

Tradition & Discovery

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The Polanyi Society

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Preface

Bill Kelleher's essay "Respect and Empathy in the Social Science Writings of Michael Polanyi" is an interesting reading of Polanyi's thought in terms of what might be termed a biologically-grounded ethic. R. P. Doede's "Polanyi in the Face of Transhumanism" applies Polanyi's ideas to the emerging body of thought termed "transhumanism," which appears to be a new dress for Enlightenment utopianism. Both essays were originally papers delivered at the June 2008 Loyola University conference at which about forty participants celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of *Personal Knowledge*. There is also in this issue an exchange between John Apczynski and Andrew Grosso focused around Grosso's recent book *Personal Being* which explores uses of Polanyi as a resource for Christian theology. There are reviews by Walter Gulick, Paul Lewis and David Nikkel. The Nikkel's review treats Tony Clark's *Divine Revelation and Human Response*. This is one of the two books to be discussed at sessions of the Polanyi Society annual meeting on October 31 and November 1, 2008 in Chicago (see page 5 for meeting details). The other session focuses on Phil Rolnick's *Person, Grace, and God*. You will also find (pages 6 and 7) the schedule and paper abstracts for another Polanyi Society meeting to be held in Philadelphia on December 28, 2008 in conjunction with the Eastern Division meeting of the American Philosophical Association. Robert Innis, Walter Gulick, Vincent Colapietro, Ron Hall, Michael Raposa, Charles Lowney and Drew Leder are the principals in the session. The Loyola conference and the meetings in conjunction with the AAR and APA make 2008 a banner year for the Polanyi Society. Please notice the inserted page requesting dues and contributions to the Society. This is especially important since a few unexpected expenses for the Loyola conference forced the Society to dip deeply into our operating funds. Notice also the several items in "News and Notes." There is now available a special Polanyi issue of *The Political Science Reviewer*. Much of the material on which *Meaning* was based has recently been published in *Polanyiana*. At the upcoming Chicago annual meeting, the Board of Directors is putting forth a By-Law change that should make addressing the business affairs of the Society more efficient.

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.

NEWS AND NOTES

Yu Zhenhua's essay "Embodiment in Polanyi's Theory of Tacit Knowing" was recently published in *Philosophy Today*, Vol.52, No.2 (Summer 2008): 126-135).

Polanyi Symposium in the 2008 Issue of *The Political Science Reviewer*

The current annual - 2008 - issue of *The Political Science Reviewer*, devotes some 240 pages to a symposium on the insights of Michael Polanyi. Six Polanyian scholars - Dale Cannon, Tony Clark, Walter Gulick, Paul Lewis, Mark Mitchell, and Diane Yeager - have authored essays for this major journalistic symposium, describing Polanyi's numerous contributions to epistemology, theology, and political economy. Phil Mullins provides a comprehensive and in-depth review and assessment of six major secondary sources on Polanyi as a useful guide to those approaching Polanyi for the first time. Walter Mead writes an introduction to this collection.

For those who do not subscribe to this journal, individual copies of this 312 page issue (Vol. 37) can be obtained for \$10 plus \$2 postage (slightly more for mailing outside the U.S.) by phoning (800)526-7022, or faxing (302)652-1760, or postal mailing their request to The Managing Editor, *The Political Science Reviewer*, 3901 Centerville Road, P.O. Box 4431, Wilmington, DE 19807.

Potat Archive

Wally Mead is presently making inquiries to create an archive for letters and papers relating to the late William Potat, former Duke professor and mentor of many in the Polanyi Society. If you have any letters, papers, and/or class notes from your relationship with Bill Potat that would be of archival value, please inform Wally whether you are willing to contribute these, or copies of these, to the collection and, if so, approxi-

mately how many of these. (It is necessary to advise prospective archivist librarians of the amount of space the total collection would likely require.) Also, if you know of others Wally should contact for such materials, please inform him. Finally, if you are willing to assist in the collecting and organizing of these materials, please inform him at <[wbmead@ilstu.edu](mailto:wamead@ilstu.edu)>. Materials should be mailed to Walter Mead, 4 Kenyon Court, Bloomington, IL 61701.

Recent Issue of *Polanyiana*

Volume 15, Numbers 1 & 2 (2006) of *Polanyiana* is an English issue whose publication was not noted in *TAD* when it came out. The following four articles are in the issue: Struan Jacobs, "Polanyi's Pressagement of the Incommensurability Concept" (5-20); R. T. Allen, "The Cognitive Functions of Emotion" (21-40); Tihamér Margutay, "Indeterminacies By Polanyi" (41-55); and Peter Coleman, "A Note On Michael Polanyi and the Congress of Cultural Freedom" (56-64).

Additionally, this issue of *Polanyiana* includes "Meaning, Lost and Gained," which was the April and May 1969 six part seminar series given at the University of Chicago and later repeated at the University of Texas, Austin. The series concluded with several public lectures known under the title "Meaning, A Project." This material was combined with other Polanyi writing in the book *Meaning* by Harry Prosch and Polanyi.

Polanyi Society Travel Funds

For students and others requiring assistance to attend the Society's meetings held in conjunction with the AAR and the APA, Eastern Division, limited funding may be available. Please do apply although the travel fund resources were substantially reduced in providing grants for the June 13-15, 2008 "*Personal Knowledge At Fifty*" Conference at Loyola University,

Chicago. Society members are urged to inform worthy candidates that this assistance is available. Those interested in applying for this funding, as well as those able to assist in making this funding available, should contact Walter Mead (wbmead@comcast.net) and see the information on the Polanyi Society web site (<http://www.missouriwestern.edu/orgs/polanyi/>). Anyone interested in contributing to the travel fund should also contact Walter Mead.

WWW Polanyi Resources

The Polanyi Society has a World Wide Web site at <http://www.missouriwestern.edu/orgs/polanyi>. In addition to information about Polanyi Society membership and meetings, the site contains the following: (1) digital archives containing all issues of *Tradition and Discovery* since 1991; (2) a comprehensive listing of *Tradition and Discovery* authors, reviews and reviewers; (3) the history of Polanyi Society publications, and information on locating early publications not in the archive; (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 Polanyi; (7) links to a number of essays by Polanyi as well as audio files for the McEnerney Lectures (1962) and Polanyi's conversation with Carl Rogers (1966).

Polanyi Society By-Law Change

At the Saturday morning Business Meeting of the Polanyi Society in Chicago November 2 (see p. 5), proposed changes in the Society By-Laws will be voted upon. The major change is shifting the majority of official decision making from the Business Meeting held in conjunction with the AAR to Board meetings wherever they are held. The Business Meeting has been mainly attended by Board members, so the current arrangement is rather redundant and (because we often extend the discussion time for papers) has insufficient duration for the deliberation needed. Other changes are

relatively minor and include making the Editor of *Tradition and Discovery* an ex-officio member of the Board (rather than a voting Board member, at his request) and adjusting the definition of quorum. The proposed changes will be posted for review on the Polanyi Society website in early October. Any Polanyi Society member who has questions or comments about the proposed changes, should contact Board President Wally Mead (wbmead@comcast.net) or past President Walt Gulick (WGulick@msubillings.edu).

Submissions for Publication

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. Manuscripts should be double-spaced type with notes at the end; writers are encouraged to employ simple citations within the text when possible. MLA or APA style is preferred. Because the journal serves English writers across the world, we do not require anybody's "standard English." 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. Consistency and clear writing are expected. Manuscripts normally will be sent out for blind review. Authors are expected to provide an electronic copy as an e-mail attachment.

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2008 Polanyi Society Meetings

Annual Meeting With Two Sessions at the American Academy of Religion

The Polanyi Society will hold its annual meeting in conjunction with the AAR, November 1-3, 2008 rather than in the week before Thanksgiving, the period for the meeting for many years. To attend the Polanyi Society annual meeting, it is not necessary to register for the AAR meeting. For additional information about the AAR meeting, go to http://www.aarweb.org/meetings/Annual_Meeting/Current_Meeting/Reg1.pdf. The hotels and rooms in which the annual meeting will be held are included below and will be posted on the Polanyi Society web site (<http://www.missouriwestern.edu/orgs/polanyi/>). Please check the AAR Program-At-A-Glance booklet available at the AAR Registration to assure that the rooms have not been changed. The response papers should be available for downloading from the Polanyi Society web site around October 20, 2008. As in past annual meetings, formal response papers will be summarized rather than read in order to conserve time for general discussion.

Friday, October 31, 9:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Chicago Hilton Towers, PDR 3

A Symposium on Tony Clark's *Divine Revelation and Human Response* (Session M31-419)

Reviews: Chris Kettler, Friends University
Walter Mead, Illinois State University
Response: Tony Clark, Friends University
Open discussion

Saturday, November 1, 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Palmer House, Harvard Room

A Symposium on Phil Rolnick's *Person, Grace, and God* (Session M1-115)

Reviews: Paul Lewis, Mercer University
Paul Gavriluk, University of St. Thomas
Response: Phil Rolnick, University of St. Thomas
Open Discussion

Business Meeting-Open to Polanyi Society members and others interested

American Philosophical Association

Abstracts of Polanyi Society Sessions

The Polanyi Society is sponsoring two sessions in conjunction with the meeting of the Eastern Division of the APA. Both Polanyi Society sessions will be held on December 28 at the Marriott Downtown in Philadelphia, 1201 Market Street. Each of the papers will be posted on the Polanyi Society website by early December. Room assignments will be indicated on the website as well. Following are the abstracts and details of each session.

Session I: 9:00-11:00 a.m.: Polanyi and Langer on Meaning

Robert Innis, University of Massachusetts, Lowell

Between Articulation and Symbolization: Framing Polanyi and Langer

This paper will examine two specific points of entry into, and the relations between, the work of Michael Polanyi and Susanne Langer. It will show that ‘articulation’ and ‘symbolization’ are not to be taken in the exclusive sense as explicit and methodologically controlled processes of sense-giving but rather are operative at both the ‘lower’ and the ‘higher’ thresholds of meaning-making. Such a way of looking at the relation between these two philosophical projects allows us to bring them into close relation with key figures in the classic American pragmatist tradition, on the one hand, and with broad based attempts to develop a nuanced science of mind, on the other hand, that respects the results of empirical research.

Walter Gulick, Montana State University Billings

Langer and Polanyi: Existential Meaning

A person experiences existential meaning when that person’s significant interests or concerns are thought about or acted upon so that their aims or validating contexts (perhaps a purpose, value, community, or sense of the sacred) are engaged in a way that is felt to matter. Polanyi and Langer understood that experiences of existential meaning are embodied phenomena grounded in evolutionary and psychological processes, but that they are also enculturated, symbolized experiences, having a normative dimension. In refusing to be put off by charges of psychologism or lack of logical rigor, Polanyi and Langer have helped philosophy retain its engagement with what is significant to people. This paper builds upon Langer’s articulation of the primacy of felt action and Polanyi’s (and Prosch’s) taxonomy of meaning construction to explore the ways persons experience meaning in life.

Session Respondent: Vincent Colapietro, Penn State University

Session II: 5:15-7:15 p.m.: Polanyi on Normative Thought and Action

Ronald L. Hall, Stetson University

Natural Normativity: Polanyi and/or Searle

In this paper I argue that Michael Polanyi offers an ontology of normativity in nature that can be read as neither a return to Aristotelian teleology simpliciter, nor a denial of the intrinsic ontological status of natural normativity. In fact, I argue that Polanyi has a view of natural normativity that is indeed ontologically intrinsic. To show this I compare Polanyi’s view with that of John Searle. I claim that some insightful distinctions that Searle draws can enlarge and clarify Polanyi’s position; at the same time I claim that the application of these same insights ultimately serves to sharpen a basic difference between Polanyi and Searle regarding their respective views of

natural normativity. I conclude with some brief remarks on some of the implications of Polanyi's ontology of natural normativity for some contemporary debates between religion and science. I claim that Polanyi's ontology of intrinsic natural normativity is independent of any commitment to theism. I do not, however, claim that Polanyi's view is incompatible with theism. In this regard, the ontology of intrinsic natural normativity that I derive from Polanyi offers a way between the two sides of the current impasse on the issue of evolution and intelligent design.
Paper Respondent: Michael Raposa, Lehigh University

Charles Lowney, Washington and Lee University

From Science to Spirituality: A Polanyian Perspective on Moral Law and Virtue For Itself

Polanyi's analysis of knowing as a skill dependent on tacit knowledge, his appreciation of the heuristic nature of the question and the emergence of an answer, and his understanding of the intentional from-to structure of experience apply to moral knowledge as well as scientific knowledge. In this paper, I use Polanyi's philosophy to address two riddles in moral philosophy: first, the very anti-Kantian tension between the spirit and the letter of the law; second, the very Kantian idea that virtue is to be done for its own sake and not for the benefits that it may produce. Showing how Polanyi's philosophy addresses these paradoxes reveals that the good person achieves a way of being that answers questions inherent in the human condition. Furthermore, the Polanyian framework has the benefit of unifying aspects of Aristotelian, Kantian, Utilitarian and religious ethics in a vibrant, forward-focused synthesis.

Paper Respondent: Drew Leder, Loyola College in Maryland

Notes on Contributors

John V. Apczynski (APCZYNSK@sbu.edu), Professor of Theology at St. Bonaventure University, works in the area of contemporary religious thought and is a long-time student of Polanyi's thought. His essay, "What Does Paris Have To Do with Assisi?" (in *Finding Francis* [Palgrave/Macmillan, forthcoming]), is a defense of Bonaventure's theological portrait of Francis.

Robert Doede (bobd@twu.ca) is an Associate Professor of Philosophy at Trinity Western University, Langley, British Columbia, Canada. His essay "On Mind and Meaning" appeared in *TAD* 20:2 (1993-94): 28-42.

Andrew Grosso (rector@trinityks.org) earned a Ph. D. at Marquette University and currently Rector at Trinity Episcopal Church in Atchinson, KS.

William J. Kelleher (wjkellpro@aol.com) earned his Ph.D. in political science at the University of California, Santa Barbara (1984). His fields of specialty include political theory, American politics, and public law. His dissertation was on Karl Marx's axiology, or non-economic theory of value. He has worked as a free lance writer, legal researcher, lecturer in political science, and citizenship teacher in Los Angeles. His first book, *The New Election Game* (1987), is an examination of presidential election reforms, including Internet voting. His second book, *Progressive Logic* (2005), examines the principles of value that American progressives have followed throughout their history.