

Returning to Tillich

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Returning to Tillich

Theology and Legacy in Transition

Edited by
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Table of Contents

Abbreviations — IX

Acknowledgements — XI

Werner G Jeanrond

Foreword — XIII

Russell Re Manning & Samuel Shearn

Introduction: Returning to Tillich — 1

Marc Boss

Chapter 1

Which Kant? Whose Idealism? Paul Tillich's Philosophical Training
Reappraised — **13**

Douglas Hedley

Chapter 2

Tillich and Participation — **31**

Marijn de Jong & Ulrich Schmiedel

Chapter 3

Compromised Correlation? Experience in Paul Tillich's Concept of
Correlation — **41**

Julia Meszaros

Chapter 4

Tillich's Account of Love. Re-visiting Self-less Love — **53**

Sven Ensminger

Chapter 5

Kairos, History, and Religion. Some Insights on Tillich's Understanding of
Revelation in Dialogue with Karl Barth — **63**

Kate Kirkpatrick

Chapter 6

Answering Sartre. Paul Tillich and the 'Socrates of Nothingness' — **73**

Anne-Marie Reijnen

Chapter 7

Is Green the Colour of our Redemption? — **87**

Andrew O'Neill

Chapter 8

Tillich for Today's Church. Self-critique, Self-transcendence, and the New Reality — **97**

Matthew Lon Weaver

Chapter 9

The Sacred Art of Teaching. Paul Tillich on Place, Boundary, and Pedagogy — **105**

Alexander T. Blondeau

Chapter 10

Paul Tillich, Salvation, and Big, Unnecessary, Crazy, Travel Adventure — **113**

Reinhold Bernhardt

Chapter 11

"One can distinguish two ways of approaching God: the way of overcoming estrangement and the way of meeting a stranger." Paul Tillich's Engagement with Buddhism — **125**

Robert E. Meditz

Chapter 12

Two Forms of Dialectic within Tillich's History of Religion — **141**

Gorazd Andrejč

Chapter 13

Schleiermacher and Tillich on Judaism: A Structural Comparison — **151**

Ankur Barua

Chapter 14

Paul Tillich, Being Itself, and the Structure of Vedantic Panentheism — **163**

Stefan S. Jaeger

Chapter 15

Paul Tillich and the 'Dark Night of Faith' as Mystical Experience — 175

Christoph Schwoebel

Epilogue: A Dinner Speech

Tillich in Transition — 187

Contributors' Details — 201

Bibliography — 205

Index — 217

Abbreviations

EGW = *Ergänzungs- und Nachlaßbände zu den Gesammelten Werken von Paul Tillichs*, 19 vols. Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1971–1983; Berlin: de Gruyter, 1994–2016.

GW = Albrecht, Renate, ed. *Gesammelte Werke*, 14 vols. Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerke, 1959–1975.

MW = Ratschow, Carl Heinz, ed. *Main Works / Haupt Werke*, 6 vols. Berlin: de Gruyter, 1987–1992.

ST = *Systematic Theology*, 3 vols. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1951–1963.

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Werner G Jeanrond

Foreword

The German-American theologian Paul Tillich (1886 – 1965) has remained an important point of reference for students and teachers of theology. Despite shifting intellectual concerns, developing academic methods and emerging global horizons, even in our postmodern world, Tillich continues to attract new readers, while many of the once great names in western Christian theology have vanished from university courses and personal recommendations. Why is this so? I wish to suggest three explanations for Tillich's continuing presence in today's theological discourse.

First, as a person and as an intellectual, Tillich remained open to new manifestations of both God and culture. His move from Nazi-Germany to the United States and from the German to the English language exposed him to new challenges and influences and thus kept his eyes open for ever new manifestations of otherness. Although shaped by a particular German philosophical environment, Tillich remained in dialogue with many of the dominant philosophical movements of his time, not least the different expressions of existentialist thinking. Moreover, unlike other theologians, Tillich expected God to make God-self known not only in the traditional ecclesial spaces but also in the manifold cultural manifestations of human existence. Thus, throughout his career, Tillich remained a genuinely dialogical theologian with a sharp eye for the human condition and the emergence of ultimate meaning.

Second, his theological method was a method of correlation. Human questions and the Christian message were brought together constructively. Although he did not develop a "mutually critical correlation" in which, according to David Tracy, the Christian message and human experience enjoy an equally challenging and enriching status as theological sources, Tillich already saw the need for interpretations of Christian faith to be explicitly related to cultural developments. Like many of his fellow theologians on both sides of the Atlantic, Tillich reflected upon God's sovereign creative and redemptive nature, but always as revealed in this universe. Tillich's insistence that the Protestant principle needs catholic substance was not, in the first place, an ecumenical confession (although even in this regard it clearly has potential); rather it originated in his insight that no pure experience of the divine Word was ever available to us human beings. The hermeneutical challenge, then, is to defend God's divinity in the valleys of this world and not to imagine divinity outside of the world. For Tillich, this was the very point of the incarnation and the revelation of New Being in Jesus Christ.

Third, in line with his methodological convictions, Tillich produced several sharp analyses of the human condition for both academic and more general audiences. His sermons as well as some of his essays continue to be read widely today. For instance, his approach to a theology of love – always related to concerns of justice – has remained inspirational for many current works on love by Christian authors. Moreover, Tillich's openness to interreligious conversations and reflections has encouraged many Christian thinkers to become engaged in this outreach, so important in our global and pluralist age. Tillich's work can be built on, however critically; that is what distinguishes him from many other theologians of his generation. People still respond critically and constructively to his initiatives. In that sense, he has retained the status of a true theological classic.

The present collection of articles in dialogue with and inspired by Paul Tillich illustrates this point. The wish to relate to Tillich's thought today invites current thinkers not merely to follow historiographic trajectories, but to forward constructive and systematic analyses of both the Christian gospel and our own time, seeking appropriate theological responses to the challenges of the day. To be sure, Tillich's work does not name all the challenges, nor does it provoke all the adequate responses necessary when we face up to our global and radically pluralist context. But it offers both encouragement for such an intellectual engagement and advice on how to shape an ever more critical and self-critical systematic theology.

Finally, Tillich's success in communicating with his contemporaries – believers and non-believers alike – challenges us today to try and do likewise. This book presents exciting attempts of theological reflection and communication in dialogue both with this remarkable theological voice from last century and with the complex experience of women and men today.

Werner G Jeanrond

Master of St Benet's Hall and Professor of Theology in the University of Oxford

Introduction: Returning to Tillich

Paul Tillich (1886–1965) was nearly a British theologian. Whilst Tillich was in England to participate in the Oxford Ecumenical Conference, his great friend and fellow exile from Frankfurt the economist Adolf Löwe, “sought unsuccessfully to lure Tillich” to Manchester, where Löwe was then teaching.¹ Instead, encouraged by Reinhold Niebuhr, Tillich was persuaded to stay at Union Theological Seminary in New York, where he in time he became America’s leading public theologian. Since his death in 1965, Tillich has been a source of inspiration for and seminal influence upon generations of Christian thinkers in both his European homeland and his adopted American continent; his reputation bolstered by scholarly societies, book series, and academic conferences: all dedicated to the ongoing enquiry into his thought.² His status in Britain, however, has been somewhat more ambiguous.

Commenting on philosophy of religion 1955–65, but writing in 1988, Alan Sell claims:

“Tillich’s influence in North America is considerable – indeed, it has been said that to this day the number of doctoral candidates who are writing on Tillich outnumbers those who are writing on Barth – though how reliable a measure of influence this is, or which of the two thinkers derives the greater benefit from the alleged fact is not made clear. Equally, there can be no doubt that as far as British secular philosophers are concerned Tillich’s labours have produced very little by way of positive or negative response. He did not become a significant talking-point between philosophically inclined theologians and their secular counterparts in the way, for example, that Wittgenstein, and to a lesser extent in Britain, Whitehead did. It is more than likely that Tillich’s underlying idealism, and even more his indebtedness to existentialism served to dampen any enthusiasm British secular philosophers might have had for him.”³

1 Wilhelm and Marion Pauck, *Paul Tillich. His Life and Thought* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), 72.

2 In the United States, the *North American Paul Tillich Society* is an active group with a quarterly *Bulletin* and an Annual Meeting as a Related Scholarly Organization of the American Academy of Religion. In Germany, Tillich scholarship is supported by the *Deutsche Paul-Tillich-Gesellschaft*, which organizes an annual *Tagung* and biennial *International Kongress*, and by the *International Yearbook for Tillich Research* and the *Tillich-Research* series, both published by de Gruyter. The francophone *Association Paul Tillich d’Expression Française* supports scholarship in French.

3 Alan P.F. Sell, *Philosophy of Religion 1875–1980* (London: Routledge, 1988), 167.

Whatever the reasons for Tillich's relative neglect in Britain, his thought has not passed completely without notice. Somewhat peculiarly, Tillich is a household name for thousands of English school children studying the topic of 'religious language' for A Level Religious Studies and Philosophy. In juxtaposition to 'Aquinas on analogy', 'Tillich on symbols' is as established a feature of the English exam season as Wimbledon and rain-soaked strawberries. More significantly (but perhaps no more accurately), Tillich's work is also likely to be found indirectly on the bookshelves of many in the form of John A. T. Robinson's 1963 *Honest to God*, in which the then Bishop of Woolwich scandalised his generation by suggesting (drawing on Tillich, along with Bonhoeffer, Bultmann, and the situation ethicist Joseph Fletcher), that the time had come to give up on a the traditional, Biblical image of God "out there."⁴ However, much like its transatlantic cousin, 'death of God theology', Robinson's "reluctant revolution" (and Tillich's contribution to it) failed to capture either the public or the professional theological imagination and instead Tillich is perhaps best known in British theology for being the subject of Donald MacKinnon's scathing critique in light of revelations about Tillich's personal life, written in 1975 in 'Tillich, Frege, Kittel: Some Reflections on a Dark Theme.'⁵ MacKinnon's engagement with Tillich is subtle and complex just as it is resolutely dismissive of Tillich, his lifestyle and his theology: for many in British theology, the result for Tillich's legacy has been simple, summarised in Diarmaid MacCulloch's questioning in the course of his 2012 Gifford Lectures, "how far any of Tillich's theological work can be taken seriously."⁶

On 14th and 15th July 2014, a conference took place at Ertegun House, Oxford: *Paul Tillich, Theology and Legacy*. This was, as far as we know, the first Tillich conference to take place in the United Kingdom since the small conference organised by John Heywood Thomas in 1986. In part, the conference responded to the increased interest within the UK in Tillich's thought, as well as providing an opportunity to reflect on Tillich's legacy and the development of his theology in a contemporary context very different from that which he himself encountered and diagnosed in either pre-second world war Germany or post-war America. In what follows, this Introduction will briefly outline the contributions to the present volume, all of which originated in one way or another in the Oxford confer-

⁴ John A. T. Robinson, *Honest to God* (London: SCM Press, 1963).

⁵ Donald MacKinnon, 'Tillich, Frege, Kittel: Some Reflections on a Dark Theme,' in *Explorations in Theology* 5 (London: SCM Press, 1979): 129–137.

⁶ Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Silence. A Christian History* (London: Allen Lane, 2013), 202. For a fuller discussion of MacKinnon's critique of Tillich, see Russell Re Manning, 'Life, Sex, and Ambiguity' in *Les ambiguïtés de la vie selon Paul Tillich*, eds. Marc Dumas, Jean Richard and Bryan Wagoner (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2017): 39–50.

ence, before suggesting some emerging themes that may well guide the future reception of Tillich in Britain and beyond.

Overview of the papers in this volume

Marc Boss's instructive and thorough essay *Which Kant? Whose Idealism? Paul Tillich's Philosophical Training Reappraised* guides the reader through various ways of understanding just what kind of philosophical transitions Tillich underwent as a student, and beyond. Boss shows that against the common thesis of a turn from idealism to existentialism after the First World War, Tillich remained consistently committed to a particular form of idealism.

Boss thinks that recently published material from the Tillich archives sheds important light on Tillich's early position, which held Kant's concept of the unconditioned in the second critique to be most fruitful for philosophy of religion. As such, Tillich's system "rests ... on a Fichtean construal of Kant's moral philosophy". Furthermore, Tillich's position did not move from the early to the late Schelling, as is often said. Rather, Tillich read Schelling I and II in light of each other, emphasising their mutual dependence. Thus "it is thoroughly in vain to search for an 'existential turn' in Tillich's work."

Participation is central to Tillich's systematic theology. **Douglas Hedley** therefore describes Tillich as "one of the most striking contemporary exponents of Christian Platonism since Nicholas of Cusa". Hedley offers a rich contextualisation of the concept of participation within the Western philosophical tradition.

Although participation, as a distinctly metaphysical and Platonic expression, fell out of fashion from the 17th Century, we find the preacher and theologian Tillich using the term to get to the heart of religious symbols, the relation between God and the world, and our relation to Christ, the New Being. Therefore, says Hedley, Tillich should be rescued out of the corner of ecstatic naturalism and radical theology in which many of his critics have left him. Tillich is "less radical than he still seems to those critics who view him as the epitome of desiccated liberalism or even crypto-atheism."

Marijn de Jong and Ulrich Schmiedel investigate Tillich's notion of correlation and find it wanting because it fails to give an account of the compromised character of both situation and tradition: the situation contributes to the tradition and vice versa. Furthermore, Tillich's notion of ultimate concern, say the authors, entails a formalized concept of experience (without content) that is therefore empty. Instead, Tillich needs "a concept of experience in which the formal

‘that’ and the material ‘what’ co-constitute the encounter [between the transcendent and the immanent]”. Karl Barth thought of the God of Tillich’s theology as a frosty monster (*frostiges Ungeheuer*) and Oswald Bayer also follows this route. De Jong and Schmiedel, coming from a quite different theological angle, end up seeing Tillich’s concept of religious experience as cold, formal and anaemic: “We cannot relate to the ultimate without the concrete. Only through the concrete can we access the ultimate.”

While not all will agree with this characterisation of Tillich, De Jong and Schmiedel’s coining of the phrase ‘compromised correlation’ is a fruitful intervention. It expresses Tillich’s view – perhaps more clearly than Tillich – that the infinite is always present in the finite.

Julia Meszaros explains Tillich’s account of love against the background of late modern critiques of Christian love as stifling human self-fulfilment, focussing on Sartre. She shows how Tillich denies the incompatibility of freedom and dependency on the other and instead calls us to embrace the self’s necessary participation in the world, and in the other, for self-fulfilment.

Eros and *agape*, much divided in Christian theology, share at their root the desire for the union of what is separated, and are as such one, even when, under the conditions of existence, they become separated and spoiled. Meszaros argues that Tillich enables a rehabilitation of selfless love through a revisioning of such love as indeed life-giving. Self-fulfilment requires *eros*, which prepares us to receive God’s love – to accept being accepted. This self-acceptance enables true selflessness. Thus, selfless love does not destroy or overcome the self.

Sven Ensminger’s chapter makes use of Barth’s understanding of revelation to illuminate Tillich’s position. Tillich’s notion of *Kairos* is put into its historical setting and his understanding of revelation explored in the context of competing religious claims. By distinguishing between the means of revelation and revelation proper, Tillich guards against idolatry. By defining revelation broadly as that which concerns us ultimately, Tillich makes it a universal experience. Ensminger argues, against McCormack, that Tillich remains herein Christocentric. The difference between Barth and Tillich is one of approach or emphasis: that “Tillich starts from the epistemological question of “how can God be known?” whereas Barth begins with the ontological question of “where does God make Godself known?” ... the Christological focus remains in both cases nonetheless intact.”

In the second paper in this volume dealing with Tillich and Sartre, **Kate Kirkpatrick** gives an overview of Tillich’s reading of Sartre, drawing out just how highly Tillich regarded the French philosopher’s psychological acuity, even if Tillich

probably omitted to read some central works first-hand (perhaps due to late translations). She also shows how in particular Tillich's treatment of the threat of meaninglessness in *The Courage to Be* is a processing of Sartre's challenge. Sartre's notion that "the essence of man is his existence" is for Tillich "the most despairing and the most courageous sentence in all Existentialist literature." The experience of freedom as a destroyer of identity, and thus the anxiety of the loss of meaning is considered by Tillich to be a central question in his cultural situation, and for which his theology is a response.

Tillich's theology also works with Sartre's repudiation of the judging gaze of the other and the corresponding counter-attack strategy of self-definition. In the third volume of the *Systematic Theology*, Tillich agrees with "Sartre's assertion of the mutual objectification of human beings in all their encounters" and believes only the point of view of a "vertical dimension" can offer a way forward. Tillich offers some criticism of Sartre, believing Sartre to indeed harbour some essentialism in his commitment to defending human freedom.

Anne-Marie Reijnen offers an introduction to Tillich's green side, particularly in the third volume of the *Systematic Theology*, some sermons and the article 'Nature and Sacrament'. Reijnen contends Christian theology has always been a mediator of green consciousness. Thus, long before talk of eco-theology, Tillich also was concerned with the connection between salvation and nature, and "the religious significance of the inorganic". Despite affirming an anthropocentric worldview, Tillich qualifies hierarchical understandings of nature by emphasising relatedness and porous boundaries. Drawing on Schelling's poetic philosophy of nature, he encompasses all of creation in the drama of redemption. Furthermore, Tillich views anti-Christian naturalism as the bad fruit of Christian devaluation of nature and sees sacramental thinking – the affirmation of the presence of the divine, its transparency in nature and history", as an antidote to what can become a very abstract monotheism.

Tillich is moved by the thought that the possible destruction of life lies in human hands, and the disturbing thought that the history and future of humanity seems so short against the background of cosmic time. For Tillich and his generation, it is the fear of nuclear disaster that forces this reflection. Perhaps for us it is the ecological crisis. Tillich's response is fragmentary and perhaps unsatisfactory, but he does offer a way forward when he urges us to grasp opportunities "for creation of life and spirit" in the lives we lead – lives existentially united with plants and animals.

Andrew O'Neill argues that theologians who take heed of Tillich's approach can see the decline of the church as an institution as neither "failure, nor as aberration."

tion, but as an outworking of God's continued Spiritual Presence." Such hope-filled ecclesiology is founded firstly in Tillich's Protestant principle and his concept of theonomy, which insist on the church being self-critical, secondly in Tillich's understanding of the Spiritual Community in the third volume of his *Systematic Theology*, and thirdly in showing how Tillich's theology shows affinity with Douglas John Hall's notion of an *ecclesia crucis*, a church which sacrifices institutional privilege for the sake of a renewed understanding of the Gospel. "Only a church which stands with the afflicted, ... from a position of humility, is capable of communicating and embodying a new reality."

Matthew Lon Weaver's essay is a fine primer on Tillich's theology and philosophy of education from a seasoned educator. Weaver tells us that Tillich thought education should be about "evoking, empowering, and enlivening the creativity of students", helping them to find the courage to resist 'patternization' and conformity. However, this does not mean leading students to an "imprisoning autonomy". Education, being accompanied by the Spiritual Presence, can be an instance of the reconciliation of estrangement when the person-to-person communion at the heart of every educational encounter evokes that courage that Tillich says is "rooted in the true, unfathomable depth of every human being."

Weaver writes that in any classroom or lecture hall "we are to plant and nurture the seeds of courage within the hearts and minds of vulnerable, anxious students by exuding self-giving acceptance." Weaver's vision of pedagogy as creating a sacred space of "living en-couragement" is stimulating and should be of interest to anyone interested in the relation of spirituality to pedagogy.

Alexander Blondeau offers a creative hermeneutic of the phenomenon of risky, adventurous travel. Using Tillich's concepts of "structure" and "depth" as an interpretive framework, he suggests that in a "world made shallow by the prioritizing of technical control", our everyday life is dominated by merely structural awareness. Therefore, he argues that adventure, though not without its own ambiguity (the demonic), does serve as an opening to the depth of life. Risky, gratuitous adventure travel is pointless, but meaningful, as it confronts us with our mortality and the abundant unknown.

Reinhold Bernhardt's essay opens with Tillich's distinction between two ways of approaching God: by overcoming estrangement or as a stranger. The latter could characterise both Barthian and natural theology. God is thereby encountered as an external object and a great 'other' who is a source of estrangement – or as an abstract matter of probabilities. In the way of overcoming estrangement,

however, man [*sic!*] “meets something which is more himself than *he* is and which, at the same time, infinitely transcends himself” – overcoming estrangement through participation in being-itself.

Bernhardt then gives an overview of Tillich’s encounters with Buddhism, in particular his discussions with Zen master Hisamatsu and the journey to Japan in 1960. He argues that Tillich’s encounters with Buddhism were informed and motivated by this distinction concerning ways of approaching God (and correspondent types of philosophy of religion). Yet the same time, Buddhist thinking challenged his first way of approaching God because it characterises ultimate reality in terms of nothingness rather than being. While drawing out remaining key philosophical and theological differences between Buddhist and Tillichian thought, Bernhardt emphasises the significance of the visit to Japan as a cultural and existential transformation that had repercussions for Tillich’s late theology.

Robert Meditz offers an account of Tillich’s idea of Judaism in the history of religion, claiming that for Tillich, Judaism “maintains an unusual relationship of parity with Christianity”. Two types of dialectic are manifest in Tillich’s history of religion: one historical dialectic of progression and another ontological dialectic of balance. The former entails the superiority of Christianity; the latter entails parity.

Meditz argues that in Tillich’s 1912 dissertation, Christianity is superior though Judaism remains the foundation for Christianity. However, in *The Socialist Decision*, Jewish prophetism provides a resource for cultural transformation because prophecy in the context of exile breaks the idolatry of nationalism. Tillich’s 1952 lectures on the Jewish question reflect upon the theological roots of anti-Semitism and develop the notion that the relationship between Judaism and Christianity is marked by a polarity and tension between the priestly and the prophetic in the manifestation of the Holy. In Tillich’s final lecture on the history of religion, however, he encompasses all religions into a revelatory framework. This, says Meditz, reflects a shift in Tillich’s thought following his journey to Japan. Thus, while a historical dialectic remains the underlying framework for Tillich’s understanding of Judaism, in the end all monotheisms are subjected to the ontological dialectic of the Holy.

In contrast to Meditz, **Gorazd Andrejč** approaches Tillich’s view of Judaism by way of a comparison with Schleiermacher. Schleiermacher’s supersessionism and unflattering remarks about Judaism fit well into contemporary German anti-Semitism, but Schleiermacher may have also gained such thoughts from the secularized *Haskallah*-Jewish tradition of his friend Henriette Herz. Furthermore, we find explicit rejections of anti-Semitism and affirmations of Jews as full

and equal German citizens. Nevertheless, his philosophy of religion could have provided the potential for a more affirmative view of Judaism than is the case in his writings. Tillich, on the other hand, emphasizes strongly the continuity between Christianity and Judaism in his battle against Nazism. However, supersessionist themes remain, for the historical revelation in Christ is the criterion against which all religions are judged. Andrejč therefore sees both Schleiermacher and Tillich's views on Judaism as neither anti-Judaistic nor entirely fruitful for contemporary 'post-pluralist' theology, for it is too easy to remain a Christian triumphalist. While recognising historical and theological continuities, Christians should not make their approach to Judaism overly reliant on these. Instead, Christians should respect Judaism in its difference: as theologically independent and with distinct grammars of central concepts, while being awake to the anti-Semitic demons of the past and present.

Ankur Barua offers a fascinating analysis of the shared concern of Tillich and Vedantic pantheism to navigate between monism and personalism. His analysis surveys Tillich's own scant appreciation of Vedantic thought and yields an intriguing defence of Tillich, against the dismissive claim that his notion of divinity is impersonal, by way of Advaita metaphysics. Barua provides a useful and concise introduction to two key Vedantic schools of thought based around '*Saṅkara*' (ca. 800 CE/AD) and '*Rāmānuja*' (ca. 1100 CE/AD) and shows how the Christian doctrine of creation is fruitfully illumined by viewing it from the perspective of debates in Vedantic theology.

Stefan Jäger compares Tillich with the Spanish Carmelite monk St John of the Cross, showing how Tillich's concept of absolute faith can be brought into fruitful dialogue with John's pure faith (*pura fe*), which emerges out of the experience of the dark night. Jäger finds important differences between the two thinkers, but also deep parallels, for the experience of the dark night is akin to Tillich's description of existential anxiety, and both Tillich and John use metaphoric or symbolic speech and the notion of participation to express our relation to ultimate reality. Jäger is already known for his impressive study comparing Tillich's concept of faith and theology of preaching with corresponding terms in Japanese Buddhism. He therefore also gestures to the possibilities emerging from a comparison of Tillich and John for interreligious dialogue, illustrated by the concept of faith (*shijin*) in Shin-Buddhism.

Christoph Schwöbel's dinner speech, held in the dining room of St Benet's Hall, Oxford, was a perfect end to our conference and forms the epilogue to this volume. Schwöbel considers how Tillich's theology fits into various trends

in the theological scene, but concludes that the most valuable legacy of Tillich's theology is his ability to transition – from place to place, from time to time, and to other cultural spheres and pressing contemporary questions. Such a theology involves the belief that religion and God relate to all spheres of life. Such a belief gives theology a strong diagnostic potential. Yet at the same time it involves risk, willingness to adapt and a sense that our theology is transitory. Schwöbel leaves us with the challenge to not merely ask about the genealogy of Tillich's theology but to interpret him teleologically: How did Tillich use his intellectual ancestry to meet new challenges and pursue goals? In this sense, one cannot be a Tillichian: Tillich encourages the kind of theological work where one takes leave of the theologians from whom one has learned so much, in order to respond to contemporary questions with theological responsibility.

Emerging themes

The call for papers for our conference was broad, and the essays here represent a selection of some of the most interesting papers we heard at the conference, now developed into longer articles. Despite the eclectic nature of the collection, we find that the papers do converge on some shared themes. Some papers are concerned with a characterisation of Tillich's theology, and several point toward a more conservative Tillich: Boss believes Tillich remains consistently within the tradition of German idealism – that there is no existential turn in later years. Hedley emphasises that Tillich, through his dependence upon the notion of participation, remains far more classical and far less radical than many appreciate. Ensminger shows that Tillich's theology has a Christological focus. Yet, as Bernhardt and others mention, Tillich's journey to Japan right at the end of his life set his thought once again in motion as he tried to work through the implications of experienced religious pluralism. As Schwöbel emphasises, Tillich's theology is a theology in transition, which, rather than being constrained by its influences, made use of its roots to deal with contemporary challenges.

One such challenge to which Tillich's later theology responded was just this dialogue with non-Christian religions. Here Tillich was a pioneer, and several essays in this volume explore the connection between Tillich's theology and the religious 'other'. Buddhism (Bernhardt, and to some extent Jäger), Judaism (Med-

itz, Andrejč), and Hinduism (Barua) are explored. Obviously, Islam and other regional religions are missing.⁷

A further challenge to which Tillich responded in his time was existential philosophy. It is a happy coincidence that two essays in this volume, those by Meszaros and Kirkpatrick, deal with Tillich and Sartre. Some readers might wonder how Boss's claim that there was no existential turn fits together with Kirkpatrick's claim that Tillich was significantly influenced by Sartre and existentialists in general. We do not think there is a contradiction here: Tillich's philosophy of religion and theology hang together as a system because of the notion of participation (cf. Hedley) and the principle of identity from German idealism (cf. Boss). However, when it comes to talking about the human condition, Tillich finds existentialist thought to be most amenable and illuminating in expressing self-alienation. Perhaps this explains the disagreement between Tillich scholars on this issue: the existential turn many have previously discerned is semantic rather than systematic. Tillich discovered Kierkegaard as a student, Nietzsche while a graduate student and pastor, and Heidegger and Sartre while an academic theologian and philosopher. All these influenced his theological inflection and articulation of themes concerning the human condition, but not the underlying ontology.

Several other essays in the collection demonstrate the diagnostic potential of Tillich's theology, to which Christoph Schwöbel alludes. While De Jong and Schmiedel take issue with Tillich's concept of correlation for missing the mutual compromise of both situation and Christian tradition, several others find him instructive, as a theologian of culture, for analysing and responding to contemporary issues, including the ecological crisis (Reijnen), ecclesiology (O'Neill), educational practice (Weaver) and even, most originally: big, crazy, unnecessary travel adventure (Blondeau).

We hope that these essays will serve to kindle interest in Tillich's theology, demonstrate its potential for fruitful conversations in theology and across disciplinary boundaries, and make a contribution to Tillich scholarship, not least in the United Kingdom, where we hope cooperation with continental Europeans still has a promising future.

⁷ See, however, Sylvester I. Ihuoma, *Paul Tillich's Theology of Culture in Dialogue with African Theology: A Contextual Analysis*, Tillich-Studien 11 (Münster: LIT, 2004).