

# Tradition & Discovery

## The Polanyi Society Periodical

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# The Polanyi Society

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## Preface

This issue of *TAD* has an incredible array of different materials. There are memorial reflections on two recently deceased scholars, Doug Adams and Thomas Torrance. Both are figures whose writing made ample use of Michael Polanyi's thought. Jim Tiles has written a review article on Robert Innis' new book and Innis kindly responded. Mark Mitchell has recently published a new introduction to Polanyi's thought. Paul Lewis and Walter Gulick review this book and Mitchell comments on their reviews. There are excerpts from a technical article published in 2004 in the *Journal of Polymer Science, Part A* that provided Peter H. Plesch's reflections on his work with Polanyi as a chemist in the mid forties. It was an article that said some very interesting things about Michael Polanyi, about the history of chemistry and about scientific discovery. Professor Plesch provided a further comment that complements the excerpts. There is a interview with Paul Knepper, a scholar interested in Polanyi's Jewish background. Finally, there are interesting reviews by Richard Schmitt and Paul Lewis.

You will also find an update on the June 13-15, 2008 Polanyi Society conference at Loyola University, Chicago, with a tentative schedule and a conference registration form. Inquiries about the conference can be e-mailed to me (mullins@missouriwestern.edu). For the third straight issue, we are plugging the 2007-2008 membership/fund drive because we still need some dollars to support this conference. Finally, there is a call for papers for meetings sponsored by the Polanyi Society in the fall of 2008. Although matters are not fully settled, there will likely be a meeting in conjunction with the American Academy of Religion (Nov. 1) and the American Philosophical Association (Dec. 28).

Phil Mullins

*Tradition and Discovery* is indexed selectively in *The Philosopher's Index* and *Religious and Theological Abstracts* and is included in the EBSCO online database of academic and research journals.

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## NEWS AND NOTES

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Walter Mead has written an essay titled “I Know More Than I Can Tell: The Insights of Michael Polanyi” that appeared in *Modern Age*, v. 49, no. 3 (Summer 2007): 298-307.

In the January 2008 issue of *First Things* (pp.6-10) there is an interesting exchange of letters between Avery Dulles and Walter Thorson regarding Polanyi’s innovative alternative to Darwinian evolution in his concept of “emergence.” Both are appreciative of Polanyi’s approach, but Thorson provides a particularly interesting case for challenging the mechanistic and reductionistic assumptions inherent in Darwinism, and most evident in reigning schools of neo-Darwinism, by relying on Polanyi’s insights.

Aaron Milavec’s new book *Salvation is from the Jews* (Liturgical Press) came out in October of 2007 and is available on Amazon.com for \$17.96.

Dennis Cato had articles in two recent issue of *Paideusis*, which is online at <http://journals.sfu.ca/paideusis/index.php/paideusis> : “Of the Trivial and Radical: Is There A Coherent Constructivist Pedagogy?” (15: 1) and “A World of Our Own: Heesoon Bai and the Flight into Romanticism” (15:2).

### Polanyi Society Travel Funds Available

For students and others requiring assistance to attend the Society’s June 13-15, 2008 Polanyi Society conference at Loyola University, Chicago limited funding is available. Society members are urged to call the availability of this assistance to the attention of those whom they consider worthy candidates. Those interested in applying for this funding, as well as those able to assist in making this funding available, should contact Walter Mead ([wbmead@insightbb.com](mailto:wamead@insightbb.com)) and see the information on the Polanyi Society web site (<http://www.missouriwestern.edu/orgs/polanyi/>).

### Polanyi Society Financial Statement September 1, 2006 — August 31, 2007

Beginning Bal. checking		\$2023.74
Income		
10/11/06	Memberships, gifts	\$1000
11/27/06	Membership, gift	\$ 100
2/1/07	Membership, gift	\$ 500
2/23/07	Memberships, gifts	<u>\$2000</u>
	Total Income	\$3600
Expenses		
9/5/06	Travel Grant-Amer	\$ 300
10/11/06	Travel Grant-Leathers	\$ 290
10/17/06	TAD 32#3	\$ 791.73
11/17/06	Travel Grant—Hess	\$ 400
11/28/06	Stop Pymt-Smart check	\$ 30
11/29/06	Travel Grant—Smart	\$ 200
12/13/06	Pacific Ratio Achives	\$ 120
3/13/07	Checks	\$ 14.91
3/14/07	Travel Fund	\$ 35.00
4/19/07	TAD 33#1, 33 #2	\$1255.57
5/14/07	Member mailing	\$ 230.29
6/13/07	B. Clinchy reimbursement	<u>\$ 337.21</u>
	Total Expenses	\$4004.71

Beginning Bal. savings		\$2712.44
Income		
Ann Scott Gift		\$7513.68
Interest		\$ 20.68
	Total Savings	\$10246.80

2/01/07 Change of Treasurer; account transferred to Charter Oak Bank  
4/24/07 5% CD (savings) —\$7500  
8/31/07 checking Bal. \$4365.73

Jere Moorman, Treasurer

# Minutes of Polanyi Society General Membership Meeting

## Saturday, November 17, 2007, 11:20 AM — Grand Hyatt — San Diego, CA

The meeting was chaired by Wally Mead, President. The necessary quorum of members (7) was in attendance.

1. Mead discussed the possibility of recruiting a young scholar to work on getting *TAD* indexed and placed in more libraries. Neil Arner, Ph. D. student at Yale, who was present and prima facie agreeable to the idea, was suggested as a possible candidate. It might be helpful if some money could be provided to aid his work.
2. Meek suggested that posters be designed to advertise the Scott Memorial Essay Contest. We should find someone with graphics expertise to make sure that the poster would attract attention both to the contest and to the Polanyi Society.
3. *The Political Science Reviewer* will dedicate an issue to Polanyi's political theories. Eight authors have been invited to contribute to the issue.
4. Gulick reported that he hoped to have the first draft of the Polanyi Reader done in February, 2008. It has been three years in the making.
5. The University of Chicago has agreed to reprint *The Tacit Dimension*. It should be available in the summer of 2008 at a price of \$16, if all goes well.
6. The Scott Memorial Fund has \$7500. It is meant to assist young scholars.\* We are seeking additional grants and donations. Many ideas were suggested about how such funds might best be disbursed: essay contest, student sections at the Loyola Conference as well as future annual meetings, other meetings or seminars, etc.
7. The following were unanimously elected to the Board on a motion by Gulick and Cannon (who with Mullins were members of the Nominating Committee): Moorman, Lewis, Rutledge.
8. There was unanimous agreement to a motion by Gulick and Cannon that there should be a special section for graduate students and young scholars at the 2008 Loyola Conference.
9. Next year's annual meeting will probably be held in conjunction with the AAR (Nov 1-3, Chicago) unless there is a groundswell of opposition to the idea. Other possibilities under consideration include the SBL in Boston the traditional weekend before Thanksgiving and the Eastern Division of the American Philosophical Association meeting between Christmas and New Year's in Philadelphia.
10. The dues for 2008-2009 membership in the Polanyi Society (and receiving *TAD*) will be increased to \$35 a year for regular members and retained at \$15 for student members.
11. Mead reported that a grant application submitted by Mead and Rutledge to the Charles Koch Foundation for a total of \$9,000 was still under review. It requests support for (a) travel costs and honorarium of plenary speaker (R. Allen) at Loyola U. conference: \$2,000; (b) Travel Fund: \$3,000; and (c) speakers bureau: \$4,000.
12. Recent books published by Mark Mitchell (*Michael Polanyi-The Art of Knowing*) and Tony Clark (*Divine Revelation and Human Practice*) were lauded.
13. The meeting adjourned by general consent, hearing no objections, shortly after 12:00 noon.

Respectfully submitted,  
Martin X. Moleski, SJ Secretary

\* In the terms of the gift (discussed by the Board of Directors at their 11-16-07 meeting), Ann Scott specified helping with publication or travel for research that would lead to publication. Phil Mullins and Richard Gelwick were designated to work with the Board of Directors and Ann Scott in making any allocations of these dollars. The donor's intention is that the gift be a memorial to the late William T. Scott and that these funds (or any later added) should not be quickly expended.

# 2008 Polanyi Society Meetings—Call for Papers

The year 2008 celebrates the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *Personal Knowledge* in ways that go beyond the special conference June 13-15 at Loyola Chicago. Organizing the “*Personal Knowledge* at 50” conference in Chicago is well under way; this call for papers deals with two additional opportunities to present scholarship. Offering sessions at the APA (see immediately below) ventures into new waters, and if there are not sufficient responses to the various calls for papers, we may not be able to offer all the sessions we’d like to sponsor. We hope for a robust response to the call for proposals for each of the following occasions!

## Call for Papers for Two Sessions at the American Philosophical Association

The Polanyi Society will be holding sessions for the *first time ever* with the Eastern Division of the APA in 2008. The APA meeting is December 27-29, 2008 in Philadelphia and the Eastern Division is the largest annual gathering of the APA, one which attracts large numbers of younger philosophers in search of a position in philosophy. The time just before New Year’s Day is a down time for hotels and lodging is cheaper.

For one session, we are calling for proposals that deal with the relationship of epistemology and ontology. More specifically, is the order that is found in nature and experience, and referenced in language, discovered or imposed? Chapter 3 in PK on “Order” might be utilized, as might Part IV of PK. While all proposals would be expected to make use of Polanyi’s thought, related contemporary thinkers and issues might also be addressed. For instance, the issue of Intelligent Design or the adequacy of naturalism or the issue of teleology in nature might be addressed. For a second session, proposals on any philosophical topic related to Polanyi’s thought are solicited. Many issues in the philosophy of science and political philosophy, for instance, would benefit from exploration.

Proposals are ordinarily up to 500 words in length, but full-length papers may also be submitted for consideration. Send proposals as an email attachment to Walt Gulick, [wgulick@msubillings.edu](mailto:wgulick@msubillings.edu), by April 1.

## Call for Papers for Two Sessions at the American Academy of Religion

The AAR will be meeting in Chicago separately from the SBL November 1-3, 2008 rather than the week before Thanksgiving. Thus we are unsure how our proposed sessions might fit into the revised schedule, but we anticipate seeking a Friday night and a Saturday morning session per usual.

For one session, we seek proposals from persons willing to critique/respond to the recently published book by Philip Rolnick: *Person, Grace, and God*. A second session will have a similar sort of format. We seek proposals from persons willing to critique/respond to the recently published book by Tony Clark: *Divine Revelation and Human Practice: Responsive and Imaginative Participation*. Rolnick and Clark will reply to the papers on their books. We are exploring the possibility of jointly sponsoring these sessions with other groups – for instance, the Karl Barth Society with respect to Tony’s book. Please submit an offer (with some indication of background interest or approach) to critique one of these books to Walt Gulick, [wgulick@msubillings.edu](mailto:wgulick@msubillings.edu), by April 1.