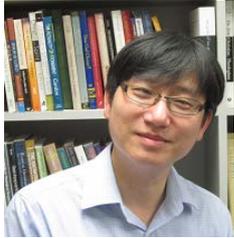


**Ultimate Concern:  
Paul Tillich, Buddhism, Confucianism**

Agenda

July 12 (Day 1)

Time	Event	Speaker and Abstract
12:00-13:30	Lunch (for speakers)	
13:45-14:10 (25 mins)	<p><b>Opening Ceremony</b>  <b>Chair: Dr. William NG Yau-nang</b>            Welcome Speeches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prof. KWAN Kai-man/ Prof. Lauren PFISTER (HKBU/HKAH)</li> <li>- Prof. LAI Pan-chiu (CUHK)</li> </ul> <p>Group Photo</p>	
14:10-15:20 (70 mins)	<p><b>Session 1: Keynote Speeches</b>  <b>Chair: Prof. Lauren Pfister</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Prof. Duane OLSON (McKendree University)</li> <li>➤ Prof. LAI Pan-chiu (CUHK)</li> </ul> <p>(Each has 25 mins to present)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Discussion: 20 mins</li> </ul>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Prof. Duane OLSON  <a href="#"><u>Abstract: Tillich's Two Methods in Context: Some Implications for Interreligious Understanding</u></a></p> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <p>Prof. LAI Pan-chiu  <a href="#"><u>Abstract: Tillich's Concept of Ultimate Concern and Buddhist-Christian Dialogue</u></a></p> </div>
15:20-15:45 (25 mins)	Tea Break	

<p>15:45-17:15 (90 mins)</p>	<p><b>Session 2: Tillich and Western Heritage (I)</b>  <b>Chair: Prof. Duane OLSON</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Dr. KWOK Wai-luen (HKBU)</li> <li>➤ Mr. Brandon LOVE (HKBU)</li> <li>➤ Dr. WANG Tao (Holy Spirit Seminary, HK )</li> </ul> <p>(Each has 20 mins to present)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Discussion: 30 mins</li> </ul>	 <p>Dr. KWOK Wai-luen  <u><a href="#">Abstract: Where can Barthians and Tillichians Meet? An Analysis through Robert Jenson's Christology</a></u></p>  <p>Mr. Brandon LOVE  <u><a href="#">Abstract: Paul Tillich: Concerning Lessing's Broad and Ugly Ditch</a></u></p>  <p>Dr. WANG Tao  <u><a href="#">Abstract: A Comparative Study of St. Thomas Aquinas's and Paul Tillich's Ideas of Love: In the Perspective of <i>Agape-Eros</i> and <i>Philia</i></a></u></p>
<p>17:15-17:30 (15 mins)</p>	<p>Tea Break</p>	

<p>17:30-19:00 (90 mins)</p>	<p><b>Session 3: Tillich and Western Heritage (II)</b>  <b>Chair: Dr. Ellen Y. ZHANG</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Prof. Russell Re MANNING (Bath Spa University)</li> <li>➤ Prof. Stephen PALMQUIST (HKBU)</li> <li>➤ Prof. KWAN Kai-man (HKBU)</li> </ul> <p>(Each has 20 mins to present)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Discussion: 30 mins</li> </ul>	<div style="text-align: center;">  <p>Prof. Russell Re MANNING  <a href="#"><u>Abstract: Absolute Faith, Correlation, and Contemporary Continental Atheism</u></a></p> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <p>Prof. Stephen PALMQUIST  <a href="#"><u>Abstract: Does Tillich Have a Hidden Debt to Kant?</u></a></p> </div> <div style="text-align: center; margin-top: 20px;">  <p>Prof. KWAN Kai-man  <a href="#"><u>Abstract: Paul Tillich on the Relationship between Morality and Religion</u></a></p> </div>
<p>19:30-21:00</p>	<p>Dinner (for speakers): Serenade Chinese Restaurant, Tsim Sha Tsui  Tour (for speakers): Harbour Tour</p>	

July 13 (Day 2)

Time	Event	Speaker and Abstract
<p>09:00-10:30 (90 mins)</p>	<p><b>Session 4: Tillich and East Asian Philosophy</b>  <b>Chair: Dr. KWOK Wai Luen</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Dr. Ellen ZHANG Ying (HKBU)</li> <li>➤ Dr. William NG Yau-nang (HKBU)</li> <li>➤ Dr. Andrew HUNG Tsz-wan (Community College, Poly U)</li> </ul> <p>(Each as 20 mins to present)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Discussion 30 mins</li> </ul>	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; align-items: center;">  <p>Dr. Ellen ZHANG Ying  <a href="#"><u>Abstract: When the Ground of Being Encounters Emptiness: Tillich and Buddhism</u></a></p>  <p>Dr. William NG Yau-nang  <a href="#"><u>Abstract: Tillich, Lotus-birth and Asian Religions: A Comparative Study of Lotus-birth as a Religious Symbol</u></a></p>  <p>Dr. Andrew HUNG Tsz-wan  <a href="#"><u>Abstract: Tillich and Classical Confucian on Religious Ethics</u></a></p> </div>
<p>10:30 10:45 (15 mins)</p>	<p>Tea Break</p>	

10:45-12:45  
(120 mins)

**Session 5: Chinese Reception and Responses to  
Tillich**

**Chair Dr. William NG Yau-nang**

- Prof. Lauren PFISTER (HKBU)
  - Dr. YANG Junjie 楊俊杰 (Beijing Normal University)
  - Dr. Keith CHAN Ka-fu (HKBU)
  - Prof. Francis YIP Ching-wah (CUHK)
- (Each has 20 mins to present)
- Discussion: 40 mins



Prof. Lauren PFISTER

[Abstract: Beyond Moral and Religious Conventionalities: Comparative Meta-ethical and Ethical Reflections on Zhang Zai \(1020-1077\) and Paul Tillich \(1886-1965\)](#)



Dr. YANG Junjie

[Abstract: "I am Caught". From Paul Tillich to T.C. Chao](#)



Dr. Keith CHAN Ka-fu

[Abstract: Pneumatological Sacramentality and Cosmic Human: Tillich, Orthodox Theology and Confucianism](#)

		 <p>Prof. Francis YIP Ching -wah  <a href="#">Abstract: <u>Another Religious Vindication of Democracy from a Christian Perspective? The Relevance of Paul Tillich to Our Situation.</u></a></p>
12:45-16:00	Lunch and Tour (for speakers) Venue: Chi Lin Nunnery	
16:35-17:35 (90 mins)	<b>Session 6: Roundtable: The Future of Tillich</b> <b>Chair: Lauren PFISTER</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prof. Duane OLSON</li> <li>- Prof. LAI Pan-chiu</li> <li>- Prof. Francis YIP Ching-wah</li> <li>- Prof. Russell Re MANNING</li> <li>- Prof. KWAN Kai-man</li> <li>- Dr. Keith CHAN Ka-fu</li> </ul>	
18:00-20:00	Banquet (for speakers): Star Seafood Floating, Shatin	

## Abstracts

### **Pneumatological Sacramentality and Cosmic Human: Tillich, Orthodox Theology and Confucianism**

[Keith CHAN Ka-fu](#) (Hong Kong Baptist University)

This paper aims at exploring the similarity with the concept of sacramentality and cosmic humanity in the theology of Paul Tillich, the Orthodox theological tradition and Chinese Confucianism. Against the dualistic understanding of the universe, they all point to a unifying, multidimensional and interpenetrating cosmos in which the transcendence divine is wholly embodied within the immanent world without losing the transcendence dimension of the divine. Moreover, they also express a unique understanding of the cosmic anthropology, which regards the status and role of humanity as micro cosmos (Tillich), priest / mediator of the earth (Orthodox theology) and the Superior Man between Heaven and earth (Confucianism). The paper will end up to draw the environmental implications of the above discussion.

### **Tillich and Classical Confucian on Religious Ethics**

[Andrew HUNG Tsz-wan](#) (Hong Kong Community College, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University)

This paper attempts to compare Tillich's and Confucian religious ethics from three aspects. They are perspectives of religious nature, substantive content and moral motivation of ethics. By such comparison, I am going to show that although there exist differences in their understanding of God/Heaven and concept of love (*agape/ren*), the religious nature and the basic structure of substantive content of their ethics are very similar. Both stresses that the relation between religion and morality is internal rather than external. Moral imperatives are derived from introspection of human nature which is related to the transcendent. Both are a kind of virtue ethics with the centrality of love, rather than utilitarianism, deontological ethics or situation ethics. Both conceive moral judgement as based on love and justice with the consideration of particular situation by using practical reason under the guidance of moral laws or rituals. However, they are very different in the perspective of moral motivation. While Confucianism stresses the significance of self-cultivation by observance of rituals, Tillich considers that the real moral motivation arises from *eros* that is given as grace rather than derived from practices of moral laws or rituals. By further investigation of their underlying concern, I argue that Confucian perception of human nature may be too optimistic and has neglected the seriousness of human murkiness. If sinfulness is the reality of existential human beings, Tillich's idea of grace could provide a better answer to human predicament and a greater moral force.

### **Paul Tillich on the Relationship between Morality and Religion**

[KWAN Kai-man](#) (Hong Kong Baptist University)

The Relationship between morality and religion is a controversial issue. While some religious scholars (e.g., proponents of Divine Command Ethics) contend that morality depends on religion, the secularists vehemently defend the independence of morality from religion (e.g., Kai Nielsen). Paul Tillich provides an interesting perspective on this problem: "If morality is intrinsically religious, as religion is intrinsically ethical, neither is dependent on the other, and neither can be substituted for the other." In

other words, “the relation of religion and morality is not an external one, but that the religious dimension, source, and motivation are implicit in all morality, acknowledged or not.”

In particular, Tillich argues for three theses: the “unconditional character of the moral imperative is its religious quality”; “love as the ultimate source of the moral commands, and grace as the power of the moral motivation”. In this paper, I will systematically explore Tillich’s view on the relationship between morality and religion. Then I will provide critical evaluation of this view, and the above three theses in particular.

### **Where can Barthians and Tillichians Meet? An Analysis through Robert Jenson’s Christology**

[KWOK Wai-luen](#) (Hong Kong Baptist University)

Tillich’s understanding of Christ as “New being” characterizes his Christology being “existential” and “symbolic”. With this stereotype, supporters of Karl Barth’s may criticize Tillich’s tendency of non-realist and a-historic. At the same time, Barth’s proposal may be refuted by Tillichians as dualist and uncontextualized. Robert Jenson, though, is very critical to Tillich’s theological project; he argued that the Christologies of Barth and Tillich were fallen into the same pitfall of the 19th Century German Liberal theology. Jenson offered his “revisionary metaphysics” as a way to overcome the problem. Surprisingly, Jenson’s project, which he considered a development of Barth’s thought, is somewhat in convergence with Tillich. In this article, I will analyze Jenson’s understanding of Jesus Christ’s role in creation and salvation history, and show some interesting meeting points between Jenson, Barth, and Tillich.

### **Tillich’s Concept of Ultimate Concern and Buddhist-Christian Dialogue**

[LAI Pan-chiu](#) (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

Paul Tillich’s concept of ultimate concern was formed with a Christian theological background, but its contribution to the rise of Religious Studies as an academic discipline in USA is acknowledged even by scholars of Religious Studies who may not be particularly interested in Christian theology. This paper aims to explore the significance of this concept for the comparison or dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism.

In the comparison or dialogue between Buddhism and Christianity, one of the thorniest issues is that since Buddhism is not a theistic religion and does not have a doctrine of God comparable to that of Christianity, comparison or dialogue between Christianity and Buddhism on their concepts of God or gods seems to be too difficult if not impossible. Making direct comparison between the Christian doctrine of God and an apparently comparable concept in Buddhism, such as Buddha or deva, may risk the danger of being too superficial or even misleading.

Upon a sketch of Tillich’s concept of ultimate concern, this paper attempts to investigate if and how

the concept is applicable to Buddhism through reviewing the Buddhist concepts of Nirvana and Dharma. It further argues that if one takes Tillich's concept of ultimate concern as a mediating concept, one may find it not only possible to explore the ultimate concern of Buddhism, but also meaningful as well as fruitful to make comparison or dialogue with Christianity. Based on this approach to Buddhist-Christian dialogue, this paper will conclude with theological reflections on the Christian doctrine of God through dialogue with various schools of Buddhism, including the Middle-Path, the Hua-yen and the Pure Land, representing three different approaches to the Buddhist ultimate concern.

### **Paul Tillich: Concerning Lessing's Broad and Ugly Ditch**

[Brandon LOVE](#) (Hong Kong Baptist University)

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing was the fountainhead of the historical Jesus movement. His "ditch" separating reason from history and revelation has been the main challenge for Modern and Enlightenment thinkers concerned with the place of Jesus in salvation and revelation. In short, the problem is the possibility of historical, contingent facts revealing eternal truths and values. Paul Tillich was a thinker working within the context of the Enlightenment, especially concerning the notion of eternal and context independent truths. This is most evident in his notion of Jesus as the Christ.

This paper is an exploration of Tillich's thought in light of Lessing's ditch. Tillich attempts to mitigate the issue of the relationship between reason and history through his kerygmatic theology of mediation. In Tillich's work, kerygmatic mediation is mostly developed as a method of doing theology that bridges a gap between the Catholic substance and the Protestant principle. However, my claim is that Tillich has replaced the Catholic substance of Nicaea with so-called universal truths of the Enlightenment. In this way, the Protestant principle is Tillich's attempt to answer Lessing's challenge. Tillich's notion of the kerygma, especially Jesus as the Christ, is typically seen as a method for making ancient theological truths relevant for more contemporary context; however, my claim is that it is also, or more so, a method for mediating between reason and history, while bordering on leaving history in the past entirely.

This theological approach has implications for interfaith and interreligious encounters. If historical facts are left to one side, being replaced by universal truths, then there is a way forward for dialogue between people of different historical backgrounds and geographical contexts. The universal is given primacy over the particular. However, one worry with this approach is that, for human beings, who are necessarily located in the particular, no true direction is given. The universal must always be found within a particular context; in this case, the Christ event cannot be found without the life of Jesus.

### **Absolute Faith, Correlation, and Contemporary Continental Atheism**

[Russell Re MANNING](#) (Bath Spa University)

Common to recent accounts of atheism in continental philosophy is the conviction that much recent theological engagement – notably the work of John D. Caputo – has not taken sufficient recognition of the deep, radical, character of these passionate philosophical atheisms. In this paper I propose that the

critiques of Caputo's over-quick theological co-option of Heidegger and Derrida (and more recently Deleuze and Badiou) are well founded; but that this analysis ought by no means to deny the possibility for an alternative – more radical and more Tillichian – theological correlation to radical continental philosophical atheism.

Central to my argument is an appreciation of quite how little radical continental philosophical atheisms have to do with a denial of the existence of God. Instead, properly philosophical atheisms are concerned with ontological and metaphysical questions of the interpretation of being and the nature of life. As such, I argue that a theological response that seeks to co-opt such atheistic philosophy whilst carefully exempting a “genuine” theology – variously articulated as “non-idolatrous”, “non-metaphysical” or “non-ontotheological” - is profoundly misguided and fails to respond substantively to the real a-theological force of these philosophical atheisms. Instead, I wish to propose the outlines of a radically Tillichian theological correlation to these philosophical atheisms – one which is, I suggest, foreshadowed by a distinction Caputo himself draws between “radical” and “confessional” theologies. The key to such a correlation lies in Tillich's own radical revisionary theology that enables us to think (or at least clears some of the conceptual space for such thinking) of an “atheistic theology” that returns us to the primordial piety of the unconditioned without succumbing to the comforting fidelities of the religions.

### **Tillich, Lotus-birth and Asian Religions: A Comparative Study of Lotus-birth as a Religious Symbol**

[William NG Yau-nang](#) (HKBU)

Paul Tillich has provided his insightful thought over religious symbols and ultimate concern in his influential work, *Dynamics of Faith*. The present study thinks along the comparative line that Paul Tillich employed in his understanding of religious symbolism to shed light upon the understanding of the symbol of lotus in Asian religious traditions. To be more precise, this paper attempts to use a comparative religious approach to study the meaning of “lotus-birth” as a religious symbol. The so-called “lotus-birth” means the birth related to the lotus flower.

This paper attempts to put forward the idea that lotus is an important religious symbol shared across different Asian cultures, as witnessed in the case of ancient Egypt, Chinese Buddhism and Daoism. This paper also shows that, some special characteristics of the plant such as open in the morning and close at night have made the plant an easy metaphor of the life and death cycle, a symbol of the duality of life and death. In addition, since lotus is not contaminated even though it grows in mud pond, and the flowers has a unique fragrance, this dualistic structure can easily be used to express an idea of moving from the profane world to the sacred world, or leaving the world of dead and gaining resurrection. This type of duality can easily acquire symbolic correlation from the characteristics of the lotus. On account of this correlation, the lotus symbol is used across different religions.

Tillich thinks that ultimate concern must be express symbolically and symbolic language alone is capable of expressing the ultimate. This paper, however, has shown that on top of expressing the ultimate, the lotus in Chinese Buddhist and Daoist narratives can also be used as a mean to approach the ultimate concern. These two Chinese traditions take the symbols of lotus as important means for enhancing a transformation towards the ultimate concern. Therefore, the symbol is not merely a mean of expression but also a mean of transformation. It deals not so much with pointing beyond themselves to the ultimate but as vehicle to the ultimate. And as such, the lotus symbols, according to these religious narratives, not just disclose new dimension of an external ultimate but at the same time unlock the new internal potentiality which when actualized can provide a new life either in the form of a new

deity or in a new spiritual life in the Pure Land.

**Keywords:**

Lotus-birth, *Nuozha*, transformative rebirth, *Nefertum*, Tillich, Symbol

**Tillich's Two Methods in Context: Some Implications for Interreligious Understanding**

[Duane OLSON](#) (McKendree University)

Through the course of his philosophical and theological work, Paul Tillich explicitly articulated two major theoretical methods. The most famous method from his later American work was a two-fold method Tillich called the method of correlation. It was developed most notably in his three volume *Systematic Theology* (1951, 1957 and 1963). The lesser known method from his early German work was a three-fold method that Tillich called the metalogical method. It was developed most notably in his work on the sciences called *The System of the Sciences according to Objects and Methods* (1922), and the volume that proceeded from it called *The Philosophy of Religion* (1925). Little attention has been given to the relationship between these methods, which is surprising given the fact that Tillich himself argued for the intimate connection between method and content in all theoretical work. This paper makes an explicit argument about the nature of the connection between these two methods. In particular, it shows the way in which the metalogical method is taken up into the method of correlation and by this remains decisive for understanding the architectonic structure of Tillich's thought as a whole.

The paper makes the further argument that grasping the structure of Tillich's thought through the metalogical method provides a better lens for analyzing both the contextual possibilities and limitations of his thought for contemporary interreligious questions. The method of correlation, as Tillich articulated it in the *Systematic Theology*, brings to the fore existential questions derived from an analysis of human finitude, anxiety and estrangement. It then places the integrating and healing response of Christian symbols in a correlated relation to those concerns. Articulated in this way, a narrow focus on that method has limited value in showing how Tillich's system engages explicitly interreligious questions.

In contrast, the metalogical method explicitly proceeds from a philosophical deduction of the essence of religion as such, involving, in Tillich's distinctive understanding, a grasp of the dynamic tension of the elements within that essence. It proceeds to unfold a spiritual history of religion, not in an empirical or chronological way, but through a philosophically determined typology that emerges from a grasp of the tension of the elements contained within the essence. Finally, it proceeds to the articulation of a norm that resolves that tension in a productive way for an individual spiritual context. All three elements of this method, the deduction of the essence of religion and its tensions, the articulation of the spiritual history with its tensions, and the resolution of these tensions in a particular norm, display an openness to interreligious questions and provide fertile ground for thinking through those questions.

Based on the insight into Tillich's system provided by the metalogical method, this paper raises one

explicit question about the universality of Tillich's vision. The primary tension Tillich develops in articulating the essence of religion and its resolution to a norm involves the contrast or even contradiction between the unconditioned and its appearance in a particular finite form. For Tillich, this contrast demands a resolution in which the form is negated for the sake of the unconditioned that it bears. Tillich develops this negation for Christianity in his distinctive interpretation of the cross of the Christ. The question raised, however, is whether this tension, as Tillich articulates it, functions universally as the decisive tension in the history of religions or whether it takes the peculiar form in which Tillich encountered it only within the monotheistic traditions of western religions. If it is the latter, the norms that emerge from other traditions will invariably and quite legitimately embody a different character.

### **Does Tillich have a Hidden Debt to Kant?**

[Stephen PALMQUIST](#) (HKBU)

After a brief account of a strange (almost mystical) experience I had while reading Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* for the first time, I devote the bulk of this paper to exploring some uncanny similarities between various theories that Kant developed and ideas that have come to be more commonly associated with Paul Tillich. Some hints will be drawn from Chapter Six of Chris Firestone's 2009 book, *Kant and Theology at the Boundaries of Reason*, which argues that my interpretation of Kant echoes various themes in Tillich's ontology. Among the themes whose Kantian roots I shall explore (as time permits!) will be Tillich's theories of: God as the Ground of Being; faith as ultimate concern; courage as the proper life-choice in the face of the anxiety that naturally arises out of an honest response to the human situation, given our fundamental alienation from the divine; the crucial role played by cultural symbols in bringing faith into historically realistic expressions; political forms as ideally self-negating; and love as a gift that must be expressed in a context of power and justice in order to be efficacious. After raising and tentatively answering the question of whether Kant influenced Tillich more than Tillich ever admitted, I conclude by wondering whether my own lifelong efforts to develop an "affirmative" interpretation of Kant's religious philosophy in general, as well as of his theory of religion in particular, may have themselves had a hidden influence in the form of my prior reading of Tillich.

### **Beyond Moral and Religious Conventionalities: Comparative Metaethical and Ethical Reflections on Zhang Zai (1020-1077) and Paul Tillich (1886-1965)**

[Lauren F. PFISTER](#) (Hong Kong Baptist University)

After introducing the unusual situations that shaped the lives of Zhang Zai and Paul Tillich, we present details from two major writings of these seminal figures: Zhang's *Western Inscription* and Tillich's sermon, "The Depth of Existence". In this process we present new English renderings of selected passages of Zhang's influential essay, and illustrate how Tillich's essay manifests onto-hermeneutic claims related to change and transformation that have not always been highlighted in his work. As a consequence, we highlight how both men's writings provoke some unusual metaethical and ethical reflections, while also sharing important values and standards revealed through this comparative study.

## **A Comparative Study of St. Thomas Aquinas's and Paul Tillich's Ideas of Love: In the Perspective of Agape-Eros and Philia**

[WANG Tao](#) (Holy Spirit Seminary College of Theology and Philosophy)

The agape-eros tension proposed by Swedish Protestant theologian Anders Nygren becomes the key paradigm of the contemporary understanding of love in the context of Christian faith. As the implement of God-man relationship in human affairs, eros mainly presents as the self-fulfilling or self-centered love proper to human nature, while agape mostly reveals as the self-giving or other-directed love at the supernatural level of godhead. In the former Catholic official *philosophia perennis* Thomistic Theology and philosophy, St. Thomas Aquinas presents the distinction between the love of concupiscence (*amor concupiscentiae*) and the love of friendship (*amor amicitiae*), and the overarching power of agape as one of the theological virtues *caritas* or charity in his doctrine of love. This article aims at understanding St. Thomas's doctrine of love by the agape-eros paradigm, and comparing it with another Protestant theologian Paul Tillich's thesis of love that unifies agape and eros. Tillich, generally accepted as one of the contemporary Protestant theologians who has the closest affinity with Catholicism, understands in consonance with St. Thomas in the idea of love from many aspects. The article proceeds in three parts. The first part entitled "Agape-Eros vs. *Amor amicitiae*-*Amor concupiscentiae*" attempts to clarify the relationship between St. Thomas's twofold distinction of love and Nygren's separation of agape and eros in order to figure out how two thinkers elaborate the idea of love by their terminology. The second part "St. Thomas: *Amor Amicitiae* and *Amor Concupiscentiae*" focuses on St. Thomas's twofold distinction of love and the discussion on charity as a theological virtue to articulate his understanding of love. In "Paul Tillich: Union of Agape-Eros" the third part, we mainly refers to Paul Tillich's idea of love, especially his theory of the union of agape and eros by his theory of the interactive quadri-qualitative structure of love. In addition, the consonance of Tillich with St. Thomas is meanwhile the major content of this part. In Conclusion, the fundamental position and methodology of both Tillich and St. Thomas on love are summarized to reconfirm their similarities.

### **Keywords:**

St. Thomas Aquinas; Paul Tillich; Anders Nygren; Agape(*caritas*)-Eros; *Philia*

## **"I am Caught". From Paul Tillich to T.C. Chao**

[YANG Junjie](#) (Beijing Normal University)

As for the reception of Paul Tillich in the Chinese intellectuals, Lien-Hwa Chow and Shu-Hsien Liu are referred to firstly. While Chow, a protestant pastor, translated Tillich's *Dynamics of Faith* (1957) in 1964 in Taiwan, Liu as one of the adherents of Neo-Confucianism finished his philosophical dissertation on Tillich in Southern Illinois University two years later (*A Critical Study of Paul Tillich's Methodological Presuppositions*, 1966). Yet it should be noted that T.C. Chao (that is, Tzu-Chen Chao), Dean of the School of Religion in Yen-Ching University in Peking as well as one of the famous Chinese theologians at that time, engaged himself to the thoughts of the German-American Protestant theologian much earlier.

In the week just before the Christmas in 1949, Dr. Chao began to read Tillich's *The Protestant Era* (1948), which was sent from Hongkong by his friend the Anglican Bishop R.O. Hall (Ronald Owen Hall). He was struck so deeply that it was praised by him as "an epoch-making book", which "every Chinese Christian should read carefully". Then he decided to translate this book in Chinese, the first chapter of which was published soon in March, 1950. In a postscript to this translation, he confessed that Tillich spoke out all that this Chinese theologian would like to say but could not and at the same time led the way with which he would follow.

Indeed, it is not surprising that Chao was inspired by Tillich, given the fact that at the time when Peking was "liberated without force" by the army of Communism he had an idea trying to reconcile Communism with Christianity in spite of all kinds of reservations on the Christian side. He was quite confident that Christianity could lay the spiritual foundation in a new China for Communism, which was said to be well at making revolution only. But unfortunately, his political expectation finally failed, with which the fact that he was not able to finish his translation of the whole book must have to do.

Not only was he interested in the thoughts of Tillich, but he accepted some of them expressed in the book *The Protestant Era*. In his letter to the Rev. A.P. Rose (Alaric Pearson Rose) written in English, he told that the suggestions received from the book "had led me to write a long article on I am caught as my argument for the existence of God". It does mean that his famous article named as "I am caught. A new argument for God's existence" originally came out of the inspirations from Tillich, which would throw a new light on our understanding for the development of the theological thinking of Chao.

The so-called "I am caught" is obviously a description of Chao's personal religious experience and furthermore of the Christian faith precisely understood by him. It comes from "I am grasped by that which ultimately concerns me", as Tillich says. For Tillich, faith is the state of being grasped just like this. Anyone could not grasp God or that which ultimately concerns me by all means, but only to be grasped by Him in a certain situation. Obviously, Tillich defines faith in such a way in order to exclude in advance the possibility that God should be totally transcendent and also the possibility that God could be found analogically through any kind of reasonable arguments. This inspires Chao so that he feels find a way to get out of the puzzles about the problem of the argument of the existence of God. God is not grasped, but anyone who wants to grasp Him is somehow grasped by Him. He even considered that this solution to the problem should be made the very foundation of the to-be-constructed Chinese theological Dogmatics. Therefore, it is interesting for us to see through such a case how much warmly the thoughts of Tillich were accepted by Chao.

### **Another Religious Vindication of Democracy from a Christian Perspective? The Relevance of Paul Tillich to Our Situation.**

[Francis YIP Ching -wah](#) (The Chinese University of Hong Kong)

The view of Paul Tillich (1886-1965) on democracy has not much received scholars' attention. It is admittedly not a "big" theme in his writings, compared to his view on capitalism and other aspects of modernity. Yet an examination of his historical and theological view on democracy, as this paper aims to do, would shed light not only on the thought of this eminent thinker but also on the political situation of

Hong Kong.

Tillich's theological affirmation of democracy can be found in volume 3 of his *Systematic Theology*. Tillich's colleague and friend, Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971), the author of *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness: A Vindication of Democracy and a Critique of Its Traditional Defenders*, justifies democracy from a Christian doctrine of human nature. Tillich, on the other hand, affirms democracy, in a more nuanced way, from his pneumatology and eschatology. Democracy, as an idea and principle, is made actual by the Spiritual Presence, and is an answer to one of the ambiguities of community, that of leadership and power. Also, democracy as an idea and principle, when it is made actual, is a manifestation of the Kingdom of God. Insofar as democracy helps overcome the ambiguities of power expansion and centralization and the ambiguities of tradition and revolution, it is an answer to the ambiguities of history.

Yet Tillich is no romantic or idealist in his understanding of democracy. Democracy is not the Kingdom of God. Democracy in historical actualization shows its own ambiguities. It is often controlled by powerful groups. Moreover, it has its own presuppositions, such as the belief in harmony and the belief in the infinite value and equal rights of persons in view of the Ultimate. When former belief shatter, as in his view of the twentieth century Europe, or when the latter belief is absent, as in this view of the religious tradition of Japan, democracy becomes difficult if not impossible.

I will try to assess Tillich's view of democracy and I will seek to relate Tillich's insights on democracy to the current political situation in Hong Kong.

### **When the Ground of Being Encounters Emptiness: Tillich and Buddhism**

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Paul Tillich's systematic theology is often perceived as one that has pushed the boundaries between onto-theology, negative theology (or apophatic theology), and existential thought, which makes him, to a certain degree, a good candidate from the post-Enlightenment Christian tradition to dialogue with Buddhism. In fact, Tillich always considers himself to be a "boundary thinker," perpetually positioned between different locations, contexts, disciplines, and cultures. His book *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions* is a product initiated by his encounter with Japanese scholars and Japanese religions (Buddhism in particular).

Rather than focusing on his notion of inter-religious dialogue, this paper will explore the apophatic dimension of Tillich's concept of God and its connection to his Existentialist philosophy. The paper will also examine Tillich's theology of God as "not a being" in light of the Buddhist view of ontological emptiness, showing that Tillich's rather apophatic way of speaking about God is more "postmodern" or "post-onto-theological" than some of Tillich's critics have recognized.