



# BULLETIN

*The North American Paul Tillich Society*

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If you have presented a paper at the 2016 meeting of the NAPTS or the AAR Tillich Group in San Antonio, Texas, please send the paper to the editor for publication in the Bulletin. Since this is a privately circulated Bulletin, publication elsewhere is permissible.

**THE 2016 ANNUAL MEETING OF THE  
NORTH AMERICAN PAUL TILlich  
SOCIETY AND THE ELECTION OF NEW  
OFFICERS**

The annual meeting of the North American Paul Tillich Society was held in San Antonio, Texas on Friday, November 18, and Saturday, November 19, 2016, in conjunction with the meeting of the American Academy of Religion. The AAR Group, "Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture" also met on Sunday and Monday, November 20 and 21.

The Annual Banquet of the North American Paul Tillich Society was held Friday evening, November 18, 2016 at the The Iron Cactus Mexican Grill and Margarita Bar, Agave Room, 200 River Walk. The Banquet Speaker was Frederick J. Parrella, Professor, Department of Religious Studies, Santa Clara University, and NAPTS's Secretary Treasurer. (The address is printed in this Bulletin.)

New officers were elected to serve the Society for 2017:

**President**

Adam Pryor, Bethany College, Lindsborg,  
Kansas

**President Elect**

Devan Stahl, School of Human Medicine,  
Michigan State University

**Vice President**

Verna Ehret, Mercyhurst University

**Secretary-Treasurer**

Frederick Parrella, Santa Clara University

**Past President/ Chair, Nominating Committee**

Bryan Wagoner, Davis and Elkins College

Three new members of the Board of Directors were also appointed for a three-year term, expiring in 2019:

Ted Farris, New York City

Charles Fox, SUNY Empire State College

Ron Stone, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

The Officers and the Board of the Society extend their most sincere gratitude to Past President Duane Olson, McKendree University, Lebanon, Illinois, for his four years of service as an officer of the Society. The Society also wishes to

thank those members who have served on the Board for a three-year term expiring in 2016:

Tom Bandy, [www.ThrivingChurch.com](http://www.ThrivingChurch.com)

Adam Pryor, Bethany College, Lindsborg,  
Kansas

Devan Stahl, School of Human Medicine,  
Michigan State University

*Congratulations to the new officers!*

**NAPTS CALL FOR PAPERS 2017**

*(Ed. note: This call for papers was sent by email in January)*

Please send abstracts to [stahldev@msu.edu](mailto:stahldev@msu.edu) by April 30, 2017.

**—1. Revolution and Reformation**

2017 marks the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Martin Luther's 95 theses as well as the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. In light of these historic events, we invite papers that assess the future of the Reformation and political revolution drawing upon Tillich's insights and methods.

Possible proposal topics may include, but are not limited to:

The future of the Protestant Reformation  
The future of political theology and revolution  
Reflections on *The Socialist Decision*.

**—2. Aesthetics and Revelation**

As a theologian of culture, Paul Tillich engaged the fine arts and their relationship to religion. According to Tillich, art can itself be religious, or an expression of "ultimate concern." In this session we invite participants to reflect on Tillich's theology of art as well as a papers which engage Tillich's understand of the symbolic and aesthetics. How can the arts, broadly construed, relate to contemporary theology? How can art be understood as revelatory? How might theology productively engage the concept of aesthetics or assess the aesthetical quality of objects?

**—3. The History and Future of NAPTS**

The first formal Tillich Society in America meet at the AAR in 1975. Since then, the Society has sustained several of its original members and gained

many more. As new generations of scholars who did not know Tillich in his lifetime but nonetheless use Tillich in their work emerge, it is time to reflect on the history, legacy, and future of the North American Paul Tillich Society. We invite papers that reflect on the evolution of the North American Paul Tillich Society, including its self-understanding, its most successful and divisive moments, and the wisdom members wish to pass on to future Tillich scholars.

#### —4. Tillich at Harvard

During his time at Harvard, Tillich was considered both one of the world's foremost theologians and a great synthesizer of religious and culture concerns. We invite papers that reflect on the flowering of Tillich's theology of culture that emerged from his time at Harvard, as well as papers that take up themes Tillich was especially concerned with during his time at Harvard, including: science, the arts, and the future of theology.

### **EDUCATION: EAST AND WEST**

#### **THE THIRD ANNUAL BATH SPA UNIVERSITY COLLOQUIUM FOR GLOBAL PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION**

**17- 18 March 2017**

**Bath Spa University, U.K.**

#### *Plenary Speakers include:*

Professor Rein Raud, University of Tallinn, Estonia.

Educational environments are becoming ever-more international with increasing focus on the mobility of people and of ideas. The globalisation of education poses particular challenges and opportunities.

We invite abstract submissions for papers and panels that will examine ideas surrounding education in the context of global philosophy and religion. If philosophy and religion are recognised as global phenomena, how might this impact on understandings of and approaches to education? How do culturally divergent views

of education and its philosophical significance differ?

Typically, the teaching of philosophy has concentrated, narrowly, upon the Western analytic tradition with limited (although increasing) exposure to alternative philosophical traditions. But what follows for the teaching of philosophy if the framework is opened up to a truly global and comparative engagement? Does inter- and trans-tradition learning require a firm foundation in one specific tradition, or can philosophy be taught "globally" from the outset? Further, what is the relevance of research into inter- and trans-disciplinarity for teaching global philosophy? Related questions concern the pressures against the globalisation of the philosophy curriculum and challenges posed by an increasingly mobile student population.

The situation in the study of religions is somewhat different: study of religions has long been a globally-engaged discipline. But what does the internationalization of curricula mean for the frameworks of 'comparative religions', 'world religions', 'new religious movements', and 'alternative religions'? In light of the emergence of the study of non-religion and unbelief, how are the disciplinary boundaries of religious studies retained, if at all?

Equally, we welcome papers that engage with pedagogical models informed by philosophical and religious traditions from both/either Western and non-Western perspectives. We also encourage submissions of an interdisciplinary nature and those that call into question the compartment of their own disciplines.

#### *Possible topics include:*

- Education and Universal Values
- Philosophies of Education
- Theology and Global Philosophy
- Religious/Theological Education in the Modern World
- Education and Environment in Global Context
- Ethics of Transnational Education
- Education and Culture
- Education and the Arts
- Education and Global Citizenship
- World Philosophy and the Contemporary Academy

- Disciplinary boundaries of philosophy, theology and study of religions
- Education and Culture
- Master-student relations in Asian philosophy

In addition, we plan to hold a special session on ‘Theology and Global Philosophy’—see separate Call for Papers.

The deadline for submissions was 20 January 2017, however, early submissions will be viewed favorably and abstracts will be reviewed on a rolling basis. For any questions please contact the Colloquium organizers: Dr. Sarah Flavel [s.flavel@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:s.flavel@bathspa.ac.uk) or Dr. Russell Re Manning [r.remanning@bathspa.ac.uk](mailto:r.remanning@bathspa.ac.uk). Please submit your abstract (500 words max) as an email attachment to either of the above addresses.

### NEW PUBLICATIONS

Paul Tillich. *Christianisme et judaïsme*. Textes traduits par Monique Boulanger, Mireille Hébert, Alain Massini, et André Gounelle. Preface by M<sup>sr</sup> Jean Marc Aveline. Volume XI of *Oeuvres de Paul Tillich*, sous la direction de Marc Boss, Marc Dumas, André Gounelle, and Jean Richard. Paris, Labor et Fides, 2017.

### **PAUL TILlich AND PENTECOSTAL THEOLOGY: SPIRITUAL PRESENCE AND SPIRITUAL POWER**

EDITED BY NIMI WARIBOKO AND AMOS YONG (BLOOMINGTON IN: INDIANA UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2015)

REVIEWED BY THOMAS G. BANDY

The relevance of Tillich’s theology to Pentecostal experience may seem surprising, as the editors of this book acknowledge. After all, Tillich is usually discussed in connection with Catholicism, Protestantism, and world religions. Pentecostalism is usually perceived by insiders and outsiders more as a spiritual enthusiasm than a theological system. In fact, studies like this are very appropriate for our times, and evocative of creative new dialogue. Both institutional academics (e.g. Harvey Cox, Mark Lewis Taylor, John J. Thatamanil, and others) and professional academics like myself (writers, consultants, and many non-profit CEO’s

in social service and holistic health care) have observed and experienced Pentecostalism “coming of age.” It is far more than a spiritual enthusiasm; it is a complex set of Christian movements with depth and significance for theology, politics, and cultural change.

Tillich’s thought was already trending toward pneumatology at the end of his life as seen in the third volume of his *Systematic Theology* where he developed the concepts of “Life and the Spirit”: Spiritual Presence, Theonomy, Religion of the Concrete Spirit, Kairos and ecstatic experience, and the quest for the Realm of God. While at that time, he engaged world religions, today he might well engage the explosion and diversity of spiritualities. He speculated about the end of the Protestant Era, and today Pentecostal movements have surpassed Protestantism and rival Catholicism as global norms for Christianity.

*Paul Tillich and Pentecostal Theology* is a collection of exploratory articles, grouped in a way that not only addresses major themes in Tillich’s third volume of the *Systematic Theology* but also in a way that engages each of the major “streams” of Pentecostalism (Trinitarian, Oneness, and Catch the Fire). A few articles are written in relationship to each other, but most stand alone. Every article is provocative and evocative. However, the summaries of Tillich’s thought in each article are rather redundant, and the range of each article overlaps with others, which makes this collection somewhat difficult to navigate. Pentecostal readers and students new to Tillich should read the responses first, as these provide excellent summaries of Tillich’s understanding of spirit (Mark Lewis Taylor, 213-222) and offer a brief summary that will help readers focus on the most significant arguments in each article (John J. Thatamanil, 228-240).

The introduction by Amos Yong (“Why is the ‘Correlation’ between Paul Tillich and Pentecostal Theology Important, and Who Cares?”), and the first two articles by Veli-Matti Karkkainen and Wolfgang Vondey (“Spiritual Power and Presence” and “Spirit and Nature”) map the different points of contact and potential relevance of Tillich with all three Pentecostal streams, and should be read first along with Andreas Nordlander’s “Pneumatological Participation: Embodiment,

Sacramentality, and the Multidimensional Unity of Life.” These articles provide overall context for two major tensions between Tillich and the Pentecostal movement: Spirit and socio/political contexts and supernaturalism that are key issues for Tillich’s understanding of Spiritual Presence and the Religion of the Concrete Spirit. The external relationships *between* persons or cultures and the *internal* relationships of Spirit in the heart of the individual and the soul of culture are constant themes throughout the book.

The section on “Ontology and Christology” will be of particular interest to Trinitarian Pentecostals and to the broader discussion of Tillich’s reframing of classical Trinitarian theology. These articles include: Rhys Kuzmic (“To the Ground of Being and Beyond”), Steven M. Studebaker (“God as Being and Trinity”), Terry L. Cross (“Tillich’s Picture of Jesus as the Christ”), and the previously mentioned article by Vondey. Their dialogue with Tillich may help to overcome the gap between theory and praxis, theologian and believer, which grows wider every day in the postmodern world and also in the emerging Pentecostal movements.

The most interesting thread of discussion here is the Pentecostal paradox of God as immanent, present, and personal; but also transcendent, external, and supra personal. The authors note that Pentecostals will struggle with Tillich’s understanding of Christ as symbol that contrasts with their experiences of intimate spiritual presence. Professor Taylor sharpens the point, observing that for Tillich “*unambiguous* experience—say, when you have that deep fusion of essential personhood amid rightly related individualization and participation—can only happen ‘fragmentally’” (218).

As Studebaker says, “...for Pentecostals accustomed to warm experiences of the Holy Spirit and personal relationship with Jesus Christ, Tillich’s description of God is not particularly fetching” (58). Kuzmic suggests an ontological language that is transpersonal, and combines the Biblical understandings of spirit as indwelling *pneuma* and impersonal or ambiguous *ruach* (52-53). Cross interprets Tillich’s “symbol” as a kind of “expressionist portrait” that captures the soul of the sub-

ject, but also engages the personality of the artist.

Their discussion of the polarities of “power” and “meaning” as Tillich’s basic ontological elements may be too limited by the sole focus on volume three of the Systematic Theology. Tillich uses the term “import” alongside “form” and “meaning” in his earlier works. James Luther Adams identifies the transforming power of import as a “form-creating” and “form-bursting” power. In the context of art itself (e.g. portraiture), import “pulsates in and through and beyond the forms that reveal it, expressing the ecstasy of freedom through the creating of something new.”<sup>1</sup> The certainty of a “personal faith”, for Tillich, is always ambiguous. Although Spirit demands the fulfillment of meaning, it always transcends any concrete expression and ultimately negates it.<sup>2</sup>

Vondey clearly defines the challenge of unresolved dualism of spirit and nature in the Pentecostal movement that makes, as Professor Thattamanil says, “a supernaturalist picture of the spirit’s intrusion into nature all but inevitable” (231). There is a difference between “Spirit” and “spirits” (230), which means that Tillich’s ontology may be more relevant to Trinitarian Pentecostals than Oneness Pentecostals.

The articles on “Participation, Symbol, and Sacramentality” are of particular interest to Oneness Pentecostals and to the broader discussion of Tillich’s understanding of symbol and Spiritual Presence. These include: Frank D. Macchia (“Spiritual Presence”), Andreas Nordlander (“Pneumatological Participation”), and Lisa P. Stephenson (“Tillich’s Sacramental Theology in a New Key: A Feminist Pentecostal Proposal”). These analyses could help Oneness Pentecostals create a theological framework of self-understanding and a bridge to dialogue with other Christian traditions.

The common thread in this section is the intersection of the finite and infinite, or simply the impact of the divine on human consciousness and community. The authors are right to perceive “symbol” as more than representation, but as a kind of “portal” through which the divine reaches down and the human reaches up, and touch fingertips in a mystical bond that has ecstatic out-

comes. As Macchia says, “doctrinal symbols must be discussed only in the light of the actual participation of faith in the ultimate reality to which symbols point” (84).

Macchia ties the concept of participation to a more mystical sense of atonement, in which Christ participates in human estrangement and humans participate in the New Being. Ecstasy involves the healing of life, rather than the abandonment of creation. Stephenson sees Tillich’s concept of symbols as a means to sacramentalize life and nudge Pentecostal experience from individual ecstasy to community as the embodiment of the New Being. Nordlander suggests that Tillich can help Pentecostals embrace a “multidimensional unity of life” that affirms charismatic experiences in the present, creation in all its aspect, and the quest for unambiguous life beyond estrangement in the Kingdom of God.

Yet Professor Taylor observes that Tillich’s notion of the participation of the Spirit in the world is not dramatic, as many Pentecostals assume, but remarkably “prosaic.” He says that Spirit “has a life-like flow, a seeping forth from and amid its preconditions”. He cites the memory of Tillich’s secretary who said Tillich wrote volume 3 of *Systematic Theology* listening to Duke Ellington’s “Mood Indigo.” Tillich discerns spirit within and amid culture, so that theology is always in conversation with culture; while many Pentecostals only discern spirit as an interruption of culture, and are therefore in confrontation with culture. If there is such a thing as “prosaic ecstasy,” Tillich stands for it. This shapes their divergent understanding of Christ in history. Simply stated, Pentecostalism regards Christ as “once and forever,” while Tillich’s theology regards Christ as “forever and once.”

One specific direction for any dialogue about eschatology and the Realm of God is to concentrate on Tillich’s concept of “Religion of the Concrete Spirit.” The section on this concept as well as on interfaith dialogue and social change include these articles: Tony Richie (“What Have Pentecostals to do with ‘The Religion of the Concrete Spirit?’”); Nimi Wariboko (“Political Theology from Tillich to Pentecostalism in Africa”); Pamela Holmes (“Paul Tillich, Pentecostalism, and the

Early Frankfurt School”); and David Bradnick (“The Demonic from the Protestant Era to the Pentecostal Era”). In various ways, these focus on replacing confrontation with conversation and the possibility of peace and reconciliation.

Richie suggests that Tillich’s concept of the Religion of the Concrete provides Pentecostals a way to dialogue with other religions without losing the centrality of Christ. This may or may not encourage cooperative evangelism and discipleship, but it may well help Pentecostals partner with other religions for social and ecological justice.

Wariboko explores an interesting, and decidedly non-Western, connection—or disconnection?—between Tillich’s understanding of love, power, and justice and the influence of Pentecostalism on African politics. He suggests that political power in African contexts is less about competitive human agencies, and more about supernatural or demonic forces using, or acting through, human agencies. That is, conflict is often cast as spiritual warfare and not just human power struggle. Just as the demonic is embodied in human agency, Tillich demonstrates how Spiritual Presence can also be embodied in human agency in order to resist the “Leviathan” of the “neo-liberal” and capitalistic west (Taylor, 209).

Bradnick offers an interesting counterpoint to Wariboko’s article, and, perhaps, more “Tillichian.” He affirms Tillich’s insight that the demonic is revealed whenever anything or anyone claims sacred status and refuses to recognize the Unconditional. Tillich’s contribution to Pentecostal dialogue is to focus on the demonic as systemic evil, which brings Bradnick closer to Tillich’s social critique. The Spirit at work in African cultures, for example, is more generally resisting the demonic neo-liberalism of armed capitalism that dominates the world today (Taylor, 222-223).

The articles on “Kairos, Spiritual Presence, and Eschatology” are of particular interest to “Catch the Fire” Pentecostals (CTF) and to the broader discussion of spirituality, the indwelling spirit, reconciliation amid diversity, and eschatology. These include Peter Althouse (“Eschatology in the Theology of Paul Tillich and the Toronto Blessing”), and perhaps (again) Andreas Nor-

lander (“Pneumatological Participation”).

At the time of the Toronto Blessing (1990’s) and the birth of the CTF movement, I was the national officer for congregational mission and evangelism for the United Church of Canada, headquartered in Toronto. I had numerous media requests to comment on the Toronto Blessing, and my response at that time parallels comments by Althouse on the relevance of Tillich to interpreting the event.

CTF Pentecostals would be particularly interested in Tillich’s understanding of history and the Religion of the Concrete Spirit as it is revealed through internal and external forgiveness and acceptance, and in Tillich’s understanding of theonomy as the power of the spirit to sustain peace and community. Spirit is mediated through, and interpreted by, symbols that are transformed into sacraments, or portals through which God and humans touch.

Althouse suggests that Tillich’s symbols of spiritual presence, Kingdom of God (immanence and expectation) offer a framework to understand CTF. His interpretation of the emerging Pentecostal practice of “soaking prayer” as a means to experience unconditional forgiveness and motivate forgiveness and reconciliation in the world are particularly apt.

The article by Andrea Norlander on “Pneumatological Participation” is also relevant here. The Toronto Blessing correlates well with Tillich’s insight that although we reach for the unambiguous life, we cannot attain by our own power. The finite/infinite intersection of “soaking prayer” is an ecstatic taste of unambiguous life, but the eschatological result is not passive waiting for the Kingdom of God, but active participation in peacemaking and reconciliation.

I hope this book will be the start of a rich dialogue between Tillich and Pentecostals...and perhaps facilitate dialogue among Pentecostal streams. John Thatamanil says it well: “[Tillich] is permitted to be what he truly is: a pneumatological theologian who stands ready to be captured by the Spirit, a theologian of grace, who longs for the Spirit’s gracious coming, a longing that is even recognized as eschatological” (229).

*Thomas G. Bandy* of Toronto, Canada is a consultant, editor, and author of over 30 books related to contemporary spirituality, leadership, and church development and a former President of the North American Paul Tillich Society. He works as a demographic and cultural interpreter and leadership coach to churches and denominations across the spectrum of Protestant (mainstream and evangelical), Catholic, Orthodox, and Pentecostal movements.

### IN THE SHADOW OF PAUL TILlich

FREDERICK J. PARRELLA

The Paul Tillich Banquet Address  
Friday, November 18, 2016  
San Antonio, Texas

I can vividly recall many of the banquet speakers that our society has welcomed through the years. Many of them knew a lot more about Tillich than I did, or at least an area of Tillich with which I was not familiar. Some were deeply moving, some exhilarating, some insightful, and, let’s be honest, a few quite boring. All of them, however, in my own mind, were *eminences grises*. And now here I am: a gray eminence among you myself! It was a great honor to be asked by the Society’s president to speak to the banquet this year, and I thank Bryan very much for this invitation. I rather doubt I will be deeply moving, exhilarating, or insightful, but I promise I will try not to be boring.

Since the banquet address is not another academic paper on Tillich’s thought, I would like to share some personal reminiscences of my own walking in the shadow of Paulus for so many years, hoping that a few of my thoughts may resonate with some of your own memories. We have all shared this path together, even though for most of the time we were not aware of this simple truth.

Let me take you back to my first encounter with Tillich’s thought. As a senior at Fordham College in the Bronx in 1964, I had an unusual theology professor. While he fancied himself a scholar, we learned later that there was a bit of the charlatan in him; he claimed to possess a mail-order doctorate in Thyrology from the Brussels

Thyrological Institute. (High marks to anyone who can define thyrology!) Yet, he knew what books to assign. On his reading list that year was a book called *The Shaking of the Foundations*. Tillich's first volume of sermons, as the other two to follow, shook my own inner foundations to the core, not unlike the major 1989 California earthquake. For Tillich had answered so many questions for me, even those I have not asked or did not know how to ask. As a good little Catholic schoolboy, I was taught by the nuns that God always was and that God always will be. The relationship between time and eternity had confounded me since I was eight or nine. Tillich introduced me to God's time and taught me that I was "living in two orders." And I began to search for the eternal in the passage of my days and in the memory of my days past. I looked for it in music and in conversation; in the face of friends I loved, and in the play between sunlight and shadow as the seasons changed; in the very texture of time that both cloaks and reveals our growing up and growing old. Whenever I reread his sermons, I am always reminded that such a search for transcendence, for the eternal, was life's true meaning. Within this seeking, the joy of love and friendship, the sorrow of loss and unfulfilled days made sense because they were not the final word. Tillich taught me to see that the divine and human belonged together. In his words, "Eternity is not the extinction of time; it is the creative unity of all times and cycles of time, of past and future" (SF, 68). And throughout, his warning also remained with me: "... one could never grasp the eternal, but one could be grasped by it" (SF, 27). When it came time for my dissertation, I knew I wanted to do it on Tillich, and my first topic was his concept of the fall. I had written a seminar paper on Teilhard de Chardin's understanding of original sin, wading through many typed single-spaced pages on "La Chute." My mentor, Ewert Cousins, eventually steered me towards Tillich's ecclesiology since that was my main area in graduate school. My defense took place just a few months after Hannah Tillich's *From Time to Time* was published. My five examiners were far more interested in Tillich's personal life than his ecclesiology!

In what time we have this evening, I would

like to share three areas where Tillich has touched me very deeply. In a doctoral seminar in 1966, Tom Driver, that wonderful teacher and Tillich scholar (and our banquet speaker in 1995) unlocked the scope and the depths of the *Systematic Theology* and Tillich's other important works. While my paper on the Christological definition of Chalcedon was undoubtedly very Catholic and conservative, the seminar introduced me to Christology in an entirely new light. Tom's final comment is still with me 50 years later: "While I don't agree with you, you understand Tillich." Thanks, Tom! Tillich taught me that the divine and the human were much closer together than I had ever imagined and that, as he says, "What we are essentially has appeared in existence, thereby overcoming existence and creating the New Reality, which is not merely *something* new within existence, but the New overcoming existence as a whole." The New Being united both the Christological and the soteriological and it rescued us from the Chalcedonian quagmire of natures and persons. I realized for the first time that Jesus was the Son of God not because something was added to his humanity, but rather because of the unique type of human person that he was.

The second area was Tillich's treatment of symbols and myths, religion and science, faith and reason, all summarized so well in *Dynamics of Faith*. I could see how the Catholic tradition, especially since the Council of Trent, had reduced the meaning of faith to an intellectual belief system. So many Catholics in the 1960s abandoned the church for this very reason. Tillich offers a refreshing alternative: faith, like love, must come from the center of the self and not be reduced to the rational, the emotional, or the volitional. As Dermot Lane explains it, while faith cannot exist without beliefs, faith can never be reduced to beliefs; put differently, ultimate concern must be expressed in symbols and myths, which can never become absolute in themselves but remain relative to the history and culture in which they emerge. Idolatry is the scourge of every living religion; those who cannot break myths, that is, relativize the mythic/symbolic expression, are always attracted to its siren song. Likewise, when myths are not broken intelligently, many reject the entire



system of myths altogether. These people reject the myths of transcendence and, in Philip Rieff's terms, fall into a more insidious myth of the "self-improved" or the therapeutic culture. Here, subjectivism triumphs over genuine subjectivity, with the objective order often reduced to a smorgasbord of individual choice. Persons cannot live without myths, and when traditional communal myths are rejected, the burden placed on individuals to make their own individual myths of meaning is exhausting and depressing. I see this very clearly in the late millennial students that I teach.

The final area in Tillich's thought that helped change my life is his treatment of the Protestant principle and Catholic substance. While growing up in the 1940s and 1950s in New York City, I was certainly not aware of the heteronomous structure of the Catholic Church. So many Catholics of my generation were naïve in many ways. We were the first in our family to seek a college degree, the first to ask real questions of church leaders. In 1952, when my mother took me to a service in the local Episcopalian church because our neighbor was a member, she felt compelled to confess it to her parish priest. He balled her out and said she was putting my soul in jeopardy! If this weren't so funny, it would be sad. We have come a long way since those pre-Vatican II days. In many ways, the Second Vatican Council taught us that there can be no Catholic substance without the Protestant principle; otherwise one is rooted in only idolatry and not the authentic Catholic tradition. Likewise, the Protestant principle cannot exist in a vacuum; while it remains the guardian at the door to the infinite, grace must be present in a gestalt, in finite forms and limited, earthbound expressions. If Catholicism has rediscovered the necessity of protest and self-criticism within itself, so Protestantism likewise looks for sacramental presence in its self-expression. This principle expresses one side of the divine-human relationship, as Catholic substance does the other. Tillich taught me to be both Catholic and Protestant at the same time—something I would never tell that old German monsignor in my days as an altar boy before Vatican II! Put differently, Tillich saved my faith because he allowed me to expand

it and let it grow within me, as I attempted to grow within it. He also was an important in teaching me how to do critical theology, including being critical of his own thought in many places. From his Lutheran perspective, he made the Catholic substance visible to me in a different light, a place where it could exercise a peculiar fascination once again. Tillich helped me see, as he says, "what was once the life substance and inheritance of all of us..." This Lutheran theologian succeeded in freeing me *for* an authentic Catholicism and *from* all of the shackles of the Roman Church's legalisms.

What can one say about the future of Tillich scholarship? A young and unimpressed student of mine recently told me that I was assigning a book of Tillich's that had been published 60 or 70 years ago, and that it must be long out of date. I reminded her that we were still reading Plato and Aristotle, and listening to Bach and Mozart, but I fear she would find these extraordinary minds and outstanding artists likewise passé. Of course, creative thinkers in every field rise and fall in popularity in the decades and centuries after they have lived. Who would have imagined the rediscovery of Meister Eckhart and Hildegard of Bingen century ago? Great thinkers and artists, it seems to me, provide so much more than just an objective body of creative work; they offer us a lens, a way of seeing through their thought to discover that what is endlessly old can again become endlessly new; they bring us to the brink of the eternal both within ourselves and within our world. If Paulus were with us tonight, I am sure he would be delighted that the age of the three officers of the Society devoted to his thought are several generations earlier than your banquet speaker. This alone is a sign of hope.

In conclusion, I would like to say a few words about all of the Tillichs beyond Paulus himself. For I have not just walked in the shadow of Tillich himself but also of his family. I just missed meeting Paulus, though I could not imagine being closer to the man than studying with Tom Driver when he was a young professor at Union and I a naïve graduate student. In 1985, I had the pleasure of spending half a day with Hannah Tillich at their home in Southampton, Long Island. At

noon, Hannah insisted that we have a drink together, just like she and Paulus did at noon and at 5 PM. I recall her graciousness and her kindness in speaking with me; she deeply regretted writing her two books in the 1970s, and said that she wanted to spend her remaining days helping young scholars understanding her husband's thought. Later, I met Mutie Tillich Farris at a dinner at Ray Bulman's house. For almost 20 years, Mutie and I would have lunch together when I was back in New York. Our favorite place was Scott's on Broadway in 105<sup>th</sup> St. At the Berlin meeting last year, I got to know Ted Farris and enjoyed conversing with him during our days together at that splendid anniversary conference. Jerry Shapiro, a professor of counseling psychology at Santa Clara, had a class following mine and one day he saw that I had written Tillich's name on the board. He had worked with René Tillich in Honolulu for many years, and it was after this small sharing of the name "Tillich" in chalk that Jerry and I became close friends. I lecture in his class on *The Courage to Be* and he speaks to my class on the psychology of marriage.

As we bring another NAPTS banquet to a close, let me say that I hope there are a number of young Tillich scholars here with us who, decades from now, will be *eminentes grises* themselves and be invited speakers at this same banquet. I rejoice in this possibility, and I know that Paulus, who is now growing ever more deeply into the heart of being-itself, would be very happy too.

Thank you very much and good evening to you all.

**APPRECIATING THE FRICTION OF  
TILlich's NORMS**

A. DURWOOD FOSTER

Throughout his theologizing, Tillich affirmed four salient norms (or criteria): two from the side of the "question" and two from the "answer." The former are "what concerns us unconditionally" (*was uns unbedingt angeht*) and "that which determines our being or not-being." [Fn. 1. ST, I, B. 4 explicates these.] The answer-side norms are God's unconditionality and the biblical

witness to Jesus as the Christ. There is resonance and overlap between the four norms but also disparity our esteemed mentor never resolved. Their relation and conflict pose intriguing puzzles in seeking to unify Tillich, though the matter seems under-noticed in commentary on his thought. I cannot—nor indeed would—undo the disparity. In fact, I am finding it a spur in my own congealing "wider ecumenism." But I do wish to point it up as an engrossing factor in our ongoing waltz with Paulus's mind and heart. This note does so very briefly, hoping for feedback and to follow with a more adequate assessment.

Many with interest in Tillich as philosophic and culture theologian seem unmindful of his emphatic commitment to Christ, while those who wrestle with it tend to be New Testament scholars for whom metaphysical issues are remote. Needless to say, the great Christian systematians have coupled ontology and Christology—Origen, Augustine, Thomas, Schleiermacher, for starters, even Barth dialectically—and none more insistently than Paulus, whose outsize gift was compellingly to convey—philosophically, scientifically, aesthetically, economical—the meaning of the "eternal" message for modern un- and over-belief. So masterfully was this done one might wish to leave it there—did not our maestro himself bemoan unfinished business in what became his Chicago swan song? Or we might revisit the *Systematic Theology's* end, which calls for, as still outstanding, a distinctly theocentric (rather than anthropo-or-cosmocentric) vision. It would thus be flatly un-Tillichian to think here of culmination. The heights Paulus scaled themselves expose how parochial world theology still largely is, half a century after his scintillating surge. Even so, his insatiable restlessness with normativity fuels hope our namesake will increasingly stoke up inter-religions embrace and critical interseeding...

The pith of the disparity between Tillich's God-norm and Christ-norm jarringly confronts us in the first's lack of a personal "God-the-Father" whereas such a figure, as in the Lord's Prayer, is axial for the biblical Christ. Remember, even if one thought (absurdly) the "real historical Jesus" did not pray to a personal God, it is the biblically pictured Jesus that counts for Paulus. In this

move, derived from Martin Kähler, creative Christian thinking over recent decades has mostly followed suit.

Though Jesus' Father-God bond is almost blatant in the NT, Tillich to my knowledge does not even mention the disparity in question. Of course, that disparity was always implicitly relevant to whether he *überhaupt* does justice to the "personal God," which *was* a bruited issue for such stalwart Tillichians as Rob James and Jean Richard. It seems odd really that Paulus's fealty to the biblical Christ was not more forcefully cited against his "ground of being" rendering of the Almighty. Partly the reason must be Tillich's sensitivity for special audiences. I recall how he told us at Union *The Courage to Be* (1952)—with its abandonment of anything like the biblical God—was meant not for us but for Yale's unbelieving philosophers! But there is surely a further factor in Paulus's disregard of (his alleged norm!) Christ's construal of God, viz., his self-avowed "schizophrenia" [Cf. Grace Calí, *Paul Tillich First Hand: A Memoir of the Harvard Years*.] Paulus's was not a clinical schizophrenia with *zero* awareness of itself, yet he would often project varying mindsets that sparked disputes with and about him. He would thus externalize, freshen, and re-digest his own grappling with sticky issues—and obviously had fun doing so.

The normativity of Jesus the Christ, as Tillich most pointedly cogitates and applies it, appears in ST II's 83 pages on "The Reality of the Christ." Be it noted such personal use of the norm is for every theologian distinct from positing the norm as such. It is one thing to espouse the biblical norm in principle and something further to apply one's grasp of it in constructive work. The first credentials one as proposing to do Christian theology while the latter controls the specificity of whatever one does—which may subtly or crassly divagate from one's formal intention. Tillich expressly met against obstinate challenges both the formal and actual stipulation for doing Christian theology. My present contention, however, is that he never resolved, in fact never acknowledged, the quite glaring disagreement between his own God-concept and that of the biblical Christ. Paulus did graphically employ Christ's normativity (a)

in delineating ideal humanhood, and (b) exemplifying agape love, but he otherwise avoided its use in conceiving the being of God [Fn 3. In saying this I must gainsay the assertion in the last paragraph of ST I—which I construe as a generalized blurb not making any precise sense.] In fact, the personal Father-God to whom the biblical Christ patently prays is typically the model for the all-too-personal (as he saw it) deity Tillich would now and again chide Union Theological Seminary colleagues and students for clinging to.

What I have come to appreciate is that most versions of Christianity and other religions do indeed harbor a conflict of norms that is precisely what propels a "wider ecumenism" of outreaching relationships and inward transformability. This is the case in the standard eleven older religions (Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism, Hinduism, Sikhism, Taoism, Confucianism, Jainism, Shinto and Zoroastrianism) and younger ones such as the Baha'i group. The so-called "new religious movements" invite assessing in this respect as well. It takes time for fissions to fester, but the mono-normative tendency (as we might call it) seems recessively intrinsic to religion along with the poli-normative.

Ecumenism in religion must thus expect to go on contending with fundamentalism "till the cows come home," with some gain hopefully as well as pain emerging from the struggle.

Inter-religiously, until almost the end of his life, Paulus dialogued face-to-face—that is to say *really*—only with Martin Buber. Besides a longed-for time in India death cut short the new dialogic plunge of the 1963 Japan trip, though that venture and intensified wrestling with his Jewish antipodal partner provide rich ore for further smelting. There seems presently a relative inactivity of inter-religious encounter, with Rev. Moon's heavy handed clamoring (the ICUS events) having abated and venerable figures like Masao Abe and Huston Smith leaving the scene. But Islam and Buddhism have swept to the fore with scanty in-depth interrogation, and one hopes earnestly for increasing Tillichian interception and digestion of what they brandish. These next years might then behold a dramatic theological breakthrough, surprising Paulus himself and winning his smile.

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**TILlich AND HEIDEGGER ON THE ACTUALITY OF GOD**

RYAN COYNE

In the May 1946 edition of the *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, Paul Tillich published an essay entitled “The Two Types of the Philosophy of Religion.” Subsequently included in his book, *The Theology of Culture*, the essay argues that the history of reflection on the divine-human relationship can be resolved into two trends. The first is the cosmological way of approaching God, in which the individual meets God as a stranger. Its basic presupposition is that the divine and the human are essentially disconnected. The second is the ontological way of approaching God, in which the individual is essentially linked with, albeit temporarily estranged from, the divine. Its basic presupposition is that one discovers God in discovering oneself. Tillich associates the first approach with Aquinas and the second with Augustine. Arguing that Aquinas severed the link between faith and knowledge, he counsels a critical reinterpretation of Augustine. Such a reinterpretation, Tillich wagers, could “do for our time what it did in the past, both for religion and culture: to overcome as far as it is possible by mere thought the fateful gap between religion and culture, thus reconciling concerns which are not strange to each, but have been estranged from each other.”<sup>3</sup>

Tillich has in mind here a very specific Augustine. It is the Augustine for whom the turn inward is simultaneously a turn upward toward transcendence; it is also the Augustine for whom truth is presupposed in any philosophical or theological argument—the same Augustine, in other words, that Catholic theologian Erich Przywara portrayed as the master of the *analogia entis*.<sup>4</sup> For Tillich, this Augustine invented the ontological approach. He was the first to argue convincingly that divinity and Being coincide in the nature of truth; he was the first to establish that the functions of the soul cannot be separated from their

relations with the true and the good; he thus made it possible to think God as the power of Being. This Augustine plays a crucial role in relation to Tillich’s forbears. According to the “Two Types” essay, he is the founder of a tradition that embraces German Idealism. By lauding Augustine Tillich advocated returning to the religious *source* of German Idealism. In 1946, as Tillich surveyed the ruins of European culture, this recuperative move was undoubtedly fraught for him.

Years later he explained the intellectual circumstances in which he labored after having left Germany behind: “Neither my friends nor I myself,” he wrote, “dared for a long time to point to what was great in the Germany of our past. If Hitler is the outcome of what we believed to be the true philosophy and the only theology, both must be false. With this rather desperate conclusion, we left Germany. Our eyes were opened, but they still were dull, unable to see reality.”<sup>5</sup> In this situation, espousing a critical Augustinianism allowed Tillich to avoid mentioning German Idealism and simultaneously to reassert its greatness. In the “Two Types” essay, he argues for example that philosophy of religion after Kant can and should be measured against the benchmark of Augustinian psychology, in which Tillich located the two basic principles of his theology. The first principle is truth is presupposed in every argument, or as Tillich puts it, *God is the presupposition of the God question*. The second principle is that God can never be reached as an object, but only as the basis of a question. Augustine is thus the spokesperson for the ultimate evidence of God as the *primum* of subject and object. As such, Augustine puts a check on the excesses of post-Kantian thought. Whereas Descartes’s concept of rationality canceled the mystical element of Augustine’s idea of ultimate evidence, Tillich reasoned, its post-Kantian reclamation went too far in recovering this element by attempting to derive “the whole of contingent contents”<sup>6</sup> from the unconditioned Absolute, which explains why it has been discredited in Protestant and Catholic circles alike. Augustinianism overcomes the gap between religion and culture by demonstrating the specific sense in which awareness of the unconditional is itself the unconditional element in finite intellec-

tion.

Tillich's critical reinterpretation of Augustine as the religious source of German Idealism is remarkable for a number of reasons. Without a doubt, it set the stage for his subsequent elaboration of ultimate concern and God as the power of being in the *Systematic Theology*. And though it was profoundly shaped by his estrangement from European culture, it invites comparison with similar endeavors carried out by his German and French counterparts (including, most obviously, Jaspers, Jonas, Arendt, Przywara, Gilson, and de Lubac, among others). But what I find intriguing about Tillich's return to Augustine is that it displays certain non-obvious resonances with the rather submerged and confusing role that Augustine played for the German philosopher Martin Heidegger. In brief, for both thinkers the return to Augustine was expressly designed to disengage the ontology of the subject from the reality of objects. What results in both thinkers, however, is what I judge to be a certain flat-footedness, willful or not, concerning *the actuality of God*.

The term *actuality* has a rather precise connotation in this context. It corresponds, of course, to the German *Wirklichkeit* in relation to, but also in contrast with, *Realität* or reality. Ever since Kant dismantled the version of the ontological proof that derives the existence of God as the realest entity from the definition of God as *primum esse*, the distinction between the actual and the real has been a contested issue. In his earliest writings, Heidegger drew the contrast in the starkest possible terms. He argues that the actuality of the self has nothing to do with the reality of object. The object is real in the sense that it is present-at-hand. But human existence or *Dasein* has its own way of being. It is never simply there as something real or as object, but rather it has its own way of being: "The self," Heidegger writes in 1920, "in the actual enactment of life experience, the self in the experiencing of itself is *primal actuality* (*Ur-wirklichkeit*)."<sup>7</sup> Tillich too distinguishes between reality and actuality, though not exactly in the manner of Heidegger.

Let us recall that in the *Systematic Theology* Tillich subordinates the question of actuality to that

of reality. Volume I, Part 1, Section II of the treatise is entitled "The Reality of Revelation," whereas, one of its subsection is entitled "Actual Revelation." Likewise, Volume 1 Part 2 section II is entitled "The Reality of God," and its major subsection is entitled "The Actuality of God." In both cases, the question of actuality follows up the inquiry into meaning—the meaning of revelation on the one hand, and the meaning of God on the other hand. The sequence tells us how to parse reality and actuality. In the former case, the meaning of revelation covers all possible and actual revelations without developing the basic criteria of what Christianity considers to be revelation. In addressing actual revelation, Tillich limits himself the historical reality of one revelation as the basic criterion for revelation as such. Reality for him thus includes everything that belongs to the concept of an entity regardless of how it is positioned vis-à-vis history. Actuality refers to what is actual in the common sense of actualization, namely, what is *really* the case.

If this arrangement seems to conflate actuality and reality, Tillich is a bit more cautious when discussing the actuality of God. The section entitled *The Reality of God* begins by stipulating that God is not a being: "'God' is the answer to the question implied in man's finitude; he is the name for that which concerns man ultimately. This does not mean that first there is a being called God and then the demand that man should be ultimately concerned about him. It means that whatever concerns a man ultimately becomes a god for him."<sup>8</sup> This particular way of stipulating that God is not a being does not make abundantly clear what Tillich maintains elsewhere, namely, that theism does not consist in affirming the existence of God as a being. In fact, the atheist says in his or her heart that God exists. For Tillich, God does not exist in the sense that that God as the power of Being is nothing concretely real or actual to be met with in our experience.

The break between actuality and reality arrives quickly but subtly in the first paragraph on the Reality of God, where Tillich adapts the Augustinian distinction between discrete goods the highest good in explicating the concept of ultimate concern. Like Heidegger Tillich argues that

concern relates primarily to entities. "The more concrete a thing is, the more the possible concern about it."<sup>9</sup> And yet the paradox of ultimate concern is that while embracing the whole realm of finite concerns it leaves behind "the concreteness of a being-to-being relationship."<sup>10</sup> Tillich expresses this as follows: "The conflict between the concreteness and the ultimacy of the religious concern is *actual* wherever God is experienced and this experienced is expressed, from the most primitive prayer to the most elaborate theological system."<sup>11</sup> What does the word *actual* mean here? Tillich does not explain it, though it is clear that the conflict to which he refers is a conflict for us. That is to say, from our perspective ultimacy negates concreteness. Tillich calls this conflict between ultimacy and concreteness "the basic problem of every doctrine of God."<sup>12</sup> The problem is unavoidable in part because we cannot specify the actuality of God beyond registering the coincidence of concreteness and its privation in the experience of ultimacy. For this reason actuality is a real problem for Tillich. Does ever solve it?

The section entitled the actuality of God is almost singularly devoted to the argument that God is not a being but Being-itself. Beyond this, Tillich does not address the problem of actuality in this section. He insists, first, that the difference between Being and beings is reducible to the division between *primum esse* and the *ens in quantum ens*, implying that the actuality of God is strictly interchangeable with ultimate reality; and second, that God as a living God must be understood as actualization, not simply as pure actuality. In making this latter distinction, Tillich is content to rely upon the Aristotelian notion of the *entelecheia*.

If we understand pure actuality and sheer immobility, then God as the power of Being is something other than pure act. And yet, the power of Being defines life only to the extent that term actualization is used symbolically, borrowing from the categories of finitude. The result is that, having disqualified God from the concreteness of the being-to-being relationship, Tillich portrays divine actuality as the referent of ultimate evidence without specifying exactly what he means by actuality. But is this a problem? To know *that* God is actual without knowing *what* God is as ac-

tual—is not this simply a way of expressing divine incomprehensibility? For Tillich this is indeed the case. It is one of the many signs that he stays rather close in the *Systematic Theology* to what he calls the mystical side of Augustinianism, as exemplified by Eckhart's unity of indistinction. The problem, however, is that divine actuality designates the point of indistinction, and idea of ultimate evidence refers primarily to this point. It is thus imperative for Tillich to work out the actuality of God, especially as it stands in contrast with the "being-ness" of beings. And yet, Tillich never advances beyond formulating divine actuality as the coincidence of concreteness and its negation.

In this regard, his experience strangely mirrors that of Heidegger. By disengaging the primal actuality of the self from the reality of objects present-at-hand, Heidegger accomplished two things. First, he was able to show that modern philosophy had failed to describe primal actuality on its own terms. Second, he attempted to make up for this failure by delineating its categories. From 1920 on Heidegger's way of approaching the difference between Being and beings relied upon the preparatory analysis of existence as primal actuality. We know now that Augustine heavily influenced this analysis in its earliest versions, those formulated in 1921 and 1922. Heidegger's brief turn to Augustine was motivated by the sense that modern philosophy lacked a proper terminology for the Being of selfhood or what he called facticity. One can show that many of the terms Heidegger uses to describe the factual character of existence are etymologically linked to his reading of Augustine's *Confessions*. In *Being and Time*, however, these terms are de-theologized, and reintegrated into an expressly non-theological mode of attesting to human existence.

The result is that for Heidegger the difference between selfhood as primal actuality and the actuality of God is not a live question. And yet, it is no accident that Heidegger constantly revisits this difference, as if he can never fully shake free of it. In his early reading of Augustine's *Confessions*, Heidegger, like Tillich, stays close to the tradition of mystical Augustinianism. Though he never mentions the unity of indistinction, he remains completely focused, in his own way, on the Au-

gustinian notion of God as *vita vitarum, vita animae mea*, the life of life, the life of my soul. In effect, he argued that the search for God is destined to fail so long as Augustine presupposes that God is a being or something real. The search succeeds only to the degree that Augustine grows increasingly troubled by his inability to find God, to the point where his life becomes nothing other than this being troubled.

On this reading, the actuality of God is not at all distinct from that of life. As *vita vitarum*, God is the invisible center of life enacted as trouble, or what Heidegger calls *care*. It is thus no wonder that Heidegger could not shake free of the actuality of God. His definition of existence as care is rooted in it. But in refusing to pursue this question, Heidegger nevertheless sketches the actuality of God in manner that resonates with the conflict between ultimacy and concreteness in Tillich's theology.

Not long after *Being and Time* Heidegger began searching for a way to interrogate Being directly, without relying upon the preparatory analysis of *Dasein*. In the context of his so-called "Turn," Heidegger no longer refers to selfhood, *Dasein*, or facticity as *primal actuality*. Instead, he criticizes scientific technology for interpreting Being as will, and metaphysics for reducing the meaning of actuality to pure objectivity. The technological manipulation of beings, he writes, "is the concealed basic trait of the *actuality* of everything now actual."<sup>13</sup> Though science at present determines what is actual, it fails to register the essence of Being itself (*Wesung des Seyns*). In the mid-1930s Heidegger began referring to the essence of Being as the *highest actuality*.<sup>14</sup> Thus, in its later works Being itself replaces selfhood as primal actuality. In what sense does this bear upon the so-called actuality of God? In Heidegger's first speaking engagement after World War II, in 1949, he suggests in passing that if we were to think God as the *most extant being*, then we would be forced to think God as self-dissembling with respect to Being itself as the highest actuality.<sup>15</sup> To put it in simpler terms, he argues that in order to think God we must think the actuality of God, and yet this actuality of God would have to be irreducible to objectivity, to reality, to existence, and to every other way of

being a being. Crucially it would also be irreducible to Being itself as the highest actuality. For this reason the question of God would be implicated in, but not fully reducible to, ontology. When it comes to the question of God we would be faced with a species of actuality that is comprehensible only in terms of privation; in short, we would know *that* God is actual, but we would not know *what* God is *as actual*. For Heidegger the name 'God' would designate the conflict between the purely extant and Being itself. It would, in short, designate the coincidence of concreteness and its negation.

From this perspective, Heidegger and Tillich strangely enough agree about the actuality of God. They both argue that this actuality designates the paradoxical limit of the concrete, the point at which it disappears. In drawing this connection, I am suggesting that it is in part a function of the rather similar ways in which they utilize Augustine as a source. The repercussions of this may be developed in a number of directions. I want to suggest two possible implications—one philosophical, the other theological.

First, the philosophical implication: I argued above that in 1949 Heidegger accommodates the thought of God as the most extant being. It would be easy to show that this accommodation is relatively unexceptional in his corpus. The later Heidegger's three most famous statements on the break between ontology and theology—namely, that a Christian philosophy is a square circle; that faith has no place in thinking; and that theology needs no thought of Being—all of these statements potentially mask the real dilemma caused by the extantness of God. This dilemma can be stated quite plainly: the later Heidegger presupposes that being itself as the highest actuality embraces all forms of extantness. And yet the thought of God as the most extant being, however, makes him less sure about this presupposition, and thus about the prospect of disentangling Being itself from the truth of beings. The philosophical implication is not that one ought to pursue the question of God beyond the limits of Heideggerian ontology. It is rather that one cannot understand how the concept of actuality functions in Heideggerian and post-Heideggerian

thought without scrutinizing the ways in which this concept is continuously mapped onto the divine.

The theological implication is perhaps more intriguing. Even if Tillich and Heidegger seem to agree, strangely, about the actuality of God, they part ways in how they deal with it. In the *Systematic Theology* Tillich mounts a defense of the *analogia entis* putting himself at a distance from dialectical theology and from Heidegger alike. Tillich argues that we can express the actuality of God symbolically by borrowing from the categories of finitude. Only the statement that God is Being-itself is used non-symbolically. Heidegger rejects the analogy of Being, arguing that it forestalls inquiry into the ontological difference. Regardless of how Heidegger pursues this inquiry, we can isolate his suggestion that God must be thought as the most extant being, but simultaneously as a being that is self-dissimulating with respect to Being itself. In numerous contexts, Heidegger discusses revelation in terms that approximate those adopted by crisis theology, arguing that the criterion of theological discourse is not available as such outside the stance of faith. But this changes nothing about the directive to think God at the limits of ontology as the most extant being.

If one took up the directive within the framework offered by Tillich, one could use it to further explore the basic problem of every doctrine of God—the conflict, that is, between ultimacy and concreteness. In short, the theological implication of this analysis is that the Tillichian analogy of Being can be further developed by distinguishing rigorously between conflict as an inner tension in human experience and conflict as an inner tension in the idea of God.

The two tensions are linked by virtue of the

### TILlich AND HEIDEGGER ON NON-BEING

RYAN COYNE

The subtopic of Tillich's later ontological investigations that I want to discuss here bears directly upon the question of Being and God. In the first volume of his *Systematic Theology*, Paul Tillich argues that nonbeing, determined dialectically,

fact that they mirror each other. But without showing how the former tension is grounded in the latter, Tillich leaves himself open to criticism coming from three sides: from the Catholic side in which the analogy of Being was more fully developed by Tillich's contemporaries; from the philosophical side, which prioritizes the ontological difference; and from side of dialectical theology, which admits, in a limited fashion, only the *analogia fidei* and never the *analogia entis*. And yet, the option Tillich spelled out for liberal theology remains a live one, provided that we follow his lead in identifying conflict, not crisis, as key to understanding human finitude.

<sup>1</sup> James Luther Adams, *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science and Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, Publ. Schocken Books), 131, 196.

<sup>2</sup> See Tillich, "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion", *What is Religion* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 144

<sup>3</sup> Paul Tillich, *The Theology of Culture*, edited by Robert C. Kimball (Oxford UK: Oxford University Press, 1959), 29.

<sup>4</sup> Erich Przywara, *Analogia Entis: Metaphysics- Original Structure and Universal Rhythm*, translated by John R. Betz and David Bentley Hart (Eerdmans, 2014).

<sup>5</sup> *Theology and Culture*, 164.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>7</sup> GA 59.173 [132].

<sup>8</sup> ST I.211.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> GA 65.58.

<sup>14</sup> GA 65.244.

<sup>15</sup> GA79.55.

signifies a threat to human existence. This threat, often figured experientially in terms of the abyss, shocks us into asking the question, *What is being itself?* Tillich maps the difference between philosophy and theology in terms of how these discourses respond to this question. For this reason the uniqueness of theology for Tillich is rooted in its particular way of confronting nonbeing. This explains why it is hardly novel to focus on nonbe-



ing while reflecting on the sources of Tillich's ontology. Writing in 1978, Adrian Thatcher opened his book *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* by suggesting that his examination of Tillich's sources, even then, had arrived "late in the day and at the end of a field"<sup>1</sup> of research. What more can we add, today—thirty five years after Thatcher's book, and fifty years after Volume 1 of the *Systematic Theology*—about the sources of Tillich's ontology, or more specifically, about the sources of his concept of nonbeing?

In a small portion of the *Systematic Theology*, Tillich tests his concept of nonbeing against the philosophy of Martin Heidegger, setting the stage for his subsequent efforts to interpret time and eternity in terms of ultimate concern. I argue that by studying the complex ways in which Tillich draws from and repudiates Heidegger, we can explain why he never fully disentangles the threat of nonbeing from the unconditional nature of ultimate concern.

The formula guiding Tillich's discussion of nonbeing in volume one of the *Systematic Theology* appears in the opening paragraph of the section entitled, Being and the Question of God: "The ontological question is: What is being itself? What is that which is not a special being or a group of beings, not something concrete or something abstract, but rather something which is always thought implicitly and sometimes explicitly, if something is said to be?"<sup>2</sup> Philosophy is ontology to the extent that it asks *this* question of Being. But Tillich refuses to equate ontology with metaphysics, arguing that all uses of the term are precarious. In the same breath, however, he then extends this term to the experience that first gives rise to the question of Being: "The ontological question, the question of Being itself, arises in something like *metaphysical shock*, the shock of possible nonbeing."<sup>3</sup> We pose the question of being, in other words, when we confront the abyss of our own possible nonbeing as well as the nonbeing of everything that is.

The argument is crucial but not unique to the *Systematic Theology*. A decade earlier Tillich expressed a similar sentiment in his inaugural lecture at Union Theological Seminary. Here the idea of shock stems from Santayana: "Santayana," he

writes, "derives all experience from shocks which we receive and which disturb the smooth flux of intuition. I think he is right. [...] It is the philosophical shock, the tremendous impetus of the questions."<sup>4</sup> This remark, from 1941, matters for two reasons. First, Tillich significantly refers to the shock in question as being philosophical. This assertion is essential to the main argument of the 1941 lecture, according to which the division between philosophy and theology is impossible, since, "whatever the relation of God, world, and man may be, [this relation] lies in the frame of being."<sup>5</sup> The question of Being is unavoidable for theology, for the simple reason that the frame of Being embraces the divine-human relation. And yet if philosophy and theology have the same origin, the passage from the former to the latter is achieved by asking for being as far as it gives us ultimate concern. Philosophy finds its fulfillment in theology, to the extent that the line of inquiry originating in philosophical shock leads to "that which decides about our being and not-being in the sense of our ultimate meaning and destiny."

Second, citing Santayana in 1941, Tillich then poses the question of Being by equating three versions of it: "What is the meaning of being? Why is there being and not non-being? What is the structure in which every being participates? [...]"<sup>6</sup> But this equivalency is repudiated in volume 1 of the *Systematic Theology*. To be specific Tillich rejects the second version of the question in 1951, claiming that the shock of possible non-being "often has been expressed in the question, 'Why is there something, why not nothing?' But in this form the question is meaningless, for every possible answer would be subject to the same question in an infinite regression."<sup>7</sup> Here Tillich disavows the 1941 version of the question of Being, which is likewise the version in which the question of Being appears in Leibniz and then again in Martin Heidegger's 1929 Freiburg lecture "What is Metaphysics?" That lecture ends by posing the question, "Why are there beings at all, and why not far rather Nothing?" This version of the question, repeated in first lines of Heidegger's 1934 seminar *Introduction to Metaphysics*, is thus repudiated at the outset of Tillich's ontological investigations. But, why?

The break in my view suggests that Tillich maintained a highly uneasy and ambivalent relation with the path that Martin Heidegger followed after the publication of *Being and Time* in 1927. This unease, reflected in a series of references to Heidegger in volume 1 of the *Systematic Theology*, is apparent already in the 1941 lecture, where Tillich makes use of Heidegger's notion of *Geworfenheit* or "thrownness" without mentioning Heidegger by name. In the *Systematic Theology*, the engagement is more explicit. Santayana is dropped as the source of the idea of metaphysical shock. And the idea is instead grafted onto a series of adaptations of Heideggerian Being-towards-death, described in sections 45-53 of *Being and Time*. This grafting is made possible by the rendition of the question of Being put forth in 1941. Already in that context, Tillich characterizes the question of Being as an existential stance rather than a simple question. This idea, explored at length in section 2 of *Being and Time*, is one of the oldest Heideggerian themes, appearing in his work as early as 1921. The question of Being, Tillich argues, is posed only insofar as it is lived as such. The question asks "for the way in which man receives or resists the appearance of his ultimate concern."<sup>8</sup> The terms of the question attest to the significance of Schelling for Tillich; what is sought by the question of Being here is an appearance, a manifestation of the ground of Being for intuitive understanding. The possibility of such a manifestation is disqualified as such by Kant; it has its roots in the early Romantic reception of the *Critique of Judgment*. The formula Tillich employs, i.e., "the appearance of ultimate concern," anticipates the 1951 concept of revelation in the *Systematic Theology* as the manifestation of the ground of Being for human knowledge. Thus one could say that the search for the ground of Being in the *Systematic Theology* remained more or less Schellingian even as it was indebted to the Protestant tradition of mystical theology exemplified among other by Jacob Böhme, as other Tillich scholars have recognized. In these terms, the question of Being for Tillich looks toward the manifestation of the "rational word that grasps and embraces being, in which being overcomes its hiddenness."<sup>9</sup>

Even if the basic dimensions of Tillich's ques-

tion are Schellingian, his analysis of what motivates the question itself leans heavily upon sections §§45-53 of *Being and Time*. Reason for Tillich asks after the ground of Being, but it is also driven beyond itself to experience the abyss or the threat of possible nonbeing. In what sense and under what conditions can nonexistence figured as the abyss be meaningful *for us* according to Tillich? It is in connection with this question that Tillich establishes Heideggerian philosophy as a source for reflection at the same time that he distances himself from the particular aims of the *Seinsfrage* in Heidegger's work during the late 1920s and early 1930s.

In the *Systematic Theology*, this question is handled on two levels. In both instances, the figure of the abyss is linked to the question of non-being, which is described as being at the root of, and thus the *real question hidden within*, the question of Being itself. On the first level, the question of nonbeing is posed as the question of the dialectical negativity within God himself. Negation as a polar element within God constitutes the divine as a mystery. It signifies the No within God that has significance for God. This No is overcome in and through vitality and creativity. Here, nonbeing is defined primarily in terms of a negation. And it is meaningful for us insofar as it is meaningful for God. Without reference to negation as a polar element internal to the divine, we would not be able to conceptualize the divine life as a dynamic force, inasmuch as dynamism requires a speculative appeal to dialectical negativity. .

On the second level, the question of nonbeing is paced in relation to human finitude. It is no longer posed primarily in terms of a negativity internal to divine life. According to Tillich, man endures the metaphysical shock of nonbeing when he imagines "the negation of everything that *is*."<sup>10</sup> Thought must begin with Being. Yet human beings can distance themselves from their Being through imagination and representation, positing the totality of beings as negated. This representational annihilation of beings constitutes the meaningful aspect of nonbeing in finite life. One cannot be indifferent to it. But instead, nonbeing necessarily stands before us as a threat. Tillich thus grants the primacy of negation, in a rep-

representational mode, over nothingness. This actually forms a stark contrast with Heidegger—as we shall see momentarily, the entire purpose of Heidegger’s 1929 “What is Metaphysics?” lecture is to establish that nothingness is prior to negation. But this primacy nevertheless marks the point at which Tillich introduces the categories of Heideggerian being-towards death to describe why we pose the question of Being in the first place. Death, Heidegger famously argues in *Being and Time*, is the possibility of my own impossibility. It stands before me not simply as the end of life, a future event, but as the farthest possibility of Being and thus as something that can be grasped and lived in the present. Human *Dasein*, for Heidegger, is its death to the extent that it resolutely anticipates the possibility of its own impossibility. Thus, death for Heidegger radically individuates the human Being whenever it is grasped in the basic disposition of readiness for anxiety.

Here is the source of crucial idea in Heidegger that *Dasein*’s Being, insofar as death is its utmost possibility, is inherently a threat for it. The idea emerges in the last paragraph of the first Marburg lecture course, given in 1923 and entitled *Introduction to Phenomenological Research*, in which Heidegger argues that death, as the most possible and least determinate possibility of existence, constitutes existence as fundamentally uncanny. In *Being and Time* (section 41), this threat is said to emerge in the *Grundstimmung* of anxiety. Precisely because the unity of existence as an articulated structural totality is grounded in its death, *Dasein*’s Being is a “standing threat” for it. No matter how *Dasein* tries to avoid it, this threat is “there” as the ground of its thrown projection.

When Tillich treats nonbeing as a threat—that is, when he treats it in dialectical relation with finitude—his proximate source is not so much Schelling or Boehme but rather Heidegger. In the section entitled “Finitude and the Categories,” for example, he argues that man’s melancholic awareness that his being tends toward nonbeing is “most actual in the anticipation of one’s own death,” and, moreover, it is “the anxiety about *having* to die which reveals the ontological character of time.”<sup>11</sup> Both formulae loosely construe the argument Heidegger advances in Division Two of

*Being and Time*, in which temporality is revealed as the truth of being-towards-death. Likewise, Tillich stays quite close to Division One of the 1927 treatise, in which Heidegger describes anxiety as the mode in which *Dasein* confronts itself as *nothing* and as *nowhere*, when he asserts on page 192 of the *Systematic Theology* that anxiety is “the self-awareness of the finite self as finite.”<sup>12</sup> More importantly, however, Tillich appropriates these formulae to mark a break with Heidegger. The break consists in arguing that even at the level of human finitude nonbeing is still overcome. The power of resisting nonbeing is inherent in every structure of Being for Tillich. Thus, even in melancholic awareness of death we discover nonbeing as the object of a negation. It is overcome by the power of Being, expressed here as the interplay between human vitality and intentionality. Tillich thus refuses to interpret existence in the Heideggerian vein as a species of nothingness, and he likewise refuse to think death as the ground of possibility. This break with Heidegger provides an indication of how *unsteady* Tillich’s employment of Heideggerian categories is in the *Systematic Theology*. This unsteadiness is perhaps most apparent in Tillich’s discussion of finitude and nonbeing in the second and third of the four divisions of his ontology, those which handle dynamics and the characteristics of Being respectively.

Here we recall that this discussion is framed by two classical approaches to nonbeing. The Greek distinction between the *ouk on*, absolute nothingness or the nothing insofar as it has no relation to Being, and the *mê on* or dialectical nothingness is placed alongside the Christian rejection of *me-ontic* matter in the doctrine of creation *ex nihilo*. Tillich traces the sources of nonbeing as resistance to Being back to Augustine and forward to Böhme, Schelling, and Hegel. Heidegger appears only in the margins; twice mentioned by name in the section, he plays two diametrically opposite roles for Tillich.

On the one hand, Tillich argues that finitude signifies a twofold participation in being and nonbeing. The metaphysical shock of nonbeing is a function of man’s ability to envisage his own nothingness. In connection with this, Heidegger is

put forth as a proof text. His analysis exemplifies the dialectical approach to nonbeing at the level of finitude. Referring to “Heidegger’s relation to Parmenides,”<sup>13</sup> Tillich portrays Heidegger as safeguarding the mystery of nonbeing against its logical and ontological avoidance.

On the other hand, two pages later Tillich faults recent existentialists, Heidegger and Sartre in particular, for replacing Being with nonbeing as the term of all meaning, thereby “giving to nonbeing a positivity and a power which contradict the immediate meaning of the word.”<sup>14</sup> The ambiguity is exemplified in the final lines of the section. Tillich invokes Heidegger’s concept of “annihilating nothingness” as describing “man’s situation of being threatened by nonbeing in an ultimately inescapable way, that is, by death.”<sup>15</sup> But in the last step he faults Heidegger for failing to recognize that Being itself “precedes nonbeing in ontological validity,” and that Being “cannot have a beginning or an end.” In connection with this, here we may ask: what is the textual source of this allusion to Heidegger’s so-called “annihilating nothingness?” And precisely what is at stake in Tillich’s rejection of Heidegger’s prioritization of nonbeing over Being-itself?

From Tillich’s point of view, ascribing positivity to nonbeing falsifies the concept of dynamics. Granted, nonbeing resists the power of Being. But this resistance is a merely negative concept of force. It is manifested only in relation to the positivity of Being itself. Without this positivity, it is nothing, an *ouk on*. The implication is clear. If Heidegger ascribes positivity to nonbeing, as Tillich puts it, then he simultaneously robs himself of the ability to explain how nonbeing is dialectically overcome by the power of Being. He thereby disconnects ontology from theology, since he can no longer show that nonbeing engenders a question, the answer to which is God. On this basis we now see clearly Tillich’s strategy: he forges a tentative connection with Heidegger only so that he can break it by showing how the question of Being leads back to God. He faults Heidegger for arguing in favor of a fundamentally active, and thus non-dialectical sense of nonbeing. But precisely which text does Tillich have in mind when he first enlists, then discards, the Heideggerian

notion of *annihilating nothingness*?

In his 1929 lecture *What is Metaphysics?*, Heidegger resumes the phenomenological analysis of anxiety launched in *Being and Time*. He argues that anxiety makes manifest a nothingness prior to negation, a non-dialectical conception of primary nothingness. Anxiety, which robs us of speech, is fundamentally different from fear. Fear takes an object, whereas in anxiety “beings as a whole become superfluous.”<sup>16</sup> They slip away or recede from us, though not in the sense that they simply vanish or disappear. In anxiety, the very *receding* of being remains somehow there before us. In fact, this receding crowds in upon us. For Heidegger if one wishes to explain why it is that in anxiety one cannot get a grip, it is not enough to point out that in anxiety beings as a whole slip away from us. One must add that the *slipping away* of beings as such is thrust upon us as well. We reach out for beings but grasp hold of their slipping away. Heidegger surmises that nothingness itself is manifest in this slipping away. It is the *parting gesture* of that which thrusts the slipping away of beings upon us. It is what causes this slipping away or receding to crowd in upon us. The nothing repulses beings as a whole. We cannot help shrinking away from it, and yet it is *given* in the receding of beings as a whole.

When Heidegger describes this active sense of nothingness, which he equates with Being-itself, he draws a distinction between annihilation (*Vernichtung*) and nihilation (*Nichtung*). “No kind of annihilation (*Vernichtung*) of the whole of beings in themselves takes place in anxiety; just as little do we produce a negation (*Verneinung*) of beings as a whole in order to attain the nothing for the first time”<sup>17</sup> Anxiety, in other words, does not cause the annihilation of beings. Instead, Heidegger writes that the parting gesture towards beings that are slipping away as a whole “is the action of the nothing that closes in on Dasein in anxiety. It is the essence of the nothing: *nihilation* (*die Nichtung*).” “The nothing,” Heidegger adds, “itself nihilates” (*Das Nichts selbst nichtet*).<sup>18</sup>

When Tillich faults Heidegger for ascribing action to nonbeing, it is presumably *this* formula from 1929 that he had in mind—that is, not *annihilating* nothingness, but rather *nihilating nothingness*.

But this raises an interesting question, since the formula Tillich attributes to Heidegger, annihilating nothingness, and which he first accepts as an apt description of man's situation of being, but later disowns as a strict ontological predication—this formula would be, from Heidegger's perspective, rightly attributed to Tillich himself, insofar as he argues that we confront nonbeing only by representing the negation or *annihilation* of everything that is.

To put it otherwise, Heidegger is simultaneously a source and a target for Tillich. The crucial issue is whether or not to admit as ontologically valid the revision Heidegger proposes in 1929 to the Christian doctrine of *creation ex nihilo*: rejecting the formula *ex nihilo fit ens creatum*, Heidegger maintains instead *ex nihilo omne ens qua ens fit*. Tillich is right to suspect that the formula imbues nonbeing with positivity, as it is meant to suggest that the nothing is what makes beings what they are. The problem is that he doesn't know *just how right he is*, since Heidegger did not replace Being with nonbeing, as Tillich maintained, but instead he argued vehemently that Being and the nothing are the same.

But there is still the question of Heidegger's relation to Parmenides, mentioned in passing at the very moment in the *Systematic Theology* when Tillich insists that, "there can be no world unless there is a dialectical participation of nonbeing and being." Once again, Tillich does not know how right he is. In all likelihood, he is alluding to *Being and Time* §44 in which Heidegger discusses Parmenides in connection with the concept of truth as *aletheia*. But if Tillich had in fact been able to check Heidegger's subsequent seminars on Parmenides, then he would have seen that Heidegger, in his own way, eventually granted the primacy of *annihilation* over *nihilation*, *Vernichtung* over *Nichtung*, and thus that by 1951 he had come over to Tillich's side.

The 1942-1943 seminar originally entitled *Parmenides and Heraclitus* (GA54) contains one of the most extensive and speculative discussions of annihilation in Heidegger's entire corpus, one that sends us back to the issue of metaphysical shock. Already by late 1930, Heidegger was primarily concerned with thinking through what he called

the *Turn* in his thinking. The Turn is another name for the active sense of annihilating nothingness: "The essence of the nothing," Heidegger writes in a later seminar, "consists in the turning-away from beings in distance from them." According to the 1942 Parmenides seminar, our way of relating to nihilating nothingness is by forgetting it. Since this nothing repels beings as a whole, we cannot avoid forgetting it. This insight leads Heidegger to rearticulate the question of Being. The goal of ontological inquiry is no longer, as it had been in *Being and Time*, to recover the meaning of Being in general, but rather it is to re-interpret beings as a whole as having been abandoned by Being itself.

Heidegger scholars have thus far overlooked the fact that this reorientation forces Heidegger at times to grant the primacy, in fact if not in principle, of annihilation over nihilation (*Vernichtung* over *Nichtung*) in the case of *Dasein*. Since Being has abandoned beings as a whole, every being without exception is now seen as being *out of joint*, displaced, unmoored, and thus *out* of its essence. The same goes for *Dasein*. The experience of *Seinsverlassenheit* or primary nonbeing *displaces* *Dasein* itself, placing it outside of itself in a radical sense, effectively tearing it away from the structure of its Being as *care* that Heidegger outlined in *Being and Time*. Thus this displacement *is* a kind of *Vernichtung*, an annihilation of its Being. And it is from out of this annihilation that *Dasein* is now called upon to pose the question of Being. This entire line of reasoning, which appears in section §7 of the 1942 seminar on Parmenides,<sup>19</sup> leads us to reconsider the issue of metaphysical shock. For even if Heidegger, in his own way, had granted the primacy of negation over nonbeing nine years prior to the publication of the *Systematic Theology*, he nevertheless sought to emphasize the fact that the shock of nonbeing does not occur as the result of representing to oneself the annihilation of everything that is, but that *shock* is an experience of being disjointed that is so all-pervasive and so all-encompassing that it goes beyond anxiety and all but disappears from view. Thus, even as he grants the point Heidegger presses the issue: what Tillich called shock, then, is what the later Heidegger called *Fright*, an experience that far sur-

passes anxiety and has nothing to do with the melancholic awareness Tillich describes as motivating the question of Being. Here I want to conclude by treating the experience of shock as a source for further reflection; one rapidly comes to see that the concept of shock is directly tied to the concept of time in Tillich, and that if we rethink shock then we must rethink time as well. Is Tillich justified in tying the meaning of shock to an experience of annihilation that stems from the imagination as he so often insists? Moreover, can his dialectical concept of nonbeing do justice to the metaphysical shock of nonbeing? Here it is important to remember that Heidegger affirms as well that thinking must begin with Being and cannot go behind it. But this does not prevent him from thinking Being as nothingness.

What then is the connection between time and shock? On the penultimate page of "Being and The Question of God," Tillich links the threat of nonbeing to the question of time: "Finite being includes courage," he writes, "but it cannot maintain courage against the ultimate threat of nonbeing. It needs a basis for ultimate courage. Finite being is a question mark. It asks the question of the *eternal now*, in which the temporal and the spatial are simultaneously accepted and overcome."<sup>20</sup> Tillich thinks eternity as the stable ground in which the negation inherent in temporality is overcome. Heidegger's analysis of shock could open an alternative approach to the relation between time and eternity, one that grants the primacy of negation as Tillich sees it: namely, rather than thinking eternity as the ground or *Urgrund* of the temporal, one would have to think of it as an *Ungrund*, a groundless ground or abyss. In the case, the experience of shock would still find its answer in God, but this answer would consist in relating the temporal to an *in-finite time* in an

eminent sense, in the sense of a time that is more finite than finitude itself.

<sup>1</sup> Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978).

<sup>2</sup> ST I.163.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Paul Tillich, "Philosophy and Theology," in *The Protestant Era* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 85.

<sup>5</sup> "Philosophy and Theology," 86.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 85.

<sup>7</sup> ST I.163.

<sup>8</sup> The Protestant Era, 88.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 90.

<sup>10</sup> ST I.163.

<sup>11</sup> ST I.197.

<sup>12</sup> ST I.192.

<sup>13</sup> ST I.187.

<sup>14</sup> ST I.189.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> PE, 90.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> GA 54.175ff. [114ff.].

<sup>20</sup> ST I.209.

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**Abstract.** Paul Tillich's 1962 sermon, "Man and Earth," was prophetic. He said, "We have

no guarantee against man-made floods...." Floods are now increasing. Global ice is melting. Sea levels are rising four times faster than in 1900 from global warming.

What are the preliminary and ultimate concerns of those who deny what 97% of climate scientists have concluded? That is, increasing carbon dioxide emissions, mostly from our profitable fos-

sil fuel burning, are warming our planet via the Greenhouse effect.

Might climate-change denial be a kind of sin? Sin for Tillich was separation and estrangement, part of our finitude, our limited ability to completely comprehend such complex and ambiguous issues as global warming. Profit-making capitalist materialism was for Tillich a quasi-religious form of idolatry: elevating a preliminary or finite concern to ultimacy. In Tillich's climate-change prophesy, his ultimate concern for God's creation trumped profit. Tillich would have been supportive of Pope Francis's "Laudato Si: On Care for Our Common Home." We have the moral responsibility to stop plundering our planet for profit, the poor suffering the most.

### **American Academy of Religion Paper**

Paul Tillich's sermon, "Man and Earth," delivered in 1962 at the Harvard Memorial Church was prophetic. He said, "It is possible that the earth may bear us no longer. We ourselves may prevent her from doing so. No heavenly sign, like the rainbow given to Noah as a promise there would not be a second flood, has been given us.

We have no guarantee against man-made floods....(1)" The biblical passage to which Tillich was referring is as follows (Genesis 9: 8-10, 12-13): <sup>8</sup>Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: <sup>9</sup>"I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you <sup>10</sup>and with every living creature that was with you—the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you—every living creature on earth... <sup>12</sup>And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: <sup>13</sup>I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

To put this in perspective, the world population in Noah's day was about 3 million people. In 1962, when Tillich delivered his sermon, we had 3 billion people. Our population has now exploded to 7 billion.

It would have been impossible for 3 million

people in Noah's day to burn enough fossil fuels to break the covenant with God. We now have 7 billion people burning fossil fuels whose increasing carbon dioxide levels are warming our earth via the Greenhouse Effect.

Miami Beach and coastal cities now have flood zone during king high tides. Rising salt water levels are diluting our fresh water supplies. Sea levels are rising from melting snow and thermal expansion at the highest rate in thousands of years. Climate scientist James Hansen recent paper published with 13 coauthors predicts the oceans could rise to 3 to 15 feet as early as 2050. Floods and other weather extremes are occurring more frequently. Storm surges from hurricane Katrina resulted in 150 billion dollars of damage to New Orleans and those from Sandy in 50 billion dollars to New Jersey and New York City.

North Carolina experienced flood damage of billions of dollars damage in October 2016 from Hurricane Matthew. Ironically, five years ago, the Science Panel of the North Carolina Coastal Resources Commissioner presented a report that outlined the possibility that sea levels along the coast could rise significantly. Reaction from local land managers and developers was quick and overwhelmingly negative. The General Assembly passed a law forbidding communities from using the report to pass new rules.

"I think this is a brilliant solution," comedian Stephen Colbert said. "If your science gives you a result that you don't like, pass a law saying the result is illegal. Problem solved." President-elect Donald Trump believes global warming is a hoax.

What are the economic, preliminary, and ultimate concerns of those who are skeptical or deny what 97% of climate scientists have concluded? That is, increasing carbon dioxide emissions, mostly from our fossil fuel burning, are warming the planet via the Greenhouse effect (2) and causing our glaciers to melt.

Climatologists like Michael E. Mann and other scientists, who participated in the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ("IPCC") that was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2007, have had their integrity perniciously attacked. They have been subject to congressional and criminal investigations. Death threats have

been made. Attacks on scientists are part of a destructive public-relations campaign being waged in an effort to discredit climate science.

These attacks are evidence that our “World is at War” as Bill McKibben put it recently. “It’s not that global warming is *like* a world war. It *is* a world war. And we are losing,”...particularly with the recent election of Donald Trump.

These threats and attacks would have been for Tillich examples of our estrangement and the brokenness of our human existence and our separation from the Ground of Being- God. For astrophysicist Niel Degraessie Tyson, “The good thing about science is that it’s true, whether or not you believe in it.”(3). However, taking global action to combat climate change requires public support. The ideology of free market fundamentalism, aided by a too-compliant media, has skewed public understanding.

In the introduction to his book, “The Creation: An Appeal to Save Life on Earth (5),” biologist Prof. Edward O. Wilson wrote a letter to a Baptist preacher requesting help in saving our planet. Prof. Wilson realized that millions of Baptist skeptics and deniers outnumber secular-humanist biologists like him.

I believe the following statement is relevant to politicians from oil-producing states: “*It is difficult to get a man to understand something, when his salary depends on his not understanding it.*” [Upton Sinclair](#), 1934

A large number of climate change deniers are also religious conservatives. However, in 2002, the Environmental Evangelical Network launched a headline-grabbing “What Would Jesus Drive?” campaign to call attention to fuel efficiency. In 2006, the group organized the Evangelical Climate Initiative, which released a statement making a moral argument for climate action. Dozens of evangelical leaders signed, including Rick Warren, whose mega-churches have tens of thousands of members.

Meanwhile, the Regeneration Project’s “Interfaith Power and Light” campaign, which launched in 2000 as “a religious response to global warming,” is rapidly expanding its membership. The interfaith section of the 2014 People’s Climate March in New York City saw thousands of people

from more than 30 faiths—Baptist, Zoroastrian and everything in between—rally for climate action. The World Council of Churches, representing hundreds of millions of Christians, has committed to divesting its multimillion-dollar endowment from fossil fuels.

At December 2015’s historic climate summit in Paris, there were morning worship groups, Vatican negotiators, and an exhibit at Notre-Dame Cathedral called “Ode to God’s Creation.” “None of this was really on the horizon 20 years ago,” says Mary Evelyn Tucker, co-director of the Forum on Religion and Ecology at Yale University. “There has been an explosion.”

However, since the Fall of 2015 we started to lose ground. In 2015, 76% of Americans believed that climate change was occurring. Recent results of University of Texas at Austin pole concluded that this has dropped slightly to 73%. A recent Gallup poll asked, “Do you think that global warming will pose a serious threat to you and you and your way of life during your lifetime?” In 2015, 62% said “yes.” In 2016, this number dropped to 57%. Similarly, the number of those who said “no,” in 2015 was 37% and this increased to 41% in 2016. In summary, the number of people regarding global warming as a serious threat has decreased from 62% in 2015 to 57% this year. This contributed to the election of Donald Trump who has threatened to roll back the environmental progress we have made to date.

Tillich’s climate-change prophecy is being trumped by profit. This is justified by belief in the “invisible hand” of Scotland’s Adam Smith that guided the pursuit for individual profit towards creating the *Wealth of Nations* (6). This 1776 economics should be updated. William Forster Lloyd (1833) observed the “Tragedy of the Commons,” in which the pursuit of individual gain leads to negation of the common good.

According to modern Scottish theologian Michael Northcott, the pursuits of individual and corporate profits together with the culture-nature divide are the root causes of our global ecological crisis (7). Corporations have the same rights as individuals, according the *Citizens United* decision of the Supreme Court. For Northcott, “nations have legal and moral responsibilities to rule over



limited terrains and to guard a just and fair distribution of the fruits of the earth within the ecological limits of our planet," with its exploding population of seven billion.

Ecology is dependent on the climate. Its science is complex, counterintuitive, and somewhat ambiguous. I became aware of this in my debates with climate change skeptics like: (a) Prof. of Physics at Hartford University, Laurence Gould, at the American Physical Society Meeting, U. Mass Amherst, November 2011; and (b) Dr. Ted Kochanski, Chief Scientist, Sensors Signals Systems, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers Climate Discussion, NewTV, August 2014. Many confuse short-term weather fluctuations with long-term climatic averages over decades to centuries. Climate change deniers "cherry pick" data to support their limited point of view. Mainstream climate science is comprehensive, accounts for large data sets, and can make predictions.

From a scientific perspective, skepticism is a *virtue*, but denial of empirically verified findings, a *vice*. Progress has come from skeptics who overturned dominant paradigms. For example, skeptics like Copernicus and Galileo in the 17th century proposed the heliocentric solar system, which eventually overturned Ptolemy's 2<sup>nd</sup> century geocentric one. For Tillich the dialectic boundary was the best place for acquiring knowledge (8).

Might climate change denial be a modern kind of sin? Sin includes rebellion against the creation, according to process theologian Marjorie Hewitt Sochocki (9). Pope Francis has described man's destruction of the environment a sin and that climate action is a sacred duty. For climate deniers who do not want to do anything about climate change, their sin would be one of omission rather than commission. For those who make death threats, their sin would be one of commission.

For Paul Tillich, sin was separation and estrangement from our life-supporting earth. Sin is evidence of our finitude, our limited ability to completely comprehend ambiguous, complex issues. For Tillich's colleague, Reinhold Niebuhr, "No virtuous act is quite as virtuous from the standpoint of our friend or foe as it is from our standpoint. Therefore we must be saved by the final form of love which is forgiveness (10)."

Since "all have sinned and fallen short (Romans 3:23)," climate change activists should love deniers by listening and talking with them. Climate science should be framed without cultural beliefs that antagonize political and religious conservatives.

Tillich lamented the loss of nature as sacrament, leading to capitalist materialism as a quasi-religious form of idolatry (11). For him, idolatry was elevating a preliminary or economic concern to an ultimate concern. In his climate-change prophesy, his ultimate concern for God's creation trumped profit. Tillich's "Courage to Be" (12) is hopefully giving strength and support to climate scientists like Michael Mann. Their lives have been threatened for their scientific findings about global warming. For Tillich, the power of love was stronger than the power of death.

Tillich believed in the Protestant Principle as prophetic and critical judgment against idolatry. He also believed in Catholic Substance, and tradition and liturgy as concrete embodiments of the Divine. Tillich would have been supportive of Pope Francis belief that we have the moral responsibility to bequeath a habitable planet to future generations (13, 14). Pope Francis enjoins us to stop plundering our planet for profit, the poor suffering the most. "Our sister, Mother Earth, now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her."

Tillich's 1962 prophesy about rising seas came true. Rachel Carlson published *Silent Spring* the same year. Let us encourage everyone including Donald Trump to watch the "National Geographic" climate change documentary "Before the Flood."

Tillich also had prophetic wisdom for those who are ambiguous about climate change. He said, "The problem of life is ambiguity. Every process has its contrast within itself (positive and negative) driving us to the quest for the unambiguous life, or life under the impact of spiritual presence. Spiritual presence, the power within us but not of us, conquers the negatives of religion, culture, and morality. The symbols anticipating the Eternal Life present answers to the problem

of life.”

At the conclusion of Tillich’s sermon “Man and Earth” which you can read in his sermon book, *The Eternal Now*, he said:

The question of humans and our earth that has plunged our time into such anxiety and conflict of feeling and thought, cannot be answered without an awareness of the eternal presence. For only the eternal can deliver us from our sensation of being lost in the face of the time and space of the universe. Only the eternal can save us from the anxiety of being a meaningless bit of matter in a meaningless vortex of atoms and electrons. Only the eternal can give us the certainty that the earth, and, with it, mankind, has not existed in vain, even should history come to an end tomorrow. For the last end is where the first beginning is, in Him to Whom “a thousand years are but as yesterday.

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