

Zoom Session on Poteat at the 1993 Washington Annual Meeting of Polanyi Society

William H. Poteat has long been recognized as a major contributor to Polanyi's influence in American intellectual circles. He was close personally to Polanyi from the mid-fifties through Polanyi's final illness and met with him many times, including hosting Polanyi for the Duke Lectures in 1964. Polanyi's thought was spread through Poteat's writing, editing (co-editor with Thomas Langford of *Intellect and Hope*), and teaching (and dozens of dissertations at Duke under his direction engaged Polanyi). Several past issues of *Tradition & Discovery: The Polanyi Society Journal* have been altogether or in part devoted to Poteat: [TAD 20 \(1\) 1993-1994](#), [TAD 21 \(1\) 1994-95](#), [TAD 35\(2\) 2008-09](#), [TAD 36 \(2\) 2009-10](#), [TAD 42 \(1\) 2015-16](#), [TAD 42 \(4\) 2015-16](#), [TAD 44 \(1\) February 2018](#), and [TAD 44 \(3\) October 2018](#).

In November of 1993, Bill Poteat appeared as the featured guest at two sessions of the annual meeting of the Polanyi Society held in Washington, D.C. Recordings and transcripts of these sessions have recently been posted on the Polanyi Society website in the section under Other Links [here](#).

I believe many in the Polanyi Society, whether they were in attendance in 1993 or not, will want to listen to the recordings and/or read or re-read these transcriptions of the 1993 sessions. It is an opportunity for those unfamiliar with Poteat to become acquainted. But it is also an opportunity for those already familiar to become re-acquainted after many years. You will hear and/or read voices of some Society members such as Charles McCoy, Wally Mead, Richard Gelwick, Doug Adams, and others who are no longer with us. But you will also hear some currently active voices such as Dale Cannon, Phil Mullins, and Walt Gulick.

A Zoom session will be held on Saturday, March 2, 2024 from 11 a.m.-12: 30 p. m. Central Standard Time to discuss these recordings and transcripts. The discussion will begin with a few observations by me and some comments by some of those who were present about their reaction to hearing and reading these some thirty years after the event. Open discussion will follow.

In his opening remarks, immediately after Ron Hall's appropriately adulatory introduction, Poteat directly addresses the relation of his work to that of Polanyi as well as the radical nature of his work. On Saturday morning he reflects on Polanyi's reaction to one of his key essays, Polanyi's "backsliding" from his post-critical philosophy, and the relation of Polanyi's tacit-explicit image to his own key image of retrotensive-protensive. Other Polanyian themes occur throughout, and the sessions go beyond his writings to reflect on Poteat's life-long project with candor, insight, and humor. And Poteat recalls personal interactions with Polanyi over two decades which are not discussed, to my knowledge, elsewhere.

The digital files are available on the website for anyone who wants to hear the sessions, and if you never had the joy of hearing Poteat in person, you will definitely want to listen to the opening of the session and perhaps even follow the five plus hours of exchange.

Poteat's words written down are not the same as hearing them on recording and, I am sure, are different also from hearing him in person. But perhaps if you listen to the sessions while reading my transcription, you will see what I mean, and get a better experience of Bill Poteat's amazing presence.

Gus Breyspraak

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