



THE NORTH AMERICAN PAUL TILlich SOCIETY

Newsletter

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Religious Studies Department
336 Bannan Hall

Santa Clara University
Santa Clara, CA 95053

Editor: Frederick J. Parrella, Secretary-Treasurer, NAPTS
408-554-4714

fparrella@scu.edu

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The annual meeting of the North American Paul Tillich Society took place in Denver, Colorado, in conjunction with the meeting of the American Academy of Religion and Society of Biblical Literature, from November 16 to the 19, 2001. Rob James, the Society’s Vice President and Program Chair, fashioned an excellent program for this year’s meeting. Twice as many papers were submitted to the Board of Readers as there were slots on the program—an excellent sign of the vibrancy of Tillich scholarship at the present time.

Attendance at both the Friday afternoon and Saturday morning sessions was very good. Over 40 were present on Friday afternoon. The international flavor of the conference was also in evidence: Doris Lax, Secretary of the German Paul Tillich Society, Peter De May, Peter Haigis, and Terry O’Keeffe all came from Europe to be at this year’s meeting.

The President of the Society, Young Ho Chun, presided at the banquet on Friday night at the Imperial Chinese Restaurant in Denver. The banquet’s location and the details were arranged by Michael

Drummy. The Society is grateful to Michael for his planning the evening and for the wonderful food and the ambience. Forty people were in attendance, the largest number in several years.

The banquet speaker was Father George Tavad. The topic of his address was “Tillich and Ecumenism,” based on conversations he had with Paul Tillich in 1963. His book, *Paul Tillich and the Christian Message*, appeared in 1962. Father Tavad’s address appears in this issue of the Newsletter.

NEW OFFICERS FOR 2002

Garrett Paul, Past President of the Society, was responsible for nominations of new officers. The officers of the Society elected at Denver were as follows:

Robison James, University of Richmond
President
Michael Drummy
Vice President

Frederick J. Parrella, Santa Clara University
Secretary Treasurer

Three people were elected to the Board for three year terms: Duane Olsen, 2004, Mary Ann Stenger, 2004, and Lon Weaver, 2004.

Congratulations to the new officers for 2002.

The Society extends its appreciation to Tom F. Driver, Robert Scharlemann, and Don Dreisbach for their three year's of service on the Board of Directors. The Society would also like to thank Robison James for his excellent work as Program Chair for the meeting in Denver this past year; Garrett Paul who served as this year's nominating committee for new officers; and Young Ho Chun, for his two years of service as Vice President in 2000 and President in 2001.

Please mark you calendars for the annual meeting in Toronto, Canada, November 22 and 23, 2002.

**Paul Tillich Group
Reinstated by the AAR**

The application to reinstate the "Issues in the Thought of Paul Tillich," a Group within the AAR, has been approved. This is excellent news for everyone, and congratulations to Rob James, Mary Ann Stenger, and the committee for their excellent work in submitting the favorable proposal.

The committee has described the purpose of the AAR Group in the following manner:

We foster scholarship and scholarly exchanges (1) that analyze, criticize, and interpret the thought or impact of Paul Tillich (1886-1965); (2) that employ themes from his thought—or revisions of, or reactions against his thought—in order to deal with contemporary issues in theology, religion, ethics, or the political, social, psychotherapeutic, scientific, or artistic spheres of human culture. The Tillich Group cooperates with the North American Paul Tillich Society (www.napts.org [under construction]), which is linked with the German, French-speaking, and other Tillich Societies. Papers at Group sessions are normally published, without prejudice to their appearing elsewhere, in the *Newsletter* of the North American Paul Tillich Society.

"Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture" is the name of the reinstated Group that will meet for at least the next five years as part of the Annual

Meeting of the American Academy of Religion. Robison James, Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, and Mary Ann Stenger, University of Louisville, were appointed Co-Chairs of this new Group by the AAR's Program Committee when that committee approved the new Group in December. Other members of the Group's Steering Committee appointed are Darlene Weaver of Villanova University, Ted Peters of Pacific Lutheran Seminary and the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, and John Thatamanil of Millsaps College. Rob and Mary Ann also co-chaired the NAPTS committee that submitted the successful proposal.

Although the Group's name is different, it is a reinstatement of the AAR Group that met for eleven years, 1989-1999, "Issues in the Thought of Paul Tillich." The new Group will have two sessions per year, each session two-and-a-half hours long. These sessions are, of course, in addition to the sessions of the Tillich Society itself. The new Group's Steering Committee is currently seeking to co-sponsor sessions in Toronto, Atlanta, and beyond with several other AAR "Program Units." A Program Unit such as our Group can have one such joint meeting per year, and it is always over and above the regular meetings of the Unit.

The new AAR Tillich Group will work closely with the NAPTS, just as its predecessor did. For example, papers or panels submitted to the Group (proposal deadline March 1) will be considered both for the Group's sessions and for the sessions of the Society (proposal deadline April 1 this year).

**The New AAR Group
"TILlich: ISSUES IN THEOLOGY,
RELIGION, AND CULTURE"
Call For Papers**

"Tillich: Issues in Theology, Religion, and Culture" invites papers on the following themes: 1) Tillich and postmodern faith formation; 2) Tillich and process thought; 3) Tillich and film; and 4) Tillich and literature. Tillich-related papers on other themes will be considered on almost an equal basis. Theme or themes for the session will be determined in part by the merit of the proposals received. Proposals no longer than two double-spaced pages should be sent both in Word attachment and pasted into an email or (less preferably) in seven copies (six without name) to the address below. A winning student paper will receive the Annual Tillich Prize (\$100) and up to

\$200 worth of expenses to attend the Annual Meeting. Send proposals to:

Robison B. (Rob) James, Ph.D., Research Professor of Theology, Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond, and Solon B. Cousins Prof. of Religion, Emeritus, University of Richmond
7914 Alvarado Road, Richmond, VA 23229-4209

Telephone: 804.288.2142

Email: <rjames@richmond.edu>

FAX: 804.287.6504

NAPTS ANNUAL MEETING

Call for Papers

The Annual Meeting of the North American Paul Tillich Society, in conjunction with the AAR/SBL Annual Meeting, will take place on Friday, November 22 and Saturday, November 23, 2002, in Toronto, Canada.

For its sessions on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, the North American Paul Tillich Society invites papers on the following themes:

1. Tillich and post-modern faith formation
2. Tillich and process thought
3. Tillich and film/literature
4. Tillich and the Bible
5. Tillich and Kierkegaard
6. Tillich and interreligious encounters/dialogue.

Additionally, Tillich-related papers on other themes will be considered. It is also anticipated at this time that part or all of the Friday session may be devoted to discussion of several books on Tillich that are expected to be published in 2002.

Proposals no longer than two double-spaced pages are due April 1, 2002, and should be sent to <mddrummy@lflaw.com>, both as a Word attachment and pasted into an e-mail, or (the least preferred option) in seven copies (six without name) to Dr. Michael F. Drummy, Lowe, Fell & Skogg, 370 17th Street, Suite 4900, Denver, CO 80202, Telephone 720.359.8200.

A winning student paper will receive the Second Annual Tillich Prize (\$100) and up to \$200 in reimbursed expenses. Papers delivered are published in the Society's Newsletter without prejudice to their appearing elsewhere.

NAPTS WEBSITE

The North American Paul Tillich Society is

happy to announce its new website. The name is WWW.NAPTS.ORG. The Secretary Treasurer says that the website will be up and running early in 2002. Any suggestions should be sent to the Secretary Treasurer. Check it out!

CORRIGEDUM

Michael F. Drummy's new book, which was reviewed by C. Eugene Stollings in the Fall 2001 *Newsletter*, was called *Nature, Man and God According to Paul Tillich*. The correct title is *Being and Earth: Paul Tillich's Theology of Nature*. It is available from The University Press of America. The editor wishes to extend his apologies to the author for the incorrect title.

Publishing Your Paper in the NAPTS Newsletter: A Request

From the editor's desk: Every year, the Newsletter publishes the papers delivered at the annual meeting. In order to facilitate this task, participants in last year's conference in Denver are asked to send their paper—on disk and a hard copy—to the editor as soon as possible after the annual meeting.

Any word processing program is acceptable, as long as footnotes are formatted *as* footnotes in the paper. Since the Newsletter is privately circulated, the author of the paper continues to hold the copyright to his/her work and may seek to publish wherever s/he wishes.

Thank you.

ON THE CALENDAR

The Paul Tillich Lecture Harvard University Langdon Gilkey

Shailer Mathews Professor of Theology, *Emeritus*
The University of Chicago
Tuesday, April 30, 2002
The Memorial Church

Professor Gilkey will lecture on the Theology of Culture. For more information, contact:

Mr. William R. Crout
Wadsworth House
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138

NEW PUBLICATIONS ON TILlich

Paul Tillich. *Dynamics of Faith*. With a new introduction to the Perennial Classics Edition by Marion Pauck. New York: HarperCollins, 2001 (1957).

Etienne Grieu. *Nés de Dieu: Itinéraire de chrétiens engagés. Essai de lecture théologique*. Doctoral thesis. Paris: Centre de Sèvres, 2001.

PAUL TILlich'S VIEW OF ECUMENISM

George Tavard

Address to the North American Paul Tillich Society, Annual Banquet, November 16, 2001

Distinguished Members of the Paul Tillich Society:

The flattering invitation from Dr Young Ho Chun to address the Paul Tillich Society came to me as a happy surprise. Not very long before I received it, I happened to be in Rome and I paid a visit to a German lady, Dr. Eva-Maria Jung, a historian of the Renaissance in Italy. In 1953 or 1954, she introduced me to Paul Tillich in New York City, where she spent some ten years. The invitation brought back to my mind the first years I spent in this country, and several occasions when I met and talked with Paul Tillich in those years, at receptions given by this lady, at Union Seminary, and in other places. While I was reading his works, I audited a few sessions of his course on History of the Reformation, a course that conveyed more information on Paul Tillich himself than on the Reformers. I particularly remember an informal talk Tillich gave Divine on the religious dimension of art. I believe it took place at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York. As we were sitting face to face at a buffet that followed, he spoke of his visit to the Le Corbusier chapel at Ronchamp, which I had myself seen some time before.

Among my acquaintances in New York in those days was another lady, now deceased, a Swiss Protestant, who had listened to Karl Barth in Basle when she was a theological student. Marisa Sulzbach was a regular participant at the meetings of an informal ecumenical group called The Third Hour. She invited me a number of times to afternoon tea, when she never failed to speak of Tillich and his thought in the most disparaging terms ("sheer nonsense," she said). Between Eva-Maria Jung, who revered Tillich without, she admitted, understanding him, and

Maria Sulzbach, I was duly exposed to the pro and the con regarding the importance of the man and of his theological system. Tillich at the time gave a course at Columbia University on "Protestantism and Culture." In 1956, the future Bishop Pike, rector of St. John the Divine, who also acted as chaplain for the University, invited me to offer a parallel course on "Catholicism and Culture." My acceptance, however, was vetoed by the chancellor of the archdiocese of New York, Monsignor McGuire.

Today I wish to approach Tillich from another angle, in light of an interesting experience I had with him. On May 26, 1963, Paul Tillich and I were featured speakers at a function organized by the Newman Club (the Catholic chaplaincy) at the University of Missouri in Kansas City. The assigned topic was "Ecumenical Perspectives." This was before the first session of Second Vatican Council, which occurred two months later, in July. Each one of us spoke for about twenty minutes, and there was a question and answer period. These texts—presentations, questions, and answers—were published by the Kansas City Newman Foundation under the title, *Ecumenical Exchange*, number 1. (I do not know if it was followed by other numbers.) Two years later, the Dublin Review for the Summer of 1965 (n. 504, pp. 162-182) reproduced the text now entitled, "An Ecumenical Dialogue, by Paul Tillich and George Tavard." A footnote explained: "This dialogue took place at the University of Missouri, Kansas City..." This was before the last session of Vatican Council II.

Both presentations were somewhat misleading, for they placed my contribution first, whereas it was Tillich who spoke first, and I followed him. This was the only time I ever spoke in tandem with Tillich, and of course I knew that the large audience of students had not come for me, but rather to hear the noted professor from Union Theological Seminary. University chaplaincies intended to be up to date. And, as we may recall, 1963 saw the publication of the final volume of the *Systematic Theology*. The reputation of Tillich's system was growing. My own book, *Paul Tillich and the Christian Message*, had been published in 1962. While it was not widely known, Tillich alluded to it in the informal get-together that followed the program, but in such a way that I felt fairly sure he had not read it himself. Of course, he had better things to do than read what his critics were saying!

I now wish to focus on the conception of ecumenism that was presented by Tillich under the title, "Ecumenical Perspectives: Protestant." Tillich's contribution takes a little over two pages in the Missouri pamphlet, and a little over four pages and a half in the *Dublin Review*. Mine is slightly longer. I must have spoken faster than his deliberate delivery allowed him to do!

Tillich began by pointing to several signs of an ecumenical opening between Catholics and Protestants. He cited, (1) the support given to ecumenical concerns by pope John XXIII; (2) the contrast between the narrowness of the Counter-Reformation and the present "willingness everywhere in the churches to listen to each other;" (3) the presence of Protestant observers at Vatican Council II; (4) the engagement of ecumenical groups "everywhere...in America and Europe" in "dialogue on the central points of doctrine and social action;" (5) the expressed opinion of Cardinal Bea that, "although the doctrines which are accepted by councils and confirmed by popes cannot be changed, they can be interpreted according to the possibility of the new and coming generations;" (6) "the immense sympathy that Pope John enjoys among all Protestant groups and, beyond them, all over the world."

Tillich then went on to explain the principles of Christian ecumenism, as he understood them. With the expressed warning that he could not speak for all Protestants, Tillich declared: "I can speak for myself as a Protestant, one sometimes at the center, sometimes on the boundary line of Protestantism." In a word the situation was that "the Protestants need something which they do not have...They *do* have the Protestant principle, but what they do *not* have and need is the Catholic substance." This basic idea is, of course, familiar to all readers of Tillich. In his presentation, he attributed the loss of the Catholic substance to two causes: first, "Protestant biblicism," that is "the erroneous idea that one can jump from the year 1963 to the years 1 to 30;" and, second, "the other shortcoming of Protestantism...the moralistic reduction of Christianity to the so-called 'teachings of Jesus.'" By now, he said, "Protestantism has almost lost the sacramental and the mystical element." The problem, as he went to explain, has nothing to do with the number of sacraments, whether two or seven or more. It is rather a question of perception, "whether you can see in something given, something appearing in time and space, the Reality of the divine preceding all our knowing and all our moral endeavor."

2.

Paul Tillich added four points before closing his presentation. (1) Firstly, "the authoritative structure of the Roman Church" remains an "insuperable" obstacle to reunion, especially because of the monarchic form of the hierarchy with an "unconditional authority on top, the Pope." I will say something about this in a few moments. (2) Secondly, the essential unity of the churches does not lie in their visible organization, but in their foundation in "the New Reality as it had appeared in the Christ." This unity is already present and at work "in all particular churches and goes far beyond them, far beyond all who are manifestly Christian, and embraces even those who are the creation of the Divine Spiritual Presence in paganism, Judaism and humanism." This was of course after Tillich's sojourn in Japan, and one may wonder if he pinned the label "paganism" on some of the temporary non-Christian religions. (3) Thirdly, this essential unity of humankind in Christ "drives towards an empirical unity;" and therefore one should promote all efforts for reunion. (4) Fourthly, the reunion of Christians must never stifle the prophetic spirit: "The voice of the Divine Spirit criticizing every earthly creation, including both church and religion, should not be silenced and cannot be silenced."

In answer to a question from the audience, Tillich gave it as his opinion that "of course" Protestants could accept reunion with the Catholic Church if "a reinterpretation" of the doctrine of infallibility "would not prevent the prophetic criticism by any bishop or any layman...But as long as this is impossible, union is impossible..."

In other answers to questions, Tillich said that the word "heretic" should no longer be used. He also made a distinction between the "anti-Judaism" of the New Testament and the Christian tradition, and "the naturalistic and racist anti-Semitism of modern times. He added that "the bad Jews...crucified the good Lord Jesus...is a childish form of seeing one of the greatest tragedies of world history," namely the conflict between the Pharisees and Jesus. In a final answer, Tillich said that instead of pushing for new dogmas on the Virgin Mary (as he feared some Catholics were doing), "we should develop both groups, Protestant and Catholic, an intensive doctrine of the Divine Spirit." And he bemoaned the lack in Protestantism "of female elements in the symbolization of the Ultimate, of the Divine," an element in "the religious substance

which we have almost everywhere in the history of religion and certainly very strongly in Roman Catholicism.”

3.

As conceived by Paul Tillich, the ecumenical movement will be fruitful if it leads Protestants to recover the Catholic substance, and Catholics to open themselves to the prophetic spirit of Protestantism. This has not been the standard formulation, either of the self-understanding of the World Council of Churches, or of the normative description of the principles of ecumenism that was then being made in the decree *Unitatis redintegratio* of Vatican II. Nor could this idea be found in the aims of the bilateral dialogues that were initiated at the end of the Council. The explicit aim of these dialogues has been to search for “organic unity” between the Catholic Church and the other Christian Churches. Tillich’s formula, however, may well function as a prophetic warning that organic unity is not possible unless the Catholic substance and the Protestant principle are able to coexist in one institution.

In any case, if one compares Tillich’s reflections in the Spring of 1963 with what has happened more recently in the ecumenical movement, one can see the prophetic spirit at work. Much of the Catholic substance was affirmed in the post-conciliar bilateral dialogues, not only between the Catholic Church and the Anglican Communion, which has been long familiar with the Catholic substance—witness the *Final Report* of ARCIC-I (1983) and the more recent reports of ARCIC-II, *Salvation and the Church* (1986), *Church as Communion* (1991), *The Gift of Authority* (1999)—but also in the dialogues with the Lutheran World Federation (*Church and Justification*, 1994) and with the World Methodist Council (*Towards a Statement on the Church*, 1986; *The Apostolic Tradition*, 1991; *Doing the truth in love*, 2001). In the context of the Faith and Order Commission of the WCC, much of the Catholic substance passed into the BEM (*Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*, Faith and Order Paper n.111, 1982) and its liturgy.

Evidence that the Catholic world is opening the door to the Protestant principle may be more elusive, and it is public knowledge that the secular press reports on such an opening only when it has given rise to some sort of scandal. The Protestant principle is nonetheless present in the mutual interrogations that are formulated at times in the bilateral dialogues. It is explicitly at the heart of the method-

ology of the *Groupe des Dombes*, an unofficial dialogue between French-speaking Catholics and Protestants in Europe, in which the need for “mutual conversion” is given a central place. And one should not forget that Vatican II, in the decree on ecumenism, n. 7, asks forgiveness “from God and from our estranged brothers” for sins against unity. Likewise, Paul VI in the name of the Catholic Church asked forgiveness for these sins, and on several occasions John Paul II has reiterated a humble quest for reconciliation in order to overcome the sinful legacy of the past.

In addition, John Paul II himself welcomed the idea of a reform of the papacy. In the encyclical *Ut unum sint* he asked: “Could not the real but imperfect communion existing between us persuade Church leaders and their theologians to engage with me in a patient and fraternal dialogue” concerning the ministry of unity of the bishop of Rome, “a dialogue in which, leaving useless controversies behind, we could listen to one another, keeping before us only the will of Christ for his Church and allowing ourselves to be deeply moved by his plea ‘that they may all be one... so that the world may believe that you have sent me’ (John 17:21)” (n.96)? What may be missing here, in Tillichian eyes, is the perspective of an on-going criticism in the Churches and their hierarchies. As Tillich would presumably hold, the Spirit may be stifled and the ineffable Ultimacy of God denied by a quasi-fundamentalist adherence to specific forms of what is unavoidably the too human language of doctrinal statements. Nevertheless in the Catholic understanding of the doctrine, there is no formulation that is impervious to improvement, so that it is logical to hold that no dogmatic formula is at any time literally final.

4.

There are other dimensions of Tillich’s prophetic views. His brief remarks in Kansas City on Judaism and anti-Semitism touched on a central concern of Vatican Council II. In the declaration, *Nostra aetate*, which was in the works when we spoke in Kansas City, the Council declared that “neither all Jews indiscriminately at that time nor Jews to-day can be charged with the crimes committed during the Passion” (n.4). In addition, Tillich’s concern with “the creations of the Divine Presence in paganism, Judaism, and humanism, is very much alive to-day when both Protestant and Catholic theologians explore the outreach dialogues, not only

with Judaism, but also with Islam and especially with the great religions of Asia.

Some Catholic theologian may be surprised that Tillich in Kansas City related Catholic Mariology to “the strong emotional element which is connected with the female symbolization” of the Divine. Paul Tillich at this point could not realize that he was already voicing one of the coming foci of feminist theology. The Virgin Mary as such is not that important in contemporary feminism. What is important is precisely what Tillich discerned, namely that female symbols—in the strong sense of symbols that participate in what they signify—can no less than traditional male symbols, lead to participation in God. “I simply confess,” he said, “that Protestantism has something of an empty space in this respect,” although he also pointed out that three lines of development in historic Protestantism have gone in that direction. These were, he noted, “some side image of Jesus, especially in the pietistic kind of piety,” and “the carrying power of the Divine as such, the Father,” as also “the ecstatic forms of the Spirit.” There was unfortunately no time in the format or our presentation to elaborate any of these three points.

5.

It seems to me, however, that Tillich’s talk in Kansas City, when it is related to his main writings, hints at an interior conflict in his thought. On the one hand, the sacramental principle, namely the belief and the experience that the material components of this world are symbolic of the Divine, is an integral element of what Tillich called the Catholic substance. In the history of Catholic Christianity, however, the Church itself belongs to the sacramental order. This fact was clearly perceived at Vatican Council II, when the Council described the Church as being “in Christ, so to say, a sacrament of salvation, that is, a sign and instrument of intimate union with God and of the whole unity of the human race” (*Lumen Gentium*, n.1). And, as one can logically argue, if the Church has a sacramental character, then also the structure of its ministry—deacons, priests, bishops—in spite of the ambiguities of the concrete forms taken by this structure in history. If it is to exist in this world, the Spiritual Community, as Tillich might say, must be embodied in sociological realities, with which, however, given the power of the Protestant principle, it can never be fully or simply identified.

I do not think that Catholic ecclesiologists would disagree with this. As was declared by Vati-

can II in the Constitution on the Church, the Church of Christ, which is the true spiritual society, is also “a society constituted and organized in this world,” and as such, it “subsists (*subsistit in*) in the Catholic Church governed by the successor of Peter and the bishops in his communion” (*Lumen Gentium*, n. 8). If this makes any sense, it means that it is in their own Church and its institutions, liturgies, and sacraments, that the Catholic faithful experience the spiritual communion with Christ that is constitutive of the Spiritual Community. Any one of the Protestant faithful who experience the Spiritual Community in their own gatherings implicitly makes the same claim. Paul Tillich, I believe, would not have disagreed.

Nowhere, unless I am mistaken, did Tillich’s discussion of Spiritual Community in parts III and IV of the *Systematic Theology* raise the question of the Church’s structure, even though Tillich affirmed the “historical providence” of God (ST, III, p.372), as also “the truth that the church, the Spiritual community, always lives in the churches, and that where there are churches confessing their foundation in the Christ as the central manifestation of the Kingdom of God in history, there the church is” (p.378).

On the other hand, eleven years before his talk in Kansas City, Tillich had given the Firth lectures at the University of Nottingham in 1952 (where I followed him in the Firth lectureship in 1969). In these lectures, that were published as *Love, Power, and Justice* (1954), he noted two important points as he reflected about estrangement and reunion.

The first regards the nature of reunion. “It is impossible to unite that which is *essentially* separated” (*Love, Power and Justice*, p.25). Therefore, it seems to me, the effort to reunite Catholic substance and Protestant principle assumes that they are not essentially separated as they exist in their embodiments in the Catholic and the Protestant Churches. Each kind of Church shares to some extent in the chief mark of the other.

The second point regards the way in which “the power of being” resides in a group that it unifies. The inner unity of a group flows from a center, traditionally seen on the model of the human body in the letters of Paul, as Tillich reminded his listeners in Nottingham. It follows that what Tillich called the ‘hierarchical’ structure of life” (p.44) is intrinsically necessary to all living beings and, by the same token, to all living groups: “The more centered a being is, the more power of being is embodied in it...”

Indeed, no organization can live without a center. "The ancient parable" of the members of the body, "shows the decisive importance of the center for the power of being for every part." And again, "The need for a center makes even an egalitarian group hierarchical" (p.45).

Had this been written by a Catholic who feels at home in a hierarchical Church, who even reads normativity in the central position of the holy see and the bishop of Rome, it would be an exact description of the role traditionally assigned to the papacy. However, far from applying his analysis of the power of being to the universal Church, Tillich generally presented the Roman understanding of primacy in ways that no educated Catholic would recognize. In *Systematic Theology*, we read: "The classical expression of this ambiguity (the ambiguity of self-transcendence) is the Roman Church's claim that it is the fulfillment of the apocalyptic vision of the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth..." (III, p. 345). I have honestly no idea in what sort of Catholic document Tillich could have found such a notion. Further on, "the declaration of the infallibility of the pope" is put together with "the tyranny of Protestant Orthodoxy, the fanaticism of its sects, and the stubbornness of fundamentalism." All these belong to what Tillich called "one line of demonization in Christianity" (III, p. 381). I am certain, however, that Tillich cannot have understood infallibility in the sense that was intended at Vatican Councils I and II.

That the exercise of papal authority can be demonic was not unknown to the Catholic Middle Ages, when several popes were fervently denounced as personal antichrists, the abomination of desolation in the Temple of God. Martin Luther stood squarely in a long tradition when, in his conflict with Leo X, he called the pope antichrist. While Tillich did not use this vocabulary, he was not very far from it, if he meant that papal authority is necessarily excessive, and cannot possibly be exercised in the framework of the liberty of the children of God.

As he formulated the question in terms of use and abuse of power, Tillich was aware of the necessary role of power in relation to love and to justice. His approach to the problem of the papacy might have provoked an interesting exchange, had the pope of the time, Paul VI, already extended an invitation to discuss the Roman primacy in its principle and in its implementation. The apparent discrepancy between affirming the necessity of a center in any living organism, and characterizing such a center as

demonic, raises questions that are of major importance to the future of Christian ecumenism.

6.

On the whole, Paul Tillich, I believe, had a clear view of the central ecumenical question. It is all the more intriguing that neither he personally, nor, more generally, his thought, have had a significant impact on the ecumenical discussions that have taken place, either in the WCC, or in the post-conciliar dialogues between the Catholic Church and other Christian Churches and traditions. Unlike Karl Barth, whose friendship with Hans Urs von Balthasar was well-known, and who openly recognized the contribution of Hans Küng to a discussion of his understanding of Justification by faith, unlike Oscar Cullmann, who visited Paul VI several times and was personally invited by the pope to be an observer at Vatican Council II, Tillich does not seem to have had close contacts with Catholic theologians or Catholic bishops, even though there have been serious studies of his thought by Catholic authors, and his system has been compared with the *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas. At any rate, his theology has not functioned as a resource for the Lutheran/Roman Catholic dialogues, either internationally or in the United States.

It is true that the volume *Justification by Faith. Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue VII* (1985), which was the fruit of five years of dialogue in this country, does include an essay by the late Carl Peter that makes considerable use of Tillich's notion of Catholic substance and Protestant principle, as also of Tillich's understanding of Justification (p. 304-315). The gist of the paper is that a Catholic principle, and not only a concern for Catholic substance, should be paired with the Protestant principle. Carl Peter called it, the "Principle of Respect for the Divine in its Concrete Realizations" (p. 310). Whether this is rightly formulated, or such a principle is really needed, is not my concern here. My point is that, whatever its value, Carl Peter's paper played no role in the actual dialogue on justification. It was written as an afterthought, when Peter discovered that the participants were not willing to posit the question in terms of Tillich's correlation of Protestant Principle and Catholic Substance. As I remember, the proposal to include this paper in the volume provoked the objection that Paul Tillich could not speak for the Lutheran tradition. It was admitted essentially to keep the dialogue open with the posi-

tion in American Catholic theology that Carl Peter represented.

Likewise, Tillich's understanding of Justification was not an ingredient in the most recent study of the anathemas that were adopted in 1547 by the sixth session of the Council of Trent (that ended in Germany with the volume, *Lehrver-urteilungen-kirkchentrenend* (1986) (rendered in English as *The Condemnations of the Reformation Era: Do they still Divide?* 1989), or in the writing of the "Joint Declaration of the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation on the Doctrine of Justification," that was finalized in 1997. I cannot claim to know what Tillich would have thought of the Joint Declaration and its signing in Augsburg on October 30, 1999. In light of his address of 1963 in Kansas City, however, I assume that he would have warned against demonic dimensions that may be lurking in the sense of achievement that is likely to follow the positive conclusions of long and difficult ecumenical dialogues. Demonic possibilities, however, should not be sufficient to stop an otherwise justifiable action from being pursued. If there is a lesson to learn from Tillich in this area, it is that ecumenical progress must not become an excuse for any kind of triumphalism.

Thank you.

THREE PRESENTATIONS

Religion in the New Millennium: Theology in the Spirit of Paul Tillich
 edited by Raymond F. Bulman
 and Frederick J. Parrella
 Mercer University Press, 2001

Ted Peters introduced the following three papers and served as coordinator of the panel. Because Ray Bulman could not attend the meeting, Prof. Peters read Prof. Bulman's paper.

THE FUTURE SHAPE OF THEOLOGY

Raymond F. Bulman

The list of contributors found on the back jacket of *Religion in the New Millennium* includes, I believe, an impressive melange of high profile theologians, supported by a broader grouping of solid, established scholars in the field. As a whole the quality of this list is such that it inevitably raises the question: "Can this reputable group of theologians

(American, Canadian, European, Asian, South American, women and men, senior as well as junior scholars) provide us with a clue as to the possible future directions theology will take at the beginning of the new millennium"? In other words, can this collection of authors help reveal to us the new shape of theology in the years that lie ahead?

I. The Necessity of Teamwork in Theology

The table of contents of *Religion in the New Millennium* is not necessarily going to help us discover the emerging shape or principal themes of theological reflection. The reason for this is that the sections of the book were in fact, established beforehand by the organizers of the New Harmony Conference as well as by the editors of the present volume. On the other hand, the impressive diversity of expertise—ranging from economics to gender issues and from the arts to interreligious dialogue—suggests to me that theologians of the future might well find it necessary to work as teams. The theological genius of giants like Paul Tillich, who could address the whole "Religious Situation," does not seem to emerge in every generation. Today's theologians, it would seem, cannot individually master the range of Tillich's cultural interests without the help of the kind of teamwork illustrated in this volume. Perhaps it would even be unwise for them to attempt to do so—especially, if they see the need for a specificity and detail of the type in which Tillich himself never engaged.

According to Jesuit theologian, Bernard Lonergan, research is a "functional specialization" in theology, which in the complexity of today's world is best done by a team of experts. I suspect it will become more common for individual efforts in theology be preceded by the scholarly input of experts, who will provide the individual theologian with "data relevant to theological investigation."¹

II. The Centrality of Environmental Concern

One of the themes that a number of contributors seem compelled to address is that of environmental or ecological responsibility. It is very clear, for example, that both Rosemary Radford Ruether and Gordon Kaufmann place ecological issues at the top of their theological agenda. Both authors evidently consider this question important enough as to be willing to propose a radically revised paradigm of Christian theology in order to address it properly.

Kaufmann, for example, calls for nothing less than a "reconceiving of God and humanity" (p. 238)

in an attempt to bring theology into line with ecological responsibility. Ruether, for her part, calls for a completely new look at the foundational Christian doctrines of the Trinity, Creation, Original Sin, Salvation, and Eternal Life through the lenses of what she presents as an ecofeminist theology (pp. 71-75).

For Ruether, it is the same mentality of male domination that threatens nature and oppresses women. Without relying on Ruether's ecofeminist stance, Kaufmann insists with equal urgency on the necessity of harmonizing social justice with environmental sustainability. This powerful environmental theme seems to force itself on the central stage of theology no matter what the theological starting point. It is probably for this reason, as well, that it makes an appearance in some form or other in so many of the other articles in this collection (See, for example, Stone, 59; Drummy, 255-59; R. MacClennan, 159). Today's realities seem to demand of theology that it incorporate the ecological challenge into the very heart of its vision and of its research priorities.

III. The Spiritual Presence or Universal Spirit

Much in the spirit of his theological mentor, Joachim of Fiore, Tillich, especially toward the end of his career, became ever more conscious of the emergence of a universal Spirit, which transcends the boundaries of particular religious communities. According to John Dourly, Tillich recognized the presence of this Spirit, especially in the experience of "spiritual freedom both from one's own foundation and for one's own foundation" (Dourly, 94). I take Tillich to mean that in these days when interreligious dialogue and mutual respect across religious lines is so critical for human survival, focus on the Spiritual Presence in our own and in other religious traditions will move us a long way toward overcoming the exclusivist/inclusivist dilemma, described so poignantly by Marc Boss in his article on religious diversity (pp. 177ff).

Mary Ann Stenger reminds us that the Spiritual Presence is also recognized in the works of justice, whereby ideologies that foster injustice are critiqued and opposed (Stenger, 130, citing Tillich, ST 3: 265). The study of religious texts makes it abundantly clear that the members of other world religions, e.g., Buddhist and Confucian, have also experienced the "in-breaking" of this same Divine Spirit. Sharon Burch, reflecting on Tillich's notion of reason in ecstasy, describes the universal experience of encountering the transcendent (p. 113),

while Taitetsu Unno, writing from the perspective of Shin Buddhism, claims that a true spiritual awareness of the full horror of karmic evil is impossible without the Illumination which comes from the "working of Great Compassion"—a transcendent Cosmic Power distinct from ourselves (p. 171).

Ruwan Palapathwala, in his original reflections on the value of Tillich's thought for the spirituality of our time, claims that Tillich's theology does not go far enough in dealing with the place of the world's religions in the Christian worldview. It is important, he claims, to take Tillich beyond the limits of his system and of his Christocentrism. In so doing, he is willing to give up not only Tillich's system, but also its "linchpin—Jesus the Christ" (Palapathwala, p. 219). What he does not name, however, is precisely that which is "beyond Christ and system." For Tillich, this is the Spiritual Presence which, in Dourley's terms, frees us, on the one hand, from our Christ-centered foundation, while, at the same time, freeing us to embrace the very same foundation from which we have been liberated.

IV. Sacralization of the Secular

Once again, we find here a theme that emerges from a variety of perspectives and from a number of sections within the collection. Marcia MacClennan, in addressing Paul Tillich's contributions to a contemporary spirituality, expresses Tillich's own view of the sacramentality of life by referring to "the divine ground that shines through every creative human act" (M. MacClennan, p. 201). In her own terms, she describes Tillich's spiritual vision as one in which "every secular event has a sacred core, every person is transparent to the divine" and, in this same vein, appeals to Frederick Parrella's description of Tillich's worldview as "a theonomous spirituality" (MacClennan, p. 201). An enthusiastic celebration of Tillich's sacramental vision is reflected in Jaci Marachin's sensuous description of the Dionysian expressions of Brazilian popular culture, whether at the beach, during carnival or in the excitement of the soccer match. Barbara Baumgarten shows us how Tillich's vision can turn a work of art—like her own quilt "At the Tomb" into a symbol of religious depth (Baumgarten, p. 161). Tom Driver, for his part, on a less optimistic note, questions whether our still emerging technological culture will remain transparent to the divine. He is especially concerned lest the electronic media of entertainment, will ultimately deprive twenty-first century people of the blessing of genuine community, leav-

ing us rather with the illusion of virtual religion and with the loss of the ability for real spiritual engagement (Driver, p.142).

Overall, it is the same sacramental outlook that serves as the guiding principle of the whole section on science and religion, which, in so many ways, is calling for a new natural theology, a “theology of the inorganic.” This theology will be grounded in a sense of the presence of the Divine Spirit throughout the physical cosmos (see Donald Arther, p. 332). This emphasis on the transparency of the secular and natural world to its own divine depth permeates the mood of the whole collection, and, in all likelihood, will remain an ongoing trend in future theological investigation.

V. Theology with a Sense of Urgency

If Tillich was correct about the nature of theology, we should always expect theological writing to reflect an existential engagement with the subject and an urgency that is driven by an underlying ultimate concern. In practice, however, this is not always the case, and it is noteworthy, therefore, that so many of the contributors to the present volume write with an evident, even contagious, sense of urgency.

When Tillich was at the height of his career, he claimed that we were living in a sacred void, waiting for the breakthrough of the divine power into history. Authors like Gilkey, Bonino, Boss, Slater, and Bulman, on the other hand, are convinced that the breakthrough is about to happen, if not already present. To explain this they fall back on Tillich’s famous notion of a *kairos* (Bulman, pp. 369-70). Langdon Gilkey, for example, describing a *kairos* as “the appearance of the Eternal in the midst of a concrete historical situation,” amends the title of his article to “The Religious Situation as We Await with Hope the New Kairos” (Gilkey, p.18). Writing from a Latin American perspective, Jose Miguez

Bonino recognizes the emergence of a *kairos* in the stark challenge we face in responding to the decisive social dilemmas of our day (Bonino, p. 33).

While the issue of religious diversity is hardly a new question on the theological agenda, one cannot but sense the urgency with which Marc Boss pursues the possibilities of interreligious dialogue, realizing that today it presents us with both the opportunity and the necessity for mutual religious transformation (see Boss, p.195). In his appeal for “creative justice” in today’s world, Peter Slater does not hesitate to describe the present religious situation as a *kairos* moment, but at the same time makes the very timely claim that every *kairos* requires both death and resurrection, not only of individuals, but also of nations and religious institutions (Slater, p. 51). Ted Peters supports this insight, arguing that “our entrance into eschatological wholeness will be through the gate of death and resurrection” (Peters, p. 327),

Well before the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, a number of the participants in the New Harmony Conference and contributors to this volume recognized that something new was in the air—that major changes were about to occur and that theology will not go on with business as usual. In the wake of the terrorist attacks on New York and Washington, this intuition has been—sadly to say—confirmed in a way that could hardly have been imagined at the time. In the years ahead, theology is not very likely to lose this sense of urgency. We can only hope that like the contributors to this volume, theological reflection will—despite all the negativity, uncertainties and threats of our present epoch—preserve not only a sense of urgency, but also the “underlying confidence that the human spirit will ultimately prevail in its pursuit of a more harmonious world” (Introduction, p. 2).

¹ Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), 172.

WHITHER THEOLOGY OF CULTURE?

Mary Ann Stenger

In the introduction to the book, *Religion in the New Millennium: Theology in the Spirit of Paul Tillich*, Ray Bulman and Fred Parrella argue that theology of culture “has widely fallen out of repute,” at least in part because of the rise of post-modernism and deconstruction (p. 4). Yet, as they clearly



recognize, the book itself counters that claim, as the contributors offer varying versions of their own theologies of culture, sometimes closely tied to Tillich and other times in the spirit of Tillich’s theology of culture but with little or no direct use of Tillich.

Bulman and Parrella also note that these theologies of culture “project a contagious mood of anticipation that something radically new is about to happen” and that the tone of these essays is optimistic

rather than pessimistic (p. 2). Both of those characterizations are striking as we reflect on our current cultural and religious situation near the end of 2001. Events that none of us could have anticipated have challenged Americans, bringing to our forefront massive death, fear, anxiety, and war.

Certainly, these challenges were familiar to Tillich! Not only familiar but in many ways, these were the challenges that situated his theology and pushed him to recognize fate and death, doubt and meaninglessness, guilt and condemnation. Those deeply experienced anxieties drove him to the very ground of being, to the power that is there in the midst of those radically negating anxieties.

Even with decades of interpreting Tillich and using him as the base from which I explored contemporary issues of feminism and religious pluralism, I found myself turning to Tillich in a new way after September 11th. His writings, especially some of his sermons, helped me put the massive death and surfacing anxieties into a broader theological perspective.

In a sermon entitled, "Love is Stronger than Death," Tillich says: "Death has become powerful in our time, in individual human beings, in families, in nations and in [hu]mankind as a whole. Death has become powerful—that is to say that the End, the finite, and the limitations and decay of our being have become visible" (*The New Being* [New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955], 170). He goes on to speak of Western civilization's ignorance of our human limits, forgetting that we are finite and limited, and keeping the picture of death from our children until suddenly it is before us in horrific images and in families whom we know lost a loved one. Tillich seemed almost prescient in that sermon! But this sermon is vintage Tillich; perhaps in different words, often philosophically and theologically couched, Tillich always has maintained the ambiguity of life, the need for critical realism, and the importance of the Protestant Principle.

Reading through the essays in this book in the last few weeks, I found that most of the writers were true to this Tillichian emphasis on ambiguity, paradox, and critique. Langdon Gilkey speaks of waiting with hope for a new *kairos* but now in the midst of deep concern about the threat of radical heteronomy (from the religious right, for example), the loss of moral standards, and the problem of ethnic cleansing. Jose Bonino calls us to explore Tillich's ideas of the Protestant Principle, *kairos*, and religious socialism in relation to the current cultural and politi-

cal situation. Jean Richard analyzes aspects of religious nationalism while Ronald Stone addresses the need to resist the demonic distortions of life in fundamentalism, greed, violence, and domination.

Of course, the focus on human death and finitude is not the final word, as Tillich connects that experience with the life-rescuing power of love, for example, preaching in the previously mentioned sermon that love *is* stronger than death. As he says: "Love is at work where the power of death is strongest, in war and persecution and homelessness and hunger and physical death itself. It is omnipresent and here and there, in the smallest and most hidden ways as in the greatest and most visible ones, it rescues life from death." Tillich's optimism dominates over pessimism, affirming the power of being not only over the threat of nonbeing but in the midst of the radical threats of nonbeing. Awaiting the *kairos*, hoping for and expecting a breakthrough of the Spirit, is a stance true to Tillich's theology of culture. The positive, hopeful tone of many of the essays in this book reflect that Tillichian stance.

With respect to content, many of the essays appear more relevant today than we could have recognized during our conference in June 1999. Peter Slater explores Tillich's idea of creative justice that involves forgiveness, not just in personal interaction but with respect to one large social group in relation to another. Rosemary Ruether addresses the relationship between humans and other creatures as well as the preferential option for the poor; she calls for a balance between justice and sustainability. How necessary and important these understandings of justice are in contrast to the too-strong outcry for revenge in the name of justice!

In our present context, discussions of religious pluralism, as in Marc Boss's essay on typology of religions or in Ruwan Palapathwala's essay analyzing Tillich's contributions to the encounter of world religions, are more important today than even a few months ago. Women's issues and women's global activism, as addressed by Sharon Burch and myself, loom larger with the plight of Afghanistan women explored in the national press.

Problems of science, technology, and religion are not new but have taken on an urgency in recent weeks. Tillich's appreciation for and yet awareness of the ambiguity in science and technology makes him an important resource for our discussions. Although not addressing the specific issues before us, the essays in this book creatively interrelate science and religion by exploring the depth in each.

Religious aspects of art and film, as analyzed by Barbara Baumgarten, Tom Driver, and Jaci Marschlin, both feed us and call us to live boldly and critically in the world.

Theology of culture is needed more today than even a few years ago. Theological understanding of our cultural and religious situation, especially in a Tillichian vein, reminds us of the danger of the demonic and of our own finitude unto death. But it also calls us to discover and to help others see the presence of the Spirit in our midst.

Let me conclude by offering my own Tillichian perspective on our present cultural and religious situation.

Several media outlets reported an increase in attendance at houses of worship the weekend after Sept. 11th. As a place for spiritual sustenance in the face of grief, as a place to gather in community, as a place to discuss responses to the tragedy, such attendance is well and good. In the tragedy of deaths of thousands and in the fear of more, people grasp at something to be ultimate for them—to fill the emptiness created by looking at death, by fears, by grieving. But it is too easy for people to grasp at that which is not truly ultimate, to grasp at a different aspect of our human life as if it were ultimate. As has happened in past history, so now, people turn to nationalism, not just patriotism, but nationalism. In *Theology of Culture* (New York: Oxford, 1959), Tillich talks about symbols being born out of the womb of our group or collective unconscious, specifically mentioning the flag (p. 58)! The nation, the United States, America, has become the focus of people's allegiance, their hopes, and their faith. Critique of our nation is attacked. A rather simplistic, "One is either for us or against us," is voiced by our president, and ordinary people take that to heart, using the symbol of the flag to express this idea. Unity seems to be understood by many as uncritical loyalty, as affirming our nationhood over against people we see as different, as other. Tillich states: "If a national group makes the life and growth of the nation its ultimate concern, it demands that all other concerns, economic well-being, health and life, family, aesthetic and cognitive truth, justice and humanity, be sacrificed." (*Dynamics of Faith* [New York: Harper, 1957], 1.) Such a strong nationalism is not patriotism but idolatry of nation, a faith in the nation that is very tempting when the nation, its values and its people, are attacked. I am not saying that all or even most Americans have adopted extreme nationalism, but I see it as a danger that is there—and es-

pecially a danger when religious groups justify and legitimate it as God's nation. It is easy for people to think: We are the good power fighting the evil power. Such a view forgets our finitude, our limits, and the ambiguity of all human actions, especially those of governments. And it forgets that the people we are fighting see themselves as the good power fighting the evil power.

Not only does Tillich call people to remember the deeper power of being but also to critique social, political and religious events and movements in response to that ultimate power. And Tillich speaks of transforming or creative justice that, like divine grace, "forgives in order to reunite" (*Love, Power, and Justice* [New York: Oxford, 1954], 66). Creative justice in a Tillichian perspective calls people to understand the humanity of those who hate us and asks for actions that convey our common humanity and faith to them and to our neighbors and different communities.

Tillich preaches that love *is* stronger than death, calling all to act against the evils in our world—not with death but with love and justice. This book offers essays that echo Tillich's call and go beyond it with respect to the concrete dimensions of our contemporary cultural and religious situation.

AN EMERGING SPIRITUALITY

Frederick J. Parrella

In *The Religious Situation* of 1926, Paul Tillich suggested this understanding of spirituality: "...to live spiritually," he said, "is to live in the presence of meaning, and without an ultimate meaning everything disappears into the abyss of meaninglessness."¹ For Tillich, it was spiritual anxiety, the anxiety of emptiness and meaninglessness, that most plagues the modern—and I think we can safely add, postmodern—individual.²

In the last few decades, the word "spirituality" has been on the lips of many, including those who would not consider themselves religious in any traditional sense. Many young people are proud to proclaim that they are "spiritual" but not "religious." By spiritual, they mean a personal journey in search of meaning and fulfillment beyond their own narrow self-interest, a journey toward what we could call transcendence. As Tillich suggested more than a half century earlier, these people want to live in the presence of meaning. At the same time, people who

consider themselves to be on a spiritual journey are often opposed to “organized religion” in any form. Their journey is usually an individual one, suspicious as they are of heteronomous forces directing the spiritual life. An Irish Jesuit recently described the situation this way: “There is a hunger for spirituality, a search for what is deeper, and a skepticism about all institutions, and this all comes together at a crucial time. We are struggling to find our voice at the end of the millennium.”³

Without doubt, Paul Tillich’s voice should be one of the most prominent in this search. His theology has provided a foundation for an analysis of the religious situation at the end of the millennium; it should also provide pathways for an emerging spirituality for the 21st century. Thus, in New Harmony, spirituality was one of the areas of special focus. On Saturday of the Conference, a session, “Spirituality and Interreligious Dialogue,” provided both papers and a panel on the contributions of Tillich’s thought to the present spiritual situation. In what follows, I will highlight some of the articles appearing in the book and present some of my own conclusions on 21st century spirituality.

In his chapter, “Compassion in Buddhist Spirituality,” Taitetsu Unno demonstrates that certain ideas in Shin Buddhism can be compared to what Tillich calls the double characteristics of agape in Christian theology; namely, “the acceptance of the unacceptable, the movement from the higher to the lower, and, at the same time, the will to transform individual as well as society.”⁴ In “Interreligious Dialogue: From Tillich to Lindbeck and Back,” Marc Boss, employing Lindbeck’s theology of religions, calls into question the customary typological distinction between exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. He makes a case for an alternative typology, and, from this perspective, re-evaluates Tillich’s understanding of religious diversity.⁵ In his chapter, “Beyond Christ and *System*: Paul Tillich and Spirituality for the Twenty-first Century,” Ruwan Palapathwala suggests that Tillich’s thought in the last years of his life “developed beyond the system-based, logocentric and Christocentric framework.” In the framework of his later writings, exemplified in his last lecture at Chicago with Mircea Eliade, Palapathwala contends, can we see the Paul Tillich who can make “a unique contribution to our understanding of a spirituality for the 21st century.”⁶

Tillich’s understanding of spirituality was also examined from two other points of view. Marcia MacLennan proposes that Paul Tillich’s legacy includes three gifts to us for spirituality in the 21st century.⁷ Tillich’s first gift, she says, is “his creative approach and fresh language about the spiritual process that the Christian community experiences in its transformation by Jesus the Christ.” The second gift Tillich offers is “courage to enter the future knowing that divine healing and grace can happen anywhere, anytime, to anyone.” Tillich offers to us courage to affirm being rather than non-being, courage to say “yes” to life when it seems to be a definite “no.” Tillich’s third gift to us is “his profound sense of the infinite present within the finite, the eternal in the midst of time.” Tillich suggests that “we need to rejuvenate the vertical direction of life, to re-visit holiness in ordinary events, to re-view the divine ground that shines through every creative human act.”⁸

Finally, Owen Thomas offers “A Tillichian Critique of Contemporary Spirituality.”⁹ He questions a number of common misunderstandings about spirituality in our culture: first, that spirituality is an optional matter so that some people are more spiritual than others; second, that spirituality should be sharply distinguished from religion as something superior to and more important than religion; third, that spirituality is essentially a matter of the inner or interior life—while religion is a matter of the outer life; finally, spirituality is essentially concerned with private life rather than public life. On the contrary, Thomas suggests, in his words, that “spirituality is something universally human, that all people are spiritual”; second, “that spirituality and religion are practically synonymous, that spirituality, therefore, is as much concerned with the outer life (of the body, community, institutions, liturgy, tradition, doctrine, ethics, and society) as with the inner life;” finally, “that spirituality is as much concerned with the public life and work of citizenship as with private life.”

Thomas contends that separating the inner from the outer life, the private from the public, misreads the Christian tradition. According to Thomas, William Temple’s words three quarters of a century ago, are still relevant to today’s spirituality. Christianity, Temple writes, is

“...the most avowedly materialist of all the great religions...Its own most central saying is: ‘The

Word was made flesh,' where the last term was, no doubt, chosen because of its specifically materialist associations. By the very nature of its central doctrine, Christianity is committed to a belief in the ultimate significance of the historical process, and in the reality of matter and its place in the divine scheme.¹⁰

In Thomas's view, some contemporary Christian spirituality is "a recrudescence in modern form of the gnosticism of the early Christian centuries." Irenaeus, he reminds us, asserted that the "inner man" was an essential theme of gnosticism: "[T]he inner man may ascend on high in an invisible manner, as if their body was left among created things in this world."¹¹ Thomas concludes with a call for a renewal of Christian formation in the churches, and the return to the centrality of the Kingdom of God in Christian spirituality.

The essays on spirituality from New Harmony bear witness to the vibrancy of Tillich's theology for both spirituality and interreligious dialogue for the 21st century. I think there are two clear reasons for this. First, Tillich was profoundly aware of the spiritual emptiness of Western culture in the 20th century. The spiritual crisis for Tillich was much deeper and more complex than the simple rejection of traditional devotion or piety and the alienation of the people from the churches. This crisis was constituted by a loss of meaning that affected the whole of religion and culture, including its political, artistic, and scientific dimensions.¹² He was aware of the spiritual longing in the hearts of those committed to the tradition, those who have rejected the tradition, and still others who stood on the boundary between both alternatives. Tillich knew that moderns no longer lived in a culture populated by "religious man" but, in Philip Rieff's phrase, "psychological man," one where the ontological and metaphysical has given way to the therapeutic.¹³ Tillich knew that moderns were, in his famous phrase, still "searching for guiding stars."¹⁴

Second and more important, Tillich's theology continues to provide interpretive categories, in which and through which we can comprehend the spiritual needs of our own times. These categories are central to his theology as well adaptive to spirituality. First, Tillich's theological system remains ageless and flexible; ultimate questions of life change their content in different cultural and historical settings, but the formal quality of ultimacy in the

question is timeless. People of every time and place must confront the question of an absolute meaning to life in the face of joy and sorrow, love and lovelessness, suffering and death. Likewise, Christians must search the Gospel tradition for answers to these human questions in a form that is faithful to the tradition and its enshrined terminology as well as in a form that makes sense to their present worldview. Second, Tillich's writings have the power to touch people deeply regardless of their age, background, or profession. His appeal remains wider than that of the professional theologian. To persons in search for meaning, works like *Dynamics of Faith* and *The Courage to Be* still offer answers to people on the boundary of belief and unbelief. Finally, Tillich offers a desirable alternative to the theological polarization of our time: between a secular modernity lacking transcendence on one side and an uncritical, rigid neo-orthodoxy on the other. Tillich's theology, especially his theological interpretation of culture, continues to help persons understand the paradox of their freedom and creativity as individuals on the one hand and their absolute dependence upon God in an evolving world on the other.

In an article some years back, I suggested these four essential characteristics of Tillich's spirituality: a spirituality "on the boundary" in its form, ontological in its foundation, mystical in its direction, and theonomous in its substance. An emerging Christian spirituality would do well to listen to Tillich's classic statement "that religion is the substance of culture, so culture is the form of religion."¹⁵ If it did, it would be pushed to the boundary line of secular culture. This spirituality would shun both the side of church or world, the sacred or the secular, and see the eternal in the midst of the temporal, the sacred in the depths of the profane. As Owen Thomas has suggested, the "spiritual" and the "religious" would no longer be on opposite sides, but embrace each other while embracing the world at the same time. And, as Marcia MacLennan suggests, "divine healing and grace can happen anywhere, anytime, to anyone." Likewise, a 21st century spirituality, as Marc Boss and Ruwan Palapathwala suggest, would be open to dialogue with other religious traditions with new energy, new commitment, and new categories of understanding.

So too, a spirituality grounded in Tillich's mystical ontology would continue to offer 21st century individuals, whether in the churches or not, a foundation for a spirituality free of the dualisms plaguing Western culture—subject and object, time and eter-

nity, the finite and the infinite, the concrete and the universal, and the sacred and the secular. Tillich rejected both the Barthian divine “No” to the human situation as well as the neo-scholastic split between nature and the supernatural. Much closer to the spirit of Eastern theology, Tillich affirms that the Holy Spirit can bear witness to our spirit because such witness takes place not beyond our spiritual life but in our human response to the search for God. While he believed that we are God’s children not through our humanity but through grace, Tillich insists that our quest for God, our capacity to ask the question and receive an answer, comes, not outside of nor in spite of, but *through* our humanity. In his 1935 debate with Barth, Tillich asserts that “without the antecedent God-likeness of man, no consequent God-likeness would be possible.”

Finally, spirituality for the new millennium must be theonomous. Theonomous spirituality sees the presence of the divine Spirit as essentially possible everywhere, not just in the confines of church or doctrine. Simultaneously, this spirituality establishes a relationship *with God through Christ* in an ecclesial community whose communal forms and structures reflect a freedom and a transparency to grace. This spirituality provides a home for the pilgrim spirit where a person is given depth and meaning to his or her own life through a Catholic substance that takes the Protestant principle seriously. Theonomous spirituality would avoid all forms of idolatry and heteronomy on one side and the emptiness of an autonomy without a foundation in spirit and community on the other.

When Ray Bulman and I decided to call a section of the New Harmony conference “Spirituality and Interreligious Dialogue,” our hope was that the knowledge and the wisdom of the presenters would not only look backwards but also into the depths of the present and into the future and the promise that it could bring. They have accomplished their task well. I told a story at the opening of the panel in New Harmony that I think is worth repeating. On the plane to Indiana that June morning, I wound up talking to a middle aged, mid-level software engineer about spirituality and I mentioned the topic of our session. His cynical comment was: “will there be a spirituality in the 21st century? If so, what will it be like?” I smiled weakly.

Can Tillich help us to answer this man’s question? And if so, how? The chapters on spirituality in *Religion in the New Millennium* are convinced that Paul Tillich’s thought will continue to nourish us in our quest for a theologically solid, personally enriching spirituality in the 21st century and beyond. I heartily concur.

¹ *The Religious Situation*, translated by H. Richard Niebuhr (New York: H. Holt, 1932); reprint: New York: Meridian Books, 1956, 1962. The German edition dates from 1926.

² Paul Tillich, *The Courage To Be* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), 46–51.

³ John Dardis, S.J., quoted in the *New York Times*, Sunday, 13 June 1999.

⁴ Taitetsu Unno, “Compassion in Buddhist Spirituality,” in Raymond F. Bulman and Frederick J. Parrella, eds., *Religion For the New Millennium: Theology in the Spirit of Paul Tillich* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2001), 165-176.

⁵ Marc Boss, “Interreligious Dialogue: From Tillich to Lindbeck and Back,” Bulman and Parrella, eds., 177-196.

⁶ Ruwan Palapathwala, “Beyond Christ and *System*: Paul Tillich and Spirituality for the Twenty-first Century,” in Bulman and Parrella, 205-220.

⁷ Marcia MacLennan, “Paul Tillich’s Three Gifts to Us for Spirituality in the 21st Century,” Bulman and Parrella, eds., 199-204.

⁸ Paul Tillich, *The Irrelevance and Relevance of the Christian Message*, edited by A. Durwood Foster (Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press, 1996), 62.

⁹ Owen Thomas, “A Tillichian Critique of Contemporary Spirituality,” in Bulman and Parrella, eds., 221-234.

¹⁰ William Temple, *Nature, Man and God* (London: Macmillan, 1934), 478.

¹¹ Irenaeus, *Against the Heresies*, I, 21, 4-5; *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, ed. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson (Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1885), 2:346b.

¹² *The Courage To Be* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), 61-62.

¹³ See Philip Rieff, *The Triumph of the Therapeutic. Uses of Faith After Freud*, 2nd edition. New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1987.

¹⁴ Paul Tillich, *My Search for Absolutes* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967), 103-104.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 69-70.

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