



THE NORTH AMERICAN PAUL TILlich SOCIETY
Newsletter

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**THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY
IN TORONTO**

The annual meeting of the North American Paul Tillich Society was held in Toronto, Ontario, on 22 to 24 November 2002. As always, it took place in conjunction with the AAR/SBL Meeting in this wonderfully cosmopolitan Canadian city.

Michael Drummy, Vice President and Program chair, created an interesting and diverse program for this year's gathering. Highlights included discussion of two new books about Tillich by members of the

Society: Mary Ann Stenger's and Ronald H. Stone's *Dialogues of Paul Tillich*, and John Carey's *Paulus, Then and Now: A Study of Paul Tillich's Theological World and the Continuing Relevance of His Work*. Both volumes were published by Mercer University Press in 2002. A fine dialogue between Tillich and Islamic thought followed with Basit B. Koshul, Jawad Ashraf, Umeyye Yazicioglu, Kelton Cobb, and Darlene Fozard Weaver, participating. The afternoon session was followed by a reception and banquet at Marcel's Bistro in Toronto. The French food was excellent and the Society is grateful to Peter Slater and Thomas Bandy for selecting the restaurant and making the arrangements. Peter John

was this year's after dinner speaker. The title of his talk was *The Words I Recorded, The Man I Knew*.

At the banquet, Rob James presented the Paul Tillich Prize for the best paper submitted by a student to Jonathan Rothchild of the University of Chicago. His paper was entitled *Framing, Fragmenting, and Freud(?): Models of the Self and Faith Formation in Paul Tillich and Iris Murdoch*.

This year's meeting and banquet was marked by a very special event. The Presidents of both the German and French Societies were with us. Gert Hummel of the Deutsche-Paul-Tillich-Gesellschaft and Marc Boss of the Association Paul Tillich d'expression française spoke briefly at the banquet and extended warm greetings from the members of their societies in Europe and Canada. It was a distinct honor to have the leaders of three of the Tillich societies together.

The Saturday morning session was a lively presentation on Applying Tillich's Theology of Culture Today. Robison B. James, John P. Dourley, and Randall K. Bush presented papers. Richard Grigg graciously presented the ideas from Daniel C. Noel's paper. (Professor Noel died this past August and the Society extends its deepest sympathy to his family.) A lively discussion followed the papers.

Thanks to the energy and the wisdom of Robison James and Mary Ann Stenger, the AAR Group, "Issues in the Thought of Paul Tillich," has been reinstated under the title "Tillich: Theology, Religion, and Culture" as a regular AAR Group. Three more sessions were held on Tillich's thought on Monday (in "All Tillich All the Time" fashion): "Tillich in Dialogue," "Paul Tillich and Ernst Troeltsch," in conjunction with the Nineteenth Century Theology Group, and "Paul Tillich, Postmodernism, and Process Thought." The Society is very grateful to Rob James, Mary Ann Stenger, and the committee for their hard work and their efforts to restore the study of Tillich to the regular AAR sessions.

NEW OFFICERS ELECTED

A new elected office for the Society was recommended by the Board of Directors and approved by the Members of the Society at their meetings this year. This office is that of the President Elect who will also serve as the Program Chair for the annual meeting. Beginning next year, the person serving in the office of Vice President will have worked with the president-elect for one

year in helping with the creation and execution of the program. In the opinion of the Board, this will strengthen the Society and add continuity to its officers.

Young Ho Chun, Past President of the Society, was responsible for nominations of new officers. The officers of the Society elected in Toronto were as follows:

Michael Drummy, Denver, Colorado

President

John Thatamanil, Milsaps College

President Elect

M. Lon Weaver, Duluth, Minnesota

Vice President

Frederick J. Parrella, Santa Clara University

Secretary Treasurer

Robison B. James, University of Richmond

Past President and Chair, Nominating Committee

Three people were elected to the Board for three-year terms expiring in 2005:

Doris Lax, Secretary, DPTG

Ron MacLennan, Bethany College

Stephen Butler Murray, Skidmore College

Congratulations to the new officers for 2003.

The Society extends its appreciation to Mel Vulgamore and Dan Peterson for their three year's of service on the Board of Directors. The Society would also like to thank Michael Drummy for his outstanding work as Program Chair for the meeting in Toronto; to Young Ho Chun who served as this year's nominating committee for new officers; and Robison James, for his two years of service to the Society as Vice President in 2001 and President in 2002.

Please mark your calendars for the next annual meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, November 21 and 22, 2002.

CALL FOR PAPERS

NORTH AMERICAN PAUL TILlich SOCIETY

The North American Paul Tillich Society (NAPTS) seeks historically informed and constructive scholarship that creatively engages the work of Paul Tillich. The NAPTS holds two sessions (Friday evening and Saturday morning) immediately prior to the AAR Annual Meeting. The society invites paper proposals on the following themes.

1. Tillich and the End/Rebirth of Metanarratives
2. Tillich and Nietzsche
3. Tillich and Catholic Substance
4. Tillich and the Arts
5. Tillich and the Bible
6. Tillich and Mysticism

Tillich-related papers on other themes will also be considered. Paper proposals (1000 words or fewer) are to be enclosed in the *body* of an email and sent to the following email address: th-tajj@millsaps.edu. A winning student paper will receive the \$300 Annual Tillich Prize. For further inquiries, contact:

Dr. John J. Thatamanil
 Assistant Professor of Religious Studies
 Millsaps College
 1701 N. State Street
 Jackson, MS 39210
 Office telephone: 601.974.1333.

The deadline is April 6, 2003.

TILlich: ISSUES IN THEOLOGY, RELIGION, AND CULTURE GROUP

Co-Chairs of the AAR Tillich Group:

- Robison B. James
 7914 Alvarado Rd.
 Richmond, VA 23229
 Work: 804.288.2142; FAX: 804.287.6504
 rjames@richmond.edu.
- Mary Ann Stenger
 7214 Heatherly Square
 Louisville, KY 40242, USA
 Work: 502.425.5473; FAX: 502.852.0078
 masten01@louisville.edu.

Papers are invited on these themes:

- (1) Tillich as a bridge between modernity and post-modernity; for example, Tillich's theory of symbol as a bridge between concept and narrative;
- (2) Tillich and womanist, feminist, or other liberation theology;
- (3) Tillich and Teilhard, with interest in science and religion;
- (4) Tillich and the Dynamics of Relationality, including the 'The Other' in Levinas, Buber, and others;
- (5) Tillich and pragmatism (possible joint session with Pragmatism-Empiricism group).

Tillich-related papers on other themes will be considered, with specific themes for sessions determined by the merit of received proposals. Electronic submissions should be sent to both co-chairs. All paperwork should be sent to Robison James. A winning student paper will receive the \$300 Annual Tillich Prize. Deadline for proposals, participant forms, and abstracts to be received by Program Chairs: March 1, 2003.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Boss, Marc, Doris Lax, and Jean Richard, eds.
Mutations religieuses de la modernité tardive: Actes du XIV^e Colloque International Paul Tillich, Marseille. Tillich Studien, vol. 7. Münster, Hamburg, London: Lit Verlag, 2002.

Hughes, Richard A. "Tillich's Metaphor of the 'Eternal Memory.'" *Encounter* 63.3 (2002): 311–328.

Bunge, Nancy. "From Hume to Tillich: Teaching Faith and Benevolence." *Philosophy Now* 38 (Oct.–Nov. 2002): 32–24.

ON THE CALENDAR

The Paul Tillich Lectures at Harvard Spring 2003

Charles Johnson

S. Wilson and Grace M. Pollock Professor of English, University of Washington, Seattle

Thursday, 10 April 2003

5:15 PM

**The Memorial Church
Harvard University**

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Professor Johnson, a recipient of a MacArthur Foundation Award in 1998 and the National Book Award in 1990, will speak on the encounter of Western theology and Eastern philosophy. He has been interested in Tillich since his years in graduate school.

For more information, please contact:

William R. Crout
 Office of the University Marshall
 Wadsworth House, Harvard University
 Cambridge, MA 02138
 617.495.5727

**TILlich: THE WORDS I RECORDED,
THE MAN I KNEW**

Peter H. John

The “words I recorded” were in some, but not in every, sense also the “man I knew,” insofar as we can “know” a person from his words alone. I may have heard more from the mouth of Paul Tillich than anyone living (or for that matter, no longer living). The following talk will combine both themes.

The recordings began in the spring of 1951 through the summer of 1954, and resumed in the fall of 1955 through January 1958, or five and a half years. Paul A. Lee, Tillich’s sometime assistant, also supplied some tapes from the years 1958-62. No doubt, some records of the Chicago years, 1962-65, may exist, but unfortunately not the seminars with Mircea Eliade. Some courses were taken more than once, and the treatment and development of many concepts varied. This applied particularly to parts of the *Systematic Theology*, where the sections on “Existence and the Christ” (1958) were recorded four times, and three times for sections of volume III, “Life and the Spirit,” and “History and the Kingdom of God” (1963). Especially important were the commentary courses on the just published Volume I (1951), taken in both New York and Cambridge. Students gave brief reports on sub-sections of the text, followed by Tillich’s replies clarifying and developing ideas, and offering occasional emendations. The text was not the mimeographed propositions that heretofore had been distributed at the beginning of the semester, but rather the published book itself, now much more condensed and even abstract, shorn of illustrative materials and the class dialogues. (Tillich was aware of the temptation to “fill in” certain parts of the system where one’s experience and empathy were deficient. My favorite proposition, and the shortest in the Tillichian “canon”: “Possibility is temptation.”) These commentaries merit publication in paperback editions and/or an Internet version. Of course, scholars and the Tillich estate would have to decide on this proposal. On the other hand, the proposal has not yet been presented or entertained. My work as a United Methodist and Congregational pastor these several decades has taken precedence.

Tillich always sought to construct a systematic theology. When he was criticized for trying to encompass everything within the purview of an imperious system, he would defend his effort by saying

that critics of system-building itself are the first to decry internal contradictions, but one part of the system should be rationally consistent with other parts. His Union Seminary colleague, David E. Roberts, wrote that it must have been dizzying to juggle all the parts of the system around in his head, and he was glad he himself was not burdened with the task! Tillich marveled at the brilliant insights and synthetic historical judgments of Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, the late professor of social philosophy at Dartmouth, whose Christian thought encompassed the vast sweep of Western history. In the last analysis, Tillich felt the latter lacked a systematic grounding to his thought. Paul Lee recalls a comment about Rosenstock-Huessy he heard Tillich offer to Hannah Tillich: “Not everyone can be a genius!” Eduard Heimann, Tillich’s close associate in the Religious Socialist period, and a professor at the New School for Social Research, regarded Rosenstock-Huessy and Tillich as the two towering intellects of the day (though he favored Tillich). Their correspondence is printed in *Gesammelte Werke*.

Paul Lee recalls an apocalyptic story he heard from Tillich about his traumatic waking hallucination in the Battle of Verdun during the First World War: sheep were grazing in Berlin at the Brandenburg Gate. This, of course, actually happened in 1945 after World War II, and the *New York Times* printed such a photo! Tillich had written about the Treaty of Verdun which dates from the time of Charlemagne in 843, which split Europe into artificial boundaries, and “the curse of Verdun” has condemned millions ever since. I wonder if Ludwig Wittgenstein or Adolf Hitler or Martin Heidegger, all of whom served in the army, ever heard Chaplain Tillich preach to “*Liebe Kameraden*” in 1915. Our colleague, Erdmann Sturm, has edited and introduced the *Frühe Predigten (1909-1918)*.¹ It would be good to have an English translation of the whole 694 pages! (And what about the untranslated material from the entire *Ges. Werke*, the Frankfurt lectures on Hegel, the two recent volumes of unpublished articles before 1933, etc.?)

Martin Kähler, Tillich’s teacher, influenced some of the ideas in *Rechtfertigung und Zweifel*, about not only the justification of the sinner by grace through faith, but about the justification of the sinner in his very doubt. (Barth says somewhere that someone should whisper in Tillich’s ear that doubting was a sin.) Kähler was also influential in the development of ideas on the historical Jesus (see Carl Braaten’s translation of Kähler). Another of Tillich’s

teachers, Fritz Medicus, once wrote in a Swiss book review that Tillich was “*der kommende Mensch in der Philosophie*.” Barth deplored Tillich’s theological education, stating that the quality of teaching at the University of Halle was not high.

Tillich remarked that he might be remembered for a few things, like *Rechtfertigung und Zweifel*, *Das Dämonische*, and *The Courage to Be*, which saw its 50th anniversary edition last year (2002), and which was the best-selling book from Yale University Press. It now has a long introduction by Peter J. Gomes, Harvard’s chaplain and Plummer Professor of Christian Morals. The book, dedicated to Tillich’s son, René, has been translated into several languages including Farsi.² Tillich said it was written for the Stoic frame of mind. The book has been listed in *The 100 Best Spiritual Books of the Century*.

The essay on *Rechtfertigung* has never been translated, so far as I know, except in a private translation by my classmate, the late Lamar Cooper, who later went to SMU’s Perkins School of Theology. Speaking of Kähler, Tillich once remarked that he so impressed the students with his serenity and deep personal piety, that, being asked about the source of that inner strength, he replied, “My inner being is always in great turmoil!”—a confession that appeared to comfort those pained by the seeming disparity between his own spirituality and theirs. Masao Abe, in one of his articles on Tillich, stated that his first impression, when he came to New York to study under him, was “the restlessness of the eye.” I can verify this on many occasions, walking in the hallway, in Harvard Yard, especially in enclosures like elevators where he appeared almost physically depressed, trying to recover equanimity, etc. It was strange to behold, and one could do nothing. Prof. Abe, incidentally, a former banquet speaker for our Society, wrote a eulogy of Tillich in which he said that he was “the first great Christian theologian in history who tried to carry out a serious confrontation between Christianity and Buddhism at their depths....Indeed, with the death of Paul Tillich, Buddhism, and all world religions, have lost an irreplaceable dialogist and a truly great Christian theologian.”³

Through a two-year grant in the 1970s from the Thyssen Foundation of Hannover, Germany, secured by the good offices of Renate Albrecht, with whom I had worked for many years, about a third of my materials was transcribed. A copy of the transcripts was sent to the University of Marburg, the University of Laval (Prof. Jean Richard), and later to the

Harvard Tillich Archive itself. I am not aware of further distribution of the transcripts.⁴

The last two years of the Harvard period produced four semesters on “The Self-Interpretation of Man in Western Thought” with a fitting finale of two hours of commentary on slides from the Fogg Museum. It was an unforgettable climax to seven years at the University. Tillich was convinced that art could enhance the communication of theology often better than conceptual thought.

In preparation for the 1959 bibliography in *Religion and Culture*, I had full access to the office files and library. My thought was not only to include published material, but titles of unpublished work as well. In one of the drawers, I noted many manuscripts, but they were in handwritten old-German script, and titles were not easy to read. Since time was limited, I had them microfilmed for later examination at leisure. I lent the reel of microfilm to Mrs. Albrecht when she visited in 1977. After returning to Germany with dozens of cassettes of tapes she had copied at my home, day and night, for three weeks—an invitation to a recording which had never been dispatched! She learned that the microfilm contained personal items mixed in with manuscripts, and that they had better be left alone for the time being. My request for their return was never honored. It was always something she would take care of. (I do not know where the reel is deposited.) Decades have passed, and they await examination. Could they be part of the trove of letters and manuscripts about which Mrs. Tillich wrote that she discovered, posthumously, and which were consigned to the flames?

I also co-edited Vol. XIV of the German collected works edition, with Renate Albrecht and Gertraut Stöber: *Register, Bibliographie und Textgeschichte zu den Gesammelten Werken von Paul Tillich*, 1975, which was later updated in an edition by Werner Schüssler and Renate Albrecht.

Hannah Tillich’s book of 1973, *From Time to Time* (which is much more her own autobiography than a biography of her husband), appeared eight years after his death in 1965. She published *From Place to Place* in 1976, which contains a brief essay by Tillich on Socrates, and three travel letters. Mircea Eliade, Rollo May, and others pleaded with her to reconsider the 1973 book—to no avail. Another account is the extraordinary essay by another family member, now a psychotherapist, Dr. René Tillich, who delivered a lecture, “My Father, Paul Tillich,” subsequently published in the bilingual volume,

*Spurensuche: Lebens und Denkwege Paul Tillichs.*⁵ The lecture took place April 24, 1998, as one of the semiannual Paul Tillich Lectures delivered at Harvard since 1990, and is being submitted for publication in this country. William R. Crout, formerly of M.I.T., and a close student of Tillich's writings, is the founder and curator of the lecture series. The published text is an edited conflation of two transcriptions, that of the taped record of his lecture, informally delivered, and that of his extensive handwritten notes, which he later sent to Mr. Crout.

One of my favorite seminars was "The Theology of Christian Mystics," given at Harvard (and earlier at Union Seminary). In Cambridge, guest lecturers included Gershom Scholem (who was a visiting professor at Brown University, my alma mater), M. C. D'Arcy, S.J., Georges Florovsky, and D. T. Suzuki. Scholem told me at Brown that he always envied Tillich's ability to speak "*druckfertig*," ready-for-the-press, referring to lectures in Switzerland years ago, where both had lectured, and Albert Einstein as well. One of my prized transcripts is Tillich's long report of several hours of conversation with Einstein. I look forward to making it available some day. Tillich said, about the mystics course, that a required reading, and perhaps a text for the whole course could be Max Scheler's "Repentance and Rebirth," in his *On the Eternal in Man*.⁶ His favored mystic was Bernard of Clairvaux.

Tillich once said he preferred emigrating to France rather than the U.S. His command of English was poor, and required a long time to flower. Even so, if one compares the style of "Life and the Spirit" in the English volume, with the lectures delivered in German in Germany, and available in mimeographed form from stenographic notes, one can see the greater power of words and command of vocabulary in the German, which is sometimes lacking in the English. The simplicity and depth of the English sermons, however, denote a genuine grasp of the language that makes a great impact.

Leaving a lecture of Tillich's in New York City, while I was a seminarian at Union in the 1950s, I drove him back to the dormitory. It was late and he had to preach the next morning and had not yet prepared the text as they unfolded on paper. I offered to expedite matters by having him dictate the sermon. He replied that for the sermon to proceed in logical form, he needed to write down his words, and let the thoughts flow along as they unfolded on paper—a tactile and visual experience. Today, words are so easily committed to paper via typewriter and com-

puter word-processing. Who handwrites letters any more?

On another occasion, attending a celebration of C.G. Jung's thought in New York with Renate Albrecht, Tillich told us, just before his turn to speak, "*Ich rede nur kurz und nur Quatsch!*" It probably was a talk that required little preparation, not at all a scholarly examination. Nevertheless, it was impressive. Many of his lectures came from invitations to speak, here and abroad (much like Karl Rahner, who admitted that much of his writing was prompted by continuous speaking engagements). Tillich regretted some of his writing, like an early 1920s lecture that had an excessive nationalistic flavor, which he labeled "one of the sins of my youth!" The only time he ever told me he was glad I recorded something was the question and answer period during a symposium on "The Nature and Significance of Existentialist Thought." ⁷Usually he merely tolerated the recordings, unlike Mrs. Tillich who, I am told, disapproved because it reminded her of his approaching mortality.

In the course on the mystics, Prof. Georges Florovsky, the Russian Orthodox theologian and historian at Harvard, spoke on icon mysticism. He once visited one of the lectures in "Religion and Culture," I recall, and stood up to contradict and instruct Tillich on his interpretation of some topic of early Christian tradition and ethics on which Florovsky was expert. "My dear Prof. Tillich..." he began. Tillich never lay claim to expertise in history of doctrine, and taught such a course only at the behest of the seminary president. It was a popular course, but he never intended to publish it—unlike the beloved Prof. Robert Calhoun, professor of historical theology at Yale, whose famous course on Christian doctrine was under option with Harper & Row for years. (He wrote a glowing review of Vol. III of the *Systematic Theology* in *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*.) Sad to say, they never came to fruition, since he was forever revising and reading the latest scholarship, and so his perfectionism prevented publication. His lectures appeared only in mimeographed form from students, as well as a course in systematic theology. Dr. Calhoun once taught a course in basic Christian theology at Union's summer school, intended only for teachers in fields other than religion. It was a concise, authoritative, and beautifully balanced series.

I remember the funeral of Tillich's friend, the psychoanalyst Karen Horney. Suzuki, also present, had influenced Horney, who regarded him as a kind

of mentor. Tillich delivered the eulogy, which was most touching (published in *Pastoral Psychology* in 1953). He heaved a deep sob at the end, just after the prayer and before the benediction. Most of Tillich's English-language prayers are printed in the dissertation of Sebastian Painadath, S.J., done in Göttingen under Hans Küng and published in India.⁸ A student once asked if or when he prayed. The answer: "Always and never!"

The course on *A History of Christian Thought* (1953, 2nd ed. 1956) was privately published, and a hardcover edition edited by Carl Braaten was brought out with Harper & Row in 1968. The German translation of Ingeborg C. Henel is a revised edition, having had recourse to the original English mss. (*Vorlesungen über die Geschichte des christlichen Denkens*, a supplementary volume in the *Ges. Werke*).

One of my favorite individual lectures is the debate, held at Vassar College, with Walter Kaufmann, "Christ or Nietzsche?" The tape recording was faulty, and the stenographic transcription was minimal. Kaufmann later requested a transcript, which I could not provide because of the defective tape. The typical German soldier carried in his knapsack the New Testament and *Also sprach Zarathustra*. I readily recall one statement of Tillich's (he felt this was an autobiographical lecture where more was disclosed than he ordinarily intended), e.g.: "It was Nietzsche who first introduced me into the liberating air of ethical autonomy." It reminded me of T. S. Eliot's statement that some people claim to be emancipated, whereas they are simply unbuttoned. (H. L. Mencken may have said something similar.)

Eliot, who had championed the publication of the *Systematic Theology* in England, fell into a period of depression from which he emerged through reading Tillich's "You Are Accepted," perhaps the most widely reprinted of his sermons.⁹ For an opposing view of "acceptance," see William Muehl, former professor of homiletics at Yale Divinity, who has written "To Hell with Acceptance."¹⁰ Tillich is nowhere mentioned by name, but...

Hannah Arendt, whose correspondence with Tillich was published last year, regarded Tillich as "not only a theologian, but an outspoken moral personality of great political and moral courage." I believe her good friend Hilda Fränkel had been Tillich's secretary for awhile. "When she was on her deathbed, he did not abandon her—as most of the 'Creative Individuals' she knew did...I saw him there daily. He made a great impression on me, be-

cause I understood that...he was a Christian, that is, capable of Christian love...she really loved the man, and he had really loved her."¹¹

The sermon on "The Divine Name," in *The Shaking of the Foundations*, was prompted by the late Harvard President Nathan Pusey who, in 1955, was congratulating his university on the revitalized Divinity School, and its addition of new faculty. He said that we can now speak about God and the things of God without embarrassment. This was unsettling to Tillich, according to Grace Cali, his secretary, and author of a fine biography of Tillich in the Harvard years.¹² He insisted that what we really need is a genuine sense of "embarrassment," of hesitation and awe, when speaking of God, contrary to the president's recommendation!

The three sermon books, whose titles in some way signify the Holy Trinity—*The Shaking of the Foundations*, *The New Being*, *The Eternal Now*—are all out of print. They deserve reappearance in one volume, with perhaps two or three other sermons that were not included, and a selection of sermons from *Frühe Predigten (1909–1918)*.

A comprehensive bibliography of primary and secondary writings, including translations into many languages, reprints, reviews, and a full listing of theses and hundreds of dissertations, has been a project of mine for many years. Passing through Helsinki 15 years ago, I noted more than 20 theses, etc., in one seminary alone. Sometimes a master's thesis is almost equivalent to a doctoral dissertation, e.g., one by Edward French, a Harvard undergraduate and a graduate of General Theological Seminary in New York: *Tillich and Plato*.

Tillich was a man who had a gift for friendship, and a loyalty that lasted a lifetime. His contact with his Wingolf brother Emanuel Hirsch, for example, in spite of the latter's involvement in National Socialist ideology, still persisted even after World War II. He complied with Hirsch's request to see if he could get an American publisher for his book on Kierkegaard, and Tillich tried, without success, to accommodate him. I visited Hirsch in Göttingen in the early 1960s, and access to the home was not complicated. A simple telephone call was all that was required. In my halting German, I timidly but boldly inquired about the Tillich-Hirsch controversy, and wondered what his present feeling was about their relationship and the political quarrel that they had made public. He replied (in German, of course): "In my Father's house are many mansions." He felt that at the time, it appeared to be a good idea. (I hope I have not mis-

represented him, and this is not an unkind remark. I still remember him as a kind, elderly gentleman, feeble and awaiting the culmination of his life.)

Tillich's life, he confessed, was very conservative and routine. He had certain hours of the day with specified tasks, letters to write, appointments to keep, and his writing and lecturing to pursue. He tried to observe society's expectations and regulations. He was once asked, in a lecture at Boston's Ford Hall Forum, what was the meaning of life? He simply replied: "To fulfill your potential." Prof. Quine would have ridiculed the question, and carried on his life's pursuits as though they *had* meaning!

Tillich was opposed to public nudity, believing it undermined the natural human instinct for modesty. He was averse to homosexuality, and was instinctively horrified at abortion. Grace Cali's book has an introduction by Jerald Brauer who felt he had to explain Tillich's quaintly passé stance on abortion, and the author herself, in a footnote, was apologetic as well. He never thought of himself as a saint, defined as one through whom God has become "transparent," and he probably had some reservations about the New Harmony memorial in his honor. A great aim of Tillich's theological life was to make the Christian faith credible to the modern man and woman, doubting and skeptical—so long as it was honest doubt. He once said that if he were to choose a vocational title, he would like to be known as "an interpreter of life."

Donald MacKinnon, the late British philosopher and theologian, has written on "Tillich, Frege, Kittel: Some Reflections on a Dark Theme,"¹³ an article that must be reckoned with, though his prose can be sometimes as dark as his title. (He also speaks of the anti-semitic Frege and Kittel.) He writes of Tillich's erotic life and the disparity between life and thought, concluding that since the life was distorted, the thought must also be defective. This is a common judgment, and open to many caveats. Whatever the facts are, there has never been a stronger critic of Tillich than Tillich himself! Ruth Nanda Anshen's *Biography of an Idea*¹⁴ is a recital of conversational at-home soirées with distinguished minds of the day: Whitehead, Einstein, Fred Hoyle, J.B.S. Haldane, Benedetto Croce, Andrei Sakharov, Cardinal Bea, and many others, including an evening with Tillich, Kurt Goldstein, and Gabriel Marcel. As time went on, Tillich, whose mood the fruit of the vine had altered, is reported to have said, "I am a sinner, laden with guilt, I shall burn in eternal hellfire, I shall be excommunicated from the Kingdom of

Heaven. I'm afraid to die." (One may assume the mirthful tone of these words.) Marcel replies, "But you are a man of faith, a Lutheran in the venerable tradition of the teaching of your predecessor, Martin Luther..." "Oh," Tillich interrupts, "I'm not worthy of him....I am always on the borderline, on the boundary, and I know that there is no boundary of a boundary. So I'm tortured by the conflict. That is my existential indecision and therefore my guilt, a sin God cannot forgive." Then Marcel, quoting Voltaire, says: "*Mais oui, le bon Dieu vous pardonera, c'est son métier.*" (I am reminded of Tillich's comment from Vol. III, 225: "It is sin which is forgiven in the forgiving of a particular sin.") The neurologist-philosopher Kurt Goldstein, a close friend of Tillich's, comments that "If his mind had not been so seminal, so perceptive, so creative, even logical, he might have become a schizophrenic."¹⁵

What are we to make of all this? I once asked Ms. Anshen how in the world did she remember all these quotations? After the evening was over, she merely sat down and wrote everything she remembered—with her own florid and lapidary interventions. I have my doubts.

A similar sentiment, I think, can be found in Rollo May's *Paulus*¹⁶, where Tillich questions, in a letter, whether his "erotic life [was] a failure or was it a daring way of opening up new human possibilities? I do not know the answer. But I am more inclined to give a self-rejecting than a self-affirming answer." May would have said "No, you have helped all of us to affirm a daring life, and risk the consequences." Whereupon Tillich could have said, and maybe would have said, "Get thee behind me, Rollo!" He knew he had hurt others, and the painful memories were always there. He was in a confessional mood, and why not accord him the freedom of self-judgment? But somehow, he could rely on the Spirit who could graciously and mercifully offer the sense of being-acceptable-in-spite-of. He was certainly "strong in the broken places." Nonetheless, he had to live with the consequences of occasional poor judgment.

His first biographer was to be Jaroslav Pelikan with Marion Hausner, later Marion Pauck, who was later to join with her husband, Wilhelm Pauck, to launch the first of two volumes on Tillich's life and thought. His lamented death prevented completion of the project, and sadly ended with only the fascinating first volume, for which we remain grateful. Pelikan had wanted Tillich to give a kind of official imprimatur to the biography, a request Tillich de-

nied. “The Man I Knew” was the man that many men and women knew in many ways.

He was sometimes an enigma to himself as well. Witness the poem written at the age of 17, translated in May’s *Paulus*¹⁷:

Am I then I? Who tells me that I am!
Who tells me what I am, what I shall become?
What is the world’s and what life’s meaning?
What is being and passing away on earth?

O abyss without ground, dark depth of madness!
Would that I had never gazed upon you and
were sleeping like a child!

Tillich would often muse about who he was, what he was about, what was the mystery of his being. He had a modest sense of his vocation and the knowledge he possessed (“I don’t know much,” he said *sotto voce* in a lecture), but he also had a self-confidence, a religious devotion and commitment (his only absolute was “ultimate concern”), and a passion for life and friendship. He claimed to be able to discern anyone’s “ultimate” concern—that for which they would sacrifice themselves. He maintained that behind every philosophical façade lurks a religious vision.¹⁸ The most agnostic thinker still has a passion for truth, and *that* was his or her ultimate concern. Often his hearers resented being lumped together in such an enveloping and slippery embrace. Norman O. Brown once cried out in a Tillich lecture, “Your definition deprives me of my God-given right to be an atheist!”

I remember an invitation to Tillich’s apartment where the seminar was to discuss which direction he should pursue, the completion of the *Systematic Theology*, or the development of a philosophy of religion that would seek to validate knowledge through religious experience. I think a summary of the latter proposal is seen in the article, “Participation and Knowledge: Problems of an Ontology of Cognition.”¹⁹ He did not embark on this path, nor develop the theme further. Eduard Heimann takes some credit for publicly pressing Tillich to finish the *Systematic Theology*. Time was of the essence.

“The toil of thought” was a theme throughout Tillich’s life. His capacity for total concentration was phenomenal—he could exclude most everything from his mind except the task at hand. Witness his early and intense concentration on absorbing all of Schelling’s writings and becoming thoroughly familiar with his thought. In the Harvard archive there

exists a long scroll of notes taken from that extensive study. He charged Rollo May in the duty of sustained creative thought, so as to feel the joy in becoming an accomplished expert in one thing. By so doing, the discipline could extend to other fields of study. May took nine years to complete his doctoral dissertation on anxiety, with Tillich as a demanding mentor. The late Werner Rode, another assistant at Union Seminary, who later taught at Yale, complained to me of Tillich’s turning on him fiercely in his own Columbia University doctoral exam, which surprised Rode since it was unexpected. He recalled the incident of a student in Germany who underwent a similar experience, and committed suicide.

Tillich had his critics. John Herman Randall, Jr., spoke of the occasional Tillich-baiting at meetings of the Philosophy Club in New York. He cited John Dewey’s comment, however, that the language-oriented analytic philosophy was always sharpening its knives, but it seemed to cut into little of substance. Herman Lotze (1817-1881) was of the same mind. Dewey felt that the Germans might be fuzzy, but at least they were talking about things that were important. Recall Whitehead’s complaint against Russell: “Bertie thinks I’m muddle-headed, but I think he’s simple-minded.” Ninian Smart wrote in *Theology* years ago that the future belonged to the hard-headed religious thinkers who sharpened their skills in the school of analysis and logic. Tillich’s chair at Union was called “philosophical theology.” Paul Ricoeur, who was appointed to the Paul Tillich Chair of Philosophical Theology at the University of Chicago, regarded Tillich as his “favorite theologian”—he once forgot the exact title, whether it was philosophical theology, or theological philosophy, and concluded it was really an oxymoron. But some theology is becoming more philosophical, in writers like Plantinga, Alston, Wolterstorff, and many others. Even the late Roderick Chisholm, my philosophy professor at Brown (who was often Prof. Quine’s debating partner), in his posthumously published *A Realistic Theory of Categories*²⁰ had a final chapter, “Implications for Philosophical Theology.” It is a pity he could not elaborate on the subject. At Harvard, the philosophy department did not altogether countenance Tillich, and the “sop” thrown in his direction, some thought, was the invitation to lecture in the philosophy department on “German Classical Philosophy.”

Santayana wrote that piety was the respect for the roots of one’s being. Tillich was a member of the

United Church of Christ (as were the Niebuhrs, Robert Calhoun, John Bennett, and many others). Many thinkers and teachers came out of the cradle of Congregational piety, some of whom could not, it appears, sustain their public devotion into their adult life. John Dewey, I think, had been active as a young man in a student Christian group; Congregationalism was in B.F. Skinner's and Willard V. O. Quine's ancestry.

For all the talk of religion and "ultimate concern," Tillich always reminds us of the tendency of religion to become deformed, demonized, idolatrous.²¹ Wahabi Islam is the demonization of true Islam (perhaps Sufism, or more tolerant examples of that faith); the Inquisition and some of the Crusades have demonized Christianity; fascism has demonized a true humanism; and a nominally "Christian" Europe has demonized the "other" just for being "other." (We were glad to hear speakers at this meeting speak of the burgeoning dialogue opening up on Islamic themes relating to Tillich's thought.)

"Religion is the highest glory and the deepest shame of man," a motto Tillich advised pastors to frame and hang on the wall of their study to remind them of the dangers of a mindless fanaticism. Ambiguity is the signature of the life of religion. Tillich loved colors, and the color gray symbolized ambiguity in the ground of Being. The demonic is the divine anti-divine.

Zen Buddhism itself, incidentally, has experienced its own episodic descent into hell. Brian (Dazen) A. Victoria, a former Methodist missionary and a Zen priest-historian, in his *Zen at War* reveals the long and sorry collaboration by the Zen leadership in Japan with the militarist rulers of the country for most of the last century.²² Even D. T. Suzuki, our beloved friend, was involved for a period of time! On the other hand, so were many of the Japanese of the time. (See the *New York Times*, Jan. 11, 2003, with continued debate on the Internet.) These books, and "the events of 9/11," have persuaded Zen spokesmen to offer public apologies for their actions. The divine-demonic composite of religion, for Tillich, was evidence of original sin. He used to quote Rev. 21:22-23: when the Heavenly Jerusalem comes down to earth, there will be no need for the temple (=religion), for God will be all in all.

I can see that this recital of disconnected memories is getting out of hand. Perhaps it can be resumed at another time. If I were to add one more item, I would cite Tillich's use of Schelling's idea of essentialization (*Essentifikation*), borrowed from Oetinger

who himself borrowed it from Boehme.²³ Oetinger often spoke of "God the Essentiator". So far as I am aware, Tillich never spoke of "essentialization" in his class lectures on the *Systematic Theology*. Why did it appear only in the last few pages of the published third volume? A. Durwood Foster presents his own thoughts in a fine article on this theme.²⁴ I suspect that this was Tillich's further elaboration on the idea of eternal life as a qualitative dimension of this life, not as an infinitely extended future time, which he found hard to contemplate and boring to anticipate, a "self-centered immortality," as Hannah Tillich notes.²⁵ I think his eschatology is defective in this respect. Why does he borrow the essentialization idea from Schelling, but not Schelling's development of the idea of resurrection? "Only a symbol?" But of course he would reply that nothing can be truly said about God and eternity that is *not* a symbolic utterance.²⁶

I would like to think that essentialization—or call it divinization, theosis, enhypostazation (Maximus the Confessor), even perhaps Teilhard de Chardin's "omega point"—was a development of ideas about "the eternal now." If he had been granted more time, he might well have advanced his eschatological theories, and offered us a deeper kind of "Christian hope" than he himself felt he could legitimately contemplate. "My dear Prof. Tillich..." Father Florovsky would have intoned...

¹ Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1994.

² translated by M. Farhadpur, Teheran: Scientific & Cultural Publications, 1988.

³ "In Memory of Paul Tillich," in *Buddhism and Interfaith Dialogue*: Part one of a two-volume sequel to *Zen and Western Thought*, ed. Steven Heine. New York: Macmillan, 1995.

⁴ A 17-page list is available by writing to me at 9 Harding Ave., Cranston, RI 02905, (401) 467-3932. A catalog of the Audio Tape Collection of lectures by Reinhold Niebuhr and Tillich is available from the Reigner Library of Union Theological Seminary in Virginia, 3041 Brook Rd., Richmond, VA 23227.

⁵ Edited by Ilona Nord and Yorick Spiegel, Münster: Lit Verlag, 2001.

⁶ Harper & Bros., and SCM Press, 1960.

⁷ *Journal of Philosophy*, 53, 23 (1956), with George Boas and George A. Schrader, Jr.—also in *Gesammelte Werke IV*).

⁸ *Dynamics of Prayer: Towards a Theology of Prayer in the Light of Paul Tillich's Theology of the Spirit*. Bangalore: Asian Trading Corp., 1980.

⁹ Lyndall Gordon, *T. S. Eliot: An Imperfect Life*. New York: Norton, 1999.

¹⁰ *All the Damned Angels* (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1972.)

¹¹ Elisabeth Young-Bruehl, *Hannah Arendt: For Love of the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 243.

¹² *Paul Tillich First-Hand: A Memoir of the Harvard Years*, Chicago: Exploration Press of Chicago Theological Seminary, 1996.

¹³ *Explorations in Theology 5*. London: SCM Press, 1979.

¹⁴ Mt. Kisco, NY: Moyer Bell Ltd, 1986.

¹⁵ See Tillich's "The Significance of Kurt Goldstein for Philosophy of Religion" [1959] in Perry LeFevre, ed., *The Meaning of Health: Essays in Existentialism, Psychoanalysis, and Religion*, Chicago: Exploration Press of Chicago Theological Seminary, 1984.

¹⁶ May, Rollo. *Paulus. Reminiscences of a Friendship* (New York: Harper and Row, 1973), 65.

¹⁷ See a different translation in a book by Richard Zaner: *The Context of Self: A Phenomenological Inquiry Using Medicine as a Clue*, Athens: Ohio Univ. Press, 1981.

¹⁸ See Catherine Pickstock, *After Writing: The Liturgical Consummation of Philosophy*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1998.

¹⁹ *Sociologica: Max Horkheimer zum 60. Geburtstag*, eds. T. W. Adorno and W. Dirks, Frankfurt 1955.

²⁰ Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996.

²¹ See Morris R. Cohen's essay, "The Dark Side of Religion." In his *The Faith of a Liberal*, New York: Holt, 1946; an earlier version is in Arthur L. Swift, ed., *Religion Today*, 1933.

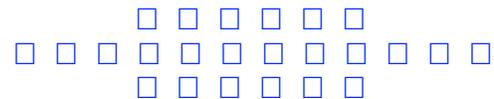
²² New York: Weatherhill, 1997, and *Zen War Stories*, London and New York: Routledge-Curzon, 2002.

²³ (See the writings of Ernst Benz, especially "Theogony and the Transformation of Man in Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling" [1954] in *Man and Transformation: Papers from the Eranos Yearbooks*, New York: Pantheon Books/Random House, 1964; and especially his *The Mystical Sources of German Romantic Philosophy* [tr. B. R. Reynolds and E. M. Paul from *Les sources mystiques de la philosophie romantique allemande*, Paris: Libr. Philos. J. Vrin, 1968]—ET: Dikran Y. Hadidian, gen. ed., Pickwick Publications, 215 Incline Way, San Jose, CA 95139.]

²⁴ "Tillich's Notion of Essentialization—A Preliminary Spreadsheet of Observations" appeared in *Mystisches Erbe in Tillichs philosophischer Theologie / Mystical Heritage in Tillich's Philosophical Theology*, Proceedings of the VIII International Paul-Tillich-Symposium, Frankfurt/Main 2000. Edited by Gert Hummel and Doris Lax. Münster and London: Lit Verlag, 2000.

²⁵ *From Time to Time*, p. 222.

²⁶ Cf. Benz, "Theogony...", p. 246, referring to Schelling's dialogue, *Clara, oder Über den Zusammenhang der Natur mit der Geisterwelt: Ein Gespräch*, ed. Manfred Schröter, Munich, 1948. ET: Fiona Steinkamk, *Clara or On nature's Connection to the Spirit World*. Albany: SUNY Press, 2002.



DIALOGUES OF PAUL TILlich

By Ronald H. Stone and Mary Ann Stenger

A PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE NEW BOOK
PUBLISHED BY MERCER PRESS IN 2002.

RONALD H. STONE

Dear Members of the North American Paul Tillich Society,

What can I say? Some of us cannot stop writing on Paul Tillich. It occurred to Mary Ann Stenger and myself that we were both presenting papers on Tillich that compared and contrasted his thought to others. Our papers were placing Tillich in dialogue consistently. There was to us a quality in Tillich's thought that required dialogue. As we thought about this, we remembered how several members of the society had suggested that Paul Tillich learned more or as much through conversation as he did by reading books. The stories about Tillich are often tales of conversations with him. He was a great companion in the art of dialogue.

Consequently, through conversation between us, we chose to share our essays on Tillich in conversation. We read each other's work, suggested editorial changes, and found it complimentary. We neither wrote about the same subjects nor did we contradict each other. It was relatively easy for us to agree to collaborate. Early on, we agreed that our dialogues would consist both of actual historical dialogues where historical detail was required and philosophical dialogues where analytic and synthetic work was necessary. The dialogues expanded beyond actual historical conversations to dialogues we wish he had undertaken. In some cases, since he had not engaged the interlocutor we wished to hear from, we constructed the dialogue.

By working together, sharing our special interests and knowledge, we were able to address issues we might not have taken otherwise. I, for example, would not have written on Buddhism although I might have attempted Hinduism. Mary Ann might have been uncomfortable with the details of Protestant social ethics in Niebuhr, but she was comfortable exploring fundamentalism. So together through conversation, we have a book representing conversations in prose; and we have given it the honorable title of *Dialogues*.

We are profoundly grateful that Mutie Tillich opened her stash of photographs again to share the wonderful photos presented in the book. The cover of Rollo May and Paul Tillich in conversation is particularly appropriate for our volume.

Through the process of collaboration on producing the book, I learned three things. The first is how great Mary Ann Stenger is to work with. The second is the Mercer University Press commitment to produce quality work on Paul Tillich. The third is how close Paul Tillich and Reinhold Niebuhr were in their Christian social ethics and how many issues on which they collaborated.

Niebuhr and Tillich

Paul Tillich recorded in his *Travel Diary: 1936* his warm associations with Niebuhr in Geneva. They breakfasted together, lunched together by the lake, and worked on lectures together. Tillich translated Niebuhr's lecture, and they reflected together on European politics at that fateful hour. Tillich remembered asking Niebuhr about academic positions at Ann Arbor and Manchester, England. He recorded that Niebuhr advised him to stay at Union Theological Seminary and "We will found a school of theology there." He noted in his reflection for July 30: "I have a feeling of warmth with him such as I had never experienced before."¹

They were at their closest intellectually when they were working on questions of religion and society. Tillich's belief-ful realism and Niebuhr's Christian realism bound them together to support religious socialism during the 1930's. Niebuhr's movement away from socialism in the late 1940s and early 1950s led Tillich and Niebuhr to diverge politically. But the impossibility of Tillich carrying religious socialism forward in the Eisenhower years meant their divergences were not widely known. For years, they shared the Fellowship of Socialist Christians.² They also shared teaching responsibilities in "Philosophy of Religion" at Union Theological Seminary while Niebuhr also taught "Christian Ethics" and Tillich "Systematic Theology." Tillich wrote appreciatively of Ursula Niebuhr's welcoming them to Union Theological Seminary the day they arrived in New York as well as his debt to Reinhold for conveying the offer to come to Union after he was dismissed in Frankfurt. But despite friendships and three decades of shared scholarly and political causes no one at Union could have regarded them as sharing a school of theology. On the other hand, by

their greatness, they did contribute to strengthening Union and increasing its importance, so they did strengthen a school. They were not the closest of personal friends. Wilhelm Pauck was closer to Tillich and John Bennett, W. D. Davies, and Abraham Heschel were closer to Niebuhr.

The differences between them became clearer with the publication of volume 1 of Tillich's *The Systematic Theology* in 1951. The end of religious socialist commitments occurred roughly at the same time as the differences between them as representatives of biblically based pragmatism and ontologically developed existentialism became clearer.

Roger Shinn, as a student of both Paulus and Reinie, has put this divergence as clearly as anyone: When Tillich arrived in this country, knowing no English, Reinie was one person with whom he could converse. As late as my time, I heard them occasionally exchange comments, in German, as they passed each other in the halls. Each had a genuine admiration for the other. See Gilkey's angry review of Fox for an example of Tillich's admiration for Reinie. Many people glibly associated the two as "neo-orthodox," a bad categorization for both. I think I once wrote in *C&C [Christianity and Crisis]*, back in the days when I was one of their regulars, that I long puzzled over this categorization of Tillich until the reason dawned on me: he spoke with a German accent. There's one other possible reason: As Niebuhr once said in a friendly, jovial way, "Whatever heresies Paul Tillich goes wandering among, he always comes home to 'justification by faith.'

But to back up, the two became strongly associated in the public mind. A second reason is that each of them defended the other against critics of the prevailing liberal-rational type. So the critics of both tended to merge them. The phrase, "Niebuhr-and-Tillich," became almost one word in some circles, even sometimes at Union. But it was foolish.

There was one more reason for the popular association. When Tillich arrived in this country, Niebuhr immediately welcomed him and many of his friends (including Eduard Heimann and others from the New School) into the Fellowship of Socialist Christians, and they there found something of an American base. Actually, as Tillich's book on religious socialism shows, there was a considerable difference between the continental group and Niebuhr's American group. But they shared many criticisms of the dominant American culture, and from the mainstream of American politics they looked alike. One night (somewhere in my 1945-49 period at Union) I

found myself helping Reinie and Ursula clean up their kitchen after a party. We combined intellectual conversation with dishwashing in a very Niebuhrian way. Something led Reinie to comment, "You know, I've just begun to realize how really different Paul and I are." I replied brashly—it was easy to be brash around Reinie—"Your students have known it for a long time." He laughed in his friendly way. We students knew it because we were getting Tillich's "system" in his lectures; Niebuhr, reading Tillich's early publications and entering conversation with him, was slower in getting the impact of "the system."³

Tillich's work had been called to Reinhold's attention by his brother. Tillich would at a later date credit H. Richard Niebuhr for saving his life by translating *Die religiöse Lage der Gegenwart* (1926) and thereby winning an invitation for him to come to the U.S.⁴ Reinhold's reviews in 1932 and 1936 of Tillich's earliest translations into English⁵ were full of praise as was his 1937 essay "The Contribution of Paul Tillich."⁶ These early pieces did not prefigure the later arguments; the last and major essay from the 1930's only raised a question about the need for more attention to the historical Jesus. He celebrated Paulus; after all, he had sponsored his immigration. For he is not only one of the most brilliant theologians in the Western world, but one whose thought is strikingly relevant to every major problem of culture and civilization. His terms may be abstract, but his thought is not. It deals in terms of rigorous realism with the very stuff of life.⁷

Tillich's review of volume one of Niebuhr's *Nature and Destiny of Man* returned the compliments and raised questions primarily about historical judgments and some of Niebuhr's comparisons. Tillich concluded, "It is a masterpiece" and applauded its chapters on sin.

Niebuhr's critique of Tillich in the Charles Kegley and Robert Bretall essay collection⁸ moved their discussion into the deeper areas of disagreement. Until the end, Niebuhr remained suspicious of Tillich's ontology. He wanted to preserve poetic-dramatic language concerning the human condition and he feared Tillich's language reduced both human responsibility and the difference between their positions. Niebuhr would concede an implicit ontology in interpretations of biblical insight and in the Bible itself, but he wanted to keep the ontology implicit. Tillich wanted to make ontology explicit and Niebuhr called such explication, "speculation." Tillich was certainly correct in asking for definitions

that are more careful. Niebuhr feared too much precision regarding faith-reduced mystery that was important to his sense of the Christian faith. More than that he feared that Tillich's understanding of estrangement made human sin more subject to fate and less to responsibility than he believed the human situation warranted. Niebuhr's critique of Tillich was at its strongest in this pre-stroke essay. His later responses in a 1956 review of *Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality*,⁹ certainly in part a response to Niebuhr's "Biblical Thought and Ontological Speculation,"¹⁰ was weaker, as was his response to Tillich's criticism in Charles Kegley and Robert Bretall's volume of essays on Niebuhr.¹¹

Tillich kept up the attack in the Harold Landon volume, *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Prophetic Voice in Our Time*.¹² While confessing his indebtedness to Niebuhr and his appreciation for their life long conversation, he criticized him relentlessly for not turning to ontology. He criticized him first for taking philosophic opinions out of context and out of time and finding them to be in error in comparison to biblical views. He tried to suggest that Niebuhr was accepting of *universal estrangement* as descriptive of the human condition. He urged Niebuhr to use ontology in thinking about freedom and destiny, pride, and self. In Niebuhr's response, he merely suggested he preferred not to use Plotinus's concepts and that he now preferred to use the symbols descriptively rather than ontologically.¹³

At that point in the argument, Tillich had certainly won. But the resultant discussion by their common friends and colleagues denied Tillich the victory. John Hutchison, Wilhelm Pauck, and Richard Kroner all defended Niebuhr's right to use his terms without needing to use Tillich's ontology. My own reading of the debate is that Tillich was correct to push Niebuhr for a more careful definition of his terms but very mistaken in thinking this meant he should use Tillich's terms. In these exchanges, they both were careful to say how they appreciated the realism of the other's position.

Tillich and Niebuhr kept most of their disagreements private although an exchange about the religious meaning of Picasso's "Guernica" broke into the open.¹⁴ In correspondence, Niebuhr would recognize Tillich as the greater theologian,¹⁵ and Tillich in the Fellowship of Socialist Christians would recognize Niebuhr as the genius in political thought.¹⁶

The most famous difference between them, of course, was the anecdotal gap between them on the appreciation of nature. Tillich referred to it as Nie-

buhr accusing him of being a German romanticist as he appreciated a tree in Riverside Park. Other students' versions have Niebuhr referring to him as a "damned nature mystic" or of Tillich quoting Niebuhr's rumored description of him as such when Niebuhr asked him why he stopped either in front of a tree in Riverside Park or the flowers in the Union quadrangle.

After welcoming Tillich into the Fellowship of Socialist Christians as well as to his new apartment in the Union Quadrangle, Tillich would publish regularly in Niebuhr's quarterly *Radical Religion* and in his biweekly *Christianity and Crisis*. They were co-founders of the Christian Council on Palestine in mid-1942. Again, in May of 1944, with Tillich leading, they were both in the Council for a Democratic Germany. In 1950, they were together on the Dunn Commission on nuclear weapons for the Federal Council of Churches just as they had worked on the Commission of a Just and Durable Peace during the war.

They agreed on the folly of a policy of unconditional surrender for Germany, of a homeland for Jews, of the immorality of the use of atomic bombs on Japan, on the need for containment while avoiding war with the Soviet Union, on the no-first-use of nuclear weapons, on opposition to right-wing politics, and on the possibilities of John F. Kennedy.

Tillich's *Gläubiger Realismus* of his German socialism translated in the United States into the socialism of Christian realism. Tillich held on to his socialism longer than did most other members of the Fellowship of Socialist Christians rejoining the SPD of Germany after the war. Niebuhr and others migrated into mixed-economic politics of the Americans for Democratic Action. Tillich's political energies were re-ignited by Kennedy's possibilities, but he had not articulated a new or alternative political-economic vision by his death in 1965.

Their closeness has led me into study of their relationships with two Jewish philosophers: Hans Morgenthau and Abraham Heschel, and currently I am utilizing the thought of the four in expounding a political philosophy that I call prophetic realism. I am writing a book,¹⁷ offering it as a philosophical base for guiding American foreign policy in what I hope can be a realistic, limited policy that also approximates a moral foreign policy.

¹ Paul Tillich, *My Travel Diary: 1936*. (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1970): 145. The discussion of Paul Tillich and Reinhold Niebuhr is an excerpt from the

chapter "Niebuhr and Tillich on the Jewish Question" in *Dialogues of Paul Tillich* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2002): 47-51.

² See: John C. Bennett "Tillich and the 'Fellowship of Socialist Christians,'" *North American Paul Tillich Society Newsletter* 16/4 (1 October 1990): 3.

³ Roger Shinn, letter (in author's possession) responding to Ronald Stone's questionnaire, (November 1990).

⁴ *Die religiöse Lage der Gegenwart* (Berlin: Ullstein, 1926). ET: *The Religious Situation*, trans. H. Richard Niebuhr (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1932).

⁵ Review of *The Religious Situation*, in *World Tomorrow* 15/23 (21 December 1932): 596; review of *Interpretation of History in Radical Religion*, in *Radical Religion* 2 (Winter 1936): 41-42.

⁶ *Religion in Life* 6/4 (Autumn 1937): 574-581.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 581.

⁸ Reinhold Niebuhr "Biblical Thought and Ontological Speculation in Tillich's Theology," in *The Theology of Paul Tillich*, ed. Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall, 216-227 (New York: Macmillan, 1961).

⁹ Reinhold Niebuhr, in *Union Seminary Quarterly Review*, 11/2, (January 1956): 59-60.

¹⁰ In *The Theology of Paul Tillich*, 216-227.

¹¹ Reinhold Niebuhr, "Reply to Interpretation and Criticism," in *Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social and Political Thought*, ed. Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall (New York: Macmillan, 1961): 429-451.

¹² Paul Tillich, "Sin and Grace in the Theology of Reinhold Niebuhr," in *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Prophetic Voice in Our Time*, ed. Harold Landon (Greenwich CT: Seabury Press, 1962): 27-41.

¹³ Reinhold Niebuhr, "The Response of Reinhold Niebuhr" in *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Prophetic Voice in Our Time*, 120.

¹⁴ *Christianity and Crisis*, 16/1, (6 February 1956): 2-3; and 16/3, (5 March 1956): 24.

¹⁵ Letter of Reinhold Niebuhr to Will Scarlett (5 November 1968). Washington papers of Reinhold Niebuhr, Library of Congress.

¹⁶ Langdon Gilkey, "A Critical Review Article." Draft of essay (August 1987): 24. In author's possession.

¹⁷ The project's research is funded by the Association of Theological Schools through its Lilly Faculty Fellowship program.

MARY ANN STENGER

I want to begin by thanking Ron Stone for his initiation of this project. Our discussion began at a Tillich Society banquet a few years ago, as Ron asked whether we had some common ground in our approaches to Tillich that might cohere in a book. As he indicated, our continuing conversations and trading of essays to read each other's work led to the overall theme of dialogue and three parts for the book, interreligious dialogue, feminism, and religion and society. Our collaboration on this project has been stimulating and productive. Thanks, Ron.

I also want to reiterate Ron's thanks to Mutie Tillich Farris for her permission to publish several photographs of Tillich from her collection. They help us remember the person, Paul Tillich, as well as his ideas that we explore and critique in relation to other thinkers.

Thanks too to Mercer University Press, especially Edd Rowell and Marc Jolley as well as their assistant Marsha Luttrell, for their support of this project and their persistence in finding Ron and me,

even when we traveled far from Pittsburgh or Louisville.

As many of you here know, my interest in the theology of Paul Tillich dates back to my days as an undergraduate. My interests centered around his ontology and epistemology, with special interest in issues of truth and verification. In my graduate work, I focused on problems of subjectivism and relativism, a discussion continued here in the chapter on epistemology and cross-cultural religious truth. Through all of my study of Tillich's theology, I have been engaging him in dialogue with contemporary theological issues, exploring not only his specific statements but also how his ideas might be used to address these issues. This continues to be my approach to Tillich studies, as this book attests.

The richness of Tillich's thought allows the possibility not only to analyze what he said in various decades of the twentieth century but to explore how those ideas might be relevant to or applied to or even reworked for today's religious, cultural, political, and social issues. The primary areas in which I bring

Tillich to the table of dialogue in this book are religious pluralism and feminism.

My first presentation to the North American Paul Tillich Society reflected my effort to engage Tillich's thought in dialogue with contemporary issues, focusing on Tillich's influence on Mary Daly in what was then her most recent book *Beyond God the Father*. In that book, she is dependent on Tillich for the method of correlation, a sense of time that parallels Tillich's *kairos*, his ideas of God as power of being, existential courage as revelatory, and the New Being. That essay is included in this collection, with some updates from later works by Daly that are critiqued strongly in light of Tillich's rejection of idolatry. That same critique of idolatry, with a related critique of injustice, is applied to the 1977 Roman Catholic document prohibiting the ordination of women.

In the last essay on Tillich and feminism, I explore Tillich's theology in relation to Roman Catholic feminist work. There I add discussions on dominating power versus empowerment and hierarchy versus mutual relationship, involving critique of Tillich's ideas as well as of Roman Catholic structures. Moving from critique to constructive efforts in Roman Catholic feminist theology, I analyze concepts of Tillich that some feminists have found helpful, particularly the role of experience in theology and his theory of religious symbols. I then explore Tillich's symbol of Spiritual Presence as a symbol that deserves more interest from feminists because of its implications of immanence and ongoing process, its relationship to experiences of faith, love, and unity with others, and theonomy, a mystical element of participation and interconnection with all creation, and its implications for individual self-realization and community.

Religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue encompass a second area of theological interest for me, as many of you know from presentations to this society as well as in Québec and Frankfurt. Tillich has been my major dialogue partner in this area because he has an enduring and expanding interest in world religions and struggles to balance openness to others with his Christian commitment to Jesus the Christ as final revelation. In the essays included in this book, I bring Tillich into dialogue with Karl Barth, Karl Rahner, and John Hick on that issue of final revelation in relation to world religions. All three agree on God as absolute, but their positions vary on the issue of final revelation in Christ. Barth and Tillich agree that the revelation in Christ is final while Hick rela-

tivizes that view, arguing for Christian revelation as one among many. Barth's Christology has a universal, inclusive dimension, in that all people have the capacity to reflect Christ's truth, but he narrows this by adding that such reflection only comes through contact with Christ. Tillich also is christocentric, even when he argues for truth in non-Christian traditions; his argument universalizes the power and effects of the New Being rather than relativizing the Christ, as Hick does.

A second essay involving Tillich and Barth brings them into dialogue with Kyoto School Buddhists Keiji Nishitani and Masao Abe on the issues of affirmation and negation in understanding ultimacy. Tillich's being-itself and nonbeing and Barth's discussion of God's Yes and God's No are compared with Abe's and Nishitani's emphasis on ultimacy as nothingness or emptiness and yet also fullness. Key sub-themes here are duality versus a monistic principle and the dynamic quality of the experience of ultimacy.

My final contribution in the book pulls Tillich into dialogue with fundamentalism on the issue of event and symbol in the understanding of Christ. Placing that dialogue in the larger social and theological context that includes feminist and pluralist christologies produces surprising comparisons. Some feminists would agree in part with fundamentalist emphasis on event more than symbol, arguing that the event, Jesus' words and deeds, bring salvation or liberation. Yet, other feminists might support Tillich's emphasis on symbolism that could diminish the importance of Jesus' maleness or the maleness of his disciples. A pluralist such as John Hick relativizes the event of Jesus, although seeing him as having a strong consciousness of God, and like Tillich emphasizes the strong role of Christ as symbol or metaphor. Fundamentalists share with Tillich a critique of idolatry, of absolutizing finite experiences, at least to a point, but they do not turn their critique to their own words, interpretations, and deeds.

Many of the dialogues and comparisons in which I have engaged Tillich in the essays in this book reflect the tension of a dialogue between modernists and postmodernists. The dialogues on religious pluralism and feminism set the contrasts of the universal versus the particular, an absolute base versus more relativist stands, the powerful versus those with little or no power, and overarching theory versus theory rooted in ethics and action. Can the universalized, modern voice speak to the particular concerns of women or Hindus or Buddhists, etc.? In be-

coming more open to truth in other religions or in feminist theologies, do we lose an absolute ground, leaving everything as subjective and relativized? To address issues of power, must we reject the voices of those who socialized with the powerful or who were dominant voices of our theological past? Must we give up theories that attempt to speak of the universal condition of humans in favor of those that reflect a particular group in a particular cultural, political situation?

Some might dismiss Tillich as a dead, white male voice of the modern era of theology, no longer relevant to our postmodern period. But I think such an approach throws out the many insights Tillich had into humans, society, and God. His experiences of war and evil, along with his ongoing dialogues with other scholars, first in Germany and later in the United States, kept him both grounded in reality and open to new possibilities. He was aware of power and its abuses; he saw idolatry in action and recognized that idolatry caused injustices. Cultural actions and expressions must always stand under the pull and the critique of the absolute.

Tillich wrote about theological norms as developing in a dynamic process that critically accepted some past principles and embodied them in a new context. We too are engaged in this task, gleaning ideas and principles from Tillich's theology and applying them and making them creative in new cultural and theological situations. That process involves us in dialogue, not only with Tillich's thought but also with others, past and present. At times, we see the particular as examples of the more universal theories of Tillich; at other times, Tillich's thought is critiqued in relation to new insights from our present position of awareness.

Tillich's own engagement in dialogue is a model and a challenge for us to continue the dialogues, to listen and respond to the many voices of our era. Sometimes, they call us to change toward more openness and wider acceptance of human diversity; at other times, they want to shut off all dissent and reject new ideas. Tillich's theology should make us wary of that latter approach, as we should be of any effort to render absolute a person or a humanly created structure. We must recognize the idolatries and injustices of our own time, naming and working against them. But our challenge is not only to critique others but to critique ourselves as well, and this requires ongoing dialogue. This book is a contribution to that process, not as an end to those dialogues but rather as a part of them.

My work on this book has led me to two current projects. The first continues the dialogue of Tillich and feminism, as I want to include many other women and feminist thinkers than I had before. This will be a dialogue, exploring not only Tillich's influence and their specific critiques of Tillich but also at what his theology might contribute to feminist theology and vice versa. My second project will be a sort of dialogue between feminist theology and religious pluralist theology, looking at common bases for discussion and bringing the divergent approaches into conversation with each other. As immersed in Tillich's thought as I have been for the past few decades, I know that Tillich will be one of dialogue partners in this project as well.

I began with thanks to Ron Stone, Mutie Farris, and Mercer University Press, and I want to end with thanks to the North American Paul Tillich Society. You and many members not here today welcomed me as a dialogue partner with Tillich many years ago. At first, I was intimidated to meet the people whose dissertations and books I had read for my undergraduate honors thesis and my Ph.D. dissertation on Tillich. But over and over again, each person treated me as an equal partner in analyzing and critiquing Tillich. Some of those partners, such as James Luther Adams and Jack Boozer, are no longer living. Others, such as Terry Thomas and Victor Nuovo, no longer join our meetings. As I close, I want to pay tribute to them and to many others unnamed, who founded this society as a place for dialogue with Tillich, and to all of you, especially Jean Richard, who continue the dialogue. Thank you for your stimulating contributions and your support, as we continue the conversation.

JEAN RICHARD: A RESPONSE

I. Mary Ann Stenger on Interreligious Dialogue

I will limit myself in this report to a few main questions raised in the book. So, concerning the contribution of Mary Ann Stenger, I will stay within the first part of the book, on the "Interreligious Dialogue." Everything in this section is interesting and stimulating: the comparison of Tillich with Karl Rahner, with John Hick, with Karl Barth, and with the Buddhists Masao Abe and Keiji Nishitani. However, I will lay stress here on the first chapter on the final revelation, and on the fourth chapter on the epistemology of interreligious dialogue. Let me say,

from the outset, that I fully agree with Mary Ann; I will but try to add another piece to the argumentation, taken from Tillich's Marburg *Dogmatik* of 1925.

Here is Mary Ann's thesis concerning Tillich's theoretical standpoint on the encounter of religions: "When Tillich focuses on the concrete content of Christ or the Cross, he retains the traditional sense of Christian superiority. But his formal abstractions of meaning from those events need not be tied to the specific Christian content."¹

The first part of the thesis is well known to all Tillichians: "Jesus' sacrifice to himself as the Christ is particularly seen in the Cross; in the negation of Jesus on the Cross is his affirmation as the Christ."² This is the theological-christological expression of the paradox of final revelation. As such, I would say it expresses the paradoxical superiority of Christianity; so, it is not well fitted to a dialogue with other religions.

But this is not the whole story, since we find in Tillich another, more universal, form of the same paradox, stated now as the paradox of religion as such. In his 1922 lecture on "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," Tillich writes indeed: "It remains to be demonstrated that the concept of religion contains within itself a paradox. 'Religion' is the concept of a reality which through this very concept is destroyed."³ So, any religion truly oriented to the infinite must negate itself as a finite human realization. Insightfully, Mary Ann finds another universal-philosophical expression of the same paradox in Tillich's theory of religious symbols: "A finite symbol of the ultimate is both conditioned and yet points to and bears the unconditioned."⁴ Then she quotes Tillich's *Systematic Theology*: "Every religious symbol negates itself in its literal meaning, but it affirms itself in its self-transcending meaning."⁵ One reads also in Tillich's *Dynamics of Faith*: "That symbol is most adequate which expresses not only the ultimate but also its own lack of ultimacy."⁶

In the conclusion of her epistemological study, Mary Ann advocates, for inter-religious dialogue, the emphasizing of the formal philosophical and universal understanding of the paradox of ultimacy, rather than the positive content of the final revelation in Jesus the Christ. Then she adds that so doing she is "moving away somewhat from Tillich's own understandings."⁷

That would be my sole disagreement with her. I believe, on the contrary, that it is exactly Tillich's

mind in his *Dogmatik* of 1925. There, thesis ten reads as follows: "A revelation is perfect (*vollkommen*) when its way of salvation comprises the shaking of all ways of salvation."⁸ This is quite a universal-philosophical statement indeed. And it is intended to be so, since, according to Tillich, all the theses of the Introduction are "dogmatic as to their content, while they belong to philosophy of religion as regards to their form."⁹ This is thesis three of the *Dogmatik*, whereas the previous one sets the distinction between the *dogmatic* level of religious knowledge, which is concrete and normative, the *philosophical* level, which is general-universal, and the *historical* level.¹⁰

This tripartite distinction had been fully evolved in *The System of the Sciences* of 1923, but it is already clearly stated in the 1919 lecture "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture." In the first part of the lecture, entitled "Theology and Philosophy of Religion," Tillich discerns three forms of the sciences of culture, or the sciences of spirit: "the philosophy of culture which attends to the universal forms, the *a priori* of all culture; the philosophical history of the cultural values, which, through the abundance of concretizations, constitutes the transition from universal forms to its own individual standpoint, which it thereby justifies; and finally, the normative science of culture, which brings the concrete standpoint to a systematic expression."¹¹ Then, Tillich adds this important remark "about the relation of the philosophy of culture and the normative systematics of culture: They belong together and stand in correlation. Not only is theology oriented towards the philosophy of religion, but the reverse is also the case.... Every universal-philosophical concept which is not conceived as a normative concept on a concrete basis, is empty."¹²

This is most important with regard to interreligious dialogue. Starting from its concrete-confessional standpoint, a Christian theologian must reach a more universal position in philosophy of religion. This is what Mary Ann rightly advocates. But in so doing, the theologian is not liberated from the cultural law of gravitation. At the highest point of philosophy of religion, one is always bound to his own religious basis. He remains a Christian philosopher of religion.

We may read here, in the first chapter of the book, a very interesting counterexample: "John Hick," writes Mary Ann, "has called for a switch from a Ptolomaic understanding of religion to a Copernican viewpoint."¹³ This means "a shift from the

dogma that Christianity is at the center to the thought that it is God who is at the center and that all the religions of mankind, including our own, serve and revolve around him.”¹⁴ But the Copernican character of that shift is quite illusory, I think, since such a theocentric God remains the Christian God. Hick is quite aware of it; so, he will rather speak of a shift from the Christ to the Real. However, in the conversation with the Buddhists, such a Real will, once more, be unmasked as an Occidental and Christian Ultimate. So, they will foster, for their part, another shift, from “real” or “being” to “nothingness.”¹⁵ That is not surprising; it is a wonderful illustration of the correlation of philosophy of religion and theology.

A last remark concerning Mary Ann Stenger. She concludes her chapter on Buddhism and Ultimacy with these words: “We cannot resolve the question of whether different paths (different experiences and expressions) lead to the same ultimate, but we can suggest that the differences are not total and when explored reveal important similarities.”¹⁶ This statement is most important. It means that, in spite of all the cultural and religious differences, we finally all enjoy the same humanity. That is, I think, the last protecting fence against racism, and we should be grateful to Mary Ann for that reminder.

II. Ronald H. Stone on Religious Socialism

I turn now to Ronald Stone’s contribution, more especially to his three chapters on religious socialism. And I begin with the beautiful chapter nine, where Ron singles out three particular moments of Tillich’s commitment to socialism: the Berlin Kairos Circle of the 1920s; the Frankfurt School at the beginning of the 1930s; and the Fellowship of Socialist Christians in the United States of the late 1930s and 1940s.

Concerning the Berlin years, Stone gives in a few pages an impressive detailed account of the political situation prevailing there after World War I and the Revolution of November 1918.¹⁷ We are naturally inclined to think that in those years, when Tillich was elaborating his doctrine of the kairos, the political sky of Germany was becoming clearer. On the contrary, Tillich’s first writings on religious socialism were worked out in the political turmoil of Berlin. It is not surprising then to hear Stone saying that they “expressed the spirit of utopianism more than...belief-ful realism.”¹⁸ The spirit of utopianism was certainly required, at that time, to overcome, to

transcend somewhat the actual situation, to look above the situation at the new era that might come.

With regard to the Frankfurt years, Ron Stone recalls that “Tillich’s closest friends in the Institute (of Social Research)—Adorno, Horkheimer, and Marcuse—were all involved in psychoanalysis and/or the relationship of sociological theory to Freudian theory.”¹⁹ That explains Tillich’s shift of emphasis in the United States, from Marx to Freud. It does not mean, however, that Tillich had moved away from Marx. On the contrary, Ron affirms that “the lifelong, primary-dialogue partner to Paul Tillich’s Protestantism was Marxism.” And as a proof of it, he recalls the unpublished report of Tillich on “The Christian and the Marxist View of Man,” written first in 1935, with a developed version in 1959.²⁰

Thereby, we are carried back to the previous chapter, chapter eight, which deals with Tillich on the boundary of Protestantism and Marxism. Ron Stone here calls our attention to the use of Max Weber in Tillich’s early socialist writings, especially in the 1926 book on *The Religious Situation*.²¹ No doubt, the concept “the spirit of capitalism” is borrowed from Weber, and we would be well-advised to push further the investigation along that line. However, I wonder if Max Weber does not reach Tillich very often through Ernst Troeltsch. This might be the case with the concept of “ideal-types,”²² especially when it is used in the interreligious dialogue, as in the Bampton Lectures.²³

Anyhow, this is certainly the case with the concept “principle,” as explained in the Introduction of *The Socialist Decision*: “The word *principle* is used to refer to the summarizing characterization of a political group,” writes Tillich, since “the logic of essence is inadequate in face of historical realities.”²⁴ Here, in a footnote, Tillich explicitly refers to Troeltsch’s essay “Was heisst ‘Wesen des Christentums?’”²⁵

That introduces me to the main question I would like to raise in connection with this chapter on the relation between Protestantism and Marxism in Tillich’s thought. When Tillich is speaking about Protestantism and Marxism, obviously he is not concerned with Protestantism in general, not even with Lutheranism in general. What he has in mind is the Protestant principle, which refers to justification through faith, but also, and even more, to the prophetic protest against every human claim to absolute truth and authority. In this connection, let me quote

at length Ron's very accurate comment on the Tillichian doctrine of the kairos:

In the moment of kairos the absolute is expressed, but yet it is not an absolute.... The proper response in such a situation is to refrain from trying to capture the absolute; rather one should surrender to it. Christ as the one who surrenders the self is clearly the norm for life in moments of kairos. As Christ reveals the individual surrendering to the universal, so in moments of personal kairos or social kairos the particular is to be surrendered to the universal. Clearly, Tillich is using his Christology as a formulation for philosophy of history, but for him the secular images of "the third epoch of world history" or the "Kingdom of God" can express the same reality.²⁶

Note that we find here again the same Christological principle referred to by Mary Ann Stenger in the context of interreligious dialogue. Note also the shift from a Pauline Christology of the Cross to the proclamation of the Kingdom of God by the Jesus of the Gospels. Of course, both are expressions of the same Christian reality, but it is not the same expression. Tillich himself makes it very clear when he raises the question of the norm in the *Systematic Theology*. "For modern Protestantism," he writes, the norm "was the picture of the synoptic Jesus," while "for recent Protestantism it has been the prophetic message of the Kingdom of God." Then he adds: "The norm of systematic theology is not identical with the 'critical principle for all theology.' The latter is negative and protective; the norm must be positive and constructive."²⁷

So the norm of Tillich's *Systematic Theology* is not the Protestant principle as such, but "the New Being in Jesus as the Christ."²⁸ This is, of course, a more positive and constructive formulation; but it is still a Pauline concept. Tillich writes in a footnote here: "While Barth's Pauline protest against liberal theology agrees with that of the Reformer and is dependent on Paul's protective doctrine of justification through faith, the Paulinism of the present system is dependent on Paul's constructive doctrine of the New Creation in Christ which included the prophetic eschatological message of the new eon."²⁹

My own feeling on the question is that it is very hard to build a consequent social theology on the sole foundation of the Pauline epistles. This is too frail a basis. For such an endeavor, the Gospel of the Kingdom of God seems to be a necessary starting point. And I think this is acknowledged by Tillich himself at the very beginning of his chapter "On the Boundary Between Lutheranism and Socialism."

It is comparatively easy to move into socialism from Calvinism, especially in the more secularized forms of later Calvinism. By way of Lutheranism, the road to socialism is very difficult. I am a Lutheran by birth, education, religious experience, and theological reflection. I have never stood on the boundary between Lutheranism and Calvinism, not even after I experienced the disastrous consequences of Lutheran social ethics and came to recognize the inestimable value of the Calvinistic idea of the Kingdom of God in the solution of social problems.³⁰

So, besides many others well indicated by Ronald Stone, this might be a theological reason explaining Tillich's ideological shift from socialism to existentialism in the United States: his whole Pauline theology was driving him that way.

A last word about chapter ten, on "Religious Socialism and Liberation Theology." I was very interested by the debate on justice that fills the major part of the chapter. On the one hand, according to Ismael Garcia's dissertation, "justice is the central concern of liberation theology."³¹ On the other hand, Ron Stone notices that "justice was not the central term of Paul Tillich's religious-socialist polemic against capitalism."³² And I think the same is true of Marxist socialism in general.

If we consider now what liberation theologians, Gustavo Gutiérrez especially, have to say about justice, we realize that: first, we don't find in their writings a theory of justice;³³ second, the awareness of justice comes indirectly through the awareness and the denunciation of injustice, particularly the injustices done to the poor;³⁴ third, "any formal definition of justice [should] come from the needs of the poor;"³⁵ fourth and finally, such a formal and theoretical concept of justice requires as a presupposition a commitment to solidarity with the poor.³⁶

Here we see that there is no given universal conception of justice that might be applied to the concrete situations of history. Such a preconception of justice exists, of course, but it is nothing else than the ideological expression of the extant order. How to disclose, then, the injustices of such a prevailing social order? The answer is clear enough: this can be done by looking at the oppressed, at those who suffer from such an order. That is the Marxist claim of the epistemological privilege of the proletariat, which means the privileged situation of the oppressed, as a standpoint that allows to see and to denounce the injustices of the established order.

Interesting enough, this brings us back to Tillich's epistemological theory I referred to in my dis-

cussion on Mary Ann Stenger's work. In his 1919 lecture, "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," Tillich writes indeed: "Every universal concept in a science of culture is either unusable or it is a concealed normative concept; it is either an alleged description of something that does not exist or it is the expression of a standpoint."³⁷ This is proving true, not only for religion and for art but also, and above all, for ethical-universal concepts, such as the concept of justice.

So, many thanks, Mary Ann and Ron, for this wonderful piece of work, which allows for so many important and interesting discussions.

¹ Mary Ann Stenger and Ronald H. Stone, *Dialogues of Paul Tillich* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2002), 10.

² *Ibid.*, 11.

³ Paul Tillich, *What Is Religion?*, edited and with an Introduction by James Luther Adams (New York, Evanston and London: Harper & Row, 1969), 124. Cf. *Dialogues of Paul Tillich*, 11, note 10, and 33, note 75.

⁴ *Dialogues of Paul Tillich*, 11-12.

⁵ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 2 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 9. Cf. *Dialogues of Paul Tillich*, 33, note 75.

⁶ Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), 97. Cf. *Dialogues of Paul Tillich*, 71.

⁷ *Dialogues of Paul Tillich*, 77-78.

⁸ Paul Tillich, *Dogmatik. Marburger Vorlesung von 1925*, Herausgegeben von Werner Schüßler (Düsseldorf: Partmos Verlag 1986), 62.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 30.

¹¹ Paul Tillich, *Main Works/ Hauptwerke*, 2, 71; translated by W.B. Green in *What Is Religion?*, 156-157; trans. by V. Nuovo in *Visionary Science* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 20.

¹² *Main Works/ Hauptwerke*, 2, 71-72; *What Is Religion?*, 158; *Visionary Science*, 21.

¹³ *Dialogues of Paul Tillich*, 12.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 17.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁷ *Dialogues of Paul Tillich*, 166-170.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 173.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 178.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 157.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 152.

²² *Ibid.*, 154.

²³ Paul Tillich, *Main Works/ Hauptwerke*, 5, 310-311.

²⁴ Paul Tillich, *The Socialist Decision*, translated by Franklin Sherman (New York: Harper & Row, 1977), 9; *Dialogues of Paul Tillich*, 154.

²⁵ Tillich, *The Socialist Decision*, 165.

²⁶ *Dialogues of Paul Tillich*, 169; cf. Paul Tillich, *The Protestant Era*, translated by James Luther Adams (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1966), 43.

²⁷ Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. I, 48.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 49-50.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 51, note 13.

³⁰ Paul Tillich, *On the Boundary. An Autobiographical Sketch* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), 74.

³¹ *Dialogues of Paul Tillich*, 190.

³² *Ibid.*, 193.

³³ *Ibid.*, 93.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 191.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 190.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 192.

³⁷ Paul Tillich, *Main Works/ Hauptwerke*, 2, 70; *What Is Religion?*, 156; *Visionary Science*, 19-20.

PAULUS: THEN AND NOW**BY JOHN J. CAREY**

A PANEL DISCUSSION ON THE NEW BOOK
PUBLISHED BY MERCER PRESS IN 2002.

JOHN CAREY

I welcome this opportunity to share a few remarks about my book before we hear from the respondents. I will be brief in my remarks today to save most of our time for our discussants.

As my academic career at Agnes Scott College came to an end, I was working on an article on Tillich's ethics, and I began to reflect back on work I had done on Tillich and especially about the various papers I had presented to the meetings of the Tillich Society. That gave me the idea of organizing some of my work into this book. The title of the book, *Paulus: Then and Now*, signals that the book is organized into two main parts. Part I deals with several foundational aspects of Tillich's thought which, in my judgment, deserved fuller consideration: how Luther and Lutheranism influenced him, how much he drew from Marx, how the political and social climate of Germany in the 1920's shaped his interest in political theory, and how he understood the authority of the Bible. Most Tillich scholars have been generally aware of these cultural and intellectual influences on Tillich, but I have attempted to delve into each one of these topics in more specific detail. I hoped that these four chapters might help us understand better Tillich's assumptions and theological world. These chapters might be understood as searchlights on Tillich "then."

Part II deals with the relevance of some of Tillich's insights into the present situation. These chapters all deal with Tillich "now." This section has five chapters which explore whether Tillich's assessment of the human situation in *The Courage To Be* (1952) can still be regarded as a helpful assessment of life as we enter the third millennium; whether his understanding of *eros* is still helpful amid today's discussions of human sexuality; whether his interpretation of the doctrine of creation (when compared to the thought of Langdon Gilkey and Sallie McFague) can contribute to the modern discussion of science and religion; whether Tillich's system can survive the criticisms of postmodernism; and whether his approach to ethics is still be viable

after the attack on his personal life by various feminists. All of these topics are complex, and I cannot explicate them further here. These topics, however, will give you a sense of the problems I have addressed, and maybe whet your appetite for purchasing the book!

The book actually has a third part, too. This final section contains three Appendices which describe (1) the Harvard Tillich Archive, (2) the Tillich Archive at the University of Marburg in Germany, and (3) my banquet address at the annual meeting in Orlando in 1998 about the founding of the North American Paul Tillich Society in 1974 and 1975. I expanded the Appendix on the Marburg Archive to include a discussion of contemporary German Tillich scholarship, since those developments are not readily available to most English speaking scholars. This book is not an attempt to systematically analyze Tillich's contribution to Christian theology. That work has been done. My book may be most helpful to younger Tillich scholars who are not aware of much of the secondary work that has been done on Tillich, and who may wonder whether Tillich's insights can still illumine contemporary theological debates. I have tried to establish some critical distance from Tillich, but I believe that readers will detect my belief that Tillich still has much to offer a new generation

I appreciate the help of Mutie Farris, Tillich's daughter, for searching family scrapbooks and providing previously unpublished family photographs which show us Paulus's humanity. Edd Rowell, the Editor-in-Chief at Mercer University Press, was a great help in sharpening issues and pushing me toward greater clarity. Anything that remains unclear is my fault and not his.

Response by THOMAS BANDY
"The Quest for Absolutes Today"

The invitation to comment on John Carey's new book *Paulus Then and Now* is welcome, because I continue to brood about the astonishing, paradoxical relevance of Tillich's ideas (and those of his disciples) amid the diversity of spiritually questing publics with whom I annually interact. My perspective may be unique in this Society, precisely because I do not have any vantage point from within the academy. This year alone, I taught face-to-face in about 50 cities, and interacted with about 5000 seekers and

leaders from a multitude of cultures, languages, economies, religious backgrounds, and theological perspectives, and the ideas that we in the Society directly attribute to Tillich remain surprisingly influential. Let's not even talk about e-mail...

I.

John Carey summarizes the postmodern experience as one of multi-cultural diversity, cross-disciplinary conversation, and unpredictable change—an experience postmodern missionaries call “speed, flux, and blur.” Postmodern perspective bears these assumptions:

—The contextual nature of thought which makes all interpretations of meaning relative to place, personhood, and culture;

—The subjective nature of judgment that weighs relative impact but can never be conclusive;

—The pragmatic nature of epistemology that requires no “absolutes” in order to know and negotiate the known world.

All this may be so, but then John makes a remarkable statement: “But one thing is true,” he says, “the meta-narratives are gone.”

Are they? Is the quest for absolutes merely dependent on whom we find authoritative, how we envision faith, or how any one person interprets religion and culture? If the events of recent times, and the passion for spirituality, and the global spread of Christianity and Islam suggest anything, it is that meta-narratives are more powerful than ever. It is not just that there are competing meta-narratives (there certainly are!) but that behind all of this is a conviction that meta-narrative is possible and that the quest for it is worth dying for. There is a compulsion, a drive common to the micro-cultures emerging around the earth that leads beyond personal truth, to a larger corporate vision, and ultimately to a convergence with the Holy.

Are meta-narratives gone? Or is it more accurate to say that the European–North American experiential axis, and the elite and learned academy within it, are no longer the people best qualified to articulate them? The assumption that truth should be recognized as knowledge, and in turn lead to Logos, and then inevitably precipitate Agape is no longer potent for the articulation of a meta-narrative. Instead, truth must be recognized as vision, and, in turn, lead to Chaos, and then inevitably precipitate Eros. It is the hope for meta-narrative that *is* the meta-narrative. It is the conviction that there is one, even though any

particular expression of it may be inadequate. More than this, even, it is the conviction that “adequacy” itself, if it were achieved, would in fact be no real test of “authenticity,” because any vision that could be summarized in word or thought would no longer be worth dying for.

This is why Tillich's ideas (leaning as they do on Schelling, Boehme, Marx, Bergson, Berdyaev, Nietzsche, Buber, William James, and even Heidegger) are still so relevant in the postmodern world. The ontology of infinite import that simultaneously employs and shatters all forms; and the metaphysics of power, justice, and love; and the dialectical unity of agape and eros; and the lived experience of autonomy, heteronomy, and theonomy, all remain paradoxically influential for the postmodern quest for absolutes.

I say this is “paradoxical” because it is a hidden quest. If you quantify research or read contemporary literature or question academic lecturers, you will be told that nobody believes in “absolutes” and the quest is over. But if absolutes have more to do with vision, chaos, and Eros than knowledge, logos, and agape, why would anyone be satisfied with such research? The hidden quest for absolutes emerges when you dialogue with micro-cultures, talk unofficially in the corridors, and stand in the midst of battlefields. That is where Tillich's ideas capture the imagination of the public.

II.

What, then, are the “absolutes” that lie at the heart of the “hidden quest” of the postmodern, multi-cultural, cross-disciplinary, spiritually yearning publics?

The desire for God. This is the same “God above god,” or the “God beyond theism,” that Tillich (and the company for whom he speaks) described. It is the vision of that which forever escapes human articulation, but which constantly and uncontrollably shapes human experience. Everyone may not share Tillich's own addiction to conceptualization, which led him to describe this God as “Being-Itself,” but each micro-culture contains the conviction that “the truth is out there” or “the vision awaits its time”.

The desire for God. This is the yearning to merge oneself with the Holy and experience what Tillich called inexhaustible, infinitely full, but indefinite “power of being” (*My Search for Absolutes*, Touchstone, 1967, 82). This is the Eros that is even more fundamental than Logos, because it makes the

full participation of subject and object possible in a more profound experience of “knowing” as “merging.”

The “beliefful realism” of the human situation.

This is the connectedness of the infinite and finite in which both culture and nature become bridges and portals of both power and meaning. Cultural and natural forms become symbols that point beyond themselves, but also portals through which infinite import tugs on the heart and intervenes in the alienation, angst, and anger of human experience.

The meta-narrative of redemption. This is the “story-line” among “real people” that may be told in many ways, with many metaphors, weaving through any number of ideological and theological perspectives, that nevertheless is about radical separation, passive perseverance or aggressive struggle, and final acceptance. Tillich connects the meta-narrative of redemption with the unconditional character of the moral imperative, but postmodern publics go beyond ethics to link meta-narrative with the apocalyptic power of being itself. Moderns expect a meta-narrative to be their meta-narrative, rendered manageable through obedience. Postmoderns expect a meta-narrative to be God’s meta-narrative, uncontrollably experienced in unpredictable moments.

Tillich argues that “absolute relativism” is not only a logical contradiction in terms, but also an existentially unendurable experience. Radical skepticism is not possible without some absolute to be skeptical about, nor is it of any practical value in living unless it drives a deeper yearning for unity. According to Tillich, obsessive relativism drives people to ask why, then, is there something, and not nothing? The postmodern public would turn that question around, and ask why, then, is there nothing, and not something? Whichever way you ask the question, however, the dialectic of being and non-being remains at the center of the human condition.

III.

It is no accident that *The Courage to Be* remains one of the all-time best-selling books in philosophical theology among postmodern publics. The theme of “courage” is now the key category of authenticity that measures leadership in a time of speed, flux, and blur. It is not professionalism, or intellectualism, or political savvy, or personality type that generates the best leaders in any discipline, but their “courage” to stake financial security, career path, interpersonal relationships, and even personal health to pursue

something of infinite and unconditional worth. In other words, the readiness to make transparent the hidden quest for the absolute that lies buried under all the chatter about relativism requires a degree of “courage” that is beyond the capacity of many people—and, to be brutally honest, especially beyond the capacity of the current generation of modern seminary graduates busily empowering the death of congregations all across North America today.

Here is how Tillich’s “Courage to Be” translates into postmodern experience.

The courage of dis-harmonized hope

The modern elevation of harmony to “cult” status (whether in “church families,” “national ethos,” or “global village”) has led to an enforced concord that destroys the very thing it seeks. The Courage to Be today is the courage to see Kairos in the chaos: the hidden potential in people, the hidden possibilities in situations, the hidden resources in selfhood, and the hidden purposes in life. It is the courage to walk the boundary between love and prophecy, conscious that you will inevitably be inappropriate.

The courage of lifestyle credibility

The modern obsession with professionalism, certification, and authority (the rehearsed word, the orderly ritual, and the strategically planned deed) has led to a corporate hypocrisy that defeats the very “quest for quality” that it seeks. The Courage to Be today is the courage to let truth be revealed through the unrehearsed word, spontaneous experience, and entrepreneurial deed that allow others to measure the real depths of our spirits. It is the courage to walk the boundary between authenticity and ego, conscious that you will inevitably be unpopular.

The courage of missional urgency

The modern over-confidence in progressive justice and educational process has led to a timidity of action and hesitancy to articulate faith motivation that betrays the very inclusiveness that it seeks. The Courage to Be today is a “heart burst” of simultaneous service and witness that places the true well being of another micro-culture above preservation of my membership privileges. It is the courage to walk the boundary between rejection and passion, conscious that you will inevitably be politically incorrect.

The courage of letting go

The modern pride in achievement and success has led to a compulsion to control that undermines the very creativity it seeks. The Courage to Be today is a readiness to surrender power over product, proc-

ess, and people. More than this, it is the audacity to risk even the hope that has been realized, and the lifestyle that is accepted, and the mission that has been achieved, trusting that a still greater participation of finite experience and infinite meaning can yet be realized. It is the courage to walk the boundary between self-mastery and self-surrender, conscious that you will inevitably be premature.

IV.

In the era in which Tillich wrote, no one remotely anticipated the resurgence of spirituality, the overthrow of secularity, the global acceleration of Christian and Islamic movements, and the re-emergence of the Jesus meta-narrative as both a theological and political key to the discernment of destiny. Tillich himself refers to Jesus only twice in *The Courage to Be*, and in the *Systematic Theology* passes all too quickly through the “reality of Christ” to concentrate on the “life of the Spirit”. Tillich is too easily sidetracked to redefine the Trinity in terms of the life processes described by Schelling, or to dismiss the Trinity as a Protestant neurosis about fatherhood.

The postmodern Christian today is attempting to find the Christological center in the courage to be that Tillich largely ignored. Yet, the seeds of a Christology are there in Tillich’s own critique of post-Nicean theology and reassessment of the Chalcedon confession. The Jesus narrative is crucial, not because of its theoretical sense, but because of its existential urgency. Tillich’s intuition of the power of atonement as the participation of the infinite and the finite fully experienced in the incarnation, and his perception that the hope of redemption for culture and nature lies in participation with the New Being, hints at a recovery of the Christological conviction of the earliest church. Tillich asks the right question: Why was the early binitarian trend of thinking about God and Christ overcome by Trinitarian symbolism? (See *Systematic Theology* III, 289, 292). Yet, he fails to explore the answer. If Tillich is to maintain relevance to the emerging post-modern world, Tillich scholars need to wrestle with this question.

Response by DONALD F. DREISBACH

John Carey has done us all a service with his new book. He has published some previously un-

available and quite interesting pictures from the Tillich family album. Further, the content of the book is quite useful, especially the first two chapters on subjects every half-competent Tillich scholar knows about. No, I am not damning with faint praise. Everybody know that Tillich was raised a Lutheran and ordained a Lutheran. But what, exactly, is Lutheran about Tillich’s work, or, to be more precise, what of Martin Luther himself do we see in Tillich’s work? I have read some Luther, but not much, and would be hard put to answer such a question, beyond some obvious statements about grace and acceptance.

Similarly, everybody knows that Tillich was engaged in left-wing politics in Weimar Germany and that one of his early book was *The Socialist Decision*. Obviously, he was influenced by Marx. But just what did Tillich take from Marx and what did he reject? Again, I would be hard put to give a very precise answer to that question. Fortunately, it is just these questions that Carey answers in his first two chapters. The chapters are relatively short, roughly twenty pages with type large enough not to strain these aging eyes, but John’s prose is very economical, with issues and responses clearly laid out. Further, there are many footnotes, many of them references to primary sources that I did not know existed. This would be a dandy book to give to students who are beginning serious Tillich research in these areas.

Marx

Let me begin with Marx, another Lutheran, sort of.¹ Tillich was, among the first Christian thinkers to see in Marx a prophetic voice. After nearly three decades of Liberation Theology, this seems quite unremarkable, but at the time Tillich was writing about Marx, it must have taken more than a little courage for a Christian writer to say anything positive about Marx, the great enemy of religion, even though, compared to Isaiah’s or Amos’s, Marx’s attack on religion is pretty tame.

In Tillich’s view, Marx, like the prophets, saw history as a dynamic struggle between good and evil (29). Tillich emphasized Marx’s demand for justice and for an end to the dehumanizing conditions of work, rather than his questionable interpretation of history (30-31). And Tillich sees Marx’s demand to change the world, not just to understand it, as similar to the notion of *kairos*, which calls not just for understanding, but for decision and action (31-32)

On the other hand, Marx rejects any notion of a transcendent Unconditioned (30). And Tillich rejects

the elevation of the proletariat to the status of the only proper revolutionary class. Rather, the future rests with those of all classes who are open to the demands of the Unconditioned in the *kairos* (34). In this, Tillich was ahead of his time. After Foucault and others, it is hard for even a sympathetic Marxist to see class as the sole, or perhaps even the most important, structure of oppression. Class relations themselves are much more muddled than they were in Marx's time. How would we regard the Baseball Strike: Class warfare between two different strata of millionaires?

As a continuation of his chapter on Tillich and Marx, John adds a chapter on Tillich's political activity in Germany. I haven't space to pursue the details here, but John does show that Tillich had a sympathetic understanding of the motives of those on the right. At the same time, he saw the left as responding to the demands of the Unconditioned for improvement. While he was, therefore, always on the side of the left, Tillich also had a concern about the dogmatism of the left. Would that his conciliatory voice be heard in left-wing groups today.

Luther

Let us move on, or move back, to Martin Luther. In a way, a comparison of Tillich to Luther is more difficult than a comparison of Tillich to Marx. Although Tillich and Marx were quite different, the questions they dealt with—the meaning of history, social justice in general, and so forth—were, if not identical, at least parallel. Luther and Tillich had different questions and different methodologies. Luther writes to a wide variety of issues of his time; Tillich does too, but to a lesser extent, and he is much more of a systematic theologian, and in this, is closer to St. Thomas Aquinas than to Luther. Luther's big question was: "How can I believe in a merciful God?" Tillich's was: "How can one be a believer in the modern age?" (8-9)

Still, there are clear influences. The one I found most interesting is Carey's statement that "though Luther waxed eloquent on forgiveness and restoration, he had little sense of sanctification or, as we might say, growth in the religious life" (18). In this, Luther differs from both the Catholic and much of the Protestant tradition. We do not find exactly the same thing in Tillich, but something very close. For him, salvation is always partial and fragmentary. Everyone possesses the New Being, but no one has it completely. We never completely transcend es-

trangement from God or ourselves. All of this seems to me to echo Luther's claim that we are at the same time both justified and sinful, *simul justus et peccator* (16).

Let me push this a little further, perhaps going beyond what is really Luther's influence, perhaps not. I see in Tillich a tragic view of life. The experience of acceptance by the God above God may empower and encourage one to confront the power of non-being, but this confrontation is itself partial and finite, and in the end, non-being wins. We die, we lose our being, we *are not*. All the meaning and value that we have established during our brief lives, in the face of guilt and meaninglessness, might be picked up by our posterity, but is lost to us. I know, in the latter part of the third volume of the *Systematic Theology* we find that we will be eternally remembered, that we, in a sense, return to God, so ending our estrangement. But this comes as a surprise. Nothing in any of Tillich's earlier writing prepares us for this, and it does not seem to me really to fit into Tillich's system. It strikes me not as a symbolic statement, but as an escape into imagination, poetry, and maybe even wishful thinking.

The Courage to Be

As I seem to have wondered from Luther to *The Courage to Be*, let me say a bit about John's interesting chapter on this book. Among other things, he informs us that the book has been a gold-mine for Yale University Press, which has sold more than 411,000 copies, with more sales coming. I wonder how many of us in the teaching racket assign *The Courage to Be* in one or more of our courses.

John calls *The Courage to Be* a brilliant book (59), but wonders if its gloomy analysis of human existence is still relevant, or even if it applied to the majority of Americans in the fifties. I saw the Eisenhower years through the jaundiced eyes of a teenager, but I do remember that being advised to dig a fall-out shelter in the back yard was not comforting. And I think Tillich's concern with meaninglessness is still quite relevant, and not just among "pockets of despair" in America (58). In teaching the book in my Existentialism course, I find that with just a little help undergraduate students can deal with Tillich's ontological language. As for the despair of meaninglessness, I remind them that the second greatest cause of death among people their age is suicide, led only by auto accidents, many of which are more or less suicidal. I realize that there are

many causes for suicide, from bio-chemical imbalances to broken love affairs, but certainly if one sees life as sensible, as offering self-fulfilling, meaningful possibilities, one is much less likely to roll out of bed in the morning and reach for the razor blades. And students do respond to this, since many of them know someone who committed suicide, or tried to.

What I find most difficult in teaching this book is making plausible the experience of being grasped by the God above God, the finding of oneself accepted in spite of being in despair about oneself. Tillich's example is someone like Sartre writing a book about the meaninglessness of existence, thus affirming meaning in the face of meaninglessness. But my students do not write books. What can I point to in their experience that is, or is like, this experience? The best I can come up with is getting over a broken love affair. The only woman I could ever love, my soul-mate, leaves me, leaving me in despair, rejected, unattractive, sexually incompetent. Then some cute girl smiles at me, and I respond. Is that the God above God? If anybody has a better example, please tell me about it.

Conclusion

After reading John's chapters on Marx and Luther, I could not help but think that I wish John or somebody with his talent for brevity and insight would produce something like this, twenty to thirty clear, pithy pages, on the relation of Tillich to

Nietzsche. I would rather have this than articles on Freud, Kierkegaard, Schelling, or anybody else. I think so much of Tillich is a dialogue with Nietzsche, taking some things, such as the death of the god of theism, and rejecting others, yet I would be hard put to say much about this beyond obvious generalities.

I think this even more strongly after reading John's chapter on Tillich's ethics. I have written a bit on this subject and am not particularly proud of it. I find in the *Systematic Theology* an odd mix of Aristotle and Kant. Certainly, Tillich never gives us a clear set of arguments setting out his ethical position. Often what he says is more implied than directly argued. Carey avoids the trees and manages to see the forest. He sees Tillich's ethics as one of self-affirmation, with a strong sense of risk and isolation, with obvious ties to Nietzsche. John does not argue the point at length, but he does make enough textual references to persuade me.

Thanks, John, for a helpful and very readable book.

¹ Marx's father, born a Jew, was baptized Lutheran, perhaps because Prussian law forbade a Jew from employment in the Civil Service. Whether Karl was also baptized I don't know.

² Page references to Carey's *Paulus Then & Now* will be cited parenthetically.

**PAUL TILlich AND THE RECONSTRUCTION
OF SIN AND SALVATION IN ISLAMIC
THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY**

Jawad Ashr

A modern systematic anthropological theology has yet to be developed in an Islamic methodical discourse. Terms such as sin, salvation, and redemption have been locked up in Islamic tradition but little effort has been given to the daunting task of linking the traditional Islamic theology with modern currents of thought. Such an enterprise, considering the wealth and complex nature of traditional Islamic theology is no doubt a prodigious task. This paper

will thus deal with only the initial questions of a systematic anthropological theology, i.e. what is sin or the human condition and what is salvation or resolution to sin? As perhaps in any religious tradition, the Islamic religious tradition has innumerable volumes of works on sin including both pragmatic as well as ideal works but most emerged in the medieval era, within the framework of medieval Muslim thought. The purpose of this paper is to present a modern account of sin in consonance with modern thought currents. For this, again, I have chosen to reconstruct sin and salvation on the method of a systematic anthropological theology, which correlates sin with the human condition, and salvation as resolution to the problematic of the human condition.

A world-view or an ideology is legitimated, efficacious and thus enduring only to the degree that it

can successfully conceptualize or make contextual and thus make sense out of the flux of the vicissitudes of history and historical forces at play. This is especially relevant in the last three centuries of modernity and modernization where practically every domain of human thought and experience, from the epistemological to the ontological in philosophy to the sociological and anthropological precipitation of such philosophies in concrete history, have been transformed in a profound manner. Any ideology, be it a faith-tradition based or a philosophical one, which is unable or unwilling to engage in dialogue with the ubiquitous reality of modernity will eventually cease to be an actor on the stage of history. It risks the loss of plausibility and the ultimate ends of non-being.¹ For the Christian faith-tradition, Paul Tillich has lead modern theologians in the daunting task of enabling the Christian faith-tradition to dialogue with the intellectual tradition of modernity and offer a pragmatic theological framework to incorporate it, thus preventing it from what he would term non-being. Since I have said that Muslim thought has yet to embark on a similar enterprise, I will thus reconstruct the theological concepts of sin and salvation in consonance with Tillich's thought which I find rather congenial to the Islamic theological disposition. I intend to illustrate that the concepts of sin and salvation in Islamic anthropology are very close, if not identical, with Tillich's.

Sin and Salvation in Tillich's Thought

In order to understand theological terms such as sin and salvation and the symbols that they manifest in Tillichian thought, an understanding of Tillich's ontology is indispensable. Ontology for Tillich was "the inquiry into what is for *anything* or *any* realm of beings to be; ontology searches for the structure common to *all* these aspects and fields. The category common to all was for Tillich, being."² The unity of all categories of human experience, from the psychic to the religious, moral, material, and the historical all are united in their virtue of being. From this ontological framework of being' everything is related and thus there exists a unity between all categories. This is especially accentuated in Tillich's conception of religion within the framework of his ontology of being. He delineates the relation of religion to the whole of our being and the world's being with the following points: (1) that religion is ultimate concern and concerns that are ultimate have to do with our being/ non-being. (2) Religion has to do inescapably

with the structure of our being. Religious problems thus represent distortion of our structure while religious answers represent a renewal of the structure of our being. (3) The religious dimension of our experience—that which concerns our being and non-being, difficulties of our essential structure—characterizes, permeates, and dominates both our individual and social existence.³

In resonance with Tillich's ontology of being, Langdon Gilkey explains that estrangement from the underlying unity of being constitutes for Tillich, the first name for evil or sin, and reconciliation, the return of the estranged, is the primary signal of redemption or salvation. It would not be inaccurate then to conclude that since religion was ultimate concern for Tillich, estrangement from God then was the quintessential definition of sin, the effects of which were dangerously embedded in the intellectual disciplines of modernity as well as in the increasing secularization of society at large. This is the general, albeit very crude, outline and structure of Tillich's ontology, which will be the operating structural framework in the reconstruction of sin in Islamic Anthropology.

Sin and Estrangement in Islamic Thought

Since my depiction of sin in Islam will be derived predominately from the Islamic scripture, the Qur'an, it would be prudent to present a cursory overview of it. The centrality of the Qur'an in Islam could best be described through an analogy⁴ of Christ's role in Christianity. In *surah* Al-e-Imran, *ayah* 45, Allah(t) revealed the following:

Behold! The angels said: 'O Mary! Allah will give thee glad tidings of a word (*kalima*) from Him. His name will be Christ Jesus, the son of Mary, held in honor in this world and the hereafter and of (the company of) those nearest to Allah.' (Qur'an 3:45)

In this *ayah*, Christ is referred to as a word (*kalima*) from Allah(t), much like the concept of the logos/word in Christian thought. Remarkably, the Qur'an also refers to itself in more than one place (81:19 and 86:13) as the speech/word of Allah(t). This analogy illustrates the importance of the Qur'an in every sphere/domain of Islam, whether it is in thought or practice. The importance and centrality of the Qur'an in all spheres of Islam is congruent with the importance and centrality of the Christ in Christianity. The Qur'an is the supreme authority and primary source in any Islamic discipline just as

Christ would be if he were among the Christian faith community today.

It would be fallacious to reconstruct sin in a systematic theological anthropology without the Qur'an playing a foundational role. Therefore, my depiction of sin in systematic theology will derive its general fundamental principals solely from the divine scripture, the Qur'an. My focus will concentrate on the verses dealing with the Fall and the three *ayat* of *surah* Al-'Asr (Time through the ages). The English translation is as follows: "By the passage of time. Verily humankind is in loss. Except such as have faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual enjoining of truth, and of patience and constancy" (Qur'an 103:1-3). The salient features of an Islamic theological anthropology are embedded within the text of these concise *ayat*. Therefore, the method of the synthesis of sin and salvation in my theological anthropology will be a proper cohesive and creative exegesis of the *ayat* of *surah* Al-'Asr, utilizing other parts of the Qur'an, especially those passages dealing with the Fall.

The first *ayah* 'Wal-'Asr' or "By the passage of time" is an affirmation of the name of the *surah* "Time through the ages." This passage of time is what we would refer to as history, the same history in which the Qur'an was revealed, Christ performed miracles, Moses lead the Bani-Israel (the children/tribes of Israel) out of bondage and into Sinai, indeed, a history of our world. It is inclusive of the characterizations hitherto given to history such as the "ages of faith" and "the ages of reason." It accepts the evolution of the body, paradigmatic shifts in thought, the explosion in technology, revolutions in ideology, cruelty of human suffering, environmental destruction, and even the possibilities of global annihilation. It is the medium in which we may be able to experience being and at the same time that which is part of our being since this passage of time, this history is a human enterprise. The human being, the most superior of Allah(t)'s creations, was granted power over the earthly resources for his own utility, to shape the forces of change that make history, in short, to shape his own destiny.⁹

The next *ayah* states categorically "Inal Insana la fi Khusr" or "Certainly humankind is lost." The subject of this *ayah*, humankind, is organically linked with the subject of the first *ayah* (time), reinforcing the point that the passage of time (history) is a human enterprise and one necessitates the other.¹⁰ Allah(t) affirms with certainty that in the passage of time that humankind is in a state of con-

tinual loss. This is the paramount problematic of the human condition or sin. This being in a state of loss concerns the individual as well as the collective level and is universal¹¹ in its application. It is as if when Allah(t) created us, He imbued us with auto-suggestive tendencies (perhaps in the unconscious part of our psyche) to eventually enter a state of loss. Being in a state of loss is actually being alienated from the Creator Himself. Being in a state of loss or alienation began with the creation of the first human being as is evidenced in the Fall of Adam and Eve. The following is the Qur'anic depiction of the Fall:

And We said: 'O Adam! Dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden; And eat of the bountiful things therein as (where and when) ye will; but approach not this tree, or ye run into harm and transgression.' Then did Satan make them slip from the (garden), and get them out of the state (of felicity) in which they had been. And We said: 'Get ye down, all (ye people), with enmity between yourselves. On earth will be your dwelling place and your means of livelihood for a time.' Then learnt Adam from his Lord certain words and his Lord turned towards him; for He is Oft-Returning, Most Merciful. We said: 'Get ye down all from here; And if, as is sure, there comes to you Guidance from Me, whosoever follows My guidance, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve. But those who reject faith and belie Our signs they shall be companions of the fire; they abide therein' (Qur'an 2:35-39).

O Adam! dwell thou and thy wife in the Garden, and enjoy (its good things) as ye wish: but approach not this tree lest you become unjust. Then began Satan to whisper suggestions to them' he said: 'Your Lord only forbade you this tree, lest you should become angels or such beings as live for ever. And he swore to them both, that he was their sincere adviser. So by deceit he brought about their fall: when they tasted of the tree' They said: 'Our Lord, we have wronged our own souls: If Thou forgive us not, and bestow not upon us Thy Mercy, we shall Certainly be lost (Qur'an 7:19-23).

Interestingly, Adam and Eve exclaim that if their Lord does not have mercy on them and forgive them, that they will certainly remain lost (refer to the last line of the second passage above). This is the state of being alienated or estranged from God and accordingly begins right with the creation of the first human beings. This alienation is the root cause of sin and manifests itself into all spheres of the human

experience,¹² but most importantly, in the domain of justice.¹³ We may note this when God forbade them from eating from the forbidden tree in 7:19 (observe the first line of the second Qur'anic passage above), He prevented them from eating from it lest they became the unjust, which is linking the first act of sin to alienation and this estrangement to injustice in sort of a necessary connection.

When humankind does become alienated, it forgets God and in a Feurbachian way, replaces this void with himself. When the finite mistakes itself for the unconditional, according to Tillich, it is then when it becomes demonic and estranged.¹⁴ This could only happen when one has forgotten the unconditional itself and this too is illustrated in the fall narrative. This taken to its logical conclusion leads to Nietzsche's¹⁵ nihilism.¹⁶ Nihilism is the apex of a process begun ironically by Adam and Eve who, in an act of disobedience, ate from the forbidden tree. The act of disobedience although, according to Muhammad Iqbal,¹⁷ it marks the beginning of volition for the human species,¹⁸ was an act where in the moment of disobedience as I have said, Adam and Eve had become alienated from God. According to the Qur'anic narrative, when they became cognizant of what they had done, they were contrite and begged for forgiveness. Allah(T) then told them that they were going to be placed on the earth for an appointed time and that He will send their posterity messengers to guide them. Thus their state of loss, their alienation from God was assured, except for those that heeded to the guidance sent by Him through His messengers.¹⁹ This alienation produces different levels of injustice. The Qur'an continually depicts the prototypes of this alienation such as in the personages of the Pharaoh and Nimrod,²⁰ in the nations such as those of Sodom and Gomorrah, and in tribes such as the Bani-Israel, and links their alienation as a direct cause of injustice.²¹ It follows, then, that Nietzsche's abrogation of morality rooted in religion for example, would lead to supreme injustice. His construction of the *ubermensch* (the superman, which will only be a handful of people) would rule at the expense and exploitation of the over-whelming majority, who would include most people who are not courageous or strong enough to devise a new system of morality, apart from their religiously rooted morality, including humanism. It is not only that "God is dead" but also that the morality which He ordained is also to be destroyed. This would lead to a complete alienation from God, a complete state of loss, and it would necessitate a

thoroughly unjust system, as is evident in Nietzsche's conceptualization of the *ubermensch*. This would be in my conceptual framework absolute sin. Therefore, as a general rule, the gradation of sin and alienation from God (being in a state of loss) is directly proportionate to injustice. The alienation and the resultant injustice could be protracted to include the individual²² as well as society in its collective sense.

The forgetting of God and the resultant estrangement is also evident in a profound *ayah* of the Qur'an in *surah* Al-Hashr (the translation of which interestingly enough is "The Banishment") which states, "And be ye not like those who forget Allah; And He made them forget their own selves! Such are the rebellious transgressors!" (Qur'an 59:19). This forgetting of God and the reciprocal effect of being made to forget your own self would be, for Tillich, non-being in the most intensive sense, since we are cognizant of our own being and the ontology of being as the matrix of unity of everything, from the inside. This would be the cardinal sin in Tillich's thought, the resolution of which would be the re-introduction or being cognizant of being which would represent a re-unification from the estrangement of non-being and thus salvation; the resolution to this estrangement or sin, the problematic of the human condition.²³

The Sin Problematic in the age of Progress: The Fall and Estrangement of Humanity

In the age of progress, on a collective level, humankind has advanced tremendously in thought and technological innovation. Modern technology and modes of production have produced so much food, wealth, and goods that no other era in history has paralleled it.²⁴ This only leads us to a grand paradox. Modern progress has indeed developed the technology and has produced the wealth to alleviate the suffering of the masses but paradoxically, global abject poverty and injustice have also risen in the era of modern progress to levels never witnessed in the history of humankind.²⁵ If there is anything existential, it is the fact of global injustice. Indeed, at a collective level, the basic problem of the human condition is that humankind is in a state of loss, and alienated from God, which ultimately manifests itself in global injustice.

Paul Tillich also speaks of sin and the human condition as an "estrangement" from God and from our sense of how things ought to be. Thus for Tillich, the story of the Fall is a story of estrangement

from God, with Christ symbolizing a re-union with the estrangement. This is very congenial with my concept of sin in an Islamic theological anthropology. In his *Systematic Theology*, Tillich goes as far as to state that:

In relation to God, it is not the peculiar sin as such that is forgiven but the act of separation from God and the resistance to reunion with him. The symbol of forgiveness of sins has proved dangerous because it has concentrated the mind on particular sins and their moral quality rather than on the estrangement from God and its religious quality.²⁶

Thus, estrangement or alienation (the state of being lost) is truly and succinctly depicted as sin in Tillichian thought as well as in my assessment of Islamic theological anthropology. Interestingly enough, Tillich also discusses the forgiveness of sin in relation to God's justice. He states:

But God does not stand in a private relation to man, whether a familial relation or an educational relation. He represents the universal order of being and cannot act as though he were a "friendly" father, showing sentimental love toward his children. Justice and judgment cannot be suspended in his forgiveness. Man can believe in forgiveness only if justice is maintained and guilt is confirmed.²⁷

In the Islamic theological anthropology, the relationship between sin or alienation, justice and God, are much more closely linked. As we have already explained, God in Islam is the embodiment of justice; so when we are estranged or alienated from God, we are estranged and alienated from justice as well. It is the Islamic belief that all the Prophets that were sent at different stages of history in different regions of the world came to eradicate this estrangement/ alienation from God and thus establish His justice.²⁸ That is why all of them came and preached about not only God but also His law, and if not law, ethics and divine principals of morality. From this perspective, not only Christ, but also all of the Prophets from Adam to Muhammad (pbuh)²⁹ were symbols of re-union with this estrangement/alienation from God.³⁰

The problem of the human condition is their collective state of loss or alienation from God, which necessitates injustice and oppression. This alienation from God was further augmented in Enlightenment thought and throughout the era that we refer to as modernity. In short, a major paradigm shift took place in Enlightenment thought. Whereas the inquiry

into God, the soul, and the life hereafter was paramount in pre-Enlightenment thought, the object of inquiry was radically altered in modernity. Nature took the place of God, the physical body over the soul, and life here-and-now over an afterlife.³¹ This concluded in the emergence of three major phenomenon which, if are not yet global, are well on their way to becoming global. They are scientism as an epistemology, secularism as a sociology, and capitalism as an ideology. None have anything to do with God or religiosity except to reduce the role of God in the public sphere, the collective socio-political and economic domains of human concern. Some, especially capitalism, are directly responsible for oppression, exploitation, and injustice of much of humanity. Such is the degree of injustice and exploitation of the majority, an injustice resulting directly from the alienation from God, a state of being lost. This is supported by Tillich's thought in his discourse between what is secular and the holy. Tillich states that:

Sin is a state of things in which the holy and the secular are separated, struggling with each other and trying to conquer each other. It is a state in which God is "in addition to" all other things.³²

This clear depiction of secularism is cogently punctuated in the era of modernity. It is an illustration of a society where God and the holy are effectively separated from the public institutions, as is true in secular society, and where the holy begins to compete with the secular in many domains of human experience.³³

So what is salvation or the resolution to sin and the basic problematic with the human condition? Quite logically, it would be the establishment of the just order of God on earth and thereby breaking the collective alienation of humankind. This just order of God in Islam is referred to as *Khilafah*. *Khilafah* is translated into English as vice-regent. The concept of the rule of *Khilafah* is analogous to the role that the viceroy of India played in the imperial aspirations of Britain. During colonization, the viceroy was the supreme ruler of India so long as he did not transgress the bounds of the Queen of England. Similarly, in a *Khilafah* system, humankind are the supreme rulers of the earth so long as they do not transgress the bounds of God. Thus, humankind is mandated by God to stay within the bounds of His laws and, as long as they remain within these bounds, they are free to innovate and shape their own destinies in every domain of the human experi-

ence. This allows and encourages movement and innovation in thought and practice. It must be made perfectly clear at this juncture that the system of *Khilafah* should not be mistaken for a theocracy.³⁴ *Khilafah* only requires that no laws be passed repugnant to the Qur'an and the tradition of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), and as far as who governs, this is decided by the people.³⁵

There are many aspects of the system of *Khilafah* that would require volumes of written work to fully comprehend. Since its establishment is the resolution for sin and the basic problematic of the human condition, I will compare it with the apex of the evolution of modern political and economic thought and the type of society that they have given birth to. For better or worse, democracy and capitalism are considered the best systems to have evolved at this stage of history.³⁶ If nothing else, they have become hegemonic in their influence. If we were to trace the intellectual roots of modern democratic thought, it would lead us to Jean-Jacques Rousseau. In his treatise, *The Social Contract*, Rousseau explains that the foundations of democracy rest in the sovereignty of the general will of the people.³⁷ In Islam, this is nothing less than *shirk*, an associating of someone or something as equals with Allah(t).³⁸ In Islam, sovereignty rests exclusively with Allah(t) while humankind is entrusted with the vice-regency on earth. Popular sovereignty is equivalent to a popular rebellion against God, which is the near-universal state of humankind. The institutionalization of the *Khilafah* is in fact the *de facto* recognition of Allah(t) as the sovereign. It could only serve to affect this alienation of humankind from God in the most profound manner. When every law to be mandated is scrutinized against the scriptural bounds of Allah(t), such an institution could only effect to develop an active conscious of and an organic link with God individually and collectively. God is thereby emancipated from the secular prison of the private sphere of human activity. This gives birth to a society's collective and active consciousness of God, freed from an individualistic and a very private and passive³⁹ awareness of God as is mandated in a secular society. God becomes an existential fact not only in our private dealings—as in a secular society—but also in our collective public affairs. The destruction of secularism in the event of the establishment of the *Khilafah* completes the circle of emancipation from the collective alienation from God, our state of loss or sin, the basic problematic of the human condition.

If one does not take up this “ultimate concern”⁴¹ to establish the *Khilafah*, Allah(t) has addressed such people with an admonition. Not only will there remain an alienation and estrangement from God (and the socio-political economic injustice on earth), but Allah(t) states that such an alienation and estrangement has deeper repercussions. The era of modernity and progress is, as I have already stated, the era of alienation and estrangement from God accompanied with global injustice and oppression. In fact, the epistemology of scientism, sociology of secularism, and the ideology of capitalism have eroded religion and the primacy of God in the sciences as well as our collective practices. It has almost thoroughly destroyed the study of metaphysics. Having (if I may borrow Nietzsche's term) “killed” God, we have also killed our own being, as is threatened by the verse I quoted earlier from surah Al-Hashr (The Banishment) about being aware of forgetting God lest God in return make us forget our own selves and thus our very being. This is because in Islam, as is in many religions, we are endowed with a soul that is from God. The destruction of metaphysics and the inquiry into God also had the effect of marginalizing the inquiry into the study of the soul. Thus, having “killed” God, most of us have killed our own inner being, viewing ourselves only as some highly developed animal, as is the materialistic interpretation of scientism that is in vogue.⁴² Again, for such people, they forget God, so God made them forget themselves.⁴³

Thus far, we have only discussed the basic problematic of the human condition—the nature of sin—and its resolution—the nature of salvation—directly from the first two ayat of surah Al-‘Asr. The third and final ayah of this surah contains the practical means to bring about this resolution or salvation. It is actually a four-step methodology required to bring about a certain change against the status quo. This method has a universal character and could generally be applied to include any form of change and not just the Islamic one, or the *Khilafah* system. The four stages are chronologically ordered and organically linked.

The literal translation of the third ayah of surah Al-‘Asr is: “Except such as have faith, and do righteous deeds, and (join together) in the mutual enjoining of truth, and of patience and constancy” (Qur'an 103:3). From this ayah we could extrapolate the four stages of a revolutionary methodology to bring about a concrete change in society. In chronological order, they are: (1) faith/ideology, (2)

work/deeds, (3) exhorting one another to the truth of your faith/ideology, and (4) persevering with patience. Since the first stage is central and most complex, it will require far more exegetical effort and space to fully comprehend it as compared to the final three stages.

The first stage of this methodology is having genuine faith. This is best understood by utilizing Tillich's concept of ultimate concern. Tillich in *Dynamics of Faith*, states that, "Faith is the state of being ultimately concerned: the dynamics of faith are the dynamics of man's ultimate concern. If it claims ultimacy it demands the total surrender of him who accepts this claim, and it promises total fulfillment even if all other claims have to be subjected to it or rejected in its name."⁴⁴ This ultimate concern is similar to the concepts of ideology, or the German term *weltanschauung*. Thus forth, in Tillich's definition, we could probably include nationalism as well as the many variants of Marxism, socialism, capitalism, and many other "isms" which could serve as ultimate concerns for many people. Many gave the ultimate sacrifice of their lives for these causes in the hopes for ultimate fulfillment relative to their ultimate concerns.

In Islam, the ultimate concern or ideology is Tawheed (the oneness and unity of God). The name of the religion "Islam" itself literally means "submission" to this ultimate concern. Tillich illustrates two types of ultimate concern, a genuine and an idolatrous one. The idolatrous ultimate concern is one that could be identified with a finite material, worldly reality. Such an ultimate concern is liable to disappoint us because it is bound to perish. Tillich depicts the genuine ultimate concern, or God, the transcendent, as the one that keeps eluding us. The transcendence of God is most profoundly expressed and radically adhered to in Islam. The very testimonial of faith in Islam begins with a negation, "La ilaha or there is no God," a negation of everything, especially but not limited to the material worldly concepts or depictions of God. The testimonial of faith in Islam concludes with "illal-lah or except Allah(t)."⁴⁵ A more clear and comprehensive understanding of the transcendence of the God of Islam and Tawheed (His oneness/unity) could be had through the study of surah At-Tawheed which reads: "Say He is God the One and the Alone. He is the Eternal. He neither begets nor is begotten. And none is like unto Him" (Qur'an, 112:1-4).

The first ayah clearly answers pagan and pantheistic conclusions in that God is one and alone in

His oneness. The second is also a refutation of certain classical philosophical propositions such as the co-eternity of matter with God and that God created with pre-existing matter as opposed to creating *ex nihilo*. The third ayah is a clear statement against not only the Christian formulations and doctrines of God but also pagan ones.⁴⁶ The final ayah is radically iconoclastic because it obliterates any possibility of God having any finite, worldly, material, and/or anthropomorphic characteristics in the description of His being or *zat* in the Arabic. Some scholars of Islam have difficulty of even speaking of God as being for it connotes or gives us an image of a tangible God.

With such a radical notion of the transcendence of God, the problematic that follows is then, what exactly is our conception of God? From the Islamic perspective, we only know of who God is through His attributes (*siffat*) and not through His being (*zat*). The attributes (the 99 names of God) are all abstract and immaterial. For example, He is Ar-Rahman (Most Merciful), Al-Hakeem (Most Wise), and the one that I have utilized earlier, Al-'Adl (the embodiment of Justice). Contrary to Karl Barth's view that there are no points of connection between God and man, Islam allows for a few possibilities of points of connection. The Qur'an is made up of surat which embody a collection of three to several ayat. Ayat literally means signs. A sign gives directions or points to the reality of something beyond it. The ayat are signs pointing to God. Similarly, the Qur'an also refers to nature,⁴⁷ history,⁴⁸ and psychology⁴⁹ as ayat. All of these ayat serve as points of connection through which we could know God to the extent possible in our material existence.

Coming back to the concept of faith in an Islamic theological anthropology and placing it back into my conceptual framework, faith is the first stage of a four-stage methodology to eradicate alienation/estrangement from God, our state of being lost, the basic problematic of the human condition. Having discussed faith in Tawheed as the ultimate concern of a Muslim, as well as points of connection between them, the impending issue is how does this ultimate concern (Tawheed) play a role in the eradication of the collective alienation and estrangement of humankind from God (and justice). Tawheed implies that Allah(t) is not a male nor a female, black nor white, and in fact, not a human nor a material being. Thus, He has no reason to and He does not favor any particular color, race, sex, ethnicity, or nationality. Under God, all are born equal politi-

cally; this is revolutionary. It does not allow political leadership or framework based on nationalism, fascism, monarchy (blood relations/ royalty), or through any other allegiance except through the allegiance to the Islamic ideology, the ultimate concern of Tawheed. The very nature and call to Khilafah, the acknowledging of the sovereignty of God and vicegerency of humankind necessitates this fact.

From the economic perspective, Allah(t) as stated in the first ayah of surah At-Tawheed, is "The One and *Alone*." Thus, He alone is the creator as well as the owner of the heavens and earth. He alone is the owner of everything, including our own selves, and so it follows, that we own absolutely nothing at all. Everything is given to us as a trust from Him; this is why it is continuously emphasized that everything must ultimately perish when we return to Him for reckoning. This is a highly spiritual notion of material that Tawheed tends to inculcate in its recipients. Nevertheless, Islam recognizes the fact that not all and, in fact, most cannot attain this high level of the spiritual dimension of material and wealth. Therefore, the Khilafah system is obligated to uphold God's laws on the equal distribution of wealth as humanly possible. Islam thus forth allows ownership of private property but inhibits wealth from becoming concentrated in the hands of the few.⁵⁰ It actually unites the best components of capitalism and communism minus their exploitative tendencies. Key to this is the absolute categorical prohibition of *riba* (usury)⁵¹ in Islam. The Qur'an denounces this sin in the harshest spirit of admonition: "O ye who believe! Fear Allah, and give up what remains of your demand for usury, if ye are indeed believers. If ye do it not, take notice of war from Allah and His messenger" (Qur'an, 2:278-279). The importance of this prohibition becomes clear when considering that capitalism's exploitation of labor, over the past 30 years, has developed a far more oppressive mechanism of exploitation. Through the tentacles of the IMF and the World Bank, most, if not all, of the developing world are practically enslaved through usury-based debts. The results have been abject poverty, social and cultural engineering, and a re-structuring of the economies of the majority of the countries of the world to continue their practical enslavement, concluding in the complete destruction of their economies.⁵² Islam and Tawheedic ideology would attack the root of this modern exploitative tendency of financial capitalism

without compromise until it is completely eradicated.

In the first stage of destroying alienation/ estrangement from God by establishing His justice on the earth, we may sum-up that we need to begin with faith (as is stated in the first part of the third ayah of surah Al-'Asr). This faith (ideology), in Tillich's terms, must be our ultimate concern that demands our complete and total submission and promises complete fulfillment. I have illustrated that this ultimate concern in Islam is the concept of Tawheed and have demonstrated some of its most important practical implications in the socio-political and economic spheres of society. As for ultimate fulfillment, I will discuss it in the fourth stage of this methodology since it deals directly with this issue.

Once we adopt an ultimate concern, some action must necessarily follow because it necessitates some form of submission. It would be strange, if not outright absurd, to have an ultimate concern and not participate in bringing it about (if it is not established) or keep it from being overcome (if it is established). If we participate in any form of society, then we are actually upholding its status quo or legitimizing it by our very participation. Peter Berger, as well as most sociologists, would agree that the human being is indeed a social being. Outside of his social context, he ceases to be completely human. Thus, in his socializing, he is participating in society and internalizing the thinking, practices, rituals, and customs of his cultural and anthropological environment. Anything that would disrupt his socializing would be considered, in Berger's terms, "anomic."⁵³ Thus every society has its own ultimate concern⁵⁴ and its expression manifests itself in certain practices, rituals, customs, modes of worship, and/ or jurisprudence. In Islam, the ultimate concern of Tawheed demands its expression in the dual act of the acquiring and augmenting of moral imperatives as expressed in the 99 names of Allah(t) (*siffat*),⁵⁵ as well as in the establishment of the divine law (*shari'ah*). In the second stage of this four-stage methodology, as outlined in surah Al-'Asr, "do good/righteous works" is more or less, at an individual level. The idea is best understood by the proverbs "practice what you preach," and "the best sermon is your action." If you cannot internalize your ultimate concern, there is no use in going further. A genuine change cannot be effected without at least a decent amount of people who are able to satisfactorily internalize and actuate the basic expressions of

their ultimate concern to the degree possible, relative to their societal constraints.⁵⁶

Once the second stage is initiated and you have individually internalized the basic practical manifestations of your ultimate concern, then the next logical step is to export it. Once someone reaches the point of certainty and impeccable conviction of their ultimate concern, exporting it obviously not only becomes a prerequisite to bring about a desired change in society, but it is a natural inclination to do so. As social creatures, we long to communicate our deep-felt convictions to others and strongly desire their acceptance of them. Muhammad Iqbal, in his *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, in depicting the difference between the mystic and prophetic consciousness states that,

Muhammad of Arabia ascended the highest Heaven and returned. I swear by God that if I had reached that point, I should never have returned. These are the words of a great Muslim saint, Abd al-Quddus of Gangoh. In the whole range of Sufi literature it will probably be difficult to find words which, in a single sentence, disclose such an acute perception of the psychological difference between the prophetic and the mystic types of consciousness. The mystic does not wish to return from the repose of "unitary experience"; and even when he does return, as he must, his return does not mean much for mankind at large. The prophet's return is creative. He returns to insert himself into the sweep of time with a view to control the forces of history,⁵⁷ and thereby to create a fresh world of ideals.

Thus, the mystical tradition and the individual experiences of the mystics tend to be selfish in make-up, where their "unitary experience" does not affect their environment but only themselves, especially considering the ineffable nature of their experiences.⁵⁸ Conversely, the prophetic conscious begins with the unitary experience, a cognition of the ultimate concern, and manifests itself to change/shape the social forces of history.⁵⁹ It is this exporting of the ultimate concern, what you believe is the ultimate truth that is the third stage, as stated in the third part of the third ayah of surah Al-'Asr: "And those who exhort one another to the truth."⁶⁰

As you try to export your ultimate concern, retaliation against you necessary follows as a logical reaction by societal forces set against your ultimate cause. The potency of the retaliation will be directly proportionate to the degree your ultimate concern

demand a change in the status quo. The more revolutionary your ultimate concern, the greater the retaliation. Thus, if your ultimate concern does not deal a blow to the status quo, chances are minimal if any retaliation will be meted out.⁶¹ Considering the scope of the change necessitated by the Islamic ultimate concern (Tawheed), which manifests in a complete change in the socio-political and economic structure of the contemporary ideology of capitalism, the ultimate retaliation is to be expected. Yet, this is nothing new, for every major prophet, was met with ultimate retaliation.⁶² This is because, according to Islam, they all came with one ultimate concern, that of Tawheed, which demands the establishment of justice and an end to oppression of all sorts.

The objective of retaliation is simply either to dilute the potency of a revolutionary ultimate concern or to obliterate it right out, to prevent even the possibility of its re-emergence to threaten the status quo. The retaliation is a given; without a doubt, it will ensue a revolutionary ultimate concern. The form of response of the adherents to the retaliation is crucial. If the revolutionaries respond with violence, for example, the violence will legitimize the propaganda and vilification efforts of the societal forces against them. In contemporary terms, the violence of a certain ultimate concern legitimizes state authority to respond with force, often with violent and deadly force. The adherents of the revolutionary ultimate concern have no chance against the forces of the state (the Army, Air Force, and other special forces). The only recourse is to the process of civil disobedience, which was powerful enough to be utilized by the likes of Martin Luther King and Ghandi to accomplish their objectives or ultimate concerns.

Refraining from responding to humiliation, physical violence, and carrying out a disciplined campaign of non-violent civil disobedience requires patience and perseverance. It is no easy task and represents the fourth and final stage of the four-stage methodology to establish the Tawheedic ultimate concern, as stated in the final part of the third ayah of surah Al-'Asr: "and those who persevere with patience and steadfastness."

Finally, the issue of ultimate fulfillment must now be addressed. In the Islamic theological anthropology, the ultimate fulfillment is the promise of salvation in the hereafter or eternal paradise.⁶³ But there is also a dimension of ultimate fulfillment that could be realized in the mundane, in our earthly existence. It too is directly linked with the ultimate

concern, in simple terms, it is nothing less than a merger between the human will and the will of God. The unity of volition between the divine and the human is evidenced in the Qur'an. In the first battle of Islam, the battle of Badr,⁶⁴ the prophet (pbuh) took a handful of sand and threw it in the direction of the militarily advantaged pagan enemy. Despite the overwhelming odds against them, the Muslims score a decisive victory at Badr. After the battle was won, Allah(t) revealed, "It is not ye who slew them; it was Allah: When thou threwest (a handful of dust), it was not thy act, but Allah's in order that He might confer on the Believers a gracious benefit from Himself; for Allah is He who heareth and knoweth (all things)" (Holy Qur'an 8:17). This indicates a remarkable merging of wills, that of God and humankind. In other words, in the act or process of establishing the Tawheedic ultimate concern and justice, God himself becomes a partner and co-worker with humankind in this momentous task. Thus, even if the practitioners fail in establishing the Tawheedic ultimate concern and thereby eliminating the basic collective problematic of humankind, which is alienation and estrangement from God and its conclusion, justice, at the very least they retain a satisfaction of the promise of ultimate fulfillment in the hereafter, eternal paradise and seeing God, their ultimate concern, as well as temporal/ provisional fulfillment in the cognizance of the merger between their will and that of the ultimate concern (the one transcendent God).⁶⁵ Of course, success in establishing the ultimate concern, the logical corollaries of Tawheed (socio-political and economic justice), is an additional and ultimate fulfillment on earth, because it in essence becomes the realization of God (Al-'Adl, the embodiment of Justice) on earth.

I would like to offer one parallel between dissolution of the finite volition into the infinite and the dissolution (*fana*) of the Islamic mystic or sufi into Allah(t). As for the mystic, he involves himself in austere ascetic practices and personal worship so that he may experience a unitary moment with the divine (*fana*) only to return (*baqa*) to his earthly state and then to continually repeat this cycle of dissolution (*fana*) and separation (*baqa*). This is done for the ends of experiencing a unitary moment with the divine, an intense spiritual state, the profundity of which is ineffable. The passage of the Qur'an that I quoted earlier (8:17) offers a new type of a unitary moment that is as spiritually intense if not infinitely more so than that of the mystics. First, it is communal in nature for it is not exclusive to any particular

individual in contrast to the mystic's intensely individualistic and ineffable experience. Secondly, as it is in Iqbal's passage that I quoted earlier, the mystic's efforts and spiritual attainment are historically neutral in the sense that the mystic not only does not concern himself with symbols of the divine in the vicissitudes of history but, instead, shuns history, a sign or symbol of God, all together. In contrast to this, the mergers of volition in Badr occur in and through the efforts to shape the vicissitudes of history. Finally, the spiritual unitary experience of the mystic is ineffable where as the pointer to a merger of volitions in the Qur'an is explained in the very word or speech of Allah(t), which in essence confers on a merger of volitions, the highest spiritual state possible in the profane world. However, it must be ever-present in our minds that the merger of volitions, the superior of all types of spiritual achievements in the mundane, is initiated and then achieved at its apex in and through the will to establish Al-Adl (The Justice), one of Allah(t)'s 99 names/ attributes in history. Through this process, we achieve in Tillichian terms, the "Eternal Now" and with a merger of volition, as powerful an eradication of estrangement/ alienation as humanely possible.

The mergers of volition in the act of establishing justice finds a remarkable parallel if not exposition in Tillich's definition of kairos and theonomy. As for Kairos, the group with which Tillich was actively engaged, he explains that, "It unites in temporal fusion, the universal and particular, the absolute and relative" and it represents the Eternal Now in our particular historical moment, a coming that manifests the new possibility of creation (origin) in that time, a new appearance leading toward fulfillment (Gilkey, 11). As for theonomy, he explains that,

Theonomy, the participation of the transcendent in and through the autonomy and creativity of the finite and historical, is here a temporal process, achieved in the historical passage from origin through kairos, and through free political action in response to the kairos, action towards justice or fulfillment" (Gilkey, 12-13).

If we compare these definitions of theonomy and kairos of Tillich with the ultimate fulfillment of a merger of volition in the Islamic pursuit of justice, one would be hard pressed to find a more organic and direct awareness or connection with ultimate concern in the temporal world.

In summary, the basic problematic, its resolution, and the means to accomplish it are all encapsulated in surah Al-'Asr. The first two ayat of surah

Al-'Asr—By the passage of time. Verily humankind is in loss—explain the problematic of the human condition that is its alienation and estrangement from God manifest in global socio-political and economic injustice. The resolution (salvation) is the elimination of the alienation by the establishment of God's socio-political and economic justice on earth. The four-part methodology to bring about this revolution (resolution) is embedded in the third and final ayah. The first step is acquiring faith, which is, according to Tillich, a state of being ultimately concerned. The ultimate concern in Islam is Tawheed, which by its very concept demands the establishment of the socio-political economic order of justice and the eradication of the alienation and estrangement between God and humankind. An ultimate concern demands ultimate submission, first at the individual level that is the doing of righteous deeds—in Islam, and adhering strictly by the Shari'ah and emulating the attributes of God. After this stage is satisfactorily executed, it then follows that this ultimate concern must be exported which is according to surah Al-'Asr, "the exhorting one another to the truth," until it is eventually established. The exportation of a revolutionary ultimate concern necessitates a retaliation proportionate to the extent that it is revolutionary. In Islam, the Tawheedic ultimate concern requires a clean sweep, an ultimate change in the character of contemporary capitalism and the global injustice that has become inseparable from it. The Tawheedic ultimate concern demands ultimate retaliation. In the face of this ultimate retaliation, contemporarily the only effective and proven recourse to bring about a revolution has been a non-violent civil disobedience. Key to a non-violent civil disobedience is perseverance with patience in the face of all sorts of retaliation (from verbal to physical, to the ultimate), and this is stated in the terminus of surah Al-'Asr: "and those who persevere with patience." If the revolutionary effort is successful, alienation and estrangement from God is eliminated through the establishment of the Tawheedic socio-political and economic justice. If the struggle is unsuccessful, the participants gain from the knowledge of an ultimate fulfillment of the promised paradise in the hereafter where they will see their ultimate concern, and from the Islamic notion that once engaged in the establishment of the ultimate concern, the Tawheedic socio-political justice, that Allah(t) becomes a co-worker with them and the merger of the will of God with the will of

man is made possible resulting in the eradication of estrangement.

In conclusion, I would like to quote one verse from the Qur'an where God states the following: "We sent aforetime Our messengers with clear signs and sent down with them the Book (scripture) and the balance (of right and wrong), that humankind may stand forth in justice" (Qur'an 57:25).

Going back to the Qur'anic narrative of the fall, the first act of sin was entering a state of alienation and estrangement from God, which was considered as a form of injustice. God then ordered them on the earth, prescribed guidance, and taught them that guidance will come from Him and those who heed it will be successful in ridding them of the alienation or estrangement from God and injustice. God is also intimately connected with justice—the very embodiment of justice according to one of His names in the Islamic tradition—thus bringing justice on the earth is in essence eliminating injustice as well as the alienation and estrangement from God in the most profound manner. This is accomplished through establishing His system of justice on the earth that is through the guiding principals of the revelatory scripture sent just for these ends of establishing justice (as is evidenced in the last verse quoted from 57:25). The establishment of the system of God (*Khilafah*) would be an open challenge to secularism, which, as I have explained, is a sin of the era of modernity in estranging God from the public sphere (the political, economic as well as the collective social spheres of life). Furthermore, it would check the possibilities of nihilism, as I have previously explained, a total estrangement and alienation from God and thus an absolute sin.

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¹I chose non-being deliberately to illustrate in Tillichian terms, that non-being is the essence of evil and sin as we shall elaborate in the duration of this paper.

³Gilkey, *Gilkey on Tillich*, 19.

⁴Surah is typically translated as 'chapter' that is composed of a collection of verses. Surat is the plural form of surah.

⁵Ayah is usually translated as 'verse' but this is not quite accurate. Ayah literally means 'sign.' So each ayah is actually a sign that gives direction beyond itself or to God. Ayat is the plural form of ayah.

⁶Allah(t) is the Arabic name of the transcendental indivisible Creator Almighty God. In the duration of this paper, I will be using both the Arabic 'Allah(t)' as well as the English 'God' to denote the transcendental indivisible Creator Almighty God.

⁷This translation has been taken from Yusuf Abdullah Ali. It should be noted that there is no exact translation of the Arabic Qur'an possible in any other language. This is because the Qur'an is originally an Arabic Qur'an, meant to be understood in the Arabic tongue. Thus forth, other terms could be utilized in addition or instead of the translation which I have taken from Ali. I will be doing this in the efforts to extrapolate the essence of the Qur'an as close as I could to the original Arabic.

⁸In the Islamic tradition, the human being is considered 'Ashraf-al-Makhlūq' or the highest of all creation. The Qur'an in more than one place explains the creation narrative where Adam is imbued with the 'ruh' or soul which is from God Himself. It is this ruh, in the words of the 20th century Muslim thinker Muhammad Iqbal, 'the divine spark within,' which according to the Qur'an made

the human being worthy of prostration from even the angels.⁹

Of course, to balance this and protect the environment, the human beings in the Islamic faith tradition are required to respect the natural world which they have been given as a trust from God. Unlike many religions, according to Islam, one may find divine inspiration in the natural world as well and that is why not only the verses of the Qur'an are referred to as ayat (signs) but nature is also referred to as ayat or signs which can lead to the Almighty. Similarly, the self and history are also referred to as ayat, making the study of nature, psychology and history, sacred sciences to be given due respect.

¹⁰If there was no passage of time /history, we would not exist and this is in fact practically inconceivable. Similarly, if there were no humans, we would not be aware of a history, even if it did exist objectively, external to our subjective conscious. From a relational point of view as in process theology, history and all of the accumulated experiences are crucial for every individual, which have been internalized and sort of guide for him/her to future decisions.

¹¹It is an indisputable fact that Muslims regard the Prophet as well as the Qur'an as being the final ones. Therefore, the Qur'an is proverbially considered as the final word of God for all of mankind for all times to come. The state of being loss is universal because Allah(t) in surah Al-'Asr uses the word 'insan' which is human-kind and not just Muslims.

¹³Marjorie H. Suchocki in her *God, Church, Christ: A Practical Guide to Process Theology*, discusses how all previous experiences and the environment condition our future decisions, how all these experiences are relational to our decisions. In this perspective, if we were to juxtapose the Qur'anic narrative of the Fall, the alienation and estrangement which is from the first act of sin by Adam and Eve is an experience which is passed on to all human beings and is very much part of our psyche. Thus the past experience of alienation 'the state of being lost' is one passed onto every succeeding human psyche, the one experience which is inevitable 'through the passage of time.'

¹³Allah(t) is known through His attributes, and the 99 names of Allah(t) in the Islamic tradition are also His attributes. They include Him as being 'The Most Wise,' 'The Most Merciful,' 'The Most Knowledgeable,' and most are in the superlative form. One of the few that does not take a superlative form is Al-'Adl which is not 'The Most Just,' but rather, 'The embodiment of Justice.' This remarkable parallel between justice and God Himself is crucial in the resolution of the basic problematic of the

human condition in theological anthropology that will become evident in the duration of this paper.

¹⁴ Gilkey, *Gilkey on Tillich*, 19.

¹⁵ Much of my remarks on Nietzsche will come from 2 major works of his. One is *Beyond Good and Evil* and the other is *Thus Spake Zarathustra*.

¹⁶ All critics of religion or masters of suspicion though advocating the emancipation of humankind from religion, nevertheless paradoxically retained a morality that was predominately rooted in religion. Take Marx, for example; the concepts of economic egalitarianism and justice are concepts derived from religion. Only Nietzsche is audacious enough to take this to its logical conclusion by not only advocating the doing away with religion in toto, but also its morality.

¹⁷ Muhammad Iqbal is perhaps the greatest Muslim thinker (known as the poet-philosopher of the East) of the 20th century.

¹⁸ Allama Muhammad Iqbal, *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, ed. M. Saeed Sheikh (Lahore: Iqbal Academy Pakistan and Institute of Islamic Culture, 1989), 67-68. This also appears to be quite similar to Tillich's interpretation of the Fall and Adam's freedom to disobey God as a pre-requisite to becoming a 'self.'

¹⁹ It is to be noted that this alienation is not necessarily exclusively a subjective passive condition. This is where Iblis or satan the accursed serves as an external active mechanism to help facilitate the alienation of humankind from the Creator. In the Qur'an, in surah #15 Al-Hijr, Allah(t) explains that Iblis or satan refused to bow to Adam when all of the angels as well as the Jins (Iblis/satan was a Jin, which were created from smokeless fire) were ordered by Allah(t) to do so. Iblis did not bow because he thought himself (energy) to be superior to Adam, who was made from material (dirt/clay). Accordingly, Iblis asked for respite until judgement day to lead people away from the path of God to actively participate in alienating and estranging them from their creator as he had done with Adam and Eve.

²⁰ In the Qur'an, the Pharaoh and Nimrod ultimately declared themselves to be Gods and ruled their respective kingdoms with their own laws.

²¹ Since God is the embodiment of justice, only He could devise and give us a truly just system. Any other system is unjust to the proportionate degree that it does not correspond with God's system.

²² The Qur'an in many other places also speaks of forgetting God and relates it being unjust to ourselves.

²³ It is also interesting how the Qur'an refers to itself quite often as the reminder. Further analysis and research (which is not in the scope of this paper) needs to be done

with the concept of the Qur'an and it being a symbol of remembrance and a reminder in the debilitation of estrangement.

²⁴ This is clear when we consider proverbial facts such as that the technology explosion in the past 50 years has produced more technology than that of our human history combined that preceded it. Also, Pakistan alone (about twice the size of CT) for example, produces enough food to feed all of China.

²⁵ The world wars, weapons of mass destruction, famines, abject poverty due to the plundering of the World Bank and IMF through the novel mechanism of exploitation and usury, are some of the hallmarks of global injustice.

²⁶ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 3: Life and the Spirit History and the Kingdom of God (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1963), 225.

²⁷ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 288.

²⁸ In the Qur'anic narrative of the Fall, after Adam and Eve repented, God banished all of them (including satan) to the earth and told them that he will send guidance and that salvation in essence will be for those who heed the guidance. The guidance in the Islamic faith tradition is taken to be the Prophets and the scriptures revealed to them. These are using Tillichian terminology, the points of connection that eliminate or destroy the continual alienating tendencies instinctual within the human species as well as the influences of satan (or the demonic as external forces opposed to this).

²⁹ After mentioning the name of the Prophet of Islam, Muslims are supposed to say 'May God's peace be upon him' which is the reason why a '(pbuh),' the acronym for 'peace be upon him' is often written after the mention of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

³⁰ It must be noted that Tillich does not view the re-union with the estrangement as I have interpreted it. Tillich's idea, of course, is a re-union linked with the Christological concept of the crucifixion of Christ. His depiction of the Fall and the human condition as an 'estrangement' of God and its affinity with my Islamic theological anthropology is why I have utilized his thought. The interpretations of the re-union with the estrangement is our point of separation.

³¹ Dr. Israr Ahmad, *Islamic Renaissance: The Real Task Ahead*, trans. Dr. Absar Ahmad (Lahore: Markazi Anjuman Khuddam-ul-Qur'an, 1996), 6-7.

³² Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1, 218.

³³ The tension between the holy and the secular is best illustrated in the modern example of America where Godless institutions in arts, entertainment, politics, eco-

nomics, as well as education are in continual tension with religious institutions. The emergence of fundamentalism not only in Christianity but in basically all the major religions of the world, in Islam, Hinduism and Judaism for example, may be viewed as a response to the hegemonic aspirations of secularism (as well as capitalism).

³⁴ Theocracy is not forbidden in Islam, but the political structure of the early community that served as models was not a theocracy. They ruled by the scripture but the rulers were not the clergy or a priestly class.

³⁵ Dr. Israr Ahmad has covered this topic of the political and legislative character of the Khilafah in greater depth in his essay "Constitutional and Legislative Framework of Khilafah." He depicts the Khilafah as being some sort of a mix between a theocracy and a democracy that he terms 'theo-democracy.'

³⁶ This is evident by taking into consideration of many theoreticians such as the leading Western apologist Francis Fukuyama. In his book, *The End of History and the Last Man*, Fukuyama boldly concludes that Western liberal democracy and capitalism are indeed the apex of human evolutionary thought, the best of all possible systems extant. It is not only Fukuyama, but many intellectuals and social workers from a wide range of nations, cultures, ethnicities, and religions have if not outright accepted without question, have acquiesced to the universal aspirations of democracy and capitalism.

³⁷ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, trans. Maurice Cranston (London: Penguin Books, 1968), 62-64.

³⁸ Shirk is the greatest sin in Islam which is the only unpardonable sin if done intentionally.

³⁹ Passive in the sense that religion/God does not play much of a role (if any) in the public sectors such as the political and the economic spheres of a secular polity.

⁴⁰ If we take America as an example of a secular society, the prohibition of public school prayer, and recently, actions being taken to change the state motto of Ohio because it is religiously oriented is testimony to the extreme secular tendencies of the modern secular state.

⁴² Here is one example where the secular interpretation in modern education has practically dominated the holy and marginalized the concept of the soul to the point where it is becoming harder to accept. This is especially true in the field of psychology and the domination of the materialist doctrines of behaviorism. I understand that now in the field of psychology, behaviorism has taken a back seat to an even more materialist interpretations of the human psyche (which I thought was impossible, thinking behaviorism to be the pinnacle of materialist thought in psychology).

⁴³ They are not even aware of the alienation and estrangement from God because God is imprisoned in their private affairs, if He is believed at all. They try their best to come in terms with global injustice, so they try to invent new 'isms' to fill in this void at the collective level which religion originally used to do. They have not only become alienated from God, but have become alienated from their own inner beings and thus, this is one possible interpretation of the reason for an increasingly individualistic egoistic and immoral society.

⁴⁶ The pagans of Arabia also had created idols such as Lat, Mannat, and Uzza whom they took to be the daughters of Allah(t). Also in the later Persian, Greek, as well as Roman Mythraic mythologies, there are many sons and daughters ascribed to God.

⁴⁷ The Qur'an is the word of God and nature is the work of God. They have the same author and thus the work of God must not contradict the word of God for a contradiction between these two realms implies a contradiction which God has authored. Science and religion in Islam cannot contradict each other and in fact, they are indeed complimentary. There is also an ayah in the Qur'an where Allah(t) states 'We will continue to show them signs from without and from within their own inner beings until they acknowledge that this (Qur'an) is the truth.' The signs from without could easily be taken for the latest scientific developments and in many fields of the sciences, they are at the threshold of utilizing religious terminology to illustrate the scientific phenomenon which they have discovered. No where is this more evident than in the language of the physicists, especially speaking of the unseen parallel universes (compare this with the possibilities of heaven and hell as being unseen parallel universes) and the other side of the event horizons of the black hole. The most interesting remark on this issue was from a non-Muslim physicist on the TV show 'Turn of the Millennium' who was requested to speak of what the next millennium held for his respected field. He stated that the scientists would be able to interpret religious phenomenon better than the theologians.

⁴⁸ The Qur'an itself refers to history in describing the previous nations and the reasons for their downfall, and then depicting them as ayat or signs. Thus, the Qur'an encourages the study of history to unearth certain universals and their effects as they exist in history.

⁴⁹ The Qur'an also quite often depicts the archetypes of the different psyche's of many types of people, like that of the arrogant and oppressive ones such as the Pharaoh and Nimrod, as well as the pious such as those of the many Prophets and their helpers. One thing that the Qur'an cogently and categorically speaks about is the self

and the soul. In the realm of psychology, the thought of Carl Jung and William James are very congenial to the Qur'anic psychology of the self. This analysis of modern psychology is a clear example of the last part of the ayah mentioned earlier about Allah(t) showing signs from within their own inner beings. It should be noted that only a sophisticated terminology and jargon, a semantic disguise, is what separates of much of the conclusions of science from those of the Qur'an.

⁵⁰ The enforcement of zakat or obligatory charity on those who have amassed wealth that is not in use for a period of one year, is a great equalizing mechanism in Islam to prevent the wealth from being concentrated at the top and for it to be distributed to the poor. The zakat is 2% (which is so miniscule that it will not harm any wealthy person to any great extent) of the total value of the wealth not in use that one has in their possession. This excludes cars, things used for business, and things needed for everyday life.

⁵¹ Just as shirk is the greatest sin in thought, riba or usury in Islam is the greatest sin in action ('aml). According to some very strong or rigorously authenticated (sahih) hadith traditions, the sin of riba is equal to 30 times fornication and in another, it is equivalent to sleeping with your mother in the sacred precincts of the sacred mosque (Haram Shareef). Finally, there is no quantitative difference in Islam between usury and interest as it was made in the Judeo-Christian tradition. In Islam, it is one and the same. More could be had on this issue in my fairly recent paper: "The Evolution of the Transvaluation of Usury into the Spirit of Capitalism and the Qur'anic Perspective," published by the *Qur'anic Horizons*, Lahore, Pakistan.

⁵² The mechanism which were utilized in 'forcing' these developing countries to practically enslave themselves to the whims of the IMF /World Bank are too many to discuss for the scope of this paper. The Jubilee 2000 movement and other loose organizations which are beginning to expose the destruction and immoral modern day enslavement of developing countries through usury are testimony to the exploitative nature of usury.

⁵⁴ Again, this ultimate concern could be religion, a mythology, humanism, communism, fascism, capitalism, and etc.

⁵⁵ In other words, the 99 names of Allah(t) are ideals to be emulated and for us to augment as much as possible. So for example, since Allah(t) is Ar-Rahman (The Most Merciful in the superlative/infinite sense) we are to be as merciful as possible and likewise for the rest of the attributes.

⁵⁶ The society and status quo may not permit or limit the expression of your ultimate concern. Such was the case with the some of the companions of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) who were prevented from even praying in public in the early stages of their revolutionary struggle.

⁵⁷ Iqbal, *Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam*, 99.

⁵⁸ In his book, *Mysticism and Philosophy*, W.T. Stace explains that one of the best known facts is the universal principal of all mystics, that their mystical experiences due to the inadequacy of language, is ineffable. The experience thus begins with them and more or less, terminates with them.

⁵⁹ Interestingly enough, Tillich also refers to prophetic consciousness as justice dependent on a relationship with the transcendent. Gilkey elaborates on this point and explicates that justice with expectation to Tillich was an illustration of prophetic consciousness .

⁶¹ Thus, most cults get away even with robbing people and other bizarre acts because they do not threaten the status quo of the power structure. Similarly, you could be a radical sect of any religion or ideology and never become a recipient of retaliation until you speak of establishing socio-political economic justice. Retaliation usually begins with vilification and demonization of the practitioners of the ultimate concern and usually the ultimate concern itself. If not quelled by verbal retaliation, it exasperates into violent repression of this ultimate concern.

⁶² After the very first time that the angel Jibreel (Gabriel) communicated with the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) in the cave Hira, he became frightened and confused to the point of rushing to his wife Khadija (RA) and telling her to cover him with blankets as he shivered with fear and anxiety. Worried about his state, Khadija (RA) took the Prophet (pbuh) to her cousin Waraqa ibn Naufal who was a learned Christian scholar of the scriptures. Waraqa asked the Prophet (pbuh) to describe what had happened to him. After explaining what had happened in the cave, Waraqa immediately having recognized the signs from the scripture, told him that it was the angel Jibreel who visited him and that he was chosen by God to become His messenger. It was then when Waraqa ibn Naufal stated that if he lived long enough, he would stand by Muhammad (pbuh) when his people would turn him out. Waraqa, the learned scholar of the scriptures stated 'when your people would turn you out,' because he was well aware of the pattern of the ultimate retaliation that was meted out to the bearers of the ultimate concern (of Tawheed) that had preceded him.

⁶³ According to a hadith tradition, the greatest thing in paradise will be seeing God's face every Friday, indicating the direct link and relationship with the ultimate concern and the ultimate fulfillment.

⁶⁴ Badr was to decide the fate of Islam. It precipitated after thirteen years of severe persecution during the ideological battle of Islam in the Meccan phase. This battle was to prove the validity of the victor's ideology a victory which would have meant that Allah(t) conferred his grace on the side of the victor and was on their side from the beginning. So central it was at this juncture of the revolu-

tion that the Prophet (pbuh) after performing the longest recorded prostration in his life, prayed to Allah(t), requesting victory or else face despair for the future of Islam.

⁶⁵ Additional evidences of the merging of the ultimate will of God with that of humans exist in the hadith as well.

THE DIVINE, THE DEMONIC AND THE NINETY-NINE NAMES OF ALLAH: TILlich'S IDEA OF THE "HOLY" AND THE QUR'ANIC NARRATIVE

Basit Koshul

Building on Rudolph Otto's insight regarding the character of the "holy," Paul Tillich argues that the common understanding of this term is a departure from and truncation of its original meaning. The common understanding of the holy associates it with unambiguous moral perfection, logical truth, and absolute good. Such an understanding has deprived the term of its original, strongly ambiguous character. The original meaning of the holy was strongly ambiguous; insofar as the holy was not merely the good, the true, and the beautiful, it also included elements that can be characterized as demonic.

Traces of this ambiguity regarding the holy can be found in the Hebrew Testament characterization of God. This ambiguity is most clearly reflected in "the ritual or quasi-ritual activities of religions and quasi-religions (sacrifices of others or one's bodily or mental self) which are strongly ambiguous" (DF, 14ff.). Following a particular line of interpretation of the Biblical narrative, the ambiguous character of the holy has been lost and replaced by an unambiguous character. Tillich argues that the recovery of the original meaning of the holy has direct implications for the modern understanding of the sacred, ultimate concern and inevitably the dynamics of faith. The following pages will first outline Tillich's description of the ambiguous character of the holy and then move on to a critical evaluation of Tillich's attempt to recover the original ambiguous meaning. It will be argued that such a recovery is very difficult given

the resources at Tillich's disposal. At this point, the Qur'anic narrative will be explored as a possible resource to take Tillich's project further.

The Demonic, the Divine, and the Ambiguity of the Holy

Tillich has used the term "demonic" in a number of different ways and in different contexts. A demonic claim can be "the claim of something conditioned to be unconditioned" (ST, I, 227). A different description is that "a main characteristic of the demonic is the state of being split" (ST, III, 103). Yet, another description is that "the unclean designated something demonic, something which produced taboos and numinous awe" (ST, I, 217). The various uses of "the demonic" should not be taken as evidence that there is inconsistency in Tillich's use of the term, only as evidence that the manner in which he uses the term is determined by the context in which it is being used. In the context of the present discussion, the one description of the demonic that is most relevant is the manner in which Tillich uses it to highlight the ambiguous character of the holy. Tillich notes that the "holy can appear as creative and destructive. Its fascinating element can be both creative and destructive" (DF, 14). Tillich details the description of the creative and destructive character of the holy in these words:

One can call this ambiguity divine-demonic, whereby the divine is characterized by the victory of the creative over the destructive possibility of the holy, and the demonic is characterized by the victory of the destructive over the creative possibility of the holy (DF, 15).

The ambiguous character of the holy manifests itself in the form of its creative and destructive possibilities and these dual possibilities themselves

point to the simultaneous presence of the divine and the demonic in the holy. The divine represents the creative possibilities of the holy and the demonic represents the destructive possibilities of the holy. Consequently, the holy has an ambiguous divine-demonic character.

The common understanding of the demonic views it as a form of un-holiness (actually the form of un-holiness par excellence). Yet, the description of the (ambiguous) holy provided by Tillich makes it possible to characterize the demonic as a type of holy. Tillich employs the term demonic in its original mythological connotation: "Demons in mythological vision are divine-antidivine beings. They are not simply negations of the divine but participate in a distorted way in the power and holiness of the divine" (ST, III, 102).

The fact that the demons participate in a distorted way in the power and holiness of the divine opens up the possibility that they can lay a false claim to genuine holiness and divinity. When distorted participation in the holy and divine is presented as a genuine manifestation of the holy and divine, then idolatry and idolatrous faith are produced. The demonic becomes idolatrous by "identifying a particular bearer of holiness with the holy itself" (ST, III, 102). Tillich goes on to note:

In this sense, all polytheistic gods are demonic, because the basis of being and meaning on which they stand is finite, no matter how sublime, great or dignified it may be. And the claim of something finite to infinity or to divine greatness is the characteristic of the demonic (ST, III, 102).

The emergence of idolatry is the result of the demonic holy vanquishing the divine holy, and presenting itself as the genuine holy.

Tillich argues that Biblical religion "most profoundly understood" the ambiguous character of the holy, and its fight against idolatry has to be viewed in light of this understanding. The Hebrew prophets waged a constant struggle against the demonic destructive element in the holy in order to forestall the emergence (or the actual presence) of idolatrous faith. Evaluating the outcome of this struggle against the demonic elements in the holy, Tillich notes:

And this fight was so successful that the concept of the holy was changed. Holiness becomes justice and truth. It is creative and not destructive. The true sacrifice is obedience to the law. This is the line of thought which finally led to the iden-

tification of holiness with moral perfection (DF, 15).

In waging this fight against the ambiguous character of the holy, Biblical religion was only doing what comes naturally in the search for and definition of an unambiguous religious life. After noting that the demonic potential is present in all forms of religion, Tillich states:

Demonization of the holy occurs in all religions day by day, even in the religion which is based on the self-negation of the finite in the Cross of the Christ. The quest for unambiguous life is, therefore, most radically directed against the ambiguity of the holy and the demonic in the religious realm (ST, III, 102).

Given what Tillich has already said about the original meaning of the holy, it appears that "a quest for unambiguous life" requires the repudiation of the ambiguity of the holy. But, repudiation in this sense only means the manner in which one lives one's life, not the manner in which one understands the holy. Even though Tillich does not state the matter in these terms, it is obvious that the Hebrew prophets were waging a struggle against the demonic in human life, not repudiating the destructive (i.e., demonic) possibilities/ capacities of Yahweh. Even though a believer is called upon to continuously seek the unambiguous religious life, he/she must always remain cognizant of the ambiguous character of the holy, or the demonic potential of the holy. This is because there is a direct relationship between the potential of idolatry in the religious life and the demonic potential in the holy:

Idolatrous faith is still faith. The holy which is demonic is still holy. This is the point where the ambiguous character of religion is most visible and the dangers of faith are most obvious: the danger of faith is idolatry and the ambiguity of the holy is its demonic possibility. Our ultimate concern can destroy us as it can heal us (DF, 16).

In short, the ambiguity of the holy is reflected in the ambiguity of religious life. A genuine quest for the unambiguous religious life requires an acute appreciation of the all of its ambiguities. The appreciation of these ambiguities is the most essential of prerequisites (but not the only one) of not mistaking the ambiguous for the unambiguous. Tillich notes:

One could say that the holy originally lies below the alternative of the good and the evil; and that it is [ambiguously] both divine and demonic; that with the reduction of the demonic possibil-

ity the holy itself becomes transformed in its meaning; that it becomes rational and [unambiguously] identical with the true and the good; and that its genuine meaning must be rediscovered (DF, 15).

A rediscovery of the ambiguous character of the holy is necessary not only for a healthy personal religious life, but also for a genuine collective religious life. An appreciation of the fact that the holy itself has both divine, creative possibilities and demonic, destructive capacities will make it easier to understand and appreciate the fact that religion in all of its multitude of manifestations has destructive, as well as creative, possibilities. In fact, the history of religion reveals that religion has struggled against religion constantly, in the sense that the creative side of religion has waged an unending struggle against the destructive side of religion in the name of the holy:

One can read the history of religion, especially of the great religions, as a continuous inner religious struggle against religion for the sake of the holy. Christianity claims that in the Cross of the Christ the final victory in this struggle has been reached, but even in claiming this, the form of the claim itself shows demonic traits; that which is rightly said about the Cross of the Christ is wrongly transferred to the life of the church, whose ambiguities are denied, although they have become increasingly powerful throughout its history (ST, III, 104).

The foregoing discussion can be summarized as follows. The original meaning of holy is highly ambiguous, where the holy is characterized by divine/creative possibilities and demonic/destructive possibilities. The original meaning has been lost due to certain developments within Biblical religion, and the holy has come to be associated with the divine that is unambiguously good, true, and beautiful. The original ambiguous meaning of the holy has to be recovered for a healthy religious life, both at the individual and collective levels.

Tillich has identified a particular problem. But given the religio-theological system out of, or towards which, he is arguing, Tillich's task to recover the ambiguous character of the holy appears to be paradoxical. While his task at hand is the recovery of the original, ambiguous meaning of the holy, the religious system out of which, or towards which, he is arguing stands of pillars that are holy in the unambiguous sense of the word. When viewed from the perspective of Tillich's definition of the divine

and the demonic, the divinity of Christ, the crucifixion of Christ, and the resurrection of Christ are all characterized by unambiguous holiness. Interpreting the divinity of Christ in terms of the meaning of the holy offered by Tillich, makes Christ unambiguously holy in the sense that in the person of Christ the creative divine has completely vanquished the destructive demonic. In the person of Christ, there is no trace of the destructive demonic whatsoever. Conversely, the crucifixion of Christ is an unambiguously holy event in the sense that in this event the destructive demonic vanquishes the creative divine. The destructive demonic of finite human culture, puts the creative, infinite divine in the human world on the cross. In the history of religious thought, it is difficult to find examples of unambiguous holiness that can match the divine holiness of Christ and the demonic holiness of the crucifixion of Christ. The poles of unambiguous divinity and unambiguous demonic remain untouched in the resolution of the paradox through the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection is characterized by a holiness in which the creative divine completely vanquishes the destructive demonic.

Tillich is aware of the fact that a particular reading of Scripture is largely responsible for the loss of ambiguity of the holy. In the Hebrew Testament, the holy has the characteristics of divine creativity and demonic destruction; this understanding of the holy loses its ambiguity with the progressive rationalization of religious thought. But, Tillich does not appear to be aware of the fact that Nicean Christology and the Doctrine of Atonement affirm the unambiguous character of the holy more resolutely than any theological or philosophical exposition of the issue. From this perspective, teleological development inexorably moves history in a direction where the creative divine completely vanquishes the destructive demonic, and nothing remains other than the holy that is completely divine. In the unfolding of this drama, the entry of God into human history, His crucifixion and resurrection, are the pivotal acts:

A more profound preparation for genuine trinitarian thinking is the participation of god in human destiny, in suffering and death, in spite of the ultimacy of the power he wields and with which he conquers guilt and death (ST, I, 228).

In light of the unambiguous character of the holy that is implicit in Nicean Christology and the Doctrine of Atonement, it can be said with a fair degree of confidence that a Christian reading of Scripture naturally leads to an unambiguous understanding of

the holy. Whatever value one may see in recovering the ambiguous character of the holy, the demands of Christian faith require an affirmation of its unambiguous character. Therefore, it is not surprising to notice that in Tillich's attempt to recover the ambiguous meaning of the holy there is paltry reference to Scripture. For the most part, the exercise is characterized more by philosophical discourse than by constructive engagement with Scripture. The value of philosophical discourse/inquiry is evidenced by the fact that Tillich has presented a strong case for the necessity of recovering the ambiguous character of the holy. But while such philosophical discourse/inquiry can present the problem with a degree of clarity that cannot be had otherwise, the resolution of the problem is hardly possible without constructive engagement with Scripture. If it is assumed that a recovery of the ambiguous character of the holy is necessary for a healthy personal and collective religious life, then this recovery will have to be attempted by other means than the one proposed by Tillich.

The Jamal and Jalal of Allah: The Holy in Qur'anic Perspective

In shifting the discussion of the holy from the Biblical perspective to the Qur'anic perspective, one faces a number of different challenges. The following observation by Robert Bellah highlights a particularly difficult one:

Without intending any disrespect one can speak of a certain poverty of symbolic reference to God in the *Qur'an*. Ancient Israel...first built up its conception of a transcendent God on the model of the ancient Near Eastern great king. God was above all King, Lord, Ruler. Christianity continued this line of analogical thought, but added to it a stress on God as Father, which was much less central in Israelite thought. In the *Qur'an* God is understood first of all neither as king nor as father but simply as God. The only analogy for God is God (Bellah, 155).

It is indeed the case that the Qur'an does not contain any analogical references to God. Whereas the Israelite God, is likened to a (divinely) benign King who often becomes (demonically) wrathful and the Christian God, is likened to a (divinely) loving Father willing to make any sacrifice for His creatures, the Qur'an contains no imagery from the created order that can be likened to God. From the Qur'anic perspective, no analogy is logically possi-

ble because God is so utterly unique that there is nothing in the created order to compare Him to. But the absence of analogical references to God in the Qur'an cannot be mistaken for an absence of symbolic references. If anything, the Qur'an is primarily composed of symbolic references to God. The Qur'an considers itself to be composed of ayaat (signs, symbols) pointing towards God. Even though it is usually translated as "verse," the word ayah (pl., ayaat) literally means sign, symbol, evidence. The Qur'an says about itself: *These are the ayaat of a Clear Book: behold, We have sent it down as an Arabic Qur'an so that you might understand (12:1-2)*. Besides itself the Qur'an notes that such ayaat (signs, symbols) are also to be found in the world of nature, in the unfolding of history and the depths of the human soul: *Soon We will show them Our ayaat on the furthest horizons and in the depths of their own souls, until it becomes clear to them that this is indeed the truth (41:53)*. The unfolding of the historical process will lead to further discoveries in the natural, created world (i.e., "the furthest horizons") and in human consciousness (i.e., "the depths of their own souls") that will prove to be symbols pointing towards God. Since these symbols are to be discovered with the unfolding of the historical process, this process itself is an ayah of God. While one cannot draw an analogy between God and anything in the created order, there is nothing in the created order that is not an ayah of God, a symbol pointing towards God.

Among the variety of sources containing the ayaat of God, the Qur'an occupies a privileged status because it is the Word of God. The manner in which the Word of God speaks about God provides a unique means of knowing God, in addition to but also above and beyond other ways of knowing Him. Whereas God's proper name in the Qur'an is "Allah," He is known by many other names, and responds just as easily to being called by a name other than His proper name: *Say: "Call upon Allah, or call upon the Most Beneficent: By whatever name you call upon Him, (it is well): to Him belong the Most Beautiful Names..." (17:110)* The Divine Word, the Qur'an, refers to the Divine Person, Allah, by using ninety-nine different names, which the Qur'an calls the "Most Beautiful Names." The names, though not listed in the Qur'an, are found in the form of a list in the Prophetic traditions (the hadith). The list of the ninety-nine names has been divided up differently for the purposes of discussing/clarifying different issues. For example, one the di-

vision of the list has been to distinguish those names, which refer to Allah's attributes and those, which refer to Allah's personal self. In the context of the present discussion the most relevant division of the list is that which divides the names into the categories of *jamal* and *jalal*. Often translated as "beauty," *jamal* can be understood as fascinating, irresistible, attractive beauty (i.e., *mysterium fascinans* in Otto's terms). Often translated as "majesty," *jalal* can be understood as paralyzing, irresistible, overpowering majesty (i.e., *mysterium tremendum* in Otto's terms). The list of these names begins thus: Allah, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful, the Royal, the Holy, the Peace. The beginning of the list, and much of the list in general, names Allah in terms of His *jamal*, His beauty. But within the list of the Most Beautiful Names there are a number of pairs that directly contrast the *jamal* of Allah with His *jalal*. For example, Allah is:

The Giver of Life/The Giver of Death;
 The Harmful/The Beneficial;
 The Avenger/The One Who Erases Sin;
 The One Who Takes Away/The One Who Gives Abundantly;
 The Most Forgiving/ The Most Irresistible;
 The One Who Expands/The One Who Restricts
 The One Who Subdues Wrong/The One Supreme in Pride.

After noting that the "tendency of pairing concepts, of speaking in polarities, seems typical of Islamic thought" (Schimmel, 226), Schimmel, describes the polar character of the *jamal/jalal* in these terms:

God is One, but with creation, duality comes into existence, and from duality, multiplicity grows...Polarity is necessary for the existence of the universe, which, like a woven fabric, is capable of existence only thanks to the interplay of God's *jalal* and *jamal*, the *mysterium tremendum* and the *mysterium fascinans*, by inhaling and exhaling, systole and diastole (Schimmel, 228).

While the turn to Islamic sources does not exactly match the divine/demonic characterization of the holy offered by Tillich, there is an overlap between Tillich's characterization and the Islamic characterization. Tillich's divine and the Islamic *jamal* correspond to the *mysterium fascinans*, and Tillich's demonic and the Islamic *jalal* correspond to the *mysterium tremendum*. In light of this overlap, a relationship is established between Tillich's attempt to recover the original meaning of the holy, and the use of Scripture to explore the manner in which Allah is

described in the Qur'an in order to shed light on Tillich's project. The turn to Scripture has complemented Tillich's project by providing explicit Scriptural warrants for the philosophical and historical arguments offered by Tillich.

The turn to Scripture to recover the original ambiguous meaning of the holy, brings with it the added benefit of laying bare problematic aspects of the discussion that were not addressed in philosophical discourse. While Tillich notes that originally "the holy lies below the alternative of good and evil" (DF, 15), he does not detail this point further with respect to his description of the demonic and the divine. Insofar as the holy has creative potential, it is related to the creative divine (which is also the good), and insofar as the holy has destructive potential it is related to the destructive demonic (which is also evil). For Tillich, the demonic lacks creative, life-giving potential by definition: "The demonic is the perversion of the creative, and as such belongs to the phenomena that are contrary to essential nature, or sin." (IH, 93). While the demonic is always present in a creative act, it remains buried in the bottom and depth of the act. When playing this completely hidden and passive role in the creative act, the demonic "remains within the limits of its uncreative weakness" (IH, 93). The creative powers of the holy are unambiguously related to the divine, with the demonic being present but playing no active-creative role. Conversely, the destructive powers of the holy are unambiguously related to the demonic, with the divine being passively present but playing no active-destructive role. By depriving the demonic of any genuine creative possibilities, and depriving the divine of any genuinely destructive possibilities, Tillich has problematized his own assertion that the holy lies below the alternatives of good and evil. In other words, recovering the ambiguous character of the holy is logically problematic if the divine is unambiguously creative and the demonic is unambiguously destructive. Logically speaking, this evidences a deep, irreconcilable split within the holy where the demonic and destructive elements are forever locked in a struggle against one another. This logical problematic is the rational counterpart of the theological problem that faces Tillich in the recovery of the ambiguous character of the holy.

In order to recover the ambiguous character of the holy, it must be posited that the divine is also ambiguously creative, containing within itself destructive possibilities and the demonic is ambiguously destructive, containing within itself creative

possibilities. A look at the Qur'anic narrative reveals that the *jamal* and *jadal* of Allah are both ambiguous in terms of their creative and destructive possibilities. The Qur'an notes that while the fascinating beauty (the *jamal* of Allah) is predominantly creative in character, it can be a source of punishment and destruction under certain circumstances. Similarly, while the paralyzing majesty (the *jadal* of Allah) is predominantly destructive in character, it can be a life-giving blessing under circumstances. In other words, Allah's *jamal* (the *mysterium fascinans*) has destructive life-denying potential, and His *jadal* (the *mysterium tremendum*) has creative life-giving potential.

The fact that the created order proceeds from the *jamal* of Allah, is evidenced by the opening ayaat of Surah Rahman:

The Most Beneficent! It is He who has taught the Qur'an. He has created the human being: He has taught the human being speech. The sun and the moon follow prescribed courses; and the herbs and the tree both bow in adoration. And the firmament He has raised high, and He has set up the Balance (of Justice), in order that you may not transgress due balance. So establish the standard of justice, and fall not short in the balance. It is He Who has spread out the earth for His creatures: therein is fruit and date palm, producing clusters (enclosing dates): also corn, with (its) leaves and stalk for fodder, and sweet-smelling plants. Then which of the favors of your Lord will ye deny? (55: 1-13).

The creation of the human being, human speech, sun, moon, trees, herbs, etc. etc. are all "favors of your Lord" and at the same time manifestation of His creative powers. Allah's beauty manifests itself in the created order, and all the blessings contained in the created order for the benefit of human beings. But under certain circumstances the creative, endowing powers of Allah become a source of destruction for those enjoying the "favors" and "blessings" of Allah: *Let not the unbelievers think that Our respite to them is good for them: We grant them respite that they may grow in their iniquity...(3:178)*. Allah grants certain individuals leeway and respite, not as an expression of His pleasure, but as an expression of His anger. Similarly, He warns those benefiting from His blessings to be careful about the meaning that they read into the reception of the blessings:

Do they think that by all the wealth and offspring which We provide them We [but want to]

make them vie with one another in doing [what they consider] good works? Nay, but they do not perceive [their error]! (23:55)

Allah blesses certain people with His favors so that they may continue to "grow in their iniquity," all the while that they are thinking they are being showered by God's favors. The terminating point of growing in iniquity is that the individual becomes oblivious and heedless of Allah's ayaat and the remembrance of the One towards Whom the ayaat point: *But You did bestow on them and their fathers, the good things (in life) until they forgot the message [contained in revelation] (25:18)*. These ayaat from the Qur'an evidence that sometimes Allah manifests his *jamal* in the form of opening up the doors of His favors and blessings in order to lead particular persons/groups to their utter perdition. In this case, the divine, creative character of the holy (to use Tillich's terminology) is actually functioning as the destructive, demonic.

Conversely, there is clear evidence in the Qur'an that that which Tillich calls the destructive, demonic sometimes plays the role of the creative, divine. Under certain circumstances, Allah manifests his *jadal* so that the individuals afflicted by Divine wrath may take heed and repent. The manner in which the Qur'an frames the discussion of destructive Divine punishment suggests that at its very core the punishment is a reparative effort on Allah's part. This reparative effort comes after all other attempts of drawing human attention towards Allah have failed, but before Allah exercises His final judgment on the matter. *And indeed We will make them taste the lesser penalty in this life, prior to the ultimate penalty, so that perchance they may (repent and) return (32:21)*. The principle of using punishment as a means of repairing the human-divine relationship also applies to human-human relationships:

[Since they have become oblivious of Allah], corruption has appeared on land and in the sea as an outcome of what men's hands have wrought: and so He will let them taste [the evil of] some of their doings, so that they might return [to the right path] (30:41).

The tasting and experiencing of evil, and Allah's letting human beings taste and experience evil, can have creative, life-restoring consequences. An argument could be made that a "return to the right path" after having fallen off of it will result in a qualitatively different religious life, than a religious life that is the result of faithfully remaining on the right path and never having departed from it. In

other words, the religious consciousness that characterizes the second naïveté, is qualitatively different the religious consciousness of the first naïveté. From the Qur'anic perspective, the primary function of the manifestation of the *jalal* of Allah (in Tillich's terminology, the demonic side of the holy) is to initiate the onset of the second naïveté. The following ayaat from the Qur'an succinctly summarize the foregoing discussion regarding (in Tillich's terms) the creative potential of the demonic and the destructive potential of the divine:

And, indeed, We sent Our messengers unto people before your time [O Muhammad] and afflicted them with misfortune and hardship so that they might humble themselves: yet when the misfortune decreed by Us fell upon them, they did not humble themselves, but rather their hearts grew hard, for Satan had made all their doings seem goodly to them. Then when they had forgotten all that they had been told to take to heart, We threw open the gates of all [good] things, until, even as they were rejoicing in what they had been granted. We suddenly took them to task: and lo! They were broken in spirit; and [in the end] the last remnant of those fold who had been bent on evildoing was wiped out. For all praise is due to Allah, the Lord of all the worlds. (6:42-5).

The *jamal* and *jalal* of Allah, make the holy highly ambiguous in the Qur'anic narrative. This ambiguity is further deepened when it is realized that the *jamal* of Allah has destructive potential and this destructive potential of the *jamal* is such that there can be nothing more destructive than it. Conversely, the *jalal* of Allah has creative potential of such power that if it succeeds in turning the attention of the heedless back to Divine guidance, it succeeds where all other life-giving efforts had failed. Under what circumstances do the creative powers become destructive and the destructive become creative: the manner in which the individual responds to the received blessing/ hardship. The foregoing discussion can be summed up thus: Qur'anic symbolism describes Allah in a way that is highly ambiguous (as this term is employed by Tillich in his discussion of the divine and demonic in the holy). The categories of *jamal* and *jalal* simultaneously express this ambiguity and deepen it.

From the Qur'anic perspective, ambiguity is heaped upon ambiguity and ambiguity. In the midst of such ambiguity, the question naturally emerges: Under what circumstances does the divine become

destructive and the demonic become creative? This question is of direct relevance to the religious life, in both its individual, personal forms and the collective, social forms. In light of the Qur'anic ayaat cited above, the answer is clear and straight forward: the stance and attitude of those experiencing the divine/demonic will determine if the encounter with the holy will be a life-affirming encounter or a life-negating encounter. The ambiguity of the situation is not transcended by the possession of something unambiguous outside the situation; even in Tillich's own framework, it is difficult to unambiguously posit the presence of something unambiguous that can be possessed. The ambiguity of the situation is resolved by first recognizing the nature of the situation and then adopting the proper relation to the particular situation that one is facing. Consequently, the unambiguous is not something that exists outside the ambiguous, but has to be recognized and located inside the ambiguous. In the process of trying to recognize and locate the unambiguous within the ambiguous, the seeker becomes a party in the becoming of the unambiguous. If this line of reasoning is correct, then the importance of understanding the holy in all of its ambiguity is more pressing than even Tillich may have realized.

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