Tillich held a more inclusive perspective in what salvation meant for the entirety of the world.

Hopeful Redefinition: Conclusion

As I consider the long road toward change with regard to the ecological crisis, I am both hopeful and concerned about the state of the world. Throughout my own work I have read beautiful accounts of the ways we ought to live. Lives connected to the earth; paying attention to when the mayflies hatch so as to know where fish will be in the river, building houses from wood we collect ourselves knowing that those old spruce have saplings ready to take their place, the rotation of our garden so that the next year's corn will get the nutrients it needs. And to be honest, if I had the realistic choice and opportunity, I would choose that life. But the reality is, lots of people in this world do not like bugs, don't care to know what a spruce is, and enjoy buying their corn from the corner store. My point is that we do not live in a society that currently allows us to make the best possible ecologically ethical decisions. Maybe that is the

hope for some day in the future, but it is not a reality now.

And this brings me back to Tillich. His theology has broader implications for Christian communities of faith in relationship to ecological theology. As stated previously, his theology of nature provides an appropriate middle ground to account for individuals and communities who cannot or do not want to associate with nature in egalitarian terms. The definition of enlightened anthropocentrism provides a framework and articulation of concern for nature without the daunting requirement of living, physically and emotionally, on par with the non-human world.

Through his discussion of technology, the multidimensionality of life, and theology of salvation, Tillich gives a hopeful perspective in his understanding of nature. As others have shown, Tillich had a deep reverence for nature that permeated his work. However, while the claims of his anthropocentrism have some accuracy, it does not do justice to his theology to cast it aside as potentially not influential to the ecological community. What is most hopeful about Tillich's theology of nature and what warrants giving it attention is his nuanced human-centeredness. Along the lines of Krebs's enlightened anthropocentrism, Tillich presents a theology that accounts for human responsibility while also showing care and concern for the natural world. The interest in nature Tillich expresses in his own life and in his theology moves beyond the bounds of aesthetic appreciation and utilitarian use. He recognizes its inherent value and humanity's dependence on the realms of the inorganic and organic. He solidifies the relationship in his view of salvation through connecting humanity's fate to the state of nature. Tillich understood and revered the relationship of humanity and nature, serving as a prophetic voice for the impending ecological crisis.

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ⁱ See Lai, Pan-chui. 1999. Paul Tillich and Ecological Theology. *The Journal of Religion* 79(2): 236. and Drummy, Michael. 2000. *Being and earth*. New York: University Press of America. 62.

ⁱⁱ Also known as ecological theology.

ⁱⁱⁱ See Lai pp. 247, and Drummy pp. 117.

^{iv} (Tillich 1955, 79)

^v (Tillich 1963a, 12).

^{vi} (Tillich 1955, 77).

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