

NEWS AND NOTES
***Tradition and Discovery* 45:1**
February 2019

The online-only “News and Notes” section of *Tradition and Discovery* includes bibliographic information, calls for papers, annual meeting programs, and any other items possibly of interest to members of the Polanyi Society and other persons working with the thought of Michael Polanyi. Send material to Paul Lewis, Editor of *Tradition and Discovery*, at lewis_pa@mercer.edu.

Call for Proposals
Conference at University of Cambridge
“Tacit Engagement in the Digital Age”
June 26-28, 2019

The Polanyi Society, in collaboration with CRASSH at the University of Cambridge, UK, is pleased to solicit proposals for inclusion in the above referenced conference. CRASSH (Center for Research in the Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities) is one of the largest humanities institutes in the world. Its mission is to create interdisciplinary dialogue both across the University of Cambridge’s many faculties and with international scholars. It offers over 200 public events each year. The web site for CRASSH at <http://www.crassh.cam.ac.uk/> provides further information.

Satinder Gill, author of *Tacit Engagement: Beyond Interaction* and a speaker at the June 2018 Nashotah Polanyi Society Conference, initiated a fall conversation with CRASSH about a Cambridge meeting cooperating with the Polanyi Society. The Polanyi Society Board of Directors at its November 2018 meeting approved support for a summer 2019 meeting. The three-day meeting format combines features of earlier CRASSH meetings and Polanyi Society conferences.

The first two days of “Tacit Engagement in the Digital Age” have been organized largely by Satinder Gill in conversation with CRASSH. This portion of the conference focuses on questions about tacit underpinnings of artificial intelligence and electronic media and related issues in our digital age as indicated by the headings of the following sessions, each lasting for a morning or an afternoon:

- Exploring Performance as a Paradigm of Knowledge
- Self as Interaction in the Digital Age
- Trust in the Shadows of Machine Thinking
- Possible Futures: Art, Science, Technology, and Society

In addition to two longer papers for each session, there will be panels for each of these four topics with four or five presenters giving sharply focused papers of ten minutes each before more general

conversation. A number of panelists and 20-minute paper presenters have already been identified by CRASSH, but additional proposals are sought.

On June 28 there will be sessions on **any Polanyi-related topic** given in the traditional format of the Polanyi Society's annual meetings and conferences. Papers for this portion of the conference only are to be posted online (<http://www.polanyisociety.org>) by June 10 with provision of 30 to 45 minutes of discussion after a brief summary of the paper's key points.

In responding to this call for proposals, please indicate whether your proposal is for a panel or for a paper. Send proposals of roughly 150-250 words as attachments to Walter Gulick at wgulick@msubillings.edu. Priority will be given to proposals received by **February 15**. Notice of acceptance will be communicated within a week after that date.

Registration cost for the conference is £50 (£30 for students). A banquet for speakers will be about an additional £20. Arrangements for housing are presently being investigated. If university housing is available, it generally is less expensive; a list of nearby hotels is being put together. Further information about registration, housing, food options, and related information will be listed on the Polanyi Society web page as soon it becomes available.

2019 Polanyi Society Annual Meeting Call for Papers

The 2019 Polanyi Society Annual Meeting will be held in San Diego, California. The meeting will be held on **Friday, November 22, 2019**, immediately prior to the American Academy of Religion's annual meeting and the week before Thanksgiving. We expect to have at least two sessions on Friday. If the number of accepted papers warrants a third session, either a Thursday evening (November 21) or Saturday morning (November 23) session will be added.

As in the past, we invite paper proposals on **any topic** related to Polanyian thought that interests you. Below are several possible topics that recently have been suggested or partially discussed and which seem to have the potential for interesting presentations:

- Post-critical response to outcomes assessment in education
- Knowing versus understanding in Polanyian perspective
- Polanyian understandings of interpretation and frameworks
- A Polanyian version of virtue epistemology
- Michael Polanyi as reflected in Gareth Dale's *Karl Polanyi: A Life on the Left*

- Polanyi's social and political thought and contemporary politics and culture
- Elements worth developing further in Polanyi and Prosch's *Meaning*
- The Meaning Lectures in relation to Polanyi and Prosch's *Meaning*
- Post-critical approaches to history (or sacred texts)
- The use and limits of passion and desire in post-critical psychology

A proposal of about 250-300 words should be sent as an attachment to Walter Gulick (wgulick@msubillings.edu) by **May 1**. This Call for Papers and updated information on papers accepted, the final schedule, etc. will be posted on <http://www.polanyisociety.org>.

Walter Gulick, Chair of Program Committee

Input on the Annual Polanyi Society Meeting

Where and when should the Polanyi Society schedule conferences and annual meetings? Some recent discussions have suggested that the current annual meeting, always held in conjunction with the American Academy of Religion (AAR) the weekend before Thanksgiving, has become problematic. A number who attend are interested in Polanyi but do not, after the annual meeting, attend subsequent AAR sessions. But it also appears that some attend annual meeting sessions because they are attending AAR meetings or meetings of other cooperating groups. The AAR venue has become increasingly expensive, and it is at an awkward time of year for some. Where do you stand on questions such as these?

The Polanyi Society Board of Directors recently agreed to solicit input about these matters. A link to an informal five-question survey was posted on the Polanyi Society electronic discussion list in early January of 2019. If you did not respond to this survey and wish to do so, the link is below:

https://hillsdale.col.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_eFDNOHNMKMPK1il

As the preceding note makes clear, the November 2019 Polanyi Society annual meeting will definitely be held in conjunction with the AAR annual meeting in San Diego, CA. But the annual meeting pattern may change thereafter.

Budapest Workshop on Philosophy of Technology 2019 Call for Abstracts

The second Budapest Workshop on Philosophy of Technology will be held December 12 -13, 2019 at Budapest University of Technology and Economics. Preliminary information about the workshop is now posted at <http://budpt.eu>. Papers can explore any topics connected to the epistemology, ontology and ethics of technology (see the suggestions on the web site). One-page abstracts (in English) for presentations will be submitted through a portal that will be open March 4, 2019 through June 30, 2019 with notification of acceptance by July 21, 2019. There will be publication options for participants. Remote participation will be possible via pre-recorded video presentations; the workshop organizers will provide assistance to those doing remote presentations. Inquiries can be directed to Mihály Héder (mihaly.heder@filozofia.bme.hu), Chairperson of the Program Committee.

Additions to the Polanyi Society Web Site

Convivium: The United Kingdom Review of Post-Critical Thought was the publication of the UK-centered group—also named "Convivium"—interested in the thought of Michael Polanyi. Convivium was the early counterpart to the North American scholarly group that eventually became the Polanyi Society. Both the United Kingdom and the North American Polanyi groups formed and began sponsoring meetings and publishing newsletters and eventually mini-journals in the seventies. These groups often exchanged and re-printed reviews, short articles and notices in their publications. Many of the early Polanyi Society publications preserved in the *Tradition and Discovery* archive identify material published also in *Convivium* and the same is true of *Convivium* issues. However not all the interesting *Convivium* material commenting on Polanyi's thought was republished. There were 25 issues of *Convivium* published between 1975 and 1987. Retirements and other complications eventually led to the demise of *Convivium* as an independent publication. Former *Convivium* subscribers often thereafter subscribed to and submitted material for publication in what became *Tradition and Discovery*. In 1994-95, the UK Polanyi group officially merged with the Polanyi Society and all those on the *Convivium* mailing list were added to the Polanyi Society mailing list.

An archive of *Convivium* issues identified by number and date of publication has recently been added to the Polanyi Society web site. You can access this archival collection from polanysisociety.org simply by scrolling down to the link for [Issues of Convivium 1975-1987](#).

Early *Convivium* issues are quite brief but later issues are approximately 25 pages long. All issues were produced on a typewriter and then duplicated so the quality of archival digitized copies in the *Convivium* archive is not always good. The copies available of some issues have underlinings and other notes in pen or pencil. Although the Polanyi Society web committee looked for

Convivium in many UK and US libraries and contacted several persons affiliated with *Convivium*, we were unable to secure better quality copies of this early publication. In fact copies of *Convivium* 5 and 10 are missing from this collection. If you have information about these missing issues, or have better quality copies of issues in the archive or have questions about *Convivium* contact Phil Mullins (mullins@missouriwestern.edu).

Facebook and YouTube Material

Polanyi Society members who use Facebook should note that Andy Steiger has recently taken up the project of adding content and updating the Polanyi Society Facebook material. The Facebook page is now linked to a new YouTube channel. Here are the links to both:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TraditionAndDiscovery/>

YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC-gSsBzSxyQ-Dm_cilu_Xzg

Academic Papers, Blogs, Dissertations and Publications

Don J. Payne, Professor of Theology and Christian Formation, at Denver Seminary recently published a review of Esther Meek's *Contact with Reality* in *Denver Journal*, an online review journal produced by the faculty of Denver Seminary. The review is available at <https://denverseminary.edu/resources/news-and-articles/contact-with-reality-michael-polanyis-realism-and-why-it-matters/>.

Colin Cordner's article distinguishing science from scientism, "The Diagnosis of Scientism: Eric Voegelin and Michael Polanyi on Science and Philosophy," was originally published in 2013 in *Appraisal* 9 (3): 3-12. It is now available online in VoegelinView, a web site dedicated to the thought of Voegelin and political philosophy that also provides commentary on aspects of culture: <https://voegelinview.com/diagnosis-scientism-eric-voegelin-michael-polanyi-science-philosophy/>. Cordner is Associate Editor for this web site.

Colin Cordner's 2016 Carleton University dissertation "A Tale of Two Republics: Plato and Michael Polanyi on Science, Faith and the Study of Man" is online at <https://curve.carleton.ca/6c3deffc-92e2-4c81-a13d-6f8b75540c71>. The abstract is below.

Abstract: The purpose of this work is to employ the meditations of Plato, son of Ariston, and the Hungarian polymath Michael Polanyi in an analysis of the essence of science and philosophy, and

the causes and conditions of nihilism. As the means to that endeavour, we shall proceed by way of comparative exegeses of key writings by both men, Plato's *Politeia*, *Symposium*, *Timaeus*, and *Critias*; and Polanyi's *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*, *The Study of Man*, *The Tacit Dimension*, and *Knowing and Being*. Through that process we shall be reflecting upon their philosophic anthropologies and their accounts of the existential character of the open soul versus that of *l'homme revolté*; on the grounds of scientific and philosophic knowledge of reality; and the nature of the free society as the open soul writ large.

Gábor István Bíró's 2017 Ph. D dissertation, "Projecting the Light of Democracy Michael Polanyi's Efforts to Save Liberalism via an Economics Film, 1933-1948" is reviewed (background, findings and resources) in this online 16-page "thesis booklet" posted by Budapest University of Technology and Economics: https://repozitorium.omikk.bme.hu/bitstream/handle/10890/5399/tezis_eng.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y.

Andy Steiger is a filmmaker for whom the thought of Michael Polanyi is an important resource. The following links are to two short films he created. The first of these, "What Is Human?" recently won a number of awards including People's Choice and Best Short Film.

What Is Human?: <https://vimeo.com/311290269/16d716b379>

What is the Value of Human Life?: <https://vimeo.com/311291190/26d0fc0832>.

Steiger will be making a presentation at the July 2019 World Congress of the International Association for Philosophy of Law and Social Philosophy at the University of Lucerne, Switzerland the theme of which is "Dignity, Democracy and Diversity."

Richard T. Allen. 2017. "[The Real Significance of Metaphor: Lucian Blaga and Michael Polanyi](#)," *Rivista Italiana di Filosofia del Linguaggio* 11(2): 258-266. DOI:10.4396/20171201M1

Abstract Metaphors are taken to be 'figures of speech' which apply the terms for one known object to another. They can be used to soihow or argue that what applies to the one also applies to the second. But this ignores Lucian Bladga's important distinction between such 'plastic' metaphors and 'revelatory' ones which articulate for both the discoverer and for his audience something radically new for which there is no word. This relies upon our tacit powers, as shown by Piaget and articulated by Michael Polanyi, to adapt our present concepts, categories and language by using them as clues and attending from them and to what we sense that they point to and which cannot be 'assimilated' to them. A completely new word would articulate and convey nothing, but a word used as a revelatory metaphor can both open up a 'mystery' or 'unknown unknown' and reveal and convey something of it. The work of Blaga, Polanyi and Piaget on epistemology and language is used to explain, with examples, how this is possible and why it is important. Indeed, language grows by means of such metaphors which, if successful, then become 'literal' uses of the

words used, and their metaphorical origins are forgotten. The proper understanding of metaphor may require some radical changes in our ideas of language and knowledge.

Key words: Attending from-to, Lucian Blaga, plus knowledge, minus knowledge, plastic metaphors, revelatory metaphors, Michael Polanyi, Piaget, tacit integration.

Richard T. Allen. 2016. "[The Personalist Epistemology of Michael Polanyi](#)," *Quién* 1(4): 7-25.

Abstract: Uniquely among personalist philosophers Michael Polanyi was an internationally recognised scientist, and so able to tackle scientist reductionism and objectivism on their chosen ground of natural science, by showing that it requires throughout the personal participation, commitment and judgement, often tacit, of the scientist, as does all our knowing and action. For this he formulated his central conception of the essentially tacit integration of subsidiary details from which we attend and use as clues to apprehend the 'comprehensive entities' and to perform the 'complex actions' to which we focally attend. Thus he restored the scientist to his science and the person to the world in which he lives. Science is a deeply personal pursuit, as are all disciplines, and reductionism and objectivism, to the extent that they are actually practised, would destroy civilisation with it.

Key words: Polanyi, reductionism, science, tacit integration.

Peter Hartl. 2012. "[Michael Polanyi on Freedom of Science](#)," *Synthesis Philosophica* 54: 307–321.

Abstract: In the present essay I investigate Polanyi's main arguments for academic freedom. Academic and political freedom are closely related to each other: if state takes control over science, it will lead to the collapse of freedom itself in the whole society. His arguments against totalitarianism rely on his anti-positivist philosophy of science. He diagnoses totalitarianism as a denial of academic freedom which is based on a pragmatist view of science and instrumentalist interpretation of moral values. Polanyi's idea of science is a spiritual, idealistic description of a community of free intellectuals who are passionately committed to seeking the truth and have an autonomous community with its own rules and autonomous direction. Seeking the truth for its own sake is the essential goal of science, which can be accomplished only if it remains free from political, ideological and economical influences. I will argue that Polanyi's insights can still be relevant today, when science can become an instrument of profit-oriented practical needs instead of seeking the truth itself, and the humanities (including philosophy) are often considered unnecessary.

Key words academic freedom, Michael Polanyi, pure science, scientific authority, self-coordination, tacit judgements, totalitarianism, tradition, truth.

Paul D. Aligica and Vlad Tarko. 2012. "[Polycentricity: From Polanyi to Ostrom, and Beyond](#)." *Governance: An International Journal of Policy, Administration, and Institutions* 25 (2): 237-262. DOI:10.1111/j.1468-0491.2011.01550.x.

Abstract: The article overviews and elaborates the concept of polycentricity, defined as a structural feature of social systems of many decision centers having limited and autonomous prerogatives and operating under an overarching set of rules. The article starts by introducing the concept as it was advanced by Michael Polanyi and developed by Elinor and Vincent Ostrom. It continues introducing possible instances of polycentricity as well as related notions, as part of an attempt to further elaborate the concept through a concept design approach that systematically applies the logic of necessary and sufficient conditions. The article concludes by arguing that the polycentricity conceptual framework is not only a robust analytical structure for the study of complex social phenomena but is also a challenging method of drawing non-ad hoc analogies between different types of self-organizing complex social systems.

Justin Fruehauf, Frederick G. Kohun, and Robert Joseph Skovira. 2014. "[A Discussion Focusing on Polanyi's Tacit Knowing](#)," *Online Journal of Applied Knowledge Management* 3 (2):100-113.

Abstract: The essay is a contradiction, of sorts. Its problem is prompted by use of Michael Polanyi's term tacit knowing in the knowledge management literature. So the problematic for the essay is what does Polanyi mean by tacit knowing? We will attempt to dwell in Polanyi's description of tacit knowing as he has written extensively about the tacit coefficient of human existence. He has described this phenomenon in *Personal Knowledge* (1962), *The Tacit Dimension* (1966), *Knowing and Being* (1969), and *Meaning* (1975). The essay is an exploration of the ideas of tacit knowing, tacit knowledge, and the tacit dimension.

Key words: tacit knowing, subsidiary ... focal, from ... to, Gestalt, personal commitment, tacit coefficient, conviviality.

http://irma.math.unistra.fr/~schappa/NSch/Publications_files/2012a_OberwTacit_Intro.pdf

This is the report on a workshop, organized for historians of mathematics, which focused on explicit and tacit knowledge in mathematics. It is a fascinating discussion and reflects that some historians of mathematics are attuned to Polanyi's ideas and are exploring them in the context of mathematics.

Mathematisches Forschungsinstitut Oberwolfach Report No. 04/2012 DOI: 10.4171/OWR/2012/04 "Explicit Versus Tacit Knowledge in Mathematics." Organised by Tom Archibald, Burnaby Jeanne Peiffer, Paris Norbert Schappacher, Strasbourg January 8th – January 14th, 2012

Abstract: This workshop aimed to bring together an international group of historians of mathematics to reflect upon the role played by tacit knowledge in doing mathematics at various times and places. The existence of tacit knowledge in contemporary mathematics is familiar to anyone who has ever been given an idea of how a particular proof or theory "works" by a verbal analogy or diagrammatic explanation that one would never consider publishing. Something of it

is felt by every student of mathematics, when the process of learning mathematics often amounts to training the right reflexes. In more advanced contexts, the tacit understanding that a particular technique, instrument or approach is “the one to use” in a given circumstance gives another familiar instance. Tacit knowledge, a term introduced by the philosopher M. Polanyi, contrasts with the explicit knowledge that in almost all historical mathematical cultures is associated with mathematical text. The workshop invited a use of the categories of tacit and explicit knowledge to achieve a better knowledge of how mathematical creation proceeds, and also of how cultural habits play a tacit role in mathematical production. The meeting intended to offer the possibility of significant innovation and enrichment of historical method, as well as new and compelling insight into the process of creating mathematics in different times and places. The meeting was intended to afford the opportunity for a presentation of selected case studies by leading experts and new scholars. In retrospect, as we hope these abstracts show, the results promise to be of significant interest not only to historians, but to the mathematical community more broadly.

Donations to the Travel, Grants, and Projects Fund and the Polanyi Society Endowment

The Polanyi Society Board of Directors in November 2018 combined Society travel funds into one fund, entitled the Travel, Grants, and Projects Fund. Particular disbursements may, however, be in memory of particular persons.

The Travel, Grants, and Projects Fund will continue to enable scholars to participate in Society meetings. One of the Society’s goals is to involve persons who are presently, or have recently, been engaged in graduate studies. Recent Polanyi Society annual meetings have included a session with graduate student papers and travel awards have supported this part of the program. These travel awards will continue and possibly some new awards will soon be added. Donations to the Travel, Grants, and Projects Fund are much appreciated.

The Polanyi Society Endowment was established a few years ago with a gift from the late Ann Herbert Scott, the widow of William T. Scott, the original Polanyi biographer. Slowly, the Endowment is growing. The eventual aim is to have an Endowment that generates each year some resources which can be used to support and expand Polanyi Society programming.

Please support these funds by sending a tax-deductible contribution to The Polanyi Society, C/O Charles Lowney, 10 Jordan Street, Lexington, VA, 24450. Checks should be made out to the Polanyi Society and marked Travel, Grants, and Projects or Endowment (or general operating). You can also directly access the Polanyi Society PayPal button (with accompanying tutorial) to make a donation (<http://polanyisociety.org/paypal/donate.html>). The actual PayPal transaction is handled on the secure PayPal site.

Back Printed Issues of *TAD* Available for Purchase

A limited number of back issues of *TAD* are available for purchase as long as supplies last. The cost for a copy of issues up to and including Vol. 41:3 is \$5.00. A copy of issues from 42:1 on is \$7.00. All prices include shipping and handling. For issues up to and including Vol. 39:2, contact Phil Mullins (mullins@missouriwestern.edu). For issues from 39:3 to the present, contact Paul Lewis (lewis_pa@mercer.edu). Payment should be sent to The Polanyi Society, C/O Charles Lowney, 10 Jordan Street, Lexington, VA, 24450. Checks should be made out to the Polanyi Society and earmarked for back issues.

Minutes and Reports Posted

The Polanyi Society Board of Directors met on November 16, 2018 in conjunction with the Denver annual meeting of the Society. The minutes of that meeting and the reports of the Treasurer are posted [here](#) on the Polanyi Society web site (<http://www.polanyisociety.org>) under the Other Links/Polanyi Society Board of Directors Materials.

Web

A Note Concerning Membership

If you receive the print issue of *Tradition and Discovery*, your membership expiration date is on your mailing label. Dues notices are sent out with the October issue and must be paid by December 31. The membership secretary will contact those who have not paid dues after the first of the year, but it may result in missing the February issue. Please remember that the Polanyi Society is a small organization with limited resources used for many projects. If you receive only the digital *TAD*, you are not required to have an official subscription; nevertheless, a contribution (which can be made via the [secure PayPal link](#)) will be welcomed.