

Tradition & Discovery

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Preface

This issue includes minutes from the last business meeting of the Society (November, 2002) as well as a financial statement for the fiscal year completed at the end of August 2002 and the call for the papers for the next annual meeting to be held November 22 and 23, 2003 in Atlanta, Georgia (p. 5). Tibor Frank kindly has shared some interesting letters that he received in response to his *TAD* 28:2 essay on the networking of Polanyi and other Hungarian *émigrés*; the letters are from retired chemistry professor Brian Gowenlock who was a research student of Michael Polanyi in the forties. I have written a short memorial for Charles S. McCoy, a teacher and scholar who for 45 years, before his November, 2002 death, taught Polanyi to graduate students and made use of Polanyi's ideas in articulating his own postcritical Christian federalist perspective. One of the two major essays in this issue is David Rutledge's "'Conquer or Die'?: Intellectual Controversy and Personal Knowledge," which is a revised version of a paper he presented at the 2001 Polanyi conference at Loyola University. Rutledge analyzes what Polanyi says about intellectual controversy and ways to address it in *Personal Knowledge* and other writing. Dale Cannon's essay "Construing Polanyi's Tacit Knowing As Knowing By Acquaintance Rather than Knowing by Representation: Some Implications" is also a revised Loyola paper. As his title suggests, Cannon argues that tacit knowing properly regarded is knowing by acquaintance, a relational knowing of reality. He believes that the scholarship on Polanyi has not adequately recognized Polanyi's emphasis upon relational knowing of reality and that taking the priority of acquaintance knowledge into account makes Polanyi a much more radical thinker than he has been recognized. In *TAD* 28:3, there was an announcement about Maben Poirier's new Polanyi bibliography that was just off the press. I am pleased in this issue to include an interview with Poirier in which he discusses his 423 page project and the relationship between this bibliography and earlier ones. Finally, don't miss the reviews this round. Walter Gulick provides a very interesting discussion of Cesarani's 1998 biography of Polanyi's controversial friend Arthur Koestler. Gulick suggests the ways in which Koestler's life touched the lives of many members of the Polanyi family. Jere Moorman reviews *Tacit Knowledge in Organizations*, one of several recent publications that suggest the ways in which Polanyi's ideas are being picked up by those interested in business.

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

Upcoming Kings College Conference

A conference on “Christian Theology and Michael Polanyi” is scheduled for Friday, May 2, 2003 at King’s College London. It has been organized by the Dept of Theology and Religious Studies at King’s College in association with the Gospel and Our Culture Network. After an introductory paper by Bishop Peter Forster, the main speakers will be Prof. Colin Gunton, Prof. Alan Torrance, and Lincoln Harvey, with closing response by Prof (retired) Dan Hardy. Inquiries can be directed to Rev’d Dr Murray Rae at EDLUMIC@aol.com or Rev’d David Kettle at DJK@kettle.force9.co.uk.

Stefania Jha gave a paper titled “Tacit Knowing, Moral Development and Pluralism” at the London University Institute of Education, at a session with the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain. She reports that the audience was very engaged and there were many good questions.

Aaron Milavec received a fellowship for the 2002-2003 academic year to study at the Center for Studies in Religion and Society at the University of Victoria, B.C. He will be working on a book tentatively titled *The Common Ground for Discovering Religious and Scientific Truths: Michael Polanyi’s Postmodern Foundations for Embodied Knowing*. In the Spring term, he will give a public lecture titled “How the Thrill of Scientific Discovery and the Transformative Power of Religious Experience Share the Same Human Dynamics.” Milavec can be reached, until 8/1/03 at Center for Studies in Religion and Society, University of Victoria, P.O. Box 1700, Victoria, B.C. V8W 2Y2 Canada or by email at milavec@ameritech.net.

Richard Henry Schmitt’s essay, “Thought Shaped by Experience: Polanyi’s Impact and the Way Ahead”,

recently appeared in *Psychoanalysis and Contemporary Thought* (Vol. 25, No. 2, Sp 2002: 223-241). The essay was originally presented at the Polanyi’s Society’s June 2001 conference at Loyola University of Chicago.

Struan Jacobs’ “Polanyi’s Presagement of the Incommensurability Concept” was published in *Studies in History and Philosophy of Science* (Vol. 33, 2002: 105-120).

Phil Mullins’ essay, “On Persons and Knowledge: Marjorie Grene and Michael Polanyi” was included in the recently published Lives of Living Philosophers volume on Grene (*The Philosophy of Marjorie Grene*, Randall E. Auxier and Lewis E. Hahn (eds.) Chicago: Open Court Publishing Co., 2002: 31-60).

Electronic Discussion List

The Polanyi Society supports an electronic discussion group exploring implications of the thought of Michael Polanyi. Anyone interested can subscribe; contact Struan Jacobs (swjacobs@deakin.edu.au) who is the moderator. The address for the list is polanyi-list@deakin.edu.au

Minutes of the Business Meeting November 23, 2002

1. Richard Gelwick's financial statement for the fiscal year ending in August (printed below) was presented by Phil Mullins. The statement was approved as submitted. According to Mullins' unofficial update (based upon some recent income and expenditures), the Society presently has approximately \$1600 in our checking account and \$2000 in savings.

2. The many contributions of the late Charles McCoy were held up in memory with thanks. The possibility was raised of giving to a fund in honor of Charles McCoy, but until other possibilities of gifts in honor of Charles are resolved (at Pacific School of Religion and the Graduate Theological Union), this seems premature.

3. Diane Yeager asked about the possibility of securing funding for gathering a small working group to explore some aspect of Polanyi's work (for example, Polanyi and process thought). The Liberty Fund and Lilly Foundation were mentioned as possible funding sources. The possibility was raised that one of our Polanyi Society meeting slots could be used for grant writing purposes.

4. General discussion produced the following possible topics for next year's Annual Meeting:

a) Persons we might invite (as in recent meetings featuring Haight, Clayton, and Goodenough): Ken Wilbur (a prolific writer on science and religion from Boulder, CO), John H. Brooke (Cambridge historian of science and a former Gifford lecturer), Luco J. van den Brom (professor of systematic theology at Groningen University), J. Wentzel van Huyssteen, (James I. McCord professor of theology and science at Princeton Theological Seminary) and Tom Ferraro (who knows Polanyi and Whitehead and is interested in philosophical foundations of sociology).

b) Because the next meeting will be in Atlanta, a number of Atlanta-related person/topics were suggested: The Center for Law and Religion (Mark Silk) is there, and the names of Lou Schwartz and Ira Peak were mentioned in connection with this topic. Several feminists at Emory who are interested in rehabilitating hierarchy could be encouraged to relate such ideas to

Polanyi. The famous primate specialist, Frans de Waal and the biopsychologist Melvin Konner are there (and Konner might well be interested in the topic of reductionism). While these and other options are explored, a general call for papers will be sent to the membership.

Marty Moleski, S. J.
Secretary

POLANYI SOCIETY FINANCIAL STATEMENT September 1, 2001 – August 31, 2002

Beginning Balance in Checking	1908.24
Income	
From Interest	6.37
From membership dues & gifts	2200.00
Total	2206.37
Total Balance + Income	4114.61
Expenses	
TAD 27:3	708.81
Moleski-AAR, 2001	300.00
TAD 28:1 and TAD 28:2	1455.91
Mullins-Non-Profit Report	15.00
Total	2479.72
Year End Checking	1634.89

Beginning Balance in Savings	1030.84
Income	
Interest	19.07
Membership Dues & Gifts	1000.00
Total Savings Income	1019.07
Year End Checking	2049.91

2003 Polanyi Society Annual Meeting--Call for Papers

This year's annual meeting of the Polanyi Society will in Atlanta November 22 and November 23, 2003. Our meeting will be held as an "Additional Meeting" in conjunction with the annual meetings of the American Academy of Religion and the Society of Biblical Literature. The request to the AAR/SBL for space is pending but again this year we anticipate having both a Friday night session from 9:00-11:00 p.m. and a Saturday morning session from 9:00-11:30 a.m.

As the minutes of the last Society business meeting reflect (p.4), there was considerable interest in continuing the recent tradition of devoting one annual meeting session to a special speaker whose work makes use of or has some parallels to Polanyi's philosophical perspective. However, efforts to organize such a session with some of the figures suggested have not been successful. The 2003 annual meeting will in all likelihood have two sessions that each can accommodate two papers and responses.

A number of topics have been proposed over the last several years. The list below is not exhaustive, but is drawn from recent *TAD* calls for papers. Proposals on these or any other topic (including responses to a book) will be considered:

- (1) Polanyi and Issues in Philosophy of Biology
- (2) The Relationship of Personal Knowledge and Public Discussion
- (3) The History of Polanyi Studies
- (4) Michael and Karl Polanyi: A Comparison of Perspectives
- (5) Agency and Meaning in Polanyian Thought
- (6) Polanyi's Political Philosophy
- (7) Teaching Polanyi and Polanyian Teaching
- (8) Tacit Knowing and Psychology
- (9) Polanyi and Whitehead
- (10) Contradictions, Inconsistencies, Lacunae or Incongruities in Polanyi Texts
- (11) Polanyi's Axiology

Proposals of up to 500 words in length or inquiries should be sent (e-mailed preferred) to the address below by April 10, 2003.

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Professor Gowenlock on Michael Polanyi's Manchester Years

Tibor Frank

ABSTRACT Key Words: Michael Polanyi in Manchester; the history of Manchester University Chemistry Department; Professors Arthur Lapworth, I. M. Heilbron, A. R. Todd, E. L. Hirst, Hugh O'Neill, Tom Torrance; Polanyi as a teacher.

The following letters were written by the distinguished British chemist Professor Brian G. Gowenlock in response to Tibor Frank's article on "Networking, Cohorting, Bonding: Michael Polanyi in Exile," Tradition and Discovery 23:2 (2001-2002): 5-19. The two letters contribute to the history of the Manchester years of Michael Polanyi with interesting details concerning several of his colleagues and contemporaries. These informative comments by a former student of Michael Polanyi will improve our knowledge of the last years of Polanyi as a physical chemist.

Soon after my article "Networking, Cohorting, Bonding: Michael Polanyi in Exile" was published in *Polanyiana*, 10, 2001/1-2, pp. 108-126 and *Tradition and Discovery* XXVIII, 2001-2002, No. 2, pp. 5-19, I received a most interesting letter from Professor Brian G. Gowenlock, a former associate of Michael Polanyi in Manchester (March 6, 2002). Upon receiving my answer, Professor Gowenlock continued to supply important information on Polanyi's Manchester years (March 8, 2002). Both confirming and supplementing my article, his letters need no comment.

Attached is the complete text of Professor Gowenlock's letters. I am grateful for his kind permission to publish them and for his additional efforts to collect further information:

Wed, 06 Mar 2002

Dear Professor Frank

May I introduce myself! I am a retired professor of chemistry and a former research student of Michael Polanyi. If he had not been invited to the Gifford lectureship and as a result changing his chair of physical chemistry for that of social studies in 1948 I would have been able to remain in Manchester as an assistant lecturer. Your account of the 1932 negotiations with Professor Arthur Lapworth were of considerable interest to me. I knew that MP had been approached and had turned down the offer of the chair but was unaware of the details of the offer. In particular I can never recall any mention having been made of a new building. The various buildings that were occupied by the chemistry department at that time were all 19th century and the physical chemistry research areas were all built in 1873. The major part of these where I worked were converted mathematics classrooms and not all of these rooms were provided with fume extraction cupboards. I can well understand that MP would have wished for something better. Lapworth was not in the best of health at that time, so I was told, and retired in 1935. The organic chemist who was appointed in 1933 was I M Heilbron who moved to Imperial College, London in 1938. His successor was A R Todd who moved to Cambridge in 1944 to be succeeded by E L Hirst who moved to Edinburgh in 1948. Polanyi was never the head of the department of chemistry. In his 15 years in Manchester Polanyi was a powerful influence upon his academic colleagues, co-workers and research students and I remain deeply indebted to him.

In the reference 34 of your paper you put a ‘?’ before the name of Allmand. A J Allmand was a professor of physical chemistry in the University of London and an electrochemist of a high reputation. He was a colleague of F G Donnan, an active Roman Catholic.

Thank you again for your interesting article.

Brian G Gowenlock

Fri, 08 Mar 2002

Dear Professor Frank

Thank you for your kind reply. I now reside at 5 Roselands, Sidmouth, Devon, UK, EX10 8PB. I was a member of the Chemistry Department at the University of Manchester from 1943 to 1948 and my research under Michael Polanyi began in January 1946. The day to day supervision was provided in succession by two lecturers Charles Horrex (1946) and Ernest Warhurst (1947 - 8). Both of these men had been profoundly influenced by Michael Polanyi having commenced their research in 1933. From them I heard much of those pre-war years. Later in my first university post in Swansea I knew the Professor of Metallurgy, Hugh O’Neill who had been a lecturer in Manchester in the 1930’s and who was a friend of Michael Polanyi. From him I learned of Polanyi’s reaction to the purge of the Brownshirts in 1934. When I took up my chair in Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh in 1966 I met Professor Tom Torrance of Edinburgh University and we soon found a common interest in Polanyi’s writings. In my retirement (now aged 76) I still retain that interest and find *Tradition and Discovery* to be full of interest.

Those who knew Michael Polanyi in the Manchester Chemistry Department are a diminishing group but I think we all retain many memories and acknowledge his profound influence on our lives.

Please feel free to quote me as you have suggested.

Brian G Gowenlock

WWW Polanyi Resources

The Polanyi Society has a World Wide Web site at <http://www.mwsc.edu/orgs/polanyi/>. In addition to information about Polanyi Society membership and meetings, the site contains the following: (1) the history of Polanyi Society publications, including a listing of issues by date and volume with a table of contents for recent issues of *Tradition and Discovery*; (2) a comprehensive listing of *Tradition and Discovery* authors, reviews and reviewers; (3) information on locating early publications; (4) information on *Appraisal* and *Polanyiana*, two sister journals with special interest in Polanyi's thought; (5) the “Guide to the Papers of Michael Polanyi” which provides an orientation to archival material housed in the Department of Special Collections of the University of Chicago Library; (6) photographs of Michael Polanyi; (7) five essays by Michael Polanyi.