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## Book Reviews

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*Practical Knowledge: Outlines of a Theory of Traditions and Skills.* Edited by J.C. Nyiri and B. Smith. London: Croom Helm, 1987. Pp.224 ISBN 0-7099-4477-2.

*Practical Knowledge* is based on papers read at a conference in Austria in 1985 on “Kuntsgefühl, Sprachgefühl, Rechtsgefühl: Zum Problem des praktischen Wissens.” Its concerns obviously overlap with those of Polanyi, as the first two papers acknowledge. Several of the papers present materials, comparisons and references of interest to readers of this journal. But, I suggest, the distinctiveness and primacy of a practical knowledge, irreducible to articulate theory, and its implications regarding tradition and sensitivity (or feeling for), could have been more clearly and fully established by more attention in some of the papers to Polanyi’s work. I shall focus on those papers which come nearest to Polanyi’s themes.

In the first paper, “Knowing How vs. Knowing That”, Barry Smith (Manchester) draws attention to those thinkers who have accorded primacy to the practical, such as Gestalt psychology, especially its founder Christian von Ehrenfels, and in relation to conduct as well as perception, Merleau-Ponty and the Gestalt-character of behavior, and Polanyi and the tacit element in natural science. He starts with Ryle’s distinction, taken as his title, and points to aspects which Ryle neglected: the role of feeling (or sensitivity) and the social nature of disciplines which are transmitted by traditions. He draws attention to the importance of learning by doing and to the forms of practical knowing which the specifiable procedures of computers cannot attain. Smith’s argument would have been even stronger had he used, as well as Polanyi’s “surface” examples, the “deep” structure of tacit integration, attending *from* in order to attend *to*, which means that all knowing is controlled by the tacit, personal and therefore practical powers of the knower.

The same applies to the concentrated and wide-ranging paper, “Tradition and Practical Knowledge”, by J. Nyiri (Budapest). Nyiri considers tradition as a non-discursive means of transmitting practical knowledge. He points out that some technical skills, such as riding a bicycle, do not necessarily need apprenticeship, whereas social skills do. And, he argues, the existence of computer programs for medical diagnosis takes away some of the magic of the argument, found in Kant, Hayek, Polanyi, Ryle and the later Wittgenstein, that one cannot have rules for applying rules (one could object that *someone* still has to recognize the symptoms in the patient in the first place before they can be fed into the program). He distinguishes two positions regarding practical knowledge: the weaker, that it is a *practical abbreviation* within the flow of knowledge and thus that acknowledgment of it requires no transformation of epistemology; and the stronger, that there is either a layer of it irreducible to propositions or, even stronger, that such a layer is the foundation of all knowledge. Similarly, he finds two theories of tradition: the “weaker” that all traditions are really “secondary” ones whose contents can be discursively transmitted; and the “stronger” that are “primary” traditions whose contents cannot be reduced to discursive terms, and, even stronger, that reason itself is grounded in traditions. In respect of the last, he refers to Oakeshott and to Maurice Halbwachs (*Les cadres sociaux de la memoire*, 1925), who regarded reason as raising oneself to wider and more inclusive traditions. He then quickly surveys some associated terms such as “custom”, “authority” and “prejudice”, and effectively quotes Ernst Mach, as well as Burke, on the necessity of prejudice. Finally, despite his initial reservations, he defends the thesis of “strong” traditionalism by reference to studies of language, Thomas Kuhn and science, art (Arnold Hauser, Robert Musil), law and politics and social life (Carl Menger, Burke, Hayek, Gadamer, Hart, and the later Wittgenstein).

“Meaning and Rules” by Eva Picardi (Bologna), addresses three questions in relation to statements of fact: (1) What type of theoretical knowledge, if any, does the understanding of sentence meaning consist in? (2) How is understanding of meaning related to people’s abilities to suit linguistic force to words and words to the world? (3) How far does knowledge of a sentence’s meaning and ability to use rest on tacit knowledge of rules governing its words?

In answer to (1), she takes Quine’s and Davidson’s theories, both of which state that unravelling some of the entailments of a sentence is needed for a grasp of its meaning, and points out that this involves tacit skills. As for (2), she concludes, partly following the later Wittgenstein, that knowledge of meaning, in factual assertions, is not only a matter of knowing the rules for applying words but also of being able to recognize similarities on the implicit basis of a structure of comparatives (“If this and that are chairs, then so is that over there”). And these two conclusions together constitute her answer to (3).

Rudolph Haller’s (Graz) “On the Feeling for Language and Its Epistemic Value” discusses the role of that feeling for language which is supposed to enable us to decide which expression is appropriate when we have no explicit rule to guide us. He draws attention to cases where one immediately feels that something is wrong in what has been written or said but cannot yet say just what it is and why it is wrong. “We sense in (an) unnoticed manner that which is worthy of being noticed.” This feeling drives and constrains our articulate thought, and the articulation of our thought, without our noticing how it does so. As our surety in familiar forms of language in familiar situations, it does not accompany speaking and hearing but acts like a watchman who sits up and takes notice when required. We notice, by feeling, not what is familiar but changes in what is familiar. Feeling declines with mastery. Its cognitive value lies in registering alterations. Therefore it is not required for, and does not explain, the knowing and following of rules, which we do blindly.

Roger Scruton (London) provides a substantial paper on “Rechtsgefühl and the Rule of Law.” He argues that a properly constituted legal procedure (with, *inter alia*, judicial independence, publicly known laws, corporations treated as persons, and concrete and not abstract laws) itself will embody “natural law”, “principles” or “rights” in its process of adjudication. Genuine law and natural law, he suggests, are as inseparable as a man and his shadow. And someone who places himself as an impartial judge in the setting of conflicts will generate for himself the legal procedures outlined and thus *Rechtsgefühl* or a sense of justice.

Barry Smith, in “Practices of Art,” offers an ontology of works of art, developed from Marx’s analysis of work, which is designed to incorporate both the origins of works of art in the artist and their recognition by the public, plus also the artistic practices and training which artist and audience require. The theory accounts for creativity in terms of the incalculable fusion of disparate practices (but does that fit Shakespeare’s superiority over his contemporaries?).

The remaining papers are: Roderick Chisholm, “Theory and Practice: the Point of Contact”; Joachim Schulte, “Remarks on Sprachgefühl”; and Johan Wrede, “Poetry and Nationalism”.

R.T. Allen

*A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes.* By Stephen Hawking. New York: Bantam Press, 1988. Pp. 240. ISBN 0-553-05340-X.

This book has been a best seller. I read a rave review on it in 1989 and bought it because of the title, having long been fascinated by the mystery of time, and hoping for some illumination about it.

This book isn't a history of time at all. It is an account of what physicists have believed and now believe about the physical universe. Stephen Hawking is, according to the blurb on the cover, "widely regarded as the most brilliant theoretical physicist since Einstein," and I accept that, for I certainly cannot dispute it. He has written the book, we are told, for the non-mathematical layman, and I suppose it gives non-mathematical laymen as good an illusion of understanding as we can get. In that sense it is well written.

The book is purely a physicist's account of the universe. Of course there is nothing wrong with writing a purely physical account of the physical universe, as long as it is clear that this account is an abstraction, and not the whole truth about the subject in its setting. Abstractions are most necessary and useful. But the abstraction needs to be consistent and abide by its chosen rules, or it cannot tell truth--like style in a painting. And this is where I think it is legitimate for non-mathematical laymen to criticize. We cannot criticize the physicist's account of the universe; we just have to swallow black holes, an expanding universe, the uncertainty principle and string theories; and we just have to hope that a little glimmer of understanding will be digested into our minds. But we can protest when we see that the abstraction which is physics is being used as if it were not an abstraction but the whole truth, and that undigested pieces of other subjects, from areas quite outside the author's competence, are being tacked on and thus given the authority of "Science."

There is almost nothing in the book about life, mind or thought. The few remarks that are on these subjects show that they are considered as unimportant

parts of physics, not worth any special attention in the vast scope of the physicist's study of the universe (e.g. 137: "Each history (in the sum of histories) will describe not only the space-time but everything in it as well, including any complicated organisms like human beings who can observe the history of the universe"). The message that comes through all the references to human beings is that they are completely unimportant. And it is quite unjustifiable that this message should be given this authority: physics can have nothing to say about what is important and what is not.

Stephen Hawking does see a paradox in the search for a unified theory that will describe everything in the universe, for he says:

The ideas about scientific theories outlined above assume we are rational beings who are free to observe the universe as we want and draw logical deductions from what we see. In such a scheme it is reasonable to suppose that we might progress ever closer to the laws which govern our universe. Yet if there really is a complete unified theory, it would also presumably determine our actions. And so the theory itself would determine the outcome of our search for it! And why should it determine that we should come to the right conclusion from the evidence? Might it not equally determine that we draw the wrong conclusions? Or no conclusion at all (12)?

The solution to this difficulty he finds in the Darwinian idea of the survival of the fittest, which could make it unlikely that those individuals who are able to get the right answers are the most fitted to survive, and so right answers are likely to be found. But nothing produced by purely physical processes can be said to do anything right or wrong: the whole idea of right and wrong belongs to life and mind.

And life and mind, as well as God, are entities not determined by physical processes and so are outside the scope of this book. He deforms them in putting them in, and then cheats by using them as if he had not deformed them. For instance, in the argument cited above, he sees that in order to be part of his unified theory, rational beings would have to be physically determined and so not rational. But he thinks that the purely physical processes of chance and natural selection could nevertheless cause these beings to arrive at “right” solutions to problems. Here he cheats in assuming some of super mind, such as could not exist in his unified theory, which could say which theories were right and which were wrong.

Stephen Hawking explains that when we thought the universe to have a beginning we could suppose it had a creator, but if the universe is completely self-contained “it would have no beginning or end, it would simply be. What place then for a creator?” His idea of God is one of the simplistic irrelevances tacked on to the physics, almost an “old man in the sky” idea; and if the old man is not needed to start the system working or push the whole process along, there is nothing left for him to do, and he might as well retire gracefully.

So, no place for God in the universe of modern science, a conclusion that has often been drawn. But not only is there no place for God, there is no place here for life, or mind, or thought as an independent reality--and determined thought is no thought at all. If no thought, no science; if no persons, no scientific instruments and so no curiosity to invent and use them.

At the very end of his book, Professor Hawking touches on God again. If we do discover a complete theory, he says, it should be understandable in broad principle by everyone, not just a few scientists.

Then we shall all...be able to take part in the discussion of the question of why it is that we and the universe exist. If we find the answer to that, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason--for

then we would know the mind of God.

How could he expect to know the mind of God, whom he has not seen, when he has not looked at the mind of his brother whom he has seen? How could he expect physics to give any answer to the “why” question? This sort of statement is what I mean by Professor Hawking’s naivety outside his subject--or, if he had thought about these other subjects as deeply as about physics, the book would have had a validity which it lacks. But it would not have sold so well, since people seem to like to read about “science” rubbishing God and man: it lets us off the hook of conscience.

Michael Polanyi says many things about such “scientific” double-think. I shall quote only one, from the very beginning of *Personal Knowledge*, about the meaning of objectivity:

In the Ptolemaic system, as in the cosmogony of the Bible, man was assigned a central position in the universe, from which he was ousted by Copernicus. Ever since, writers eager to drive the lesson home have urged us, resolutely and repeatedly, to see ourselves objectively in the true perspective of time and space. What precisely does this mean? In a full “main feature” film, recapitulating faithfully the complete history of the universe, the rise of human beings from the first beginning of man to the achievements of the twentieth century would flash by in a single second. Alternatively, if we decided to examine the universe objectively in the sense of paying equal attention to portions of equal mass, this would result in a life-long preoccupation with inter-stellar dust, relived only at brief intervals by a survey of incandescent masses of hydrogen. Not in a thousand million lifetimes would the

turn come to give man even a second's notice. It goes without saying that no one--scientists included--looks at the universe this way, whatever lip-service is given to "objectivity". Nor should this surprise us. For, as human beings, we must inevitably see the universe from a center lying within ourselves and speak about it in terms of a human language.... Any attempt rigorously to eliminate our human perspective from our picture of the world must lead to absurdity (*PK* 3).

The true lesson of the Copernican revolution, then, is not the unimportance of man but the marvelous power of man to escape from his sensory experience and see the universe through theory. This is the kind of thought which Professor Hawking has not considered.

Dru Scott

*Angels Fear: An Investigation Into the Nature and Meaning of the Sacred.* By Gregory Bateson and Mary Catherine Bateson. London: Rider, 1987. New York: Macmillan. Pp. 224. ISBN 0-02-507670-1.

Those who work persistently and critically at the interface of two (or more) intellectual disciplines do not usually get warm thanks from their specialist contemporaries. Nevertheless, they often generate important concepts. Gregory Bateson (1904-1980) was one of these. His father was a famous geneticist at Cambridge and, in his own degree at that university, he combined anthropology and the natural sciences. It was in the former field that he made a name for himself in Southeast Asia. He worked with, and later married, Margaret Mead. His first book, *Naven*, investigated the initiation rites of the Iatmul people of New Guinea. It is still a classic. He was already beginning to develop an anti-reductionist view of human behaviour. This showed in his clear awareness of the fact that all societies need understanding at several different levels and that the "feedback" relation from a higher, contextual, level to a lower "embedded" level is subtle. These, however, were not his own terms. He introduced the Aristotelian words *ethos* and *eidōs* to designate, on the one hand, all the feelings and expressive rituals which bind a group together at an unconscious level and, on the other hand, *eidōs* for the more explicit level of culture. This *eidōs* network of shared consciousness is articulated mainly by language. He applied the analysis also to his understanding of the behaviour of fellow academics at high table in Cambridge ("the port *must* circulate clockwise" and similar rituals). Looking back, one can see that the insight was an important one; but that distinction was drawn too sharp.

Partly because of his interest in the subtleties of biological control systems, Bateson came to work with Norbert Wiener, father of cybernetics, on anti-aircraft target-tracking systems. After the War, he turned his ideas to ecological and psychiatric problems. Here too he innovated. His first book of essays, *Steps to an Ecology of Mind*, shows this rising pitch of interest. Now a posthumous book of essays, expanded and edited by his

daughter, summarizes some of his earlier explorations and carries the argument and the speculation further. The subtitle, “an investigation into the nature and meaning of the sacred”, indicates the breadth of his enquiry.

*Angels Fear* is not an impressive book, at first encounter. The line of thought is far from straightforward and the father-daughter dialogues which link it together are, in my opinion, too jokey and oblique. Nevertheless, it does contain extremely interesting ideas, some of which are not in Bateson’s other books. In his last years in California, he seems to have become quite a celebrity. At the same time, he was finding the *ethos* of the counter-culture more congenial than that of the universities. So he lived at the Esalen Institute where he welcomed the warmth and open-mindedness, as well as the “healing” attitude to his own, ultimately incurable, illness:

My friends here love me and I love them. . . [Yet] while I disbelieve almost everything that is believed by the counter-culture, I find it more comfortable to live with that disbelief than with the dehumanizing disgust and horror that conventional occidental themes and ways of life inspire in me. They are so successful and their beliefs are so heartless (53).

He rationalizes this preference partly by suggesting that the counter-culture is generating “a buffer of diversity that will protect the human being against obsolescence.” But to the reader it also looks like a good example of Bateson’s ambivalence as an anthropologist: his head and his heart responding, the one to a scientific *eidōs* and the other to a countercultural *ethos*. There is no doubt that he gains strength from the community in which he lives. But he is capable of being fiercely critical of the magical and supernatural words which his New Age friends so readily bandy about. His overriding message is that we all need a new epistemology if we are “to limit the excesses both of the materialists and of those who flirt with the supernatural.” And later: “we know enough today to expect

that this improved stance will be unitary, and that the conceptual separation between ‘mind’ and ‘matter’ will be seen as the byproduct of . . . an insufficient holist.”

Michael Polanyi and Gregory Bateson were both reacting against the imperialism and reductionism of contemporary science. But they trod different ground. Polanyi shows some wariness of cybernetics. He noticed the important, newly emerged information theory out of which cybernetics grew (*PK* 36-38). But the sophisticated guidance theories which all developed from it during the War appeared to be part of the pernicious endeavor to reduce knowledge to “strictly impersonal terms” (*PK* 328). That, at least, seems to have been his fear in the nineteen fifties. By the end of the sixties, however, he was grappling with the problem of what happens at the boundary between a lower and a higher system: between living and non-living, for example, when molecules of DNA “tell” the other components of a living cell what to do. He began to explore parallel situations and developed a terminology of “boundary conditions” and of “dual control.” In “Life’s Irreducible Structures” (in *Knowing and Being*) this is how he sums the matter up:

A system under dual control relies ... for the operations of its higher principles on the workings of principles of a lower type, such as the laws of physics and chemistry. Irreducible higher principles are *additional* to the laws of physics and chemistry (231).

The problem of what happens at such interfaces and the corresponding problem of what language to use in such “shifting” ground continues to exercise scientists, mathematicians and philosophers. Bateson’s approach would have been congenial to Polanyi. His viewpoint is multidisciplinary but the foundation of his thinking is deep and unifying, at the level of information theory. Bateson is more categorical than Polanyi in his rejection of dualism; but, like Polanyi, he shows profound respect for traditional ways of doing and knowing.

In the rest of this note I will list and briefly characterize some of the ideas which Bateson played with and worked with and which gave him hope and pleasure up to the end of his life.

1. The hidden and the tacit: Bateson never uses Polanyi's term, but he helps us to understand why we can never do without tacit knowledge, even when thinking about the simplest organisms. Putting it very baldly, you cannot have a "yes" without a hidden "no." Even the simplest mental and living activity is to do with "difference-registering" responses. At a high level, animal or personal, when many faculties and sensitivities are being integrated in focal awareness, the innumerable subsidiaries must be, at the time of action, the time of most reality, hidden.

2. *Ethos to eidos*: my impression is that there is much social-psychological mileage to be gained from Bateson's understanding of the processes whereby the feeling texture and pre-verbal patterns of a community form the "soil" or tacit ground from which the explicit and articulate structures of society emerge (see Polanyi, for example on conviviality and rituals in *KB 211*). Bateson did not use his *eidos* terminology in his later works, possibly because he saw that the Aristotelian term did not match the concept well.

3. A richer, interactive meaning for "ecology": in the nineteen seventies, I often tried to find educational concepts which were less instrumental and mechanical than those which were then (and still are) fashionable. So I recall the shock of recognition and pleasure when I encountered Bateson spelling out the principle that *the environment evolves with the evolving creature*:

Surely the grassy plains themselves were evolving *pari passu* with the teeth and hooves of the horses and other ungulates. Turf was the evolving response of vegetation to the evolution of the horse (*Steps 128*).

4. Bateson's thinking about *double binds* and their relevance to mental disturbance and to compulsive and addictive behaviors (including the addiction to armaments) runs through much of his writing. The common theme is a person's or a group's failure to respond to a higher context as well as to the lower, more pressing and obvious one (note the link with Polanyi's "dual control", again).

5. Structure and threshold: also in the seventies, I remember trying to sort out the meaning of "structure" after reading Levi Strauss. I could only get as far as seeing structure statically as the kind of abstract relationship between the parts which is immanent in a system: for example, the immaterial and perfect curve which is hidden in the imperfect stones constituting an arch. Bateson takes the whole concept and moves it into the fourth dimension, that of time, so that it applies to the genesis and development, as well as to the sustaining, of a system. He offers the usual simple feedback example and shows us, via cybernetics, that the hidden "yes-no" switching of the thermostat in its relation to the higher system (in this example, the person in the centrally heated room) creates an upper and a lower threshold of relative stability, *warmth*. The thresholds sustain an ecological equilibrium in which life is comfortable. The structure of my static stone arch can now be seen as a special case of once-for-all stability. The fine "yes-no" adjustments all happen at the beginning, in the hands of the designer or mason. Bateson, by following his more dynamic line of explanation, shows how social structures--a behavioral norm would be an example--can be similarly understood in terms of ecological levels and information theory. The systematic exclusion of an arbitrary degree of coldness from the house can, on this line of thought, be an explanatory analogue to the operation of a taboo in society which marks out a large area of danger by a series of arbitrary and apparently trivial prohibitions. *The threshold* (whether thermal or behavioral) *is the structure which persists*. We begin to see how taboos and inhibitions may be generated with unconscious "purpose." But further, and this is not in

Bateson's writing, the norms which are mapped out leave spaces of openness. These "vistas" (which I have written about) or "affordances" (J. J. Gibson's term) are the shapes of perceived opportunity to which human motivation responds. It should be noticed that this approach is not, in principle, reductive because it always assumes a higher, as well as a lower level, of explanation. From it emerges Bateson's analysis of the profane and the sacred, the forbidden and the holy. It is, I believe, a line of thought with great potential.

Bateson's ideas come across compellingly and entertainingly in **Angels Fear**. If you want a good preliminary taste, try reading Chapter VII, "Let not thy left hand know." Here Bateson's presentation of water snakes from "The Ancient Mariner" ("and he blessed them *unawares*"), his paradoxical story of the peyote sacrament, contrasted with the self-conscious kitsch religion of a Californian "prayer breakfast," all make a nesting Chinese box of treasures.

Robin Hodgkin

*Seeing Man Whole: A New Model for Psychology*. By Edward Moss. Lewes: Book Guild, 1989. Pp. 412. ISBN 0-86332-344-8.

Of this book, Rowan Williams, Lady Margaret Professor of Divinity at Oxford writes: "it achieves what few writers have managed--a theory of human nature and human growth that takes full account of both philosophical and psychological questions about the nature of mind, and also opens the way to a profound theological understanding of the activity of grace in the formation of human selves."

In this wide-ranging project, which links many areas of inquiry, Moss offers us a unified account of the person in terms of his own model of mind and human nature. He uses the term "model" in the way Michael Polanyi uses the phrase "interpretive framework." In fact, he works with a loosely integrated hierarchy of models on different levels that fit into more generalized models at higher levels. To understand human nature, he says, it is necessary to bring a range of disparate phenomena into a coherent set of relationships. We cannot hope to explain them all in terms of a single model.

Moss's purpose in the book as a whole is to identify what he calls "the true self" - and to distinguish the "anticipatory self", that has plans and aspirations, from the role-playing self and the "Here-Now" self. This involves identifying two so-called "cycles", one "predicative" and the other "purposive." Moss works within a broad conceptual framework in which the human organism is assumed to be a self-regulating system with mind as its regulator. It has three main structural elements, a sensory apparatus, an arena of attention (consciousness) and a memory store. Consciousness has its own structure. Moss talks of different kinds of space, dimensions, or relationships. For example, perceptual space differs from the space in which imagination works and this differs from logical space.

Moss begins by examining a series of approaches to the nature of man by different psychologists. Then he

explores the theory of mind and looks at different accounts of the origin and nature of the idea of the “self.” The first eight chapters provide a systematic and rigorous exposition of Moss’s ideas concerning perception, thought, language, the emotions, consciousness and the unconscious, decision taking, the nature of the self and of the “person” as a purposive being. The style and terminology are appropriate to a fairly sophisticated text book and I would like it to be required reading for students of psychology and philosophy. But these chapters make difficult reading for the non-specialist and I fear that this could discourage the intelligent lay person from reaching the last four very rewarding chapters, which are written in less technical language.

In Chapter 9, Moss turns to the question of the origins of neurotic conflict, the growth of the self and the nature of authenticity. His model of “the own self” to which we can be “true” is discussed in relation to other models used in the world of psychotherapy. For Moss, integration means being able to exclude formerly repressed and buried experiences from this “self.” Healing, he suggests, does not entail integrating unacceptable ideas into the continuing self. The goal for coherence of mind is sincerity, integrity and good faith.

In Chapter 10, Moss discusses the concept of mental health and modern therapeutic attempts to restore coherence. He finds these techniques less than satisfactory, not least because they fail to offer any kind of moral judgement. It is impossible, he suggests, to separate altogether the psychiatrist’s task of restoring the patient to fitness for the world from the moralist’s task of deciding what kind of world ought to be brought about and how individuals should behave. He makes the point that the therapist is generally concerned only to produce well-adjusted people, who fit the collective “norm”. But our world extends into the future and includes the potential as well as the actual. A great range of therapeutic techniques is now on offer, but beyond therapy, moral judgement is still needed. Should we not take possible change into account and consider what a person ought to do in order to impose change on the environment to match

potential patterns in himself?

In the course of this chapter, Moss has a particularly interesting discussion of Jung’s theory of individuation and the integration of “the shadow”, in which he admits to being at odds with Jung and with most current schools of humanist psychology and psychotherapy. It is not clear to him, however, whether the disagreement arises at a purely psychological level, or comes from a deeper moral level. The issue is the true nature of wholeness (health). For example, is moral good to be found in a well-balanced integration of benevolence and aggression, of self-transcending and self-assertive tendencies? Or does moral health lie in a purification of the “anticipating self”? Are self-assertive tendencies to be identified with self-transcending tendencies or are the undesirable elements to be eliminated? Moss here explores the possibility of bringing psychological models and the theory of psychotherapy into harmony with the Christian model of human “wholeness”. The ideal expressed by Jesus, he suggests, represents a joyful and spontaneous obedience based on love and trust. Only in such terms is Moss prepared to accept Jung’s theory of the archetype of the self as simultaneously the archetype of the divine. Members of the human race, he thinks, can only find their true selves in the mutual identification of man with God, both loving and being loved. *A complexio boni et mali* may be the best we can achieve, but it is an accommodation with evil, not an integral expression of love!

In Chapter 11, Moss turns his attention to the value systems by which human choice is guided and identifies four ways of seeking the fullest possible realization of individual human potential. The “social” way is to work for the greatest good of the greatest number, but this runs into the problems of what kind of society is both good, feasible and worth being adjusted to. The logic of this approach is ultimately totalitarian. The “existentialist” way is to justify the absolute freedom of the individual, regardless of the claims of society. The logic of this approach has led certain psychiatrists to see the cause of human madness and badness as lying always in society

and the family, not in the individual, who is their victim. To ask the individual to conform to the expectations of society is, on this view, a betrayal of his true needs. This approach tends to support a whole system of implied values that are permissive in the extreme and develops a world of isolated individuals whose commitments are a matter of temporary convenience. The third way is based on the idea that some people have much greater potential than others, which justifies their self-realization at the expense of others. This “heroic” tradition reached full development in Nietzsche for whom true value is expressed by “superman”.

Each of these ways reflects something of the truth about human nature, but none of them can cure the sickness, corruption and evil to which we are prone, or bring us to health, wholeness and true well-being. The fourth paradoxical “way” takes us, Moss suggests, on the road to self-realization, through the fullest possible denial of the self. At this point, Moss relates the Christian account of the self to the model he has built up in this study and presents the Christian life in the form of a psychological theory, which provides a value system for human living, one that demands a “rebirth”, that is, a recognition of self as a separate identity, but united with others in “the Body of Christ.” Christianity is here understood as a type of humanism growing out of Jesus’s saying about losing life in order to find it and self-assertion becomes identified with the participatory and self-transcending powers of true humanness.

At this point, Moss analyzes the characteristics of two kinds of ideal “role”, both having a place within the “humanistic” tradition, both with implications for the individual and for society. These are the “hero” and the “saint”, though the saint is a special case of the hero. Moss’s point is that only when the hero’s integrity comes from humility, not pride, can the ideal of the “hero” be safely adopted as the model of man-in-his-wholeness. Only then does the ideal role provide a unifying contour for the idea of the self, defined in terms of integrity, good faith and courage. We need heroes, but only heroes who assert themselves in humility can create the humane

society. The way to freedom and reconciliation is through sacrificial love, not aggression.

No summary can do justice to a book of 400+ pages, but I hope I have said enough to suggest that Moss is offering us something radically new and important. In some ways, the last chapter, entitled “The Idea and the Reality”, is the most satisfying of all, since it turns from the psychological problem of constructing a model and analyzing the way in which it works to the philosophical and ultimately religious problem of examining its implications for our view of the world. In fact, what Moss does in the last chapter illustrates what he says at the beginning about a complex model being, in effect, a hierarchy of models embedded one within the other. In the last chapter he returns to his original conceptual framework and sets the whole within a wider framework still.

I recommend this book as a work full of intellectual and spiritual nourishment, which challenges many dehumanizing trends in contemporary theory and practice. My one regret is that it may reach relatively few readers for reasons already mentioned. Moss’s critique of modern psychological theories is very important and, in fact, the last three chapters would alone make a splendid short paperback, with an introduction summarizing the essential argument of the earlier chapters in the non-technical language.

For readers of *Tradition & Discovery*, I would add that Moss clearly knows Polanyi’s writings and is indebted to his views in certain basic respects. For example, he sees the real world as a hierarchy of levels and works with presuppositions that derive from this paradigm. He also refers to Polanyi’s distinction between subsidiary and focal “knowledge” (sic), though he appears to interpret it in terms of his own model by equating the distinction between focal and subsidiary awareness with the distinction between determinate and indeterminate knowledge. I suspect that he may be confusing subsidiary and focal awareness with the quite different distinction Polanyi makes between tacit and explicit knowledge. If the book runs to a second edition I hope that this

confusion will be clarified. It would also be useful if the Index could be checked and expanded. Of the very references to Polanyi, the most important on pages 133/135 does not appear. Perhaps my chief regret is that Moss makes virtually no use of Polanyi's philosophical tools in working out his own model of the self and in developing his ideas about the shaping power of grace, which he likens to the "moral equivalent of the force of gravity." It would, for example, have been illuminating to see this idea linked with Polanyi's use of field imagery and gradients of meaning, which lie at the heart of his theory of mind.

Joan Crewdson

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## Submissions for Publication

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Articles, meeting notices and notes likely to be of interest to persons interested in the thought of Michael Polanyi are welcomed. Review suggestions and book reviews should be sent to Walter Gulick (see addresses listed below). Manuscripts, notices and notes should be sent to Phil Mullins. All materials from U.K. contributors should first be sent to John Puddefoot. Manuscripts should be double-spaced type with notes at the end; writers are encouraged to employ simple citations within the text when possible. Use MLA or APA style. Abbreviate frequently cited book titles, particularly books by Polanyi (e.g., *Personal Knowledge* becomes *PK*). Shorter articles (10-15 pages) are preferred, although longer manuscripts (20-24 pages) will be considered.

Manuscripts should include the author's name on a separate page since submissions normally will be sent out for blind review. In addition to the typescript of a manuscript to be reviewed, authors are expected to provide an electronic copy (on either a 5.25" or 3.5" disk) of accepted articles; it is helpful if original submissions are accompanied by a disk. ASCII text as well as most popular IBM word processors are acceptable; MAC text can usually be translated to ASCII. Be sure that disks include all relevant information which may help converting files to Word Perfect or ASCII. Persons with questions or problems associated with producing an electronic copy of manuscripts should phone or write Phil Mullins (816-271-4386).

Insofar as possible, *TAD* is willing to work with authors who have special problems producing electronic materials.

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## Notes On Contributors

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**R.T. Allen** is a teacher and author as well as, editor and coordinator for the UK Polanyi studies group; he recently published a volume titled *Michael Polanyi* in the *Thinkers of Our Time* series.

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**Drusilla Scott** is author of *Everyman Revived: The Common Sense of Michael Polanyi*.

**M. Elizabeth (Betsy) Wallace**, Assistant Professor of English, Western Oregon State College, Monmouth, OR 97361, has organized two sessions on Polanyi at Modern Language Association meetings. She edited "Polanyian Perspectives on the Teaching of Literature and Composition" which was based on the 1988 MLA session. She has also recently published "The Circling Hawk: Philosophy of Knowledge in Lawrence and Polanyi" in *The Challenge of D. H. Lawrence*, ed. Michael Squires and Keith Cushman, University of Wisconsin Press, 1990.

**Sam Watson** is Professor of English at the University of North Carolina, Charlotte and Director of the North Carolina Writing Project. He edited the Spring-Fall 1981 issue of *Pre/Text* which focused on Polanyi.

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## Polanyi Society Membership

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Institutional Affiliation

Primary Interest in Polanyi (use key words for index; e.g., philosophy and education):

Scholarly work/publications: Please list below your thesis/dissertation and/or any publications of interest to persons acquainted with Polanyi's thought (be sure to provide complete bibliographic data):