


1967

The Concept of Spirit as Related to the Knowledge of God in the Thought of Paul Tillich and Nicholas Berdyaev

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THE CONCEPT OF SPIRIT AS RELATED TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD
IN THE THOUGHT OF PAUL TILLICH AND NICOLAS BERDYAEV

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Religion
Ouachita Baptist University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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May 1967

May 23, 1967

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I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. Religious epistemology has as its primary concern the knowledge of God. That concern is dealing with God that is more than human but is creative of and revealed in the human. One of the major problems of

¹Martin E. Marty, "The Spirit's Holy Breath," Isis, 96:108, Winter, 1967.

²Ibid., p. 99.

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM AND DELIMITATIONS

The concept of Spirit eludes precise definitions, and for that reason it has almost become a forbidden word.¹ The tide has begun to change, however, with recent developments. During the 1950's, America witnessed a revival of religious interest. The 1960's have ushered in a religious revolution. Bishops John Robinson and James Pike and the forward look in Harvey Cox's The Secular City have not only made the public aware of radical changes in church confessions, but they have expressed the secularity and the worldliness that dominate much of modern academic theology. The "death of God" theology simply climaxes a sequence of events.² Those changes have brought new significance to the concept of Spirit.

I. THE PROBLEM

Statement of the problem. Religious epistemology has as its primary concern the knowledge of God. That concern is dealing with Mind that is more than human but is creative of and revealed in the human. One of the major problems of

¹Martin E. Marty, "The Spirit's Holy Errand," Daedalus, 96:108, Winter, 1967.

²Ibid., p. 99.

existential philosophy is how radically different the knowledge of God is from the knowledge of objects, values, one's self, and even the minds of other humans. The knowledge of God offers the possibility of a direct contact of consciousness with consciousness.

Knowledge and experience are not identical, but when considering Paul Tillich and Nicolas Berdyaev specifically, one can learn the importance of experience as a medium of spiritual knowledge. The major concern of this investigation was to determine how significantly experience relates to a Reality beyond the structures of rationality as it is expressed in the doctrine of the Spirit in the thought of Tillich and Berdyaev.

Present status of the problem. The problem of the knowledge of God has been clearly focused in recent attempts at making Christianity relevant and communicable to secularized technological society. Bishops Robinson and Pike, with an affinity for logical analysis, have been outspoken in their criticisms of archaic ecclesiastical structures and confessions.³ The radical theologians, represented by Altizer, Hamilton, and Van Buren, have denied for humanity a

³James A. Pike and John Krumm, Roadblocks to Faith (New York: Morehouse-Gorham Company, 1954).

living God, and consequently a knowledge of God.⁴

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Dr. James McCord, President of Princeton Theological Seminary, projects that the new emphasis in theology will be on the Holy Spirit--"the God of the present."⁵ The theological emphasis following the Reformation was on the Father. Barth and Bultmann, contemporary theologians, have made the Son central.⁶ Recent developments indicate serious consideration of the Holy Spirit as the emphatic theological symbol expressing the reality of God to contemporary man.

The World Council of Churches, in their 1968 meeting, will be pointing to God's promise of resurrection to all men through the Holy Spirit. The theme of that meeting will be, "Behold, I make all things new."⁷ Without seeking to redefine the Spirit, contemporary religious thought will express an urgency to know Him through His manifestations in such universal strivings as peace and social justice.⁸

Paul Tillich. Tillich's latest significant contribu-

⁴Lonnie D. Kliever, "Mapping the Radical Theologians," Religion in Life, 36:8-27, Spring, 1967.

⁵"Radical New Voice," Time, 88 (no. 6):69-70, August 5, 1966.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., p. 70.

⁸Ibid.

tion to religious thought was to bring the concept of Spirit into "sophisticated academic theology and philosophy" as few thinkers have.⁹ "Divine Spirit," for Tillich, was a symbol that gave meaning to "the revelatory experience of 'God present.'"¹⁰ In the "dimension of spirit," the power of being was united with the meaning of being.¹¹ Man was "grasped" by the divine Spirit and transcended himself in that immediate experience of revelation.¹²

Nicolas Berdyaev. Berdyaev anticipated man's radical revolt against a transcendental God. The present-day theological trend is toward a secular immanentism which makes man God.¹³ Berdyaev and Nietzsche asked the same question concerning "the place of creative ecstasy, vision and prophecy in man's endeavor to comprehend reality."¹⁴ Nietzsche's conclusion was that "God is dead" and consequently "the death of man in the advent of the superman."¹⁵

⁹Marty, loc. cit.

¹⁰Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, I, 1951; II, 1957; III, 1963), I, 111-112.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., p. 112.

¹³Kliever, loc. cit.

¹⁴Nicolas Berdyaev, Dream and Reality (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1962), p. 279.

¹⁵Ibid.

Berdyayev, on the other hand, became concerned with showing that creative ecstasy and inspiration were "a pledge of the living reality of God and man."¹⁶ Spirit was the divine element in man, an emanation of Divinity and a divine-human creative process.¹⁷

The concepts of those two thinkers point beyond the constrictive boundaries of logical positivism which eliminates both metaphysics and theology.¹⁸ Tillich and Berdyayev united subject and object in spiritual unity and thus made a divine-human reciprocity meaningful in knowledgeable experience.

III. DEFINITIONS OF TERMS

Philosophical theologian. Tillich was an apologist in the sense that he sought ways to relate theology to all human knowledge and experience.¹⁹ The "method of correlation" Tillich used described the encounter that took place

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Donald Lowrie (trans.), Christian Existentialism: A Berdyayev Anthology (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1965), p. 37.

¹⁸ William T. Blackstone, The Problem of Religious Knowledge (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1963), pp. 10-15.

¹⁹ Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall (eds.), The Theology of Paul Tillich (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1952), p. 230.

between the question implied in man's existence and the answers formulated by the Christian message.²⁰ Tillich used a philosophical method to systematize a Christian theology. He has been regarded, therefore, as a philosophical theologian.

Religious philosopher. Berdyaev resented being designated a theologian. He preferred being called a religious philosopher.²¹ His concept of Spirit maintained a religious-philosophical significance rather than a theological characterization. Berdyaev revealed the passion of a sage and a prophet²² and was considered to be the most articulate and convincing exponent on Eastern Orthodox thought.²³ He was an existentialist, in the tradition of Dostoevski-- "total, extreme, and apocalyptic."²⁴ His unique religious philosophy was his greatest contribution to Western thinkers.²⁵

²⁰Tillich, op. cit., pp. 59-62.

²¹Berdyaev, op. cit., pp. 164-165.

²²F. H. Heinemann, Existentialism and the Modern Predicament (New York: Harper & Row, 1953), p. 154.

²³"Obituary," Christian Century, 65:323, April 14, 1948.

²⁴William Barrett, Irrational Man (London: Mercury Books, 1958), p. 14.

²⁵Ibid.

The creative genius of Berdyaev was expressed in a fragmentary style²⁶ which made his philosophical creations complex and often contradictory.²⁷ Freedom characterized Berdyaev's philosophy and revealed his basic anarchistic temperament.²⁸ Creative freedom was the religious theme of his philosophical expressions.

Knowledge of God. The "knowledge of God" has been used in this investigation to describe the apprehension of the divine Other who is distinguished from the knower. Knowledge is more than the reflection of the mind on God. A creative reciprocity transfigures the subject in a "transcendental consciousness."²⁹ Revelation, thus, becomes the medium of knowledge.³⁰ "Spiritual knowledge" and "religious knowledge" have been used synonymously when related to the problem of knowing God. The term "doctrine" was used interchangeably with "concept" even though the former has theological connotations and the latter philosophical connotations.

²⁶Berdyaev, op. cit., p. 87.

²⁷B. E. Owen, "Nicolas Berdyaev," Fortnightly, 168: 412, December, 1950.

²⁸Berdyaev, op. cit., pp. 56, 62.

²⁹Lowrie, op. cit., p. 134.

³⁰Tillich, op. cit., pp. 129-131.

Experience. "Experience" was used to denote the mediation of religious knowledge by direct contact of human consciousness with divine consciousness. That "experience" made the knowledge of God different from other kinds of knowledge.

Spirit. "Spirit," when capitalized, referred to the divine Spirit. "Spirit" (with a small "s") characterized man as man.³¹ That differentiation was easily discerned in Tillich's thought. Berdyaev, influenced by Eastern Orthodox mysticism, made Spirit a divine-human mystery.³² Therefore, "Spirit" may be capitalized or not and yet mean something both divine and human. The philosophical expression of Spirit was creativity and freedom.³³

IV. PREVIEW OF THE ORGANIZATION

Authors have grouped Tillich and Berdyaev together with similar general designations. This investigation was a comparative study of their concept of Spirit as related to the knowledge of God. Such a study has not been done. The importance of such an inquiry has already been noted.

³¹Tillich, op. cit., p. 111.

³²Lowrie, op. cit., p. 37.

³³John Macquarrie, Twentieth Century Religious Thought (New York: Harper & Row, 1963), p. 203.

First section. The first part of this investigation delineated the theory of knowledge which characterized the two thinkers. Although both came from contrasting backgrounds (Berdyaev--Eastern Orthodox; Tillich--Western Protestant), a common agreement was shared in a revelatory ekstasis (ecstasy).

Second section. The second section described the "Ground of Being" (Tillich) in comparison with the Ungrund (Berdyaev-Boehme) or the Abyss of Being. Views of personality were considered and semantically differentiated. A difficulty which could not be avoided was trying to set a free-thinking anarchist (Berdyaev) who did not always use the same terms in the same way over against the systematic-minded grammarian (Tillich). Often they said the same thing with opposing images. The problem of symbol and reality was a concern in this section.

Third section. The third division dealt more specifically with the application of epistemological theory to the doctrine of the Spirit. The mysticism implied in the "New Being" of Tillich and Berdyaev's "God-manhood" was a guide toward understanding their knowledge of God. In both instances, those "experiences" were expressions of the Spirit and a divine communion as opposed to communication.

Fourth section. In the final section, the contri-

butions of those two thinkers were summarized and evaluated. The investigation has shown that an existentialist theology-- which is speaking to contemporary man--takes the doctrine of the Spirit seriously as a means toward knowing God.

V. SOURCES OF RESEARCH

Berdyaev and Tillich made impressive contributions to Christian thought. Much of the Russian philosopher's prolific pen has been translated into English. However, the large amount of research done about him has remained unpublished with some excellent exceptions. The absence of indexes to his works creates complications for the investigator. Most of the first translations were released by British printers and since have been assigned to American publishers.

Tillich's creative life was spent in the United States, thus making his thought available in English. He was forty-seven years of age when he came to America³⁴ and was completely foreign to the English language. His tortuous use of the English language makes difficult a full understanding of his thought.

Macquarrie and Herberg classify Tillich and Berdyaev as existentialist theologians. A number of articles have

³⁴Kegley, op. cit., pp. 14, 16.

been written about them and by them. However, most of Berdyaev's articles have not been translated.

Some pertinent materials were drawn from existentialist thinkers who have noted the significance of the thought of Tillich and Berdyaev. A number of unpublished dissertations have also been written on the two men separately. The problem, therefore, in religious epistemology is more than knowing just for the sake of understanding; it is knowing for the sake of worship. Personal involvement becomes necessary² when religious knowledge is the object of man's search, for the knowledge of God is an existential problem.³ Trachtenberg observes:

Part of the intellectual vitality of religious thought in our time has come from a recognition of the importance of involvement, and it has come, in nearly all instances, from those who have been influenced by what is generally called existentialism.⁴

Subjective idealism, as an approach to religious knowledge, tends to make objective reality conditional on the experience of the knower.⁵ Realism argues that there are

¹William Temple, Nature, Man and God (London: The Macmillan Company, 1934), p. 75.

²Tillich, op. cit., p. 71.

³D. Elton Trachtenberg, Philosophy of Religion (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), p. 21.

⁴Ibid., p. 22.

⁵Ibid., pp. 22-24.

CHAPTER II

RELIGIOUS EPISTEMOLOGY

William Temple states, "the heart of Religion is not an opinion about God, such as Philosophy might reach as the conclusion of its argument; it is a personal relation with God."¹ The problem, therefore, in religious epistemology is more than knowing just for the sake of understanding; it is knowing for the sake of worship. Personal involvement becomes necessary² when religious knowledge is the object of man's search, for the knowledge of God is an existential problem.³ Trueblood observes:

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Subjective idealism, as an approach to religious knowledge, tends to make objective reality conditional on the experience of the knower.⁵ Realism argues that there are

¹William Temple, Nature, Man and God (London: The Macmillan Company, 1934), p. 30.

²Tillich, op. cit., p. 71.

³D. Elton Trueblood, Philosophy of Religion (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1957), p. 23.

⁴Ibid., p. 23.

⁵Ibid., pp. 33-34.

objects that exist irrespective of the knower's experience.⁶ Pragmatism makes religious knowledge questionable because truth cannot be known on the basis of pragmatic relativism. Thus, truth becomes relative for the sake of success rather than reflecting reality.⁷ Absolutism creates the superstition of ego-infallibility. Trueblood says, "It is as much an evil to say that we know the truth perfectly as it is to say there is no truth to know."⁸ Even an infallible book must be understood by an infallible mind to comprehend absolute truth.⁹ "Truth is even though it may be beyond us."¹⁰

The traditional levels of knowledge include the following: the knowledge of physical bodies, the knowledge of other minds, the knowledge of one's own mind, and the knowledge of values and universals.¹¹ The fifth level of knowledge deals with the possibility of knowing God. The object of knowledge on that last level is Mind that is capable of creating bodies and being revealed in them. The immediate knowledge of God becomes real by a "direct contact of consciousness with consciousness."¹²

⁶Ibid., pp. 36-38.

⁸Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 46.

¹²Ibid., p. 56.

⁷Ibid., pp. 39-42.

⁹Ibid., p. 43.

¹¹Ibid., pp. 54-56.

I. KNOWING AND BEING

Ontological reason. One of Tillich's key phrases was "ultimate concern," which he described as the determining factor of our being or not-being.¹³ "Being," in that context, included the entirety of human reality, "the structure, the meaning, and the aim of existence."¹⁴ The question "to be or not to be," must obtain a decisive response, for it meant to be "ultimately concerned about that which determines [man's] ultimate destiny beyond all preliminary necessities and accidents."¹⁵

Tillich asserted that knowing implies being.¹⁶ "Therefore, it is more adequate to begin an analysis of existence with the question of being rather than with the problem of knowledge."¹⁷ That statement did not preclude the opposite order to be used in some situations, but Tillich denied that the philosophical or theological system could be supported by epistemology.¹⁸

Ontological reason, for Tillich, was "the structure of the mind which enables the mind to grasp and to transform reality."¹⁹ Elements other than the cognitive were included

¹³Tillich, op. cit., p. 14.

¹⁴Ibid.

¹⁵Ibid.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 71.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 72.

in ontological reason, which were the aesthetic, theoretical and practical, detached and passionate, subjective and objective.²⁰ "Technical reason" described the capacity to determine the means to be used toward ends that are already given.²¹ Ontological reason, on the other hand, determined the ends and then the means, secondarily.²² Technical reason, therefore, needed ontological reason as its companion and the source of its expression.²³

Ontological reason was capable of turning upward and participating in the universal logos of being or of turning downward and succumbing to non-being.²⁴ Ontological reason was both subjective and objective. The mind received or "grasped" a reality according to some corresponding structure of reality and penetrated into the depth or essential nature of the reality.²⁵ Another aspect of the mind was its ability to "shape" or transform a given material into a living structure which had the power of being.²⁶ Tillich defined subjective reason as "the rational structure of reality which the mind can grasp and according to which it can shape reality."²⁷

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Ibid., p. 73. ²²Ibid.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Kegley, op. cit., p. 142.

²⁵Tillich, op. cit., p. 76. ²⁶Ibid. ²⁷Ibid., p. 77.

Berdyayev Depth of reason. Tillich assigned to ontological reason a dimension which he called "depth":

The depth of reason is the expression of something that is not reason but which precedes reason and is manifest through it. Reason in both its objective and its subjective structures points to something which appears in these structures but which transcends them in power and meaning. This is not another field of reason which could progressively be discovered and expressed, but it is that which is expressed through every rational expression. It could be called the 'substance' which appears in the rational structure, or 'being-itself' which is manifest in the logos of being, or the 'ground' which is creative in every rational creation, or the 'abyss' which cannot be exhausted by any creation of or by any totality of them, or the 'infinite potentiality of being and meaning' which pours into the rational structures of mind and reality, actualizing and transforming them.²⁸

Reason pointed to a reality that was beyond objective findings. Tillich, in the "depth" dimension, located it one step below--along with Boehme and Berdyaev.²⁹ That Reality manifested itself in every act of reason, but it was hidden beneath the conditions of existence.³⁰

II. KNOWING AND OBJECTIVITY

Subjective reality. Spiritual reality is imparted by God, according to Berdyaev, as a non-objective reality.³¹

²⁸ Ibid., p. 79.

²⁹ Berdyaev, op. cit., p. 177.

³⁰ Kegley, op. cit., p. 143.

³¹ Nicolas Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, trans. George Reavey (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1939), p. 11.

Berdyaev's view was that the objective is that which is the least real.³² "Objectification is merely a process of symbolizing"³³ and cannot be regarded as ultimate reality.³⁴

Heinemann saw in Berdyaev's opposition to objectification, a connection with Kierkegaard's discrimination between inessential and essential knowledge.³⁵ Berdyaev praised Kant's distinction between the phenomenal and the noumenal world but criticized him for denying that the noumenal world could be known. Kant failed to explain why man makes use of objectified knowledge.³⁶

Berdyaev identified objectification with the fall of man³⁷ which led to a mutual severance between persons.³⁸ The mystery of reality was not solved by concentrating on objectifications but by reflecting on the action of the subject.³⁹

Being and objectivity. Berdyaev maintained that the

³²Nicolas Berdyaev, The Beginning and the End, trans. R. M. French (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), p. 53.

³³Ibid. ³⁴Berdyaev, Dream and Reality, p. 276.

³⁵Heinemann, op. cit., p. 41.

³⁶N. O. Lossky, History of Russian Philosophy (New York: International Universities Press, Inc., 1951), p. 238.

³⁷Macquarrie, op. cit., p. 203.

³⁸Lossky, loc. cit.

³⁹Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 9.

subject is ultimately real and capable of knowing reality.⁴⁰ "Being itself," which is a Greek philosophical term adapted by Tillich to describe the nature of God, was denied ultimate reality by Berdyaev on the grounds that it was a product of intellectual objectification.⁴¹ "Original reality," declares Berdyaev, "is creative act and freedom, and the bearer of original reality is the person, the subject, spirit rather than Being, nature or object."⁴²

The relationship between "thought" and "being," to Berdyaev, may be summarized as follows:

as long as the knowing subject and the known object are conceived as divided, as long as reality presents itself to us 'objectively,' or rather in an objectivized way so long must knowledge needs remain inadequate to reality, i.e., a knowledge pertaining to disparate, disintegrated being.⁴³

Knowledge and creativity. Berdyaev called his position an "Idealism of freedom" which was distinguished from "naturalism" and "objective Idealism."⁴⁴ He affirmed that "knowledge is essentially active because man is active."⁴⁵

⁴⁰Berdyaev, Dream and Reality, p. 276.

⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Donald Attwater (ed.), Modern Christian Revolutionaries (New York: The Devin-Adair Company, 1947), pp. 332-333.

⁴⁴Berdyaev, loc. cit.

⁴⁵Nicolas Berdyaev, Solitude and Society, trans. George Reavey (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1938), p. 46.

No epistemological distinction existed between knowledge and being. But Berdyaev approximated Tillich's position when he says, "knowledge is not merely reflection, it is creative transfiguration."⁴⁶ That "transfiguration" was the same as Tillich's "shaping" of man's world. Berdyaev's position fused both the idea of "grasping" and "shaping" (Tillich) into an indivisible spiritual monad.

Knowledge, for Berdyaev, was the result of free activity; it was "creative transfiguration." Man participated with God in the finishing of the created world. No human cognitive action created the world. God created, but man brought his creative freedom into every sphere of knowledge to continue the process of world-creation.⁴⁷ Berdyaev's concept of freedom which is prior to being⁴⁸ became the abyss out of which erupted the creative activity of knowledge.⁴⁹

Berdyaev allowed two kinds of knowledge: intuition with regard to spiritual reality and objectivization with

⁴⁶Lowrie, op. cit., p. 27.

⁴⁷Berdyaev, Solitude and Society, p. 46. Cf. Nicolas Berdyaev, The Meaning of the Creative Act, trans. Donald Lowrie (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1955), p. 42.

⁴⁸Berdyaev, Dream and Reality, p. 103.

⁴⁹Lowrie, op. cit., p. 134.

regard to nature.⁵⁰ The latter failed to transcend the boundaries of reason, for basically it was rationalization. Therefore, thought did not transcend the individual or existence.⁵¹

Divine-human subjectivity. The subject, understood by Berdyaev as spirit, became the informant of actuality with purpose. For Spirit was divine-human subjectivity in which "a Divine breath" penetrated human existence.⁵² Spirit was freedom and creative act.⁵³ But that position precluded a clear distinction between natural and supernatural knowledge.⁵⁴

Berdyaev's theory of knowledge took on a personal character without becoming exclusively isolating. "Personality gets to know things in communion and community with the world and with man; it enters into union with world experience and world thought."⁵⁵ Thus, knowledge was not merely

⁵⁰Lossky, op. cit., p. 249.

⁵¹Lowrie, op. cit., p. 34.

⁵²Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 11.

⁵³Nicolas Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, trans. R. M. French (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1944), p. 76.

⁵⁴Attwater, op. cit., p. 335.

⁵⁵Berdyaev, Beginning and End, p. 39.

logical, but social.⁵⁶ Knowledge was not only born out of life itself, but reflected life's destiny. The basic question of epistemology was not how one may know, but "who knows, and does he who knows belong to being?"⁵⁷ That theory of knowledge led to Berdyaev's concept of Spirit which he termed as "the truth of being."⁵⁸ Spirit was not being in the sense of a rational category, but it was a reality prior to being.⁵⁹ Spirit was freedom and was accepted as "an inbreathing, the inspiration of God. . . . In spirit man is free. . . ." ⁶⁰ Berdyaev's paradoxical "God-manhood" was inextricably interwoven with his theory of knowledge.

III. KNOWING AND REVELATION

Ecstasy and the transcendent. Tillich and Berdyaev were at opposite poles ontologically. Berdyaev treated being subjectively and as a secondary reality. Being, for Tillich,

⁵⁶Berdyaev, Dream and Reality, p. 126.

⁵⁷Nicolas Berdyaev, The Destiny of Man, trans. Natalie Duddington (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), pp. 3-13. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 32.

⁵⁸Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 57. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 36.

⁵⁹Ibid. ⁶⁰Lowrie, op. cit., p. 37.

was primary and therefore the most real. The objectivity of being in Berdyaev's thought made being the least real. Tillich's ontological definition of reason was a philosophical attempt to grasp reality.⁶¹ On the other hand, Tillich and Berdyaev moved close to each other when they considered elements relating to revelation. For instance, Tillich's "depth of reason" can be equated with Berdyaev's "spiritual knowledge." Both of those concepts pointed toward meaning and potentialities which were not expressed, or "objectified." Berdyaev's idea of revelation included an event-- Tillich called it a "sign-event"⁶²--within the spiritual life. But that event was an internal meeting of the knower with Thou who was not object but subject. Tillich had the same thing in mind when he endeavored to overcome the gap in his subject-object relationship by uniting the act of knowledge with the knower.⁶³

The mystical element of Berdyaev's thought became apparent when he refused to rationalize the divine-human relationship involved in revelation.⁶⁴ The revelation of God

⁶¹Kegley, op. cit., p. 206.

⁶²Tillich, op. cit., p. 115. ⁶³Ibid., p. 94.

⁶⁴Berdyaev, Dream and Reality, p. 205.

⁶⁵Tillich, op. cit., pp. 111-112.

was both a revelation of God and a revelation of man.⁶⁵ In its relation to knowledge, revelation was something that was given; whereas, knowledge was that which the knower discovered. Often man's perceptions, according to Berdyaev, may collide with what was revealed because of his reaction to revelation.⁶⁶

Berdyaev's mysticism was shared, to a degree, by Tillich. Tillich spoke of being grasped by and being united with the Christ which was a medium of knowing God.⁶⁷ "Grace" was the practical term to describe that high level of creative existence. Otherwise, creative ecstasy was called "inspiration." But Tillich chose to use "ecstatic reason" in his "system."⁶⁸

'Ecstasy' ('standing outside one's self') points to a state of mind which is extraordinary in the sense that the mind transcends its ordinary situation. . . . Ecstasy occurs only if the mind is grasped by the mystery, namely, by the ground of being and meaning. And . . . there is no revelation without ecstasy.⁶⁹

Ecstasy, in Tillich's usage, was not equated with an

⁶⁵Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, pp. 171-172. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 236.

⁶⁶Berdyaev, Solitude and Society, p. 7. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 237.

⁶⁷Tillich, op. cit., p. 96.

⁶⁸Kegley, op. cit., p. 211.

⁶⁹Tillich, op. cit., pp. 111-112.

emotional excitement (though that may be included), but it was a state in which reason went beyond rational structures without destroying them.⁷⁰ Tillich permitted the use of "ecstasy" to describe the miracle of the mind and that miracle as the ecstasy of reality.⁷¹ The miracle, or "sign-event" which gave the mystery of revelation, did not destroy the rational structure of reality in which it appeared, but produced a numinous astonishment, pointed to the mystery of being, and was received as an ecstatic experience.⁷² Brightman quoted Tillich as saying, "Revelation is the breaking-through of the unconditional into the world of the unconditioned."⁷³

Berdyayev described ek-stasis as the signification of the creative act, "a breaking through to eternity."⁷⁴ The movement of that view progressed in reverse order to that of Tillich's break-through of the infinite into the finite. Man could and did experience the passing out beyond his personal limits. That spiritual experience was inward, and the "tran-

⁷⁰Ibid., pp. 112-114.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 117.

⁷²Ibid., pp. 116-117.

⁷³Edgar S. Brightman, A Philosophy of Religion (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1940), p. 174.

⁷⁴Berdyayev, Dream and Reality, p. 205.

scendent" which lifted him came from his inner depth.⁷⁵

God is deeper within me than I, myself, as St Augustine has said. I must transcend myself. The depths within a man may be closed off, and these depths demand a break-through, transcendence. Through this transcendence the secret in man is made manifest: this is revelation.⁷⁶

New Being and the Divine-human process. Revelation eludes precise definition but is "received" by the Spirit and existentially realized in Jesus as the Christ,⁷⁷ who is "final, definite, and beyond all change."⁷⁸ Tillich recognized that the theological system depends entirely upon the criterion which revelation alone supplies in the "New Being in Jesus as the Christ."⁷⁹ Apart from revelation the knowledge of God would be unavailable.⁸⁰

Like Tillich, Berdyaev denied reality to revelation that is handed down through the channels of history and tradition.⁸¹ Tillich, however, did admit the occurrence of

⁷⁵Nicolas Berdyaev, The Divine and the Human, trans. R. M. French (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1949), pp. 62-63. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 238.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Tillich, op. cit., pp. 132-137.

⁷⁸Kegley, op. cit., p. 332.

⁷⁹John Burnaby, "Towards Understanding Paul Tillich," Journal of Theological Studies, 5:202, October, 1954.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Berdyaev, Dream and Reality, p. 170.

revelation through (not in) history as miracle through ecstatic experience.⁸²

Berdyayev acknowledged that God reveals Himself through the Holy Scriptures, but knowledge was impossible without divine action. God met man, which made revelation a divine-human process. The knowledge of God predicated revelation, and revelation predicated the activity of the whole man. Revelation was not something man received automatically as "a special act of Divinity."⁸³

God was yearning for man, and man yearned for God. That reciprocal action disclosed to Berdyayev the double-sidedness of the religious phenomenon. Rationalistic theology denied the divine longing for man, because no room was made for the need of completion in a rationalistic concept of emotion. Perfection, then, became changeless.⁸⁴ Berdyayev's God was creative Spirit expressed in freedom.

Tillich and Berdyayev used different terms to describe the same process of revelation. The God-man is the key to their expressions of the reciprocal exchange between God and man.

⁸²Tillich, op. cit., p. 120.

⁸³Nicolas Berdyayev, Truth and Revelation, trans. R. M. French (London: Geoffrey Bles, 1953), pp. 35-37. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 239.

⁸⁴Berdyayev, Divine and Human, p. 27. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 238.

Critique of revelation. Berdyaev's "critique of revelation" was a summons to take the opposite direction from the course taken by the age of the enlightenment. The critique of reason moved toward objectivization; i.e., "socialism, natural religion and deism, toward a rationalistic and moralistic interpretation of Christianity, toward the denial of mystery and the mystical side of Christianity."⁸⁵ The direction to be taken by the critique of revelation was toward "primary spiritual experience, toward the existential subject; not toward the 'natural' but rather back toward spirituality."⁸⁶

To summarize, Tillich's approach to knowing God was ontological, and Berdyaev's approach was subjective. Both thinkers conceived the same reality but in different categories. Their opposing terms, nevertheless, did not prevent them from approximating the same position regarding revelatory experience.

⁸⁵ Berdyaev, Truth and Revelation, pp. 53-54. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., pp. 239-240.

⁸⁶ Lowrie, op. cit., p. 239.

to transcend himself as a CHAPTER III to communion with the Mystery, in which is found the truth of mysticism. For

THE DIVINE MYSTERY

Berdyayev, that mysticism was a better source of the know-

ledge. Rudolf Otto's The Idea of the Holy brings the serious religious thinker into the presence of the divine. The subject-object structure of reality is transcended by the experience of the holy numinous. Otto described the mystery of the holy as tremendum and fascinatum which pointed to the abyss and ground of man's being.¹ Both Tillich and Berdyayev were drawn to the mystery of divine Being in the rhythm of Otto's impulse.²

apophatic theology. "Apophatic theology" reduced the mystery to a sociomorphism which frequently has become idolatry and reflects the slavery of religious

I. THE GROUND OR ABYSS OF BEING

Apophatic theology. Berdyayev considered God as being free from concepts and all rationalization. He states, "The knowledge of God is pure apophatics,"³ which means to assert that God is but in the assertion deny that He can be known. The only way that Berdyayev conceived the possibility of divine reality becoming known was in mystery. Man was able

Berdyayev, Divine and Human, p. 7. Ibid.

¹Rudolf Otto, The Idea of the Holy (London: Oxford University Press, 1923), pp. 22-25.

²Tillich, op. cit., pp. 215-216. Cf. Berdyayev, Divine and Human, p. 7.

³Berdyayev, Truth and Revelation, p. 57. Cf. Berdyayev, Slavery and Freedom, p. 71. Cf. Will Herberg, Four Existentialist Theologians (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1958), p. 143.

to transcend himself as he entered into communion with the Mystery⁴ in which is found the truth of mysticism.⁵ For Berdyaev, that mysticism was a better source of the knowledge of the divine Mystery than that of theology.⁶ Tillich agreed at that point as he elucidated man's endeavor to reach God by this world's wisdom and defined it as the "foolishness of idolatry."⁷ God may be known in personal experience and communion.⁸

The great mystery in Berdyaev's thought was bound up in the paradox of "God-manhood," which marked the limits of what he called apophatic theology.⁹ "Kataphatic theology" reduced the mystery to a sociomorphism which frequently has become inhumanity and reflects the slavery of religious societies (including the church) to the sovereignty of success, progress, and the acquisition of power. Berdyaev observed that men have even adjusted Christian doctrines to those same symbols of slavery.¹⁰ Then he adds, "final truth

⁴Ibid., p. 83.

⁵Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 7. ⁶Ibid.

⁷Paul Tillich, The New Being (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 112.

⁸Berdyaev, Beginning and End, p. 155.

⁹Berdyaev, Truth and Revelation, p. 57. Cf. Berdyaev, Beginning and End, pp. 99ff.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 57-58.

lies with mysticism rather than with dogmatics."¹¹ Dogmas have mystical significance, but Berdyaev pointed out that theology was derived rather than primary in its expression.¹²

Berdyaev's view of God did not relegate Him to a position of being "Wholly Other." In fact, his "God-manhood" concept did not make God qualitatively different from man. Man had an indelible godlike element within himself.¹³ Berdyaev described man as a microcosmos and a microtheos.¹⁴ For him, no cosmos or God was in the objective order, but rather a cosmos as well as God was in man.¹⁵ Man was then conceived as a being who surmounted himself and overcame the world by participating in the mystery of creative power.¹⁶

Behind the man of this phenomenal world stood the transcendental man. Berdyaev described "transcendental man" as one who "is created in eternity" and "abides in God."¹⁷ The incarnation was an interpretation of two natures in the God-Man and should take place in the "God-manhood."¹⁸

Tillich was speaking apophatically when he posited

¹¹Ibid., p. 58. ¹²Ibid., pp. 57-58.

¹³Macquarrie, op. cit., p. 203. Cf. Berdyaev, Beginning and End, p. 234.

¹⁴Berdyaev, Beginning and End, p. 172.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 40, 172. ¹⁶Ibid., p. 172.

¹⁷Berdyaev, Truth and Revelation, pp. 141-142.

¹⁸Herberg, op. cit., p. 114.

a "God above the God of theism."¹⁹ His desire was to express divine reality above that which is expressed in the God about whom man's understanding is limited by finite conceptions.²⁰ Any conceptualizing of God, even a "God above God," must encounter necessary limitations by the receptacle of human finitude.²¹

Subjectivity of being. Apophatic mystical theology would not accept the category of being as belonging to God. Being, for Berdyaev, would either designate God as a super-being or as non-being.²² God was rather the Existent. He was Spirit in nature, in substance, in force, and in power, "concretely existing from profound spiritual experience and not from objectivized natural and social experience."²³

Spirit is neither an objective reality nor a rational category of being. Spirit has never existed, nor can it exist anywhere, in the form of a real object. The philosophy of spirit should not be a philosophy of being or an ontology, but a philosophy of existence.²⁴

Since God was Spirit, for Berdyaev, He could not be

¹⁹D. Mackenzie Brown, Ultimate Concern: Tillich in Dialogue (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), p. 51.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 8.

²²Ibid., p. 10.

²³Berdyaev, Divine and Human, pp. 9, 14.

²⁴Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 10.

objective being.²⁵ God was not even to be regarded in terms of the Absolute, for there are not indications of existence or signs of life in the Absolute.²⁶ Berdyaev faced the devotional principle and denied prayer to an abstraction. Only the God of revelation, the God of the Bible, was able to communicate with and have communion in man.²⁷

That doctrine, professing to meet the needs of abstract reason, turns God, so to speak, into a stone; it deprives Him of any interior life and of all dynamic force. But God is life; life, not being, if by that term the rational concept of being is understood. Being is secondary, not primary; it comes to light after the division between subject and object; it is a product of thought, of rationalization.²⁸

For Berdyaev, God was indubitably and absolutely beyond all objectivization, even in abstract thought.²⁹

Berdyaev offered the following marks of objectification:

1. The estrangement of the object from the subject.
2. The absorption of the personal in the impersonally universal.
3. The dominion of necessity and the destruction of

²⁵Nicolas Berdyaev, The Realm of Spirit and the Realm of Caesar, trans. Donald Lowrie (London: Gollancz, 1952), pp. 41-42. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., pp. 50-51.

²⁶Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, p. 84.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 84-85. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 46.

²⁸Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 15.

²⁹Berdyaev, Truth and Revelation, pp. 26, 53.

freedom.

4. The adjustment of the socialization and nominalization of man and his opinion.³⁰

Being, for him, was a secondary product. The mystery of primary existence was revealed in the subject.³¹ To identify objectivity with reality was to confuse both categories. "The 'objective' is that which is least real, least existential."³²

Philosophers have denied the existence of God because He was conceived merely as an objective being standing above men and directing their affairs as He chose.³³ But God is not being, and not nature; He is Spirit. As Berdyaev says, "He is greater and higher, more mysterious than our rationalized concept of being."³⁴

The dualism of Berdyaev's thought was expressed when he denied this phenomenal world into which man is thrown as belonging to God. The noumenal world of God (Spirit, subjective) broke through into this world in the existence of

³⁰Berdyaev, Beginning and End, p. 62.

³¹Ibid., pp. 111, 141. Cf. Heinemann, op. cit., p. 158.

³²Ibid., p. 53.

³³Berdyaev, Truth and Revelation, pp. 94, 143.

³⁴Berdyaev, Beginning and End, p. 100.

living beings.³⁵ "God is not like anything at all in the world of objectification. . . . He is spirit, freedom, love and eternal creativeness."³⁶

To objectify God, for Berdyaev, meant to make Him an anthropomorphic and sociomorphic tribal God regarded as a master, king or governor with man as a subject and a slave. God should not be considered creator of the world any more than master and king, for He was beyond the limits of a causal relation.³⁷ Reference to God as an administrator of the universe was false objectification.³⁸ Man was to transcend the limitations of slavery toward the subjective reality of the divine, and thereby attain the highest humanity. "Likeness to God. . . . means the attainment of humanity at its maximum."³⁹

Ontological concern. Tillich was just as anxious to avoid objectifying God as Berdyaev. But he was just as insistent on using an ontological approach as Berdyaev was in opposing it with a spiritualistic-subjectivistic approach. Tillich's starting point was with man who asked the question of ultimate concern from the depths of his own being. "This does not mean that first there is a being called God and then

³⁵Berdyaev, Truth and Revelation, p. 155.

³⁶Ibid., p. 238.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 55-56.

³⁸Ibid., p. 57.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 123-124.

the demand that man should be ultimately concerned about him."⁴⁰ Whatever ultimately concerned man, for Tillich, became god. Thus, man could be ultimately concerned only about that which is god for him.⁴¹ That abstract idea is implicit in the commandment, "Love the Lord thy God with all thy heart."⁴² Tillich described religion as "the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern."⁴³ That concern made all other concerns simply preliminary and offered the answer to the question of the meaning to life.⁴⁴ If one was aware of his finitude, he already had some idea of the infinite. "Finite being, surrounded, as it were, by non-being, cannot escape the quest for the ultimate ground of being. This is man's ultimate concern."⁴⁵ God was not a particular being over against other lesser beings.⁴⁶ Tillich suggested that the genuine ultimate must transcend the subject-object relationship and was a

⁴⁰Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 211. ⁴¹Ibid.

⁴²Matthew 22:37.

⁴³Paul Tillich, Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 4.

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Macquarrie, op. cit., p. 367.

⁴⁶Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 235.

reality in which man himself participated.⁴⁷ "The God which is a being is transcended by the God who is Being itself, the ground and abyss of every being."⁴⁸ God was not identical with every moving atom, but for Tillich, God was in everything as its creative ground.⁴⁹ "Ground" was a metaphor that pointed to the idea of creation.⁵⁰ Tillich would not say that God was man's true being, but that "our true being is rooted in the divine ground. The essence of every individual human being is in the divine, or--in theological language--'in the mind of God.'"⁵¹ Tillich considered all descriptions of God, other than "being-itself" and its corollaries, as merely symbolic.⁵² Yet symbolic terms were necessary in order to speak of God as living, and every true symbol participated in the reality it symbolized. "God lives in so far as he is the ground of life."⁵³ Hartshorne takes issue with Tillich's nonliteral usage of the term "symbol."⁵⁴ He finds no good reason for

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Paul Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 82.

⁴⁹Brown, op. cit., p. 173.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 46.

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 48-49.

⁵²Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 238-239.

⁵³Ibid., p. 242.

⁵⁴Kegley, op. cit., p. 170.

Tillich's withdrawal from the symbolic applicability of "Process-itself" to God⁵⁵ which comes within the structure of Berdyaev's thought.⁵⁶

Tillich and Berdyaev had a common intellectual antecedent in Jacob Boehme.⁵⁷ Therefore, the "ground of being" in Tillich's thought approached the same identity of the "Divine Nothing" (or Ungrund) in Berdyaev's thought. No rational explanation can be given to the Ungrund. One can only acknowledge it as an "infinite mystery underlying all that is, visible and invisible--the fathomless abyss of the indeterminate."⁵⁸

Boehme understood freedom to be rooted in God who created it. Berdyaev, on the contrary, considered freedom as "groundless" and outside God. So, freedom was uncreated.⁵⁹ That concept forced Berdyaev into the same alternative as that of Tillich. Instead of a "God above God," Berdyaev implied a "God beneath God." Freedom was spirit and prior to being.⁶⁰ Freedom, like being-itself, eludes a rational definition.⁶¹

⁵⁵Ibid., pp. 172f, 339.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 170.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 340.

⁵⁸Michel Vallon, An Apostle of Freedom: Life and Teachings of Nicolas Berdyaev (New York: Philosophical Library, 1960), p. 149.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 151.

⁶⁰Lowrie, op. cit., p. 147.

⁶¹Ibid.

Berdyaev describes the abyss of creative freedom:

[it] is the source of all life, every actualization in being; in it are hidden the possibilities of both good and evil. A primordial, irrational mystery, the abyss lies at the base of the world's life. And no system of logic can completely cover this irrational mystery of life.⁶²

Both God and freedom were manifested out of the Ungrund. God was not responsible for freedom from which evil arose. Man was the product of both God and freedom-- of non-being.⁶³

Symbolic knowledge of that Divine Mystery allowed spiritual experiences not attained in "metaphysical categories or ontological substances."⁶⁴ The Ungrund, above all, was creative dynamism, movement, and energy.⁶⁵ God created the world out of the depths of Freedom, and overcame the depths of non-being by sacrifice and love.⁶⁶ Creativity was the mystery of freedom and "proceeds from within, out of immeasurable and inexplicable depths, not from without, not from the world's necessity."⁶⁷

⁶²Lowrie, op. cit., p. 188.

⁶³Charles Hartshorne and William L. Reese, Philosophers Speak of God (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), p. 288.

⁶⁴Vallon, op. cit., pp. 152-153. ⁶⁵Ibid., p. 153.

⁶⁶Lowrie, op. cit., p. 147.

⁶⁷Berdyaev, Meaning of the Creative Act, pp. 144-145. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 145.

Freedom is the ultimate: it cannot be derived from anything: it cannot be made the equivalent of anything. Freedom is the baseless foundation of being: it is deeper than all being. We cannot penetrate to a rationally perceived base for freedom. Freedom is a well of immeasurable depth.⁶⁸

Spiritual existence. Berdyaev described freedom as spirit and spirit as real existence.⁶⁹ "Spiritual experience is the greatest reality in human life."⁷⁰ For Berdyaev, God and His divinity, spirit, and the spiritual were communicated to man in the experience of life. The only proof of the existence of God was found alone in the spiritual experience of man.⁷¹ Berdyaev admitted that the majority of mankind has probably never had a genuinely spiritual experience.⁷² That void explains the denial of God's existence by an ubiquitous scepticism.

Tillich refused to admit that God "exists" even symbolically. The creative "ground of essence and existence" could not become a part of the transition from essence (being) to existence.⁷³ He could not be universal essence (pan-

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, p. 11. Cf. Vallon, op. cit., p. 154.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ Vallon, op. cit., p. 155. ⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 204-206.

theism), for then He would cease to transcend all finite potentialities, having ceased to be the power of their ground.⁷⁴ "It is as atheistic to affirm the existence of God as it is to deny it. God is being itself, not a being."⁷⁵

Tillich's thought, however, progressed toward more agreement with that of Berdyaev's as his Systematic Theology evolved. Earlier he changed his terminology from the unconditioned to the unconditional, and then from the unconditional to the ultimate concern. Finally, in the third volume of his "system", he came from being-itself to spirit.⁷⁶ His spiritual and intellectual heritage pointed back to Boehme, who in no way could say that "God's essence is a distinct thing possessing a particular place or abode, for the abyss of nature and of creation is God himself."⁷⁷ Therefore, God could not "exist" at all. Ferre, evaluating Tillich's position, comments, "God cannot be a separate being or entity but is the total meaning-reality that makes for existence and for harmony of existence."⁷⁸

"Divine Spirit" or "Spiritual Presence" was used by Tillich as a dimension of life which united the power of

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 236.

⁷⁵Ibid., p. 237.

⁷⁶Nels Ferre, "Tillich and the Nature of Transcendence," Religion in Life, 35:665, Winter, 1966.

⁷⁷Ibid., p. 666.

⁷⁸Ibid.

being with the meaning of being.⁷⁹ "Spirit can be defined as the actualization of power and meaning in unity."⁸⁰ The tension between essence and existence was relieved as man participated in the New Being. The Spirit enabled man, in his essential being, to conquer the "distortions of existence" as he appeared under the "conditions of existence."⁸¹ Thus, man's "existence", for Tillich, was ambiguous, but his essential being was actualized "within the existential in an unambiguous way."⁸² The divine Spirit broke into the human spirit and drove it out of itself. The experience was one of self-transcendence.⁸³ All mankind, as Tillich observed, was always under the impact of the Spiritual Presence.⁸⁴ That idea was closely akin to the "God-manhood" concept of Berdyaev in which two worlds met: the world of nature, necessity, and slavery; the world of transcendence, freedom, and a divine consciousness of himself.⁸⁵

Berdyaev, however, maintained that man was united with God in existence while Tillich's view of "essence" made it impossible for God to be existential.

⁷⁹Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 111. ⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Ibid., pp. 269-270.

⁸²Ibid., p. 270.

⁸³Ibid., p. 112.

⁸⁴Ibid., p. 140.

⁸⁵Berdyaev, Meaning of the Creative Act, pp. 60-62. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 55.

Both Tillich and Berdyaev found a common source for their thought in Boehme. The Ungrund was used to express the Reality that went beyond (or beneath) man's finitude. Whether God was described as the "Ground of Being" or as the "Abyss of Being", He became known within man's existence but outside normal descriptive categories.

II. THE PERSONAL

The interpretation of the category of person is anticipated in and determined by these authors' explication of the category of being. Tillich spoke of God as personal, but the being of God transcended the symbol.⁸⁶ Berdyaev's subjective theme made God known intuitively in the depths of personal existence.⁸⁷

Impersonal being. Tillich posited the God who is "Personal-Itself" above the God who is a person.⁸⁸ The same logic was used when he made "Being-itself" transcendent over God who is a being. He does say, "Being includes personal being," but God was still left in the abstract. Man's encounter with God was one with the "ground of everything personal, and as such not a person."⁸⁹

⁸⁶Macquarrie, op. cit., p. 368. ⁸⁷Ibid., p. 203.

⁸⁸Tillich, Biblical Religion, p. 83. ⁸⁹Ibid.

The classical Christian doctrine of God (esse ipsum), according to Tillich, was a transpersonal category.⁹⁰ Being-itself was a term that pointed to the "unconditional and infinite character of the ultimate" and rendered Him impossible to identify Himself with anything particular that existed.⁹¹ He was not writing in a spiritualistic context, but the problem of the incarnation was obviously side-stepped to accomodate Buddhist thought. In his Systematic Theology, he was unashamed to say that, "God is not God without universal participation."⁹²

To be fair, Tillich did say that God was not less than personal, but he ruled that "the symbol is confusing." He was convinced that the term was not used by classical theology except in reference to "the trinitarian hypostases," not for God Himself. God was not made "a person" until the nineteenth century when the trinitarian concept was interpreted in terms of persons.⁹³

Trueblood makes the distinction between "personal" and "a person" a mere quibble. Grammatically, the adjective has no meaning without reference to the noun. "The only

⁹⁰Tillich, Christianity and World Religions, p. 67.

⁹¹Ibid.

⁹²Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 245. ⁹³Ibid.

reality that is personal is person."⁹⁴ He refuses to accept Tillich's position that God became personal in the nineteenth century. God was clearly a Person from Christ. "How else could Christ say 'Oh Father?' [sic] Can a direct appeal be made to that which is personal, but not a person?"⁹⁵

Hartshorne agrees with Tillich by interpreting God as the "universal individual, truly individual yet no less universal and free, participating in the being of everything as its ground."⁹⁷

Tillich spoke of the personal character of God as a "myth", and says, "Where the myth is taken literally, God is less than the ultimate, he is less than the object of ultimate concern, he is not God in the infinite and unconditional sense of the great commandment."⁹⁸

Trueblood wants to know what Tillich meant by "taken literally." He knows Tillich did not mean "taken as though God has a physical form like man's form or appetites and temptations."⁹⁹ Every thinking person would notice the inadequacy

⁹⁴Trueblood, op. cit., p. 273. ⁹⁵Ibid.

⁹⁶Charles Hartshorne, "Tillich and the Nontheological Meanings of Theological Terms," Religion in Life, 35:681, Winter, 1966.

⁹⁷Burnaby, op. cit., p. 199.

⁹⁸Trueblood, op. cit., p. 269. ⁹⁹Ibid.

of that concept. Trueblood concludes that Tillich meant "taken seriously." But Trueblood detects a fallacy in the reasoning.

If I believe 'literally' that God is personal, because I believe that the highest order of being is personal being, why is God less than ultimate? . . . To picture God as an impersonal absolute, a mere being with no consciousness or purpose, is to involve oneself in one absurdity while trying to escape another. God is not the object of ultimate concern if he lacks the simple majesty of the freedom which man undoubtedly has.

The central point is that if God is not personal, in a literal sense, then God is not the ultimate explanation of that which most requires explanation.

Trueblood acknowledges that the personal character of God transcends the level of human personality, but he insists that while God is more than we are, "He must be at least as much as we are."¹⁰¹

Personal spirit. Berdyaev was diametrically opposed to Tillich at this crucial point. Personality was prior to being in Berdyaev's thought and was spiritual.¹⁰² Personality "presupposes the existence of the spiritual world."¹⁰³ Super-personal values were implied and created by personality.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., pp. 269-270.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 270.

¹⁰² Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, p. 73.

¹⁰³ Berdyaev, Destiny of Man, pp. 61-62. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 69.

¹⁰⁴ Lowrie, loc. cit.

Personality had value in itself, but it also presupposed the supreme value of God.¹⁰⁵ Conversely, personality was created by the idea of God and the freedom of man.¹⁰⁶ "Human personality is the supreme value . . . because it is God's idea, God's image, the bearer of the divine element of life."¹⁰⁷

Personality was not to be found in the objectified world, neither was it an objectivization of the psychic life to be observed by the psychological scientist.¹⁰⁸ Man, in such a case, would be only partially known. "A person must be known only as subject, in infinite subjectivity, where the mystery of existence lies hidden."¹⁰⁹

A doctrine of personality, Berdyaev thought, was possible on the basis of a Christian interpretation of man. His Christian concept perceived man as not only fallen and sinful, but as possessing the image and likeness of God. That spiritual element in man elevated him above the social and natural order. Spiritual freedom gave him an independence from the "realm of Caesar."¹¹⁰

A personalistic philosophy must accept the fact that spirit does not generalize, but rather individualizes: it does not construct a world of

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., p. 73.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 71.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 74.

ideal values, general and non-human, but a world of persons with their qualitative content.¹¹¹

The Personality of God and the personality of man presupposed each other. Personality could not survive if it were self-contained. Love and sacrifice expressed the relationship that was involved in mutual communion.¹¹²

Berdyayev accepted a divine element in man in which a paradoxical union took place. The divine arose out of the mystery of "divine-humanness" which was both transcendent to man and at the same time joined with the human in the divine-human image.¹¹³ Personality reflected that divine image and consequently made God possible as an inner reality.¹¹⁴ Berdyayev made personality a "theandric" existence.¹¹⁵

Personality was not a part of the natural world, but invaded it "with a claim to be its own end and the supreme value."¹¹⁶ Therefore, the community and the church, which

¹¹¹Ibid.

¹¹²Berdyayev, Destiny of Man, p. 57.

¹¹³Berdyayev, Slavery and Freedom, p. 39. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 74.

¹¹⁴Fuad Nucho, Berdyayev's Philosophy: The Existential Paradox of Freedom and Necessity (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1966), p. 75.

¹¹⁵Herberg, op. cit., pp. 126-127.

¹¹⁶Berdyayev, Beginning and End, p. 136.

belong to the objectified world, could not be supreme values.¹¹⁷

Individuality, unlike personality, was a naturalistic category with biological, social, and cosmic attachments. Outside those connections, individuality was lost.¹¹⁸ Personality was not a part of a larger whole as was individuality. "Personality is the freedom and independence of man in relation to nature, to society, and to the state."¹¹⁹ Personality was not bound by natural processes, but was divine emanation with universal content. Personality bore witness to the fact that man was on the boundary between the world of nature, necessity, and dependence; and the world of spirit, freedom, and independence.¹²⁰

Personality could not be defined by its relation to the world which was objectified, "but by its relation to God."¹²¹ Personality found the realization of its life only by going out from itself to another and thus was saved from the disintegration of "egocentric self-containment."¹²²

Personality is I and Thou, another I. But the Thou to whom I goes out and with whom it enters into communion is not an object, it is another I, it is personality. . . . The personal needs an other, but that other is not external and alien: the relation of the personal to it is by no means

¹¹⁷Herberg, op. cit., p. 119. ¹¹⁸Ibid., p. 121.

¹¹⁹Ibid., p. 122. ¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹Ibid., p. 126. ¹²²Ibid.

exteriorization. . . . External relations means objectivization, whereas communion is existential.¹²³

Tillich and Berdyaev were at opposite poles in their use of the concept of personality as it related to the nature of God. Personality, for Tillich, described a human phenomenon only, and therefore, was inapplicable to God. But for Berdyaev, personality described the highest spiritual value that God and man shared.

III. SYMBOL AND REALITY

Meaning of symbol. The search for meaning within the depths of mystery, for Tillich, required the use of symbols. Religious truth and error were confused if the choice to employ religious symbols was refused.¹²⁴ This investigation has not included artistic symbolization within its scope. However, Tillich warned against the danger of confusing artistic symbolization with religious symbols themselves, which wrongly implies that religion could be replaced by art.¹²⁵ Symbol, in that context, implied two realms: the natural and the spiritual. Any bridge which spans and unites those two worlds was a symbol.¹²⁶

Symbols, rather than being discarded, as Bultmann

¹²³Ibid.

¹²⁴Kegley, op. cit., p. 248.

¹²⁵Brown, op. cit., p. 40.

¹²⁶Lowrie, op. cit., p. 178.

suggested, had to be used and interpreted so that no loss of meaning incurred.¹²⁷ Tillich insisted that symbol was necessary to express man's ultimate religious concern which included both the meaning and the mystery of his being; both the ground and the abyss of his being; and both the natural and the spiritual dimension of his being.¹²⁸ Specific symbols made possible concrete religious experience which gave to religion its substance and power.¹²⁹

The natural world, for Berdyaev, was symbolic and, therefore, fallen. The symbolic world was the same as the objectivized world.¹³⁰ Being symbolic, the natural, external world pointed to a reality or to a spiritual world beyond itself.¹³¹ Man, a citizen of both worlds, found meaning in the empirical world by "living it in spiritual experience" and concentrating on the spiritual world.¹³²

Tillich distinguished subjective symbolism and objective realism from realistic symbolism in Berdyaev's thought.

¹²⁷Brown, op. cit., p. 190.

¹²⁸Burnaby, op. cit., p. 198.

¹²⁹Brown, op. cit., p. 172.

¹³⁰R. D. Knudson, "Symbol and Reality in Nicholas Berdyaev," Westminster Theological Journal, 24:42, November 1961.

¹³¹Ibid.

¹³²Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, pp. 88-90. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 179.

Subjective symbolism expressed the division of the natural and spiritual realms and the solitude of modern man in which the incarnation of the Spirit remained hidden. Objective realism expressed the enslavement to the objectifications of the spiritual in institutions, power, and matter in which the Spirit was lost in its incarnation. Realistic symbolism expressed a new understanding of the "mythos", in which was found "living knowledge."¹³³ "Myth is reality, indeed, incomparably more reality than concept . . . myth expressed the supranatural within the natural . . . the spiritual life within the life of the flesh."¹³⁴

Another aspect of Berdyaev's thought involved the problem of communication. For him, the objectivized world was a world of separation, where spirit was isolated from spirit.¹³⁵ Symbol was used to break down dividing walls of irrationality and brought meaning to language, laws, and institutions. Knudson says, "In this sense the symbol is a function of society, serving to hold it together."¹³⁶

God and symbol. Tillich defended his concept of God as unsymbolic. He confessed that Professor Urban of Yale forced him to recognize that only an unsymbolic statement

¹³³Paul Tillich, "Berdyaev," Religion in Life, 7:410, Summer, 1938.

¹³⁴Ibid.

¹³⁵Knudson, op. cit., p. 38. ¹³⁶Ibid.

could be spoken with reference to symbolic knowledge.¹³⁷ An all-embracing symbol would render it meaningless. "Being-itself" was an unsymbolic concept which demanded religious symbols for an existential meaning. Tillich did not use the term "God" symbolically. To him, "God" implied both the "God above God" or the ultimate ground of being and the particular expression of God. "God" united both the symbolic and the reality.¹³⁸ Tillich states, "God is being-itself, or the absolute. However, after this has been said, nothing else can be said about God as God which is not symbolic."¹³⁹

Meaning was conveyed through such symbols as personality, life, justice, and love. But in each case, the symbol participated in a reality which was transcendent to itself.¹⁴⁰ No relationship could exist between the creature and the holy God except through symbolic media.¹⁴¹ Tillich recognized the reduction of meaning in religious symbols because of the recurrent question, "Does God exist?"¹⁴² "God" in the question was identified with preconceived objects that may or may not exist.

¹³⁷Kegley, op. cit., p. 334.

¹³⁸Brown, op. cit., p. 13.

¹³⁹Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 239.

¹⁴⁰Macquarrie, op. cit., p. 368.

¹⁴¹Burnaby, op. cit., p. 201.

¹⁴²Brown, op. cit., p. 88.

The meaning of God was not to be found in those objects unless they did exist and were reinterpreted in such a way as to participate in His being. Otherwise, the question of God's existence would not be asked.

Spirit and reality. Berdyaev was in essential agreement with Tillich when he viewed God as above goodness or perfection. He saw these as objectified statements and, therefore, symbolic. But he further understood being as object.¹⁴³

[God] is not something but no-thing, and none of our determinations are applicable to Him. We can only think of God symbolically and mythologically. And a symbolic psychology of God is possible--not in relation to the Divine Nothing of negative theology, but in relation to God-the-Creator of positive theology.¹⁴⁴

Spirit defied all efforts at definition. Definition would either kill spirit or change it into object.¹⁴⁵ As God has attributes, so does Spirit. Berdyaev ascribed the following attributes to Spirit: "freedom, meaning, creativity, integrity, love, value, an orientation towards the highest Divine world and union with it." He included both the pneuma of the Scriptures and the nous of Greek philosophy in his list of attributes of the Spirit.¹⁴⁶ Yet Spirit never

¹⁴³Hartshorne, Philosophers Speak of God, p. 289.

¹⁴⁴Ibid.

¹⁴⁵Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 33. ¹⁴⁶Ibid.

lost its mystery for Berdyaev. He states, "Everything must be finally comprehended as a mystery of the spirit."¹⁴⁷ All objective existence, external and material objects, were only symbols of "what is taking place in the depth of the spirit, in man."¹⁴⁸

Spirit, for Berdyaev, was a divine emanation from the "primal, pre-existential freedom, from the Ungrund."¹⁴⁹ He described it as a "Divine infusion, an inspiration."¹⁵⁰ Spirit was uncreated reality. The paradox of the spirit was shown in its freedom both in and from God.¹⁵¹ "Spirit is the Divine element in man; and through it man can ascend to the highest spheres of the God-head."¹⁵² That mystery could not find adequate expression in any rationalization. Only in symbol could an attempt be made.

Tillich approximated the position of Berdyaev when he united both the abyss of divine power and the meaning of the divine Logos in "God as Spirit."¹⁵³ Those two polarities were "joined and given actuality in and by the Spirit,"¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁷Berdyaev, Meaning of the Creative Act, p. 20.

¹⁴⁸Ibid. Cf. Berdyaev, Beginning and End, pp. 50-51.

¹⁴⁹Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 34.

¹⁵⁰Ibid.

¹⁵¹Ibid.

¹⁵²Ibid., p. 33.

¹⁵³Burnaby, op. cit., p. 199.

¹⁵⁴Ibid.

much like Berdyaev's combination of the "infusion and inspiration" in the divine-human paradox.

Thus, God as Spirit has been found to be the highest reality in the thought of both Tillich and Berdyaev, notwithstanding their opposing approaches. For Tillich, being-itself was primary in a mystery-meaning paradox. For Berdyaev, creative Freedom (Spirit) was primary with its divine-human paradox. In both cases, the God-Man was the most important symbol in revealing God to man.¹⁵⁵

Berdyaev conceived God's final and definitive act of self-manifestation as a creative act of Spirit in which "the birth of God takes place in vital fashion."

Spiritual experience was the only proof of the existence of God for Berdyaev.² Spirit sustains Berdyaev's critical interpretation of the knowledge of God:

Our knowledge of God is, therefore, basically intuitive, subjective, experiential, or, if you will not blanch at the word, mystical. It is neither exclusively intellectual, emotional, volitional, nor intuitional, but rather integral,

¹V. V. Eshkovsky, A History of Russian Philosophy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1951), II, 174. Cf. Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, pp. 191, 193-194.

²Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, p. 64. ³Ibid.

⁴Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 2.

⁵Berdyaev, Beginning and End, pp. 37, 51, 53. Cf.

¹⁵⁵Brown, op. cit., pp. 96-98; Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, pp. 88-129. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., pp. 179-180.

CHAPTER IV

SPIRIT AND COGNITIVE EXPERIENCE

Berdyayev's dynamic concept of Spirit retained for him the "mystery of the Divine" which was destroyed in a "static" concept of God.¹ The God of Biblical revelation was not to be absolutized and thereby abstracted, for the God of the Bible was personality containing dramatic life and movement.² God related Himself to others, to man, and to the world.³ Berdyayev conceived God's final and definitive act of self-manifestation as a creative act of Spirit in which "the birth of God takes place in vital fashion."⁴

Spiritual experience was the only proof of the existence of God for Berdyayev.⁵ Spinka summarizes Berdyayev's spiritual interpretation of the knowledge of God:

Our knowledge of God is, therefore, basically intuitive, subjective, experiential, or, if you will not blanch at the word, mystical. It is neither exclusively intellectual, emotional, volitional, nor intuitional, but rather integral,

¹V. V. Zenkovsky, A History of Russian Philosophy (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), II, 774. Cf. Berdyayev, Slavery and Freedom, pp. 193, 137-141.

²Berdyayev, Slavery and Freedom, p. 84. ³Ibid.

⁴Berdyayev, Divine and Human, p. 7.

⁵Berdyayev, Beginning and End, pp. 37, 51, 53. Cf. Matthew Spinka, Christian Thought: From Erasmus to Berdyayev (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1962), p. 221.

combining all these four together with the indefinable additional element which results from this integral approach.⁶

Lossky differed with Berdyaev by defending intuitive knowledge of nature, but agreed with Berdyaev's insistence on intuition with regard to spiritual reality.⁷

The idea of God, for Tillich, became a personal reality only in revelatory experience.⁸ The communication of knowledge was received "when grasped, within the Church, by the Divine Spirit."⁹ Man, as Tillich saw him, was incapable of isolating himself from his spirit-hood or suppressing his ultimate concern.¹⁰ Man as spirit reflected a divine image, and out of his spirit came the sense of an ultimate destiny. The sensing of that ultimate destiny was an awareness of "God, the Ground and center of all meaning."¹¹ Tillich found corroboration in Luther's experience of being grasped by the "penetrating Presence of God." The reformer noted that God was deeper, more internal, and more present in man than man

⁶Carl Michalson (ed.), Christianity and the Existentialists (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1956), p. 63.

⁷Lossky, op. cit., p. 249.

⁸Macquarrie, op. cit., p. 370.

⁹Paul Tillich, The Shaking of the Foundations (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948), p. 120.

¹⁰Daniel D. Williams, "Systematic Theology," Christian Century, 81:519, April 22, 1964.

¹¹Tillich, Shaking of Foundations, p. 48.

was to himself.¹² God's self-disclosure, in Berdyaev's thought, was "the fact of the Spirit."¹³ Revelation was spiritual experience and life within a "theogonic and an anthropogonic relationship."¹⁴

I. SPIRITUAL EXPERIENCE

Concerning Berdyaev, Spinka noted that when the human spirit encountered the Divine Spirit existentially, God was immediately and intuitively apprehended.¹⁵ That encounter was initiated by the Holy Spirit. Although God was incomprehensible, for Berdyaev, He was revealed as One who "suffers with the world and with man."¹⁶ Man, for Tillich, invariably had a desire to be reunited with God.¹⁷ That desire raised him above the level of subjectivity and objectivity.¹⁸ Berdyaev, in agreement with Tillich, made pure spirituality a reality independent of the "intellectual opposition of subject

¹²Ibid., p. 44.

¹³Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 14.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 15.

¹⁵Spinka, op. cit., p. 221.

¹⁶Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, p. 85.

¹⁷Tillich, Systematic Theology, II, 52.

¹⁸Williams, op. cit., p. 522.

and object."¹⁹ Spirit existed only in the subject but was not in the least subjective.²⁰ That distinction of Berdyaev was confused in paradoxical language flowing from his ecstatic creativity. But his intention was clear. He had no desire for the divine-human Spirit to be controlled by either end of the polarity. Both were free and creative, and the relationship was communal.

Creative Freedom. God was not revealed in the sphere of a natural perception of reality. He was revealed in the depth of "existential experience" which was spiritual experience.²¹ Berdyaev used Moses, the prophets, St. Paul, and Christ as illustrations of God's revelation in the "interior being", in the depths of the spirit. That spiritual experience was not an object but an "inward word" by which the meaning of primary reality was found.²²

When God was increasingly objectified and made a mystery beyond naturalistic analogy, communion was not possible in the mystery, according to Berdyaev.²³ The paradox came into focus when God was understood as an anthropomorphic

¹⁹Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 10. ²⁰Ibid.

²¹Berdyaev, Truth and Revelation, p. 111.

²²Berdyaev, Beginning and End, pp. 58, 73.

²³Ibid., p. 155.

person who accepted humanity as His unique attribute. He did not, however, take on those attributes that were entirely human and socialized.²⁴ The paradox of His human and divine relation was resolved only in the divine mystery which was beyond explanation.²⁵

God was communicated only by what was revealed in the depth of spiritual experience. Berdyaev held that freedom (the antithesis of the determinism of the natural world) was the thing revealed.²⁶

Belief in God is the charter of man's liberty. Without God man is subject to the lower world. . . . what is possible is an inward existential meeting with God.²⁷

Berdyaev interpreted freedom as the entrance of genuine novelty into the course of events which, when fully recognized, destroyed causal determinism.²⁸ He emphasized the ultimacy of freedom which was prior to being, whether the being of God or of man. But the relationship between freedom and God was "from all eternity."²⁹

The religion of the Spirit, to Berdyaev, had its basis

²⁴Berdyaev, Truth and Revelation, pp. 51, 53.

²⁵Ibid., p. 53.

²⁶Ibid., p. 57.

²⁷Ibid., p. 113.

²⁸Berdyaev, Beginning and End, pp. 165, 161.

²⁹Hartshorne, Philosophers Speak of God, p. 287.

in creative development, transfiguration, and assimilation to God.³⁰ The religious meaning of creativity was recognized in Berdyaev's concept of freedom.³¹ Man's creativity was the primary basis for affirming God's existence, for knowing God was recognized as a divine-human act of creation.³²

Man did not lose his freedom but was fully and freely himself only when he came to know God.³³ The Spirit was the principle which "synthetizes, and maintains the unity of personality."³⁴ Berdyaev used the concept of the Holy Spirit to describe the principle of union between God and man. The mystery of creation, which was anthropological and cosmological in its mystery, was revealed in the Holy Spirit.³⁵

The revelation of truth was possible for Berdyaev only through the creative activity of the spirit. Truth, being absolute, was incomprehensible and unattainable.³⁶ But "truth is meaning" and therefore recognized more than the "darkness" of non-being. Truth means freedom. "To deny freedom is to deny truth."³⁷

³⁰Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 185.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

³³Nicolas Berdyaev, The Fate of Man in the Modern World, trans. Donald Lowrie (Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1935), p. 116

³⁴Ibid., p. 134.

³⁵Ibid., p. 184.

³⁶Berdyaev, Meaning of Creative Act, p. 43. ³⁷Ibid.

Freedom, understood as something positive and joined with creativeness, becomes creative energy. Freedom means not only freedom of choice, but choice itself. Freedom cannot be simply a formal self-defence; it must lead to creative activity.³⁸

Freedom was not as central to the thought of Tillich as in that of Berdyaev. However, Tillich spoke of the "directing creativity of God" which penetrated the "freedom and spontaneity" of man. He used "spontaneity" to describe the inner nature of living beings. When spontaneity was described in the "dimension of spirit", it was identified as freedom.³⁹ Freedom involved man as a whole with destiny--not necessity--as its basis.⁴⁰

Berdyaev interpreted the creative act as "an expression of the whole life of man."⁴¹ The act came from the spirit and by its very nature was ecstatic.⁴² Creativity moved beyond the boundaries of nature and became transcendent. For Spirituality to be distinguished from myth, a transition was necessary from "symbolism to realism, to mystical realism."⁴³

³⁸Berdyaev, Fate of Man, p. 46.

³⁹Brown, op. cit., p. 175.

⁴⁰Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 182-186; II, 62-63. Cf. Burnaby, op. cit., p. 197.

⁴¹Berdyaev, Beginning and End, p. 172.

⁴²Ibid., p. 174.

⁴³Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 134.

from Mystical realism. Tillich described mysticism as follows:

immediate participation in the divine Ground by elevation into unity with it, transcending all finite realities and all finite symbols of the divine, leaving the sacramental activities far below and sinking cult and myth into the experienced abyss of the Ultimate.⁴⁴

Immediacy was the central idea in Tillich's thought. Berdyaev reiterated the same idea when he defined mysticism as:

The spirituality that Berdyaev proposed would liberate knowledge which has its source in vital and immediate contact with the ultimate reality It is derived from the word 'mystery,' and must therefore be regarded as the foundation and source of all creative movement.⁴⁵

Berdyaev's concept of a mystical experience described a direct and intimate union between the human spirit and transcendent spirituality by means of ecstasy. Heinemann interprets Berdyaev's "experience" as disregarding all connections with the external world and calls it "anarchic mysticism."⁴⁶ But Berdyaev established three conditions for Christian mysticism: personality, freedom, and love.⁴⁷ The last mentioned could hardly be Christian and remain disassociated

⁴⁴Tillich, Christianity and World Religions, pp. 91-92.

⁴⁵Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, pp. 74-75. Cf. Attwater, op. cit., p. 336.

⁴⁶Heinemann, op. cit., p. 41.

⁴⁷Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, pp. 115-127.

from the external world. Spirit was freedom and gave victory over slavery, providing a "vital surge and ecstasy."⁴⁸ Berdyaev, overwhelmed at times by a state of dizziness in ecstasy, composed his writings without interrupting the freedom of his thoughts by consulting other books.⁴⁹ He says:

Only in the white heat of creative ecstasy, when none of the divisions and differentiations into subject and object had yet arisen, did I experience moments of fulfilment and joy.⁵⁰

The spirituality that Berdyaev proposed would liberate man from the idea that God is moved by human suffering. The only thing that God would need is man's ecstatic transcendence of his limitations.⁵¹ That experience was characterized by "creative energy and inspiration with the aim of transcending self-centeredness and of overcoming egocentricity."⁵² That "new spirituality" directed man's energies toward his fellow man, society, and the world in general.⁵³ In that way, self was freed by the Spirit.⁵⁴

Tillich said that much had been learned about mystical experience from a deeper understanding of the Asiatic religions.⁵⁵ He did not regard mysticism as darkness or irra-

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 164.

⁴⁹Berdyaev, *Dream and Reality*, p. 214. ⁵⁰Ibid., p. 215.

⁵¹Berdyaev, *Spirit and Reality*, p. 172.

⁵²Ibid. ⁵³Ibid. ⁵⁴Ibid., p. 173.

⁵⁵Paul Tillich, "Vertical and Horizontal Thinking," American Scholar, 15:103, January, 1946.

tional emotion. Rather, he used it as a special way of looking at the world and the soul, "which has its own right and its own perfection."⁵⁶

In his sermon, The Experience of the Holy, Tillich distinguished mystical ecstasy from prophetic ecstasy.⁵⁷ He said the difference lay in the prophet's identification with his unclean people. No ecstasy, however great, could erase from the prophet's memory his responsibility to the social group of which he was a member.⁵⁸

Tillich pointed out the error of thinking that man could produce the "ecstasy of the ultimate concern."⁵⁹ But man was free to receive or accept that divine ecstasy.⁶⁰ He based his rationale on the same concepts as St. Paul and the reformers.⁶¹ Tillich saw man's ultimate unity in life when there was no split between subject and object,⁶² but when he was "re-united with the Infinite and Eternal Being-itself."⁶³

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷Cf. Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 136, where the same distinction is made.

⁵⁸Tillich, Shaking of Foundations, p. 90.

⁵⁹Brown, op. cit., p. 17. ⁶⁰Ibid., p. 18.

⁶¹Ibid., p. 17.

⁶²Williams, op. cit., p. 518.

⁶³Joseph Haroutunian, "The Question Tillich Left Us," Religion in Life, 35:716, Winter, 1966.

Ecstasy occurred, for Tillich, in the transaction of the self with the world.⁶⁴ Such an ecstasy of love was experienced in the Divine Presence that expressed itself in the community.⁶⁵ Love's ecstasy thus truly became existence.

Revelation of Spirit in spirit. Nucho sees a balance in Berdyaev's thought when revelation kept his mysticism from degenerating into psychic experience.⁶⁶ But revelation, for Berdyaev, was not only the medium of spiritual knowledge, it was the content mediated. Revelation was always a revelation of meaning.⁶⁷ Revelation was always communicated in spiritual experience known by faith, and faith "is a free spiritual act for without freedom faith is an impossibility."⁶⁸

The revelation of the Spirit, in Berdyaev's estimation, depended upon the creative activity of man as well as God's new manifestation to man. The revelation of the Spirit was a divine-human revelation.⁶⁹ Berdyaev maintained the distinction between the human and the divine, but their separa-

⁶⁴Cf. Haroutunian's view of ecstasy which must not come at the price of personal existence, suggesting an ecstasy of love.

⁶⁵Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 177-181.

⁶⁶Nucho, op. cit., pp. 127-128.

⁶⁷Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, p. 94.

⁶⁸Ibid., p. 107.

⁶⁹Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 183.

tion and opposition were overcome in the Spirit.⁷⁰ That revelation proved the end of objectivization to Berdyaev. "In the relation between man and God an infinite spiritual experience is possible."⁷¹

Berdyaev used the religious concept of Holy Spirit to set out his "new spirituality" which, he believed, would characterize the new epoch of the Spirit:

But the Holy Spirit does not yet reveal Himself completely; He is not yet poured out in fulness upon the life of the world. A new spirituality is possible, a divine-human spirituality in which man reveals himself in his creative strength, to a greater extent than he has revealed himself hitherto. Creativeness, freedom, love more than all else will characterize the new spirituality.⁷²

Berdyaev considered the relationship between the Holy Spirit and human spirit of fundamental importance in Christian thought.⁷³ He saw the pneuma as the "bearer and source of prophetic inspiration in Christianity."⁷⁴ The concept of the paraclete pointed to the advent of a new age of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁵ For Berdyaev, Christianity had a new divine-human responsibility to "rehumanize man, society, culture, and the world,"⁷⁶ which would be the work of the Spirit transcending

⁷⁰Ibid.

⁷¹Ibid.

⁷²Berdyaev, Divine and Human, pp. 137-138.

⁷³Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 162.

⁷⁴Ibid.

⁷⁵Ibid.

⁷⁶Berdyaev, Fate of Man, p. 129.

the ego-centricity of the community.

Tillich used "ecstasy" to define man's being "grasped by the Spiritual Presence." He was careful to explain that nothing "essential" was lost in ecstasy. Man retained his rationality and his "centered self" which was marked by the dimension of spirit.⁷⁷

"Inspiration" and "infusion" were expressions denoting the way man's spirit received the impact of the divine Spirit. Tillich says, "the Spiritual Presence is not that of a teacher but of a meaning-bearing power which grasps the human spirit in an ecstatic experience."⁷⁸ In the Protestant tradition, Tillich thought of the Spirit as personal.⁷⁹ For that reason, the ecstatic element in prayer became possible as the divine Spirit prays through man, enabling him to do what he otherwise could not do.⁸⁰ Tillich pointed out the dangers inherent in the ecstatic manifestations of the Spirit. Yet he defended the doctrine against its ecclesiastical critics.

The Church must prevent the confusion of ecstasy with chaos, and it must fight for structure. On the other hand, it must avoid the institutional profanization of the Spirit which took place in the early Catholic church as a result of its replacement of charisma with office. Above all,

⁷⁷Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 112, 114.

⁷⁸Ibid., p. 115.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 116.

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 116-117.

it must avoid the secular profanization of contemporary Protestantism which occurs when it replaces ecstasy with doctrinal or moral structure.⁸¹

Tillich paralleled Berdyaev's concept of freedom by making ecstasy transcendent to the subject and object structure and making it a "great liberating power under the dimension of self-awareness."⁸² Subject and object united for Tillich in the ecstatic experience. He illustrated his thought by the example of ecstasy in prayer. God was both object and subject who "prays to himself through us."⁸³ He differentiated ecstasy created by the Spirit and an extraordinary state of mind due to "subjective intoxication." The criterion he used was the manifestation of creativity in the ecstasy which was absent in the subjective intoxication.⁸⁴

Tillich was influenced by the "Spirit-movements" when thinking of the media of the Spirit.⁸⁵ Those movements interpreted the Spirit as dwelling in the depths of the person without the need of symbol. When He speaks, according to them, He speaks through the "inner word." To that, Tillich replies:

If God speaks to us, this is not the 'inner word'; rather, it is the Spiritual Presence grasping us from 'outside.' But this 'outside' is above outside and inside; it transcends them. If God were not also in man so that man could ask for God,

⁸¹Ibid., p. 117.

⁸²Ibid., p. 119.

⁸³Ibid., p. 120.

⁸⁴Ibid.

⁸⁵Ibid., p. 126.

God's speaking to man could not be perceived by man. The categories 'inner' and 'outer' lose their meaning in the relation of God and man.⁸⁶

Thus, Tillich concluded that the Spirit could not be communicated without a medium. The Word was always present as a medium. Tillich thought of man's life as being under the dimension of the spirit, and, as such, determined by the world whether or not the word had a voice.⁸⁷ The Spirit overcame the indefiniteness of language as He grasped man in the poverty of his expression.⁸⁸ For Tillich, the Word of God was an event created by the divine Spirit in the human spirit. The Word was God's creative self-manifestation rather than a conversation between two beings.⁸⁹ Tillich speaks to all humanity when he says:

In the moment when we feel separated from God, meaningless in our lives, and condemned to despair, we are not left alone. The Spirit, sighing and longing in us and with us, represents us. It manifests what we really are. In feeling this against feeling, in believing this against belief, in knowing this against knowledge, we, like Paul, possess all. Those outside that experience possess nothing. Paul, in spite of the boldness of his faith and the depth of his mysticism, is most human, most realistic--nearer to those who are weak than those who are strong. . . . It is not his spirit which inspired him . . . but rather the Spirit which has witnessed to our spirits that we are the children of God.⁹⁰

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 127. ⁸⁷ Ibid. ⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 254.

⁸⁹ Tillich, Biblical Religion, p. 78.

⁹⁰ Tillich, Shaking of Foundations, pp. 139-140.

Spiritual ecstasy in mystical experience was an important aspect in the thought of Tillich and Berdyaev as a medium of divine revelation to man. Both thinkers understood mysticism as a valid category in Christian thought and experience. For Tillich, the structures of rationality were maintained. In Berdyaev's thought, creative freedom tended toward an inspiration that took precedence over rational differentiations. Both thinkers understood the Spirit as divine, as the revealer of God in man.

II. THE MANIFESTATION OF DIVINE SPIRIT

The God-manhood. God as Spirit was communicated in a divine-human interaction in Berdyaev's thought. God was real only in relation to man. Thus, Berdyaev coined the term "God-manhood." The doctrine of the "eternal God-manhood," according to Tillich's analysis, was central for Berdyaev.⁹¹ Attwater sees Berdyaev as reasoning not with God or man, but with God and man.⁹² The problem of religion, to the mind of Berdyaev, was the paradox of God as being both beyond man and in the innermost content of man's existence.⁹³ Attwater sees in Berdyaev's God-manhood concept that which "unites what discur-

⁹¹Tillich, "Berdyaev," p. 412.

⁹²Attwater, op. cit., p. 329.

⁹³Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, pp. 16, 17. Cf. Attwater, loc. cit.

sive reasoning is incapable of uniting, and renders every moment and atom of life and being a witness to the supreme simultaneous oneness and duality of God and man."⁹⁴

Christ was pivotal in the thought of Berdyaev because the Christological event gave him a deeper foundation for his belief in man's creative freedom.⁹⁵ He found strength in Luther's recognition that the divine was not incarnate "in domination, lordship, but in freedom; not in authority, but in humanity, in divine-humanity."⁹⁶ Berdyaev was a humanist in the sense that he believed in and sought for the truth of man.⁹⁷ Christ was a mythological symbol for Berdyaev that made him aware of the "mystery of the birth of God in man and of the birth of man in God."⁹⁸ He thought of God as needing man's "creative response to the divine summons."⁹⁹ The logic of Berdyaev's position brought him to accept Angelus Silesius's motto, "I know that without me God cannot exist for a single second. If I cease to be, He too must necessarily cease to be."¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴Attwater, op. cit., p. 330.

⁹⁵Berdyaev, Dream and Reality, p. 178. Cf. Berdyaev, Meaning of the Creative Act, pp. 99-101.

⁹⁶Berdyaev, Truth and Revelation, p. 95. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 51.

⁹⁷Berdyaev, Dream and Reality, pp. 178-179.

⁹⁸Ibid., p. 179.

⁹⁹Ibid.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

The "God-manhood" concept could not be given rational explanation, but Berdyaev saw it as a great reality more concrete than merely the idea. He denied that a mythological witness was "make-believe" but was a means of pointing to realities underlying the Christian revelation.¹⁰¹ Berdyaev opposed any attempt at rationalizing and de-personalizing the God-manhood. Both God and man necessarily were to remain unconfused identities.¹⁰²

God-manhood embodies the unity and the interaction of two natures, divine and human, which are one but unconfused. Man is not subsumed in God, but is made divine, and his humanity endures in eternal life.¹⁰³

Murchland correctly observes that Berdyaev's philosophy of personalism is to be distinguished from a philosophy of subjectivity.¹⁰⁴ Berdyaev saw the impersonal and supra-personal forces of the objective world threatening to destroy the human person.¹⁰⁵ The primary element in personality, for Berdyaev, was spirit. Spirit signified the essence of man's divine-human reality and his function of freedom to emancipate the world from the dehumanizing mechanization of the "realm of Caesar."¹⁰⁶ Berdyaev spoke of man's spiritual

¹⁰¹Ibid. ¹⁰²Ibid., p. 180. ¹⁰³Ibid.

¹⁰⁴Bernard G. Murchland, "Berdyaev as Prophet," Commonweal, 72:362, June 24, 1960.

¹⁰⁵Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 63.

¹⁰⁶Berdyaev, Spirit and Caesar, pp. 46-48.

transformation from his "fallen" nature into that of the son of God as theanthropy in which he attained the divine-human personality. Personality was human only when it was divine-human.¹⁰⁷

When man no longer desired the image of God, Berdyaev saw him conforming to the image of the beast characterized by the power of technology and social mechanization.¹⁰⁸ The process of dehumanization climaxed in the techniques of modern war.¹⁰⁹ Berdyaev referred to technology as "the machine" which had a crushing effect on the human soul and shattered the integrity of the human personality.¹¹⁰ The process of dehumanization was reflected in modern literature, science, philosophy, and theological thought.¹¹¹

That process was a "de-Christianizing" process that led to "insanity, since the very image of man is darkened."¹¹² The spiritual disorganization of man, which destroyed the image of God in man, became apparent to Berdyaev. To him, God could be found and known only in the re-humanization of man and society in a divine-human endeavor.¹¹³ Berdyaev saw

¹⁰⁷Berdyaev, Destiny of Man, p. 54; Slavery and Freedom, p. 39. Cf. Spinka, op. cit., p. 220.

¹⁰⁸Berdyaev, Fate of Man, p. 26.

¹⁰⁹Ibid., p. 33.

¹¹⁰Ibid., pp. 80-81.

¹¹¹Ibid., pp. 34-39.

¹¹²Ibid., p. 126.

¹¹³Ibid., p. 29.

man's solely human work "torn to pieces by demonic forces, by the demons of hatred and malice."¹¹⁴ But the illumination of the "dark principle in cosmogony and theogony" could bring man to his highest good and a spiritual understanding of God.¹¹⁵

Berdyaev, then, did not think of God except in relation to man. In the tradition of Boehme, Berdyaev saw Spirit and nature as one. When man arose from the qualities of Adam's nature and to the qualities of God in Christ, man became an "Adam-Christ" and Christ a "Christ-Adam."¹¹⁶ Berdyaev says:

This is what I call man's birth in God, his entry into Divine life. Christ is the Man Absolute, the Heavenly man, man born in God, as a hypostasis of God.¹¹⁷

Since Spirituality was a divine-human condition for Berdyaev, the origin of man's spiritual power was not human alone, but divine-human. Berdyaev saw man as coming into touch with the divine within his spiritual depths and receiving support from that divine source.¹¹⁸ He interpreted the

¹¹⁴Ibid.

¹¹⁵Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, pp. 160, 185; Nicolas Berdyaev, The Meaning of History, trans. George Reavey (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1962), p. 56. Cf. Zenkovsky, op. cit., p. 775.

¹¹⁶Berdyaev, Meaning of the Creative Act, pp. 67-68.

¹¹⁷Ibid., p. 68.

¹¹⁸Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 130.

Christian view of the relationship between God and man as a "divine-human anthropologism."¹¹⁹ Berdyaev recognized in that concept the independence of two natures, human and Divine, the interaction of the grace of God and the freedom of man. Berdyaev states:

Man, as God's 'other', gives a free answer to God's call, revealing his own creative nature . . . God awaits answering love and creative participation in the conquest of the darkness of non-being.¹²⁰

In man, according to Berdyaev, was the meeting of two worlds. He was a "slave" to this world, but, at the same time, a "king" transcending all things of nature in the likeness of God.¹²¹ Berdyaev considered man as "prior to, and deeper than, his psychological and biological aspects."¹²² He charged Christianity with weakness for not teaching a Christological anthropology, as the following excerpt indicates:

. . . in the Christian revelation the truth about man's divine nature is really only the reverse side of the medal of the truth about Christ's human nature. The Christology of man is inseparable from that of the Son of God: Christ's self-consciousness is inseparable from that of man.¹²³

¹¹⁹Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, pp. 31-32. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 59.

¹²⁰Ibid.

¹²¹Berdyaev, Meaning of the Creative Act, p. 60.

¹²²Ibid., p. 61.

¹²³Ibid., pp. 80-81. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 57.

The divine-human spirituality made explicit in the "God-manhood" concept asserted the dignity of man in the likeness of God.¹²⁴ Berdyaev saw God as demanding man's creative participation in freedom. In that participation, man became aware of God working through him. That event was "creative inspiration" in spiritual experience.¹²⁵ The only way man was to find God was through the divine principle in himself which Berdyaev called "the word of God."¹²⁶

Berdyaev understood man's revolt against God as "an uprising of the true God Himself." In his thought, the revolt was, in fact, in the name of God for the sake of a higher concept of God. Therefore, the human revolt presupposed the existence of God.¹²⁷

Implied in Berdyaev's concept of the "God-manhood" was his interpretation of history. He defined "celestial" history as the "true metaphysical foundation of history."¹²⁸ The "celestial" was a part of the inmost depths of man's spiritual life. That experience of the human spirit, which

¹²⁴Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 133.

¹²⁵Berdyaev, Destiny of Man, p. 53. Cf. Lowrie, op. cit., p. 151.

¹²⁶Ibid., p. 54.

¹²⁷Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 2.

¹²⁸Berdyaev, Meaning of History, p. 49.

was in direct communion with the divine Spirit, provided the source of history.¹²⁹ He says, "The celestial is that deepest reality which propounds the theme of man's relations with God and the absolute source of life."¹³⁰

The nature of the mystery taking place in the inmost depths of being, for Berdyaev, was a mutual relation between God and man. He held that if a human longing for God existed and a response to that desire, then a divine longing for man necessarily existed. That divine longing was the "genius of God in man."¹³¹ The divine movement which expressed that genius of God implied a reciprocal movement of man toward God, by which God was generated and revealed.¹³² That reciprocity constituted, for Berdyaev, a primal mystery, both of the spirit and of being.¹³³

In Christ, "the Absolute Man," Berdyaev saw an explanation of the complex historical process. For both the revelation of God and the reciprocal revelation of man in God were combined in Christ.¹³⁴ Berdyaev said that Christ "stands in the center of both celestial and terrestrial history."¹³⁵ He refused to rationalize the "God-manhood"

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ Ibid.

¹³¹ Ibid., p. 59.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid., p. 60.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

concept, but the mystery constantly challenged him. That reality was spiritual revelation.

The New Being. Tillich, faced with the question of Christ's identity, said that Christ could not be known any longer in the flesh. But, "we also have him as Spirit, which means that his spiritual presence, as it appeared in the resurrection visions, is something that transcends the historical image."¹³⁶ In dialogue with Tillich, a Franciscan Father placed priority on the mystical element in Christ rather than on His historical existence as the basis for a present experience of saving power. Tillich was in agreement, for the interpretation pointed to a spiritual understanding of Christ.¹³⁷

Tillich's concept of "New Being" was identified with Christ because it was first made visible in Jesus the Christ.¹³⁸ The New Being was "Spirit which becomes a reality in the spirit of every Christian."¹³⁹ For Tillich, the same reality was designated by both "Christ" and "Spirit." He defined a Christian as one who participates in that new reality and was referred to as "one who has the Spirit."¹⁴⁰ The

¹³⁶Brown, op. cit., p. 212.

¹³⁷Ibid., p. 219.

¹³⁸Tillich, Shaking of Foundations, p. 132.

¹³⁹Ibid.

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

heart of the Christian message was contained in the fact that the Spirit, distinguished from man's spirit, was able to make itself understood.¹⁴¹ The New Being was formed by the Spirit who was beyond man becoming real within him.¹⁴²

Tillich's "dimension of spirit" designated the unity of life's power and meaning.¹⁴³ He maintained that the divine Spirit's invasion of the human spirit always came in a social context, since the human spirit cannot function outside the "ego-thou" encounter.¹⁴⁴ That context, however, could be in total privacy as well as in external communications.¹⁴⁵

Faith and love, for Tillich, were the two manifestations of the Spiritual Presence. Those manifestations were undistorted in Jesus as the Christ.¹⁴⁶ Christ, for Tillich, would not be the Christ without those who have accepted the new reality in Him and from Him.¹⁴⁷ Likewise, the Spiritual Community (the Church) was not considered spiritual unless it was founded on the New Being as it appeared in Christ.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴¹Ibid., p. 135.

¹⁴²Ibid.

¹⁴³Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 22.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., p. 139.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., p. 236.

¹⁴⁶Ibid., pp. 144-145.

¹⁴⁷Ibid., p. 149.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., p. 150.

¹⁴⁹Of. ibid., p. 140.

Tillich characterized the Spiritual Community in the Pentecostal context which included (1) the ecstatic character of the creation of the Spiritual Community, (2) the creation of an indestructable faith, (3) the creation of a self-surrendering love, (4) the creation of unity, and (5) the creation of universality.¹⁴⁹ The Spiritual Community was composed by personalities grasped by the Spiritual Presence and united by God in faith and love.¹⁵⁰ Tillich states, "As the Spiritual Community is the dynamic essence of the churches, so is the Spiritual personality the dynamic essence of every active member of a church."¹⁵¹ He saw "conversion" as a long process which was unconsciously going on long before it broke into consciousness.¹⁵² That "conversion" was another way of describing "being grasped by the Spiritual Presence," which he defined by "experience."¹⁵³ God became known in the structure of the New Being through a mystical quality of religious experience which has been discussed and found to be universally valid.¹⁵⁴

In regeneration, Tillich held, man experienced the New Being as creation. The faith that was necessary to accept God's acceptance was impossible without "God himself as

¹⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 151-152.

¹⁵¹Ibid.

¹⁵³Ibid., pp. 220-221.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., p. 217.

¹⁵²Ibid., p. 219.

¹⁵⁴Cf. ibid., p. 242.

Spiritual Presence." The Spirit created the faith through which man was "justified by grace."¹⁵⁵ Man could do nothing to reach such faith. Rather, Tillich says:

He who is ultimately concerned about his state of estrangement and about the possibility of reunion with the ground and aim of his being is already in the grip of the Spiritual Presence.¹⁵⁶

"Justification" was a term Tillich used to describe the experience of the New Being as paradox.¹⁵⁷ To him, justification was not only a doctrine, as an article of faith, but also a principle: "because it is the first and basic expression of the Protestant principle itself."¹⁵⁸

The "paradox" of justification was the unconditional act of God in which the unjust man was declared to be just. For some, according to Tillich, the central element in the courage of faith was to surrender personal goodness.¹⁵⁹ To others, who had lost life's meaning in radical doubt, "God"--who had disappeared--reappeared as the presupposition of their "unconditional seriousness of the despair about meaning."¹⁶⁰ The courage of their faith was to accept that paradoxical acceptance.¹⁶¹ Again, Tillich's concept of Spiritual

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., pp. 221-222.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., p. 223.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 226.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 228.

¹⁶¹ Ibid.

Presence was definitive of that divine self-disclosure in which man is "grasped" in existential experience.

The life which had felt the impact of the Spiritual Presence in regeneration and justification, for Tillich, was followed by a processive sanctification in the experience of the New Being. That process, under the impact of the Spirit, was synonymous with a life of actual transformation.¹⁶²

Four principles determined the New Being as process in Tillich's "system": (1) the principle of awareness, (2) the principle of increasing freedom, (3) the principle of increasing relatedness, and (4) the principle of self-transcendence.¹⁶³

Man, under the principle of awareness, in the process of sanctification, became increasingly aware of his actual situation and of the forces struggling around him and his humanity. Man was becoming aware of the answers to the questions implied in that situation.¹⁶⁴ The vital dynamics of life would open up to him in spite of demonic and ambiguous elements.¹⁶⁵

The principle of freedom included, for Tillich, a freedom from both the command and the content of the law in proportion to a man's reunion with his true being under the

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 229.

¹⁶³Ibid., pp. 231-237.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 231.

¹⁶⁵Ibid.

impact of the Spirit.¹⁶⁶ The more man was reunited with his true being, the more he was free from the law. Tillich says, "Freedom from the law is the power to judge the given situation in the light of the Spiritual Presence and to decide upon adequate action which is often in seeming contradiction to the law."¹⁶⁷

By the principle of increasing relatedness, Tillich understood man to be elevated above himself by the divine Spirit in order that loneliness, self-seclusion, and hostility might be conquered. Sanctification, in Tillich's thought, provided for solitude and communion in interdependence that conquered loneliness.¹⁶⁸ Sanctification turned man away from self-contempt and self-elevation toward a self-acceptance of his essential being.¹⁶⁹ Tillich considered man "in search for identity" as he became more spontaneous and more self-affirming under the power and meaning of the Spirit.¹⁷⁰

Tillich explained that awareness, freedom, and relatedness could not be reached without self-transcendence.¹⁷¹

Such "participation in the holy" was described as the "devotional life under the Spiritual Presence."¹⁷² Tillich in-

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 232.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 234.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 235.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., pp. 234-235.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

cluded both the holy and the secular in the devotional life of the Christian.¹⁷³ He gave very little significance to the distinctions between formalized and private devotion but did point out the dangers of disregarding those distinctions altogether.¹⁷⁴

Self-transcendence was an experience that was possible in every act that was under the impact of the Spiritual Presence. He says;

This can be in prayer or meditation in total privacy, in the exchange of Spiritual experiences with others, in communications on a secular basis, in the experience of creative works of man's spirit, in the midst of labor or rest, in private counseling, in church services.¹⁷⁵

The highest point in Tillich's process of sanctification was "mystical union." He rejected Roman elements which "contradicted the aim of sanctification, the personal relation to God," and faith as the way to that aim.¹⁷⁶ However, "mystical" was Tillich's term used to describe the experience of man's being grasped by the Spirit in the state of faith. In fact, Tillich was persuaded that without the "mystical" faith would not be present, only belief.¹⁷⁷ Tillich made clear his distinctions between mysticism as a religious type and the mystical as a category, which is indicated

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 236.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 176. ¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 242. ¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

in the following: brotherhood of man. A creative spir-

As an ecstatic experience, faith is mystical, although it does not produce mysticism as a religious type. But it does include the mystical as a category, that is, the experience of the Spiritual Presence. Every experience of the divine is mystical because it transcends the cleavage between subject and object, and wherever this happens, the mystical as category is given.¹⁷⁸

Berdyayev and Tillich both have focused their concepts of the mystical in the revelatory experience of the God-manhood and the New Being. The Divine Mystery was not explained but expressed in Spiritual reality.

III. THE CREATION OF AGAPE

Creative action. Berdyayev's concept of divine-human creativity, in which God was revealed, was seen to have developed from the basic idea of God's love. To love was to create, and to create was to participate in a revelatory "I-Thou" relationship.¹⁷⁹ He thought of man as fulfilling his highest destiny when he responded in creative freedom to God's love.¹⁸⁰ Berdyayev's "emancipated spirituality" had as its objective a universal salvation through a

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Berdyayev, Meaning of the Creative Act, pp. 212-213. Cf. Donald A. Lowrie, Rebellious Prophet (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1960), p. 250.

¹⁸⁰ Berdyayev, Slavery and Freedom, p. 141. Cf. Lowrie, loc. cit.

realization of the brotherhood of man.¹⁸¹ A creative spiritual life expressed itself in love and meant the transformation of life into a new creation in the world.¹⁸² Berdyaev saw love not only as the source of creativity¹⁸³ but also as creative action itself.¹⁸⁴

Man's search for the meaning of life and for the knowledge of God was found in an experience of divine-human love. Spiritual reality was communicated when man responded to God's love.¹⁸⁵ Man not only realized the other, but personality went out from himself to another personality in the solitude of love.¹⁸⁶

The idea of God as suffering, yearning, and sacrificial for "the other" was the only conception of God which would subdue atheism.¹⁸⁷ Creative love became a means for the divine-human revelation. Berdyaev spoke of the Christian revelation as showing God to man in the aspect of sacrificial creativity as well as to man in the experience of spiritual

¹⁸¹Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, pp. 149-151.

¹⁸²Ibid., pp. 152-153.

¹⁸³Berdyaev, Destiny of Man, p. 149.

¹⁸⁴Berdyaev, Meaning of the Creative Act, pp. 213, 217.

¹⁸⁵Berdyaev, Destiny of Man, pp. 204-205.

¹⁸⁶Berdyaev, Solitude and Society, p. 180. Cf. Lowrie, Christian Existentialism, p. 98.

¹⁸⁷Berdyaev, Divine and Human, p. 185.

love.¹⁸⁸ That concept did not suggest His self-sufficiency, but rather, the need for passing into its "other." Berdyaev thought of the Christian concept of "sacrificial love" as the inclusion of tragedy.¹⁸⁹ He said that if the tragic element were removed from the life of God, Christ, His cross, and the crucifixion would have to be denied.¹⁹⁰ Precisely that very element brought to man the power of transcendence. For man could receive meaning from the divine Spirit whose creative love responded to man in his existential suffering. Reciprocally, man responded in love through Spirit creatively.¹⁹¹ Berdyaev states, "Only in the Divine-humanity, in the Body of Christ, can man be saved."¹⁹²

Love, for Berdyaev, was not only expressed in the mystery of the "God-manhood" but necessarily directed itself toward concrete personality in this world.¹⁹³ In that way the divine Spirit could be revealed through man in social creativity as well as to man in the experience of spiritual ecstasy.

Unambiguous unity. Tillich said that the power of

¹⁸⁸Hartshorne, Philosophers Speak of God, p. 290.

¹⁸⁹Ibid.

¹⁹⁰Ibid.

¹⁹¹Berdyaev, Fate of Man, pp. 18-19.

¹⁹²Ibid., p. 129.

¹⁹³Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom, pp. 55-56.

love liberated man from his false self to his true self which was grounded in true reality.¹⁹⁴ The knowledge of personality, according to Tillich, depended on love.¹⁹⁵ Fragmented knowledge and experience which participated in tragedy could have meaning by the power of love. For love "transformed the tormenting riddles [for St. Paul] into symbols of truth, the tragic fragments into symbols of the whole."¹⁹⁶

In contrast to faith, which was the state of being grasped by the Spiritual Presence, love was "the state of being taken by the Spiritual Presence into the transcendent unity of unambiguous life."¹⁹⁷ Tillich's concept of "ambiguity" characterized the contradictory merging of the essential and the existential elements in all of life's processes as exclusively ineffective.¹⁹⁸ Tillich symbolized the unambiguous life by the terms "Spirit of God," "Kingdom of God," and "Eternal Life."¹⁹⁹ Agape, for Tillich, was unambiguous love, and therefore, impossible for the human spirit alone.²⁰⁰

Tillich considered love as containing strong emotional

¹⁹⁴Tillich, New Being, p. 74.

¹⁹⁵Tillich, Shaking of Foundations, p. 109.

¹⁹⁶Ibid., p. 113.

¹⁹⁷Tillich, Systematic Theology, III, 134.

¹⁹⁸Ibid., p. 107.

¹⁹⁹Ibid.

²⁰⁰Ibid., p. 135.

elements but did not categorize it as an emotion.²⁰¹ Love was "the whole being's movement toward another being to overcome existential separation."²⁰² In love, the knower became aware of his emptiness in contrast to the "abundance of the known."²⁰³ The ecstatic manifestation of the Spiritual Presence was communicated in agape as it was united with faith.²⁰⁴ Tillich says, "Love as agape is a creation of the Spiritual Presence which conquers the ambiguities of all other kinds of love."²⁰⁵ Defined as spiritual power, love accepted the object of its concern without restrictions, held fast to that acceptance in spite of the estranged state of its object, and anticipated the re-establishment of the greatness of that object of love though its accepting him.²⁰⁶

Agape, for Tillich, characterized the divine life itself. He states, "Agape is first of all the love God has toward the creature and through the creature toward himself."²⁰⁷ In terms of creativity, love meant to derive part of the content of one's own life from the object of that love. Thus, Tillich can say:

[God] is not a separated self-sufficient entity who, driven by a whim, creates what he wants and

²⁰¹Ibid.

²⁰²Ibid., p. 136.

²⁰³Ibid., pp. 136-137.

²⁰⁴Ibid., p. 137.

²⁰⁵Ibid.

²⁰⁶Ibid., p. 138. ²⁰⁷Ibid.

saves whom he wants. Rather, the eternal act of creation is driven by a love which finds fulfillment only through the other one who has freedom to reject and to accept love. God, so to speak, drives toward the actualization and essentialization of everything that has being. For the eternal dimension of what happens in the universe is the Divine Life itself. It is the content of divine blessedness.²⁰⁸

Tillich, then, considered man as being grasped by God in faith and as responding to Him in love as one and the same state of creaturely life. That experience was the participation of man in the transcendent unity of unambiguous life.

Berdyaev and Tillich used the concept of Spirit--dynamically manifest in the spiritual experience of the Godmanhood and the New Being--as revelatory of God's reality in love. Such an experience was one of self-transcendence where the divine and the human interacted.

Love has been discovered, in the thought of those thinkers, to be a manifestation of the Spirit which, in turn, revealed to man in himself the reality of God. In that revelation, the essential nature of God was disclosed; namely, agape.

Berdyaev and Tillich both strove to draw man out of the estrangement that separated him from his true self. For God was discovered by man in agapeic "I-Thou" reciprocation

²⁰⁸ Ibid., p. 422.

made possible only in essential humanity under the impact of the Spirit. Without such love that contact or relationship would be impossible, thereby suspending the reality of God

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

from man's existential consciousness. was found to be different from other types of cognition. Tillich discovered a "depth" in man's reason expressing the structure of "being-itself" or the "ground of being." Berdyaev pointed freedom prior to being as the source of knowledge in creativity.

Tillich's God was an ontological reality, whereas in Berdyaev's thought, God was Spirit in creative freedom. Both men drew from Boehme's abyssal Ungrund (or Divine Nothing) to describe the Divine Mystery. God was beyond personality in Tillich's thought; but He could not exist without personality; for Berdyaev, for Spirit—in a divine-human relation—was the primary element in personality. God truly existed for Berdyaev but was beyond existence for Tillich. Yet, they were in essential agreement as to God's reality and man's relationship to Him.

For both thinkers, God transcends a personal reality to man through the manifestation of divine Spirit. That spiritual experience was a mystical attraction of the divine and the human beyond the structures of subjectivity and objectivity and symbolized in the God-man. Whether the revelation came as the ecstasy of creative freedom (Berdyaev) or as being grasped by the Spiritual Presence (Tillich), in both

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary. The knowledge of God was found to be different from other types of cognition. Tillich discovered a "depth" in man's reason expressing the structure of "being-itself" or the "ground of being." Berdyaev posited freedom prior to being as the source of knowledge in creativity.

Tillich's God was an ontological reality, whereas in Berdyaev's thought, God was Spirit in creative Freedom. Both men drew from Boehme's abyssmal Ungrund (or Divine Nothing) to describe the Divine Mystery. God was beyond personality in Tillich's thought; but He could not exist without personality for Berdyaev, for Spirit--in a divine-human relation--was the primary element in personality. God truly existed for Berdyaev but was beyond existence for Tillich. Yet, they were in essential agreement as to God's reality and man's relationship to Him.

For both thinkers, God became a personal reality to man through the manifestation of divine Spirit. That spiritual experience was a mystical interaction of the divine and the human beyond the structures of subjectivity and objectivity and symbolized in the God-man. Whether the revelation came as the ecstasy of creative freedom (Berdyaev) or as being grasped by the Spiritual Presence (Tillich), in both

the concept of Spirit was used as the means of describing God's self-disclosure to man. That revelatory experience was not ego-centric but found its divine-human expression, as well as its source, in creative love.

Conclusions. This investigation revealed that a religious existentialism has taken the concept of Spirit seriously and has used it as a means of knowing God in personal reality. Buber's "I-Thou" concept has been an influence on interpreters of mystical relationships.

The fine distinctions which questioned the personality and existence of God became less consequential when considered within the context of the whole thought of Tillich. His abstractions became more concrete when applied to existential experience.

Berdyayev appeared more traditionally orthodox than Tillich at some points. The mystical element of his thought was stronger due to his Russian background. His resistance to abstraction in the concept of being was weakened by defining Spirit as Freedom. Both Being-itself and Spirit did not remain abstract in the Christian's life of devotion for either Tillich or Berdyayev.

Reality was made known as Divine in the innermost depths of man by an initial act of Spirit and a human response of love. Within existential tragedy (estrangement)

the knowledge of God became possible by the power of creative love which has eternal significance in the cross of Jesus the Christ.

With the advent of the space age, the developments in the physical sciences, and the emergence of the modern technical society, the traditional concepts of God have become void of meaningful content to contemporary man. Tillich and Berdyaev accepted those challenges. They offered an adaptable method, through the use of their concept of Spirit, for making God personally real in man.

The protagonists of a "Christian agnosticism" can be received as correctives to Christianity by accepting their criticisms of some out-moded religious schematicisms. Many ecclesiastical patterns which once were spiritually relevant now quench rather than free the divine Spirit from communicating with man. But if Christian consciousness can recapture a religious vitality through the creative work of the Spirit, Christianity would then be able to communicate the reality of God consciously as Spirit in answer to the scepticism of a radical theology.

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Abstract of a Thesis

Presented to

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THE CONCEPT OF SPIRIT AS RELATED TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD
IN THE THOUGHT OF PAUL TILlich AND NICOLAS BERDYAEV

An Abstract of a Thesis

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by

Wilbur W. Brannon

May 1967

I. THE PROBLEM

The problem of knowing God has not been solely a twentieth century phenomenon, but the current "death of God" theology has brought the problem into focus within the Christian community in terms of secular involvement. A "Christian agnosticism" has emerged from within the Church criticizing archaic ecclesiastical structures and confessions. Those criticisms have been leveled by radical theologians, represented by Altizer, Hamilton, and Van Buren, who have denied for humanity a living God and consequently a knowledge of God.

Modern man has suffered the loss of life's meaning and its supportive Reality. "God", therefore, has become a term without meaningful content. Religious existentialism, as a mode of thinking, has offered some hope to man, for it communicates to him the meaning of his existence and his relationship to a Reality beyond his existence.

The concept of Spirit has come to be used with a new emphasis in contemporary theology. The question of this investigation was whether or not a religious existentialism took the concept of Spirit seriously as a means of knowing God. Both Tillich and Berdyaev were religious existentialists who brought the concept of Spirit into sophisticated academic theology and philosophy. A divine-human exchange

was expressed in their thought as knowledgeable experience. That attainment was possible only when the structures of subject and object were transcended. Man's self-transcendence was the result of an initial act of the Spirit through which the Divine was revealed as Reality. Thus, for Tillich and Berdyaev, Reality was made known as Divine by the Spirit in the innermost depths of man.

II. THE PROCEDURE

The problem of the knowledge of God presupposed the problem of knowledge in general and the problem of religious knowledge in particular. For Tillich, man was concerned primarily about his being and his existence. God, therefore, became the ground of man's being providing meaning to his existence. Berdyaev understood man as existentially concerned, too. However, Spirit was more fundamental to Berdyaev than was being. Man fulfilled his true humanity only as he discovered his divinity in the Spirit's creative work. That disclosure was experienced in a valid "ecstatic" experience in which the structures of rationality were preserved and creative freedom was expressed.

The problem of knowing God raised the question of the nature of God. For Tillich, God was above personality but was communicated personally. In contrast, Berdyaev's God was existentially personal and revealed in personality.

Personality, for Berdyaev, was the highest spiritual value that God and man shared.

God was mystery for both thinkers, and their concepts which described that mystery reflected the influence of Jacob Boehme. "Spirit" was vital in a cognitive experience which revealed the God of mystery as the God of meaning. The divine manifestation was met by a human response of love which united God and man spiritually in a creative relationship. "Spirit" was the descriptive term used to elaborate on that relationship by both Tillich and Berdyaev. The Spirit was both divine and human in a reciprocal relationship.

III. CONCLUSIONS

This investigation discovered that a religious existentialism does take the concept of Spirit seriously. The "Spirit" was a methodological tool which Tillich and Berdyaev used to make God personally real in man. The concept of Spirit can be adapted for modern man in a highly technological and secularized society where antiquated religious forms have left man in a spiritual void. The Spirit, not confined to forms, can penetrate to the depths of man's being and communicate on any level of human existence.

Man's hope of deliverance from his tragic estrange-

ment from Reality--his true humanity in God--depends on his being possessed by the vitality and creativity of the Spirit. The harmful effects of a Christian agnosticism would be sharply reduced by such a spiritual impact of the divine on the human in an existential grasp of faith.