

Tradition & Discovery

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Preface

The articles in this issue are good evidence that those who carefully examine the thought of Michael Polanyi are amply supplied with resources that prove valuable for contributing to contemporary discussion in philosophy and religious studies. Edward St. Clair's article questions the conventional wisdom that suggests scientific explanations treat the how of creation while religious explanations treat the why of creation; he offers interesting mythic analysis of discussions in contemporary scientific cosmology. Araminta Stone Johnston returns to the literature on the Azande tribe, treated by Polanyi and others, to look again at issues concerned with rationality and relativism; she offers criticism of the ways in which Charles Taylor and Peter Winch have wrestled with these issues. John C. Puddefoot's article is an imaginative effort to set forth the peculiar kind of realist position which Polanyi's thought suggests.

Plans are still being worked out for the upcoming 1994 annual meeting of The Polanyi Society to be held this November in conjunction with the annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion in Chicago. The next issue of *TAD* should include all of the details. With luck, it may be possible to work out some arrangements for those coming to Chicago to visit the Polanyi Archives in the Regenstein Library at the University of Chicago.

As several Polanyi Society members know, work on a couple of special issues of *TAD* (one on William Poteat and one on Polanyi and Paul Tillich) is proceeding. This work does not imply that *TAD* will be any less interested in other sorts of Polanyi-related articles; please continue to send in essays -- regardless of their area of focus -- for consideration. Note that, with this issue, *TAD* begins a policy of printing selected letters to the editor (see page 4). You may also, in future issues, find some brief reader responses to articles with an attached reply from the original author. Feel free to contact me if you are considering formulating a response.

Phil Mullins

Tradition and Discovery is indexed selectively in *The Philosopher's Index* and *Religion One: Periodicals*. Book reviews are indexed in *Index to Book Reviews in Religion*.

NEWS AND NOTES

William Scott, after a serious illness this winter, has completed a draft of the biography of Michael Polanyi. A committee composed of Richard Gelwick, Charles McCoy, Phil Mullins and Walter Gulick is working with him to see the draft move quickly toward publication. One of the great achievements of Professor Scott is the gathering of an enormous amount of background information about Polanyi before the Gifford Lectures. This background will contribute to a wider understanding of Polanyi's work in science and in economics as well as his work in philosophy.

John C. Polanyi sometimes too modestly hides his light under a bushel but we are pleased to discover two generally relevant and interesting articles by or about him:

"Collective Will or Law of the Jungle: Reflection On the New World Order," *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* 47:5 (June, 1991) 28.

James Krieger, "Nobel Laureates Reflect on Science, Economics (John C. Polanyi, Gerald M. Edelman, Robert Solow, and Herbert C. Brown) at the New York Chemical Congress Symposium," *Chemical and Engineering News* 69: 37 (September 16, 1991) 30-31.

Searching electronic data bases continues to yield recent publications on or making us of Polanyi's thought including the following:

R. G. Dean, "Ways of Knowing in Clinical Practice," *The Clinical Social Work Journal* 17: 2 (Summer, 1989) 116-27. Dean argues that the concept of personal knowledge changes our use of theories and points to the imprecision in our use of language. This view leads to a relativistic view of knowledge through which the client's story is seen as a constructed narrative rather than a set of facts to be objectively recorded. Therapeutic neutrality is considered a myth, and difficult ethical questions about value differences and the clinicians's influence over clients are

brought to the fore.

Nancy Pine, "Three Personal Theories That Suggest Models for Teacher Research," *Teachers College Record* 93:4 (Summer, 1992) 656-72. Pine discusses three theoretical structures (those of Michael Polanyi, Maxine Grene, and Ann Berthoff) which consider the role of personal interpretation central to ultimate meaning-making. Pine proposes them as useful frameworks for teachers who are beginning deliberate classroom research.

For a review of Eugene Webb's *Philosophers of Consciousness: Polanyi, Lonergan, Voegelin, Ricoeur, Girard, Kierkegaard* (Seattle: University of WA Press, 1988) see *The International Journal for Philosophy and Religion* 32:2 (October, 1992) 123.

The final program of The Polanyi Society meeting at the Fall 1994 annual meeting of the American Academy of Religion is still being arranged. Besides the usual Saturday morning session with two papers, we are trying to arrange two other events that take advantage of the meeting location (Chicago). One is a Friday evening conversation with persons who were with Polanyi during his Chicago years. Second is an introductory tour of the Polanyi Archives at the Regenstein Library of the University of Chicago. Details about these events will be announced later.

Richard Gelwick, General Coordinator

On April 15, 1994, **Richard Gelwick** had heart surgery (a quadruple bypass) at Maine Medical Center. He expects to return to work at the University of New England in June. Mail to Gelwick can be sent to RFD #5 Box 2440, Cundyss Harbor, Brunswick, ME 04011.

NEWS AND NOTES

Letter to the Editor

Sir,

It is usually unprofitable for authors to reply to reviews of their books, but I would like to crave your indulgence for two comments upon the reviews in *TAD* Vol. XX No.2, by Drs Sanders and Wetherick of my *Polanyi* in the series *Thinkers Of Our Time*.

Thinkers Of Our Time is a uniform series of books intended by the editor and publisher (Prof. R. Scruton) to be a counterweight to Fontana's *Modern Masters* (to which I had previously offered a volume on Polanyi, which was rejected) and to show that the great names of this century have not been hostile to tradition and our cultural inheritance. In writing my volume on Polanyi I was therefore constrained by the strict limit of 25,000 words set by the publisher, and consequently had to omit much that I would have liked to have included, especially the social and political aspects, and to condense much of what I was able to include. I decided to focus on the Polanyi's epistemology and ontology of tacit integration. (Since then I have done the same in 1,500 words (!) for the new *Routledge Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*.) For, contrary to what Dr Wetherick suspects, it is my impression that, in Britain, Polanyi has become somewhat confined within the context of "science and theology," and even there too often only as a means of combatting Positivism, so that his distinctive contribution to philosophy generally has been rather neglected.

An elaboration of my theological assessment of Polanyi, plus a constructive use of his philosophy within, and not just clearing the way for, theology will be found in my *Transcendence and Immanence in the Philosophy of Michael Polanyi and Christian Theism* (Edwin Mellon/Rutherford House, 1992) (yes, it is a revised version of a Ph. D. thesis!). I have also constructively employed his philosophy in my *Structure of Value* (Ashgate, 1993), a study in fundamental axiology. Likewise, I have devel-

oped my appreciative assessment of his political philosophy in my *Beyond Liberalism* which I have just completed for the MPLPA's project on "The Liberal Tradition of Central European Philosophy" for the Central European University, to which I would like to express my gratitude, respectively, for being asked to join that project and for the grant awarded to me.

Dr Sanders rightly notes the incongruity of the remark on the cover about "sceptical conservatism" in relation to Polanyi and Hayek. But that was written by Prof. Scruton and I would have vigorously repudiated it had I known about it. Indeed, my argument in *Beyond Liberalism* is that, as we move from von Mises and Popper to Hayek and Polanyi, we see a sceptical, rationalist and therefore self-destructive Liberalism giving way to one based on faith and tradition (and therefore fundamentally Christian and Conservative, and explicitly so in Kolnai).

Not included in the last chapter of my *Polanyi*, for I have only just heard of it and have yet to read it, is what I believe to be a development of Polanyi's philosophy within economics, P.C. Roberts' *Alienation and the Soviet Economy* (U. of New Mexico P., 1971). Had I written something on Polanyi's economics, I would have criticised his espousal of Keynes, for I am a convinced Hayekian monetarist.

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Correction: Walter Mead's article "John Hallowell: A Political Philosopher's Critique of His Profession's Paradigm" was in *The Political Science Reviewer*, 1994 (annual) rather than, as listed in *TAD* 20:2, *The Political Science Review*.