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PAUL TILLICH'S PHILOSOPHY OF
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GRADUATE COLLEGE

PAUL TILLICH'S PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNICATION

A DISSERTATION

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degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY

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PAUL TILLICH'S PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNICATION

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PAUL TILLICH'S PHILOSOPHY OF COMMUNICATION

CHAPTER I

ON THE BOUNDARY BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND RHETORIC

"The boundary is the best place for acquiring knowledge."

Introduction

Once described as a "colossus standing astride the world of contemporary theology,"¹ Paul Tillich wielded an influence on Western twentieth century religious thought rivaled only by Switzerland's Barth and Germany's Bultmann.² At his death Time hailed his work as one of the "religious landmarks" of this age and concluded that "his name is better known to laymen than that of any contemporary theologian."³ Life magazine remarked, "He made Christian theology as important in the thought of his time as Einstein made the equivalence of mass and energy important in modern weaponry."⁴

¹Ved Mehta, "The New Theologians," The New Yorker, November 13, 1965, p. 119.

²The opinion of Kenneth Hamilton, "Paul Tillich," Creative Minds in Contemporary Theology, ed. by Philip E. Hughes (Grand Rapids: William Erdmans, 1966), pp. 451-479.

³"Man of Ultimate Concern," Time, October 29, 1965, p. 80.

⁴"Great Radical Theologian was Apostle to the Skeptics," Life, November 5, 1965, p. 40D.

One partial but widely offered explanation attributed Tillich's remarkable success to the cultural comprehensiveness of his thought. R. M. Brown, for example, suggested that Tillich "engaged in a continuous endeavor to communicate far beyond the pale of those who are conventionally labeled 'theologians.'"⁵ The New York Times editorialized that "it was the exceptionally broad canvass on which Paul Tillich worked that distinguished him from so many modern theologians. This patient scholar took as his subject all of life" ⁶ Jerald Brauer, once Tillich's student and later Dean of the University of Chicago Theological school, offered this explanation of Tillich's efforts in this direction.

Whatever is formative of culture and illustrative of the outreach of the human spirit is of primary importance and concern to Tillich. Because he has long argued that culture is the form of religion he remains passionately and deeply interested in all forms of culture itself. It is amazing how he can move to the heart of a cultural phenomenon, analyze its significance, and see its interrelationship with other facets of the cultural situation. It is this wide-ranging interest and deeply penetrating analysis of the cultural situation which makes Tillich so attractive to the modern intellectual.⁷

An astonishing array of speaking occasions, articles, books, and teaching interests further testified to the cultural breadth of Tillich's intellectual horizons. Tillich spoke before such diverse groups as commencement audiences at Massachusetts Institute of

⁵R. M. Brown, "Paul Tillich," Commonweal, January 21, 1966, p. 471.

⁶"Paul Johannes Tillich," New York Times, October 27, 1965, p. 47.

⁷Jerald C. Brauer, "Preface," The Journal of Religion, XLVI, Tillich Supplement (January, 1966), 89-90.

Technology and the New York School for Social Research, the fortieth anniversary dinner for Time and the centennial of the American Institute for Architects, the Metaphysical Society of America, and the American Psychopathological Association.⁸ He delivered major lectures on three continents.⁹ He discussed theology with Albert Einstein, literature with T. S. Eliot, and psychology with Carl Rogers.¹⁰ His penetrating and analytic mind produced articles for an almost infinite number of popular magazines and specialized journals which included, in addition to his primary specialties of philosophy and theology, academic areas like politics and psychiatry, art and architecture, sociology and history.¹¹ He continually added to his cultural horizons throughout his life, and one of the last lectures he delivered before his death bore the title, "The Effects of Space Exploration on Man's Condition and

⁸See Paul Tillich, "The Inner Aim," Time, April 21, 1961, p. 57; "Conformity," Social Research, XXIV (Fall, 1957), 345-360; "Environment and the Individual," Journal of the American Institute of Architects, XXVIII (June, 1957), 90-92; "Relation of Metaphysics and Theology," The Review of Metaphysics, X (September, 1956), 57-63; "Anxiety-Reducing Agencies in Our Culture," Anxiety, eds. Paul H. Hoch and Joseph Zubin (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1950), pp. 17-26.

⁹The Yale Terry Lectures, the Firth Lecture in Nottingham, England, and a lecture tour of Japan. Each of these events produced subsequent publications: The Courage to Be (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952); Love, Power, and Justice (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960); and based on his Japanese tour, Christianity and the Encounter of World Religions (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963).

¹⁰For instances of the first two see Paul Tillich, The Theology of Culture, ed. by Robert C. Kimball (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 125-133. For the latter example see "Paul Tillich and Carl Rogers: A Dialogue," Pastoral Psychology, XIX (February, 1968), 55-64.

¹¹As representative examples of each of the preceding see Paul Tillich: "Marxism and Christian Socialism," Christianity and Society,

Stature."¹² Nothing better indicates the range of Tillich's interests than his seven-year role as "University Professor" at Harvard and a previously cited edition of his collected essays entitled, Theology of Culture. The virtuosity of Tillich's scholarship prompted his friendly "disputant," Reinhold Niebuhr, to call him "the most learned man I know," and even his more severe critics, like J. Heywood Thomas acknowledged,

Tillich has a background of amazing erudition in history, philosophy and literature. He has shown too how profitable a sympathetic study of psychoanalysis can be for the theologian. In short, he is distinguished by an unusual Catholicity of scholarship and understanding and like the poet considers nothing of human interest to be foreign to his field of study.¹³

A fitting tribute to the multi-dimensional facets of Tillich's thought occurred when the Society for the Arts, Religion, and Contemporary Culture established the "Paul Tillich Commemorative Lectureship."¹⁴

Beyond its contributions to the eclectic character of Tillich's

VII (Spring, 1942), 13-18; reprinted in The Protestant Era, trans. James L. Adams (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1948), pp. 253-260; "Can Human Nature Change?" (Symposium with Harold Kelman, Frederick Weiss and Karen Horney) The American Journal of Psychoanalysis, XII, No. I, 62-69; "Protestantism and the Contemporary Style in the Visual Arts," The Christian Scholar, XL (December, 1957), 307-311; "The Philosophy of Social Work," Pastoral Psychology, XIV (December, 1963), 27-30; "History as the Problem of Our Period," The Review of Religion, III (March, 1939), 255-264.

¹²Paul Tillich, The Future of Religions, ed. by Jerald C. Brauer (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), pp. 39-52.

¹³Niebuhr as quoted by Mehta, "The New Theologians," p. 116; and "Some Notes on the Theology of Paul Tillich," The Hibbert Journal, LVII (April, 1959), 253.

¹⁴George W. Cornell, "Cultural Guidelines Deteriorating, Theologian Says," The Oklahoma Daily, May 10, 1968, p. 13.

insights, the sweep of Tillich's thought influenced a wide range of disciplines. That influence appears, for instance, in literary criticism. James Livingstone employed concepts borrowed from Tillich to interpret Salinger's Franny and Zooey.¹⁵ John Fraser, writing in Nineteenth Century Fiction about Wuthering Heights, observed, "But as Tillich points out in a book that could be a decided aid in obtaining a balanced attitude toward the novel, 'in every act of justice daring is necessary and risk is unavoidable.'"¹⁶ History also felt the pervasive force of Tillich's ideas. Charles H. Foster utilized categories borrowed from Tillich to analyze American culture.¹⁷ Perry Miller used and praised Tillich's historical concepts in his biography on Jonathan Edwards.¹⁸ John Housley and Norman Young attempted to apply Tillich's thought to education.¹⁹ The journal of Pastoral Psychology recently devoted an entire memorial issue to Tillich's contributions to psychology and psychotherapy.²⁰ Furthermore, a perusal of more than fifty

¹⁵"J. D. Salinger--The Artists' Struggle to Stand on Holy Ground," The Drury Review, II (February, 1967), 10-20.

¹⁶"The Name of Action: Nelly Dean and Wuthering Heights," Nineteenth Century Fiction, XX (December, 1965), 234. The citation comes from Tillich's Love, Power, and Justice, p. 56.

¹⁷"The Thenonomous Analysis of American Culture," Studies in American Culture, ed. by Joseph Kwait and Mary Turpie (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1960), pp. 189-206.

¹⁸Jonathan Edwards (New York: William Sloan Associates, 1949), pp. 314-319.

¹⁹"Paul Tillich and Christian Education," Religious Education, LXII (July-August, 1967), 307-316 and "Some Implications of Tillich's Theology for Christian Education," Religious Education, LX (May-June 1965), 230-237, respectively.

²⁰"Memorial Issue on Paul Tillich," Pastoral Psychology, XIX (February, 1968).

dissertations and theses written from 1940-1968 reveals additional instances in which Tillich's ideas have been incorporated into the theoretical framework of other fields.²¹

The relevance, however, of Tillich's thought for speech-communication theory remains essentially unexplored. Corvin, who brought principles of theoretical criticism to bear in his consideration of "The Rhetorical Practice of Paul Tillich," stressed that the study he did was "not designed primarily as an analysis of his theory."²² One other work, a projected Master's thesis on the concept of participation with illustrations from Tillich's homiletic practice, by John Northwall has not been completed.²³ Beyond these, established speech-communication theorists such as Thomas Olbricht, Anthony Hillbruner, Floyd Matson, and Ashley Montagu exhibit a tentative interest in the communicative implications of Tillich's thought;²⁴ but, unfortunately, none has attempted a comprehensive survey of those implications.

Tillich's Interest in Communication

A conscious concern with the problems and character of

²¹For a complete list of these see the bibliography.

²²William Ray Corvin, "The Rhetorical Practice of Paul Tillich," (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, the University of Oklahoma, 1968), p. 10.

²³Ibid., 2. Correspondence with the Library of the University of Colorado indicated no record of the completion of this thesis as of July 10, 1969.

²⁴See Thomas Olbricht, "Paul Tillich's View of Audience Adaptation and Its Implications for Rhetorical Theory" (Unpublished research paper, University of Pennsylvania, n. d.); Anthony Hillbruner, Critical Dimensions: The Art of Public Address Criticism, (New York: Random House, 1966), pp. 128, 147-149; "Introduction: The Unfinished Revolution," The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication, ed. by

communication spanned most of Tillich's professional career, permeating all facets of his life from the eminently practical to the highly sophisticated. At least as early as World War I when he served as a chaplain in the German army, Tillich experienced the dismay and shock of trying to speak relevantly to soldiers, who, as he described them, "were about to die."²⁵ Caught up in this traumatic, hemispheric catastrophe, Tillich later reminisced about the intense effort he expended to find the best way to communicate under such conditions. He concluded:

If I used Biblical language it meant nothing to them
I preached sermons, therefore, that never used any of the language of the Bible. They were a little mystical, a little poetical, and also had a touch of common sense, and they had an effect.²⁶

Tillich's return to civilian life plunged him into the chaos of postwar Germany; he rapidly became an active participant and leader in a new movement, the Religious Socialists,²⁷ which was destined to have a pan-European intellectual impact but which failed to achieve its immediate national objectives within Germany. This role, too, thrust special communication responsibility upon Tillich, as he confided in recalling the advice he imparted to young men serving this cause.

When young ministers who belonged to our group went to their pulpits, I always told them not to preach religious socialism, but to

Floyd W. Matson and Ashley Montagu (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 6.

²⁵Mehta, "The New Theologians," p. 132.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷For Tillich's account of this see On the Boundary: An Autobiographical Sketch, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1966), pp. 74-80.

do two things: to preach the principles out of which religious socialism came--principles of love expressed in the unity of justice and power--and to spell out what is against justice here and now, the making of men into cogs of a machine, into objects and things.²⁸

Similar statements could be cited reflecting Tillich's involvement with communication strategy in his American careers as a "traveling lecturer"²⁹ and minister;³⁰ but the preceding instances should amply illustrate Tillich's pragmatic concern which he summed up as covering "more than forty years of public speaking."³¹

On a different and perhaps more elevated plateau, communication influenced Tillich's life as a critical "shaping" force, adding existential dynamics to his thought as well as premising the thematic intent and direction of his work. Tillich referred to the former connection in a lengthy autobiographical sketch written to vivify the way in which existential experience embedded itself into the core of his ideas; in it he pays tribute to the fact that the bulk of his literary efforts was based on "addresses and speeches."³² He continued,

Speeches and essays can be like screws, drilling into untouched rocks; they try to take a step ahead, perhaps unsuccessfully, perhaps in vain. My attempts to relate all cultural realms to the religious center had to use this method. It provided new

²⁸Paul Tillich, "Freedom and Ultimate Concern," Religion in America, ed. by John Cogley (New York: Meridian Books, 1958), pp. 284-285.

²⁹See Paul Tillich, "On the Boundary Line," The Christian Century, December 7, 1960, p. 1437.

³⁰See Paul Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), Preface.

³¹Paul Tillich, My Search for Absolutes (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1967), p. 45.

³²Ibid., p. 44.

discoveries--new at least for me--and, as the action showed, not completely familiar to others.³³

In addition, Tillich's theological-philosophical objectives contain implicit communication connections. As a cultural synthesizer seeking to "overcome the isolation of theology, to relate it to literature, the humanities, and the social sciences,"³⁴ Tillich indirectly included communication both as a tool to accomplish his objective and as a discipline within the scope (humanities) of his envisioned synthesis.³⁵ Likewise, Tillich's avowed acknowledgement that "my whole theological work has been directed precisely to the interpretation of religious symbols in such a way that the secular man--and we are all secular--can understand and be moved by them" implied a communicative barrier and his reasoned attack on it.³⁶

Yet, dwarfing all these interests in communication is the universal vision which prompted Tillich to insert communication into the heart of his philosophic system and to assign it a powerful, formative role in man's actualization of his being. Tillich's definitive declaration that "communication is a matter of participation"³⁷ related

³³Ibid.

³⁴"Harvard's Theologian," Newsweek, April 17, 1954, p. 66.

³⁵The assumption here is that rhetoric belongs in the humanities. See Everett Lee Hunt, "Rhetoric as a Humane Study," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XLI (April, 1955), 114-117; Donald Bryant, "Whither the Humanities?" The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XLII (December, 1956), 363-366; and Marie Hochmuth Nichols, Rhetoric and Criticism (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State Press, 1963), pp. 3-19.

³⁶Paul Tillich, Ultimate Concern, ed. by D. Mackenzie Brown (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), pp. 88-89.

³⁷Paul Tillich, Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel," Audio-Visual Department, Union Theological Seminary, 1952. All three

communication directly to his ontological structure.³⁸ The potent psychological and ontic implications which Tillich attributed to communication (the "word") nowhere resounded with more force than in a paper he read to the American Psychopathological Association.

The word is the first and basic cultural agency; this poses the question: How does the word reduce anxiety? The answer is that the word has power, psychic as well as intellectual. It has power and all anxiety springs from lack of power. The word bans chaos, the threat of non-being, inside and outside of oneself. The powers of chaos as they appear in innumerable forms, from the most primitive myths to the most highly developed religious symbolisms are expressions of the basic anxiety which is the destiny of man; for we are finite beings and at the same time aware of our finitude. This source of anxiety cannot be removed because it is we ourselves, our very being. But the creative word can keep it in limits and make life possible.³⁹

Regardless of the seeming ambiguity of the preceding statement, one message stands out. Tillich attributed a tremendous cultural power to the "word," i.e., language. Resolving the strange, indeed puzzling, ring of Tillich's words and setting them into a framework which hopefully gives them more intelligibility constitutes the purpose of this study. Help comes, of course, from Tillich, himself.

One final bond between Tillich and communication remains unexplored--Tillich's lectures on communication. Not until January of

articles bear the title "Communicating the Christian Message: A Question to Christian Teachers and Ministers," Union Seminary Quarterly Review, VII (June, 1952), 3-11; Pastoral Psychology, VII (June, 1956), 10-16; Theology of Culture, pp. 201-213. All four sources were consulted by the author but quotations are based on the tape which disagrees in several instances with the published accounts, which all agree.

³⁸See Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (3 vols.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-63), I, 174-178.

³⁹Tillich, "Anxiety-Reducing Agencies in Our Culture," Anxiety, ed. by Paul Hoch and Joseph Zubin, p. 17.

1952 did Tillich deliver a lecture on communication, per se. This lecture to a minister's workshop at Union Theological Seminary is available on tape; it has also been published in at least three different sources.⁴⁰ Again, in 1959 Tillich undertook to formulate principles which undergird communication.⁴¹ In both these lectures Tillich evinced primary concern with the traditional rhetorical interest, public speaking, but the generality of his comments and the sweeping scope of his vision give his principles an application to communication in virtually all forms.

Moreover, the clues provided by these lectures combine, upon careful examination, with the systematic principles of his more comprehensive works, the incidental comments in his less specialized writings, and the insights into his own communication experiences to provide the data for a complete philosophy of communication. Because Tillich labored more diligently than most men to maintain internal consistency in his thought (he once confessed that it was impossible for him to think "in other than a systematic way"⁴²), the task of drawing together the various phases of his communicative idea to form a complete, unified whole is much simpler than it otherwise would be. Yet, up to this point no one has attempted to weld these diverse factors into a coherent whole which will intelligibly interrelate his lectures, his philosophic

⁴⁰See n. 37, p. 10.

⁴¹Paul Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," New Christian Advocate, IV (May, 1959), 12-17.

⁴²Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, vii.

position, and his experiences to each other, much less to communication theory. Thus, a vast amount of material silently awaits assimilation from a perspective of communication; Tillich's written legacy includes more than a score of books and hundreds of articles, with an almost equal number having been written about him. If Duhamel's contention that rhetoric "cannot be adequately interpreted apart from the ideological context in which it occurs"⁴³ needs a testing ground, Tillich represents the ideal figure.

Justification

The fragmentary state of our understanding of Tillich's ideas on communication should itself supply sufficient motivation for this study; but the innovations of Tillich's philosophic position suggest an even more compelling reason for scrutinizing his relevance for communication. If rhetoricians genuinely want and seriously need new philosophical presuppositions from which to consider communication, as Otis Walter suggested over five years ago,⁴⁴ then Tillich demands a hearing in the speech-communication field.

Tillich departed from the dominant traditions in American philosophical thought and rhetoric in two significant respects. First, Tillich's view of the world is essentially realistic rather than

⁴³Albert P. Duhamel, "The Function of Rhetoric as Effective Expression," Journal of the History of Ideas, X (June, 1949), 344.

⁴⁴Otis M. Walter, "On Views of Rhetoric, Whether Conservative or Progressive," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XLIX (December, 1963), 367-382.

nominalistic; he labeled himself a "moderate realist."⁴⁵ Tillich knew at this crucial point he ventured into an area often unfamiliar and uncongenial to most Americans.

American history started in the period of prevailing nominalism. America never experienced the "realistic" thinking and feeling as Europe did in its "archaic" period. The assumption that universal concepts imply more reality than individual objects can hardly be explained to people who have been educated for centuries to the conviction that universals are mere words and that "reality" indicates only the realm of empirical objects.⁴⁶

Tillich's realism prompted him to seek the unity of the world in the face of its apparent multiplicity and to establish deductive, a priori universals which rendered it meaningful; hence, his ambitious undertaking of the subject "all of life."⁴⁷ Such a perspective, highly reminiscent of Plato (and German idealists generally),⁴⁸ meant that Tillich viewed communication in its broadest possible connections with reality as a whole and not simply as a specialized function of man limited to courts, the legislature, or the conference room.

A second difference between Tillich and other philosophical approaches to communication, closely related to realism, grows from his preferential placing of the ancient, pre-Socratic philosophical discipline of ontology (the study of being) ahead of the more generally

⁴⁵William L. Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogations, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), p. 389.

⁴⁶Paul Tillich, "The Social Function of the Churches," Social Research, III (February, 1936), 92.

⁴⁷See n. 6, p. 2.

⁴⁸See John Herman Randall, Jr., "The Ontology of Paul Tillich," The Theology of Paul Tillich, ed. by Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall (New York: Macmillan and Company, 1959), pp. 136-141.

approved epistemology.⁴⁹ Once again Tillich realized how sharply he contrasted with prevailing trends but felt that ontology, which he called "first philosophy," preceded epistemology temporally and evaluatively.⁵⁰ Consequently, he turned from epistemology with its highly refined observational techniques and urged a contemplative, experiential reflection as the key to an interpretation of man, meaning, and reality.

The uniqueness of Tillich's philosophic perspective manifests itself in a number of the issues and problems raised in this paper. Almost frighteningly ominous is the terminological barrier raised by terms such as "being," "realism," and "ontology": At times, the mundane task of defining threatens to overpower the more important consideration of exposing new insights and affirming new values.

Tillich's innovative perspective also raises several new and different questions: (1) How does speech affect man as man in contrast to man as a consumer or voter; (2) how does speech affect person-to-person relationships not as regards observable persuasive "effects" but as terms of the deepening of community; (3) how does an ontological perspective affect the relationship between ethics and epistemology in communication (subsumed under this larger heading are such perplexing questions as how communication can achieve change while preserving the individual freedom of the listener); (4) how does history affect communication when history is interpreted as "creative time"; (5) what should be the proper ends of communication? Tillich's thought, by its

⁴⁹Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 163ff.

⁵⁰Ibid. and Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, p. 30.

nature, will contribute little to questions such as whether humor adds to the rhetorical effectiveness of a serious speech or whether primacy or recency is a greater determinant of rhetorical success. At the same time, however, Tillich has the distinct advantage of showing ultimate communication objectives which may subsequently affect the character of smaller questions by making them superfluous or by revealing them in a new light. More than anything else, Tillich supplies a new way of thinking about communication and the presuppositions which govern it. In this capacity Tillich functions more as a Plato than an Aristotle. If anything, Tillich's questions satisfy an innate human tendency to know "why," rather than providing an instrumentally constructed "how."

A third difference introduced by Tillich changes the previous relationship which has been envisioned between philosophy and communication. Past studies have predominantly focused on specialized overlapping such as logic,⁵¹ semantics,⁵² or perception. By beginning with being itself or ultimate reality, Tillich extends both the philosophical enterprise and communication's relationship to it. Thus, communication appears as an intrinsic human activity more central to man's fulfillment

⁵¹See Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone, Jr. (eds.), Philosophy, Rhetoric and Argumentation (University Park: Pennsylvania State University, 1965); and A. Craig Baird, Rhetoric: A Philosophical Inquiry (New York: The Ronald Press, 1965), pp. 20-23.

⁵²I. A. Richards, The Philosophy of Rhetoric (New York: Oxford University Press, 1965).

⁵³George Campbell, The Philosophy of Rhetoric, ed. by Lloyd Bitzer and foreword by David Potter, (Carbondale: University of Southern Illinois Press, 1963).

of the meaning of life than as a tool refined for a practical objective. One result of Tillich's broadened vision is an evaluation of communication which transcends its oft-sounded political contribution to democracy and points toward its ontological contribution to man's development as man. In doing this, Tillich indirectly reminded rhetoricians that to affect human behavior, communication must presuppose some view of man as man and what he ought to be. He also implied that his communication theory centered more on "people," person-to-person relationships, than on "issues," person-to-idea relationships.

One final difference in Tillich's perspective is his virtual absence of acquaintance with past or traditional communication theory. A careful perusal of his published writings and lectures indicates no cognizance of recognized rhetorical theorists or works, with the single exception of the Phaedrus, and his reference to it does not relate to communication.⁵⁴ Indeed, his solitary use of the term "rhetoric" sets it against a pejorative and overly simple backdrop. "Politicians, dictators, and other people who wish to use rhetoric to make an impression on their audience use the term God in this sense."⁵⁵ Tillich thus offers a new perspective essentially unaffected by the past history of communication theory.

Hopefully the uniqueness of Tillich's philosophical presuppositions will produce some new interpretations, but undoubtedly it will raise many difficulties even as it offers new insights. Some of these

⁵⁴"Symbols of Eternal Life," Pastoral Psychology, XVI (April, 1965), 15.

⁵⁵Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 182.

potential problem areas have already been intimated--the terminological barrier and the absence of a rhetorical tradition--while others remain as yet unspecified. One of these involves the broader application of Tillich's stated concern with communicating in religion. While the specificity of the content to be communicated influenced Tillich's thought, it exerts no more influence than the forensic interest of classical rhetoric or the political-business interest of much modern rhetoric. In all these cases methodologies and generalizations transcend their specific content; in Tillich's instance, the philosophical basis which underlies all his thought guarantees a broad base for his communication theory.

Next, any effort to study Tillich may encounter the gallingly indifferent "so what?" Some, operating with different premises, dismiss his perspective as too "abstract," meaningless, or unverifiable. Tillich frequently spoke of and to such attitudes. His normal response was to suggest that those who ignored his questions simply substituted unconscious answers and decisions for them.⁵⁶ Furthermore, instead of one's viewing Tillich as antithetical to any position in speech-communication, a saner judgment recognizes his approach to communication as being complementary to other approaches, or, at the most, simply different. Tillich also does something else, previously implied; he offers a comprehensively designed response to man's inquisitive desire to know simply for the sake of knowing; in this age of specialization, he postulates a universal analysis of reality. If Tillich at times seems out of step with the questioning spirit of the modern age, then surely that

⁵⁶Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 20.

same contemporary spirit warns us to proceed cautiously in dismissing any serious claim to "truth."

Finally, many of Tillich's supporters who strongly disavowed his reliance on "rhetoric" and his own castigation of anything that smacked of "mere persuasion" seem on the surface to prevent this union.⁵⁷ Clarifying, however, the differences between Tillich's ideas and superficial concepts of rhetoric constitutes one of the undertakings of this study, as well as interpreting in this way more precisely what Tillich means by "mere persuasion."⁵⁸ Far from mitigating against this study, such remarks only enhance its possible value.

Plan of Study

Five substantive chapters aim at innovatively relating communication and Tillich's philosophy; they move down a constantly descending staircase from the ultimate universals of being to the somewhat milder abstractions of interpersonal communication. Each chapter employs the insights of its predecessor gradually to illumine the whole; yet certain earlier sections such as the discussion of symbols (Chapter III) become more meaningful in light of later discussions on existential epistemology (Chapter V).

Chapter II introduces the overarching theme of the entire study,

⁵⁷See in this connection: Wilhelm Pauck, "The Sources of Paul Tillich's Richness," The Future of Religion, ed. by Jerald C. Brauer, p. 24, Walter Leibrecht, "The Life and Mind of Paul Tillich," Religion and Culture: Essays in Honor of Paul Tillich, ed. Walter Leibrecht (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1959), p. 3; and Edward O'Connor, "Paul Tillich: An Impression," Tillich in Catholic Thought, ed. by Thomas A. O'Meara and Celestin K. Weissner (Dubuque, Iowa: The Priory Press, 1964), p. 25.

⁵⁸Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 45.

"communication is a matter of participation." A survey of the philosophical background surrounding participation paves the way for its eventual definition as "the principle of relatedness." Subsequently, three basic forms of participation or relatedness are isolated as having special relevance to communication.

The third chapter examines in greater detail the first and most important of these categories, essential participation or relatedness. In it the meaning of being (ontology) is explored and its relation to essential participation and communication is explicated. From it comes a new conceptualization of the purpose of communication, viz. that communication affirms the being of man through three functions--the affirmation of his self-realization, the creation of community, and the power of symbolization.

Chapter four moves from ontological relatedness to the dynamic stage of life, historical relatedness. This discussion reiterates the priority of ontology in Tillich's thought by tracing out its shaping character in Tillich's philosophy of history and by reciprocally considering the changes which time introduces into essential participation and the communication functions inherent in it. The consequence of time's effect on being Tillich designated as "situation" which has the broader definition of "meaninglessness" existing as a constant threat to communication. Three basic communication genres arise in an attempt to combat meaninglessness and to help man realize through communication his sense of being. Perhaps the most important insight developed in this chapter is that such oft-repeated, if ill-defined political, social, and religious positions as "conservative," "liberal," or "moderate" have their counterpart in communicative systems when they are

defined in relation to a list of communicative criteria.

The final chapters, five and six, picture the act of communication as it transpires on the person-to-person level. The former chapter explores Tillich's parallel to listening, reception, defined as diagnosing, analyzing, or learning about the situation or person with whom one wishes to communicate. The latter chapter explores the act of speaking or message formulation as Tillich viewed it from an apologetic perspective. Both these chapters maintain Tillich's ontological presuppositions, but now the purposes and ends of communication become more pragmatic and at points even touch on traditional rhetorical concerns about how attitudes can best be changed or re-shaped. Chapter five revives the old Platonic insight that the "method" and "attitude" which motivate knowledge accumulation also affect the knower, the content of his knowledge, and the known. Chapter six applies Tillich's highly stimulating "method of correlation" to communication. The final chapter, seven, synthesizes the ideas of the preceding chapters and extends their implications; Tillich's relevance to theorists such as Plato and Burke is also briefly noted.

Summary

Tillich's thought fulfills, at least partially, the call of one rhetorician, Otis Walter, for new beginnings in rhetorical theory based on new philosophical presuppositions. In this capacity Tillich as an "ontologist" and a "humanist" stands outside the mainstream of the technological-empirical thrust of the modern study of communication, both criticizing and extending its horizons.

Tillich's special predilection for metaphors like "boundary" and "frontier" suggests the thematic combination of old and new envisioned in this dissertation.⁵⁹ It seeks to draw from the well-known fabric of Tillich's philosophy a perspective on communication which Tillich himself never actualized. It seeks to reunite two ancient disciplines, often enemies, bred in the Greek genius, philosophy and rhetoric, healing some old wounds and encouraging new perspectives. It accepts the best of the contemporary but raises again some old questions about values, ethics, and ends.

Staying on the boundary is never easy; Tillich conceived it as constantly "full of tension and movement."⁶⁰ Some speech communicationists will see all philosophy and no communication. Some philosophers will see all communication and no Tillich. To balance the "tension" requires participating on the sides of all the critical fronts in the hope that the synthesis will produce something new for each. This is the goal--the journey stretches ahead.

⁵⁹See Tillich, On the Boundary: An Autobiographical Sketch; and "Frontiers," The Future of Religions, ed. by Jerald C. Brauer, pp. 52-63.

⁶⁰Tillich, "Frontiers," The Future of Religions, ed. by Jerald C. Brauer, p. 53.

CHAPTER 2

AN OVERVIEW OF COMMUNICATION AS PARTICIPATION

"Every relation includes a kind of participation."

Participation: An Ontological Approach to Communication

Philosophic Origins

Tillich's lectures emphasized the central importance of participation in the communicative act. In an early lecture Tillich affirmed that "communication is a matter of participation. Where there is no participation there is no communication."¹ In a later discussion he stressed that "real communication has to do with participating"² In both instances the nature of Tillich's statements and the strategic introductory positions they occupy indicate that Tillich used "participation" to define the essence of communication as he understood it.

Yet, to most students of communication, Tillich's definition itself sounds vague and puzzling; the difficulty stems from the fact that Tillich's definition presupposes a different model, system, or framework from which to view communication. Tillich did not draw his fundamental image of communication from the Aristotelian formula of

¹Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 204.

²Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," p. 12.

"rhetoric as the counterpart of dialectic."³ Similarly, he did not utilize the mechanistic models of behaviorism with their emphasis on encoding-decoding in its several variations.⁴ Instead, operating within the confines of his own background, he approached the definition and elaboration of communication through traditional philosophic categories which are often foreign to the modern speech theorist. Consequently, any understanding of Tillich's terminology generally and of participation specifically must begin with an analysis of his primary philosophic tradition with its multiple methodological implications.

As an aid in clarifying the general sense in which Tillich employed such terms as being and participation, the philosophic background apparently most relevant to Tillich was suggested by Rowe.⁵ As a beginning point, he developed the nature of Tillich's thought in the context of its realistic as opposed to its nominalistic tendencies. Rowe's approach seems justifiable on several grounds. Tillich clearly placed himself in the realistic tradition.⁶ His early reputation in America revolved in large measure around the concept of "belief-ful realism."⁷ Tillich's later thought openly bristled at times with

³Aristotle Rhetoric I. 1354^a1.

⁴See, for instance, chapter two, "Models and Speech Communication" of Gerald R. Miller's Speech Communication (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1966), pp. 51-81.

⁵William L. Rowe, Religious Symbols and God (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1968), pp. 43-73.

⁶See notes 46 and 47, p. 13.

⁷See Paul Tillich, The Religious Situation, trans by H. Richard Niebuhr (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1967), pp. 11-18.

hostility toward nominalism, particularly in the guise of contemporary logical positivism. He castigated it for (1) making hidden and a priori assumptions about the nature of reality;⁸ (2) denying the possibility of knowledge by denying the existence of universals;⁹ and (3) obscuring the nature of reality by conceiving of being as merely the highest abstraction.¹⁰

Rowe's perceptive discovery, in addition to clarifying Tillich's own philosophic outlook, sparked the vision needed to relate the concept of participation with the realistic tradition with which it has been associated. Plato's Parmenides is generally cited as the earliest example of participation used to describe the relationship between a universal (man) and a specific (John Doe);¹¹ the Platonic strain is obvious in Tillich's usage of the term, although Tillich actually seems to have expanded slightly the sense of participation beyond that of Plato. On occasion Tillich employed the term participation as being virtually synonymous with the term universal itself;¹³ on still other

⁸Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 20.

⁹Ibid., 117.

¹⁰Tillich, Systematic Theology, II, 10-11.

¹¹See William F. Lynch, An Approach to the Metaphysics of Plato Through the Parmenides (Georgetown: Georgetown University Press, 1959), pp. 149-167.

¹²The Platonic element in Tillich has been noted by many observers. J. Heywood Thomas, for example, contended, "There are times when one feels that his outlook is quite simply Platonic (or at least Plotinian) and he once remarked to me that the trouble with me was that I was too Aristotelian in my logic whereas he was more Platonic." "Foreword," Paul Tillich in Catholic Thought, ed. by Thomas A. O'Meara, and Celestin D. Weisser, p. vii.

¹³See Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 165; and "What Is Basic in

occasions Tillich used the term participation to refer to the relationship or identity which existed between the universal and its particular manifestation.¹⁴ Sidney Hook preferred to emphasize the former usage, so he asserted that Tillich's "employment of the 'participates' suggests that he is treating it as a Platonic universal."¹⁵ The latter perspective agreed more closely with Lewis Ford's conviction that essential participation represented one of the basic forms of participation.¹⁶ More plausible than either alternative is the possibility, which later investigation confirms, that Tillich found his original impetus for using participation in Plato and then fashioned a unique role for it within his own thought.

The preceding discussion has already disclosed the fundamental issue which divided realists and nominalists--the nature and significance of universals. Nominalists in the tradition of Roscelin of Compiègne, William of Champeaux, and William of Occam envisioned the "really real" as the individual entity (the particular tree, case, or incident) accessible to empirical investigation.¹⁷ Universals such as treehood, they regarded as no more than "communicative notions" or signs. On the other hand, realists in a tradition extending from Plato,

Human Nature," Pastoral Psychology, XIV (February, 1963), 18.

¹⁴Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 88.

¹⁵Hook, The Quest for Being (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1961), p. 157.

¹⁶"The Three Strands of Tillich's Theory of Religious Symbols," The Journal of Religion, Tillich Supplement, XLVI (January, 1966), 123.

¹⁷See Meyrick H. Carre, Realists and Nominalists (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 38-42.

Augustine, and medieval realists to Tillich contend that reality has the nature of universals.

Rowe further offered three qualities which typically distinguish the concept of a "universal" and, hence, realism. In his analysis universals as contrasted to particulars (1) are predicable, (2) are non-temporal and non-spatial, and (3) possess extra-mental existence.¹⁸ He then cites the statement "Socrates is wise" to provide an illustration of a universal (wisdom) being employed in a manner quite similar to the statement "Communication is participation." In other words, communication offers a particular instance of participation, similar but not identical to the way Socrates represents a particular instance of wisdom; the subtle implications of differences in these two statements will soon manifest themselves.

The realistic perspective is extremely helpful when contemplating any of Tillich's key concepts. A categorical consideration of them as universals shapes the manner in which one approaches and interprets them. To ask what is being, or what is participation, appears analogous to asking what is beauty, what is goodness, what is wisdom. Attempts to construe these terms too literally distort the thrust and intent of Tillich's thought. In this respect his own suggestion that participation is better viewed as a "power" than a material object is well taken.¹⁹ Tillich's thought consistently stays on a plateau of abstraction reminiscent of Platonic universals; regardless of his peculiar

¹⁸Rowe, Religious Symbols and God, p. 44.

¹⁹Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 88.

point of emphasis the image of universals influences the nature of Tillich's philosophic vocabulary.

As previously suggested, however, in a crucial manner, Tillich's assertion that "communication is a matter of participation" does not conform to the stereotype of a universal reflected in "Socrates is wise." Fundamentally and obviously, "communication" lacks the particularity or the specificity of "Socrates." Instead, in the former instance, one universal, "participation," is predicated of another, "communication," for one might say "Tom is communicating." Thus, the statement "Communication is a matter of participation" looms as infinitely more complex than its counterpart. The statement clearly implies a hierarchy of universals in which the nature or character of the lesser or lower one, communication, depends on the greater or higher one, participation.

Thoroughly grasping the hierarchical difference between the two universals--participation and communication--means viewing participation from within the framework of its ontological relation to being. Participation, viewed as an element of being, is a part of everything that is.²⁰ Tillich preferred to say that "everything participates in the structure of being."²¹ As a part of the ontological description of everything that is, participation goes beyond the less comprehensive universal or collective to represent the principle or power of universality, conceptualization, or transcendence. Participation in this sense describes the quality of relatedness, whether one depicts the

²⁰Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 164-166.

²¹Ibid., 168.

similarity of structure which enables two objects to be labeled as trees; or the power of man's mental capacity to identify and unite similarities; or relationships of an environmental nature which involve historical, biological, or sociological ties.

The necessary components of any relationship are an individual entity such as a tree, leaf, idea, or person and something to which the entity is related such as a forest, trunk, family, belief, or "world" in general.²² Hence, "individualization-participation" as polar terms within Tillich's ontological structure define the "category of relations."²³ Everything, Tillich contends, has participation or relatedness. By this he means that all existence exhibits the quality of distinction and sameness, separateness and similarity, the one and the many. Individualization, representing the pole of individuality, intrinsically produces separation and difference. Participation, representing the pole of universality or plurality, unites individual entities into meaningful aggregations.

When Tillich employed the term participation, he typically thought of it in its ontological generality as designating the principle of relationship, of identity, of similarity, of commonality. The precise nature of this relationship or "sharing"²⁴ may change, but the quality of relatedness through some form of inherent similarity remains.

Hence, Tillich utilized the term participation in a host of

²²The term "world" for Tillich indicated "a structure or a unity of manifoldness." See Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 170.

²³Ibid., 177.

²⁴Tillich offers "sharing" as an approximate synonym for participation in The Courage to Be, p. 88.

different settings, acknowledging that the "concept of participation has many functions."²⁵ He could talk of participation in a universal truth,²⁶ in past traditions,²⁷ in agape,²⁸ in another person,²⁹ in an artistic work,³⁰ or a movement like Religious Socialism.³¹ Tillich's classic statement occurred in volume one of his Systematic Theology.

A symbol participates in the reality it symbolizes, the knower participates in the known, the lover participates in the beloved, the existent participates in the essences which make it what it is under the conditions of existence; the individual participates in the New Being as it is manifest in Jesus the Christ.³²

R. M. Smart harshly criticized Tillich's use of participation in this passage because he felt Tillich applied it indiscriminately to logically different items--connotative overtones, epistemological relationships, a highly intensive personal relationship, etc.³³ Yet, one should constantly remember that when Tillich thought in ontological terms, as he does in the previous citation, he took no single example as a norm for defining participation; rather, he tried to find the unity

²⁵Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 177.

²⁶Tillich, "Symbols of Eternal Life," pp. 13-20.

²⁷"Theology and Architecture," Architectural Forum, CIII (December, 1955), 132.

²⁸"Creative Love in Education," World Christian Education, IV (Second Quarter, 1949), 27.

²⁹Tillich, "The Philosophy of Social Work," p. 30.

³⁰Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, p. 9.

³¹Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogations, ed. by Sydney Rome and Beatrice Rome, p. 360.

³²Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 177.

³³"Being and the Bible," The Review of Metaphysics, IX, (June, 1956), 598-607.

within all these different phases of reality. For him the unity existed precisely in the idea of some form of relatedness which he expressed through the concept of participation. The virtually inexhaustible range of applications of the concept of participation confirmed Tillich's conviction that it was characteristic of all being. If pressed, Tillich would certainly have acknowledged the differences in these various relationships and in the principles which governed them but would still maintain that within the higher order of his ontological abstraction, these were all types of participation.

Isolating more specific, hopefully normative, forms of relatedness which Tillich intended for participation to designate when he used it in connection with communication stands out as the first real challenge in discriminating less abstract meanings for it than pure ontology. Certain scholars, such as Rowe, decided that Tillich never criterially delimited normative forms for participation. He complained that "the fundamental difficulty inherent in Tillich's discussion of participation is his failure to explain the many different uses which this term has in his system."³⁴ Granted, disentangling and clarifying these forms is difficult but one hopes that it is not impossible, however.

Types of Participation

Participation has already been defined in its widest possible latitude as the principle of relatedness. At this point the process of constructing a philosophy of communication has barely begun. Somehow the abstract, skeletal, and somewhat unwieldy conception of

³⁴ Rowe, Religious Symbols and God, p. 118.

"communication as participation" needs substantive fleshing and concrete illustrating. Unfortunately, Tillich who ostensibly operated under the auspices of his own principle of semantic rationality, undertook, as one critic previously noted, no effort to classify or further refine the nuances of meanings he attached to participation.³⁵ Tillich did, however, commend the efforts which Lewis Ford made in this direction.³⁶

In connection with this analysis of Tillich's concept of religious symbols, Ford studied Tillich's uses of participation. Five sub-categories or dimensions appeared in his analysis; each category expressed a form of relatedness occurring with characteristic regularity. Typically, however, as Ford found, Tillich had the frustrating and confusing habit of shifting from one category to another with no overt warning. At least three of Ford's five categories indicate basic forms of relatedness highly relevant for Tillich's interpretation of communication.

Ford designated the five types of participation he isolated in Tillich's writings as causal participation or causal relatedness, inclusive participation or inclusive relatedness, receptive participation or receptive relatedness, environmental participation or environmental relatedness, and essential participation or essential relatedness.³⁷ Causal participation, according to his analysis, "signifies the effect's participation in its cause. If B participates

³⁵Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 55-56.

³⁶"Rejoinder," The Journal of Religion, Tillich Supplement, XLVI (January, 1966), 186.

³⁷Ford, "Three Strands of Tillich's Theory of Religious Symbols," pp. 121-123.

in A causally, then A causes B."³⁸ Pure examples of this type of participation in the writings of Tillich are relatively limited. Tillich's affirmation that an "individual leaf participates in the natural structures and forces which act upon it" reflects one possible way in which the effect participates in its cause as the result of the cause.³⁹ It also appears in his view that a man participates in his destiny to the degree that his actions tend to have later repercussions upon him.⁴⁰

This facet of participation reduced in traditional communicative discussions of communication strictly to logical relationships (cause-effect) received no analogous place in Tillich's thinking on communication. He clearly believed in logical consistency,⁴¹ but he also regarded "logical proof" as a superficial manifestation of some more fundamental aspect of human existence and not in itself as a sufficient explication of effective communication. Consequently, causal participation dovetailed in its broader implications into other categories which Tillich clearly regarded as bearing more directly on human existence.

Inclusive participation, Ford's second category, he defined as describing "the relation of a being to that which it includes. Thus man participates in the subhuman realm because the physical, chemical, biological, and psychological levels are found within him."⁴² Generally,

³⁸Ibid., p. 121.

³⁹Ibid.

⁴⁰Ibid.

⁴¹See "Logical Rationality," Systematic Theology, I, 56-57.

⁴²Ford, "Three Strands of Tillich's Theory of Religious Symbols," p. 122.

Ford felt that inclusive participation signified "an asymmetrical relation in which the inferior 'shares in' the superior."⁴³ This type of participation described the way in which "communication" participated in "participation;" but, like causal participation, its more significant applications appear under other headings.

As a third category Ford develops the previously referred-to idea of essential participation. This sub-division of participation "explains the relation between the particular and the universal."⁴⁴ According to its realistic implications, "two things that are similar participate in the same property."⁴⁵ For instance, two individuals, John Doe and Mary Smith, participate in the common universal of manhood or perhaps wisdom. Or an oak and a pine tree participate in the common universal of treehood.

This category of participation asks a supremely important question--what essences or universals does communication participate in and how do they affect the nature, purpose, or ends of communication. This is far from a new question. Plato's Phaedrus should be studied as an attempt to isolate the basic universals affecting communication; nonetheless, Tillich's responses constituted a unique set of answers to it. Above all, communication participates in the structure of being; this is its essential relationship, and in this dynamic encounter communication participates in man's realization of his being through

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 123.

⁴⁵Ibid.

self-creation, interpersonal communion, and "world" harmonization. These three interrelated "universals" operate to influence the nature and end of all communication. The consideration of them in chapter three reveals what Tillich envisioned as "really" happening in the communication act regardless of what the external trappings surrounding the act might be.

A fourth classification of participation discerned in Ford's analysis was "environmental participation." This form of participation pointed to the "individual's real relatedness to that which surrounds him."⁴⁶ Both conscious and unconscious forces operated here. The individual participates in past traditions, in sociological structures and power groups, in community outlooks, symbols, and linguistic structures. Indeed, the variety of factors which is part of the individual's "world" or environment is so great that each of them requires highly professional expertise.

In order to include them all in some way in his discussion, Tillich preferred to refer to the sum total of environmental impact on an individual or group as "situation."⁴⁷ Within this concept, he encompassed the traditional rhetorical concern with such facets of communication as audience and occasion. Tillich, however, noticeably expanded the boundaries of these restrictive concerns. "Situation" consistently carried for him the connotation of historical change with its accompanying call for adaptation. Chapter four provides a more complete account of how "situation" affects communication.

⁴⁶Ibid.

⁴⁷Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 3-5.

Ford labeled the final category of participation "receptive participation."⁴⁸ Conceivably it might also be denominated "epistemic participation" because it described the epistemological relationship between the knower and the known. Ford believed it "signifies openness and sensitivity toward that which is participated in."⁴⁹

Participation sustains several significant relationships to the act of knowing. First, it points to the fact that some type of similarity or sameness must exist between two things (person to person, person to idea, person to tree) before one can know the other. Knowledge, Tillich indirectly argued, required an a priori or essential structure of relatedness.⁵⁰ Second, participation on a polar continuum with detachment pointed toward the personal element in epistemology. Certain types of knowledge require a greater participation, intimacy, or depth of relationship between the knower and the known.⁵¹ Tillich envisioned, for instance, scientific knowledge and technical subjects as requiring a minimum of participation. On the other hand, religious, aesthetic, axiological, or psychotherapeutic knowledge presupposed a maximum of individual participation. While a person can become highly involved in experimental research, the depth of his personal relationship to the content of his research remains relatively limited.

Ford contended that "in its most intensive form, receptive participation passes over into what we might call existential

⁴⁸Ford, "Three Strands of Tillich's Theory of Religious Symbols," p. 122.

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 177.

⁵¹Ibid., 94-105.

participation,"⁵² Existential participation consequently implied for Tillich a peculiar type of human response which transcended intellectual insight or instinctual emotional reaction. It crescendoed into an act which emerged from the center of a person's life engaging all facets of his personality into a total response.

Communication has traditionally been associated with epistemology. Every message, visual or vocal, every cue sent from speaker to listener, involves or evokes some type of epistemological reaction. The act of persuasion involves the changing or refashioning of knowledge. The study of perception's role in communication reflects epistemic overtones. Tillich regarded communication as opening up or drawing the individual into a state of participation with the reality which the communicator discusses.⁵³ A particular message or symbol acts to engender the participation of the listener and the "reality" under consideration.

Existential participation also supplied the basis for a distinction between message types, the dynamic for a "methodology" of audience analysis, the model for message structure, the goal of a message objective, and the ethical motivation for communicative restraint. The importance of existential participation in constructing Tillich's philosophy of communication assumes such importance that two chapters, five and six, are devoted to exploring it.

⁵²Ford, "Three Strands of Tillich's Theory of Religious Symbols," p. 122.

⁵³Tillich, Theology of Culture, pp. 51ff. and "How We Communicate the Christian Message," p. 13.

Ford's analysis of the five basic types of participation developed in Tillich's writings coupled with the overriding idea of participation as the principle of relatedness fills an important gap in explaining Tillich's use of participation. The ensuing four chapters rely on the insights and terminology Ford contributed; however, in each chapter the particular form of relatedness transcends the limited use to which Ford applied it, i.e., religious symbols. Here the concern is communication in general.

Communication Implications of Participation

Tillich's contention that "communication is a matter of participation" could be paraphrased, then, in light of the preceding discussion in several ways. One might say that "communication is a matter of relatedness, universality, or multiplicity." Perhaps still better might be the translation that "communication is a matter of commonization." This last rendering unites Tillich's perspective closely with that suggested by the Latin root of the English term communication, communis.⁵⁴ The precedent for Tillich's linking of communication and participation may reside in Parmenides where Plato relates the Greek equivalents of the terms "fellowship," "communion" (*κοινωνία*) to that of participation (*μεθεξῆς*).⁵⁵

By implication, Tillich's conception of communication as commonization or participation appears at once extraordinarily penetrating and comprehensive; in fact, it may be the most encompassing definition of communication ever offered. Communication emerges from it as a basic

⁵⁴Harry L. Levy, A Latin Reader for Colleges (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1962), p. 207.

⁵⁵Lynch, An Approach to the Metaphysics of Plato through the Parmenides, pp. 96-136.

form of relationship whose guiding principles are analogous to those governing every form of relatedness. Any effort to conceptualize about the function and scope of communication which neglects this consideration errs. As a consequence of this breadth of vision, Tillich nowhere limited his practical discussion of communication to the traditional rhetorical genre of public speaking, even though in his published lectures on communication this dimension received the emphasis because he spoke to Protestant ministers. Instead, Tillich recognized through the concept of participation the communicative unity of superficially diverse situations. A psychotherapist and his patient,⁵⁶ a minister and his congregation,⁵⁷ an artist and his work,⁵⁸ a government and its propaganda,⁵⁹ a commercial and the consumers⁶⁰ --all of these serve as examples of communication.

But even while Tillich recognized these and other situations as communicative acts, he also refused to see them as intrinsic units containing within themselves the dynamic principles which govern communication. He went one step beyond them to interpret these instances as a part of the general category of relatedness, subject to the principles which derive from and apply to it as a whole. To Tillich the

⁵⁶Tillich, "The Philosophy of Social Work," pp. 27-30.

⁵⁷Tillich, "The Relevance of the Ministry in Our Time and Its Theological Foundation," Making the Minister Relevant, ed. by Hans Hoffman (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1960), pp. 19-35.

⁵⁸Tillich, "Existentialist Aspects of Modern Art," Christianity and Existentialist, ed. by Carl Michelson (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), pp. 130-135.

⁵⁹Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," p. 12.

⁶⁰Ibid.

study of communication centered on the study of relatedness. Therefore, Tillich's methodological approach to the study of communication did not begin with an observation of communicative situations but rather with a philosophic, indeed ontological, analysis of relatedness. His whole procedure at this point is inherently deductive. His deductions, moreover, which have the character of "universals," are expressed in deceptively simple key word concepts with multiple unspecified connotations. He established these "universals" deductively and then applied them a priori to communication. Consequently, he ended up with a "genuine philosophy of communication" based not merely on a consideration of communication, per se, but on a systematic analysis of the whole of reality and relatedness as he understood them.

Tillich's perspective and methodology clashed directly with the growing tendency of the twentieth century to study empirically and inductively more and more microscopic questions.⁶¹ By contrast, he moved toward the widest possible latitude of agreement or commonization, analyzed it, and moved backward toward the more specific. Whatever contributed to the commonization of men as men contributed to communication. Understand the process of commonization and one understands communication. All of Tillich's endeavors to explicate communication rested on his view of participation, which in turn depended on his perception of the totality of reality.

While Tillich's definition revealed methodological procedures

⁶¹See, for example, the fifty questions posed by Paul D. Holtzman in "Summary: Questions We Should Be Asking," The Frontiers in Experimental Speech Communication Research, ed. by Paul E. Ried (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1966), pp. 89-92.

implicit in his thinking, he did not intend that it should serve merely as a technique-producing formula. Tillich evinced no interest in simply producing a list of ten easy steps to the development of effective communication. Tillich certainly sought through his categorizing of communication as an act of participation to interpret its inner dynamics as being governed by those qualities which most strongly influenced human relatedness; at the same time his definition presupposed ethical restraints. "Participation" always operated in polar fashion with its ontological opposite, "individualization," and even though Tillich placed his definitional stress on the participatory end of this continuum, his ontological structure does not permit the neglect of its counterpart. Communication's possibility and meaning derive from "relatedness" but the communicative act always transpired in creative tension with the imperative of maintaining the integrity of the individuals involved in it.

Thus communication for Tillich, as will become increasingly apparent, is not oriented toward the "discovery of all the available means of persuasion"⁶² nor is its ultimate objective instrumental, "to influence--to affect with intent."⁶³ To Tillich communication achieved success if it enhanced or maintained the relationship of the individual to himself, his fellow man, and his "world." Tillich never conceived of communication as simply an instrumental or means-charged act; it was always evaluative or existential. In communication man sought self-affirmation through relating to his "world;" and communication's "bad

⁶²Aristotle Rhetoric I. 1355^b26.

⁶³Berlo, The Process of Communication, p. 13.

or good," its "success or failure," could not be measured by votes, dollars, or opinion polls. Its criterial standard became its contributive power to the humanness, i.e., meaning, freedom, integrity, sense of dignity, of the participants in the communicative experience. In other words, Tillich considered, but also looked beyond whether a given communicative exchange achieved its immediate goal ("pick up the pencil") to ask how every encounter affected the total humanity of both speaker and receiver. Is the communication monologue or dialogue? Does it create an "I-Thou" or "I-It" relationship? These are the important questions from Tillich's perspective. Assuming that "communication is a matter of participation," Tillich envisioned the fulfillment of its task in the degree to which it contributed to participation between and among individuals.

In summary, then, three major implications arise from Tillich's definition. First, for Tillich communication as participation described communication as belonging to the principle or category of relatedness. Second, associated with this his definition reveals the philosophic background and methodological assumptions of Tillich. Third, it portrayed the ultimate objective of communication not as persuasion but as communion or the establishment of community.

Summary

In brief retrospect, the preceding pages supplied an insight into the realistic background of Tillich's philosophical outlook and at the same time suggested that many of Tillich's key concepts became more meaningful when viewed as universals like "wisdom" or "beauty." Participation, after this pattern, appeared as the "principle of relatedness"

and its communicative implications were summarized. At this point the definition "communication is a matter of participation" broadened into the tripartite forms "communication is a matter of essential relatedness," "communication is a matter of environmental relatedness," and "communication is a matter of existential relatedness."

Each aspect of these definitions identifies a set of relationships which bear on communication. Furthermore, the principles which most relevantly apply to the separate categories of participation derive from the nature of the category and are then re-applied to communication. The dominant considerations, for example, in essential participation originate from an analysis of ontology; in environmental participation, from history (historical relatedness); and in existential participation, from epistemology (epistemic relatedness). In this manner three distinct and complex philosophical categories converge through participation; the principle of relatedness, to apply to communication.

From a slightly different perspective, these three categories of participation represent a descending hierarchy. Essential participation defines the transtemporal principles' part of every communicative transaction, regardless of where and when it occurs. Environmental participation defines the historical relationship constantly stamping communication with variety, giving it ever new external forms. Existential participation defines the person-to-person dimension which gives communication its immediate, existential potency as well as the weight of ethical restraint. Moreover, the three areas merge in two ways. They all represent forms of participation and the principles formed

within each area bear the mark of Tillich's ontological vocabulary and Weltanschauung. Hence, essential participation, the subject of the next chapter, exercises a decisive influence on Tillich's entire philosophy of communication.

CHAPTER 3

ESSENTIAL PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

"Every being participates in the structure of being, but man alone is immediately aware of this structure."

Introduction

The preceding chapter traced the broad outlines of Tillich's conception of "communication as participation." Two embryonic ideas conceived there fuse in this chapter and together receive more extensive examination. They are: first, that communication involves a study of "commonization" or the principle of relatedness; and second, that "essential participation" designates a significant area of concentration within the broad sphere of "relatedness." In this instance the deceptively simple adjective-noun form, "essential participation," cloaks an extremely complex set of relationships. In addition, the relationships incorporated into the definition of participation are the most "essential" in the sense of being the most basic, universal, and pervasive of relationships. They affect all other categories of participation with a pre-determining, conditioning power and for this reason deserve the appellation "ontic relationships," just as this chapter could be renamed "Ontological Participation and Communication."

The coordinate conjunction "and" serves a useful function in

either chapter heading because it stresses the mutuality or interdependence which exists between communication and the ontological dimension. Dual issues thus arise; how does ontology, the structure of being, affect communication and how does communication affect ontology. Neither of these questions, however, can be answered without considering a third question, presupposed in each of the other questions--what is being, the structure of being, or ontology. Hence, the three major divisions of this chapter become the nature of being, communication and being, being and communication. The key to essential relatedness resides in ontology, which describes the universal structure or relationship common to everything and penetrates directly to the heart of Tillich's interpretation of reality with all its implications for communication.

The Structure of Being

"Paul Tillich," said Columbia's John Herman Randall, Jr., "stands in the classic tradition of western philosophy, in that long line of thinkers stemming from the Greeks who have been concerned with the problem of being and wisdom."¹ Moreover, according to Sidney Hook, Tillich played a vital role in restoring the concept of being to a position of prominence and respectability in twentieth century philosophy.² Time after time, Tillich asserted the priority of this concept as the determining element in all spheres of reality.³ Tillich defined

¹Randall, Jr., "The Ontology of Paul Tillich," The Theology of Paul Tillich, ed. by Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall, p. 132.

²Hook, The Quest for Being, p. 156.

³Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, pp. 81ff.

philosophy as "the cognitive endeavor in which the question of being is asked."⁴ His axiomatic assumption that "everything participates in being" made it the commonization principle par excellence.⁵

However, two problems intervene between being and its application to communication: (1) Tillich's own failure to link the two in his lectures on communication; and (2) the ambiguity and sense of vague emptiness most Americans associate with the term being. Tillich's exclusion of being from his popular discussion of communication demands some type of explanation in view of its general prominence in his thought and the use made of it here. Several plausible explanations occur.

The brevity and practicality of Tillich's remarks on these occasions may have prohibited his elaboration of a subject as complex as ontology. Tillich probably also assumed that his more detailed comments on being were available elsewhere and an interested party could make the necessary correlations via the category of participation. Finally, and perhaps most feasible of all, Tillich simply presupposed his view of being and moved directly to his anthropology. For instance, in his earlier lecture, Tillich's initial point raised the question, "where are the people living to whom we are to communicate . . .?"⁶ He responded, "they all participate in human existence. This is a very universal answer. But it is by no means a simple answer."⁷ In this

⁴Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, p. 5.

⁵Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 169.

⁶Taped lecture by Paul Tillich, "Communicating the Christian Gospel."

⁷Ibid.

discussion human nature illustrates the practical human situation while being, which never directly appears, forms the construct prompting Tillich's analysis.

The second barrier, establishing a meaning for being, presents a more serious obstacle. Tillich, himself, contended "Being cannot be defined. For in every definition being is presupposed Being can be characterized by concepts which depend on it, but which point to it in a metaphorical way."⁸ The most satisfactory method for resolving this problem from Tillich's point of view would be a completely developed ontology, but such an involved undertaking lies outside the purview of this dissertation. The interest here centers more on conveying a general sense of what Tillich means when he uses terms such as being and power of being. Three related approaches to being are attempted, each building on the other to provide a progressively clearer picture of how Tillich employed the concept being. Briefly, the three approaches are: (1) a general overview of Tillich's defense of "being" and an introduction to the logical structure of being; (2) a presentation of the question of being and man's key role in the structure of being; (3) a consideration of "ultimate concern" and "community" as the answer to the question of being or as the source of the power of being.

Tillich's preliminary remarks in the introduction to the second volume of his Systematic Theology offer a good beginning point for the first method. On this occasion, Tillich responded at length to nominalist criticism of his employment of the term being.

⁸Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, p. 35.

The criticism of the nominalists and their positivistic descendants to the present day is based on the assumption that the concept of being represents the highest possible abstraction. It is understood as the genus to which all other genera are subordinated with respect to universality and with respect to the degree of abstraction. If this were the way in which the concept of being is reached, nominalism could interpret it as it interprets all universals, namely as communicative notions which point to particulars but have no reality of their own. Only the completely particular, the thing here and now, has reality. Universals are means of communication without any power of being. Being as such, therefore, does not designate anything real

The answer to this argument is that the concept of being does not have the character that nominalism attributed to it. It is not the highest abstraction, although it demands the ability of radical abstraction. It is the expression of the experience of being over against non-being. For this reason, the medieval philosophers called being the basic transcendental, beyond the universal and the particular. In this sense the notion of being was understood alike by such people as Parmenides in Greece and Shankara in India. In this sense its significance has been rediscovered by contemporary existentialists, such as Heidegger and Marcel. This idea of being lies beyond the conflict of nominalism and realism. The same word, the emptiest of all concepts when taken as an abstraction, becomes the most meaningful of all concepts when it is understood as the power of being in everything that has being.

No philosophy can suppress the notion of being in this latter sense. It can be hidden under presuppositions and reductive formulas, but it nevertheless underlies the basic concepts of philosophizing. For "being" remains the content, the mystery, and the eternal a priori of thinking.⁹

Tillich's extremely important statement makes two vital points about the term being. Negatively it asserts that being does not result from the last and most abstract step in the reasoning process. Being, for him, does not describe what is left when one subtracts the differences in genera until all that finally can be said is that "they have being." Indeed, Tillich moves in exactly the opposite direction. Positively, he considers being as the place where thought begins. The foremost and indispensable element of any phase of reality is its

⁹Tillich, Systematic Theology, II, 10-11.

existing being. Two of Tillich's key statements stressed this.

It is the expression of the experience of being over against non-being The same word, the emptiest of all concepts when taken as an abstraction, becomes the most meaningful of all concepts when it is understood as the power of being in everything that has being.¹⁰

A better grasp of Tillich's reason for attaching such significance to being is obtained by postulating the basic structure of being, self-world.¹¹ At this point, part of the reason for much of the confusion frequently associated with "being" suddenly appears; despite its singular form, "being" is not a single thing, entity, or fact; instead, being describes a relationship, a duality--a "self" and its "world." In establishing "self" and "world" as his pivotal deduction with implications capable of coherently interpreting all of reality, Tillich resurrects the familiar philosophic pattern exemplified so famously in Descarte's cogito ergo sum. Here is a starting place, a relationship, on which all else hangs, and a relationship, it might be added, which contains a paradigm of all the functions of communication.

But what does it mean to say "being" assumes the form "self-world?" Simply, if somewhat crudely illustrated, Tillich means that to have being you need a "person," a "self," or "man" and "something else"--a tree, another person, or event. In other words, preceding any botanical science is the relationship tree-man; preceding any psychology is the relationship person-to-person, and preceding any history is the relationship man-event. Further interpreted, this ontological structure

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 168-171.

affirms that before you can describe, analyze, or dissect anything you need a describer, analyzer, or dissector and something which is describable, analyzable, or dissectable. And, Tillich asserts, this relationship precedes any statement you can make, any experiment you conduct, or vivisection you perform. Thus being most elementally depicted presupposes an observer (subject) and an observed (object), which in his vocabulary "are." Consequently, he wrote, "Everyone participates in being, and everyone experiences being when he encounters beings: persons, things, events, essences."¹²

Furthermore, the pre-supposition, self-world, lends itself to additional analysis which still antedates anything one may say biologically, historically, psychologically, i.e., epistemologically, about either side of the structure of being. Tillich delimited six elements divisible into three polarities (individualization-participation, dynamics-form, and freedom-destiny) which further defined the nature of traditional philosophical categories (time, space, causality, and substance) which he feels impregnate any description of the self-world structure.¹⁴

This brief analysis of being, Tillich's ultimate deduction, provides at best a logical description of being; but in fulfilling this function, it opens the door for a second avenue by which being can be conceived. Something precedes in time this logically deducted formula

¹²Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, p. 61.

¹³Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 174-186.

¹⁴Ibid., 192-198.

which, as Kelsey expressed it,

is the fact that Tillich begins ontological analysis with an analysis of human experience. The experience of being over against non-being is a human experience. A man realizes in shock that he is persistently threatened by biological extinction, cognitive skepticism, and moral nihilism.¹⁵

Tillich symbolizes man's dawning awareness of the experience of being, his dependency on a structure or world outside of himself, by the question--"Why is there something, why not nothing."¹⁶ This query, or some form of it, implies a number of possibilities to Tillich; it represents the power of man to conceptualize or to question ("Man is the being who asks the question of being.");¹⁷ it also suggests that man is not only subject or observer. Man is an "object," who, particularly in relation to other selves, finds his own self. Towering above these indications, however, this query, which one writer proclaimed a "universal ouch" more than a request for information,¹⁸ suggests that everything in man's encounters with being constantly borders on the

¹⁵David H. Kelsey, The Fabric of Paul Tillich's Theology (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1967), p. 60. A similar point is made by Don Browning, "Analogy, Symbol, and Pastoral Psychology in Tillich's Thought," Pastoral Psychology, XIX (February, 1968), 46-48.

¹⁶Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 163; and Tillich, Biblical Religions and the Search for Ultimate Reality, pp. 9ff.

¹⁷Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 17; and Tillich, Biblical Religions, p. 11. What Tillich is really interested in when he cites this question is man's power to ask questions. He once remarked in this connection, "I suggest that you sit down some day and do nothing but sit and think--not even read anything--just think, perhaps for as long as a whole hour, of what it means that there are beings called "man," who are able to ask questions. In this simple phenomenon a whole world is implied and a demonstration is given of the interdependence of subject and object in every cognitive approach." My Search for Absolutes, p. 70.

¹⁸Kelsey, The Fabric of Paul Tillich's Theology, p. 61.

verge of dissolution. This negative experience, this threat of possible disintegration between a self and his world, Tillich labeled the "shock" or threat of non-being."¹⁹

As an experience, the "shock of non-being" internally affects the "self" side of the basic structure of being. This threat strikes man in the form of anxieties, which Tillich defined as "the state in which a being is aware of its possible non-being" or as "finitude experienced as one's own finitude."²⁰ Three basic forms of anxiety or threats to man's self-affirmation appear: the anxiety of death; the anxiety of meaninglessness; and the anxiety of guilt.²¹ The experience of non-being does not mean merely the theoretical recognition of one's biological extinction but rather the existential awareness that one must die, that it is a part of his very existence. In this connection Tillich distinguished sharply his view of ontological "anxiety" from neurotic fear, or anxiety. Neurotic fear is localized anxiety; it is objectified in relation to specific objects, events, or situations.²² Objectifying fear is one way to deal successfully with anxiety, because once identified with a definite object or situation, fear seems more manageable. Pathological and neurotic anxiety reflect the basic structure of ontological "anxiety" but are not identical with it.

¹⁹See Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 163; and Tillich, The Courage to Be, pp. 40-41ff.

²⁰Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 35.

²¹Ibid., pp. 41ff.

²²Ibid., pp. 64ff.

But non-being is not "self" contained; it affects both the individual and his perceived world. Its effects spill over into "world" at two primary and critical points--in relations with fellow human beings (rejection or non-acceptance) and in relation to the totality or whole of one's world. This latter point, which admittedly seems ambiguous, has additional light shed on it by the third and last method of viewing being, ultimate concern, which received a more explicit place in Tillich's thought than the former idea.

Man's power to face these ontological threats to his being and affirm self and world in their presence constitutes the experience of the "power of being." In other places, Tillich described this experience as "the courage to be." "We have defined courage as the self-affirmation of being which is effective in every act of courage."²³ The concept of "ultimate concern" identifies man's major experience of the power of being with regard to his world. Tillich contended:

Our ultimate concern is that which determines our being or not-being. . . . Nothing can be of ultimate concern for us which does not have the power of threatening and saving our being. The term "being" in this context does not designate existence in time and space. Existence is continuously threatened and saved by things and events which have no ultimate concern for us. But the term "being" means the whole of human reality, the structure, the meaning, and the aim of existence. All this is threatened; it can be lost or saved. Man is ultimately concerned about his being and meaning. "To be or not to be" in this sense is a matter of ultimate, unconditional, total, and infinite concern.²⁴

In this excerpt Tillich employed "ultimate concern" in two different but related senses. In the latter portion of the statement

²³Ibid., p. 172.

²⁴Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 14.

he used it to refer to man's anxiety about his own being. Thus one is ultimately concerned about the meaning, significance, or purpose of his life. The source of man's anxiety about his being was the threat of non-being, the loss of self and world. Secondly, in response to this "ultimate concern" accrued the additional meaning of "commitment" to something which seemed to possess the power to reduce the threat of non-being. Whatever object man identified with this power became his "ultimate concern."

A wide range of factors qualified as potential objects or symbols of ultimate concern. In the Dynamics of Faith, Tillich enumerated some items and their function frequently found in this category.

Man, like every living being, is concerned about many things, above all about those which condition his very existence, such as food and shelter. But man, in contrast to other living beings, has spiritual concerns--cognitive, aesthetic, social, political. . . . Some of them are urgent, often extremely urgent, and each of them as well as the vital concerns can claim ultimacy for a human life or the life of a social group. If it claims ultimacy it demands the total surrender of him who accepts this claim, and it promises total fulfillment even if all other claims have to be subjected to it or rejected in its name. 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. The extreme nationalisms of our century are laboratories for the study of what ultimate concern means in all aspects of human existence, including the smallest concern of one's daily life. Everything is centered in the only god, the nation--a god who certainly proves to be a demon, but who shows clearly the unconditional character of an ultimate concern. . . .

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Another example--almost a counter-example, yet nevertheless equally revealing--is the ultimate concern with "success" and with social standing and economic power. It is the god of many people in the highly competitive Western culture and it does what every ultimate concern must do: It demands unconditional surrender to its laws even if the price is the sacrifice of genuine human relations, personal convictions, and creative eros. Its threat is social and economic defeat, and its promise--indefinite as all such promises--

the fulfillment of one's being.²⁵

Being, viewed as "ultimate concern," points toward the basic underpinning in one's life. One's ultimate concern was never a single value but the all-conditioning value in one's entire psychic and world structure. In this sense Tillich universalized ultimate concern and applied its dynamics to superficially diverse forms--religion, politics, finances, etc. Thus ultimate concern and human existence became inseparable for Tillich; destroy a man's "ultimate concern" and you destroy the man; control it and you control the man. The basic thesis of this characterization of being is that man continually searches for a power, a reality, or an "ultimate concern" which will strengthen his own sense of being, meaning, or purpose.

In addition to ultimate concern man finds the power of courage to be through person-to-person encounter, although Tillich did not as specifically develop community as a source of the power of being as he did ultimate concern. The theoretical basis for community's power lay in the role person-to-person (here "person" as "object" defines the nature of "world") relationships exercised in the creation of man's basic humanity and self-awareness. Tillich conjectured:

When individualization reaches the perfect form which we call a "person," participation reaches the perfect form which we call "communion." Man participates in all levels of life, but he participates fully only in that level of life which he is himself--he has communion only with persons. Communion is participation in another completely centered and completely individual self. In this sense communion is not something an individual might or might not have. Participation is essential for the individual, not accidental. No individual exists without participation, and no personal being exists without communal being. The person as the fully

²⁵Paul Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, World Perspectives, Vol. X, Harper Torchbooks (New York: Harper & Row, 1958), pp. 1-2.

developed individual self is impossible without other fully developed selves.²⁶

Tillich contended here that the "self-world" structure of being comes into being only through personal relatedness; he developed the practical implications of this relationship when he exclaimed, "Even a minister who is a poor preacher can make his message relevant through the liturgy and through his being."²⁷ Tillich put the theoretical and practical into focus, aptly summarizing their affect on being, when he observed:

One cannot become a person without encountering another person and discovering the limit of one's own claim in the claim of the other one. We cannot develop healthily unless we find the power of being which we lack in the power of being of others who have it, and whom we can let participate in our power of being. This encounter can be in words and it can be in silence. Silent communication is often more important than communication in words.²⁸

Communication and the Structure of Being

Tillich's inference about participating in the "power of being" of another person through communication hinted at the potential role communication exercised in the structure of being. In a previously cited speech which he delivered before the American Psychological Association, Tillich brought this idea to actual fruition, employing "word" as a synonym for man's capacity to communicate. Tillich contended that

²⁶Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 176.

²⁷Tillich, "The Relevance of the Ministry in Our Time and Its Theological Foundation," Making the Ministry Relevant, ed. by Hans Hoffman, p. 20.

²⁸"The Theology of Pastoral Care," Pastoral Psychology, X (October, 1959), 21.

the word has power, psychic as well as intellectual. It has power, and all anxiety springs from lack of power. The word bans chaos, the threat of non-being, inside and outside of oneself.²⁹

Tillich does not merely re-echo the old argument that speech raises man above the level of animals. Instead, he points toward the fundamental fact that communication creates and constantly reinforces the humanity, meaning, and being of man as man. Communication functions through meanings, and it activates and fulfills meaning as the teleological realization of what it is to be. Tillich's instinctive grasp of this led him to regard the "word" as the basic element of man's culture, i.e. world.

The discovery that being was relationship and not a "thing" also implied the presence of communication suggesting the logic of following the same three-step plan used in approaching being to mould Tillich's random comments on communication and being into a cohesive unit. First, then, communication sustains a relationship to the logical, self-world structure of being. In fact, it creates the structure! Language, which for Tillich frequently represented man's communicative capacity, gives to the "self" its "world."

Language, as the power of universals, is the basic expression of man's transcending his environment, of having a world. The ego-self is that self which can speak and which by speaking trespasses the boundaries of any given situation.³⁰

Language presupposed what Tillich regarded as man's most unique, and realistic, quality--"the power of abstraction, the power to create

²⁹Tillich, "Anxiety-Reducing Agencies in our Culture," Anxiety, ed. by Paul Hoch and Joseph Zubin, p. 17.

³⁰Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 170-171; see also Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, pp. 70-74.

universals in terms of language." Language, in other words, reflects shared substance and perception and can therefore facilitate perception of shared substance. In at least three of his major works, Tillich described language with some approximation of the idea of language as "the power of universals."³¹ Tillich used "universal" and "participation" interchangeably on occasion;³² if that substitution is made in this quotation, then it would read, "Language is the power of participation." Tillich himself approached this definition when he commented, "In language, communication becomes mutual participation in a universe of meanings."³³

The power of man and hence the power of language to project beyond the individual or the particular generates the defining characteristic of language liberation "from the here and now."³⁴ Thus, through language man adds to or transcends the actual physical substance of his "environment" and creates a world, "a structured whole."³⁵ Language thus signifies man's capacity to create meaning, order, and purpose even as it simultaneously contributes to their realization. Tillich, therefore, parallels "linguistic" and "technical" ability. Both transcend the "physically given" and both are expressions of each

³¹Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 170; III, 62; Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 72; and Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 91.

³²For instances of this interchange see, "What is Basic in Human Nature," Pastoral Psychology, XIV (February, 1963), 17; and Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 165.

³³Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 58.

³⁴Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogation, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome, p. 389.

³⁵Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 170.

other, "speaking and using tools belong together."³⁶

While language operates to give man a "world," it contributes (and this is its major impact) at the same time to bringing man to self-awareness or self-relatedness and thus toward fulfillment of his essential humanity, as Helen Keller so impressively demonstrated. Communication as a means of self-affirmation or self-expression stimulates and deepens the individual's awareness of his own being. It reassures him of the reality of his own existence and serves as the vehicle through which he shapes and identifies the form of his own existence. Tillich once described this function as an aspect of "existential truth," by which he meant "a truth which lives in the immediate self-expression of an experience."³⁷ Tillich developed the practical implications of this idea when he confessed that speaking, from his first to his last address, gave him "the greatest anxiety and greatest happiness."³⁸ Communicating stimulates awareness of being and the infinite potentiality of the human being.

Tillich typically submerged this ontological communicative function into the thought that "man is the being who asks the question of being." Hence, language which brought man the power to organize, conjecture, and create a world also bequeathed to him anxiety; the knowledge that liberated from particularity also prompted the realization of a past preceding man and of a future succeeding him. Thus man's

³⁶Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 58.

³⁷Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, pp. 45-46.

³⁸Ibid.

grasp of the universal aroused in him the question of being, i.e. the threat of non-being and awareness of finitude, even as it conveyed self-relatedness.

Next, and in conjunction with its production of the shock of non-being, language or communication functions to alleviate man's anxieties. Speaking a common language, for instance, presupposed a form of community between man; for "language," in Tillich's words, "is communal, not individual."³⁹ Language depended on "social relatedness" which in cyclical reciprocity it engendered. Thus language, or a non-verbal substitute for it, creates the potential of activating the power of being in the person-to-person encounter. Language as shared substance becomes the vehicle through which men strive to overcome the subject-object barrier between them and reunite with each other, affecting a sense of harmony, unity, or love (which Tillich defined as the "drive toward the reunion of the separated"⁴⁰). In this capacity communication ontically created being by giving man ontologically the ability to know his fellowman and, thus, through community to know himself.

Of transcendent significance, however, Tillich envisioned communication as actualizing the experience of the power of being through its symbolic relation to ultimate concern. "Man's ultimate concern must be expressed symbolically," Tillich conjectured, "because symbolic language alone is able to express the ultimate."⁴¹ By this he meant

³⁹Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 81

⁴⁰Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, p. 33.

⁴¹Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 41.

that no one finite thing, phrase, object, or word literally summarized all that man experienced as "world," (i.e., "the whole of human reality, the structure, meaning, and aim of existence."⁴²). Subsequently, a man selects certain phrases, objects, words, or things from his environment and perceives them as identical with his relation to his entire world so that a threat to them attacks the foundations of his own existence. Positively, the symbols elevated to this level assume ultimacy and convey to those who accept them in this sense "the power or courage to be." In symbols, Tillich reflected, a group acknowledged its "own being."⁴³ Tillich's favorite example to illustrate this principle was the "flag" which demonstrated how a symbolic object generated "ultimate concern" and how people who interpreted it in this role were affected by it.

The flag participates in the power and dignity of the nation for which it stands. Therefore, it cannot be replaced except after an historic catastrophe that changes the reality of the nation which it symbolizes. An attack on the flag is felt as an attack on the majesty of the group in which it is acknowledged. Such an attack is considered blasphemy.⁴⁴

At this point an insight of some consequence begins to dawn about the relation between "ultimate concern" and Tillich's entire symbolic theory, viz. that a full cognizance of Tillich's general symbolic theory requires an ontological perspective. Only after Tillich's theory of symbols is set against this primary framework can implications be drawn from it for less universal levels. The image of being premises

⁴²Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 14.

⁴³"Religious Symbols and Our Knowledge of God," The Christian Scholar, XXXVIII (September, 1955), 192.

⁴⁴Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 42.

Tillich's discussion on symbols, but it surfaces directly only in rare, occasional comments. He implied it when he suggested that a symbol "radiates the power of being and meaning of that for which it stands"⁴⁵ or when he talked of groups acknowledging their "own being" in symbols⁴⁶ or when he discussed the imperative of ultimate concern, that "which determines our being or non-being," being expressed in symbols.⁴⁷ Ford and Rowe, however, who undertook probably the most detailed analysis of Tillich's theory of symbols omit the ontological perspective as a direct force in interpreting Tillich and, subsequently, they reject as useless the most valuable and critical criterion for understanding Tillich's ideas on symbols, participation.⁴⁸ Thus, a brief survey of Tillich's theory of symbols undertaken from the ontic standpoint of "essential participation" will clarify further the role of communication in the structure of being and also aid theologians and philosophers seeking to interpret Tillich on this point.

Every individual characteristic Tillich enumerated for symbols found its starting point in being, and the inner dynamics of each characteristic become clear only from this perspective. Tillich's own words, often overlooked because of their offhanded nature, explicitly

⁴⁵Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," Religious Experience and Truth, ed. by Sidney Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1961), p. 4.

⁴⁶Tillich, "Religious Symbols and Our Knowledge of God," p. 192.

⁴⁷Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 41.

⁴⁸See Rowe, Religious Symbols and God, p. 125 and Ford, "Three Strands of Tillich's Theory of Religious Symbols," pp. 124-127.

say this. Note carefully the sentence following the previously cited statement from Tillich.

Man's ultimate concern must be expressed symbolically, because symbolic language alone is able to express the ultimate. This statement demands explanation in several respects.⁴⁹

Tillich then proceeded to amplify "these several respects" by a discussion of the individual characteristics of symbols.

Even though the vocabulary Tillich employed to describe the individual characteristics of symbols remained fluid, three basic functions constantly reappear: participation, perceptibility, and collective response. When these three functions are interpreted from an ontological framework, their basic meaning for Tillich emerges more distinctly. The concept of "essential or ontic participation" aids first in elucidating the difference which Tillich envisioned between the only two communicative forms he devised, signs and symbols.

Typically, Tillich compared and contrasted symbols and signs by dividing his analysis into two steps: (1) joint function of signs and symbols; (2) participation as the primary difference between signs and symbols. "Symbols are similar to signs in one decisive respect," according to Tillich. They both "point beyond themselves to something else."⁵⁰ By "pointing to" Tillich apparently meant something similar to "refer," "denote," or "signify." It is a more formal statement of his conception of language as liberating men from the "here-and-now." A "red light," for instance, points to the necessity of cars stopping.

⁴⁹Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 41.

⁵⁰Tillich, "Religious Symbols and Our Knowledge of God," p. 189.

The letters "D E S K" point to something on which we might lay paper and write.⁵¹ A crucifix points to Golgotha, which in turn points to "god" or that which might concern one ultimately.⁵² Fundamentally, signs and symbols both denote and through this function make possible man's "world and culture." Their nature is not distinguished on this basis.

Tillich prefers to emphasize the contrast between signs and symbols as a special point. On a theoretical level he contended that "the difference, which is a fundamental difference between them is that signs do not participate in any way in the reality and power of that to which they point."⁵³ Hence, he concluded, "signs can be replaced for reasons of expediency or convention,"⁵⁴ but symbols cannot because they "participate" in the reality they represent. At this point most interpreters commit an egregious error. They try to take one of Tillich's examples of participation--the flag, a king, a diplomat--and through it establish the norm by which to understand participation, when in actuality behind every instance lurks the concept of essential or ontic participation. Symbols participate ontically in both sides of the ontic structure; to man they assume the position of ultimacy via their power to interpret and give cohesiveness to the whole of his world. This meaning of "participation" does not exclude other senses in which Tillich employs

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 189-190.

⁵²Paul Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," Journal of Liberal Religion, I (Summer, 1940), 13.

⁵³Tillich, "Religious Symbols and Our Knowledge of God," p. 189.

⁵⁴Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 42.

"participation" (such as the traditional Platonic concept of participation as the similarity shared by two things); but it underlies them. It originates in association with the idea that language creates man's "world" and subsequently aids man in formulating expressions which he identifies with the power of his world as a whole.

The second function Tillich attributed to symbols, perceptibility, also demonstrates affinity with the ontological dimension. "Every symbol," Tillich contends, "is two-edged. It opens up reality and it opens up the soul."⁵⁵ Clearly derivative from the self world, ontological structure symbols do something special to the structure: they give it depth, profoundness, or special vision. Tillich generally illustrates this symbolic aspect with aesthetic examples—art, poetry, drama, music⁵⁶—but all of these depend on man's capacity to abstract ultimacy in terms of one's whole world. While none of these examples are necessarily identical with ultimate concern, in their unique ways they partake of its nature as experienced in various human dimensions, particularly in the sense of giving "meaning" to existence.

Finally, symbols reflect their social basis—the "collective unconscious."⁵⁷ Several points associated with ontology cluster here. One is that symbols meet man's instinctive, unconscious need for some

⁵⁵Tillich, "Religious Symbols and Our Knowledge of God," p. 191.

⁵⁶See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 42-43; Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," Religious Experience and Faith, ed. by Sidney Hook, pp. 4-5. Tillich, "Religious Symbols and Our Knowledge of God," p. 191; Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 15.

⁵⁷This particular phrase occurs in "Religious Symbols and Our Knowledge of God," p. 192.

power of being.⁵⁸ Symbol "cannot be produced intentionally," Tillich charged,⁵⁹ by which he did not mean that a person might not deliberately conceive and plan a "symbolic" type occurrence but rather that the "unconscious" of group life must accept the occurrence as a symbol: the criterial factor here is the group's need for the power of being. Tillich implied that symbols come into existence, like language, only through personal encounter; symbols are not private. In community they endure, are shared, and give continuity to social life.

Hence it is not correct to say that a thing is first a symbol and then gains acceptance; the process of becoming a symbol and the acceptance of it as a symbol belong together. The act by which a symbol is created is a social act, even though it first springs forth in an individual. The individual can devise signs for his own private needs; he cannot make symbols. If something becomes a symbol for him, it is always so in relation to the community which in turn can recognize itself in it.⁶⁰

Generally, in fact, education or initiation into a group or culture consists of indoctrination into a group. Symbols thus generate "being" by conveying ultimate concern and through their offer of community.

Tillich clearly recognized that not every symbol was carried by men to the extreme of "ultimate concern" or cultural community. His discussion referred to other symbol categories: history, art, politics and religion; his examples come from many of these areas.⁶¹ Yet, each area depends on, participates in, or shares a relationship with the ultimate dimension. Historical events are remembered because of their

⁵⁹Ibid.

⁶⁰Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 14.

⁶¹See Paul Tillich, The Interpretation of History, trans. by N. A. Rasetzki and Elsa L. Talmey (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), pp. 89, 98; Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 43; Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Experience," Religious Experience and Truth, ed. by Sidney Hook, p. 3.

relation to and effect on communal life. Aesthetic experiences sensitize man to man, to his world, to the experience of being (Tillich closely correlates the aesthetic, the religious, and the "ultimate."⁶²). But it clearly is a mistake to invert the process for interpreting symbols by looking at their individual qualities apart from their primary relation to ontology.

To this point it has been argued that communication, above and beyond any specific referential or denotative function, has significance simply in its effect on the total being of man. It does this through its self-relating power, through its power to establish community, and finally through its ability to orient man toward the whole of his reality or world through symbolization. However, communication also participates in non-being, as man's persistent effort to master communication and its breakdown demonstrates.

On the assumption that communication exercises a vital role in man's being, one would also assume it has a powerful negative role. Tillich's address to the American Psychopathological Association also implied this.

We know the anxiety of not finding the right word, the anxiety of having to speak and not being able to do so, while realizing that the wrong word spells destruction for our souls and our world. This is one root of shyness, self-seclusion, concealment, flight into conventional talk and action, flight to authorities who are supposed to know the right word.⁶³

Communication's role in non-being parallels its role in being.

⁶²Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogation, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome, p. 407.

⁶³Tillich, "Anxiety-Reducing Agencies in Our Culture," Anxiety, ed. by Paul H. Hock and Joseph Zubin, p. 18.

All communication barriers derive from communication's participation in non-being as well as being. First, there is non-being in communication through the "ambiguity of language." Language, although indispensable for the creation of "world," "also separates the meaning from the reality toward which it refers."⁶⁴ This phenomenon, which Tillich called the "gap" between the object grasped and the meaning of the word, opens language to infinite manipulations and distortions.⁶⁵

Next, communication creates anxiety in the individual about his own being; this is exemplified in the experience of "stagefright" and is reflected in many less obvious ways, as Tillich's preceding observations suggested. Communication also partakes of non-being in personal relationships.

In every act of participation there is an element of holding one's self back and an element of giving one's self. In the attempts to know the other one, self-seclusion expresses itself in the projection of images of the other's being which disguise his real being and are only projections of the one who attempts to know. The screen of images between persons makes every knowing participation between persons profoundly ambiguous. . . .⁶⁶

Finally, communication participates in non-being through "demonic" symbols which wield negative, destructive personal and social consequences such as restlessness, depression, anxiety, or fanaticism.⁶⁷ Tillich explained this thought by contending:

But here also are disintegrating possibilities as in some political symbols such as the Fuhrer and the swastika, or in religious symbols

⁶⁴Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 69.

⁶⁵Ibid.

⁶⁶Ibid., 76-77.

⁶⁷Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," Religious Experience and Truth, ed. by Sidney Hook, p. 4.

such as the Moloch type of gods, human sacrifices, doctrinal symbols producing a split consciousness, etc. This characteristic of symbols shows their tremendous power of creation and destruction. By no means are they harmless semantic expressions.⁶⁸

Being and Communicative Functions

Only one of the original three questions posited in the beginning of this chapter remains unanswered: interpreting the influence which being exerts on communicative functions or ends. The basic categories (or ways of talking about being) reappear in response to this question to provide a new definition of communication as the means by which man relates to himself, his fellowman, and the cosmos. Bred into these closely linked functions are new evaluative criteria by which the "effectiveness" or value of communication is determined. Communication's dependency on being, or essential participation, is obvious in every instance; the structure of being not only identifies the nature of the functions, but it also shapes the vocabulary used to frame and examine them. The categories themselves (self-relatedness, other-relatedness, and world-relatedness) which appeared in the preceding section now receive a more explicit adaptation to communication.

Communication evaluated from the standpoint of self-relatedness has one overriding criterion--how does communication affect man as man, and not as he fulfills a specific role. All communication theory should recognize a la Tillich that it has a shaping power on man's view of himself. Communication with its orientation to specialized functions such as politics, business, and the ministry, always tends to see man in

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 4-5.

accord with the narrowed vision of its own limited objectives, thus distorting his humanity and contributing to the demonic force of non-being.

Numerous forms of communication can be interpreted as man's attempt to affirm his own sense of selfhood. The "babbling of a baby" and the solitary play of children fall into this category. Even in the adult world many communicative occurrences demonstrate this tendency; viz., expletives released in moments of intense emotion, internal shadow debates or conversations, a jibe in the mirror, and many unseen creative acts such as the unpublished poem, diary, or a destroyed painting. And even when communication has obvious repercussions beyond the individual, a strong element of self-affirmation remains, particularly in aesthetic fields such as "art," which Tillich saw as "the highest form of play" or as a way in which man interpreted himself.⁶⁹ The catharsis element of drama and literature might also overlap into self-affirmation through purification.

In a negative sense, this purely concentrated self-centered function of communication partially explains the fascination which communication as a discipline has held for many. The later sophist and the elocutionist represent in this connection the power which communication as communication holds, even when it is entirely removed from relevancy to the outside "world." Surrogate, self-indulgent communication has power for those who participate even when they mistakenly confuse the "word" and the "reality" it helps to create.

Man needs speech to be man. Therefore, "freedom of speech," which underscores the requirement of a proper or best type of

⁶⁹Tillich, "Existentialist Aspects of Modern Art," Christianity and Existentialist, ed. by Carl Michalson, p. 16.

communicative situation, looms as more than a political, social, or pragmatic reality. It appears as an ontological demand. The individual who has politically, psychologically, or otherwise (perhaps through "techniques of persuasion") lost his "freedom" or power of speech, and its consequent, free decision, has had his sense of identity, dignity, or personhood reduced.

Because "self" always stands in polarity with "world," all communication, whether explicitly "self" directed or hurled at one's world, has a "self" impact. Throughout the greater portion of this dissertation, the emphasis resides on the "world" side of being, but even when attention does not overtly focus on the "self," the ultimate "self" destination of all communication should not be forgotten.

The second major communication function uncovered by Tillich's analysis is fellowship (*κοινωνία*) or communion: The basic criterion here asks how does a given communicative exchange relate man to man. The classic example of communication utilized in this role is love or courtship; Tillich made this principle paramount in all aspects of human relations--education, parent-child, analyst-patient, etc.⁷⁰ The agape relationship is reduplicated in all these areas through the concept of love as reunion and communication as the vehicle through which the barriers are overcome, at least partially, between men who function as both subject and "object" in communication. As men communicate ideally they achieve oneness, the spirit of comradeship. Hence, Tillich stated his preference for dialogue as the ideal circumstance

⁷⁰See Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, p. 85; "Creative Love in Education," pp. 27, 34.

for communicating.⁷¹

Communicative acts which relate man to man frequently engender a highly esoteric communication, which is often referred to as "in jokes" or the intuitive reading of reactions between intimates. Much of this communication which appears as meaningless and "wastebasket truth" especially in group discussion or "teas" at peace conferences, serves the vital role of awakening and deepening this sense of community described by such words as "truth," "confidence," and "love," or "like." Many traditional language forms such as greetings, expressions of condolence or congratulations reflect this tendency institutionalized. The ultimate consummation that some impassioned orators experience in the exhilaration of holding audiences spellbound also expresses this quality on a person-"mass" level.

Despite the potential for "good" latent in every person-to-person encounter, danger also belongs in such meetings and the communication which brings them into being.

In any encounter of man with man, power is active, the power of personal radiation, expressed in language and gesture, in the glance of the eye and the sound of the voice, in face and figure and movement, expressed in what one is personally and what one represents socially. Every encounter, whether friendly or hostile, whether benevolent or indifferent, is in some way, unconsciously or consciously, a struggle of power with power.⁷²

It is this "power struggle" which produces the ethical challenge of communication. At its best, every act of communication should enhance the "power of being" and the sense of community of all the parties

⁷¹Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 45.

⁷²Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, p. 87.

involved in the communicative exchange. This cannot occur when any participant in the exchange diminishes the "power of being" of another. In effect, the individual who does this has, through the principle of participation, harmed himself, because he derives less meaning, less power, from his own participation or communion with that person.

Several practical implications derive from Tillich's ethical theory. One, forcing decisions, even through consummate rhetorical skill, from another delimits his personhood, his power of being; Tillich emphatically denounced it.⁷³ Ethical communication must consider and strive to permit the full individuality of the person addressed. "The moral imperative," Tillich wrote, "demands that oneself participate in the center of the other self and consequently accept his peculiarities even if there is no convergence between the two individuals as individuals."⁷⁴

In addition to its ethical import, the power of being generated by community (or encounter) gives added impetus to what speech has traditionally called "ethos" or "source credibility." Tillich does not deny that "what a man is" has a bearing on the communication relationship,⁷⁵ but ultimately he finds that the fact he is a man, a person, is a sufficient basis for acknowledging his power of being. "Man" is the most potent ("persuasive") factor involved in the encounter; the most forceful of communicative encounters are person-to-person.⁷⁶ Whether

⁷³Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

⁷⁴Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 45.

⁷⁵Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 45.

⁷⁶Henry Nelson Wieman has an interesting development of a thesis close to Tillich's ideas under the concept of "creative interchange,"

they end in the extremes of love or murder, they most intensely embody the power of being.

The final communicative function implicit in ontology involves the symbolic task of relating finite man to infinite cosmos. Symbols unquestionably occupy the highest throne in Tillich's communicative hierarchy because they represent the form through which man experiences his infinite cosmos. Holding the ontological position paralleling ultimacy, they make the individual's world "meaningful" by giving him universal security about his power of being. Underlying and making possible this function is man's capacity to evaluate and abstract, his power to create community through shared perception, and his acceptance of certain "concrete" symbolic forms as expressions of ultimacy. This latter quality, above all, bestows a power on symbolic communication which defies empirical analysis because symbols as expressions of man's perceived power of being are never completely explainable in denotative terms, which inherently change the relationship of the observer and his symbol. Subsequently, communication of and about symbols assumes the form of urgency and ultimacy, and attacks on symbols meet a righteous indignation born from the perilous threat of an infinite loss of meaning. Moreover the same word ("God") or object ("love") may have sign value for one group and for another the symbolic force of ultimate or cosmic threat or fulfillment.

The key to communication from the ontic perspective becomes the ability to empathize with symbolic content by correctly assessing the

see "Speech in the Existential Situation," The Quarterly Journal of Speech, XLVII (February, 1961), 150-157.

symbolic power embodied in the words, acts, or objects of a given community. Subsequently, the message produced as a result of such assessment reflects the shared sense of community and experienced being. The speaker's communication assumes depth significance only to the degree it partakes of the ultimate cosmic significance of a group's accepted symbols. Individual messages may never directly mention a recognized symbol but may merely arouse traditional responses associated with the symbol and in this way appropriate or maintain its power.

Symbolic communication also works through the tacit understanding shared by a given group of people who accept a common set of symbols; their assumed symbolic agreement contributes a measure of implicit understanding to even the lightest conversation. From this type of function, symbolic communication adds to its effect of direct self-world harmonization the indirect benefit of sustaining being through sustaining community; Tillich sees symbols as lying at the heart of group life and continuity. Education, formal or informal, aims at engendering felt appreciation and empathy for the esoteric symbolic acts, concepts, or words which embody ultimacy for a given group, although in all likelihood the group itself will not interpret its activities in ontological terms. The alternative to group life through symbols is disintegration of community, loss of meaning, i.e. ultimacy and chaos in all aspects of a society including communication effectiveness.⁷⁷

⁷⁷Tillich places the loss of political, philosophical, and religious symbols in the center of the cultural collapse of prewar Germany and postwar Western life in general. See The Protestant Era, pp. 222-260.

Symbolic communication thus either conveys ultimacy, the power of being, or creates the bases for communication within community; but it also spawns indigenous forms of communication such as Independence Day speeches or, in a crude way, fan magazines reflect the sheer potency and fascination of symbolically perceived acts and people. Almost all ritual reflects formalized symbolic ultimacy, and the utopian rhetoric of revolutionaries captures the flavor of new ultimacy. In fact, basic symbol areas such as "politics," "aesthetics," "success," or religion, develop whole sets of symbols clustering around pivotal symbols. Tillich arranged these into a hierarchy which he ranked: (1) transcendent--level of primary concepts such as God, Hamlet, freedom; (2) immanent--the level of myth or personification where symbols take on human qualities; and (3) sign-symbols--the level where a given factor such as the statue of justice blindfolded denotes not only a building, the courthouse, but symbolizes as well the "justice" of the American judicial system.⁷⁸ Each level of symbols evokes certain degrees of response cast into certain forms, sharing, however, a tie to the broader base of "ultimacy." In addition, the various areas of symbolic activity receive a subtle, often unconscious rank so that the area elevated to primary ultimacy subsumes the preceding hierarchy and also develops a relationship to other symbol areas which may include ultimate rejection, say, of religion. Yet, for Tillich "symbols" can be rejected only in the name of other symbols.

⁷⁸Tillich enumerated these levels in "Religious Symbols and Our Knowledge of God," pp. 195-196.

The effectiveness of symbolic communication on the self-world, self-other relationship, along with the system of communication it conceives, depends on two factors--cohesiveness and authenticity. The former quality described the social impact symbols had on the community identified with it, and the latter, the adequacy of the symbol to represent the power of being in a given historical period.

Symbols claim primacy because they represent value, individually and collectively. They reflect on an ultimate level connotative power defining the way man sees and interprets his world and the individual entities in it. They underlie community, create symbolic forms, and give potency to the individual messages which participate in them.

Summary

The preceding discussion focused on three primary issues: the nature of being, the role of communication on the structure of being, and being's impact on the nature of communication. Examining each issue revealed the close interdependence between the areas. The first issue produced the insight that being was a relationship (self-world) and developed the implications of this idea. The definition of being as a structural relationship presupposed communication and led to the discovery that communication actualized being through language, creation of community, and the concept of ultimate concern. These aspects of communication as influenced by ontology, in turn, unmasked the basic functions of communication as self-relatedness, person-to-person relatedness, and the symbolic creation of ultimate concern.

The ontological framework which undergirded this entire analysis inevitably cast the subject of communication into a new perspective and

new vocabulary. When Tillich focused on the power of being as the depth dimension of life consequently shaping facets and forms of communication he raised new ethical considerations about persuasion and new evaluative questions about how the "success" of a given communication is determined. In addition, Tillich's ontic deductive premise affirmed the oft neglected principle that models and methodologies of communication which ignore questions about purpose, function, or values implicitly pass judgments on such questions. These functions which form the foundation for his philosophy thus contained a strong element of "oughtness" in what he depicted as "is." Tillich's communicative functions seemed to ignore highly specific and important pragmatic questions about communication and its social or political effects. Such an omission innately colored Tillich's procedure, which would reduce a given message or the total expressions of a movement to a symbol of ultimate concern. Yet, in the final judgment, Tillich only tries to lay bare presuppositions which determine the ways practical decisions are sought and the judgments made about their "success" or "failure." His emphasis ever reminded us that decisions and consequences associated with communication have importance not in themselves but only as they affect man and his world.

Moreover, Tillich's perspective provided a systematic framework which included many forms of communication not typically considered; he deepened the concept of ethos and broadened the meaning of a "symbol." He also turned every communicative encounter between people into a significant occasion never to be taken lightly. The linking of communication to ontology also provided the basis for acknowledging the

universality of communication. Those who deny communication its independent validity as a discipline must use it. Furthermore, in actuality they object only to its negative, "non-being," manifestations which no given system or philosophy of communication can overcome.

Finally, Tillich revealed that the unity necessary for effective communication involved self, community, and world; if any one of the three is perverted, communication on each level suffers. Man, a self, when threatened, develops neurotic communal and world relationships influencing the whole tone of his communication. Breakdowns in communicative barriers on all levels, and a loss of "world" orientation leads to the demise of desire to communicate or the judgment that communication is impossible (existentialist). Further chapters will reveal and amplify many of the themes introduced here. The relationship between symbols, ultimate concern, and community constitutes the primary focus on the ensuing chapter, while the person-to-person, community dimension of communication forms the substantive theme of chapters five and six.

CHAPTER 4

ENVIRONMENTAL PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION

"Nobody who uses language is outside history."

Introduction

Environmental participation carries the concept of "communication as a matter of participation" into yet a new phase of relatedness. Under Ford's guidance it had previously suggested "the individual's real relatedness to that which surrounds him." But applied to communication, environmental participation expands its significance, designating the interdependence or relatedness which exists between communication and the diversified, relative, and ever-changing cultural milieu which surrounds it. A collage of factors--such as physical circumstance, biological conditions, and racial, social, economic, and national attitudes--all mold a complicated environmental complex against, in, and through which all communication transpires. In Tillich's terms "environment" and communication become "polar" forces reciprocally interacting to shape and influence each other.

Tillich frankly acknowledged the personal limitations facing any individual seeking to digest and explain these complex environmental influences. When he contemplated the subsequent task of relating environment to communication, Tillich confessed: "There is one

consolation. None of us is asked to speak to everybody in all places and in all periods. . . . Our participation is inevitably limited."¹ Yet, Tillich did utilize historical analysis as the best possible method for reducing environment to a working hypothesis with meaningful implications for communication.

But again, as with ontology, Tillich did not explicitly develop a philosophy of history in his popular discussions of communication; he merely voiced in these discussions the surface indications of his more complicated principles. Tillich subtly hinted at the presence of historical dynamics in the allusions which dot his discussions of communication impediments--"people of our time," "today's world," "present civilization," and "modern mind." He made this connection even clearer when he asked questions such as how can the message "be focused for the people of our time" and then retorts that "in other words, we are concerned here with the question: How can the Gospel be communicated?"² On another occasion he queried, "Do we have to change the traditional theological language in order to be able to communicate in today's world?"³ Once he announced history's decisive force in communication.

History shuts and opens doors. It is history which has created the problem of the irrelevance of the minister and not the inevitable deficiencies and failures of the ministers, theologians, and Church authorities. And it is history that gives the opportunity to restore the relevance of the ministry.⁴

¹Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

²Ibid.

³Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," p. 12.

⁴Tillich, "The Relevance of the Ministry in Our Times and Its Theological Foundation," Making the Ministry Relevant, ed. by Hans Hoffman, p. 26.

Tillich selected history as the key to environmental analysis because he felt its structure applied with equal validity to all cultural dimensions. "History," he conjectured, "has given to everyone the physical, social, and spiritual conditions of his existence."⁵

The historical principles, however, which govern Tillich's probing inquiry of environment and link it to communication must be discerned from his philosophical discussions of history and then reapplied to communication. Tillich's basic historical methodology belongs in the "typological" category.⁶ Consequently, he constructed an ideal pattern of historical movement which is never fully actualized but which has the advantage of applying with equal validity to such abstract cultural entities as "Western Civilization," a subgroup within this larger framework, or to the life of an individual. Secure in his conviction that the broader historical trends in time shaped all they encountered, Tillich normally focused his energies only on the more abstract cultural entities.

The decision to follow Tillich's own policy and consider history as the key to environmental participation resolves a portion of the problem posed by this chapter. Two other vital issues remain: (1) an inquiry into the relationship which history or environmental participation shares with essential participation or ontology; and (2) a determination of the relationship which history exercises on being and subsequently on communication.

⁵Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 346.

⁶Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 103.

First, history as the domain of conscious life becomes the plane where man experiences or actualizes his being.⁷ Invoking the classical philosophical distinction between potentiality and actuality, Tillich's conception simply contends that self-affirmation, community, and world harmonization transpire within an actual, concrete historical setting; they occur somewhere in time and space and do not exist merely as metaphysical creations of a mind generating a "world behind the world."⁸ Tillich roundly condemned the modern age because its historians saw only "time and place" to the total exclusion of being. He complained that

the dynamic moving spirit of historical reality has come to prevail to an increasing degree. The meaning of history seems more important to the mind than does the meaning of being. The metaphysical interpretation of history has become an urgent and practical concern.⁹

History and being converge for Tillich in the concept of ultimate concern. Every consciously articulated history presupposes an ultimate answer to the meaning of existence.¹⁰ Thus history is opened to ontological analysis and Tillich can commandingly speak of "the necessity of a metaphysical interpretation of history."¹¹ Hence, an ontological

⁷See Tillich, The Protestant Era, pp. 27, 186 and Systematic Theology, II, 4.

⁸Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, p. 7.

⁹Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 81. Tillich viewed metaphysics and ontology as synonyms, but in almost all of his American works he used only the latter term. See Systematic Theology, I, 163. Tillich did not finalize his "metaphysics" of history until Systematic Theology, III, 297-426.

¹⁰Systematic Theology, III, 350.

¹¹Tillich, The Religious Situation, pp. 82, 83. Ontology is clearly reflected in the headings which preface the earlier portion of Tillich's work: "Man (self) and History (world)"; Tillich, "History and

sub-structure guided his analysis of history. The first section of this chapter clarifies the role this essential structure, including the communicative functions contained in it, has on Tillich's philosophy of history.

Moreover, history, ontologically reduced to "creative or dynamic time," has a profound effect on the environment in which communication occurs. The second section traces out the character of this influence through the concept of "situation," which in itself summarized Tillich's analysis of the circumstances surrounding communication in the late twentieth century. History subsequently conditions both the way man fulfills his ontological needs and the role of communication in their attainment.

Finally, section three details the primary communicative responses possible in view of the dynamic nature of "situation." The three basic categories which emerge--traditional, apologetic, and revolutionary--represent different approaches to the same goal, the actualization of man's being. Their triple character results from the thrust of time and the communicative options it creates.

Twin objectives evolve from this threefold division: (1) surveying the interdependence of history and being to define Tillich's philosophy of history in ontological terms and also to suggest communication's role in the historical process; (2) surveying the interdependence of history and communication to explain the communicative "situation" produced by history and to explicate the tripartite

the Categories of Being": "The Dynamics of History." See Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 300-338.

communicative systems engendered by it. The former objective relies on the vocabulary and structure developed in chapter three, while the latter one provides a new perspective on how communication relates to man's fulfillment of being in history.

An Ontological Interpretation of History

Tillich's scholarly interest in history spanned more than forty years. His active involvement in the political, social, and religious movements which sprang up in Germany as the aftermath of World War I spawned his initial interest. The crusading fires of political controversy burned intently in his early works from this era: The Interpretation of History, The Religious Situation, and a number of reprinted periodical articles in The Protestant Era. In them he bristled with antagonism toward capitalism and proclaimed the coming of a new epoch in the name of kairos. His last major historical work, Systematic Theology, volume III, lacked the social urgency and reforming resolve of these earlier works, but it bore the polished hue of his more sensitive, mature reflection.

Tillich's formally stated philosophy of history did not slavishly adhere to the threefold pattern laid down in the preceding chapter as a method for approaching being, but the general features of this pattern (the logical structure of being, man and the question of being, ultimate concern and community as the power of being), permeate his thought. Thus the pattern possesses sufficient validity to serve as an organizing structure embracing the major features of his philosophy of history.

An additional fourth step must be added to these three to complete the picture of history, viz. time. This concept, implicit in the ontological structure, via the concept of non-being, assumes such a prominent role in an ontological interpretation of history that it justifiably received special attention. Furthermore, the ensuing analysis will reveal that all four points interrelate with each other, as well as reveal the appearance of communication as a basic factor in history.

Self-world, as the basic ontological relationship, embedded itself into the heart of Tillich's working definition of history.

According to him history

is always a union of objective and subjective elements. An "event" is a syndrome (i.e., a running-together) of facts and interpretation. . . . There is no history without factual occurrences and there is no history without the reception and interpretation of factual occurrences by historical consciousness.¹²

Tillich detected this subject-object ontic theme in the etymology of the word history.

The well-known fact that the Greek word historia means primarily inquiry, information, report, and only secondarily the events inquired about and reported is a case in point. It shows that for those who originally used the word "history" the subjective side preceded the objective side.¹³

By stressing self-awareness, here translated "historical consciousness," Tillich underscored the subjective side in history and opened the door to the second ontological factor in history--man and the question of being.

¹²Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 302.

¹³Ibid., 300.

History, as the product of a unique form of self-awareness which implies man's dependent connection on occurrences outside himself, begins only when man developed the linguistic capacity to ask and answer the question of being. He wrote, "For if that being which eventually will produce history is called 'man,' he must have language and universals. . . ." ¹⁴ "Language and universals" signified to Tillich the power of abstraction, and history for him rested on such a foundation. Only when man could turn back toward the past to remember and only when he could anticipate the future to plan could man have history and face a situation which produced the question of being. Language, history, and time thus assume a closely knit interdependence. Language, or man's capacity to communicate in expressive forms, reflected what Tillich called "the substance of his tradition" or past. ¹⁵ Language gives man a memory, including a vocabulary which binds him to a certain community. Language also reflects the tensions of the contemporary moment when the history and tradition of a given group come under attack. The birth of the twin disciplines, rhetoric and history in the same society, as well as the excessive reliance of the earliest history on speeches, testifies to the close communion which binds language and history together as expressions of man's self-awareness.

Third, history involved the concept of community. "History," Tillich once observed, "is the history of groups"; ¹⁶ or, as he otherwise

¹⁴Ibid., 306.

¹⁵Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogations, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome, p. 373.

¹⁶Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 312.

expressed it, "the group is the bearer of history."¹⁷ By this Tillich meant that a meaningfully remembered past and a goal-oriented future belong only to the power of group life. Physically the continuing presence of group members and its organized group life contribute to this power by allowing person-to-person encounters. Closely tied to these encounters, the group maintained a common language. Beyond this the group also preserved an ontological dimension of meaning by providing a purposeful orientation about the worthwhileness of life.

Associated with this latter function, which phased at points into ultimate concern, was the ontological-symbol correspondence which gives the group cohesiveness and history a valuation, direction, or viewpoint. Tillich believed that "one cannot escape the destiny of belonging to a tradition in which the answer to the question of the meaning of life in all its dimensions, including the historical, is given in symbols which influence every encounter with reality."¹⁸ Historically, this meant that certain occurrences will be transformed "into symbols of the life of a historical group." Yet, the choice of which events to elevate and what value to assign to them reflects an already existing current of meaning or purpose. Tillich had a special name for the formal expression of this fundamental, overriding sense of value or purpose. He labeled the overt manifestation of this symbol bearing function "vocational consciousness."¹⁹ The group's vocational consciousness included the ritualistic maintenance of traditional

¹⁷Ibid., 308.

¹⁸Ibid., 302.

¹⁹Ibid., 308.

symbols as well as the projection of itself into the future as a valued, productive institution. Education into the group basically meant emphatic understanding and identification with the symbols of the group. It was the ontological embodiment of meaning in these symbols which made deviation from the group norm so perilous for the group and traumatic for the individual who must subsequently find a new basis of meaning for his life.

Thus far the connection between environmental and essential participation emphasizes Tillich's basic ontic structure. The principles and characteristics developed to explain being have required only a minimal adaptation for explicating history. In addition, communication's basic functions affecting being, e.g., self-affirmation, language, community, and symbols, easily translate into ontic formulations about the nature of history, man's environment. In turning to time, however, the character of history begins to assert its individuality, and its unique environmental influence on communication becomes clearer. Furthermore, the effect of time on environment and communication is neither neutral nor constructive, but destructive. Time as the reflection of non-being brings an element of threat or meaninglessness into the environment and subsequently into communication. The following survey of time at all levels amplifies its nature and the negative potential accompanying it.

Tillich identified time's unifying element in all levels of existence--inorganic, historical, psychological--as the quality of "after-each-other-ness,"²⁰ or more simply temporal progression or

²⁰Ibid., 313ff.

maturation. Elsewhere he confessed that this historical conception and the ontology underlying it excluded "a circular interpretation of the temporal."²¹ Time's unity as "after-each-other-ness" did not reside in mere temporal, i.e. chronological progression, but even more in concepts associated with it, such as change, process, or transition. "Time, so to speak, runs ahead toward the new, the unique, the novel,"²² and creative newness, by definition, suggests a corresponding quality of disruption and destruction. Consequently, time culminates in a "transcendent" drive in which time as creative newness results in an ultimate fulfillment and the cessation of time or change. Tillich offered this explanation of "transcendent time."

History transcends every creative act horizontally. History is the place of all creative acts and characterizes each of them as unfulfilled in spite of their relative fulfillment. It drives beyond all of them toward a fulfillment which is not relative and which does not need another temporality for its fulfillment.²³

Time, interpreted generically as the "embodiment of the new" and the "destruction of the old," generates a powerful influence on being and thus necessarily affects communication and man's realization of the power of being. Traces of its influence appear on every level of ontology. Temporally, man relates to his world in three basic forms: past, present, and future. Historically, the development of chronology and periodization reflect attempts to relate to man's past world, while planning and anticipation reflect its future vision.²⁴ Yet, man in

²¹Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, p. 76.

²²Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 319.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid., 330.

actuality knows his world only as "now." Thus the present holds center stage in Tillich's dramatic confrontation of past and future. "The present," he conjectured, "is the past,"²⁵ and again "the present is the future."²⁶ Its pivotal character gives it a denouement role in Tillich's entire discussion of time.

Man's self-affirmation in the "now" moment is constantly threatened by the gift of abstraction--his realization of a before himself and an after-himself. The ultimate loss of selfhood, identity, or unity thus appeared as a total disorientation toward the past (amnesia) or the thrust into an unknown future where all relationships undergo traumatic unrecognizable transformations. Yet, as long as the self can sustain a meaningful relation to its "today," it can synthesize past and future to give its being temporal actuality.

Time also affected man's sense of community and ultimate concern; the "new" ever threatened community as potential disruption. Each new birth represented the intrusion of possible distortion into the community--the generation gap. Strenuous group pressure always built at every opportunity to bring the young and uninitiated into the symbolic life of new community. But even in societies where the creative potential of new meaning appeared effectively checked for long periods, the danger of deviation persisted as possibility; eventually, it entered either from without or within, but even in the former case the new could not enter unless the propensity for it already existed in the group.

Time also affected the depth dimension of ultimacy and the

²⁵Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 32.

²⁶Ibid., p. 33.

symbols associated with it. Tillich envisioned every historical act as aimed "at something," but each individually meaningful act rested on the foundation of "ultimacy" or transcendent meaning which weaves the lesser acts into an intelligible whole. The outward form this "transcendent meaning" assumed was the symbolic, and time had a pronounced influence here.

"Adequacy" of expression means the power of expressing an ultimate concern in such a way that it creates reply, action, communication. Symbols which are able to do this are alive. But the life of symbols is limited. The relation of man to the ultimate undergoes change. Contents of ultimate concern vanish or are replaced by others.²⁷

The passage of time, "after-each-other-ness," produced the "death" of some symbols and the conception of others. This process could be sudden, as in a catastrophic historical event which through revolution might change a nation's reality and its symbolic forms such as the flag.²⁸ Or, on the other hand, symbols might change gradually through a more nebulous process wherein they simply lost their situational relevance.

Like living beings, the symbols grow and die. They grow when the situation is ripe for them, and they die when the situation changes. The symbol of the "king" grew in a special period of history, and it died in most parts of the world in our period. Symbols do not grow because people are longing for them, and they do not die because of scientific or practical criticism. They die because they no longer produce response in the group where they originally found expression.²⁹

Every act of communication as an occurrence in time or history

²⁷Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 96.

²⁸Ibid., p. 42.

²⁹Ibid., p. 43.

faces the challenge of relevancy and contemporary meaningfulness. Words change their meaning or become obsolete, old slogans ring with emptiness, once viable groups and coalitions lose their unity, etc. Thus ontologically summarized, time threatens man's realization of the basic functions of communication--self-affirmation, community, and the symbolic. The clearest and most forceful expression of time's intrusion into environment and communication arises from an examination of Tillich's concept of situation which encompassed temporal progression, and meaning within a given historical framework.

Situation as Zeitgeist

Tillich assigned the concept of situation a flexible role in his books, lectures, and articles. He commented on the varied roles situation could play when he observed, "It can appear on a family, tribal, national, or international basis. It can be restricted to a particular history-bearing group; it can be enlarged to a combination of such groups; it can embrace continents."³⁰ Tillich normally employed "situation" to refer to the broadest possible cultural ties. Hence he asserted, "the present about which we speak is the life of our Western Society."³¹ On this level "situation" synthesized man's perception of his actualized being under the temporal force of a given historical period; therefore it represented the final product created by the union of essential and environmental participation or of ontology and history.

³⁰Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 325.

³¹Tillich, The Religious Situation, p. 40.

Time and meaning assume a uniquely important function in the present situation and consequently, it looms as more significant than either the past or future. Tillich specifically employed situation in the present sense in the introduction to volumes I and III of his Systematic.³² After subtitling the first division of his introduction to volume I "Message and Situation," Tillich proceeded to define "situation" as "the scientific and artistic, the economic, political, and ethical forms in which they men express their interpretation of existence."³³ Later in volume III he returned to the situation concept as the contemporary union of time and meaning when he contended that a message which did not comprehend the present situation was "a-Kairos--missing the demand of the historical moment."³⁴

"Situation" as the present historical moment comprised both a compilation of major events sharing an approximate chronological continuity (object) and the temporal meaning these events had for their human interpreters (subject). Tillich illustrated this by referring to the political split between East and West and noting that "situation" did not describe the split per se, but the "political interpretations of split."³⁵ Hence, meaning, the subjective side of situation, subtly began its triumph over time, as mere physical occurrence, shaping it with a definitive character--as examples of "situation" taken from

³²See Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 3-5; III, 3-7.

³³Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 3-4.

³⁴Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 6.

³⁵Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 4.

Tillich's lectures to ministers demonstrate.

In former centuries of Christian history, the authorities formulated as the Biblical message, often unconsciously, those points which gave answers to the temporal and spatial situation of their people, including themselves. They formulated as the Biblical message that which could be communicated to themselves as well as to masses.

In the early Greek church it was the anxiety about death and doubt which prompted the double idea we find in all the early Greek fathers, namely, that "Life" and "light" is the message of Christianity. In the Greek Orthodox Church this is still decisive today. Easter is by far the most important festival of the Russian church. In the medieval church, it was the anxiety resulting from the social and spiritual chaos following the breakup of the Roman Empire which produced the transcendent-sacramental foundation of a hierarchical system to guide society and individuals. In the Reformation it was the anxiety of guilt and the message of justification which was decisive for every formula of the Reformers.³⁶

Situation as the composite of contemporaneity and value or "meaning" penetrated beneath the surface of most activities. The formative cultural principles of a given era lend unity to the period by reflecting its fundamental values, goals, and transcendent meaning, or lack of it. These sub-surface meanings manifest themselves in "Zeitgeist" fashion in the cultural forms to which Tillich previously referred ("scientific and artistic, the economic, political, and ethical"). Yet, language, more clearly than any other single cultural phenomenon, reflected the "situation."³⁷ Its usages and connotations mirror the problems and anxieties (the question of being) inherent in each era.

Moreover, this "depth" meaning expressed in various cultural forms and language cannot be gleaned from a "literal," i.e. semantic-positivist, interpretation of these cultural and linguistic forms,

³⁶Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

³⁷Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 7.

because they reflect ontic or ultimate meaning; these forms symbolize the inner significance of the period. They embody in their substances the manner in which man perceived his meaning or being in terms of self, community, and world; what Tillich called man's "creative self-interpretation in a special period."³⁸ As a result, the individual who wishes to communicate with his "situation" must ascertain the power which "time" and "meaning" as "situation" have exercised on the communication objectives of self-affirmation, community, and world-harmonization.

Borrowing extensively from existential analysis as he detected its basic motifs in art, literature, psychology, drama, and philosophy,³⁹ Tillich telescoped his characterization of the present situation into a single dominant theme laden with communication implications--meaninglessness. In keeping with the communication objectives of essential participation, "meaninglessness" in the modern situation would include a loss of symbols, a breakdown in community, and a loss of self-identity. Tillich's writings repeated these themes over and over, but no one statement better summarized the three jointly than the following excerpt written during the early stages of World War II. In it Tillich expressed his conviction that the "disintegration of our day consists in the loss of an ultimate meaning of life by the people of Western civilization. And with the loss of the meaning of life, they have lost personality and community."⁴⁰

³⁸Ibid., 4.

³⁹See Tillich, The Courage to Be, pp. 139-154.

⁴⁰Tillich, The Protestant Era, p. 262. Examples of the loss of traditional symbols can be found in Tillich's Theology of Culture,

Much later, employing slightly different language but echoing the same theme he wrote:

It is not an exaggeration to say that today man experiences his present situation in terms of disruption, conflict, self-destruction, meaninglessness, and despair in all realms of life. This experience is expressed in the arts and in literature, conceptualized in existential philosophy, actualized in political cleavages of all kinds, and analyzed in the psychology of the unconscious.⁴¹

The loss of essential, ontic meaning was intimately involved with the unintelligibility of a single word or expression. Tillich considered the breakdown of symbols, community, and self-affirmation the major causes of communicative difficulties; he never discussed specific communication problems in his lectures until he had described the ontic and historical background which produced verbal, grammatical, or semantic distortion. Tillich explicitly related ontic, historical, and verbal meaning in an incisive statement.

In every meaning, however, lies the silent presupposition of the meaningfulness of the whole, the unity of all possible meanings, i.e. faith in the meaning of life itself. If we want to define this more exactly, we must say: In our every act of meaning, theoretical as well as practical, a definite concrete meaning is before us, and at the same time, as the object of a silent belief, there is the absolute meaning or the meaningfulness of the whole. That this is so, becomes especially clear at moments when all meaning threatens to be lost, and the world sinks down into an abyss of nothingness, a meaningless void. The single meaning which is experienced and accomplished always bears a relationship to others; otherwise it would be a meaningless aphorism. Meaning is always a system of meanings.⁴²

p. 152; The Courage to Be, p. 175, 189; Ultimate Concern, p. 88; of the loss of community in The Protestant Era, 262, 263; Theology of Culture, p. 104; and of the loss of self-affirmation in The Protestant Era, 202, and The Courage to Be, pp. 151-154.

⁴¹Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 49.

⁴²Tillich, The Interpretation of History, p. 221.

Tillich did not reject semantic⁴³ or grammatical meaning as irrelevant to communication; he simply subordinated it to the ontological. Subsequently, when he envisioned communicative problems he thought of the breakdown of symbols which embodied ultimacy, community, and self-affirmation. Hence, he set as his own primary communication objective the maintenance, the reinterpretation, or the creation of symbols and the strengthening of community. The paradox of modern "meaninglessness" is that increased scientific and technological advances have not stemmed the increasing breakdown in communication between individuals, groups, or nations. Tillich, therefore, envisioned the solution to this predicament not through improved technique but in the restoration of symbols capable of sustaining genuine community and not simply "solidarity." As the next major section will demonstrate, Tillich's position as an apologetically oriented communicator grew from his preceding evaluation of the nature of meaning.

The position suggested for symbols by essential participation receives further confirmation in the important role symbols exercise in environment defined as time. Within history the general function of symbols, viz. overcoming non-being present via the inherent dynamic of history, assumes a concrete form. The threat of meaninglessness has become acute in the modern era, because the disintegration of symbolic meaning in this period implies total breakdown of ontological communication objectives and reinforces the demand for symbols and community. Moreover, since communication always occurs in time, the possibility

⁴³See Tillich's concept of "semantic rationality," Systematic Theology, I, 54-56.

of meaninglessness persists as a constant threat. Subsequently, three communicative systems (arising from man's temporal environment) attempt to combat the threat.

Communication and History

"Meaninglessness," dramatically active in the present situation, also describes a constant chaotic potential inherently present in communication via time's "after-each-other-ness" character. Many familiar communication problems (the index, generation gap, slang) spring from the ceaseless drive in which "history runs ahead toward the ever new and the ultimately new." Time reserves its most serious blow, however, for man's symbolic expression of ultimate concern. When an individual no longer perceives his being as affirmed in an inherited set of symbols, a profound change occurs in his entire life involving his language and basic group loyalties.

Problems, crises, and communicative breakdowns produced by historical movement, or creative time, generate three primary communication systems; each system provides a way for man to sustain his power of being in the midst of environmental flux. The categorical names of the three--apologetic, traditional, and revolutionary--strongly imply the time distinctions which form the basis of their differentiations, although ontically interpreted the three aim at the same basic ends. As genre descriptions, "apologetic," "ritual," and "revolutionary," can characterize a word, sentence, speech, movement, or institutional purpose; however, more broadly interpreted, they define life styles and the communication elements which permeate them. Interpreting each

system by comparing and contrasting its features on the following five-point checklist reveals the typical nature of each system: (1) time or "situation" orientation; (2) self-world emphasis (closely related to community vs. individual emphasis); (3) language style; (4) community vs. individual continuum; (5) attitude toward symbols.

Apologetic

Apologetic communication originated from a present-past time continuum. Its primary time valuation is the present situation and in its depth resides the potential for the affirmation of being. "Answer and questions," Tillich determined, "must come out of current situations."⁴⁴

Meaning belonged to the present, the here and now; the persuasive force of any message derived from its immediate verification in the life of the individual. Whatever cannot be supported "experientially" conveys no real meaning.⁴⁵ Yet, "every experience in one's life," Tillich believed, "can have the effect of opening up the human mind so that it is ready for existential participation."⁴⁶ The principle of support through immediate verification became the basis of Tillich's homiletics, as he clearly announced in the introduction to the first published volume of his sermons.

⁴⁴Cited by Arthur Wehrwein, "Right Question Pleases Tillich," New York Times, May 5, 1963, p. 69.

⁴⁵See Tillich, "Truth and Verification," Systematic Theology, I, 100-105.

⁴⁶Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," p. 13.

There is, however, a more important reason for the publication of this volume. A large part of the congregation at the Sunday services came from outside the Christian circle in the most radical sense of the phrase. For them a sermon in the traditional Biblical terms would have no meaning. Therefore I was obliged to seek a language which expresses in other terms the human experience to which the Biblical and ecclesiastical terminology point. In this situation an "apologetic" type of sermon has been developed. And, since I believe that this is generally the situation in which the Christian message has to be pronounced today, I hope that the publication of some attempts to meet this situation may not be useless.⁴⁷

Apologetic communication, however, mediated the past to the present. It assumed a shared connection between past and present which was momentarily unrecognized. Breaking sharply in this conception with radical existentialism which emphasized only the "now," Tillich, the realistic essentialist, sought common ground to unite past and present. He found his common ground in the uniting power of "essences," i.e., language which was preserved and shaped by historical experience, and in the "shared ground of human experience," the need for being.⁴⁸ Tillich did not deny that human nature can change in history, but he did detect an abiding element of existential unity--man's ontic search for meaning and being. Change occurred primarily in the communicative forms through which man expressed and realized this search.

Next, apologetic communication emphasized the "subjective" (self) side of communication as opposed to the objective (world) side. As anticipated in the preceding idea of "experiential proof," apologetic communication sought to accomplish self-world correlation by shaping

⁴⁷Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations, Preface.

⁴⁸Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

the attitudes of the individual toward his world. Apologetic communication does not seek decisions which change the world but seeks rather to clarify or make the individual's relationship to his "world" clear or more intelligible; as a communicator, the apologist removed barriers which threatened this structure by pointing toward already held agreement and perspective.⁴⁹

Third, apologetic communication relied on the language of the present to mediate the past into the jumbled matrix of the "now." Its language and thought forms belong to the now. Apologetic communication draws upon these forms because they possess living, environmental power and convey experiential force. Believing that a word or concept gains its primary connotations from the events and associations which surround it, the apologist searches for those contemporary expressions which reflect connotations similar to the forms which previous generations employed to express being and power; he then works to equate these.

Fourth, apologetic communication seeks to achieve community without the coercion of group pressure or the force of tradition exerted merely for the sake of tradition.⁵⁰ It aims at community based on genuine acceptance of the individuals who constitute the community. Apologetic communication wants only genuine decision accompanied by living acceptance of symbols and of one's fellowman.

Finally, apologetic communication takes the symbols of the past and seeks their contemporary reinterpretation. Frequently depicting

⁴⁹Ibid.

⁵⁰Tillich labeled these other forms of community, "Solidarity," Theology of Culture, p. 104.

himself as an apologist, Tillich explained in a seminar discussion shortly before his death what this entailed.

How this situation can be overcome without a fundamental reformation of the way in which Christianity expresses its symbols, preaches them, and interprets them, I really do not know, although my whole theological work has been directed precisely to the interpretation of religious symbols in such a way that the secular man--and we are all secular--can understand and be moved by them. On this basis (which is a small confession to you about my work), I believe it may be possible to reinterpret the great symbols of the past in a way that restores meaning to them.⁵¹

The apologist, regardless of his field of endeavor, revered the symbols of the past as valid representations of man's ultimate concern; but he formulated their contemporary relevance through their vivid restatement.

This capsule summary of apologetic communication provides the guidelines for the next two chapters which spell out their implications in greater detail. Chapter five develops these implications from the listening side and six from the speaking side of communication.

Traditional Communication

Unlike apologetic communication, traditional communication locates the source and ideal for the power of being in past occurrences and events. It then "speaks" to the present "from a situation of the past."⁵² Such a communication system exalts tradition as authority; and accordingly, that which tradition does not sanction, at least implicitly, does not deserve acceptance.

⁵¹Tillich, Ultimate Concern, p. 88.

⁵²Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 3.

Traditional and apologetic communication both value the past and its meaning-producing events. Tillich, the ingrained apologist, frequently confessed his own romantic affection for the past.

My love for church buildings and their mystic atmosphere, for liturgy and music and sermons, and for the great Christian festivals that molded the life of the town for days and even weeks of the year left an indelible feeling in me for the ecclesiastical and the sacramental.⁵³

He also noted a general absence of the power of the past in general American thinking.

To grow up in towns in which every stone is witness of a period many centuries past produces a feeling for history, not as a matter of knowledge but as a living reality in which the past participates in the present. I appreciated that distinction more fully when I came to America. In lectures, seminars, homes I visited, and personal conversation with American students I found that an immediate emotional identification with the reality of the past was lacking. Many of the students here had an excellent knowledge of historical facts, but these facts did not seem to concern them profoundly.⁵⁴

Yet, despite some similarity, a sharp difference appears between apologetic and traditional communication over the question of how the past connects to the present. Traditional communication brings the past into the present as past, without adaptation, maintaining a direction of past-present.

Next, traditional communication stresses the "world" side of the structure of being. World, however, does not designate the literal physical-spatial environment but rather the evaluation placed upon the world by the group in which the individual participates. Hence the individual formulates his basic life orientation or cosmology from a

⁵³Tillich, On the Boundary, p. 59.

⁵⁴Tillich, "Autobiographical Reflections," The Theology of Paul Tillich, ed. by Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall, p. 5.

particular group (community), which having predetermined a weltanschauung, then mediates its conclusions to the individual.

Neglecting contemporary adaptation, traditional communication employed yesterday's language and thought forms. Accuracy of expression assumed a position of prominence vital to the continuing power of meaning in a changing environment. When the validity of these expressive forms is challenged, blame for their inadequacy shifts from the expression to the individual who fails to pay the past homage.

Traditional communication retains old symbols. Its emphasis falls on continuity, reaffirmation, and relearning rather than reinterpretation. Consequently, it either rejects environmental influences as irrelevant or minimizes them to the greatest possible extent. In majestic splendor it clings to its past, denying the dynamic, creative thrust of history.

Through its rigorous symbol system and allegiance to the past, traditional communication achieves a strong sense of community and thereby imparts being to the individual through its promise of certainty and the balm of group acceptance. Hence, it mediates being or ontological meaning to the present not by message adaptation but by the living power of group dynamics which, as in the military, will sacrifice the individual to maintain traditional institutional integrity. New meaning comes through continually recreating the group heritage and through esoteric indoctrination into the group traditions; these traditions determine the "being of the individual" and he exists as "being a part."⁵⁵

⁵⁵See Tillich, "The Courage to Be as a Part," The Courage to Be, pp. 86-112.

Revolutionary Communication

Revolutionary communication looks toward the future, emphasizing a future-present continuum. Its power drive lays hold of the transcendent ideal toward which time always moves. Its character thus bears the indelible marks of utopianism, erecting its meaning-being center not on what "was" or "is" but on what "will be." To affirm what will be necessitates advocating what should be, and, consequently, revolutionary communication operates from a high ethical imperative, combined with a spirit of crusading zeal which denounces past and present alike.

Like traditional communication, revolutionary communication elevates "world" over "individuality." It announces, however, as its objective the radical transformation of the present environment, guided by a future ideal. On the basis of a restructured world, the individual self will find his own being. Thus revolutionary communication does not correlate self-world through message adaptation or group dynamics but by the promise of world or environmental adaptation. Consequently, its power drive meets greatest acceptance among those disenchanted individuals and groups who view the present environment as intolerable; times of crisis may enlarge the membership in this category.

In conceiving its language and thought forms, revolutionary communication bears the marks of the new and the utopian, although these expressions rapidly become present and soon past. While the passage of time may subdue their novelty, it does not immediately or inevitably tarnish the future potency which undergirds them; nor will it necessarily reduce the absolutes which resound through revolutionary communication.

Also after the manner of traditional communication, revolutionary communication demands strong group support. Threatened from all sides it can exist only through a devoted community which tolerated minimal individualism. Loyalty to the group tends to determine the character of the individual's existence.

The greatest task facing the revolutionary is the creation of new symbols of ultimate concern.⁵⁶ Believing that "symbols could only be overcome by other symbols,"⁵⁷ revolutionary communication has to provide new, widely accepted symbols to displace older ones. Then, too, it must overcome the fears aroused by new symbols with their latent challenge to the established order. As his nearest brush with revolutionary communication, Tillich, the religious socialist, undertook the personal challenge of producing new political-historical symbols; unfortunately, reactionary fascism emerged triumphant in this struggle.⁵⁸

Summary

Environmental participation as developed in this chapter described the relationship which Tillich envisioned between communication and the multifaceted circumstances surrounding its occurrence. Tillich unraveled this complex relationship by turning to history, which gave "to everyone the physical, social, and spiritual conditions of his

⁵⁶Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogation, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome, p. 406.

⁵⁷Paul Tillich, "Existential Analyses and Religious Symbols," Four Existentialist Theologians, ed. by Will Herberg (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1958), p. 291.

⁵⁸See Tillich, "Kairos," The Protestant Era, pp. 30-54.

existence." Yet, a historical perspective only confirms the priority of ontology and its communication objectives; even here the ontological structure reappears, structuring the character of Tillich's philosophy of history--subject-object, language, community, and vocational consciousness or transcendent meaning.

Moreover, with the addition of time, the actualization of being became a dynamic process continually propelled forward by an "after-each-other-ness" quality. Time, creative newness, exercised a formative influence shaping the way man perceives his being and meaning. It adds the potential of meaninglessness to every communicative situation. As a result, man finds genuine or existential meaning only in the here and now; past and future become irrelevant if they do not collate with it.

In keeping with his existentially determined historical analysis, Tillich characterized the present cultural situation as "meaninglessness." Thus it provides a vivid representation of the chaos which time potentially introduces into every situation. Correcting this situation demanded a restoration of ultimate concern, community, and self-identity; but these objectives require a common acceptance of symbols and the creation of genuine community premised on acceptance. Only where these qualities predominate can intelligibility and meaning exist, creating the best possible circumstance for communication.

Time, however, cast the realization of these objectives with their consequent meaning into three idealized types--the apologetic, traditional, and revolutionary. These three primary genres reflect environmental thrust as it introduces new meaning and value into life.

The communication systems which time engenders share affinities with basic life styles, since they are affected by the five criteria which give each system its uniqueness. Tillich clearly preferred the apologetic system over the other two alternatives. Indeed, from one standpoint, chapters five and six represent a further refinement of the apologetic ideal.

CHAPTER 5

EXISTENTIAL PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION: LISTENING

"The knower participates in the known."

Introduction

Ford termed the ideas developed in these next two chapters "receptive participation," which he defined as "openness and sensitivity toward that which is participated in" or as "the act of knowing."¹ Once he had established the formula that receptive participation equals epistemology, Ford further narrowed his consideration of the act of knowing to "existential participation," which he felt identified the most penetrating and intense form of knowing.² Consequently, just as chapter three moved from a partial philosophical analysis of being to communication and chapter four from a partial philosophical analysis of history to communication, so chapters five and six proceed from an existential inquiry into knowing to communication.

Against this backdrop, existential participation explicates Tillich's dictum that "communication is a matter of participation" by looking at the primary epistemological relationships affecting communication. Under existential participation the act of communicating is

¹Ford, "Three Strands of Tillich's Theory of Religious Symbols," p. 122.

²Ibid.

examined from both sides, reception of knowledge and transmission of knowledge. In this case Tillich assumes a perspective analogous to modern speech theorists who divide communication dichotomously--speaking-listening, encoding-decoding, or perhaps, transmission-reception. With them Tillich asks how does one know when he fills the role of listener and how does one "teach" or instill knowledge when he fills the role of speaker. Tillich envisioned an existential type of listening when he urged "participation means participation in their existence, out of which the questions come to which we are supposed to give the answer."³ Similarly Tillich contemplated an existential type of speaking when he theorized: "We who communicate . . . must understand the others, we must somehow participate in their situation so that their rejection means partly an ejection, a throwing it out in the moment in which it starts to take root in them."⁴

Yet, Tillich's existential treatment of listening-receiving and speaking-shaping obviously transcends the normal explanations of these dualities; he does not, for example, view the communicative exchange descriptively or psychologically but philosophically. Tillich postulates a universal picture or structure of listening and speaking heavily influenced by ontology and permeated with ethical restraints which he felt should characterize all listening and speaking. Furthermore, because Tillich's epistemology grew out of his ontology, it does not concentrate on message content, whether sent or received, as an end in

³Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

⁴Ibid.

itself but instead focuses on the person-to-person and person-to-symbol relationships presupposed in every cognitive endeavor. As a result, his primary emphasis falls not on the circuitous route a message travels between its origin and its intended destination but on the view one holds of the person, the human being, with whom one communicates, regardless of whether he listens to him or speaks to him. Moreover, by relying on the single concept of existential participation to describe both reception and sending, Tillich affirms that these complementary acts grow out of a common epistemological attitude; if one listens, learns, or analyzes in order to control or coerce people he will speak out of the same motivation.

Since the key to chapters five and six is the existential attitude, the first section of this chapter clarifies the meaning and significance Tillich attached to it. The following two sections explore the implications of the existential attitude for epistemology generally and for communication specifically. The concluding section concentrates on listening as interpreted from an existential perspective. Chapter six extends themes developed here by developing speaking or "shaping" goals compatible with an existential attitude and by evolving a format capable of achieving those objectives.

The Existential Attitude

Either blank stares or intuitively nodding heads--these responses typify most reactions greeting the term existential. Maligned, abused, overused, and unquestionably ambiguous, the concept existential participation, nonetheless, frames Tillich's picture of what transpires, or should transpire, in communication. As a further complication,

Tillich's own position with regard to existentialism was itself somewhat controversial; on occasion he was called an existentialist and praised for it,⁵ while others criticized his slighting of existential concerns.⁶ Careful study, however, provides a clearer statement of his relationship to existentialism and the meaning he assigned to the concept.

Tillich personally eschewed the full implications of the existentialism of Kierkegaard or Heidegger,⁷ which he labeled radical existentialism, "existentialism as a content," or "existentialism as a philosophy."⁸ Tillich rejected the extreme of "radical existentialism" for three basic reasons. Ontologically he disputed radical existentialism's denial of the basic ontological structure, self-world. He lamented that "the self, cut off from participation in its world, is an empty shell, a mere possibility."⁹ Radical existentialism, by beginning with man as man alone, left the individual without relatedness. This led to Tillich's historic rejection of radical existentialism because it denied man historicity, i.e., a meaningful connection with the past,

⁵See Will Herberg, "General Introduction," Four Existentialist Theologians, pp. 2-3; Bernard Martin, The Existentialist Theology of Paul Tillich (New York: Bookman Associates, 1963); and Arthur Cochrane, The Existentialists and God (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1963).

⁶See William Hamilton, The System and the Gospel (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1963).

⁷See Tillich, "On the Boundary Line," p. 1437 and Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich, Philosophical Interrogations, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome, pp. 360-361.

⁸See Tillich, The Courage to Be, pp. 123-154.

⁹Ibid., 151.

with community, and hence with language.¹⁰

Tillich's most serious criticisms of radical existentialism began from this communication base. According to his interpretation radical existentialism discerned no structure greater than the individual and in this sense was identical with nominalism. So, radical existentialism faced a "calamity" of expression; "non-objective thinking and its expression--this is the calamity of the existential thinker."¹¹ Because the existential thinker cannot directly communicate the ideas he wishes without diverting attention, at least partially, away from the personal experience he has in mind, he must create special forms of expression intended to "indirectly communicate."¹² In Tillich's opinion, the existential thinker "can only create in his pupil by indirect communication that 'existential state' or personal experience out of which the pupil may think and act."¹³ Moreover, radical existentialists, as illustrated by Max Stirner, always bordered on solipsism.¹⁴

But even as he separated himself from certain forms of existentialism, Tillich also found himself attracted by much it said. He expressed his affinities with the existential movement either through the concept "existential attitude"¹⁵ or by the simple "existential"

¹⁰Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogations, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome, p. 373.

¹¹Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 91.

¹²Ibid., p. 90.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 136.

¹⁵Tillich, Systematic Theology, II, 25-26 and The Courage to Be, pp. 123-126.

which he felt referred "to a human attitude."¹⁶ When he diagnosed the ailments of the modern situation as meaninglessness, Tillich reflected an existential attitude;¹⁷ when he repeatedly warned of the grave danger of making "the other person into an object, into a thing"¹⁸ he also expressed the existential attitude, and when he talked of "an existential understanding of a symbol by participation in its revealing power" Tillich reiterated the same theme.¹⁹ Still, none of these examples provides a coherent, direct grasp of the existential attitude.

In two fundamental, closely related statements Tillich unveiled the heart of the existential attitude as he understood it: A knowledge centering around man and his symbolic concerns arises only through existential participation. Tillich explained:

Nevertheless, a cognitive attitude in which the element of involvement is dominant is called "existential."²⁰

The existential attitude is one of involvement in contrast to a merely theoretical or detached attitude. "Existential" in this sense can be defined as participating in a situation, especially a cognitive situation, with the whole of one's existence.²¹

Presupposed in these statements are a number of existential themes: (1) a protest against an easy rationalism which claims to understand reality objectively; (2) a protest against any attempt to

¹⁶Tillich, Systematic Theology, II, 26.

¹⁷See Chapter 4, pp. 98-99.

¹⁸Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

¹⁹Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogations, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome, p. 385.

²⁰Tillich, Systematic Theology, II, 26.

²¹Tillich, The Courage to Be, pp. 123-124.

reduce man to the level of an object, studying him as if he were a thing; and (3) an emphasis on the different types of knowledge involved in "knowing about" something and being passionately involved with someone. While these themes receive more extensive treatment in the next section, Tillich's "existential attitude" itself cautions against a simplified, objective grasp of existential participation. Such a position would in itself distort the meaning of the existential attitude. Existential participation belongs to that realm of life or existence better known through involvement than explanation.

The Existential Attitude and Epistemology

Metaphorically describing knowledge as a "union" involving subject and object,²² Tillich envisioned the process of knowing after a pattern which might be compared to the fusive possibilities of two interlocking circles, one representing the subject and the other the object. Three basic connections are plausible: "detachment," with only the exterior tangential sides adjoining; "participation," a coincidence as exact as possible of one circle with the other; and "understanding," a precisely indeterminable midpoint somewhere between the extremes. Any epistemological exertion ("one plus one," "in 1492 Columbus sailed the ocean blue," the diagnosis "schizophrenic," or "your husband is dead") merges the knower and the known after one of these patterned arrangements. Moreover, regardless of which extreme dominates, an element of its opposite always remains.²³

²²Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 94ff.

²³Ibid., II, 26.

Decisions about which pattern best applies in a given situation are governed by the nature of the object being considered, because Tillich wrote "knowledge depends on its object."²⁴ Knowledge predominantly determined by the "detached" pattern Tillich labeled "controlling knowledge"; it expressed the realm of knowledge accessible to technical reason's grasp and exploitation. He explained: "It unites subject and object for the sake of the control of the object by the subject. It transforms the object into a completely conditioned and calculable 'thing.' It deprives it of any subjective quality."²⁵

Controlling knowledge has a large, legitimate sphere of influence which Tillich never seeks to diminish, but in his judgment it unfortunately has usurped the throne room, claiming "control of every level of reality."²⁶ Tillich believed that "man" should be exempt from its sphere of control; in keeping with the existential attitude, he did not want man reduced to the level of a machine, an objectified robot subjected to programmed manipulation. "A self which has become a matter of calculation and management has ceased to be a self. It has become a thing. You must participate in a self in order to know what it is."²⁷

As a result Tillich assigned man, human nature, to a different level of knowledge, "receiving knowledge," which yields only to existential participation. "Receiving knowledge," following the pattern of

²⁴Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 124.

²⁵Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 97.

²⁶Ibid., 99.

²⁷Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 124.

participation, concentrated on taking the object into itself. In the sweep of receiving knowledge are concerns suggested by such topics as "life, spirit, personality, community, meaning, values, and ultimate concern."²⁸ Such concerns, Tillich explained,

have the character of totality, spontaneity, and individuality. Experiments presuppose isolation, regularity, generality. Therefore, only separable elements of life-processes are open to experimental verification, while the processes themselves must be received in a creative union in order to be known.²⁹

Knowledge determined by detachment eventuates in control. Knowledge amenable to participation creates communion. In the act of participating with another person, both parties are changed and enriched through therapeutic acceptance.³⁰ The best examples of this dynamic knowledge include both the successful psychoanalytic patient-doctor relationship and the forming of friendships.³¹ In addition, controlling knowledge underscores the identity in the two.³² Finally, detachment and technical reason emphasize "means"; participation and existential reason underscore "ends."

Standing somewhere midway between these extremes floats "understanding." It implies the presence of both detachment and participation. Describing it, Tillich observed,

²⁸Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 99.

²⁹Ibid., 103.

³⁰Ibid., 95-96.

³¹Paul Tillich, "The Philosophy of Social Work," Pastoral Psychology, XIV (December, 1963), 28-29.

³²Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 94-95.

The unity of union and detachment is precisely described by the term "understanding." Its literal meaning, to stand under the place where the object of knowledge stands, implies intimate participation. In ordinary use it points to the ability to grasp the logical meaning of something. Understanding another person or a historical figure, the life of an animal or a religious text, involves an amalgamation of controlling and receiving knowledge, of union and detachment, of participation and analysis.³³

On one occasion Tillich cited scholarship as a form of understanding.

While describing the effects of the loss of symbols he commented

this can lead to a point where an existential understanding (by participation) has become impossible and a scholarly approach--which still requires some empathy of understanding--is necessary if members of one group want to understand the symbols of the other group.³⁴

While Tillich clearly recognized a middle stance between the polarities of participation and detachment, he generally talked only in positive-negative terms, particularly with regard to the act of listening. He seemingly assigned a stronger role to analysis in transmission and formulation than in receiving. In other words, listening as an act of existential participation approaches intuition, but the conscious attempt to formulate and express this knowledge involves analysis and reflection, i.e., a self-detaching from the experience. Tillich's entire discussion would have gained inestimably from a greater clarification of "understanding." In any case the extremes remain relatively fixed, and Tillich unequivocally advocates existential participation as the experiential doorway to knowing man. He vividly paraphrased these contrasting epistemological approaches when he commented:

³³Ibid., 98.

³⁴Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogations, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome, p. 385.

But there are two different ways of knowing. We may distinguish them as our knowledge of the other one as a thing, and our knowledge of the other one as a person. The first is the cognition of external facts about somebody. The second is the participation in his inner self--as far as any human being is able to participate in another one. The first is done in detachment, through an empirical approach; the second is done through participation in the inner self of the other one. The first is unavoidable, but never enough in human relations. The second gives the real knowledge, but it is a gift given alone to the intuition of love.³⁵

The Existential Attitude and Epistemology in Communication

The modern epistemological revolution, as Tillich depicted it, stamped its form into virtually every major cultural endeavor. "In psychology and sociology, in medicine and philosophy," Tillich complained, "man has been dissolved into elements out of which he is composed and which determine him."³⁶ If Tillich correctly analyzed the fragmentation process working in the contemporary situation, then the influential thrust of controlling knowledge should also exhibit itself in the speech communication field. A positive confirmation of his diagnosis rests on the answers to two pivotal questions: (1) what motivation underlies most contemporary research in speech-communication theory; and (2) what image of man underlies most research in speech-communication writings.

Previous analysis would suggest that technical reason focuses on control, objectification, and means. The pragmatic "means" supporting communication function emerges clearly in the sharp cleavage Berlo draws between "instrumental" and "consummatory" communication.³⁷

³⁵Tillich, "The Philosophy of Social Work," p. 29.

³⁶Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, I, 99.

³⁷Berlo, *The Process of Communication*, pp. 17-20; Berlo's concept of "empathy" also has some affinities with Tillich's idea of existential participation, see pp. 117-122.

Instrumentally conceived communication asks one basic question, "How can I gain the advantage?" It measures success by the "effect" criterion, translatable wherever possible into concrete behavioral descriptions. This mood in communication, aptly announced over forty years ago by Wichelns ("It is not concerned with permanence, nor yet with beauty. It is concerned with effect."³⁸), reaches a powerful culmination in the technically perfected communication control in Wiener's cybernetics.

When I give an order to a machine, the situation is not essentially different from that which arises when I give an order to a person. In other words, as far as my consciousness goes I am aware of the order that has gone out and of the signal compliance that has come back. To me, personally, the fact that the signal in its intermediate stages has gone through a machine rather than through a person is irrelevant and does not in any case greatly change my relation to the signal. Thus the theory of control in engineering, whether human or animal or mechanical, is a chapter in the theory of messages. . . . Communication and control belong to the essence of man's inner life, even as they belong to his life in society.³⁹

The rivalry over the best motivational objective for communication--control versus communion--did not begin in the twentieth century; Plato's stringent criticism of rhetoric involved this issue and its ethical corollary, "Can that which controls be exempted from the question of ultimate ends." Yet, the increasing use of empirical research has magnified the potential dangers of control and accentuated the rift between control and communion by its depersonalized presentation of man and his communication. Cognitive detachment constantly threatens, if not actually dominates, in this situation. Man appears in a variety of

³⁸Herbert Wichelns, "The Literary Criticism of Oratory," Rhetorical Idiom, ed. by Donald C. Bryant (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1958), p. 35.

³⁹Norbert Wiener, The Human Use of Human Beings (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1954), p. 16.

roles--consumer, voter, group member, etc.--but man as man is invisible; even provocative-sounding titles like Speech and Man devote chapters to "Control Speech."⁴⁰ Language, man's primary communication vehicle, suffers reduction to the "physical" denotative level. Mechanistic models of communication transform communication from interpersonal activity into a key punch computerized diagram.

Concerned voices, shaped by a strong humanitarian tradition and an existentialist perspective on man, have denounced recent trends in speech-communication theory. Floyd Matson and Ashley Montagu, for instance, enunciate a position extraordinarily compatible with Tillich's, whose name they mention along with several others as having influenced their observation that

one distinctive service of the religious existentialist is to have repudiated the technological model of communication as an inexhaustible monologue, addressed to everyone and no one in the form of mass communication. These writers have made us aware that human communication, wherever it is genuine, is always a person-to-person call--never a transcribed message from an anonymous answering service to whomever it may concern.⁴¹

A similar point is scored by Richard Weaver in a strongly worded paragraph.

Rhetoric speaks to man in his whole being and out of his whole past and with reference to values which only a human being can intuit. The semanticists have in view only a denatured speech to suit a denatured man. Theirs is a major intellectual error, committed by supposing that they were going to help man by bringing language under the surveillance of science.⁴²

⁴⁰Charles T. Brown and Charles Van Riper, Speech and Man, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1966), pp. 77-98.

⁴¹"Introduction: The Unfinished Revolution," The Human Dialogue: Perspectives on Communication, ed. by Floyd W. Matson and Ashley Montagu (New York: The Free Press, 1967), p. 6.

⁴²Richard M. Weaver, Visions of Order (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1964), p. 77.

Pitting "dramatism" against "scienticism,"⁴³ Kenneth Burke develops related motifs in the battle he waged, through numerous works, over the best way to understand man and his communication. William Rueckert summarizes Burke's basic thrust.

Burke's general conclusion is that certain fundamental human needs of man are denied realization by the present scientific rational, technological, mechanistic, capitalistic orientation. These permanent, fundamental needs--what Burke calls "norms"--are denied realization because the "technological psychosis" is negativistic, dissociative, dehumanized, destructive, combative, deterministic, and selfish; anti-ethical, anti-magical, anti-poetical, and anti-religious. This orientation advocates and actually establishes a conception of self and purpose which leads not toward the better life, but away from it. . . .⁴⁴

Tillich's voice, scarcely known and heard in the communication field, also challenged the prevailing tendency to emphasize methods over man, detachment over participation. Tillich assumed that the first great decision made by the one who enters a communicative situation as listener or speaker involves a view of man as man; his epistemological emphasis demands an addition to, if not a revision of, prior methodological approaches to audience analysis and feedback (man) and the reevaluation of persuasive effect to include impact on man's total being. Never one to condemn discovery, per se, or even the scientific investigation of man ("Treasures of empirical knowledge have been produced in this way, and new research projects augment those treasures daily."⁴⁵), Tillich, nonetheless, delimited the value of detached

⁴³See Kenneth Burke, The Rhetoric of Religion (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), pp. 38ff.

⁴⁴William H. Rueckert, Kenneth Burke and the Drama of Human Relations (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963), p. 35.

⁴⁵Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 99.

analysis of man constantly underscoring its negative potential.

In spite of its possible success with man as voter, consumer, and worker, Tillich specifically faulted "controlling knowledge" on at least four counts. First, he finds empirically, statistically oriented analysis helpful primarily at the most general level of interpersonal relation--the mass audience.⁴⁶ Implicit within this orientation is the blurring loss of individuality. Second, he contended that an existential element must inevitably at some point inject itself into the creation, assimilation, or application of even controlling knowledge.⁴⁷ Third, he found that detachment methods could not change or even understand opinion on the crucial issues of human existence.⁴⁸ Fourth, he envisioned the entire detached approach as accentuating the "objective," meaningless character of modern man by depersonalizing his primary avenue of reaching his fellowman--language.⁴⁹ In other words, instrumental and detached methodologies contribute to the dehumanization of man.

The Existential Attitude and Listening

Against objective, detached conceptualizations of man, Tillich asserted an alternate methodology conditioned by an existential attitude.

⁴⁶See Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," p. 12.

⁴⁷See Tillich, "What Is Basic in Human Nature," Pastoral Psychology, XIV (February, 1963), 15-16.

⁴⁸Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 98 and The Interpretation of History, p. 150.

⁴⁹Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, pp. 54-55.

Serious difficulties inhere in any effort to present this methodology or apply it to listening or speaking because translation of existential qualities into objective statements unavoidably stultifies the dynamic experience they involve. Tillich indirectly discussed this problem when he described the difficulty the existentialist had in communicating; he did not escape the same problem. Consequently, an existentialist appraisal of listening does not emerge systematically, but instead assumes a form more comparable to an intense personal encounter whose implications transcend any factual account of the meeting. More simply expressed, existential participation as a description of decoding resembles a love story more than a schematic diagram.

Because Tillich's emphasis falls on the persons who communicate rather than on the content of what is said, respect for and acceptance of the "other" in spite of his lack of status constitutes a fundamental principle of existential participation as reception. Tillich coined the phrase "listening love" to describe this attitude of acceptance "in spite of."⁵⁰ "Listening love" through acceptance of the "other" generated the dynamic of ontological meaningfulness by giving to the communicator the sense of worthwhileness and being that is necessary for personhood. Tillich promoted "listening love" as the existential ideal for listening when he said:

No human relation, especially no intimate one, is possible without mutual listening. . . . All things and all men, so to speak, call on us with small or loud voices. They want us to understand their intrinsic claims, . . . Listening love is the first step to justice in person-to-person encounters.⁵¹

⁵⁰Tillich, "The Philosophy of Social Work," p. 28.

⁵¹Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, pp. 84-85.

"Listening love" is a listening to and looking at the concrete situation in all its concreteness which includes the deepest motives of the other person.⁵²

As listening love substitutes community, i.e., being as the dynamic of "being a part of the other," for monopolistic control, it functions to facilitate the linguistic and purposive meaning which underlies communication. Although "listening love" assumes appropriate communication forms to signal its presence, as a primary motivating force and as a dynamic quality conditioning the entire encounter, it represents a creative level of sensed community never completely expressible.

Coordinate with creative acceptance exists a parallel determinant of existential participation as reception—respect and sensitive response to man as a unified whole. Presupposed within the concept of "listening love," the idea of respecting man's totality and uniqueness provides additional insight into the nature of man—furthering, strengthening the need for his acceptance as a man. Respecting man's wholeness implies to Tillich protecting his freedom.

Freedom, I believe, should be described as the reaction of a centered self to a stimulus in such a way that the center, and not a part or a partial process within the whole determines the reaction. The center is the point in which all motives, drives, impressions, insights, and emotions converge without any one of them determining the center. We experience the center in every deliberation, in every decision, in every act of self-awareness, of self-rejection, of self-acceptance.⁵³

To judge man by any one realm ("temporal, spatial, historical, psychological, sociological, biological")⁵⁴ reduces one's knowledge to the

⁵²Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 109.

⁵³Tillich, "What is Basic in Human Nature," pp. 16-17.

⁵⁴Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 124.

level of detachment and could result in an objective relation only to man-in-a-role and not to man himself. Moreover, the individual cast into a special restricted mold may well find his range of options limited and his freedom "to be" subsequently restricted.

If man's unity is interpreted as the freedom of his full functioning self, it also implies man's uniqueness. Tillich regarded the "uniqueness of every individual and every situation" as an absolute.⁵⁵ To view man otherwise is to judge him mechanically by predetermined patterns which make it difficult to know man, yet easy to control him. Fully cognizant that comparisons with other people and their accumulated experience are inescapable and invaluable, Tillich does not recommend their disuse; he opts only for the possibility that the listener always remain open for the incomparable and the unusual arising out of each new situation confronting him. He thus "listens sensitively and reacts spontaneously," not mechanically.⁵⁶

As the end objective of "acceptance" was "communion," so the end objective of "freedom" is "individuality." Independent decision stands in Tillich's value system as a greater good than success. Preferring a mature, totally considered "no" to a "coerced" yes, Tillich believes communication should merely "make possible a genuine decision" and not be judged by the content of the decision.⁵⁷ Why? Because in this way

⁵⁵Tillich, "The Philosophy of Social Work," pp. 27-28.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 28.

⁵⁷Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

the full humanity of man as the freest possible determining being remains unimpaired.

Existential participation implies acceptance of man and respect for his uniqueness. These qualities represent prerequisite attitudes conditioning the manner in which one listens and the purpose to which one applies his knowledge. But existential participation as "reception" also includes the nature of the communication formats. As an organizing principle, existential participation seeks to maximize opportunities for communication and to develop communication opportunities which engender participation as opposed to detachment; dialogue situations typically promote this objective best. While a dialogue format (discussion, conversation, question and answer, forum, etc.) increases possibilities for all participants to both listen and talk more, any method can be a mere tool exploited for control or propaganda purposes if not guided by the motives of acceptance and freedom previously discussed.

Existential participation not only favors certain communicative forms, per se; it prefers these forms because they encourage personal encounter. Hence, spoken communication always claims preference over written communication, direct negotiation over mediation. Dialogue situations of genuine encounter affirm man's being, encouraging greater self-expression and allowing for communion. Moreover, dialogue situations of genuine encounter provide new epistemological insight for the "receiver" on personal, historical, and cultural levels. Tillich's writings offer numerous illustrations of his assessment of existential participation in each of these areas, but no statement better amplifies his intentions than his description of listening on the cultural level.

Perhaps the most significant experience in this respect was my visit to Japan from May to July of this year. Although the trip took place at the end of the ten-year period about which I have been asked to write, the picture would be incomplete if I did not mention it. The encounter served to bring to full awareness elements of thought which had been present for a long time. A friend of mine in whose political judgment I have an almost unlimited confidence asked me years ago, "Why don't you take the Eastern world into consideration within your religious-political thought?" This concern has been a thorn in my intellectual flesh ever since; I expressed it in some of my addresses in Japan as the desire to overcome Western provincialism. I cannot judge at this moment to what degree I have succeeded in overcoming it, but I have felt an immense enrichment of substance ever since my trip. "Substance" in this context means more than new insights and certainly more than a better knowledge of another section of the world. It means being somehow transformed through participation.⁵⁸

Any number of communication problems Tillich mentions--geographic isolation, ignorance,⁵⁹ and lack of historical involvement--⁶⁰ center in the concept of the need for increased physical, personal encounter. Communication motivated by and growing out of existential participation supplies knowledge by intuition.

Numerous facets of Tillich's own personality illustrated the principles of listening he expounded. Haunted by the thought that he might treat a person as an object, Tillich's own communicative behavior emboldens the meaning of the existential attitude defined as listening love. While interviewing Tillich, Ved Mehta observed the startling fact that Tillich never allowed another party, even his personal secretary, to answer the phone for him because he did not want anyone to come between him and the person calling.⁶¹ Tillich's conviction that he

⁵⁸Tillich, "On the Boundary Line," p. 1435.

⁵⁹Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," p. 13.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Mehta, "The New Theologians," p. 122.

should seek the maximum association with those with whom he was communicating made the dialogue situation his favorite communication format.

"Looking back at more than forty years of public speaking," Tillich confessed that

from the first to the last address this activity gave me the greatest anxiety and the greatest happiness. I have always walked up to a desk or pulpit with fear and trembling, but the contact with the audience gave me a pervasive sense of joy, the joy of creative communion, of giving and taking, even if the audience was not vocal. But when it becomes vocal, in periods of questions or discussions, this exchange was for me the most inspiring part of the occasion. Question and answer, Yes and No in actual disputation--this original form of all dialectics is the most adequate form of my own thinking.⁶²

Arthur Wehrwein discovered that Tillich introduced discussion classes into the University of Berlin in the 1920's.⁶³ Charles Kegley conjectured that Tillich was possibly the most accessible of all contemporary theologians, a man who "relishes direct confrontation and scrutiny."⁶⁴ According to Jerald Brauer, his students perceived these same qualities in him.

It was because Tillich needed students for his own completion that they accepted him so gladly; they were wanted and needed not to build a man's ego but to participate in a process of learning that can only be complete where teacher and student genuinely need each other and contribute to each other. Teaching was for him a process of love, and so he received love.⁶⁵

Wilhelm Pauck, Tillich's colleague and close friend reflected:

⁶²Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 45.

⁶³Wehrwein, "Right Question Pleases Tillich," p. 69.

⁶⁴Charles Kegley, "Tillich Talks," The Christian Century, August 18, 1965, p. 1012.

⁶⁵"Paul Tillich's Impact on America," The Future of Religions, ed. by Jerald C. Brauer, p. 17.

He loved to be with and among people and to discuss with them almost any question that happened to be brought up. Throughout his life, from the days of youth until the years of his old age, he learned more from conversations, discussions and debates than from books, although having said this I must hasten to add that he diligently sought and industriously read many books.⁶⁶

Existential participation as "attitude" unites two pivotal areas, ethics and epistemology, into a single concern. In keeping with Tillich's dictates, the way we know and formulate our knowledge either jeopardizes or promotes the welfare of those with whom we deal. Existential participation seeks to protect human existence with its intrinsic qualities of freedom, uniqueness, and dignity. But existential participation manifests a "self" as well as "other" direction; in seeking maximum opportunities for communication and in respecting the full humanity of those involved in the communication process, the existential participant affirms his own being. His oft-neglected, untapped power source is the being of the other person now revealed in a sensitive encounter.

Existential participation, even interpreted as "listening love," contains an element of detachment (reflection, analysis); on occasion Tillich referred to this as "critical love."⁶⁷ This element protects existential reception from naivety, solipsism, or unthinking pliability. "Critical love" may judge, analyze, evaluate, or aim at eventual transformation, but it does so within the established boundaries of "listening love." Tillich viewed critical love as a necessity from

⁶⁶"The Sources of Paul Tillich's Richness," The Future of Religions, ed. by Jerald C. Brauer, p. 30.

⁶⁷Tillich, "The Philosophy of Social Work," p. 29.

many standpoints and especially recommends it to ministers who constantly run the danger of participating culturally to the point of conformity. To them he suggested, "Ministers need withdrawal and retirement from those influences beating upon us every minute."⁶⁸

Summary

Tillich's survey of epistemological relatedness and its effect on the act of listening in communication was decisively shaped by the existential element in his philosophic outlook. Guided by his existential attitude Tillich evolved three basic epistemological relationships --detached, understanding, and participation. Communication's person-to-person character insured the practical predominance of epistemological principles most attune to maintaining and creating harmony in this communal relationship. Overshadowing all other considerations in this connection is Tillich's unshakeable existential conviction that man's freedom and individuality demand preservation in communication as they do everywhere. Because he called the acknowledgement of "every person as person" the "unconditional imperative,"⁶⁹ Tillich affirmed that man must not be objectified; he must be known first and foremost as "man," a centered whole. Failure to maintain this imperative through abusing the other person results in abuse of one's self and a loss of self-dignity.⁷⁰

⁶⁸Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

⁶⁹Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 105.

⁷⁰Ibid., p. 95.

Implicit in Tillich's existential attitude were criticisms of modern methodologies which neglected the personal exchange in communication. Tillich thus joined with other concerned voices to warn against dehumanizing trends in the speech field. In developing his own existential perception of listening as knowledge reception, Tillich stressed the idea of personal encounter, acceptance, dialogue, and sensitive response. Thus existential participation did not detail a technique for listening but prescribed a universal attitude which should accompany any method or technique: an attitude which asked why does one listen and how does one look upon his partner in communication, and which answered with a declaration of his significance as a human being. Tillich's own biography further added to the meaning of existential participation. The power generated by "listening love" balanced by the reflection of "critical love" generated the dynamic "power of being" by strengthening community and by giving the involved participants a grasp of the symbolic world of the individual or situation which he entered.

Existential participation as a "formalized," practical communicative methodology cannot always be fully implemented. Men must, for instance, sometimes write instead of meeting face-to-face, a fact Tillich knew and lamented.⁷¹ Similarly, men will invariably be known in the roles they fill and will at times engage in communication exchanges with a minimal level of existential force; regardless, however, the

⁷¹Ibid., 46. Personally, however, Tillich once remarked, "I've never been capable of not answering letters. It's the agape in me." Cited by Mehta, "The New Theologians," p. 121. Tillich received more than twenty-five "fan" letters a day.

existential potential of every encounter requires conscious recognition of the importance of knowing man as man and of maximally encouraging his freedom, his self-affirmation, and self-centeredness.

Moreover, despite the practical roadblocks one can raise against Tillich's thinking, and there are many, he still enunciates a warning and a vision constantly needed in a discipline ever bordering on potential coercion. Tillich also performs the great service of carrying ethical considerations back to a more profound level (the ontological and then the epistemological) and of involving them in the "passive" act of listening as well as the "action" of speaking.

Finally, this section reveals the intensely personal concern for people which penetrated so deeply into Tillich's being, a quality so many seem to have sensed intuitively and responded to in him. In the end Tillich placed the "individual" ahead of the "absolute," the "principle," or the "universal"; of course, he based the possibility for such an action on his existentially interpreted experience that the only real way to preserve communication was to preserve individuality.

CHAPTER 6

EXISTENTIAL PARTICIPATION AND COMMUNICATION: SHAPING

Introduction

Shaping, as listening's complementary function, suggests the act of communicating from the standpoint of a speaker-encoder or message-source; shaping, as it describes person-to-person and idea-to-person relationships, connotes persuasion by implying an element of forming, constructing, changing or reforming, restructuring, and renewing within these relationships.¹ As a specific communicator's activity, shaping seeks transition through some form of epistemological (message) production. If one assumes with Duhamel that the "rhetorical is determined by the epistemological,"² then the participation-detached continuum which swells like a great river through all Tillich's work appearing as symbol-sign, connotation-denotation, existential-technical knowledge reduces traditional message classifications, regardless of media, into two principal categories: participatory (existential,

¹Tillich also uses the Greek term praxis as a synonym for shaping. On page sixty-five of the third volume of his Systematic, he defined praxis as "the whole of cultural acts of centered personalities who as members of social groups act upon each other and themselves. Praxis in this sense is the self-creation of life in the personal-communal realm."

²Duhamel, "The Function of Rhetoric as Effective Expression," p. 345.

messages requiring a high degree of audience and speaker involvement) and detached (objective or technical messages, requiring a minimal degree of audience and speaker involvement).

Moreover, just as Tillich summarily dismissed detailed investigation of sign, denotation, and technical knowledge, so now he similarly devotes no consideration to detached message structures or concerns except to lament the effort of the Logical Positivists, big-brothers to the General Semanticists, to reduce all language to a scientific ideal.³ Tillich dedicates his energies to the cause of existential communication, i.e., communication touching the deepest levels of human existence both as content and as a form, thereby achieving maximum participation.

Exploring existential communication leads in two directions. First, the search requires surveying the communication objectives associated with existential participation; the ethical-communal motifs related to listening will reappear here in forms which suit speaking. Second, the search prompts an investigation of how existential communication can accomplish its message (epistemological) objectives without violating the boundaries imposed on it by those objectives. Tillich never treats, after the manner of a beginning speech text, the question of how to put together a particular message; instead, in keeping with his generalizing nature, he develops broad principles which can shape and inform the development of a particular message and which unite audience analysis and message context within the embracing whole of participation.

³See Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 20 and Theology of Culture, p. 53.

Communicative Objectives and Existential Participation

Employing the word "genuine" like a saber, Tillich incisively distinguished his overt communication purposes from traditional and typical aims. Preferentially setting as his goal "genuine decision,"⁴ Tillich evolves a communication philosophy in which "genuine rejection" takes precedence over habitual or superficial agreement and "genuine acceptance" represents the summa cum laude.⁵ Already a cleavage looms between Tillich's restricted "genuine" ambition and sophisticated rhetoric's "win-at-virtually-all-costs" strategy. The disparity raises again the vivid memory of Socratic choice, preference for rhetorical failure and death over injustice, superficial absolution, or the violation of self or other integrity.

But exactly what does Tillich mean by "genuine decision?" Negatively, a genuine decision excludes many influences: (1) It cannot grow from mere rote compliance (the straight party voter, the "yes" man, the traditional Christian); (2) nor does a genuine decision arise from ignorance or a conformity to social pressure; (3) finally, a genuine decision cannot emerge from empty emotionalism or whatever is involved in the manipulation Tillich castigated as "mere persuasion." Positively, a genuine decision springs from a radically different motivation centering not on issues but on the personalities involved in communicating; it shifts the value scale away from success defined as the decision sought by the communicator toward the whole personality of

⁴Taped Lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

⁵Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," pp. 12-13.

the listener(s), decision-maker(s), and the fulfillment of his or their humanity. A genuine decision arises from the "whole" or "center" of an individual's personality; in other words, no particular dimension of life should ideally outweigh any others; thus, emotion should not momentarily overpower reason, nor should socio-economic pressures displace moral conscience. Fundamentally, a genuine decision equals a "free" choice, with freedom defined as respect for man's integrity and individuality. Only from this basis can true commitment emerge and with it a stronger, more capable human being.

By strengthening individuality, communication itself is preserved because it maintains the polarity of commonality-individuality. When this polarity breaks down as in autocratic-subservient relationships, there is no real communication because there is no real choice, and man as man suffers. Since "meaningful" communication requires full individuality among the communicators, Tillich prefers a "genuine" rejection of his message to "acquiescence" to it.⁶ "True communication," in Tillich's words, involves "making possible a decision for or against something."⁷

Concomitantly, Tillich does not dismiss communication as being unimportant; rather by refocusing communicative ends, by redefining success to designate the nature or quality of the response ("genuine") and not its observable result or effect, Tillich opened the door to a new form of communication, which he regarded as extremely important.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

Genuine or existential communication as a first step aimed at "understanding," or "partial participation,"⁸ or overcoming the communication barrier Tillich described as a "lack of existential participation."⁹

Genuine decisions are rare because communication and communicators who seek to produce them are rare. Two opposing pressures threaten genuineness: overcommunication or "methods of mere persuasion" and ineffectual communication or "our inability to communicate" or not to overcome the obstacles to communication.¹⁰ Major obstacles include misinformation, supplying the wrong information either accidentally or intentionally, and above all, inadequate statement of one's position. To Tillich the adequacy of a statement relates to its relevance for the meaning of the listener's life.

Otherwise expressed, "genuine decision" demands empathic participation on the part of the communicator and the listener. Barring this possibility the communicator either fails or his communication falls under a different classification. Communicating so that real understanding transpires runs the high risk of degenerating into "mere persuasion" because the communicator's ego-drive easily loses sight of the necessity of retaining the "individuality" and "freedom" of the listener. Thus, Tillich confronted the formidable task of articulating a method of communicating powerful enough to generate "existential

⁸Ibid.

⁹Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," p. 14.

¹⁰With reference to educational attitudes Tillich called this former fault "self-imposition" and the latter, "self-restriction." See Systematic Theology, III, 260-261.

participation" and overcome barriers to achievement of "felt knowledge" and yet impotent enough to guarantee that the listener-chooser retains his freedom of genuine decision.

Moreover, intertwined with the epistemological goal of "shaping" defined as "genuine decision through partial participation" lie the larger but more implicit goals of reuniting man with himself, his fellowman, and conveying to him a sense of harmony with his world. Tillich never naively expected his view of communication automatically to prevail over counter systems, nor did he believe it would resolve all problems, but he advocated it as the best and most noble communicative approach, effecting in the long run the greatest "good." In addition, he implied but did not systematically develop multicultural applications of his communicative philosophy, extensively broadening communicative concerns into such areas as education, missions, parent-child relationships, and periods of cultural disintegration.

The Method of Correlation: Definition

The concept of correlation¹¹ summarized the epistemological theory around which Tillich develops his positive approach to message construction. The term correlation suggests the unnamed presence of participation ("the principle of relatedness") within correlation (correlation) and implies that Tillich projected a "method" for obtaining effective communication, however existential its character might appear. A preliminary survey of his method of correlation or participation uncovers the congruence between its basic epistemological character and

¹¹See Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 34ff.

the communication objectives of existential participation; the following subheadings, independence and dependence, define the nature of correlation and express its congruity with these objectives. The final section examines more extensively the concept of correlation in actual operation.

As a method, correlation primarily identifies an epistemic stance, but it also has counterparts on all levels of Tillich's thought. It expresses, for instance, the midpoint in the ontic polarity participation-individuality, viz., the point where the polarities merge. Furthermore, all of the apologetic aims also find their epistemic formulations in correlation--the union of past and present, voluntary community, symbolic equation, etc. In fact neither of the other systems of communication, tradition or revolutionary, seriously considers the "self" of the listener with the seriousness demanded by correlation. Correlation also shares at least two ties to existential listening; as the description of a message-listener relationship, it expresses the speaking counterpart of dialogue as Tillich's favorite metaphor for correlation, "question and answer," suggests.¹² In addition, the first step in the method of correlation, existential listening, implies the a priori of empathy with those with whom one seeks correlative communication.

Independence

Rooted firmly in the concept of correlation is the participatory image of "co-relating" distinct but mutually related factors; with this

¹²See for example Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 6-8, 18, 22, 66-68; Theology of Culture, pp. 205, 208.

concept Tillich hoped to preserve the integrity and freedom of each element in communication. Penetratingly defined as "a unity of the dependence and independence of two factors,"¹³ correlation designated more than a formula for outlining or organizing; it unveiled the critical cognitive balance so necessary for genuine decisions. By stressing independence, correlation protects the integrity of the listener and the ideational positions he represents, while its corresponding emphasis on dependence affirms a point of commonality, continuity, or contact where differences between two individuals, viewpoints, groups, or cultures merge into essential oneness.

Through correlation Tillich endeavored not only to overcome ineffectual communication without resorting to overpersuasion but also to preserve individuality from the quagmire of unintelligibility yet without permitting commonality to destroy individuality. In this instance, then, correlation describes Tillich's ideal epistemological relationship from the communicator's standpoint just as "listening love" depicted this ideal in the art of message reception. While correlation eventuates in a message aimed at a listener the message itself consciously and consistently recognizes the listener's freedom of choice.

One source of everpresent tension in correlation is the difficulty of balancing the ethical restraint of protecting individuality with the epistemic challenge of discerning sufficient commonality to make change possible. Only a person fully oriented to correlative

¹³Duane Fordershee, "Tillich's Method of Correlation," (Unpublished Seminar paper, Department of Philosophy, University of Oklahoma), p. 3.

thinking can balance this tension and not abuse the power inherent in commonality for his own self advantage. Correlative thinking absolutely accepts the distinctness of the other person and then proceeds through a process which combines participation and detachment toward message preparation and presentation. This procedure raises a second threat to individuality, the danger that the element of detachment which analytically reflects on existential listening and on sources of commonality, and which searches for the best forms of expression will spread beyond these bounds and engulf the person-to-person character of the speaker-listening relationships. As a consequence, the speaker may objectify his listener and replace constructive dialogue with overpowering monologue, ultimately destroying the capacity for genuine decision.

From the ethical-epistemic base of correlation, he then moves toward an analysis of those points where maximum commonality or dependence occurs among speaker-listener-message-reality. Thus the method of correlation culminates in a search for the most effective means of extrapolating and stating these points of correlation in a single message possessing existential veracity; to an examination of this side of correlation is the next task.

Dependence

In the same motion with which correlation affirmed the independence and freedom of the listener(s), decider(s), or audience it also affirmed the dependent connection of all parties in the communication act. Effective communication as reflected in a message relies on this commonality or dependence as the source for audience analysis and

message adaptation. Tillich's correlative method of audience analysis and adaptation began on the ontological level with human finitude, the threat of non-being, and the implications derivative from these. All men, Tillich proclaimed as a basic principle of communication awareness, "participate in human existence. This is a very universal answer."¹⁴

Therefore, Tillich did not begin his analysis and adaptation, according to colleagues, by looking at a particular audience but with man as man. Jerald Brauer contended:

He never thought of a particular audience. He thought of all men in similar conditions. Mankind fit into the structures of being as he understood them. He endeavored to relate this man to the problem which he was discussing. There was no conscientious effort to relate to a given group. He talked to mankind in general.¹⁵

Dr. Edward Steimle, Professor of Homiletics and Tillich's colleague at Union Theological Seminary, shared this conviction.

As you know, Dr. Tillich gave his sermons to college and university students. There was no particular effort to show an adjustment to a local situation. He spoke to mankind and his problems. He spoke to man as he understood man to be.¹⁶

By beginning with man as man, a human being, and not man as part of a special audience or filling a given role Tillich's message perspective gained a greater universality as the international appeal of his own works implies. While this perspective admirably suits Tillich, who designed a message content structured to affect man's ultimate concern, his sense of being, we must ask whether this type of correlation has

¹⁴Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

¹⁵Interviews cited by Corvin, "The Rhetorical Practice of Paul Tillich," p. 106.

¹⁶Ibid.

relevance for more pragmatic concerns like politics or labor disputes. Although Tillich never faced a question phrased exactly this way an affirmative answer to it runs throughout his thought.

The eclectic, cosmopolitan career of Tillich, who attempted to demonstrate "the relation of religion to politics, art, philosophy, depth psychology, and sociology,"¹⁷ affirms a unity inherent in human endeavors which makes it difficult to separate any aspect of life from its effect on such concerns as being. At the same time, Tillich recognized that some questions and messages bore more directly and consciously on man's ontic needs than others.¹⁸ Any message, Tillich would seem to counsel, has a more dynamic quality when it takes cognizance of man's existential predicament and the forms man uses to resolve these problems. Tillich's theory of symbols and ultimate concern, or transcendent meaning vividly dramatizes this thought. Since the "meaning of life" or "the meaningfulness of the whole" affects every meaning, the connection between a given message and the symbolic frame which supports the whole must be determined.

Moreover, Tillich's philosophy of communication suggests that the form of communication, regardless of its content, can affect man's being. If the manner of communication, entirely apart from the content, restores or strengthens person-to-person relationships, it has had an ontic "healing power."

¹⁷Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 41.

¹⁸See Paul Tillich, "Art and Ultimate Reality," Cross Currents, X (1960), 1-2.

Messages should correlate with man's ontic needs, but they should also correlate with man's second major sphere of commonality or dependence, environment. Men share a common situation, although the situation may vary from culture to culture. Blocked in larger terms, environmental participation adds contemporaneity to universality. From a communication standpoint Tillich regarded language as "the basic and all-pervasive expression of every situation."¹⁹ Thus the central task of correlation here becomes, "How can we find the proper language for communication?"²⁰

Any message, even a universal one, which does not reflect the contemporary Zeitgeist lacks relevancy and power. Coincident with this conclusion, Tillich borders on defining rhetoric as the adaptation of "ideas to people," although he projects the concept of ideas into a much broader framework than the immediate, pressing issue. In order to adapt successfully to the environment, Tillich urged a painstaking search of the contemporary cultural milieu and the mood which dominated it. Advocating as primary research areas "philosophy, poetry, drama, the novel, therapeutic psychology, and sociology,"²¹ Tillich reached for a vocabulary which he projected as a prelude to understanding and speaking to modern man.

Sharing or participating in another's situation opened the door to participating in the reality of his life and the meaning which filled

¹⁹Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 7.

²⁰Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," p. 12.

²¹Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 63.

the vacuum of his words. Conversely, as one grew more proficient in speaking the other's language you could lead him to "participate in the reality" which your words--now his--can convey to him. Thus Tillich's messages ring with the terms, concepts, and images of twentieth century philosophy, psychology, and literature; examples are "Gestalt of Grace," "Accepting acceptance," "estrangement," "despair," "meaningless." In this way Tillich groped through the dense environmental fog to strike a sympathetic note of universal agreement about principles which he believed transcended any situation. Candidly Tillich acknowledged this goal:

Now take the term "estrangement." When I speak in any college about estrangement, everybody knows what I mean, because they all feel estranged from their true being, from life, from themselves especially. But if I spoke of their being sinners, they would not understand at all. . . . But estrangement is a reality for them.²²

Correlation means finding commonality in essential and environmental participation. Tillich believed, moreover, that adaptation could occur only when ontological principles could support its application. Furthermore, correlation serves as a means to fundamental communication objectives; by protecting individuality it strengthened self-affirmation, by revealing unity and not forcing decision it engendered community, and finally by demonstrating their situational relevance it reinforced symbolic value.

Method of Correlation: Application

While the preceding discussion has clarified the basic character of correlation, an even clearer insight into the method of correlation

²²Tillich, Ultimate Concern, p. 98.

comes from a translation of its principles into recurring characteristics of messages built from its premises. Tillich's own metaphor, "question and answer," provides an exceptionally suitable skeletal framework for demonstrating the convergence between independence and dependence in a single message.

Question and Answer

A correlated message draws its literary form from the image of a dialogue or conversation in which a dialectic exchange between two or more parties leads toward a common synthesis. Modeled after the classic Platonic pattern, a correlated message appears as a conceptual dialogue as opposed to a dramatic one; without characterization, it nonetheless seeks a full airing of viewpoints and a satisfactory resolution of differences through an exchange of opinion. Theoretically in this manner the communicator who must address others from a monologue position can through a correlated message imitate the ideal of genuine dialogue by incorporating both the perspective of his listener and himself into a single communication act. Consequently, the first obligation of the communicator preparing a correlated message is a fair statement of the other's position, or a fair delineation of the issue, or a question which prompts the discussion. Only after this transpires can an appropriate response or rejoinder originate. As a result Tillich's typical message structure consists of two parts, problem and solution.

Question and answer also fill a function beyond that of form; they imply the ontological dimension shared by both speaker and listener. Question implies the universal problem, the threat of non-being,

and answer constitutes the symbolic response to this ontic dilemma. A correlated message uniquely expresses both question and answer. According to Tillich many cultural message forms--art, literature, the theater, philosophy--simply express man's existential plight.²³ Such messages have one primary value--their therapeutic effect on the formulator. Tillich once remarked of intellectuals, "they can express the despair of existence artistically and philosophically, and can create a meaning of meaninglessness."²⁴ A message has greater shaping power when in addition to reflecting the power of non-being it also stimulates the "courage to be."

Messages also err on the other extreme. Some messages affirm answers but do not satisfactorily relate to the current questions; Tillich placed fundamentalist religion in this camp²⁵ along with other messages (Fascism) which destroyed the humanness they ostensibly affirmed in its symbols.²⁶ A correlated message in contrast to these other types unites symbolic response and situational question to provide an existential message of timely import. The method of correlation describes the way question and answer join in a message to encourage genuine decision by the listener.

²³See Tillich, Theology of Culture, pp. 125-126; The Courage to Be, pp. 135-154; and "Existentialist Aspects of Modern Art," Christianity and the Existentialist, ed. by Carl Michelson, pp. 128-147.

²⁴"Religion and the Intellectuals," Partisan Review, XVII (March, 1950), 254-257.

²⁵Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 3-4.

²⁶Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," Religious Experience and Truth, ed. by Sidney Hook, p. 5.

Question

A correlative message always begins with the issue, the problem, the negative, or crisis as it exists in the mind of the listener, at least as the speaker discerns it. But correlation does not designate mere acceptance or statement of this problem; instead, it seeks to intensify the question until it assumes existential reality to all hearing the message. By dramatizing the human predicament the communicator reinforces the tie between his message and man's need for being. Tillich referred to this when he spoke of jarring awake those "living in secure towers . . . covered by an assumed knowledge of all answers."²⁷ At this point, Tillich unwittingly became rhetorical in the classical sense; virtually all his messages (sermons, essays, and systematic) begin by dramatizing the plight, the contradictions of human existence, and the shock of non-being. Only after properly "awakening" his audience does he affirm a positive, symbolic answer.

Since Tillich believed the base of every issue always involves human existence, the best method to verify it was experiential. "We cannot use evidence to tell people that human nature is like this," Tillich conjectured.²⁸ Intensification, then, did not derive from authority, logic, or statistic but from the declaration of human experience. Human personality as it reflected on the meaning of its own existence best testified to the experience of being and non-being. No

²⁷Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

²⁸Ibid.

wonder Tillich's sermons were so devoid of quotations or illustrations.²⁹ Tillich preferred direct appeal to human experience which opened up "the human mind so that it is ready for existential participation."³⁰ Hence, his classic appeal:

But there is a way of rediscovering their meaning, the same way that leads us down into the depth of our human existence. In that depth these words were conceived; and there they gained power for all ages; there they must be found again by each generation, and by each of us for himself. Let us therefore try to penetrate the deeper levels of our life in order to see whether we can discover in them the realities of which our text speaks.³¹

Obviously subjective human experience cannot substitute for valid areas where objectivity rightfully rules; but it claims a valid sphere of its own.³² Moreover, even in many areas where the surface indicators of objectivity appear as evidence, frequently these formal qualities merely cloak already present existential conviction. Question, therefore, as the expression of man's search for being and meaning penetrates into many message sources which indirectly reflect it. The successful communicator, alert to its presence, understands the question, dramatizes it through personal experience, but also goes beyond this, responding to it with an answer.

Answer

Answer, most simply conceived, represents the second and positive half of a particular message, that portion in which the

²⁹See J. Frederick McKirachan, "The Preaching of Paul Tillich," Princeton Seminary Bulletin, LIII (January, 1960), 36.

³⁰Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," p. 13.

³¹Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations, p. 154.

³²See Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 100-105.

communicator supplies a resolution to the issues or questions raised by the former half. But answer involves much more than a "second half" or even a direct connection with a given issue; it also points toward the meaning of the whole and the strengthening of being. Hence, answer translates into symbol; correlation means bringing the symbolic power of a message into direct confrontation with the existential needs of the listener so that he accepts a given symbol as valid for all levels of his existence. Such a perspective amplifies Tillich's previous interpretation of man, which pictured his ultimate concern in more concrete, immediately accessible forms, called symbols;³³ in this capacity symbols supply the answers to man's threatened loss of being, his existential predicament.

Consequently, the key to "shaping" as message production lies in the subtleties of "symbolic correlation." Symbols penetrate, if situationally relevant, into the inner core of man's personality where values and basic attitudes germinate from existential anxiety and the quest for certainty; as a result, these "depth" forces undergird most pragmatic decisions reached by the listener in communication. If a sender, through "symbolic correlation," can reach this depth dimension, he taps the formative existential power of being, even when he does not consciously interpret his message content in these philosophical terms. Symbolic correlation reaches the "whole" of man beyond any one influence because it communicates directly and immediately, i.e., "intuitively" to man.

³³See pp. 74ff.

Symbols, however, and messages built around them communicate meaning only when they are accepted or understood as symbols which answer one's existential questions. In Tillich's words, this means we must make "symbols understandable as symbols."³⁴ Without the power to evoke the proper connotations in the mind of the listener, a symbol is dead, and the message associated with such a symbol suffers the same fate. Improper attitudes toward a given answer or symbol may result from several causes: a total rejection of all symbols--the abyss of meaninglessness; a wrong perception or interpretation of a symbol; a state of doubt or uncertainty about a symbol's authenticity.³⁵ Yet, regardless of the motivation which produces the disparity between the listener's ultimate concern and a given symbol, no message can overcome this gap which does not establish itself as an answer. To accomplish this, a communicator needs a clear grasp of symbol groupings and the relationship between them.

Tillich's messages imply three major symbol groupings. First, symbols are grouped into formalized classifications such as art, literature, history, religion, etc. The most powerful group, however, and the basis for evaluating all the others is the category which most directly embodies an individual's ultimate concern, for Tillich this would be the ontic-religious dimension. Secondary symbol categories then relate to the category of ultimate concern according to a hierarchical arrangement, in which the language and mood associated with one category

³⁴Tillich, "How We Communicate the Christian Message," p. 13.

³⁵Tillich, Ultimate Concern, pp. 189-192.

shares greater or less affinity with another category. Thus, symbols from an area closely associated with the category of one's ultimate concern may strengthen symbols in the ultimate concern group or vice-versa. Tillich personally found a close connection between religion and aesthetics.³⁶ Subsequently, he built his sermons around poetic imagery which also embodied his thesis that personal experience was the strongest source of appeal. He described his sermons as "a little mystical and a little poetical."³⁷ He also discerned a close tie between the nature of philosophy, psychology, and theology which he utilized in developing his Systematic Theology.³⁸

A correlative message not only develops the relationships between formal symbol categories; it also explores the situational relevance of symbols. Every period, according to Tillich, would have certain terms, words, figures, or other symbolic forms which possess greater evocative power in a given situation than other forms. Tillich, for example, urged a total ban on the word "original sin,"³⁹ but he found powerful situational relevance in "estrangement"⁴⁰ and discerned a unity in the reality they pointed toward. Tillich typically examined symbolic areas in relation to ultimate concern, in order to decipher situationally relevant terms which he could appropriate to build stronger connotations for the symbols he held up. Tillich concludes his

³⁶Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogations, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome, p. 407.

³⁷Mehta, "The New Theologians," p. 123.

³⁸Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 4.

³⁹Tillich, Ultimate Concern, p. 89.

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 98.

lectures on communication with examples of this type of symbolic correlation. He equates religion and medicine to define salvation and grace or he substitutes estrangement for sin.⁴¹ In this way he not only merges the connotation of separate symbol categories, but he also reveals common areas of insight into human existence shared by the various categories.

Symbolic correlation in message also derives from the wise application of what Tillich called "symbol sets."⁴² Symbol sets suggest the idea of a hierarchy of connotative power in symbol categories, so that certain symbols possess greater power than others. Tillich detected three levels which he labeled transcendent, immanent, and sign-symbol.⁴³ As a message strategy this hierarchy had two uses in Tillich's message. First, Tillich generally began his message with lower order, usually immanent symbols, because they aroused less resistance when the set with which they were associated was not fully accepted as an answer. At the same time immanent symbols also possessed the potential power to gain acceptance for the whole set so that if acceptance for a lower order symbol could be secured, acceptance of the entire set could follow. Second, Tillich would change symbol sets by taking symbols from one level into a different order. He frequently translated symbols from the immanent level into the transcendent level where he felt unnoticed areas of agreement could emerge. This seems to have been the procedure which

⁴¹Taped lecture, "Communicating the Gospel."

⁴²Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogations, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome, p. 390.

⁴³See p. 76.

prompted Tillich's previously cited advice to the young ministers of the religious-socialist movement when he told them not to preach religious socialism, per se, but the principles out of which it grew.⁴⁴

The personality of the speaker also plays a role in symbolic correlation as answer, just as it did in vivifying the question. Tillich unequivocally contended that "the spoken word is effective not only through the meaning of the sentences formulated but also through the immediate impact of the personality behind these sentences."⁴⁵ His later interpretation of this as a reflection of "existential truth" indicated that the person as a symbol activated the quality implied by "immediate perceptibility." The communicator functions as a living symbol who vividly brings the abstract immediately to mind. Thus, the "personality" brings an additional "cognitive dimension" to communication, a dimension after a model which compares to "intuition" or a "felt knowledge" perceived below the level of the rational.⁴⁶ The person thus aids the process of symbolic correlation by the dynamic cognitive support which his personality lends to his position. His living presence projects the quality of existential participation into his message, adding new depth and force to his words.

The relationship between these various symbol factors, including the "living symbol," grows extremely complex in actual practice. For a message to comprehend successfully these complexities, the

⁴⁴See pp. 7-8.

⁴⁵Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 45.

⁴⁶Tillich, Theology of Culture, p. 23.

communicator must existentially participate (listen) in the symbolic world of his listeners until he grasps internally its character. Then through experiential reflection, he can develop a symbolic strategy which reveals the symbolic unity between the world of the listener and speaker.

Symbolic correlation as the communicator's method of answering the question of his listener is more than a pairing of words, themes, or slogans, although these may become involved in the process. It is a process of revealing congruent spheres of meaningful "reality" and of relying on the ontological dimension as the ultimate source of that congruency when necessary. Cognitively, the end result of symbolic correlation should assume the form of new or renewed attachment to linguistic forms which affirm the "depth" meaning of life. Success in demonstrating congruency is a message's shaping power.

Summary

The epistemological tone and restraint which framed Tillich's approach to listening also permeates his view of shaping; in both instances Tillich's overriding concern lay with the moral and ontological welfare of his listener, whether one or many. When discussing the act of message formulation, Tillich sought to protect his listener, first, through the form of communication which does not seek or present "all the available means of persuasion." He wants the listener to make a genuine decision, as opposed to an unwanted or uninformed one. Only genuine freedom in decision making can encourage the full development of the listener's humanity and individuality. Not all decisions will

be of sufficient magnitude or proper type to suit this goal but all potentially are. Furthermore, without constant restraint and awareness of this objective the listener easily becomes an object subjected to manipulation. Correlation expresses Tillich's communication concern for the listener and his attempt to do justice to his attitudes and individuality.

Yet, the existential communicator not only cares for his listener as a decider who receives certain correlative messages. He also cares for him as a man. Thus he sees his listener as a human being threatened by the vicissitudes of life. Consequently, he wants his message to create community by uncovering differences and similarities. Correlation itself expresses the desire to secure unity within divergence, true community within conceptual dialogue. Beyond this, the existential communicator wants to strengthen the symbolic world of his listener as a man, because unless he identifies with symbols the whole world of the listener borders on meaninglessness. Consequently, the existential communicator wants to give an answer to the listener which will merit his ultimate concern most authentically and realistically. For this reason the ontic level and its symbolic expression serve as the best foundation for the development of correlation; this dimension expresses and creates meaning in the sense of the meaning of the whole.

Shaping thus implies formal or stylistic communication qualities, as well as community and symbolic variables; it reflects the full range of ontological or essential communication objectives. But shaping also says more. In assuming both the power to diagnose, even dramatize and prescribe, the existential communicator assumes the correctness of

his stance; he believes his symbols possess the qualities needed by his listener. He cannot escape persuasion. Nor can he fully avoid the persuasive use of symbolic power. He can only add to his appeal for respect of individuality and freedom the insight that other-abuse is self-abuse and symbolic abuse threatens total meaninglessness.

CHAPTER 7

TELOS: RETURN TO THE BOUNDARY

"A fragment is an implicit system;
a system is an implicit fragment."

Between Philosophy and Communication

As an exile from Nazi Germany Tillich disembarked in New York City, on November 4, 1933, an "alien" and stranger adrift in a foreign land without a knowledge of its language or way of life.¹ The mutual affection which developed between Tillich and his adopted homeland in the ensuing years was remarkable. In less than twenty years he "became the most eloquent spokesman for religion in America."²

His books were read by countless thousands, impossible demands were made on him as a lecturer, his concepts were commonplace at cocktail parties, he was quoted and interviewed constantly by all media of mass communication, and he was listened to gladly by students; which was for him a great source of joy. With no publicity to speak of, seven thousand students turned out to hear him at the University of California, Berkeley, only a few months before his death.³

To these evidences of Tillich's popular acceptance might be added the

¹Tillich, "Autobiographical Reflections," The Theology of Paul Tillich, ed. by Robert W. Bretall and Charles W. Kegley, p. 16. Tillich describes himself as an "alien" in On The Boundary, pp. 91-96.

²Brauer, "Paul Tillich's Impact on America," The Future of Religions, ed. by Jerald C. Brauer, p. 18.

³Ibid., 15.

widespread dissemination of his thought into many disciplines.⁴

Introducing Tillich to yet another field, speech-communication theory, constitutes still another "unnatural" beginning, for the thought of the man, if not for the man himself. The end result of this migration is by no means certain. The strangeness of Tillich's unique vocabulary and perspective rings awkwardly in the ears of most rhetoricians. The conspicuousness of Tillich's presence begins with the bewildering announcement of his realistic philosophical premises. These premises then culminate in the disconcerting ontological assertion that "communication is a matter of participation."

By placing communication within the embracing whole of relatedness or relationships, Tillich formally laid the foundation for his methodological and conceptual uniqueness. Methodologically Tillich's definition implied that communication could not be understood without reference to the principles which govern all relationships. Hence, understanding its inner workings demands insight into the whole category of relatedness or participation itself. In taking this dramatic first step Tillich's thought permits a reversal of Walter's axiom that every "philosophical system has rhetorical implications"⁵ and allows the assertion that every rhetorical theory contains implicit assumptions about personal, communal, and cosmic relationships. Every communication theory thus suggests a philosophy of life. Subsequently, communication by Tillich's placement could not avoid statements, or attitudes, which

⁴See pp. 5-6.

⁵Walter, "On Views of Rhetoric, Whether Conservative or Progressive," p. 374.

influence ethical, social, and even cosmological relationships. While a given theory may exclude or deny such responsibilities, if Tillich is correct, no communication theory can disentangle itself from its responsibilities so simply.

The word as the bearer of meaning has an impact on all sides of man's spiritual life, on the whole personality. It is addressed to the intellect; it informs man about his situation, his actual and ideal relation to God, the world, and himself.⁶

Through Ford the basic types of relationship Tillich named participation grew clearer; amplified by Tillich's own thought, they formed a hierarchy capped by ontology, defined here as essential participation. In making ontology, rather than epistemology, the beginning place for his philosophy of communication, Tillich stretches the relationship between communication and philosophy to the breaking point and pushes the boundary between himself and past theorists to its limits. From this ontological frontier Tillich raises new insights and questions. But even more important than any single item is the total difference in perspective Tillich generates from ontology. Ontology examines not the act of communicating, per se, but the whole of reality, the experience, or structure of relatedness which supports the individual act of communication and gives it meaning. In other words, an ontological interpretation of communication stresses man speaking, as well as man speaking. Ontology, through Tillich, asks for an explication of communication's role in man's existence.

A new emphasis in communication thus arises in the form of new objectives for communication. Ontologically evaluated, communication

⁶Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, p. 33.

does not aim at the discovery of all the available means of persuasion nor the impersonal "adjustment of men to ideas and ideas to man" but instead seeks man's adjustment to himself, his fellowman, and world. . . . These aims, often implicit in other systems, become dominant in Tillich and permeate every phase of his emerging philosophy of communication. The function of symbols in world harmonization is a major concern throughout Tillich's thought, capping all three objectives, appearing in all three communicative systems and culminating in the "answer" of the correlative message. The ethical relations arising from community shape his epistemology and his interpretation of existential listening and genuine decision. All these aims merge in the broad goal of ontology--the "courage to be." Such a goal implies the image of unity, wholeness, or peace; the ideal of man united with himself, his fellowman, and his world.⁷ On a personal level, the aims of communication compress into the concept of agape, which means the reunion of the separated; communication as a form of relatedness functions to draw man into the unity of community.⁸

Standing on this boundary, Tillich verbally lashes out at views of communication which stress neutrality, impersonality, or de-humanization. For Tillich the overwhelming significance of communication lay, not in its use as a tool or instrument for self-aggrandizement, but in its cosmological, sociological, and psychological power.

Tillich, however, in line with his interpretation, traces the

⁷See pp. 60, 71.

⁸See Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, p. 28.

most serious threats to communication and being to the dynamic thrust of creative time, "after-each-other-ness." In creating barriers to self-identity, community, and symbolic authenticity, time produces the specter of meaninglessness. Three systems of communication combat non-being as it relates to Tillich's ontic communication objectives; but only one of these, the apologetic, consistently deals with the "situation" as Tillich understood it.

With this brief review of Tillich's ontological communication perspective, the boundary toward which Tillich's philosophy of communication moved reaches its maximum extension. In turning to epistemology Tillich drew nearer in conception, and occasionally in detail, to classical rhetoric. In several respects Tillich emphasized specific means for effective communication; he does this, for instance, in his preference for dialogue, in his dramatization of man's existential plight, in his reliance on experiential proof, in his recognition of detachment, and in the strategy implicit in the method of correlation. Yet, on the whole, even in epistemology, everything changes. Tillich the essentialist suddenly becomes an existentialist dedicated to the freedom and integrity of the individual. As a result, listening becomes an act of communion, not an art of hearing; audience analysis becomes a highly charged personal encounter in which the issues become existential acceptance of the "other" as person and insight into his symbolic world, not the rational analysis of a "thing." Similarly, message production finds its ultimate motivation in strengthening being by means of symbolic reinforcement. Tillich and conventional speech communication never seem quite to meet, even when they employ similar or identical categories.

Moreover, the traditional speech-communicationist must surely find something missing in Tillich's analysis--the resolution of the highly involving, pragmatically determined issue, whether the question concerns a political choice or religious doctrine. As Kenneth R. Mitchell observed about Tillich's advice to the pastoral counselor, "Tillich's ontological concerns . . . did not lend themselves to a concern for process and work, a concern for which more transactional interests would have served better."⁹ Mitchell strives in this perceptive article to distinguish the functional aspects of "doing" from "being." His general thesis is that Tillich provides rare insight into the stance and attitude which one needs, but that attitude and intention alone may not be sufficient; with this conclusion classical rhetoricians could well agree.

Tillich does not, however, go away so easily. Undoubtedly he raised questions which might not help a lawyer win a case or a businessman to make a sale, yet his questions might help them to be happier human beings or evaluate the total worth of their communication attempts. Tillich's questions antedate the questions of traditional rhetoric. His questions are first or prior in the sense that they ask about purpose, ends, and values. They lead up to the concerns of classical rhetoric. While Tillich does not actually and literally cross the boundary to plunge into what Burke called "the Scramble, the Wrangle of the Market Place, the flurries and flare-ups of the Human Barn Yard" he subtly penetrates there.

⁹Kenneth R. Mitchell, "Paul Tillich's Contribution to Pastoral Care and Counseling," Pastoral Psychology, XIX (February, 1968), 24.

Tillich's relevance at this level derives from his insistence that every decision, every use of persuasion, every word which influences thought and behavior has effects which transcend its immediate environs. Furthermore, in their transcendence these acts and events become symbolic; by paying greater attention to the whole one might better weigh symbolic impact and so accept defeat before the violation of self, other, and "world" integrity. By stressing the need to look at the whole and then the parts, Tillich offers another defense of himself, viz., the consistency of a systematic thinker. Tillich believed he could interrelate all aspects of his thought, his life, his communication, and reality as a whole. Can those who oppose him on practical or other grounds do the same? Tillich knew the "essayist" or "critic" had the easier task, but he disdained it. In a "concluding statement" to his philosophical interrogation he commented:

Therefore, the systematic thinker must defend himself in all directions into which his system reaches; and he often is inferior in his defense to critics who are thoroughly expert in one or several fields. The systematic thinker, on the other hand, has the advantage of envisaging his field as a whole and, consequently the interrelation of every problem with every other problem.¹⁰

Tillich preferred the boundary.

Between Old and New

Tillich's movement toward an ontological interpretation of the whole of reality, including communication, marks the clarion distinction of his philosophy. In other respects Tillich frequently shares a common perspective with two other well-known names in communication circles:

¹⁰Reese, "Interrogation of Paul Tillich," Philosophical Interrogations, ed. by Sydney and Beatrice Rome, p. 408.

one "old," Plato, and one "new," Kenneth Burke. Like Tillich these men share a humanistic, multifaceted, and diversified cultural outlook which reaches out to include more and more. In addition, their works on communication impart an attitude or perspective rather than a schematic program of techniques; with Tillich they are more men of intellectual pursuit than pragmatic activism.

Tillich had an intimate, life-long acquaintance with the thought of Plato. He generally pictured himself as more Platonic than Aristotelian¹¹ and once conjectured that no philosophy could afford to overlook the insights of Plato.¹² Plato's influence on Tillich is evident and his influence in Tillich's linking of participation and communication has already been suggested.¹³ Tillich's inclusion of the Platonic notion of eros with participation and communion would also seem to confirm this hypothesis.¹⁴ On the other hand, a direct literary connection between the two contemporaries, Tillich and Burke, appears non-existent. Tillich and Burke do share a common affinity in their knowledge of a wide number of philosophers; and one man in particular may have influenced them both--Bergson.¹⁵ Tillich and Burke

¹¹See Tillich's comment in this connection to J. Heywood Thomas, "Foreword," Paul Tillich in Catholic Thought, ed. by Thomas A. O'Meara and Celestin K. Weisser, p. vii.

¹²Tillich, "Art and Ultimate Reality," Cross Currents, X (1960), 13.

¹³See p. 37.

¹⁴See Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, p. 32. Tillich says, "Concepts like participation and communion point to the eros quality in every philia relationship."

¹⁵See Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 168, 179, 181, 232; and Kenneth Burke, Language and Symbolic Action (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), pp. 9-10.

specifically employ the Bergsonian concept of "unfulfilled expectation."

Regardless, however, of the cognizance or lack of it these men possess of each other, some remarkable points of general synthesis in their broad outlooks on communication merge. First, there exists a type of mystical unity in the ultimate objectives which they seek for man and toward which they point communication. A number of terms from these men point toward this common vision in their thought--power of being, agape, (Tillich); eros, arete, (Plato); and hierarchy, consubstantiality and order, (Burke). All three men thus envision a point of unity, rest, and peace among men; typically at some point they dramatize this conception through the image of love or courtship.

Second and as a direct result of the preceding premise, the three jointly see communication and life as processes intrinsically bound together. Derivative from this interconnection are at least three additional insights. One of the most evident is their objection to the idea of a normative (as opposed to specialized) neutral, scientific language or communication; logical positivism thus looms as their common foe. Tillich contended:

. . . we are in a process in which a very important thing is being discovered: namely, that there are levels of reality of great difference, and that these different levels demand different approaches and different languages: that not everything in reality can be grasped by the language which is most adequate for mathematical sciences; the insight into this situation is the most positive side of the fact that the problem of symbols is taken seriously again.¹⁶

¹⁶Tillich, "Religious Symbols and Our Knowledge of God," p. 189. See also the anecdote Tillich relates in "Reply to Interpretation and Criticism," The Theology of Paul Tillich, ed. by Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall, p. 332.

Burke likewise argued:

First, I would set "Dramatism" against "Scientism." In so doing, I do not necessarily imply a distrust of science as such. I mean simply that language in particular and human relations in general can be most directly approached in terms of action rather than in terms of knowledge.

.....
In this view, "meaning" is not reduceable to "information theory," mechanical "interpretation" of "signals," and the like.¹⁷

As a necessary extension of these views, Tillich and Burke develop a highly articulate, symbolic view of life and communication. Most "meaningful" acts become symbols charged with multiple connotations, although Tillich interprets the nature of symbols as the ontic reflection of ultimate concern while Burke interprets it as a fundamental attribute of man and language. Quite strikingly, however, both scholars assign the negative or non-being a formative role in the creation of language and, hence, man's humanity and symbolization. To Burke the negative expresses the "unnatural" birth of language as a realm beyond the natural, physical world and his subsequent placement of language in the category of transcendent meanings.¹⁸ By way of contrast Tillich projected non-being as a philosophical absolute which he coordinated with man's power to abstract. From this capacity came man's subsequent realization of finitude.¹⁹

¹⁷Kenneth Burke, The Rhetoric of Religion (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), pp. 38, 40. Plato's views in this regard are discussed by Richard M. Weaver, The Ethics of Rhetoric (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1953), pp. 1-26.

¹⁸See Burke, Language as Symbolic Action, pp. 9-13; 419-479.

¹⁹See pp. 59, 60, 67, 68.

All three men view communication as a phenomenon intrinsically bound to the totality of human relatedness. Tillich and Burke carry this principle to the point of intra-self-relatedness. Plato's Phaedrus vividly dramatizes the inter-human relationships implied in communication. The vivid irony underlined by the Phaedrus is the paradox that men could love discourse and not men whose "soul" it affected or that men could approach one another through language but remained "detached from each other." A careful application of Tillich's ontological principles, particularly as contrast between controlling and existential knowledge, could result in a new interpretation of the relationship between rhetoric and love in the Phaedrus.

A final derivative from the uniting of life and communication is the unanimous declaration issued by this trio about the superiority of dialogue over all other communicative forms, though the three all somehow manage a prolific literary output. Tillich and Plato expressly voice their conviction that writing, for example, stifles the existential reality of the experience it describes.²⁰ Burke recognized the same disparity and through "dramatism" and the "pentad" endeavored to make communication more critically aware of the flexibility of language and the complexity of the human art of communicating.²¹

A third broad principle which jointly characterized Tillich, Burke, and Plato was their realistic bias. This assumption implicitly

²⁰See Plato Phaedrus 277-278; and Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, pp. 45-46.

²¹See Kenneth Burke, A Grammar of Motives and A Rhetoric of Motives (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1962), pp. xvii-xxv.

colored Plato's method of searching for essential definitions of his key terms like justice, virtue, love.²² Tillich explicitly labeled himself a "moderate realist."²³ Burke could write:

The realist Grammar works the other way round: it begins with a tribal concept, and treats individuals as participants in this common substance, or element (whereas Korzybski stresses above all the need for a "non-elemental" approach to language).²⁴

Against this realistic background, one of the more interesting comparisons arises--the relationship between Tillich's use of participation to describe communication and Burke's use of identification for a similar purpose. Obviously, both men rely on these terms partially as a result of their acceptance of the reality of substance and consubstantiality (Burke) or relatedness and universality (Tillich). Yet, Tillich consistently displays an aversion for the term identification.²⁵ His objection to it is rooted in his interpretation of identification as the impersonal designation of commonality. As a result he felt it implied the loss of individuality by suggesting an impersonal act in which involuntary or non-genuine acceptance of the "other" displaces a free acceptance (based on the polarity participation--individuality) which accepts the element of difference as well as commonality. Tillich fully accepts the presupposition that commonality or relatedness precedes communication (whether described by participation or

²²See the Phaedrus 249; and Carre, Realists and Nominalists, pp. 32-37.

²³See p. 13.

²⁴Burke, A Grammar of Motives and A Rhetoric of Motives, p. 248.

²⁵See Tillich, Morality and Beyond, pp. 39-42; and Tillich, "On the Boundary Line," p. 1436.

individuality), but feels that without its polar opposite it becomes a tool of exploitation.

Burke, on the other hand, stays close to the linguistic realism lying behind identification. He consequently interprets it as a linguistic achievement made possible by the "signs of consubstantiality."²⁶ Identification thus does become a method, albeit resting on the theoretical ground of substance. Burke unquestionably develops a clearer grasp than does Tillich of how identification among the separated occurs; he does not exhibit the concern for individuality shown by Tillich who explains the process of participation ontologically as opposed to linguistically.

In this latter observation we return full cycle to the uniqueness of Tillich as contrasted to Burke and Plato, his ontological beginnings. Tillich's systematic procedures carried the implications of his ontology consistently into all phases of his thought; he translates everything into ontology. Burke, the linguistic philosopher, operates in precisely the opposite fashion; he transposes philosophy into dramatism. Thus substance or essence becomes the active "tribal family" or "identification." He discerns, not premises, but motives and consistently seems to shift his ground. Plato correlates the two, since he casts his philosophical premises into the drama of dialogue.

From a communication standpoint, once the hurdle of terminology is overcome, Tillich's consistency produces the greater clarity. Moreover, Tillich's existential attitude does provide a protection and

²⁶See Burke, A Grammar of Motives and A Rhetoric of Motives, pp. 544-552; 579-583.

concern for the individual not so clearly evidenced by Burke or Plato. Still more important the communication objectives spelled out by ontology, self-affirmation, community, and symbolic harmonization have a pristine clarity uniting all facets of Tillich's discussion of communication.

Beyond the Boundary

Anyone who examines Tillich's philosophy of communication expecting traditional questions and answers will receive the shock of living on the boundary. Tillich does not offer an easy list of new techniques or premises committable to memory. Instead he challenges with a total philosophy in which communication and life reciprocally interact to shape each other and to form a concept of "meaning" requiring existential participation as an a priori to understanding.

Subsequently, one should not leave Tillich carrying a pad of hastily scribbled notes of "dos" and "don'ts," but rather, hopefully with a new ontological vision of what potentially transpires in every act of communication. Part of that vision should include a new appreciation, if not awe, for the power of the word, a new grasp of the need for acceptance voiced in every word addressed to us, and a universal longing for authentic symbols. Charged with the potency of being, every act of communication becomes an act of risk fraught with the danger of non-being as well as the power of being.

Subsequently, a second part of our vision from Tillich constitutes the inner, existential realization that our vision of what happens in communication remains at best, partial. The movement of creative

time and the demand of existential participation require continual adaptation and involvement for effective communication.

In this second realization the task envisioned by this study draws near its ultimate conclusion, the formalization and explication of Tillich's implicit philosophy of communication. Yet having finished the projected study and having composed a statement of his philosophy of communication, we realize with Tillich our completed system is only a fragment. With reality, life, process, being, and after-each-other-ness continually driving forward, new challenges loom, old understandings fade, and men do not understand each other.

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