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Religion in Modern Society:
Paul Tillich's and Max Horkheimer's
Theories of Religion

A thesis submitted by Robert Enns,

under the supervision of Dr. Klaus Klostermaier,

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RELIGION IN MODERN SOCIETY:

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THEORIES OF RELIGION

BY

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Abstract

This thesis consists of a comparative study of the philosophical theories of religion contained in the thought of Paul Tillich and Max Horkheimer. The purpose behind it is to examine these theories as contributions to our understanding of the meaning and significance of religion in modern secular society.

The study consists of three chapters. The first two elucidate the major aspects of Tillich's and Horkheimer's philosophies, including their methodological approaches to the interpretation of religion, the critical and constructive aspects of their theories, and their speculations regarding the future of religion. The third chapter is devoted to a comparative critique of these theories.

It is found that these theories display both crucial differences, reflecting the distinctions between Christian and Jewish, as well as religious and secular orientations, and significant points of convergence, indicative of the common concern of both theorists to mediate between the religious and the secular. The author concludes that, although each theory contains specific weaknesses, both offer valuable insights and represent important contributions toward the formulation of a normative interpretation of religion appropriate to our present historical situation.

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the philosophical theories of religion found in the thought of Paul Tillich (1886 - 1965) and Max Horkheimer (1895 - 1973). Although these men shared a common cultural and intellectual heritage transmitted to them in Germany during the early part of this century, as well as a close personal friendship that spanned more than three decades, they approached the phenomenon of religion from different religious backgrounds and theoretical orientations. Tillich, most widely known as a Protestant theologian, represents the perspective of the believer, although not that of a traditionalist, while Horkheimer, a Marxian social theorist of Jewish lineage, represents the perspective of secular doubt, although not that of a dogmatic atheism. These different approaches meet in their focus upon a concern that is shared equally by both men, namely, the meaning and significance of religion in modern secular society. Both men articulate a normative theory of religion that they consider appropriate to their historical context. In attempting to mediate between the religious and the secular, their theories of religion are of importance for the understanding of the contemporary human situation, especially in Western societies, deserving the attention of believers and unbelievers alike.

The study consists of three chapters. The first two

chapters elucidate the philosophies of Tillich and Horkheimer, respectively, and include an examination of their methodological approaches to the interpretation of religion, the critical and constructive aspects of their theories, and their speculations regarding the future of religion. The third chapter consists of a systematic, comparative critique of Tillich's and Horkheimer's theories, analysing their points of convergence and divergence, for the purpose of evaluating the relative strengths and weaknesses of these theories as contributions to our understanding of the meaning and significance of religion for social life at this stage in our history.

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Contents

Tillich's Theory of Religion: Ultimate Concern

> Religion is the aspect of depth in the totality of the human spirit. . . . Religion, in the largest and most basic sense of the word, is ultimate concern.[1]

Paul Tillich has undoubtedly emerged as one of this century's pre-eminent Christian theologians and philosophers of religion. His life's work represents one of the most sustained and far-reaching attempts in Europe and North America to disclose the religious dimension of human existence and defend a normative concept of religion in a period of acute social, political, and spiritual crises. The impact of his thought, while most conspicuous among scholars of theology, has extended considerably beyond theological circles.[2] This wide-ranging, albeit variable, influence reflects Tillich's own expansive interest in the manifold aspects of the world in which he lived. His theoretical work encompasses not only theology and philosophy of religion, but also Western philosophy in general, social and political theory, psychology, and aesthetics, to name the most notable areas of his concern. His use of the concept "boundary situation" as a construct for self-interpretation provides an appropriate

characterization of the nature of his theoretical position on the borders between different disciplines, as well as illuminating important experiences in his life.[3] What distinguishes Tillich most prominently from his intellectual contemporaries is his persistent and comprehensive effort to explore the religious significance of modern, secular culture, and concomitantly, his radical--in the view of some persons, even heretical--reformulation of Christian doctrine.[4]

In this chapter, Tillich's thought will be examined with the intent to delineate his theory of religion. This will entail a consideration of certain of Tillich's central concepts, his interpretation of the meaning and validity of religion, and his view of the relation of the religious dimension to other dimensions of human experience. This will be preceded by a brief discussion of particular biographical and intellectual roots of Tillich's thought, and also by an analysis of his methodological approach to the interpretation of religion. References to specific historical religions, particularly Christianity and Judaism, will be made where appropriate. Specific doctrinal questions, however, which may be of great and special concern to Christian theologians and believers, will be treated only insofar as they affect Tillich's philosophy of religion or embody a broader significance for non-Christians as well. The purpose of this chapter is not to locate

Tillich's place in the history of Christian thought, but rather to clarify his position within a wider intellectual and existential context. Such an aim seems entirely appropriate in view of Tillich's predominant concern to cross the conventional boundaries of theological thought and language in order to contribute toward a rediscovery of the religious dimension as an essential aspect of human existence in a society increasingly separated from its religious roots.

I. Formative Influences and Methodological Approach

Tillich's autobiographical writings provide important suggestions regarding certain formative influences on his theory of religion. These influences originate in the physical and cultural environments encountered by Tillich, as well as in the specific religious heritage transmitted to him during his early years. Particularly striking among those influential factors that are not manifestly religious is Tillich's relation to the natural world. Apart from his appreciation of German poetry and Schelling's philosophy of nature, his own direct experience of nature provided inspirational impulses for his philosophy of religion. Tillich speaks, for example, of a "mystical participation in nature" and of an "understanding that nature is the finite expression of the infinite ground of all things."[5] It was

especially Tillich's encounter with the sea that provoked his religious imagination. Concerning this, he writes:

> The experience of the infinite bordering upon the finite, as one has it by the sea, responded to my tendency toward the border and supplied my imagination with a symbol from which feeling could win substance and thinking productivity. . . . But there is also another element in the contemplation of the sea: the dynamic, the aggression upon the land in its tranquil finiteness, the ecstatic quality of gales and waves. . . . Also for the doctrine of the Absolute as both ground and abyss of dynamic truth, and of the religious essence as the eruption of the eternal into finiteness, the sea supplied the imaginative element needed for these thoughts.[6]

In the preceding passage, Tillich discloses the fecundity of his relation to the sea as a metaphor for the relation between the finite and the Infinite. Intuitive, or pre-theoretical, experience of nature, transformed through reflection, becomes a constitutive element of his theory of religion. A similar process occurs on the basis of Tillich's confrontation with art, particularly painting, which he acknowledges as "an experience of decisive

importance." He continues:

> Upon experience followed reflection and philosophic and theologic interpretation, which led me to the fundamental categories of my philosophy of religion and culture, namely, form and content. It was above all expressionism. . . that opened my eyes to the form-destroying power of the content and the creative ecstasy which is its necessary result. The concept of the "breakthrough," dominant in my theory of revelation, was one in connection with it.[7]

Tillich's encounter with certain visual works of art, however, contains a broader significance. The experience becomes representative of the union of cultural form and religious substance which can potentially occur in all spheres of human life. Tillich states:

> Wherever human existence in thought or action becomes a subject of doubts and questions, wherever unconditioned meaning becomes visible in works which only have conditioned meaning in themselves, there culture is religious. Through the experience of the substantially religious character of culture, I was led to the border of culture and

> religion, which I have never deserted. To its theoretical comprehension my philosophy of religion is primarily dedicated.[8]

While Tillich's philosophy of religion was significantly shaped by the fertility of his religious imagination beyond the domain of Christian education, the latter also left an indelible impact on his thought. The substance of this education was distinctly Lutheran. Tillich inherited from it the doctrine of justification, which he broadened to include the realm of thought as well as action, and which he sought to incorporate into his philosophy of religion as the limitation of philosophy. Inspired by Schelling's philosophy of religion, Tillich worked toward a "theonomous philosophy," a genuine union of theology and philosophy; but shaken by his experience in the catastrophe of World War I, he recognized that such a philosophy would need to confront "the abyss of our existence," thereby appropriating the negative judgment contained in the doctrine of justification.[9]

The late nineteenth-century Lutheran, Calvinist, and Prussian environment in which Tillich was raised left deep marks on his intellectual development that also proved to be important for his theory of religion. The patriarchal and authoritarian structure of public and domestic life represented a restrictive force against independent thought

that was accentuated, in Tillich's case, by his father's ecclesiastical position as a Lutheran minister and church administrator, and the corresponding union of paternal and religious authority. Tillich emphasizes the guilt-consciousness accompanying his conflicts with authority in his struggle for autonomy. Certainly, the severity of his personal struggle with the issue of authority can be viewed as a determining factor of one of the predominant themes in his thought on religion, expressed in the triadic concepts of heteronomy, autonomy, and theonomy, which Tillich employs to characterize intellectual orientations and historical periods.[10]

It is noteworthy that the resources that Tillich uses in his fight against religious authoritarianism are derived from the roots of that same religious heritage. The connection between the doctrine of justification and Tillich's concept "Protestant principle," which refers to the prophetic judgement circumscribing all human claims and achievements, including religious ones, as finite, is not difficult to detect. This principle, which Tillich believes to be "the main weapon against every system of heteronomy,"[11] embodies the critical and self-critical spirit in Western religion. While this spirit is mediated to Tillich through the Lutheran-Protestant form of Christianity, it originates in prophetic Judaism, to which Tillich acknowledges his intellectual and spiritual indebtedness.[12]

Perhaps the most essential root of Tillich's thought on religion, its sine qua non, is the deep sacramental feeling that was nurtured in him during his early years in a pervasively ecclesiastical environment. Although Tillich occasionally found himself in sharp conflict with the doctrine and practice of the church, he always regarded the church as his home, as a result of a bond that was formed in his youth. Regarding this early period and its impact on his thought, Tillich recalls:

> It is the experience of the "holy" which was given to me at that time as an indestructible good and as the foundation of all my religious and theological work. When I first read Rudolf Otto's Idea of the Holy I understood it immediately in the light of these early experiences and took it into my thinking as a constitutive element. It determined my method in the philosophy of religion, wherein I started with the experiences of the holy and advanced to the idea of God and not the reverse way. Equally important existentially as well as theologically were the mystical, sacramental, and aesthetic implications of the idea of the holy, whereby the ethical and logical elements of religion were derived from the experience of the presence of the divine and not conversely.[13]

The preceding quotation introduces the question of Tillich's methodological approach to philosophy of religion. According to Tillich, the problem with which the philosopher of religion is confronted is contained in the phrase "philosophy of religion." It is the problem of an antithesis between philosophy and religion, or more precisely, between religion as a concept that denotes a general sphere of intrinsically human and cultural phenomena, and revelation as a concept that refers to a singular happening, divine and transcending the realm of culture. Philosophy of religion is, therefore, in danger either of missing its object by not recognizing religion's claim to revelation, or of cancelling itself by recognizing this claim.

The compartmentalization of philosophy and revelation is an unacceptable solution to this dilemma, because it denies both the philosophical conviction of truth and the unconditionality of revelation. Moreover, such a separation destroys the unity of consciousness. In Tillich's view, the paramount task of philosophy of religion is to overcome this antithesis through a synthesis constructed upon the point at which philosophy and revelation are in agreement.[14] This point, in Tillich's thought, is the Unconditional itself. Thus, philosophy of religion must begin with the Unconditional rather than with religion.[15]

For Tillich, several implications for the study of religion follow from its task so conceived. While his writings on method in philosophy of religion vary somewhat with respect to terms and emphases, they are consistent in attempting to harmonize elements extracted from diverse philosophical orientations, in seeking to balance the demands of existential, intuitive, and critical approaches. First of all, Tillich wishes to establish an existential element, an attitude of serious commitment on the part of the philosopher, as intrinsic to the proper study of religion. Such an attitude is, of course, in agreement with Tillich's definition of religion as ultimate concern; the method must be appropriate to the object of study. Tillich recognizes but limits the importance of scientific objectivity in the study of religion. He writes:

> There is a place for such an attitude even toward religion. But it touches only the surface. There are objects for which the so-called "objective" approach is the least objective of all, because it is based on a misunderstanding of the nature of its object. This is especially true of religion. Unconcerned detachment in matters of religion (if it is more than a methodological self-restriction) implies an a priori rejection of the religious demand to be ultimately concerned. It denies the

> object which it is supposed to approach "objectively."[16]

By making this existential element an explicit presupposition of his method, Tillich avoids dismissing from the outset the revelatory claims contained in religion.

In an essay originally published in 1925, entitled "The Philosophy of Religion," Tillich proposes a method for philosophy of religion in terms of a philosophy of meaning. In this essay, he defines philosophy of religion as "the science of the religious function of meaning and its categories. A function of meaning is comprehended when one shows the necessary place it occupies in the structure of meaning-reality (Sinnwirklichkeit)."[17] In order to accomplish this goal, Tillich suggests a method that combines critical, intuitive, and dynamic elements.

The critical-dialectical element is intended to abstract the formative principles from the meaning-reality and relate them systematically to each other, or, in other words, to articulate the form of meaning. Here Tillich assumes that the principles of meaning recognized by consciousness are identical with those governing being, and that the spiritual process fulfills being through meaning (Sinnerfüllung des Seins).[18] The intuitive element, derived from phenomenology, is intended to apprehend the essence, or import, embodied in the forms of meaning, while the

dynamic element, adapted from pragmatism, is intended to disclose the creative character of existence and establish norms for the fulfillment of meaning. Tillich calls the method constructed from these elements "metalogical," which he explains in the following way:

> It is logical in the sense that the orientation to pure rational forms, involved in the critical method, is retained. It is metalogical because it goes beyond pure formalism in a double sense, on the one hand in that apprehends the import inhering in the forms, on the other in that it sets up norms in an individual-creative way. . . . The intuition (Schau) of the inner dynamic in the structure of the meaning-reality is the goal of metalogic.[19]

Tillich's discussion of philosophical method in this essay is rather technical, but the purpose behind it can be clarified with reference to an earlier essay, presented in 1922. In "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," Tillich had prepared the basis for his metalogical method by arguing that only a union of critical and intuitive approaches would be able to address adequately philosophy of religion's central problem "concerning the ultimate meaning and reality of every actual thing" by perceiving the import of the

Unconditional breaking through and shattering the forms in which it appears.[20]

According to Tillich, the metalogical method avoids separating the questions of the nature and the truth of religion into empirical and speculative ones. The nature of religion as directedness toward unconditioned meaning presupposes that which exists unconditionally. "The certainty of the Unconditional," asserts Tillich, "is the grounding certainty from which all doubt can proceed, but it can never itself be the object of doubt."[21]

In a later essay, dated 1946, "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," Tillich speaks of an immediate "ontological awareness" of the Unconditional.[22] Here he no longer refers to the metalogical method. Rather, he compares ontological and cosmological methods, and argues that the ontological method is fundamental for philosophy of religion. Stated concisely, the ontological solution to the problem of the relation between philosophy and religion, following Augustine, is that the philosophical and religious Absolutes coincide in the nature of truth; the affirmation of truth implies the affirmation of God. In Tillich's words, "[T]he religious Ultimate is presupposed in every philosophical question, including the question of God. <u>God is the presupposition of the question of God</u>. . . . God can never be reached if he is the <u>object</u> of a question, and not its <u>basis</u>."[23] The ontological method identifies the

philosophical Absolute (esse) with one element of the religious Absolute (Deus). "The Deus est esse," Tillich declares, "is the basis of all philosophy of religion."[24]

In contrast, argues Tillich, the use of the cosmological method, derived from Thomas Aquinas, undermines the immediate religious certainty provided by the ontological method by assuming that rational knowledge of God is mediated and inferential. One consequence of this method is that knowledge of God no longer has unconditional certainty and must be supplemented by nonrational authority; knowlege and faith are separated.[25]

According to Tillich, the historical cleavage that has developed between philosophy, or secular culture, and religion can be overcome by introducing the cosmological principle into the ontological approach. "The Unconditioned," he writes, "of which we have an immediate awareness, without inference, can be recognized in the cultural and natural universe."[26] The recognition of the Unconditional in the world then entails both an analysis of finitude in relation to the awareness of the Infinite and the identification of "the unconditional element in the creativity of nature and culture."[27]

According to Tillich's original conception, the role of philosophy of religion within the normative cultural sciences (Geisteswissenschaften) is to determine what is valid as religion and to articulate the essence and

categories of religion, while theology is a systematic and normative delineation of the concrete actualization of the concept of religion.[28] It is the content of Tillich's philosophical theory of religion that constitutes the central focus of the discussion that follows.

II. Critique of Religion

Tillich's thought on religion contains both constructive attempts to establish a normative concept of religion which he relates to the cultural world around him, and critical opposition to certain historical and spiritual tendencies that he regards as distortions and perversions of religion. The latter will be examined first.

Tillich interprets the history of religions as a struggle against their own demonization, or, in the words of his last public lecture, as "a fight of God against religion within religion."[29] The demonization of religion refers to the self-absolutization of a sacred institution and its usurpation of the place of the Unconditional. The phenomenon of the demonic, according to Tillich, is neither mere distortion nor even intentional evil. It is, rather, "a negative absolute." Tillich elaborates his idea of the demonic and its consequences thus:

> It is the elevation of something relative and

> ambiguous (something in which the negative and the positive are united) to absoluteness. The ambiguous, in which positive and negative, creative and destructive elements are mingled, is considered sacred in itself, is deified. In the case of religion, the deification of the relative and the ambiguous means that a particular religion claims to be identical with the religious Absolute and rejects judgement against itself. This leads, internally, to demonic suppression of doubt, criticism, and honest search for truth within the particular religion itself; and it leads, externally, to the most demonic and destructive of all wars, religious wars. Such evils are unavoidable if a particular manifestation of the holy is identified with the holy itself.[30]

Tillich therefore draws a crucial distinction between religion and the Absolute, and stringently attacks the self-elevation of religion into a false absolutism, its demonization.

Closely related to Tillich's concepts of the demonic and the demonization of religion is his interpretation of idolatry. If faith is the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern, idolatry is a perversion of faith in which preliminary, finite realities are accorded the status of

ultimacy.[31] This danger is especially prominent in religion, wherein absolute and relative elements are ambiguously intermingled in a special way. Tillich explains:

> Religious symbols point symbolically to that which transcends all of them. But since, as symbols, they participate in that to which they point, they always have the tendency (in the human mind, of course) to replace that to which they are supposed to point, and to become ultimate in themselves. And in the moment in which they do this, they become idols. All idolatry is nothing else than the absolutizing of symbols of the Holy, and making them identical with the Holy itself.[32]

The struggle against idolatrous faith and the struggle against the demonization of religion are one. For Tillich, Jesus' refusal to permit himself to be idolized by his followers is the final criterion against all such perversions of religion.[33]

One of Tillich's principal targets in his critique of religion is heteronomous religion. He characterizes heteronomy in the following way:

> Heteronomy asserts that man, being unable to act

> according to universal reason, must be subjected to a law, strange and superior to him. . . . A heteronomous culture. . . subjects the forms and laws of thinking and acting to authoritative criteria of an ecclesiastical religion or a political quasi-religion, even at the price of destroying the structures of rationality.[34]

The heteronomous tendency is premised upon the absolutization of a particular, historical form of religion, and thus has a conservative character in relation to other aspects of society. Tillich denounces this tendency, especially in Christianity, both in Catholicism's attempt to establish the church as an absolute and dogmatic authority and in Protestantism's petrification into orthodoxy and biblicism.[35]

Heteronomy inevitably entails authoritarianism. Religious authoritarianism, as well as that of quasi-religious political movements, is rooted, according to Tillich, in the attribution of holiness and ultimacy to finite media of revelation.[36] When these media are invested with such attributes, they demand the suppression of human autonomy and the devotion to hypostatized or total authority.[37]

Certain concepts of revelation and certain religious symbols make religious authoritarianism unavoidable. For

example, revelation interpreted as "divine information, based on supranatural interference," establishes a hypostatized authority that destroys the person's autonomous self-affirmation.[38] Similarly, when God is understood as the highest being who demands complete self-surrender, this god, asserts Tillich, is in reality "a demon with a divine name." Tillich continues:

> He indeed is the principle of all heteronomous authority; he stands behind the other heteronomous authorities from the family tyrant to the tyrant who conquers the world. They are his images and he is their image.[39]

While Tillich recognizes that religious and political forms of authoritarianism have been a recurrent feature of history, he is especially sensitive to their manifestations and destructive consequences in our own century. Corresponding to the appeal of these manifestations is the person who submits to them, the "authoritarian personality," who seeks an ultimate authority that will provide an internal security not furnished by partial authorities or autonomous reason. The growth of religious fundamentalism, for example, which demands the internal repression of doubt and leads to neurotic self-restriction in theoretical matters, indicates the sociological significance of the authoritarian personality in our period. Moreover,

religious fundamentalism readily becomes the ally of fascism.[40]

In psychological, sociological, and religious terms, the submission to hypostatized authority results in destructive consequences. The authoritarian personality surrenders freedom in order to escape anxiety, and thereby only sinks further into anxiety.[41] The acceptance of a religion that requires the abandonment of intellectual autonomy is, in the end, an expression of despair, and not a victory over it.[42]

Tillich's critique of heteronomy is complemented by an equally vigorous opposition to the contrary tendency, the tendency of religion to dilute its claims in order to adapt easily to a secular, autonomous culture. This tendency appears, for example, whenever religion is defended in pragmatic terms. Tillich rejects such attempts to justify religion even when the ends which religion is supposed to serve are positive ones. In a discussion of the relation between religion and a free society, Tillich states, "If religion is the state of being ultimately concerned, then it cannot be the tool for something else. The ultimate cannot be the tool for something non-ultimate."[43] In another context, Tillich argues that the attempt of some theologians to recommend religion as a useful hypothesis to explain the world and promote morality is both futile and blasphemous. "A God," Tillich declares, "who is used for any purpose

except himself is not God but a dangerous fiction, even if that purpose is morality."[44] By seeking to preserve itself on the basis of its usefulness for other ends, religion actually hastens its own decline.

A second way in which religion succumbs to secular culture is through the sacrifice of its nonconformist impulse. Tillich is well aware of the preponderance of forces in our world that contribute to "patternization," the complex of processes by which persons are moulded according to a standardized pattern. The technological nature of our society, the demands of a capitalist economy, political manipulation, advertising, and mass culture all constitute pressures toward conformity. Religion is not immune to these pressures. Illustrating and condemning the acquiescence of religion in this process, Tillich remarks:

> Unfortunately, one gets the . . . impression that the methods used in some places for producing a religious revival are essentially of the same type as those we find in the marketing of mass culture. This is tragic, because religion is supposed to be the place where the ultimate source and power of nonconformism become manifest, the place where the prophetic "no" to all patterns, religious as well as non-religious, is heard and pronounced.[45]

Tillich's judgment, expressed as early as 1928, that Christianity had been largely assimilated into modern, secular society and offered only a faint protest against it is one that he would likely not have revised significantly several decades later.[46]

In Tillich's view, neither the heteronomy of an ecclesiastical authority nor the autonomy of a secular culture represents an adequate principle for the ordering of human life. In conflict with each other, one or the other may express, in a particular period, the predominant spiritual orientation and organizing principle of a society, but this conflict indicates the rupture of the unity of these elements that Tillich designates "theonomy." If heteronomy subjugates the human being to a strange and superior law that destroys rationality, and if autonomy asserts the self-sufficiency of a rationality governed by immanent laws of universal reason without any reference to transcendent meaning, theonomy unites autonomous reason with its divine ground, or religious substance, constituting a rationality that remains free from alien strictures but incorporates a directedness toward the Unconditional.[47] Measured against the normative condition of theonomy, religion must avoid both the defensive posture of heteronomy and the uncritical adaptation to secular autonomy.

III. Constructive Theory of Religion

III. A. Normative Concept of Religion: Religion as Ultimate Concern

Tillich's critique of the failures, distortions, and perversions of religion presupposes a normative concept of religion. In Tillich's theory, the fundamental meaning of religion is expressed in several formulations. Religion is the dimension of depth in human spiritual life.[48] It is the "state of being grasped by an ultimate concern, a concern which qualifies all other concerns as preliminary and which itself contains the answer to the question of the meaning of our life."[49] It is "the state of being grasped by the power of being-itself."[50] In language characteristic of Tillich's early philosophy of religion, the directedness of the spirit toward the Unconditional as the basis and abyss of meaning is religion.[51]

It is clear that Tillich distinguishes between religion in its fundamental meaning and the specific, historical movements and communities that are associated with claims of special and direct experience of the Holy in contrast to secular culture.[52] The very existence of religion in the latter sense as a special sphere alongside the secular realm is viewed by Tillich as the result and sign of the tragic estrangement of human spiritual life from its true ground and depth.[53] At the same time, however,

Tillich argues that religion in this special, concrete sense is necessary to our existential situation in order to preserve the substance of religion. Without a set of symbols expressing the unconditional character of the Holy, secular life would become purely pragmatic, susceptible to the experience of emptiness and therefore to the infiltration of demonic contents.[54]

Before discussing some of the implications of Tillich's distinction between the two concepts of religion, it is worthwhile to examine more closely the essence of religion as ultimate concern. Ultimate concern is the experience of being grasped in one's whole personality by that which is of unconditional importance. Both the subjective and the objective aspects, the act and the object of faith, are intended by Tillich's use of this concept. Moreover, that which claims ultimacy demands a person's total surrender and promises total fulfillment.[55]

It is necessary to ask, at this point, how the total surrender demanded by an ultimate claim differs from the submission to hypostatized authority and the surrender of human autonomy which Tillich opposes. Tillich's answer to this question can be approached through his discussion of the distinction between a true and a false ultimate concern. Tillich writes, "From the subjective side one must say that faith is true if it adequately expresses an ultimate concern. From the objective side one must say that faith is

true if its content is the really ultimate."[56] Tillich asserts that the concept of ultimacy is itself a criterion of genuine ultimate concern, although the nature of true ultimacy, according to this formal definition, is illumined only by the critique of its opposite, false ultimacy.

A false ultimate concern is idolatry, the elevation of an object within the realm of finitude, an object that cannot transcend the ordinary subject-object scheme of experience, to the status of ultimacy. True ultimate concern is, therefore, not to be confused with the highest of finite concerns.[57] Furthermore, Tillich provides an additional criterion for discriminating between true and false ultimate concerns in terms of their consequences. The surrender to a false ultimate leads to "existential disappointment" and the disruption of the personality, while the personality that is directed toward the truly ultimate experiences integration and healing.[58]

According to Tillich's ontological anthropology, religion in its fundamental meaning as "the self-transcendence of the spirit toward what is ultimate and unconditioned in being and meaning" is a basic function of the human spirit.[59] Being religious, in this sense, is a universal characteristic of human existence, and Tillich asserts that there is no person without the experience of an ultimate concern, regardless of the content of that concern.[60]

The content of genuine ultimate concern, as well as the mode in which it is humanly received, require clarification. This content, in Tillich's thought, is the most fundamental absolute, which is not an absolute being, but Being itself. It is the ground of all other absolutes that are encountered in reality, such as truth in the realm of knowledge and the good in moral decisions. The experience of this absolute, the Absolute itself, is the experience of the Holy.[61]

According to Tillich, the human encounter with the Holy occurs within other encounters, wherein "structural absolutes," such as truth, indicate self-transcendence toward the Absolute itself in an anagogical process. The intention to encounter the Absolute as such is that which both characterizes religion in the traditional sense of the term and transcends the latter infinitely. Tillich finds this intention most sharply expressed in the great commandment of the Old Testament (Deuteronomy 6:5), and identifies this absolute expression in religious language as the source of his definition of religion as the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern.[62]

Following Rudolf Otto, Tillich views the experience of the Holy as ambiguous, because the Holy remains mystery, transcending the world of finite mind and experience determined by the cleavage between subject and object. The Holy is beyond finite comprehension and appears, in the

human encounter with it, to contain the contradictory possibilities of creation and destruction; this is its divine-demonic ambiguity. Both of these possibilities can appear in connection with the two opposing functions that the Holy exercises in the human encounter with it--the fascinating and terrifying functions, fascinosum et tremendum. As the goal and fulfillment of the finite, the Holy is a presence that attracts and fascinates the human; conversely, it is a source of fear and awe as it represents the negative judgement of the finite and the possibility of ultimate failure in achieving fulfillment.[63] The experience of the Holy thus remains ambiguous and unfathomable. "Nevertheless," claims Tillich, "we can be related to and know we are related to that which is mystery to us and to every human being, a mystery of man's own being in universal being."[64]

How do we know that we are related to the Holy? Consistent with a philosophy of religion that takes the Unconditional as its starting point, this knowledge is received through revelation, the divine self-manifestation, to which religion is the human response.[65] Revelation, according to Tillich, is not to be understood, as it is commonly misinterpreted, as the communication of objective information from a supranatural being. Rather, revelation occurs "wherever the unconditioned import of meaning breaks through the form of meaning."[66] Unconditioned meaning

transcends existent reality in a positive sense as its ground and affirmation, and in a negative sense as its abyss and negation, simultaneously fulfilling and shattering all immediate forms of consciousness.[67]

When the concept of religion is subordinated to the concept of the Unconditional, the subject's self-certainty is no longer given priority over the certainty of God, but, at the same time, unconditional certainty becomes possible. As Tillich explains:

> Only when the self is understood as the medium for the self-apprehension of the Unconditional, does it participate in unconditional certainty. . . . [T]he Unconditional is always that which provides a ground, and the self is its medium and that which is grounded.[68]

As this passage implies, revelation is not an abstract truth heteronomously imposed upon the self from outside its situation. It is not hypostatized authority. Rather, it is always a "correlative situation," involving the participation of the self for whom the event is revelatory. Revelation as the self-manifestation of the ground of being and meaning, and thus of true ultimate concern, reveals and confirms the essential nature of the human being without destroying its autonomous self-affirmation, and it can only

be humanly received in the state of being ultimately concerned.[69]

In accordance with such an understanding of revelation, religion cannot be considered as merely a function of the human spirit alongside, for example, ethical and aesthetic functions. The Unconditional, toward which religion is directed, is expressed in and breaks through all of them. Thus, Tillich declares, "[R]eligion does not allow a person to be also religious. . . . It is, rather, a consuming fire over against every autonomous function of the human spirit."[70]

Faith, which can be considered the fundamental characteristic of religion in Tillich's thought, is based on revelation. Tillich describes faith as "an ecstatic transcending of reality in the power of that which cannot be derived from the whole of reality and cannot be approached by ways which belong to the whole of reality."[71] It is an "act of a finite being who is grasped by and turned to the infinite."[72] "Faith is directedness toward the Unconditional" expressed in theoretical and practical behaviour, reaching "beyond the immediacy of all things to the ground and abyss upon which they depend."[73]

Inherent in faith are elements of certainty and uncertainty. As an experience of the Holy, an immediate awareness of and directedness toward the Unconditional, faith is certain and has the character of self-evidence. However,

because faith involves the participation of a finite being and is expressed in concrete content through symbolic and conditioned forms, it necessarily entails an element of uncertainty and possible failure, and therefore a risk in which the meaning and fulfillment of one's life is at stake.[74]

Doubt thus arises as an inescapable consequence of the risk of faith. This doubt is neither methodological nor skeptical, but existential, since it refers to the self's uncertainty regarding the concrete content of its ultimate concern. Moreover, this doubt is not viewed by Tillich as the antithesis and contradiction of faith. Rather, serious doubt is itself a confirmation of faith, because it indicates the unconditional nature of the concern. The profoundest doubt is itself grounded in the awareness of the Unconditional. As Tillich writes, "Existential doubt and faith are poles of the same reality, the state of ultimate concern."[75]

III.B. True Religion, Religions, and Secular Culture

Tillich's distinction between the fundamental and the narrow, or traditional, definitions of religion, and his interpretations of revelation and faith entail significant consequences for the self-understanding of specific religions, the relations between them, and the relation

between religion and culture. First of all, Tillich develops a dialectic of affirmation and negation in the relation between religion and religions. The Absolute, toward which religion as ultimate concern is directed, transcends and judges every particular religion as a concrete symbolization of the Absolute. Tillich warns, "The ultimate in being and meaning cannot be limited, cannot be caught in any particular religion, in any particular sacred place or by any particular sacred action."[76] This implies both that the claims of any particular religion to absoluteness are circumscribed and that no religion is excluded, in principle, from bearing revelatory content.

True religion, according to Tillich, is that in which divine self-manifestation occurs. Every religion is relative insofar as it objectifies the Unconditional, but every religion can be absolute insofar as it serves as the medium of revelation, "the breakthrough of the Unconditional in its unconditionality."[77] Religion that becomes self-sufficient and absolutizes itself is idolatry, and religion must therefore guard against this tendency by protesting against its own objectifcation of the Unconditional, by incorporating into its expressions of ultimate concern their own criticism, and, thereby, the doubt implied in the act of faith.[78] Thus ,in a radical and paradoxical formulation, Tillich declares, "True religion exists wherever the Unconditional is affirmed as the

Unconditional, and religion is abolished through its presence."[79]

Corresponding to the internal criticism that should be contained within a religion's self-understanding is a relation of mutual criticism and acceptance that ought to characterize the encounters between different religions. In Tillich's view, the source of idolatry is also the source of intolerance, and he seeks to avoid the errors of both a tolerance without criteria and an intolerance without self-criticism. The reference point for his resolution of this problem is again the Absolute. The criterion of every faith and the origin of its certainty is the ultimacy of the ultimate that it attempts to express, while its uncertainty and self-criticism arise from the insight into the relative validity of the concrete symbols in which its ultimate concern appears. A particular religion's claim to absoluteness must then be restricted to a claim to witness to the Absolute in a relative way. On this basis, the purpose of dialogue between religions should be to arrive at a mutual breakthrough to the point of self-judgement, the point at which the apprehension of the Holy liberates one from bondage to any particular manifestations of it. The only way, Tillich asserts, toward a unity of faith in humankind as a whole is the way exemplified by the prophets, "the way of calling idolatry idolatry and rejecting it for the sake of that which is really ultimate."[80]

Since Tillich's views regarding the legitimate claims of religions and the proper relations between them are based upon insights derived from the Jewish and Christian traditions, it is worthwhile to elucidate his interpretations of the central principles of these two religions. According to Tillich, the significance of Judaism for the history and theory of religion lies in its radical monotheism, its demand for justice, and its conception of the God of history who is not bound to the spatial territory and religious possession of a people, all of which are woven together.

The exclusive monotheism embodied in Judaism does not represent merely a struggle for one god against many, but the prophetic struggle for the one who is the Absolute against all forms of idolatry, against all gods who represent the finite and particular. It is with the establishment of the one Absolute that particular absolutes, such as truth and justice, become identified as attributes of the Ultimate.[81] Conversely, it is the principle of justice that is fundamental in the establishment of radical monotheism. In Tillich's words, "God is one God because justice is one."[82] At greater length, he writes:

> The exclusive monotheism of the prophetic religion is not due to the absoluteness of one particular god as against others, but it is the universal

> validity of justice which produces the exclusive monotheism of the God of justice. This, of course, implies that justice is a principle which transcends every particular religion and makes the exclusiveness of any particular religion conditional.[83]

It then follows, according to the judgement of the prophets, that even the nation whose religion represents the God of justice is not exempt from punishment when it violates the principle of justice. The significance of this for Tillich is manifest in the following assertion:

> I maintain that this unique conception--the rejection of that nation which represents the absoluteness of the Absolute, by the Absolute itself--is the greatest inner religious manifestation of the Absolute. . . . From this follows the inner-religious struggle of the Absolute with the relative element which claims absoluteness for itself, or (in religious language) the struggle of God against religion.[84]

It is this struggle of God against religion in the prophetic tradition shared by Judaism and Christianity that constitutes one of the deepest bonds between the two

religions and the basis of Tillich's appeal for a union of Jews and Christians.[85] Tillich consciously emphasizes the link between Protestant Christianity and prophetic Judaism by his use of the term "Protestant principle" as a reference to the element of prophetic protest. The term is not simply to be identified with the historical movement from which it is derived; rather, it refers to the universal and critical religious principle that denounces idolatry as the temptation of religion.[86] To quote Tillich:

> The Protestant principle . . . contains the divine and human protest against any absolute claim made for a relative reality. . . . [I]t is the theological expression of the true relation between the unconditional and the conditioned or, religiously speaking, between God and man.[87]

According to Tillich, the central event of Christianity, Jesus as the Christ, presents the manifestation of the Protestant principle and the decisive victory in the struggle of God against religion.[88] This is possible only through the symbol of the cross. This symbol represents the sacrifice of the particular to the univeral, the finite to the ultimate, the medium to the source of revelation.[89] Understood in these terms, the crucifixion contains the radical negation of the idolatrous tendency in

religion. In Tillich's words, "He who himself embodies the fullness of the divine's presence sacrifices himself in order not to become an idol, another god beside God, a god into whom the disciples wanted to make him."[90] Consequently, the symbol of the crucified Christ is, for Tillich, the essential criterion by which Christianity must judge itself and all other religions.[91] It represents the negation of religion in the particular sense for the sake of that which is the goal of all religions and the goal of religion in its universal meaning.

The interpretation of the relationship between religion and culture, or the sacred and secular realms, is also affected by Tillch's distinction between the two concepts of religion. As has been noted, Tillich views religion in the narrow sense, as distinguished from secular culture, as both the result of human estrangement from its true and ultimate ground, and as the necessary witness to and symbolization of this ground in an estranged existential situation. Accordingly, the antagonistic division between the religious and secular realms is not finally decisive for Tillich, since both realms are rooted in religion in its fundamental meaning as the experience of ultimate concern and the dimension of depth in human existence.[92] The most important implication of this interpretation is that secular culture itself is bestowed with religious significance.[93]

Tillich's discussion of the relationship between

religion and culture involves not only the two concepts of religion articulated above, but also two corresponding concepts of culture. In the broadest and most fundamental sense, the relationship between the two is described in the following manner:

> Religion as ultimate concern is the meaning-giving substance of culture, and culture is the totality of forms in which the basic concern of religion expresses itself. In abbreviation: religion is the substance of culture, culture is the form of religion.[94]

Characterized in this way, the relationship does not permit the dualistic separation of religious and secular realms. An ultimate concern, whether genuine or false, is implicit in every aspect of culture and can be systematically analysed by the theorist of religion.

The true and ideal relationship between religion and culture, designated by Tillich as "theonomy," is constituted by "a unity of unconditioned meaning-import and of conditioned meaning-form" whereby all cultural forms would be transparent to and filled with the "import of the Unconditional."[95] On the basis of his socio-historical analysis, however, Tillich recognizes that the normative, theonomous synthesis of transcendent meaning and cultural

form is only fragmentarily realized in history. Conflicting autonomous and heteronomous tendencies constantly threaten and frequently rupture the genuine unity of religion and culture--the former by orienting itself exclusively toward conditioned cultural forms at the expense of unconditioned meaning, and the latter by restricting unconditioned meaning to certain, specifically religious, cultural forms preserved from autonomous criticism. To illustrate these dynamics with an example cited frequently by Tillich, the theonomous situation that he finds characteristic of the high Middle Ages in Europe dissolves in the late medieval period under the growing antagonism of autonomous and heteronomous developments, culminating in the battle between an authoritarian form of Catholicism on the one hand and a Reformation embodying autonomous protest on the other, although the latter soon establishes its own orthodoxy and heteronomous authority. If Western history since then has been marked by the advance of secular autonomy, this, in Tillich's view, has been accompanied by the sacrifice of the dimension of depth associated with theonomy, and, consequently, has prepared the social and psychological conditions for the rise of quasi-religious heteronomies and totalitarian movements in our century.[96]

It should be noted that, as a theorist, Tillich examines the historical relations between heteronomy, autonomy, and theonomy, and indicates their implications for

religious and social life. As a human being who adopts a theonomous orientation to life, Tillich is not content with only a theoretical analysis, but engages in practical efforts to promote the development of a theonomous society in his own historical situation. This is probably most evident in his participation in the religious socialist movement in Germany between the wars and his articulation of much of its philosophy. According to Tillich, the work of religious socialists was an attempt to prepare the foundations for a theonomous society at a historical juncture that was interpreted as a "kairos," a moment of crisis in which the critical and creative power of the Unconditional breaks into the temporal and demands decisions and actions directed toward the fulfilment of the theonomous goal.[97]

Because the normative, theonomous relationship between religion and culture remains an ideal that is only partially and transitorily approximated in history due to the dynamic struggle between heteronomous and autonomous forces, Tillich must also address the empirical relationship between the religious and the secular as distinct institutional spheres in society with the use of the narrower concepts of religion and secular culture. According to Tillich, the difference between the religious and secular realms in the narrow sense is primarily one of intention. The former makes explicit, or manifest, the directedness toward absolute meaning that

remains implicit, or latent, in the latter. Thus, Tillich argues that even at the empirical, historical level there exists an essential unity between the two realms that encompasses the difference of intention.[98]

One consequence of this interpretation, in the situation of human estrangement, is that both the secular and religious realms, society and church, are accorded their own validity and necessity. Separated in this way, however, they must also serve to mutually criticize the antagonistic tendencies to which each is susceptible--the emptiness of meaning resulting from secular culture's complete autonomy, and the demonic distortion of meaning resulting from religion's heteronomy. This mutual criticism is viewed by Tillich as the necessary preparation for the potential development of a theonomous culture.[99]

A second consequence is that the separation between the two realms is simultaneously vitiated and ceases to be of fundamental importance.[100] Absolute meaning, toward which the religious realm is explicitly directed, is not its possession. This meaning appears in finite meaning through the revelation of the Holy, transcending both religious and secular culture, and thereby the cleavage between them. In principle, then, absolute meaning may appear in the secular realm no less than in the narrowly religious one.[101] In fact, in an analysis of the religious situation in Europe between the wars, Tillich comments that "religious energies"

have been largely absorbed by "political and social elements," producing "consequences which can be interpreted only as religious, even though they appear in cultural forms."[102] He further asserts that "the unconditioned character of religion becomes much more manifest if it erupts out of the profane, disturbing and transforming it."[103]

This discernment of religious energies in the secular sphere raises the issue of what Tillich calls "quasi-religions."[104] Tillich's use of this term refers to the movements, such as humanism, socialism, and nationalism, that have arisen on the basis of secular society, in the spiritual emptiness following the decline of traditional religion and the advance of autonomy, and which bear a genuine resemblance to religions in their function of expressing an ultimate concern. Just as religions are true insofar as they are manifestations of, and not substitutes for, that which is ultimate, so can quasi-religions be regarded as legitimate expressions of ultimate concern in secular language to the extent that they recognize their own relative status and do not make claims of absoluteness. However, like religions, quasi-religions are susceptible to idolatrous perversion or demonization, exemplified by the transformation of socialism into Soviet, and especially Stalinist, communism, and by the perversion of nationalism in fascism and Nazism. The hypostatization of the authority embodied by a secular movement, the deification of its

leaders or institutions, and the identification of its ideology with absolute truth parallel the dynamics that Tillich condemns in the religious sphere.

In view of the fact that participation in secular society is inescapable, Tillich contends that every individual is involved in some form of quasi-religion. Consequently, he seeks to affirm what is positive in quasi-religions as secular embodiments of ultimate concern, and to resist the dangers that they represent--the loss of religious substance that underlies their creative power, and their potential demonization or self-absolutization. Because the concern for ultimate meaning cannot be restricted to the specifically religious sphere, the relation between religion and secular culture, including the quasi-religions that have developed in the modern period, becomes a central theme in Tillich's theory of religion.

III. C. The Symbolic Character of Religion and the Question of God

An important component of Tillich's theory of religion, and one that seeks to make religion more intelligible to the secular mind, is his theory of religious language and objects. His interpretation of religion in the narrow sense is essentially a symbolic one, and it is this interpretation which provides a vital link between the two

concepts of religion. It would be fair to summarize Tillich's view of this connection in the following way: the totality of ideas, actions, and objects associated with particular, historical religions is the symbolic representation of religion as ultimate concern, or directedness toward the Unconditional.[105]

In developing his symbolic interpretation of religion, Tillich intends precisely the opposite of what a positivistic thinker might expect to find, namely, the inference that because religion is symbolic, it is therefore merely imaginary and without relation to substantive reality. On the contrary, religion, according to Tillich, is necessarily symbolic because its referent transcends the subject-object scheme of ordinary experience. Religious language as symbolic is thus more true and adequate to its referent than is ordinary or literalistic language.[106]

Tillich addresses the issue of the symbolic nature of religion on two levels. As a philosopher, he articulates a general theory of the nature of religious symbols in opposition to the predominant conceptual and linguistic tendencies that identify reality with that part of it that can be grasped according to the model of the mathematical sciences.[107] Connected with his philosophical work, Tillich, as a theologian, attempts to reinterpret the specific contents of the Christian tradition in order to recover their original power and intention, and to make them

meaningful for secular persons. These contents, in Tillich's view, have been distorted and rendered meaningless for many, not only due to the prevalence of increasingly scientific thought patterns, but also due to the unreflective and literalistic treatment that they have received within the church.[108] It is primarily Tillich's theory of the nature of religious symbols that will be briefly discussed below.

Genuine symbols, found in other cultural domains such as art, as well as in religion, possess certain characteristics identified by Tillich. They cannot be intentionally created, replaced, or destroyed, but live and die, wax and wane, in their capacity as symbols, in relation to their power to evoke response in the unconscious dimension of human existence, especially in the collective unconscious of the group in which they find their primary expression. The power which symbols possess may be creative or destructive for individuals and social groups, depending upon the character of a symbol's referent and the reaction of those who are grasped by the symbol. Finally, and particularly important in the defence of symbolic language against a positivistic theory of reality and truth, Tillich contends that a symbol has the capacity to unlock dimensions of reality, and correspondingly, of the human soul that otherwise remain inaccessible to us.[109]

What distinguishes religious from other genuine

symbols is the fact that the former are representations of the Holy, the ultimate ground of reality, and express the human relationship to the Holy. Tillich writes:

> Religious symbols mediate ultimate reality through things, persons, events which because of their mediating functions receive the quality of "holy." In the experience of holy places, times, books, words, images, and acts, symbols of the holy reveal something of the "Holy-Itself" and produce the experience of holiness in persons and groups.[110]

Thus, religion must use aspects of finite reality in order to symbolize that which transcends finite reality infinitely. It is precisely because of this necessity, however, that the danger of idolatry, or demonization, resides within religion. The symbols tend to become identified with the unconditional character of the Holy itself.[111] This tendency raises the question of the criteria of validity, or truth, of religious symbols as one of paramount importance.

The truth of symbols, as Tillich notes, cannot be determined according to empirical criteria, since it is not the function of symbols to disclose objective knowledge. Moreover, a comparative evaluation of the religious symbol with its referent is impossible, because the latter transcends human comprehension.[112] Rather, Tillich proposes

two major criteria, corresponding to the subjective and objective aspects of ultimate concern, by which to judge the truth of a religious symbol. The first is its "authenticity," by which Tillich means the adequacy of a symbol to the religious experience that it expresses, its power to renew and evoke response from the experiential basis upon which it arises.[113]

The second criterion of a symbol's truth is the extent to which it represents the ultimate referent, or grasps the Unconditional in its unconditionality.[114] Decisive in this respect is what Tillich refers to as the "negative quality" of a religious symbol, namely, its self-negation and therefore anti-idolatrous character, and its transparency to the Holy, the "ultimate power of being and meaning."[115] In Tillich's view, this negative criterion of a symbol's truth is most fully expressed in the Christian symbol of the cross, which, accordingly, is presented as the standard by which to judge all other religious symbols.[116]

The ground and abyss of meaning, the Absolute, the Unconditional, the Holy--these are some of Tillich's frequent designations for the final referent of religion, the object of ultimate concern symbolized by the word "God."[117] While Tillich maintains that God can only rightly be spoken of in symbolic terms, he also asserts that one cannot simply say that God is a symbol. In other words, he differentiates between symbolic and non-symbolic elements in

the image of God, and argues that both elements must be recognized. The non-symbolic element refers to the awareness of something unconditional, to which Tillich applies such terms as "Being itself" and "ultimate reality"--terms which do not point to any further referent. The symbolic element is expressed when one speaks of God in concrete and personal terms, in language that indicates the experience of a communicative ego-thou relationship with God.[118]

The conception of God as Being and as personal deserves further clarification. The classical Christian doctrine of God as Being itself, the esse ipsum, uses a suprapersonal category to refer to "the unconditional and infinite character of the Ultimate and the impossibility of identifying it with anything particular that exists."[119] Moreover, it is precisely this element of unconditionality, or ultimacy, that marks divinity in the idea of God.[120] On this basis, it is impermissible to speak of God as a being, even the highest or most perfect being, since a being is always subject to the categories of finitude. Such a conception reduces God to the level of an object, the existence of which can then be debated but never proven. In Tillich's view, "atheism is the right religious and theological reply" to this conception of God and the attempts to prove the existence of this object.[121]

At the same time, however, Tillich defends the idea of

a personal God as a necessary symbol rather than an object. The symbol of a God who possesses qualities found on the human level and who acts in history is indispensable for the expression of the human-divine relationship; it expresses the experience of the human self being grasped by that which is of ultimate concern.[122]

In order to counter the danger of a merely personal conception of God--a God who becomes a being with heteronomous authority--and to preserve the necessary symbol of God as a person within the equally necessary suprapersonal conception of God, Tillich occasionally speaks of the God beyond, or above, God. The God who is the highest being is the source of heteronomy, destroying human autonomous self-affirmation. "The true God," writes Tillich, "beyond the God who is a being liberates us from the total authority of the last polytheistic God who is in reality a demon."[123] This does not mean, however, that personal being is simply negated. Rather it is preserved and transcended at the same time. Thus, Tillich states:

> Being includes personal being; it does not deny it. The ground of being is the ground of personal being, not its negation. . . . Religiously speaking, this means that our encounter with the God who is a person includes the encounter with the God who is the ground of everything personal and as such not a

person.[124]

The God of theism is transcended by the God above God.[125]

Tillich's conception of the God beyond God suggests the deep influence of Western mysticism on his thought. Further evidence of this connection can be found in Tillich's application of other symbolic terms, such as "ground" and "abyss," to the Unconditional,[126] and a mystical influence may also be present in his theory of religious knowledge and revelation when he speaks of the unconditional certainty that arises when the human being becomes the medium for the self-apprehension of the Absolute. The distinction between, and the simultaneous unity of, the personal and suprapersonal aspects of God intended by the phrase "the God beyond God" recalls especially the thought of Meister Eckhart, whose differentiation between "the unknowable totality of the Godhead and the knowable personality of God"[127] conveys a similar conception of the Absolute and its symbolization. A striking confirmation of this similarity is presented in Bernard McGinn's discussion of Eckhart's understanding of the divine nature and the structure of reality. McGinn occasionally characterizes the divine ground in Eckhart's thought as "the God beyond God."[128]

III. D. Theism and Atheism

Closely connected with Tillich's conception of God is his interpretation of atheism. As in his discussions of religion and of God, Tillich distinguishes two major levels on which he addresses the question of atheism. As a protest against theistic religion, atheism is affirmed as having religious significance. It is the legitimate rebellion against a theism that makes God a being, specifically, a supreme being in relation to whom the human self is reduced to a being deprived of freedom and subjectivity, "a mere object of absolute knowledge and absolute control."[129] Atheism, in this sense, represents the justified struggle for autonomy against heteronomous authority. Furthermore, religion must contain within itself an immanent atheism,a protest against its own representations and objectifications of God for the sake of the God who is the "unconditioned transcendent."[130]

If, however, religion is understood in its fundamental sense as ultimate concern and God as the symbolic reference to the Unconditional, atheism, in Tillich's theory, is no longer possible. More accurately, the atheistic protest against heteronomous religion is possible only on the basis of an attitude that is itself fundamentally religious. The rejection of religion or the denial of God in ultimate seriousness is itself the affirmation of ultimate

concern.[131] To quote Tillich at length:

> The situation of doubt, even of doubt about God, need not separate us from God. There is faith in every serious doubt, namely, the faith in the truth as such, even if the only truth we can express is our lack of truth. But if this is experienced in its depth and as an ultimate concern, the divine is present; and he who doubts in such an attitude is "justified" in his thinking. So the paradox got hold of me that he who seriously denies God, affirms him. Without it I could not have remained a theologian. There is, I soon realized, no place <u>beside</u> the divine, there is no possible atheism, there is no wall between the religious and the nonreligious. The holy embraces both itself and the secular. Being religious is being unconditionally concerned, whether this concern expresses itself in secular or (in the narrower sense) religious forms.[132]

IV. The Necessity of Religion and the Question of Its Survival

In Tillich's judgement, a life without an ultimate concern is not worth living.[133] This implies that a life without an ultimate concern is conceivable, and seems to

qualify Tillich's contention that being religious, or having the experience of an ultimate concern, is a universal characteristic of human existence grounded in the human spirit itself.[134] In order to clarify this apparent ambivalence in Tillich's thought, this chapter concludes with a discussion of his views regarding the future of religion.

In an essay originally published in 1958, Tillich speaks of the loss of the dimension of depth, or of ultimate concern, as the decisive factor in the modern human predicament in the West. He expresses his awareness of the profound danger that the modern world holds for the human spirit, namely, the erosion of the dimension of life that is concerned with the ultimate meaning of existence, without which the human being is reduced to a mere object. His explanation of the loss of the religious dimension focuses upon the predominance of finite and relative concerns in autonomous, secular society. In particular, Tillich attributes human estrangement from the self and the world to the scientific, technical, and industrial forces of modern society, which are oriented toward progress on the horizontal plane of existence and reduce the awareness of the vertical plane, or transcendent dimension of life. The perpetual preoccupation with technical developments and empirical progress in society and with immediate and transitory personal goals--the constant activity of daily

life--diminishes the time available for detachment from finite reality and the immanent course of the individual's existence. Without moments of rest and meditation in which the individual can reflect upon the meaning of life, religion as ultimate concern recedes from human experience.[135]

According to Tillich's analysis, the loss of the transcendent dimension of life necessarily entails the disappearance of the religious symbols that have given expression to this dimension of human existence. The symbols themselves become transposed to the horizontal plane of existence largely through the attempts of theologians and religious participants to defend these symbols--the creation of the world and the idea of God, for example--as literal descriptions of events or supernatural beings. When these symbols are understood as belonging to the horizontal plane, they become absurd and easily discredited by scientific and historical criticism. With the decline of the transcendent dimension and its symbols, human beings become subjugated further to the technical control and manipulation that characterizes progress on the horizontal plane.[136]

In the light of these developments, Tillich analyses the revival of interest in religion observed especially in America. In Tillich's view, it is strictly a revival of religion in the narrow sense, concerned only with

strengthening religion as an institutional sphere and failing to consider the extremity of the spiritual crisis in modern society. He sharply criticizes this revival as being a false, desperate, and futile attempt to regain the transcendent dimension of life, and even as representing the consecration of conditions in which the true meaning of religion has already been lost. Condemning the "propagandistic methods and . . . primitive theological fundamentalism" of its representatives, Tillich judges this revival of religion as superficial in its response to the threats posed by secular modernity and as further endangering the preservation of real religious existence.[137]

Two decades earlier, Tillich expressed the opinion that religion, as a conditioned human creation directed toward a transcendent object, would not survive. He thought it likely that religion, as a separate realm, would dissolve and some of its contents be appropriated within the confines of secular humanism, or that it would be suppressed by the victory of totalitarian systems.[138]

While Tillich's recognition of the erosion of the religious realm and the diminution of the dimension of depth causes him concern, it does not lead him to adopt a despairing attitude toward the future of religion. There are at least two reasons for his maintenance of a hopeful attitude. The first arises from his ontological anthropology. Being human, according to Tillich, means

"being between" finitude and infinity, as is implied in the question regarding the ultimate meaning of existence. As long as this human nature survives, religion as ultimate concern will survive, even if the separate religious realm should disappear.[139] "Religion," asserts Tillich, "as the relation of man to the ultimate in being and meaning is an element in man's very nature and beyond the alternative of survival and non-survival."[140]

The second reason for Tillich's hope for the endurance of religion in its fundamental meaning arises from his interpretation of secular culture in terms of its religious significance. This interpretation results in the belief that faith, in the Western world, has not been lost, but secularized.[141] If secularization holds dangers for the preservation of the substance of religion, it is, nonetheless, in the secular realm that Tillich still discerns the clearest expressions of ultimate concern, even if those expressions are negative depictions of the contemporary human condition, of despair, and of protest in the face of meaninglessness.[142] Cultural representations of the spiritual "void" that characterizes modern experience in the latter half of the twentieth century offer negative testimony to the concern for ultimacy that underlies them.[143]

In the depths of an experience that inclines us toward despair, Tillich finds a foundation for hope. The radical

awareness of our separation from ultimate meaning is, according to Tillich, already a state of being grasped by the Unconditional. In spite of the loss of the religious dimension of depth, "its power is present, and most present in those who are aware of the loss and are striving to regain it with ultimate seriousness."[144]

Notes

[1] Paul Tillich, "Religion as a Dimension in Man's Spiritual Life," in Theology of Culture, ed. Robert C. Kimball (New York: Oxford University Press), pp. 7-8.

[2] The bulk of Tillich's own voluminous writings is accessible in both the English and German languages. In addition to this, the large and increasing body of secondary material devoted to Tillich suggests a continuing interest in his thought. For a very useful and fairly recent bibliography of the relevant literature in English, see Richard C. Crossman, Paul Tillich: A Comprehensive Bibliography and Keyword Index of Primary and Secondary Writings in English (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow, 1983).

One indication of Tillich's stature outside theological circles can be gleaned from the topical, multidisciplinary collections and various symposia to which he contributed. See, for example, Freedom: Its Meaning, ed. Ruth Nanda Anshen (New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1940); Religious Experience and Truth: A Symposium, ed. Sidney Hook (New York: New York University Press, 1961); "Religion and the Intellectuals," Partisan Review, 17, No. 3 (1950); and "Human Nature Can Change: A Symposium," The American Journal of Psychoanalysis, 12, No. 1 (1952). Regarding Tillich's wide-ranging influence, see also Langdon Gilkey, "Tillich: The Master of Mediation," in The Theology of Paul Tillich, ed. Charles W. Kegley, rev. ed. (1952; rpt. New York: Pilgrim, 1982), pp. 26-29.

For an account of Tillich's increasing fame and the recognition which he received on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean during his lifetime, see Wilhelm Pauck and Marion Pauck, Paul Tillich: His Life and Thought (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), I, esp. 218-32, 246-85.

[3] See Paul Tillich, "On the Boundary: An Autobiographical Sketch," trans. N.A. Rasetzki, in The Interpretation of History (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936), subsequently republished as a separate volume in 1966.

[4] In one of his earliest public lectures, delivered in 1919, Tillich raised the concern of the relationship between religion and culture that was to occupy his attention throughout the remainder of his life. See Paul Tillich, "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," trans. William Baillie Green, in What is Religion?, ed. James Luther Adams (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), pp. 155-181.

For references to skepticism regarding the Christian

character of Tillich's thought, see Pauck and Pauck, pp. 160-61, 167, 175-77, and also the amusing anecdote recorded on p. 102. See also Nels F.S. Ferré, "Tillich and the Nature of Transcendence," in Paul Tillich: Retrospect and Future (Nashville: Abingdon, 1966), pp. 15-16.

[5] Paul Tillich, "What Am I? An Autobiographical Essay: Early Years," in My Search for Absolutes, Credo Perspectives (New York: Touchstone-Simon and Schuster, 1967), p. 25.

[6] Tillich, "On the Boundary," pp. 7-8.

Tillich's writings vacillate between the use of capital and lower-case letters for certain terms designating the final referent of religion. For the purpose of stylistic consistency, single words used to designate this referent, such as "Being," the "Holy," the "Absolute,' and the "Unconditional," are capitalized throughout this chapter, except, of course, when they appear with lower-case letters in direct quotations.

[7] Tillich, "On the Boundary," pp. 15-16.

[8] Tillich, "On the Boundary," p. 49.

[9] See Tillich, "On the Boundary," pp. 32, 34-36.

On p. 32, Tillich expresses the doctrine of justification in the following way:

> The doctrine of justification on the one hand rends every human claim in the face of God and every identification of God and man. On the other hand, it shows how the decadence of human existence, guilt, and despair, is overcome by the paradoxical judgement, that the sinner is just before God.

Closely related to this doctrine and manifesting the Lutheran character of his thought is Tillich's negative judgement regarding human perfectibility and his markedly anti-utopian social thought. See Tillich, "On the Boundary," pp. 54-57.

[10] See the discussions in Tillich, "What Am I?" pp. 30-32; Tillich, "On the Boundary," pp. 22-30; and Pauck and Pauck, pp. 3-5.

[11] Tillich, "What Am I?" p. 33.

[12] Tillich, "On the Boundary," pp. 14,33, refers to the "uncompromising seriousness of prophetic religion" as a counterbalance to the imaginative, playful element in his

thought, and to the importance of the prophetic spirit and the Old Testament for the shaping of his life, thought, and political attitude.

[13] Tillich, "What Am I?" p. 28. See also Tillich, "On the Boundary," pp. 41-42.

[14] For a concise discussion of the problem and task of philosophy of religion, see Paul Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," trans. James Luther Adams, Konrad Raiser, and Charles W. Fox, in What is Religion? pp. 27-30.

[15] See Paul Tillich, "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," trans. Kenneth Schedler and Charles W. Fox, in What is Religion? p. 148.

In the same essay, pp. 140, 142, Tillich emphasizes that "there is no way from the self to God," that "God is either the beginning or . . . does not exist."

[16] Paul Tillich, Author's Preface, The Protestant Era, trans. and ed. James Luther Adams (London: Nisbet, 1951), pp. xxv-xxvi.

This existential element in Tillich's methodology is linked with a similar element in his epistemology, particularly explicit in his discussions of religious knowledge and truth. See, for example, Paul Tillich, "Participation and Knowledge: Problems of an Ontology of Cognition," in Sociologica: Aufsätze, Max Horkheimer zum sechzigsten Geburtstag gewidmet, ed. Theodor W. Adorno and Walter Dirks, Frankfurter Beiträge zur Soziologie, Vol. 1 (Frankfurt: Europäische Verlagsanstalt, 1955), esp. pp. 208-09; and Paul Tillich, "Kairos and Logos: A Study in the Metaphysics of Knowledge," trans. Elsa L. Talmey, in The Interpretation of History, esp. pp. 139-46.

[17] Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 41.

[18] See Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 42.

Of relevance in this context is a discussion of Tillich's "qualified idealism." See Paul Wiebe, "Tillich and Contemporary Theory of Science," in Theonomy and Autonomy: Studies in Paul Tillich's Engagement with Modern Culture, ed. John J. Carey (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1984), pp. 21-24.

[19] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," pp. 50-51.

[20] Tillich, "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," pp. 149-50.

[21] Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 71. See pp. 70-72 regarding the question of the nature and truth of

religion.

For a brief analysis of the objective and method of Tillich's early philosophy of religion, see James Luther Adams, Introduction, What is Religion? pp. 16-22.

22 See Paul Tillich, "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," in Theology of Culture, ed. Robert C. Kimball (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), pp. 22-24.

On p. 22, Tillich writes, "Man is immediately aware of something unconditional which is the prius of the separation and interaction of subject and object, theoretically as well as practically."

23 Tillich, "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," pp. 12-13. See pp. 12-16 for a fuller discussion of the ontological method.

24 Tillich, "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," p. 22.

Regarding the relation between philosophical and religious truth, see also the discussions in Paul Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, World Perspectives Series, Vol. 10 (New York: Harper and Row, 1957), pp. 89-95; and Paul Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality (1955; rpt. Chicago: Phoenix Books-The University of Chicago Press, 1964), passim.

Tillich's view of the relation between philosophy and religion, and their convergence in the question of truth recalls the approach of Hegel's philosophy of religion. See Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion: The Lectures of 1827, trans. R.F. Brown, P.C. Hodgson, and J.M. Stewart, ed. Peter C. Hodgson, one-volume ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988), pp. 77-80, wherein Hegel states, "The object of religion, like that of philosophy, is the eternal truth, God and nothing but God and the explication of God." (p. 78)

25 For Tillich's discussion of the cosmological method, see "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," pp. 16-19.

26 Tillich, "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," p. 26.

On p. 23 of this essay, Tillich argues that this "awareness of the Unconditional is itself unconditional, and therefore beyond the division of the psychological functions."

27 Tillich, "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," pp. 26-27.

For another discussion of methodology, this time arguing the complementarity of phenomenological and

ontological approaches in trying to find the referent of religious symbolism, see Paul Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," in Religious Experience and Truth: A Symposium, pp. 6-7. See also Tillich's discussion of phenomenological intuition as an immediate approach to the substance of religion in "Eschatology and History," trans. Elsa L. Talmey, in The Interpretation of History, pp. 266-70.

[28] See Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," pp. 30-34. See also the discussion of John E. Smith, "The Impact of Tillich's Interpretation of Religion," in The Thought of Paul Tillich, ed. James Luther Adams, Wilhelm Pauck, and Roger Lincoln Shinn (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985), pp. 242-43.

The question of the relationship between philosophy and theology in Tillich's thought is a complex one. His theology has an explicitly philosophical character, while his philosophy of religion has identifiable theological roots. The distinction enunciated by Smith in the essay cited above, an elaboration of Tillich's own differentiation, is a useful one for separating Tillich's philosophy of religion from his theology, although Tillich sometimes writes as both a philosopher and theologian, shifting from one position to the other, in the same work. The question of the relationship between the two appears again, however, in Tillich's theology in connection with his "method of correlation," which should not be confused with or opposed to his method in philosophy of religion. Regarding Tillich's theological method, see Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, I (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1951), 59-66; and Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, II (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1957), 13-16. For instructive interpretations of his method of correlation and the relation between philosophy and theology viewed from the standpoint of the theologian, see Gilkey, pp. 36-45; David Tracy, "Tillich and Contemporary Theology," in The Thought of Paul Tillich, pp. 261-67; and John Dillenberger, "Paul Tillich: Theologian of Culture," in Paul Tillich: Retrospect and Future, pp. 37-38.

[29] Paul Tillich, "The Significance of the History of Religions for the Systematic Theologian," in The Future of Religions, ed. Jerald C. Brauer (New York: Harper and Row, 1966), p. 88.

[30] Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, pp. 132-33.

For further discussion of the demonic and the struggle against demonization, see Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," pp. 85-88, in which Tillich locates the origin of the demonic in the abyss element of the Holy and refers to it as "the sacred antidivine," and as an ecstatic

"breakthrough in the direction of the destructive" in contrast to a "breakthrough in the direction of grace." See also Paul Tillich, "The Demonic: A Contribution to the Interpretation of History," trans. Elsa L. Talmey, in The Interpretation of History, pp. 77-96, 99-107; D. MacKenzie Brown, Ultimate Concern: Tillich in Dialogue (London: SCM Press, 1965), passim; and H. Frederick Reisz, Jr. "The Demonic as a Principle in Tillich's Doctrine of God: Tillich and Beyond," in Theonomy and Autonomy, esp. pp. 136-37, 143-50.

[31] See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 12.

In pp. 12-16, Tillich discusses idolatry in relation to the divine and demonic aspects of the Holy, and argues that idolatrous faith has as its object the Holy in its demonic, or destructive, aspect; the ambiguity of the Holy contains the possibility of idolatry.

[32] Paul Tillich, "The Nature of Religious Language," in Theology of Culture, p. 60.

As Smith, "The Impact of Tillich's Interpretation of Religion," pp. 244-45, correctly observes, there is a lack of clarity in Tillich's distinction between idolatrous and demonic perversions of religion. Smith suggests that there is a "destructiveness and horror manifest in the truly demonic," as, for example, in nazism, that is not manifest in all idolatry. While Tillich might have approved of Smith's distinction, it appears that he did not provide discrete definitions of the two concepts.

[33] See Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 140.

[34] Paul Tillich, "Religion and Secular Culture," in The Protestant Era, p. 63.

[35] See Tillich, "On The Boundary," pp. 24-26; Paul Tillich, "Church and Culture," trans. Elsa L. Talmey, in The Interpretation of History, pp. 236-37; and Dillenberger, p. 32.

[36] See Paul Tillich, "Authority and Revelation," Harvard Divinity School Bulletin, 49 No. 8 (1952), 28.

Heteronomy is thus linked with idolatry, or demonization.

[37] For Tillich's discussion of types of authority, see "Authority and Revelation," pp. 28-29. See also Paul Tillich, "The Prophetic Element in the Christian Message and the Authoritarian Personality," McCormick Quarterly, 17, No. 1 (1963), 16-18; and Paul Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice: Ontological Analyses and Ethical Applications (London: Oxford University Press, 1954), pp. 87-90.

[38] Tillich, "Authority and Revelation," p. 31.

[39] Tillich, "Authority and Revelation," p. 36.

[40] See Tillich, "The Prophetic Element in the Christian Message and the Authoritarian Personality," pp. 18-20.

[41] See Tillich, "The Prophetic Element in the Christian Message and the Authoritarian Personality," pp. 25-26.

[42] See Paul Tillich, "Religion and the Intellectuals," p. 256.

[43] Paul Tillich, "Freedom and the Ultimate Concern," in Religion in America: Original Essays on Religion in a Free Society, ed. John Cogley (New York: Meridian, 1958) p. 273.

[44] Paul Tillich, "Can Religion Survive?" in In Albert Schweitzer's Realm, ed. A.A. Roback (Cambridge, Mass.: Sci-Art Publishers, 1962), p. 310.

[45] Paul Tillich, "Conformity," in Readings in Human Relations, ed. Keith Davis and William G. Scott, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 421. (This essay originally appeared in Social Research, (Autumn 1957), pp. 354-60.)

For Tillich's discussion of patternizing forces in our society, see pp. 418-421.

[46] See Paul Tillich, "Christianity and Modern Society," trans. John C. Modschiedler and Victor Nuovo, in Political Expectation, ed. James Luther Adams (1971; rpt. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1983), pp. 4-5.

For specific historical analyses of the failure of religion, Christianity in particular, to resist the prevailing social trends, see Paul Tillich, The Religious Situation, trans. H. Richard Niebuhr (1932; rpt. New York: Living Age Books-Meridian, 1956), pp. 155-219; and Paul Tillich, The World Situation (1945; rpt. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1965), pp. 38-44.

[47] See Tillich, "Religion and Secular Culture," p. 63; Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 83-85; and Paul Tillich, "Kairos," in The Protestant Era, pp. 50-53.

[48] See Paul Tillich, "The Lost Dimension in Religion," in Issues in Christian Thought, ed. John B. Harrington (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), p. 13. (This essay originally

appeared in Saturday Evening Post, 14 June 1958.) See also Paul Tillich, "Religion as a Dimension in Man's Spiritual Life," in Theology of Culture, pp. 5-9.

[49] Paul Tillich, "A View of the Present Situation: Religions, Quasi-Religions, and Their Encounters," in Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, Brampton Lectures in America, No. 14 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1963) p. 4. See also Paul Tillich, "Aspects of a Religious Analysis of Culture," in Theology of Culture, p. 40; and Brown, pp. 7-16, 19-28.

Smith, "The Impact of Tillich's Interpretation of Religion," p. 243, suggests that Tillich understands "religion as the dimension of depth in human life and culture" and "faith as ultimate concern." While this distinction offers a conceptual refinement of this aspect of Tillich's thought, Tillich himself does not draw such a distinction consistently, but frequently discusses religion and faith in nearly identical terms. Compare, for example, this chapter's epigraph with Dynamics of Faith, p. 1, where Tillich writes, "Faith is the state of being ultimately concerned. . . ." This suggests that Tillich, consistent with his Protestant heritage, views faith as the core of religion. In Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, p. 51, he asserts that faith is the "biblical word for religious existence." Since the fundamental meaning of religion and the meaning of faith coincide for Tillich, the two terms can be used virtually interchangeably.

[50] Paul Tillich, The Courage to Be (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1952), p. 156.

[51] See Tillich, "Church and Culture," p. 222. See also Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," pp. 59-60.

[52] See Tillich, "The Lost Dimension in Religion," p. 13; Tillich, "Can Religion Survive?" p. 312; Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, pp. 130-31; and Brown, pp. 4-7.

[53] See Tillich, "Religion as a Dimension in Man's Spiritual Life," p. 8; and Tillich, "Aspects of a Religious Analysis of Culture," pp. 41-42.

[54] See Brown, pp. 175-82.

[55] See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 1-11. See also Brown, pp. 7-15.

For a brief discussion of the meaning and possible sources of Tillich's definition of religious faith, emphasizing its connections with Luther and German idealism, see Wilhelm Pauck, "To Be or Not to Be: Tillich on the Meaning of Life," in The Thought of Paul Tillich, pp.

39-40.

Tillich's discussion of religion as ultimate concern is not far removed, as he himself suggests, from Friedrich Schleiermacher's definition of religion as "the feeling of absolute dependence," when the latter is properly understood. See Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 15, 41-42.

[56] Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 96.

[57] See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p.11; and Brown, pp. 24-27, 49-51.

Not only are preliminary and ultimate concerns not to be confused, but the faith based upon the latter is not destroyed by the lack of fulfillment of the former, and as evidence for this assertion, Tillich points to the history of the Jewish people. In Dynamics of Faith, p. 119, he writes, "They are, in the history of mankind, the document of the ultimate and unconditional character of faith."

[58] See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 12, 105-11.

These are internal consequences for the self. As Tillich notes on p. 115, external consequences of idolatrous faith take the form of fanatacism and the absence of tolerance and love for others outside the idolatrous faith.

[59] Paul Tillich, Morality and Beyond, Religious Perspectives, Vol. 9 (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), pp. 17-18.

See also Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 57, where the human being is characterized as that being who attempts to reach beyond finitude to that which is ultimate.

Cf. Victor E. Frankl, The Unconscious God (orig. Austrian ed., 1948; New York: Washington Square Press-Simon & Schuster,1985), pp. 13, 77-79. Frankl defines religion in the broadest sense as the "search for ultimate meaning," and argues that the human being is characterized by self-transcendence and the search for meaning.

[60] See Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, pp. 11-14; Tillich, Systematic Theology, II, 9; and Brown, p. 44.

Tillich's emphatic distinction between the concept and the content of ultimate concern (see, for example, Brown, pp. 19-28) permits him to claim the universality of religion in its fundamental meaning without ignoring the idolatrous perversions or false expressions of ultimate concern. Idolatry, that which does not represent true ultimate concern, still presupposes the latter as its basis; the negative presupposes the positive which it distorts. At the root of this conception lies the Christian principle of the fall, the human estrangement from an original condition of goodness which, however, is not a complete separation from,

but a disruption of, the original unity between humanity and the true content of ultimate concern. This is implied in Dynamics of Faith, p. 112, where Tillich writes, "One is ultimately concerned only about something to which one essentially belongs and from which one is existentially separated."

See also Dillenberger, p. 31, who expresses Tillich's distinction between true and false ultimate concerns as a distinction between those which "bear the character of ultimacy" versus those which "function with the character of ultimacy."

[61] See Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, pp. 125, 127. In "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," p. 143, Tillich argues that the Holy is not a value, but "rather that which gives the values their value, the conditionality of their validity and the absoluteness of their relation to reality." In Systematic Theology, I, 215, Tillich writes, "The holy is the quality of that which concerns man ultimately. Only that which is holy can give man ultimate concern, and only that which gives man ultimate concern has the quality of holiness."

[62] See Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, pp. 126-28; and Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 2-3.

[63] See Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, pp. 129-30; and Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 13-16.

In the latter passage, and also in Systematic Theology, I, 216-217, Tillich discusses the historical development of the concept of the Holy and its eventual identification with moral perfection through the elimination of the demonic or destructive element originally contained within it. He suggests that this development needs to be reversed in order to recover the power and profundity intended by the original concept. At the same time, however, Tillich emphasizes the importance of the prophetic use of justice as the criterion by which to judge idolatrous or demonic holiness--an occurrence that simultaneously plays a crucial role in what Tillich views as the historical weakening of the concept of the Holy. It thus appears that Tillich wishes to renew the concept of the Holy as the signifier of that which transcends the finite, containing both divine and demonic possibilities, and that he wishes to preserve the criterion of justice against demonic forms of holiness, thereby removing only the connotation of moral perfection. However, the question remains regarding whether these two concepts of holiness--the Holy as that which contains demonic possibilities and the Holy as determined by the principle of justice--can be reconciled. Tillich's distinction, in Dynamics of Faith, p. 56, between "the holiness of being" and "the holiness of what ought to be"

summarizes the conflict without resolving it.

It is also in Dynamics of Faith, pp. 13-16, that Tillich refers to the Holy as the "entirely other," a designation of central importance in Horkheimer's theory of religion.

64 Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 129.

65 See Tillich, "Authority and Revelation," p. 27; and Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, pp. 2-5.

66 Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 105.

See pp. 105-09 for Tillich's further discussion of a theonomous interpretation of revelation.

67 Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," pp. 82-85; and Tillich, "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," pp. 142-44.

68 Tillich, "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," p. 125. See also pp. 137-38, 140.

Regarding Tillich's use of the term "Unconditional," see James Luther Adams, "Introduction: The Storms of Our Times and Starry Night," in The Thought of Paul Tillich, pp. 4-7; Adams, Introduction, What is Religion? pp. 13-15.

69 See Tillich, "Authority and Revelation," pp. 31-32.

For a much more extensive discussion of revelation, see Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 71-159, in which the focus is the relation between reason and revelation, and revelation is presented as the fulfillment and reintegration of reason. In this regard, see also Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 74-80; and Smith, "The Impact of Tillich's Interpretation of Religion," pp. 253-55.

70 Tillich, "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," pp. 126-27.

For related discussions of faith as a centered act of the whole personality in contrast to common distortions of the meaning of faith, see Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 4-8, 30-40; and Smith, "The Impact of Tillich's Interpretation of Religion," pp. 246-50.

71 Paul Tillich, "Realism and Faith," in The Protestant Era, p. 76.

For a discussion of the concept of ecstasy, see pp. 89-90 of the same essay.

72 Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 16.

[73] Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," pp. 76-77. See also Tillich's discussion, pp. 77-78, in which he presents theonomous faith as the resolution of the opposition between autonomous and heteronomous tendencies, the former being directed only toward the unity of the conditioned without intending the transcendence of the Unconditional, and the latter being directed toward conditioned forms viewed as unconditioned.

[74] See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 16-18; Tillich, "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," pp. 27-28; and Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 109.

[75] Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 22. Regarding the preceding points, see Tillich's discussions in Dynamics of Faith, pp. 18-22; "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," pp. 28-29; and Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, pp. 60-61.

For another discussion of faith and doubt, see Dynamics of Faith, pp. 99-105. Here Tillich relates certainty and uncertainty in faith to the tension between the self's participation in and separation from the object of ultimate concern, and argues that doubt cannot be eliminated through repression on the basis of an unshakable conviction, but must be accepted by the courage that also arises from faith. Tillich, p. 17, defines this courage as "the daring self-affirmation of one's own being in spite of the powers of 'nonbeing' which are the heritage of everything finite." In the affirmation of a faith that encompasses doubt within itself, Tillich has applied the doctrine of justification to the act of faith itself.

[76] Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, p. 132. Tillich immediately notes, however, that this insight could only have developed on the basis of a particular, self-transcending, and critical religion, clearly implying the prophetic tradition within his own heritage.

[77] Tillich, "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," p. 146.

[78] See Tillich, "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," pp. 145-48; and Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 28-29.

[79] Tillich, "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," p. 147.

[80] Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 125. For Tillich's discussions of the preceding points, see Dynamics of Faith, pp. 57,122-25; and My Search for Absolutes, pp. 140-41. For various detailed discussions, both methodological

and substantial, of inter-religious dialogue from a Christian perspective, see the essays contained in Tillich, Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions. For informative and critical discussions of Tillich's approach to inter-religious encounter, see Joseph M. Kitagawa, "Tillich, Kraemer, and the Encounter of Religions," in The Thought of Paul Tillich, esp. pp. 210-13; and Terence Thomas, "On Another Boundary: Tillich's Encounter with World Religions," in Theonomy and Autonomy, pp. 193-211.

[81] See Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, pp. 138-39.

[82] Paul Tillich, "The Struggle Between Time and Space," in Theology of Culture, p. 38.

In this essay, Tillich contrasts monotheism and polytheism in terms of a confrontation between universal justice linked with the category of time, or history, and nationalistic injustice associated with the category of space, and argues that Judaism witnesses to the God of history who is not bound by the power of space. In this regard, see also Paul Tillich, "Historical and Non-Historical Interpretations of History: A Comparison," in The Protestant Era, pp. 18-30. For a discussion of types of polytheism and monotheism, see Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 222-30.

[83] Paul Tillich, "Christian Principles of Judging Non-Christian Religions," in Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, pp. 31-32.

In Dynamics of Faith, p. 68, Tillich writes, "The world historical mission of the Jewish faith is to judge the sacramental self-certainty in Judaism itself, as well as in all other religions, and to pronounce an ultimate concern which denies any claim for ultimacy that does not include the demand of justice."

[84] Tillich My Search for Absolutes, pp. 139-40. See also Brown, pp. 105-06.

For an appreciative and critical Jewish assessment of Tillich in relation to Judaism, see Albert H. Friedlander, "Tillich and Jewish Thought," in The Thought of Paul Tillich, pp. 175-96. For an exposition of Tillich's thought on Judaism through an analysis of his 1952 Berlin lectures, see Glenn D. Earley, "Paul Tillich and Judaism: An Analysis of 'The Jewish Question--A Christian and German Problem,'" in Theonomy and Autonomy, pp. 213-41.

[85] See Paul Tillich, "The Meaning of Anti-Semitism," Christianity and Society, 4, No. 1 (1938), 34-36; Paul Tillich, "The Jewish Question: Christian and German Problem," Jewish Social Studies, 33, No. 4 (1971), 260-61, 269-70; and Tillich, "The Struggle Between Time and Space,"

pp. 35-39.

[86] See Tillich, Author's Preface, The Protestant Era, p. xxvi; and Tillich, "On the Boundary," p. 26.

[87] Paul Tillich, "The Protestant Principle and the Proletarian Situation," in The Protestant Era, p. 239. See also, in the same volume, Paul Tillich, "The End of the Protestant Era?" p. 226.

Tillich regards the application of prophetic protest to religion and all other spheres of life as the most important theological task, possible only through participation in the Unconditional as experienced in faith. See Paul Tillich, "The Formative Power of Protestantism," in The Protestant Era, pp. 206, 208-10. For a discussion of the distinctions and relation between prophetic and rational criticism, see Paul Tillich, "Protestantism as a Critical and Creative Principle, " in Political Expectation, pp. 10-18.

[88] See Tillich, Author's Preface, The Protestant Era, p. xliv; and Tillich, "The Significance of the History of Religions for the Systematic Theologian," p. 88.

[89] See Paul Tillich, "Christianity Judging Itself in the Light of its Encounter with the World Religions," in Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, p. 81; and Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 132-37.

[90] Tillich, "The Nature of Religious Language," p. 67. See also Brown, pp. 135-36.

[91] See, for example, Tillich, "Christianity Judging Itself in the Light of Its Encounter with the World Religions," pp. 81-82.

[92] See Tillich, "Religion as a Dimension in Man's Spiritual Life," pp. 8-9.

[93] Thus, one can understand Tillich's insistence, as a theologian, upon the importance of a theology of culture. Regarding Tillich's view of the task and method of a theology of culture, as well as some exemplary analyses conducted from this standpoint, see Tillich, "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," esp. pp. 163-81; Tillich, The Religious Situation; and various essays in Tillich, Theology of Culture.

[94] Tillich, "Aspects of a Religious Analysis of Culture," p. 42.

The abbreviated formulation of this relationship is found often in Tillich's writings. See, for example,

Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 73; Tillich, "On the Boundary," p. 50; and Tillich, "Religion and Secular Culture," p. 63.

[95] Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 74

It is apparent that Tillich uses the concepts of heteronomy, autonomy, and theonomy both in his examination of the cognitive and spiritual attitudes pertaining to the human being, and also in his analysis of the organizing principles and historical dynamics of societies. Whereas the earlier discussion of these concepts in this chapter has focused upon their application to the question of human rationality, the following discussion is concerned with their application in Tillich's socio-historical analysis.

[96] See Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," pp. 72-76; Tillich, "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," pp. 151-154; Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 85-86; and James Luther Adams, Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science, and Religion (New York: Harper & Row, 1965), pp. 60-61.

For interpretations of Tillich's thought on religion and culture with reference to this triad of concepts, see Gilkey, pp. 29-36; Dillenberger, pp. 32-33; and Smith, "The Impact of Tillich's Interpretation of Religion," pp. 255-57.

[97] See Tillich, Author's Preface, The Protestant Era, pp. xxxiii-xxxv; Tillich, "Kairos," pp. 53,55; and Paul Tillich, "Basic Principles of Religious Socialism," trans. James L. Adams and Victor Nuovo, in Political Expectation, pp. 62-66, 87-88.

Tillich's religious socialism, which seeks to combine the spiritual concern for truth with the material concern for justice, will not be extensively discussed here. What is important to observe, however, is that Tillich's social thought and political perspective are heavily influenced by, and intimately connected with his theory of religion. For a good representation of Tillich's socialist philosophy, see esp. Paul Tillich, The Socialist Decision, trans. Franklin Sherman (orig. German ed., 1933; Washington: University Press of America, 1977); and several of the essays contained in Tillich, Political Expectation; and in Tillich, The Protestant Era.

[98] See Paul Tillich, "Church and Culture," trans. Elsa L. Talmey, in The Interpretation of History, pp. 224-25.

[99] See Tillich, "Church and Culture," pp. 225-29, 235-36.

See also "Aspects of a Religious Analysis of Culture," p. 50, in which Tillich states that the church must subject itself and secular culture to prophetic criticism, and that

it must accept prophetic criticism originating outside itself. It is in this context (p. 51) that Tillich introduces the concepts of the "manifest" and the "latent" church in order to distinguish between the prophetic roles within and outside of institutionalized religion. See, in this regard, also Tillich, "On the Boundary," pp. 48-49.

[100] See Tillich, "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," pp. 175-76.

[101] See Tillich, "Church and Culture," pp. 224, 227, 233-35; and n. 8 above.

See also "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 81, where Tillich writes, "A meaning-fulfilling act or an object is sacred insofar as it is a bearer of the unconditional meaning; it is secular insofar as it does not give expression to the unconditional meaning." This judgement is, or course, applicable to both realms in the narrow sense. In this regard, see also Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 217-18.

[102] Tillich, "On the Boundary," p. 51.

[103] Tillich, "On the Boundary," p. 52.

[104] The following discussion draws upon Tillich, "A View of the Present Situation: Religion, Quasi-Religions, and Their Encounters," pp. 5-11, 14-19; the discussions in Brown, pp. 4-5, 20-39; and Tillich, My Search for Absolutes, pp. 134-36.

[105] See Paul Tillich, "Relation of Metaphysics and Theology," Review of Metaphysics, 10, No. 1 (1956), 58, where he writes, "Every religion expresses itself in symbols of its ultimate concern."

It is interesting to find the concept of symbolization in connection with the terms "depth, "meaning," and "God" in a novel that predates most of Tillich's writings on this theme. See André Malraux, Man's Fate (La Condition Humaine), trans. Haakon M. Chevalier (1934; rpt. New York: Vintage Books-Random House, 1969), p. 187, where one character says, "Everything is a symbol. To go from the symbol to the thing symbolized is to explore the depth and meaning of the world, it is to seek God."

[106] Regarding the preceding points, See Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," p. 71; Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 241; Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 41, 44-45; Paul Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," in Religious Experience and Truth: A Symposium, p. 303; and Paul Tillich, "The Idea of God as Affected by Modern Knowledge," The Crane Review, 1, No. 3 (1959), 88.

In "The Conquest of the Concept of Religion in the Philosophy of Religion," pp. 122-23, Tillich speaks of statements about the Unconditional as being necessarily paradoxical, for the reason that language cannot avoid objectifying that which is not an object, that which transcends the antithesis of subject and object.

[107] See Tillich, "The Nature of Religious Language," pp. 53-54.

[108] See Tillich, "On the Boundary," pp. 46-48; and Brown, pp. 88-89, 96-98.

In this regard, Pauck, p. 41, is correct in asserting that Tillich sought to "deliteralize" rather than demythologize religious symbols; and Adams, Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science, and Religion, pp. 2-5, notes that Tillich is an heir of Schleiermacher in his effort to present the content and indispensability of religion to a secular audience in unconventional language.

[109] See Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," pp. 3-6; Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 41-43; and Tillich, "The Nature of Religious Language," pp. 54-58.

[110] Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," p.5.

Of course, not all religious symbols are functionally equivalent in representing the Holy, and Tillich addresses this point in discussions of "types," or "levels" of religious symbols. See Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," pp. 8-9; Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," pp. 314-19; and Tillich, "The Nature of Religious Language," pp. 61-65.

[111] See Tillich, "The Nature of Religious Language," pp. 58-60.

In a related discussion, Tillich defines myths as collections of religious symbols, organized in narrative form, describing divine-human encounters, and, while defending their necessity, criticizes their literalistic interpretation as idolatrous, since such an interpretation places God on the level of finite reality. See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 48-54.

[112] See Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 316; and Tillich, "The Nature of Religious Language," pp. 65-66.

[113] See Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," p. 10; and Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 96-97.

[114] See Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," p. 10; and Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," p. 316.

[115] Tillich, "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," pp. 10-11.

[116] See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 97-98; and Tillich, "The Nature of Religious Language," p. 67.

These two criteria of a symbol's truth are also succinctly expressed in Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 240. In "The Meaning and Justification of Religious Symbols," p. 11, Tillich adds to the second criterion a "positive quality," namely, the extent to which the symbol "includes the valuation in an ultimate perspective of the individual persons," but this clearly seems to be a later addition to his discussions that emphasize the negative aspect of the "objective" criterion of a symbol's truth.

Regarding Tillich's usage of the term "symbol," see also Gilkey, pp. 45-47.

[117] Tillich writes, in "Church and Culture," p. 222, "We call this object of the silent belief in the ultimate meaningfulness, this basis and abyss of all meaning which surpasses all that is conceivable, God."

[118] See Tillich, Love, Power, and Justice, p. 109; Tillich, "The Nature of Religious Language," pp. 61-62; and Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 238-39.

Cf. this aspect of Tillich's thought with Hegel, p. 117, who speaks of God as universal and absolutely independent being.

[119] Paul Tillich, "A Christian-Buddhist Conversation," in Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions, p. 67. See also Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 235-38, for a discussion of God as Being.

[120] See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 10; and Tillich, "The Nature of Religious Language," p. 62.

In "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," pp. 24-25, Tillich writes:

> God is unconditioned, that makes him God; but the "unconditional" is not God. The word "God" is filled with the concrete symbols in which mankind has expressed its ultimate concern--its being grasped by something unconditional. And this "something" is not just a thing, but the power of being in which every being participates.

[121] Tillich, "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion,"

p. 25.

Regarding the concept of God as a being and the attempts to prove its existence, see also Tillich, "The Idea of God as Affected by Modern Knowledge," pp. 84-86; Tillich, Systematic Theology, I, 235-37; and Tillich, "Religion as a Dimension in Man's Spiritual Life," pp. 4-5.

See also Nels F.S. Ferré, "Tillich and the Nature of Transcendence," in Paul Tillich: Retrospect and Future, esp. pp. 10-12, for a discussion of Tillich's rejection of a transcendent being. On p. 10, Ferré writes, "The key to Tillich's view of the transcendent is that there is no transcendent realm, only transcendent meaning."

122 See Tillich, "The Nature of Religious Language," pp. 62-63; and Paul Tillich, "Science and Theology: A Discussion with Einstein," in Theology of Culture, pp. 127-32.

For a discussion of Tillich's conception of God in connection with his philosophical method, see Roy D. Morrison II, "Tillich, Einstein, and Kant: Method, Epistemology, and the Personal God," in Theonomy and Autonomy, pp. 35-65.

Tillich is well aware of the danger that accompanies the conception of the personal God; the suprapersonal element may be lost and God reduced to a being, no longer identified with Being and truth. Tillich also links this process with the restriction of being to objective reality, and the restriction of truth, in its existential sense, to mere subjectivity, opinions, and emotions. See Tillich, "Religion and Secular Culture," pp. 69-72.

123 Tillich, "Authority and Revelation," p. 36.

124 Tillich, Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality, p. 83.

125 See Tillich, The Courage to Be, pp. 182-90.

Similarly, Tillich here argues that theistic faith is transcended by "absolute faith," or ultimate concern, corresponding to the God above God.

126 Adams, Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science, and Religion, p. 32, n. 26, traces the concepts "ground" and "abyss" to Jacob Boehme.

127 Evelyn Underhill, Mysticism: A Study in the Nature and Development of Man's Spiritual Consciousness (1955; rpt. New York: Meridian-New American Library, 1974), p. 344.

128 See Bernard McGinn, "Theological Summary," in The Essential Sermons, Commentaries, Treatises, and Defense, by

Meister Eckhart, trans. and ed. Edmund Colledge and Bernard McGinn, The Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1981), pp. 30-39. For examples of Eckhart's distinction between the Godhead and the persons of God, see, in the same volume, pp. 96-97, 119, 123, 125, 132-36, 146.

[129] Tillich, The Courage to Be, p. 185.

[130] See Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," pp. 314-15; and Tillich, "The Two Types of Philosophy of Religion," p. 25.

[131] See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, pp. 45-46, 126-27; Tillich, "Religion as a Dimension in Man's Spiritual Life," p. 8; and Tillich, "Religion and the Intellectuals," pp. 255-56.

[132] Tillich, Author's Preface, The Protestant Era, p. xxix.

[133] See Brown, p. 186.

[134] See nn. 59, 60 above. See also Joseph Haroutunian, "The Question Tillich Left Us," in Paul Tillich: Retrospect and Future, pp. 52-53, for another indication of this ambivalence in Tillich's thought.

[135] See Tillich, "The Lost Dimension in Religion," pp. 12-15. Of relevance in this context are also Tillich, "Aspects of a Religious Analysis of Culture," pp.43-45; and Paul Tillich, "The Effects of Space Exploration on Man's Condition and Stature," in The Future of Religions, pp. 39-51.

[136] See Tillich, "The Lost Dimension in Religion," pp. 15-16.

[137] See Tillich, The Lost Dimension in Religion," pp. 12,18.

[138] See Tillich, "Can Religion Survive?" pp. 307-10.

[139] See Tillich, "Can Religion Survive?" pp. 311-12; and Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 76.
It is not clear how Tillich would reconcile this belief with the view that religion as a special sphere is necessary in order to preserve, through symbolization, the substance of religion as ultimate concern. See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 121; and n. 54 above.

[140] Tillich, "Can Religion Survive?" p. 312.
See also Tillich, "Christianity Judging Itself in the

Light of Its Encounter with the World Religions," pp. 96-97; and Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 126, where he writes, "Faith is an essential possibility of man, and therefore its existence is necessary and universal."

This argument, of course, raises the question of the permanence of human nature. Tillich's response to this question cannot be discussed at length here, but Tillich's characterization of what is fundamental in human nature as "finite freedom" does not permit a definitive resolution of the question regarding the possibility of the complete loss of ultimate concern. See, for example, Paul Tillich, "Human Nature Can Change," The American Journal of Psychoanalysis, 12, No. 1(1952), 65-67; and Paul Tillich, "What is Basic in Human Nature," The American Journal of Psychoanalysis, 22, No. 2 (1962), 115-21.

[141] See Tillich, Dynamics of Faith, p. 69.

See also Tillich, Author's Preface, The Protestant Era, p. xxx, where he writes, "Religion, like God, is omnipresent; its presence, like that of God, can be forgotten, neglected, denied. But it is always effective, giving inexhaustible depth to life and inexhaustible meaning to every cultural creation."

[142] See Tillich, "Religion and the Intellectuals," pp. 254-55; Tillich, "Aspects of a Religious Analysis of Culture," pp. 46-47; and Tillich, The Courage to Be, pp. 142-48.

143 See Tillich, "Religion and Secular Culture," p. 67.

[144] Tillich, "The Lost Dimension in Religion," p. 19.

Horkheimer's Theory of Religion: The Longing for the Wholly Other

> The life of most men is so wretched, the deprivations and humiliations are so many, and their efforts and success are for the most part so disproportionate, that we can easily understand the hope that the earthly order of things may not be the only real one.[1]

Max Horkheimer's thoughts on religion have engendered controversy, misunderstandings, and polemical attacks. Reporting on the contents of a meeting with him that occurred shortly before Horkheimer's death in 1973, H.C.F. Mansilla refers, in particular, to indignant accusations from an activistic segment of the left that Horkheimer had become a convert to religion, and had withdrawn to "theology" and a position of resignation divorced from political praxis. He also notes Horkheimer's astonishment regarding the persistence of the attacks, deriving from false interpretations of some of his later statements, in the face of the careful explanations with which his views had been expressed.[2] Appraising Horkheimer's views on religion from a more sympathetic position, Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich finds sufficient grounds to claim Horkheimer as a

member of liberal Jewry, thereby indirectly confirming the suspicions of his antagonistic critics.[3] In contrast to these suggestions, Walter Strolz asserts that the increasingly important experience of the questionable nature of human existence in the face of suffering and death did not open a way for Horkheimer into the faith-world of Judaism,[4] and Rudolf J. Siebert attempts to prove "that at no point in his life did Horkheimer become a believer."[5]

What these contradictory assessments of Horkheimer's relationship to religion actually indicate is the ambiguity and discriminating subtlety of a dialectical position that developed significantly and became more explicit throughout his life. The fact that religious themes formed an increasingly noticeable object of concern for his critical theory as he grew older, however, should not be mistakenly equated with a religious conversion.[6] Even his apparently unambiguous profession of Judaism, which appears as an incidental remark in a lecture delivered in 1965,[7] and which would seem to present a stumbling block to the contentions of Strolz and Siebert, must be interpreted in the context of his thought as a whole and in connection with his much more extensive statements on his relationship to religion in particular.

Perhaps the most accurate characterization of Horkheimer's position is provided by Helmut Gumnior and Rudolf Ringguth when they refer to the inner strife of his

existence between the negative thought of a Marxist and the affirmative practice of a faithful Jew.[8] In any case, the concern to classify Horkheimer as either a believer or an atheist is largely a matter of irrelevance, since, in his own view, the actual opposition between theism and atheism has been rendered historically obsolete.[9] What is much more important for the study of religion in modern society is to examine his critique and theory of religion, to identify the formative influences on his theoretical approach, and, especially, to elucidate his interpretation of the meaning of religion and his assessment of its place and significance within the totality of human experience. Such is the purpose of the present chapter.

I. Formative Influences and Methodological Approach

Horkheimer's theory of religion is influenced by many significant thinkers from the period of the Enlightenment and its aftermath. Siebert, for example, in what is one of the most thorough studies of Horkheimer's theory of religion, emphasizes the particular influence of Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, and diligently compares and contrasts Horkheimer's thought with Hegel's philosophy of religion.[10] Of at least equally decisive importance, however, are two fundamental roots of Horkheimer's thought

that exert a formative influence upon his attitude toward, and theory of religion, namely, certain contents of the Jewish religious tradition and the left-wing Hegelian critique of religion formulated by Ludwig Feuerbach and Karl Marx. While the latter may be more widely recognized, the former has also been acknowledged as a determinative impetus to Horkheimer's thought.[11]

To begin with a consideration of the Jewish root of Horkheimer's thought, Ehrlich identifies an elemental link between Judaism and Horkheimer's critical theory in their common will-to-justice (Wille zur Gerechtigkeit) which, he argues, also serves to explain Horkheimer's changing relationship to Marxism in view of the latter's totalitarian manifestations.[12] It is this will-to-justice that Gumnior and Ringguth interpret as the early manifestation of a "hidden theology" (theologia occulta) in Horkheimer's critical theory.[13] Inextricably coupled with this element of Horkheimer's thought is an acute sensitivity to human pain and suffering. The paradigm of the indissoluble connection between the two--the experience of suffering and the hope for justice--is, for Horkheimer, the history of the Jewish people. As he observes, "Through millenia of persecution, the Jews held together for the sake of justice. . . . Jewry was not a powerful state but the hope for justice at the end of the world."[14] "Suffering and hope have become inseparable for the Jewish people."[15] That which has become the characteristic theme of Jewish history

is faithfully incorporated into, and reflected by Horkheimer's critical theory. Siebert, therefore, refers to Horkheimer's theory as the perpetuation of "the Jewish unhappy consciousness," and identifies its impulse with "the longing of the psalms and the prophets to overcome the pain which is connected with evil."[16] Horkheimer, himself, in a passage from the early 1960s, alludes to such a function of critical theory when he likens its adherents to Jews who are neither content to seek refuge in the modern state of Israel nor willing to be absorbed into other nations. "Those who remain loyal to theory," he writes, "are remnants, like those that cling to the Talmud and messianic hope."[17]

The longing for justice and reconciliation, as will be demonstrated below, constitutes the core of Horkheimer's theory of religion. In their collaborative work, Dialectic of Enlightenment, Horkheimer and his close friend, Theodor W. Adorno, declare, "Reconciliation is the highest notion of Judaism, and expectation [Erwartung] is its whole meaning."[18] Horkheimer implicitly traces the anticipation of reconciliation back to the beginning of the Jewish and Christian scriptures when he remarks, "For Christians, the main point to the story about paradise is original sin. For Jews, it is the expulsion and the desire to return."[19] As he explicitly acknowledges in a letter penned near the end of his life, "The hope that earthly horror does not possess the last word is, to be sure, a non-scientific wish."[20] It

is a religious yearning, which, in Horkheimer's case, represents an element of the Jewish heritage that he appropriates as the driving impulse of his critical theory.

While Horkheimer can no longer find comprehensible the biblical concept of God which lies behind the commandments that have traditionally provided the foundation for justice in the Jewish and Christian religions, his longing for justice is, nonetheless, intimately connected with another essential constituent of Judaism, namely, the prohibition found in the Decalogue against the representation of God in images, and its consequence, idolatry.[21] Strolz considers this prohibition as the source of the transcendent spirit of contradiction that characterizes Jewish existence, and as the determinant of what he terms Horkheimer's "negative theology."[22] Siebert, moreover, suggests that Horkheimer radicalizes this command beyond its original religious meaning,[23] a claim substantiated by Horkheimer's strict refusal to designate the Transcendent except by the deliberately cautious concept of the entirely, or wholly Other (ein ganz Anderes). The importance of this negative principle for Horkheimer and Adorno is revealed in the following passage:

> Jewish religion allows no word that would alleviate the despair of all that is mortal. It associates hope only with the prohibition against calling on

> what is false as God, against invoking the finite as the infinite, lies as truth. The guarantee of salvation lies in the rejection of any belief that would replace it: it is knowledge obtained in the denunciation of illusion. Admittedly, the negation is not abstract. The contesting of every positive without distinction, the stereotype formula of vanity, as used by Buddhism, sets itself above the prohibition against naming the Absolute with names: just as far above as its contrary, pantheism; or its caricature, bourgeois skepticism. Explanations of the world as all or nothing are mythologies, and guaranteed roads to redemption are sublimated magic practices. The self-satisfaction of knowing in advance and the transfiguration of negativity into redemption are untrue forms of resistance against deception. The justness of the image is preserved in the faithful pursuit of its prohibition.[24]

This passage is illuminative of both Horkheimer's theory of religion and the methodological approach of critical theory as formulated by Horkheimer and Adorno. The idea of absolute justice is protected by the steadfast opposition to any false absolutization of the finite. As Wiebrecht Ries observes, Horkheimer's "Jewish atheism," linked with the historical background of the prohibition of

images, assumes a boundary between the finite and the Infinite that is not to be trespassed. Finitude does not enclose, but excludes the Absolute. God is not revealed in the world, but is absent from it.[25] The postulation, therefore, of a positive Absolute from the standpoint of earthly existence is regarded as idolatry and as the acceptance of human bondage. Moreover, a religion which decides the question of ultimate human destiny in advance and proclaims the certainty or accomplishment of a reconciliation between human essence and existence is ideology.[26] The hope for redemption is preserved and expressed only through the critique of its idolatrous substitute, which can be found wherever the prohibition against naming God is violated. In this sense, enlightenment, as critical theory, is understood by Horkheimer and Adorno as the secularized form of Jewish monotheism.[27]

Horkheimer's attempt to preserve what he values as the truth of religion, the hope for an Infinite that relativizes the claims of the finite, becomes simultaneously, through the appropriation of the prohibition against idolatry, a component of the critique of ideology, whether the ideology appears in religious or secular form. The critique of ideology, as "secularized Jewish monotheism," continues the fight against idolatry in its political, as well as religious manifestations, and in doing so, makes explicit

the resistance against political absolutes and unjust social structures already implicit in Judaism and the very existence of the Jewish people in its objective meaning.[28] Thus, the Christian theologian, Jürgen Moltmann, recognizing the iconoclastic character of Horkheimer's longing for truth and justice, interprets his critical theory in fundamentally religious terms. Appraising Horkheimer's work, Moltmann notes, "He has criticized the religious idols of religion, and also the idols and the totalization which have appeared in capitalism, in nationalism and in established Marxism as true images of earlier religious idols."[29] Moltmann continues:

> [H]is critical theory is based on the presupposition that we do not know what God is. This is an old theological principle: Deus definiri nequit. His critical theory is therefore in essence a negative theology which prohibits images: it is critical, to the degree that it cannot be satisfied with any immanent idols and righteousnesses [sic], but seeks a universal beyond contradiction into which the subjects of society could enter without compulsion; it is negative, in so far as it cannot allow the validity of any positive definitions of God, whether these are dogmatic or secularized.[30]

According to Horkheimer's own accounts, the integra-

tion of originally religious contents into his thought was motivated by the concerns of his social theory. Considering the theological element in critical theory, he recalls:

> Reflecting on political systems taught us . . . that it was necessary, as Adorno has expressed it, "not to think of claims to the Absolute as certain and yet, not to deduct anything from the appeal to the emphatic concept of truth."
>
> The appeal to an entirely other (ein ganz Anderes) than this world had primarily a social-philosophical impetus.[31]

Furthermore, Horkheimer explicitly acknowledges the secular significance of the prohibitive Jewish principle for his social theory in an interview published in Der Spiegel in 1970, a few years before his death. In this interview, he suggests that the biblical interdiction against the depiction of God in images means that absolute good cannot be described, and states that what stimulates him is the challenge to apply this theological idea to a rational theory of society.[32]

The application of this principle to Horkheimer's social theory can be readily discerned in his abstention from speculations regarding the possible features of a free and rational society and from the formulation of a positive

code of ethics. Not only is it impermissible, in his view, to produce a positive objectification of God, but critical theory likewise consciously refrains from depicting the highest good in social terms, or, in other words, from projecting a positive utopia.[33] In this respect, Horkheimer and Adorno appear to be even more cautious than Marx,who at least in one instance permits himself to envision life in a communist utopia.[34] Horkheimer explains, in the following passage, critical theory's refusal to determine the good in immediate and positive terms.

> The Jewish prohibition against portraying God, or Kant's against straying into the noumenal world both recognize the absolute whose determination is impossible. This also applies to Critical Theory when it states that evil, primarily in the social sphere, but also in individuals, can be identified, but that the good can not. The concept of the negative--be it that of the relative or of evil--contains the positive as its opposite. Practically speaking, the denunciation of an act as evil at least suggests the direction a better one would take. The insistence on the difference in the truth of the two judgements rests on many elements. One of the most important of these lies in the relation to history, to time generally.

> Evil largely refers to the present; the good has to prove itself as such. To take confirmation for granted exceeds the capacities of the person making the judgement, represents the absolutization of a hypothesis--and this quite apart from the metaphysical impossibility which such absolutization involves. The critical analysis of society points to the prevailing injustice. The attempt to overcome it has repeatedly led to greater injustice. To torture a person to death is purely and simply an outrage; to save him, if possible, a human duty. If one wishes to define the good as the attempt to abolish evil, it can be determined. And this is the teaching of Critical Theory. But the opposite--to define evil by the good--would be an impossibility, even in morality.[35]

As this quotation suggests, the principle of the prohibition of images affects not only the content of critical theory--the judgements that it pronounces with respect to society and human conduct--but its method as well. This principle is interpreted by Horkheimer and Adorno as the original religious inception of the method of "determinate negation," the critical procedure which is necessary for the movement of authentic enlightenment, and

which they incorporate into a dialectical and materialistic mode of thought.[36]

The Feuerbachian-Marxian root of Horkheimer's theory and critique of religion can be distinguished through a brief comparision of Horkheimer's short essay, "Thoughts on Religion," originally published in 1935, and the opening section of Marx's "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," supplemented by other selected passages. Both thinkers interpret religion as a human product of historical, social processes, as the reflection in consciousness of secular, fundamentally economic relations. Thus, for example, Marx views the concept of God as signifying human self-estrangement in the theoretical realm, mirroring the worker's alienation from the product of his or her labour in the material realm.[37] Similarly, Horkheimer traces the image of perfect justice back to primitive exchange, suggesting that this religious idea developed through the extension of economically conditioned rules into the infinite.[38] Understoood as an intellectual outgrowth of material, historical factors, religion, for both Horkheimer and Marx, is a phenomenon that will disappear in the course of history in accordance with changes in the material realm--a process which Marx propels, and which Horkheimer calmly observes.[39]

The evaluation of the nature of religion is determined, for both men, by their shared concern for the

real emancipation of human beings. At this point, however, important differences emerge between the two thinkers. These differences highlight Horkheimer's development of Marx's conception in a later historical context.[40]

While Marx, like Horkheimer, recognizes in religion a combination of illusion and protest, unlike Horkheimer, he does not develop the theme of religion as protest.[41] Religion, for Marx, is primarily illusion; more precisely, it is human consciousness in both alienated and ideological form--alienated, because objectified products of the human imagination, as well as human qualities and potentialities, confront the human being as independent powers whose reification causes a divided consciousness, and ideological, because these intellectual constructions conceal and perpetuate material forms of domination that could be transcended through practical activity.[42] Both of these aspects of Marx's critique of religion can be found in the following lines:

> Man, who has found in the fantastic reality of heaven, where he sought a supernatural being, only his own reflection, will no longer be tempted to find only the <u>semblance</u> of himself--a non-human being--where he seeks and must seek his true reality. . . . Man is <u>the human world</u>, the state, society. This state, this society, produce

> religion which is an inverted world consciousness, because they are an inverted world. Religion is the general theory of this world, . . . its moral sanction, its solemn complement, its general basis of consolation and justification.[43]

Marx's critique of religion, following Feuerbach, seeks to translate "religious questions into self-conscious human form."[44] Going beyond Feuerbach, Marx's critique seeks the destruction of religion in order to direct attention toward the criticism and destruction of enslaving social conditions. In this sense, "the criticism of religion is the premise of all criticism."[45] Marx continues:

> The abolition of religion as the illusory happiness of men, is a demand for their real happiness. The call to abandon their illusions about their condition is a call to abandon a condition which requires illusions. The criticism of religion is, therefore, the embryonic criticism of this vale of tears of which religion is the halo. . . .The criticism of religion disillusions man so that he will think, act and fashion his reality as a man who has lost his illusions and regained his reason; so that he will revolve about himself as his own

> true sun. Religion is only the illusory sun about which man revolves so long as he does not revolve about himself.[46]

For Horkheimer, however, Marx's conception of the relations between society, religion, and the historical movement toward liberation, assessed from a later historical vantage point, is too simplistic. While Horkheimer does not overlook the ideological service that established religion has rendered to corrupt earthly powers, he is more sensitive than Marx to the essentially oppositional character of religion as a human expression of discontent with earthly destiny. He writes:

> The concept of God was for a long time the place where the idea was kept alive that there are other norms besides those to which nature and society give expression in their operation. Dissatisfaction with earthly destiny is the strongest motive for acceptance of a transcendental being. If justice resides with God, then it is not to be found in the same measure in the world. Religion is the record of the wishes, desires, and accusations of countless generations.[47]

In Horkheimer's view, then, religion cannot be simply

dismissed as a manifestation of alienated and ideological consciousness without significance for the struggle for human emancipation, for it is also a historical record of the legitimate hopes of a suffering humankind. "In its symbols," he observes, "religion places an apparatus at the disposal of tortured men through which they express their suffering and their hope."[48]

The fundamental hope for which religion has served as the repository is, in Horkheimer's theory, the longing for perfect justice. Horkheimer contends that the image of complete justice, although an illusion, cannot be eradicated even with critical social theory's replacement of religion as the appropriate form for the "productive . . . criticism of the status quo."[49] The materialist explanation of this religious image as a transcendental projection of economically determined rules does not, thereby, lead to its rejection. Rather, Horkheimer argues:

> [T]he urge to such a conceptual transcending of the possible, to this impotent revolt against reality, is part of man as he has been moulded by history. What distinguishes the progressive type of man from the retrogressive is not the refusal of the idea but the understanding of the limits set to its fulfillment.[50]

Just as Horkheimer is more attentive than Marx to the progressive content of religion, he is much less sanguine than Marx about the establishment of a just society in the future, which, in any case, could not compensate for the injustice of the past nor remove the natural causes of suffering.[51] Speaking of the theoretical materialist, he confesses:

> For all the optimism he has about changing situations, for all that he treasures the happiness which comes from solidarity among men and work for a changed society, he has a pessimistic streak as well. Past injustice will never be made up; the suffering of past generations receives no compensation.[52]

Horkheimer is therefore concerned to preserve in his critical theory those elements of religion which testify to the human longing for a happiness that transcends and relativizes conditions of existence, which, even if qualitatively improved, can never bring the goal of such a longing to realization. He thus concludes his concise essay with the following paragraph:

> Mankind loses religion as it moves through history, but the loss leaves its mark behind. Part of the

> drives and desires which religious belief preserved and kept alive are detached from the inhibiting religious form and become productive forces in social practice. In the process even the immoderation characteristic of shattered illusions acquires a positive form and is truly transformed. In a really free mind the concept of infinity is preserved in an awareness of the finality of human life and of the inalterable aloneness of men, and it keeps society from indulging in a thoughtless optimism, an inflation of its own knowledge into a new religion.[53]

As the foregoing passage indicates, Horkheimer's materialist interpretation of religion, which he received from Feuerbach and Marx and did not abandon even in his later years,[54] does not lead him to an indiscriminate denunciation of religion as falsehood in its entirety, since the concept of transcendence is to be retained for its critical social function in demarcating human limits. Nor does it result in an underestimation of the significance of religion as a factor in the process of social development. His highly differentiated, materialist analysis of religion is exemplified in his contribution to the Institute's Studien über Autorität und Familie, where he explains:

> Religion indeed derives its whole content through the psychic elaboration of earthly data, but in the process it acquires its own specific form, which in turn influences the psychic apparatus and destiny of men and is a reality within social evolution as a whole.[55]

What Horkheimer's theoretical approach does rebut, however, is the notion that spiritual phenomena constitute an independent realm of value and authority purportedly inaccessible to reason. The fundamental issue involved here is the problem of truth. Horkheimer explicitly opposes the schism in the bourgeois attitude toward truth, expressed in the prevalent coincidence of epistemological relativism and skepticism with respect to material reality on the one hand, and dogmatic faith in the intuition of metaphysical entities or essences on the other, or, more crudely, in the juxtaposition of positivistic philosophy and inquiries into spiritualist or supernatural phenomena. He finds commonplace the fact that a scholar who may be highly rigorous and critical in his or her own scientific field can echo the most uncritical opinions regarding social relationships that are assumed to be unalterable, and then resort to a faith in some eternal or transcendent meaning as compensation for the ostensibly intractable misery produced by the existing organization of society. The result of this

schism is that basic social conditions are left untouched by critical, rational methods, and "the role of human autonomy in the preservation and renewal of social life" is eroded.[56] This schism is particularly evident in the modern attitude toward religion; the primitive materialism ruling economic life is accompanied by the extreme internalization of religion, and Christianity's principle of opposition is sacrificed to the dominant reality.[57]

In order to transcend this antinomy, Horkheimer adopts the dialectical method of Hegel, which he describes as follows:

> Recognition of the conditional character of every isolated view and rejection of its absolute claim to truth does not destroy this conditional knowledge; rather, it is incorporated into the system of truth at any given time as a conditional, one-sided and isolated view. Through nothing but this continuous delimitation and correction of partial truths, the process itself evolves its proper content of knowledge of limited insights in their limits and connection.[58]

Especially important in Horkheimer's appropriation of Hegel's method is the recognition of the historical nature of knowledge and the principle of determinate negation, the

driving force of the dialectic. As David Held explains:

> The process whereby consciousness attempts to come to terms with the world around it involves continuous negation; that is, continuous criticism and reconstruction of the knowledge of subject and object and of their relation to one another. The development of consciousness through determinate negation consists precisely in the experience of surmounting old forms of consciousness and in incorporating these moments into a new reflective attitude.[59]

For Horkheimer, in contrast to Hegel, the dialectic is materialist and open-ended. A conclusive theory of reality and a suprahistorical concept of truth, derived from the concept of God, are rejected in favour of the view that human truth, as the correspondence of cognition with its object, is historical, and subject to redefinition and correction through insights gained from experience and practice. Such an understanding of truth avoids the error of dogmatism through its open-endedness and self-critique. To quote Horkheimer:

> There is no eternal riddle of the world, no world secret the penetration of which once and for all

> would be the mission of thought. . . .When the dialectic is freed of its connection with the exaggerated concept of isolated thought, self-determining and complete in itself, the theory defined by it necessarily loses the metaphysical character of final validity, the sanctity of a revelation, and becomes an element, itself transitory, intertwined in the fate of men.[60]

However, the inconclusive, or non-eternal, nature of truth does not entail a skeptical relativism, the opposite error of the dogmatism with which it is linked. If the relationship between concept and reality changes amid the dynamics of history, this recognition does not invalidate the knowledge gained from intellectual and practical activities; nor is the conviction surrendered that cognitions recognized as valid in the whole context to which they refer are true in general, and not merely for particular individuals and groups. As Horkheimer elaborates:

> To the degree that the knowledge gained from perception and inference, methodical inquiry and historical events, daily work and political struggle, meets the test of the available means of cognition, it is the truth. . . . At the same time as it . . .

> necessarily remains inconclusive and to that extent "relative," it is also absolute, since later correction does not mean that a former truth was formerly untrue. . . . The truth is also valid for him who contradicts it, ignores it, or declares it unimportant. Truth is decided not by what the individual believes and thinks of himself, not by the subject in itself, but by the relation of the propositions to reality. . . .[61]

Furthermore, since thought and being are not identical, the furtherance of the truth is dependent upon historical action and not simply upon conceptualization. Rejecting the notion of the cognizant subject as passive observer of a historical process that by itself guarantees the advancement of the truth, Horkheimer declares:

> Rather, the truth is advanced because the human beings who possess it stand by it unbendingly, apply it and carry it through, act according to it, and bring it to power against the resistance of reactionary, narrow, one-sided points of view. The process of cognition includes real historical will and action just as much as it does learning from experience and intellectual comprehension. The latter cannot progress without the former.[62]

These characteristics of Horkheimer's dialectical and materialist theory, which has as its goal the promotion of a more just and rational society, illuminate his approach to the subject of religion. "In dialectical thought," he writes, "religious pheonomena too are related to knowledge as a whole and judged at any given time in connection with the analysis of the whole historical situation."[63] The specific implication of this for the truth claims of religion, as of philosophy, is made clear in the following quotation:

> The claim that there is an absolute order and an absolute demand made upon man always supposes a claim to know the whole, the totality of things, the infinite. But if our knowledge is in fact not yet final, if there is an irreducible tension between concept and being, then no proposition can claim the dignity of perfect knowledge. Knowledge of the infinite must itself be infinite, and a knowledge which is admittedly imperfect is not a knowledge of the absolute.[64]

If this approach threatens religion by divesting it of its claims to the possession of an absolute truth, it is not without potentially positive consequences for social life. The attempt to extract conditional truths from ultimate

claims and to relate them, within the totality of knowledge accessible at a given time, to the historical situation contains the promise of extending the influence of religious ideas more widely in the secular sphere and society as a whole.[65] In a society in which religion as an institutional sphere has been marginalized, this approach may have the effect of liberating important religious elements from their confinement in that sphere, from their intellectual compartmentalization and practical devitalization within society, and thereby of rejuvenating them as effective factors in the historical struggle to shape a more truly human existence.

II. Critique of Religion

Horkheimer's critique of religion is primarily directed toward Christianity as that religion which has become dominant in Western culture over the last two thousand years. It refers to Christianity in general terms, although distinctions between Catholicism and Protestantism are occasionally made. This critique of religion has as its focus both negative aspects of the historical development of religion and certain theological trends and philosophical interpretations of religion. The former events represent the betrayal of Christianity's highest ideals in practice; the latter signify vain attempts

to resuscitate a dying cultural force. In both cases, what Horkheimer condemns is the loss of Christianity's potentially liberating content.[66]

The essence of Horkheimer's criticism of religion as a historical power is succinctly contained in the judgement, "The history of the old religions and schools like that of the modern parties and revolutions teaches us that the price for survival is practical involvement, the transformation of ideas into domination."[67] In Horkheimer's broad consideration of the history of Christianity, the root issue is precisely the changing relationship between its religious ideas and demands and its attitude toward earthly powers. Horkheimer expresses admiration for the early Christian movement whose members were persecuted for recognizing a higher authority than political power.[68] After its initial period of suppressed existence, however, the history of Christianity is viewed primarily as the history of the recurrent betrayal of its founder. Horkheimer argues, for example:

> If it was possible for the primitive Christians to follow the gospel without unconscious resistance, it was because they knew nothing except that heaven was open to them. But the closer their doctrine came to gaining absolute power, the more it had to conform to the requirements of self-preservation

> under existing conditions, to come to terms with the law of this world--though its main idea had been the relativity of this law--and to conclude the pact it has kept ever since. Darkness gained in importance. As evil became increasingly necessary for it to carry out its plans for this world, hell became increasingly important to it in its thinking of the world beyond.[69]

Paradoxically, Christianity's conformity to the requirements of self-preservation has not been the least significant factor in its historical demise. In Horkheimer's view, the attempt to reconcile the demands of the Gospels with those of earthly power has been a major concern of theology, and corresponding to this effort has been the reversal of its meaning and the enervation of its politically dangerous norms. Speaking of early Christianity, Horkheimer observes, "The man at the stake, on the gallows, on the cross was the symbol of Christianity."[70] However, self-preservation, the adaptation to society, required that the inspirational power of this symbol be neutralized. Concerning this, Horkheimer pointedly comments:

> Through the centuries, the Catholic and Protestant churches compensated the harm Christ and the prophets may have caused society, had they become

> models, by usurping their more dangerous doctrine, and thus kept men from imitating it, from discontinuing the worship of idols, from freeing the prisoners, from loving men. The church decorated halls of justice and torture chambers with the image of the man that was hanged as the leader, and gave its blessings to that barbarism Christ and the prophets longed not to be a part of, indeed to end, to flee and to redeem. The church is the measure by which mankind undertook to overcompensate for the experience of the hopeless misery of its existence, misery as a means of blessedness.[71]

In this false reconciliation of divine and earthly principles, Horkheimer perceives the ideological function of religion in society,as well as the degradation of religious ideals. Thus, he writes:

> In Catholicism God was already regarded as in certain respects the creator of the earthly order, while Protestantism attributed the world's course directly to the will of the Almighty. Not only was the state of affairs on earth at any given moment transfigured with the radiance of divine justice, but the latter was itself brought down to the level

of the corrupt relations which mark earthly life.[72]

It is worth emphasizing here one of the aspects of Horkheimer's critique of Christianity that is a fundamental characteristic of his thought as a whole, namely, his opposition to the identification of humane ideas with the determining forces of history, of goodness with power, and truth with empirical reality. "The good is good," asserts Horkheimer, "not because it is victorious but because it resists victory."[73] This principle of Horkheimer's can be connected with his interpretations of both Judaism and Christianity. Just as he finds in Jewish history and religion the refusal to acknowledge power as an argument of the truth, he sees in Jesus' association of the good with the lowest and the humble a non-conformism that runs counter to the theological tendency to identify the good with the highest.[74]

The greatest cultural achievements of a civilization shaped by Christianity cannot be disentangled from the domination practiced in the name of this same religion. The bloody Crusades, the Inquisition, and the witch-burnings are only the most terrible examples of this domination, the apostasy of Christian claims in practice.[75] Accordingly, Horkheimer remarks, "If the great had taken the conflict of Christianity and Christendom as seriously as Kierkegaard did in the end, there would exist no monument of Christian

culture."[76]

Following Horkheimer's account, the representatives of Christianity sought to reconcile or avoid the conflict. Scholasticism's attempt to harmonize the divine and earthly realms provided ideological support for medieval society, if, at the same time, it endowed the life of each person with a meaning. With the dissolution of the medieval order, Protestantism intervened to save Christianity by acknowledging its opposition to worldliness, but in such a way that its effective opposition was surrendered. Faith was segregated from reason, the business of everyday life from reference to the beyond, and the final criterion of moral conduct was thrown into obscurity. Consequently, states Horkheimer:

> In the end nobody knew what good works were. . . . The interest of the individual and the state became the criterion of action in this world. Whether the troops waded in the blood of peasants who had risen from hunger, or whether a man sacrificed himself out of political blindness to share his last bread with them, one action was as "Christian" as the other, provided each agent sincerely believed that he was following the Word.[77]

The privatization of religion and ethics, according to

Horkheimer, rendered them all the more susceptible to the prevailing rationality of self-preservation. While the Reformation introduced the idea of civil liberty, religion survived in the bourgeois era, largely due to the challenge of atheism, as an element of life that did not seriously disturb the underlying fierce competition between individuals and nations arising from the new economic system.[78] In this regard, Horkheimer scathingly remarks, "Bourgeois morality and religion are nowhere as tolerant as when they judge the life of the rich, and nowhere as strict as toward those that want to eliminate poverty."[79] Among the masses, privatized religion and morality served to internalize external compulsion through the agency of conscience, without, however, being able to retain the latter's connection with truly transcendent contents.[80] Divested of its objective normative content, religion became "compatible with every activity and every public practice that existed in this atheistic reality."[81] Especially threatening to the independence and integrity of Christianity during the last few centuries has been the idolatry of the state, religion's integration with, and subservience to collective power.[82]

Horkheimer's indictment of the ideological function of Christianity is nowhere more severe than when he speaks of its existence in capitalist society. To quote from a passage that was penned only a few years before Europe's

surrender to fascism:

> The gulf between the moral criteria Europeans have acknowledged since the advent of Christianity, and their real conduct, is immeasurable. . . . That Christians remain unruffled when confronted with the misery of others, that they do nothing to help where injustice is done to the powerless but themselves torture children and animals; that they calmly pass by the walls behind which misery and despair take their course because their interests must be furthered; that it is always a misfortune to fall into their hands; that in view of all this, they daily worship someone as their divine model who, they believe, sacrificed himself for humanity, this lie marks every step of European life. . . . It is not part of life in this civilization to take religion seriously. Non-religious values such as justice, freedom or truth are not taken seriously either. . . . Only the powerful have to be respected; the poor and powerless are worshipped in religion, i.e., in spirit, but mistreated in reality. . . . One must worship the Lord on his Cross and drag Him to the scaffold alive. If someone attacks Christianity in his speeches, he must be persecuted, but he must also be prevented

> from making it a reality. . . . The compromise between the implementation of religion and its inexpedient abolition is the reconciliation with God via the all-encompassing lie.[83]

The general course of the historical development of Christianity, culminating in the ideological form characteristic of modern society, as outlined above, constitutes a serious danger to what Horkheimer judges to be the most important social contribution of Christianity, namely, its principle of free subjectivity which has been decisive for the historical advancement and significance of the individual in the Western world and which represents a challenge to the authority of existing powers.[84] His recognition of the real value of Christianity is expressed when he writes, "Non-conformity, freedom, self-determined obedience to Someone Other than the status quo may be regarded as typically Christian realities."[85] This religiously grounded freedom contains, in Horkheimer's view, two essential elements that are united. One is the voluntary imitation of Christianity's founder, which he approves in the following passage:

> What empirical freedom means in the person who has been religiously educated (in the good sense) in comparison with the freedom of the person never

> touched by such training, is the capacity for dedication and for acting according to the model provided by the founder of Christianity; we see it concretely in those who have been martyrs of goodness.[86]

The second element, through which the first becomes actualized, and which is already implied in the preceding quotation, is the self-sacrificing love for other persons. Concerning the commandment of love for others, Horkheimer argues:

> In Christianity, the individual was to overcome and sublate himself by devoting and surrendering himself to the neighbor and the lowliest out of love for the Highest. To save egoism by pointing to the "as thyself" at the end of the commandment is merely a trick of sophistical theologians to ingratiate themselves with the existing order of things. The autonomy of the subject as the gospel understands it is the same as its negation.[87]

Following from this interpretation of religiously rooted freedom, its effect is non-conformity and resistance against the predominant course of society. Horkheimer asks:

> What is religion in the good sense? To sustain, not to let reality stifle, the impulse for change, the desire that the spell be broken, that things take the right turn. We have religion where life down to its every gesture is marked by this resolve.[88]

It is precisely this subjective freedom, without which Christianity is inconceivable and which Horkheimer regards as the "highest of freedoms," that is being extinguished in the submergence of the individual's identity in the collective and by the social processes linked to a technocratic rationality that leads toward a fully regulated world in which persons respond automatically to signals and commands.[89] Horkheimer is concerned to preserve this Christian substance as far as possible, and he is also aware of other philosophical and theological responses to the crises engendered for religion by the events of our century. He is highly critical, however, of those responses which appear to be mainly attempts to perpetuate an outmoded cultural form and which cannot really keep alive the religious elements of resistance against the threats of totalitarianism and mass manipulation.

One of these responses is the dogmatic assertion of traditional Christianity. Conservatives seek to preserve religious truth against enlightened, rational thought

through literal adherence to the Bible and theological tradition, but such a stance serves neither truth nor the needs of the present. In Horkheimer's view, "The truth of ideas is demonstrated not when they are held fast but when they are driven further."[90] At greater length, he argues:

> [T]he meaning behind spiritual attitudes can survive only if it can find a new expression which is adequate to changing historical reality. Fidelity to the old is not proved by repeating it but by giving it new expression in word and deed at each historical juncture. If it is to continue to have its original meaning, the traditional must ever anew take a form that is geared to the age and appropriate to it while also contradicting it. Fidelity that does not take the changing world into account is not fidelity at all.[91]

Beyond his objection to the conservative attempt to re-establish traditional Christianity on the grounds that it is an errant, if, perhaps on the part of some persons, a sincere endeavor to preserve religious truth, Horkheimer also regards this as a false return to religion for another reason. Traditional Christianity in modern society cannot avoid performing an ideological role in the service of unjust social relations. Just as the resuscitation of

religious belief in the beyond is used as a palliative for the failure of bourgeois society to provide the economic gratification that it promised, [92] so the revival of Christianity in Germany after Nazism represents the substitution of one heteronomy for another. Regarding the latter occurrence, Horkheimer comments:

> Rather than quite consciously bringing to fruition the Enlightenment into which religion had passed, rather than transforming the illusory freedom of the revolution into justice, western society has given up. The return to religion does not mean that it believes in heaven once again, but that it lacks belief in a better order for the world, that it wants nothing but itself. To transform oneself into something higher, to want oneself in another, is the substance of religion, and this society lost it when it made religion as something unchanging its cause. Something unchanging can be exchanged for another equally so, as happened in Germany with Arian [Aryan] Christianity, as happened in every nationalism. After the debacle, the rightists in Germany went back to being religious Christians, but they hadn't changed.[93]

Related to the rigidly conservative position of some

is the attempt by others to artificially revive old metaphysical systems as the foundation for deteriorating values, with the distinction that the latter attempt is marked by the effort to harmonize traditional philosophy, including Christian philosophical systems such as that of Thomas Aquinas, with modern science. Apart from the impossible conceptual difficulties involved, this process converts religious and philosophical ideas into pragmatic instruments for profane ends. "The absolute," states Horkheimer, "becomes itself a means, objective reason a scheme for subjective purposes, general as they may be."[94] The uncritical adaptation of old philosophies to the modern situation only further destroys the spiritual ideas that it wishes to rescue because it transforms them into an expedient ideological device in the service of the dubious purpose of dominating reality. It thus functions to promote conformism to current trends and to block critical, autonomous reason with the heteronomy of a dogmatic absolute.[95] Against this type of endeavor, Horkheimer asserts:

> [I]ntellectual loyalty, without which truth cannot exist, consists both in preserving past insights and contradicting and transforming them. Abstract formulations of the highest values are always adjustable to the practice of stake and guillotine.

> Knowledge really concerned with values does not look to higher realms. It rather tries to penetrate the cultural pretences of its time, in order to distinguish the features of a frustrated humanity. Values are to be disclosed by uncovering the historical practice that destroys them.[96]

If Horkheimer's criticism of the retreat into theological and philosophical conservatism is severe, his indictment of the modern liberalization of religion is equally so. He asks whether any substance remains in religion when even representatives of the church question the traditional belief in an omnipotent and benevolent God as the origin and goal of the universe, and supplant it with the conception that the divine comes to expression only in a community of people.[97] Certain Protestant theologians, in particular, such as John A.T. Robinson, avoid any conflict with science through the demythologization of traditional beliefs and biblical stories, and interpret the "transcendent" as the ultimate depth and meaning of finite relationships. They sacrifice theism for an anti-dogmatic attitude. Horkheimer's response to this type of theology cuts to the root of the matter:

> Truth--eternal truth outlasting human error--cannot

> as such be separated from theism. The only alternative is positivism, with which the latest theology is in accord irrespective of contradictions. . . . Without God one will try in vain to preserve absolute meaning. No matter how independent a given form of expression may be within its own sphere as in art or religion, and no matter how distinct and how necessary in itself, with the belief in God it will have to surrender all claim to being something objectively higher than a practical convenience. . . . While the latest Protestant theologians still permit the desperate to call themselves Christians, they subvert the dogma whose truth alone would give their words a meaning. The death of God is also the death of eternal truth.[98]

In Horkheimer's view, the modern liberalization of religion leads toward the end of religion. Liberal theology abandons the attempt to unify faith and knowledge; instead, it adapts to the social demands and views of the time. It cooperates with the current politics and makes concessions to a science that can say no more than that the earth is a small ball with a mouldy cover suspended in an infinite universe.[99] This type of theology forfeits Christianity's principle of opposition, leaving the individual at the mercy

of purely immanent intellectual and social forces, and in its effort to further the survival of religion, it unwittingly contributes to the latter's liquidation. Regarding the theological responses to our present world, Horkheimer concludes:

> Neither the claim of unchanged validity for the traditional nor its dissolution into symbolism . . . can escape the nationalist totalitarian threat abroad today. This if for no other reason than that each of these attitudes displays an intention of continuing to exist in an age that has advanced too far to turn the clock back.[100]

III. Constructive Theory of Religion

III. A. Normative Concept of Religion: Religion as Longing for the Wholly Other

Horkheimer's theory of religion represents a critical and faithful effort to preserve the essence of religion, at least as expressed in the Jewish and Christian traditions, in an age in which this essence is being forgotten and in which the future of humankind appears bleak. The content of his theory of religion is concisely summarized in the title given to a series of interviews published in 1970, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen. Religion, for Horkheimer,

means the longing for the wholly Other.[101] Furthermore, theology, as the expression of this longing, becomes an essential component of Horkheimer's social theory.[102]

Horkheimer's definition of religion as the longing for the wholly Other appears in substance at least as early as 1935, and is maintained in his final statements.[103] Gumnior and Ringguth argue that, from the beginning, Horkheimer's critical theory contains within it a desperate hope for the deliverance of the hopeless, and that it is consumed by the dialectic of the wholly Other.[104] Confirmation of this interpretation can be found in a noteworthy excerpt from a letter written to Horkheimer in 1935 by Adorno. In this letter, Adorno affirmed the hidden theology that he detected in one of Horkheimer's essays published in the preceding year. According to Adorno, the consequences of Horkheimer's "atheism"--in which he believed less, the more fully that it became explicated--coincided with those of his own theological intentions. It was particularly a passage speaking of the historian as the deliverer ("die Stelle über den Historiker als Retter") that grasped Adorno and suggested to him, not the expression of a new faith in revolutionary progress, but a veiled address to the hidden God as the sole reader of the history of human suffering.[105]

The concealed address to the absent God finds a later echo in the closing pages of Dialectic of Enlightenment, where Horkheimer and Adorno write:

> It is not the portrayal of reality as hell on earth but the slick challenge to break out of it that is suspect. If there is anyone today to whom we can pass the responsibilities for the message, we bequeath it not to the "masses," and not to the individual (who is powerless), but to an imaginary witness--lest it perish with us.[106]

The appeal to an imaginary witness in this passage is the antecedent to that which is expressed, in Horkheimer's later writings, as the longing for the wholly Other.

In Horkheimer's view, religion is to be explained with reference to the social and natural conditions of human existence--injustice, misery, and death. The longing for perfect justice and happiness is a protest against these conditions, and the appeal to a transcendent being or the acceptance of a transcendent order of reality rests entirely upon human hopes.[107] The materialist explanation of religion does not negate these hopes, but it does invalidate any assurance that they will ultimately be realized. Horkheimer's theory of religion rescues the idea of the Transcendent without claiming the Transcendent as a certain reality.

III. B. The Question of God and the Refusal of Positive Symbols

This characteristic mark of Horkheimer's thought is clearly expressed in his discussion of the question concerning the existence of God. In dialectical thought, this question is simultaneously important and unimportant. It is important, because behind all genuinely human conduct stands theology; it is unimportant, because there can be no human knowledge of God, in spite of the dogmatic claims of theology.[108] Nevertheless, Horkheimer maintains that without knowing anything of the Infinite, we can recognize our own finitude in suffering and death, in our abandonment. This consciousness, however, does not prove the existence of God, but can only call forth the hope that there is a positive Absolute, an affirmative presence that may fulfill the longing for messianic redemption.[109]

In view of the immense suffering and injustice in this world, Horkheimer finds belief in the dogma of the existence of an omnipotent and benevolent God impossible. The knowledge of human abandonment is possible only through the thought of God, but not through any absolute certainty of God, which would make the consciousness of our abandonment fraudulent.[110] Horkheimer thus rejects every possible theodicy, not only on epistemological grounds, but also because of the depreciation of individual suffering implicit

in theodicies.[111] Evidence of this can be found already in Horkheimer's early work, where the futility of history is seen through the finitude of people. In this regard, he asserts, "Aber der Tod ist theoretisch auf keine Weise 'sinnvoll' zu machen; vielmehr erweist sich an ihm die Ohnmacht aller sinngebenden Metaphysik und jeder Theodizee."[112] Indeed, the endeavor to bestow upon evil a theological justification is what distinguishes religion in the bad sense. It is the perverted form of the impulse for change, observes Horkheimer, "as affirmation, prophecy, that gilds reality in the very act of castigating it. It is the lie that some earthly or heavenly future gives evil, suffering, horror, a meaning."[113]

The desolate solitariness of humankind is a recurrent theme of the notes collected in Dawn and Decline, and Horkheimer finds unconvincing both the traditional arguments for the existence of God and those of a modern, negative theology which attempt to establish a positive Absolute precisely on the basis of the recognition of the limitations of human knowledge and the contingency of this world. He writes, for example:

> There is no metaphysics; a positive assertion about an absolute is not possible. But statements about the contingency, finiteness and pointlessness of the visible world can be made. The criteria of

necessity, infinity, meaningfulness still implicit in such negations, however, cannot then be taken to guarantee the existence of the eternal in man's mind, as Kant did. Those criteria are themselves nothing but human ideas. Even the concept of an absolutely just and benevolent authority before which the darkness of this world, its viciousness and filth would pass away, and the kindness unrecognized and trampled by men might still prevail and triumph, is a human thought which will die and be scattered with those who conceived it. . . . Perhaps a powerless and tortured existence that was full of kindness is not lost, perhaps it has an eternal tomorrow. We don't know. But neither can we know whether kindness may not walk in hell instead of in paradise in the future, and whether the government of eternity is not really as bad as it appears here below. The contingency of the world and our knowledge of it, or the impossibility of metaphysics, expresses itself in the fact that all statements that transcend the temporal are equally justified or equally unjustified. . . . The senselessness of the world belies metaphysics, or rational interpretation. . . . Kindness and justice do not dwell in the universe, the universe is unfeeling and remorseless. . . . Mankind is utterly

alone.[114]

Horkheimer emphatically maintains that we cannot predicate anything of God; in speaking of the Absolute we can only declare that the world in which we live is a relative one. This judgement is derived not only from Horkheimer's radical appropriation of the principle of the prohibition of images, but also from the recognition that any representation of the Transcendent contradicts Immanuel Kant's insight, which Horkheimer accepts, that all understanding is indebted to the intellectual functions of the subject and is therefore to be understood as a questionable moment of appearance.[115] The hypostatization of human concepts into metaphysical entities, whether of a positive, or a negative character, as in the concept of nothingness, is impermissible; for Horkheimer, the only justifiable transcendence of empirical reality lies in the theologically rooted yearning for a wholly Other than this world.[116] Ultimate truth cannot be translated into human speech.

Precisely at this point a significant disagreement arises between Horkheimer and Tillich. According to Horkheimer, while Tillich shares the conviction of orthodox Jewish thought that God cannot be adequately known, and while he and Tillich agree that critical conduct in relation to reality as it exists is necessary for the appearance of

truth, there remains a fundamental difference between them. Horkheimer resolutely maintains that God and the beyond cannot be spoken of directly, while Tillich retains the theological conviction that the beyond represents justice--an article of faith that Horkheimer seriously doubts and with respect to which he can share only the nostalgia, not Tillich's optimism.[117]

This simultaneous affirmation of, and opposition to Tillich's thought on the part of Horkheimer is especially pronounced in his evaluation of Tillich's symbolic interpretion of religion. On the one hand, Horkheimer views Tillich's attempt to save religion through its symbolic, non-literalistic interpretation as an important step in the struggle to preserve Western culture, and as a more adequate reconciliation of knowledge and proclamation than Martin Luther's teaching on faith.[118] On the other hand, however, Horkheimer cannot follow Tillich to the point of making symbolic statements about God. He refuses to speak symbolically unless he knows what the symbol represents. "Ein Symbol," he argues,"von dem man nicht ahnt, wofür es Symbol ist, entbehrt des Wichtigsten, nämlich der Bedeutung."[119] Since, according to Horkheimer, God is, in principle, unknowable--the meaning of the Absolute is inaccessible--he can speak only of the longing that the ground of the world may be benevolent and omnipotent, and that the horror of this world not be final. The symbolic

interpretation of religion, which goes beyond the boundary that Horkheimer heeds, achieves a reconciliation of knowledge and faith, but through the sacrifice of meaning, which Horkheimer challenges when he asks:

> What is a symbol whose symbolic meaning no one knows? . . . If a symbolic content can be the object of thought, then it can be expressed; otherwise a symbol becomes a sign of everything and therefore of nothing.
>
> Symbolic interpretation is an escape route which the despairing take without admitting their despair to themselves.[120]

The dilemma encountered by Horkheimer is that he does not wish to abandon the idea of the Absolute, and, at the same time, he finds it inadmissible to articulate a positive conception of the Absolute even in symbolic terms. His only recourse is to express a longing for the Absolute as the negation of the earthly state of affairs, which, itself, represents the negation of true humanity. In this respect, critical theory resembles a protest at the Wailing Wall, voiced in conflict with God over a ruptured and corrupt earthly existence, and yet, expressing the yearning for an unimaginable redemption.[121]

For Horkheimer, in contrast to Hegel, the negation of

the negation of our humanity is not automatically to be construed as a positive.[122] In his view, a theology which assumes that justice will prevail in the end allies itself with positivism in making its peace with the world as it exists.[123] This is exactly what Horkheimer refuses to do. He insists upon a relentless mindfulness of misery and evil that refutes every claim to justice as long as a single instance of injustice remains, upon facing with open eyes the unreconciled in history.[124] In this vein, he counsels:

> To be conscious of the untold, horrible physical and psychological pain, and particularly physical torture which is suffered at every moment in penitentiaries, hospitals, slaughterhouses, behind walls and in full view the world over, to see all this means to live with open eyes. Without such awareness, every decision is blind, every sure step is a misstep, every happiness untrue. But happiness and truth, like truth and grief, are one. This is what Christianity means where it is not betrayed by its mindless adherents.[125]

Horkheimer's refusal to depict a positive Absolute and acknowledge a guaranteed redemption reflects, in part, an unswerving fidelity to an abandoned and suffering humankind--a fidelity that is shaped by both the

internalization of historical, Jewish experience and Arthur Schopenhauer's ethic of compassion.[126] True images of redemption may be uncovered only in the resistance against unredeemed reality. In the words of Horkheimer and Adorno:

> There is only one expression for the truth: the thought which denies injustice. . . . But however true it may be that there are no words which cannot be used in the service of lies, goodness does not appear through these words but only in the obduracy of thought against the ruling power. Uncompromising hatred for the terror wrought on the least being provides the basis for the legitimate gratitude felt by those who are spared. The appeal to the sun is idolatry. The sight of the burning tree inspires a vision of the majesty of the day which lights the world without setting fire to it at the same time.[127]

In the full recognition of the negative in human existence lies the only genuine anticipation of a positive Absolute that still remains solely a hope.

III. C. True Religion and Human Solidarity Against Injustice

The denial of the certainty of the existence of God does not, according to Horkheimer, signal the end of religion and theology. Rather, theology remains vitally important for Horkheimer, not as the knowledge of God, but as the consciousness that the world is appearance and not absolute truth or ultimate reality. In his concept of theology, he attempts to preserve the hopes of religion by divesting them of their dogmatic form.[128] He defines theology, not as a recourse to the traditional doctrine of God, but as a psychic foundation for the unappeasable longing for justice.[129] For Horkheimer, theology is the expression of the hope that earthly injustice may not be the last word, of the wish that the murderer may not triumph over the innocent victim.[130]

Concerning religion, however, Horkheimer never altered his judgement that contemporary debates within the churches could not return religion to its former position as a vital reality in social life. Without discrediting in any way the efforts of some theologians to transform the churches into critical social institutions, Horkheimer nonetheless maintained that religion could not be secularized without being lost. He reaffirmed in his later years the following words that he had penned in exile: "Good will, solidarity

with wretchedness, and the struggle for a better world have now thrown off their religious garb."[131] Nor could religion recover its social function by retrieving its status as an authority issuing commands and prohibitions.[132]

According to Horkheimer, what remains for religion at this historical juncture is to make people conscious of the fact that they are finite beings, that they must suffer and die, and that against these realities there exists the longing that this earthly order may not be final.[133] Accordingly, Horkheimer would like the existing confessions to undertake an authentic liberalization of religion by reflecting seriously upon the judgement that while experienced reality is not ultimate, the Absolute is unknown. This would entail a revision of the conception of God from an object of knowledge and possession to one of human yearning and honor, and would express a hope rather than a dogma.[134]

Irrespective of the churches' response to Horkheimer's counsel, religion as the longing for perfect justice remains a necessary component of human life because its goal can never be realized within history. As Horkheimer writes, "For even if a better society develops and eliminates the present disorder, there will be no compensation for the wretchedness of past ages and no end to the distress in nature."[135] Whether even religion understood in this sense could survive, however, seemed to Horkheimer, in his later

years, extremely uncertain in view of the danger to the longing for a qualitatively better world constituted by quantitative progress and the predominance of purely positivistic thought. He was increasingly of the opinion that one should not speak of the longing, but rather of the fear that there may be no God, as if to strengthen resistance against the supremacy of the finite through accentuating the stress on the negative and the awareness of human abandonment.[136]

Horkheimer's pessimism, which contains both historical and metaphysical aspects, does not lead him to despair. The awareness of human abandonment and the longing that this may not be final provide a motive for a possible human solidarity. Because we all must suffer and die, Horkheimer posits an original human interest in creating a world in which the lives of all would be better and less miserable, and which would be more favourable for the development of the human spirit. Even if a totally administered world should develop out of the present historical forces, the longing for the Absolute may still linger, since the satisfaction of material needs could bring the reality of human finitude to consciousness in a particular way, and thereby also produce a true, human solidarity.[137] In the present, religion, as Horkheimer conceives it, embodies an important unitive function and belongs necessarily to human culture as a force of resistance against the world as it

appears. As he declares, "Die Sehnsucht hingegen, daß die Wirklichkeit der Welt mit all ihrem Grauen kein Letztes sei, vereint and verbindet alle Menschen, die sich mit dem Unrecht dieser Welt nicht abfinden wollen und können."[138]

In Horkheimer's view, the solidarity of those who share this longing supersedes the differences between believers and unbelievers. The continuation of religious customs, therefore, becomes a relatively unimportant matter, because the people who share this longing have the deeper conviction that what prevails is unjust and the duty of a common practice in keeping this longing alive.[139] Several decades earlier, Horkheimer expressed a similar judgement when he wrote:

> The complex of historical tasks which is decisive for an illusion-free and progressive attitude today does not divide people primarily on the basis of their religious preference. Groups and individuals may be characterized more quickly today on the basis of their particular interest . . . or lack of interest in just conditions which promote the free development of human beings, in the abolition of conditions of oppression which are dangerous to and unworthy of mankind, than by their relation to religion.[140]

III. D. Theism and Atheism

Horkheimer's endeavor to bridge the gulf between believers and unbelievers in order to promote a solidarity among all persons who share the longing that injustice and misery may not be the final verdict of history is connected with his evaluation of the changing historical meanings of the terms "theism" and "atheism." He is as critical of the latter as he is of the former when it no longer signifies opposition to oppression but becomes an innocuous belief compatible with the existing order. Just as he rejects religion as a false consolation for human abandonment in this world, he exposes the palliating effect of an atheism that serves as a surrogate for religion.[141] The ritual observances that have lost their meaning in privatized religion have their counterpart in the "pointless negation" of an atheism that has lost the force of meaningful dissent.[142] Horkheimer refuses to adopt the position of a dogmatic atheist, to proclaim atheism as a dogma--a refusal that receives clarification in the following passage from the early 1960s:

> The opposition between theism and atheism has ceased to be actual. Atheism was once a sign of inner independence and incredible courage, and it continues to be one in authoritarian or

semi-authoritarian countries where it is regarded as a symptom of the hated liberal spirit. But under totalitarian rule of whatever denomination, which is nowadays the universal threat, its place tends to taken by honest theism. Atheism includes infinitely many different things. The term "theism" on the other hand is definite enough to allow one to brand as a hypocrite whoever hates in its name. . . . Both of them have been responsible for good and evil throughout the history of Europe, and both of them have had their tyrants and their martyrs. . . .Those who professed themselves to be atheists at a time when religion was still in power tended to identify themselves more deeply with the theistic commandment to love one's neighbour and indeed all created things than most adherents and fellow-travellers of the various denominations. Such selflessness, and such a sublimation of self-love into love of others had its origin in Europe in the Judaeo-Christian idea that truth, love and justice were one, an idea which found expression in the teachings of the Messiah. The necessary connection between the theistic tradition and the overcoming of self-seeking becomes very much clearer to a reflective thinker of our time than it was to the critics of religion in by-gone

> days. . . . The meanings of the two concepts do not remain unaffected by history, and their changes are infinitely varied. . . .Nowadays atheism is in fact the attitude of those who follow whatever power happens to be dominant, no matter whether they pay lip-service to a religion or whether they can afford to disavow it openly. On the other hand, those who resist the prevailing wind are trying to hold on to what was once the spiritual basis of the civilization to which they still belong.[143]

The latter group, in Horkheimer's judgement, represents the true guardians of the essence of religion.

IV. The Necessity of Theology and the Question of Its Disappearance

If the essence of religion should finally become extinguished from human consciousness, the consequences for personal and social life would be momentous, for, in Horkheimer's view, morality, meaning, and the limited autonomy of the individual are inseparably connected with the longing for the Absolute. Concerning the contempt for reason as anything more than an instrumental faculty and the concomitant collapse of individuality and morality, Horkheimer wrote during the Second World War, "Morality has survived insofar as men are conscious that the reality to

which they yield is not the right one."[144] Without the yearning for an Other entailed by a self-transcending concept of reason, this lingering remnant of morality must necessarily perish. Horkheimer explains the implications for morality of the strict instrumentalization of reason:

> Justice, equality, happiness, tolerance, all the concepts that . . . were in preceding centuries supposed to be inherent in or sanctioned by reason, have lost their intellectual roots. They are still aims and ends, but there is no rational agency authorized to appraise and link them to an objective reality. Endorsed by venerable historical documents, they may still enjoy a certain prestige, and some are contained in the supreme law of the greatest countries. Nevertheless, they lack any confirmation by reason in its modern sense. Who can say that any one of these ideals is more closely related to truth than its opposite? According to the philosophy of the average modern intellectual, there is only one authority, namely, science, conceived as the classification of facts and the calculation of probabilities. The statement that justice and freedom are better in themselves than injustice and oppression is scientifically unverifiable and

> useless. It has come to sound as meaningless in itself as would the statement that red is more beautiful than blue, or that an egg is better than milk.[145]

In his final years, Horkheimer emphatically repeats that, from the standpoint of positivism, one cannot derive any ethics or moral politics, since positivistic thought finds no transcendent authority to distinguish between good and evil. On the basis of positivism, infamy can be as rational as honesty, if criminal law does not decree otherwise. All attempts to establish morality upon the foundation of earthly wisdom rest upon illusions of harmony, and this applies also to Kant's identification of the categorical imperative with practical reason. In Horkheimer's view, all genuinely human, or moral conduct, at least in the West, is rooted in nothing else but the cultural tradition, and in the final analysis, in the scriptural word and theology. Consequently, even the most skillful politics remains mere business, if it does not preserve a theological moment in itself. The thought that the neighbour is to be loved loses its logical foundation with the last trace of theology.[146] Reason without hope for an Other that relativizes the finite and a strictly technologically determined progress abandons itself to the instrumentalism perfected in Auschwitz, and allows the

perpetuation of the human coldness without which the extermination camps would not have been possible.[147]

The grounding of moral conduct in theology does not, of course, mean for Horkheimer that ethical action can appeal to God, for, in his view, it is impermissible to go so far as to assert that there is a God. Hence, human beings can only act with the inner feeling, or subjective longing, that there may be a God who guarantees perfect justice. Horkheimer identifies this longing as one source of morality.[148] A second source is to be found in an analysis of love and friendship. When one performs an action for the benefit of another person, one's own life is enriched by the happiness that this action brings forth in the other. Again, the expectation of personal reward from a higher authority is not necessary in order to qualify an action as moral.[149] These grounds of morality contain Horkheimer's corrective to the original sin--the affirmation of one's own self and the negation of other individuals.[150]

According to Horkheimer, the reference to the Transcendent is intended to surpass the scope of existing reality and to help liberate reason from its operational-functional confinement.[151] At the same time, he perceives the historical tendencies of the present age as moving in the direction of a totally administered world in which the theological, the serious consideration of the relationship between the Absolute and the relative, will be

abolished. If such a world should come to fruition, what we call "meaning" will also disappear, and senseless, dull activity will rule. Horkheimer already witnesses the erosion of all ideas that speak of transcendence--positivism destroys every other type of reason--and argues that the further technical progress advances, the more endangered is not only the belief, but also the true longing for the Other. Serious philosophy and theology are coming to an end, and one day will be regarded as a childhood concern of the human species. In the process of renouncing all transcendent strivings and all hopes for a paradisiacal future, however, the species is purging itself of spirit, mind, and reason itself.[152]

What is true of ethical conduct and the meaning connected with a self-transcending concept of reason applies also to human autonomy. With the liquidation of theology in Horkheimer's sense of the term, the individual as a free and responsible subject loses its theoretical support. Horkheimer's diagnosis of modern social trends documents the decline of the significance of the individual subject in monopolistic-capitalistic societies and its oppression under more overtly authoritarian regimes.[153] In Horkheimer's view, the true individual is the one who identifies with the persecuted, and who consciously defies conformity in order to establish a human solidarity upon which the individual as a real subject depends.[154] This independence of the

individual, along with genuine solidarity, is constantly diminishing.

Of all the manifestations of the regression of freedom that Horkheimer observes, he regards "as decisive the shift of subjectivity from the individual to the collectivity," which he elaborates as follows:

> In every area of life, even those in which . . . a man reacts as an individual, he thinks of himself as a member, a representative, of a group. . . . What happens in society shows its full effects in those who are caught up in the process. Reality forces them to experience their true significance in the social whole. The ideas which can relativize such experience are, in the last analysis, inseparable from theology, and as they fade, the world of numbers is becoming the only valid one; the cultural era in which the individual subject was still unique has come to an end.[155]

If Horkheimer is correct in his prognosis that the individual is becoming nothing more than an atomized component of a fully regulated mass, a number in the administrative system, then human autonomy will have been a transitory project, stillborn under the suffocation of the merely immanent. Where people still speak seriously,

however, of ideas that contain transcendent projections, they are concerned with the truth which theology once signified and which science ignores. In Horkheimer's words:

> They are concerned, that is, with what lies under or behind the world which Kant regards as pure phenomenon, with the Absolute which transcends the reality whose existence depends on the mind. Man is told not to stray into such spheres. But if he obeys the prohibition (which Kant himself transgressed), he surrenders the very longing for lack of which he will, in the last analysis, lose his vaunted autonomy.[156]

The necessity of theology, in Horkheimer's sense, for morality, meaning, and human autonomy reveals the irreplaceable social function of this theology--its relativization of empirical existence and its opposition to the absolutization of the finite. Only the longing for the wholly Other can ground resistance against the degeneration of ethical conduct into action based upon pragmatic calculation, against the eradication of the desire for a meaning that transcends the merely given by a pervasive positivistic mentality, and against the complete dissolution of the individual's freedom in a fully regulated society or in the idolatry of the collective. Thus, it should not be

difficult to understand why critical theory contains, as Horkheimer expressed it, at least a thought of the theological, of the Other.[157] Critical theory does not, thereby, abandon the attempt to create a more rational and just society, but it recognizes that a comparatively just order in an increasingly regulated world is paid for with a restriction of freedom and is not the ultimate. While religious beliefs, such as the resurrection of the dead, the last judgement, and eternal life, are negated as dogmas, they are retained as demythologized ideas manifesting the need of people for absolute justice and infinite happiness--a need that becomes fully evident and stands in marked contrast to bad earthly relations.[158]

Just as Horkheimer affirmed the theological component of critical theory, he likewise considered it to be an essential constituent of any serious philosophy. In a televised dialogue concerning the work of Tillich, Horkheimer stated that he could not affirm any philosophy that did not carry within it a theological moment. As he emphasized, it is a matter of recognizing that the world in which we live is to be interpreted as a relative one, and philosophical endeavors which are not conscious of this principle are not really philosophical at all.[159]

Without the thought of the Other, enlightenment turns into its opposite. In this vein, Horkheimer and Adorno warn, "The denial of God contains an irremediable

contradiction: it negates knowledge itself."[160] Horkheimer returns to this insight in a later essay and elaborates, "Without the notion of truth and what guarantees it, there can be no knowledge of its opposite, the abandonment of men, because of which true philosophy is critical and pessimistic; indeed, there cannot even be the sorrow without which joy is impossible."[161]

In the judgment of Ries, the power, greatness, and dignity of Horkheimer's, and Adorno's, negative philosophy is constituted by the fact that it returns to philosophy the passion of the religious, as grounded in the antinomy of hope and doubt--a passion that had been displaced by modern thought and feeble-minded optimism.[162] Yet, because of the very characteristics that Ries praises, Horkheimer's philosophy has not received the serious recognition that it deserves, at least in non-theological circles.[163] In his interview with Mansilla, Horkheimer suggested that the antagonistic reaction to his discussion of the Transcendent--the criticisms from the orthodox left as well as the reproach of positivistically oriented science on the right--indicates, above all, how far the advance of a strictly instrumental reason reaches and how close we have come to the end of truly serious philosophy. Accordingly, he asserted that the task of critical theory at this historical point must be to defend the positive moments of the past, and, even if futile, to call to memory the goal of

human emancipation as first conceived by the Enlightenment.[164]

In spite of, or rather, because of his determination to confront undeviatingly the negative in human existence, Horkheimer never despaired of the hope of resistance. Shortly after the Holocaust, Horkheimer affirmed the hope that arises out of negativity when he wrote:

> The anonymous martyrs of the concentration camps are the symbols of the humanity that is striving to be born. The task of philosophy is to translate what they have done into language that will be heard, even though their finite voices have been silenced by tyranny.[165]

As he watched with foreboding the advance of a new era in the final decades of his life, his thoughts again returned to those who have protested against the course of history:

> There remains the hope that, in the period of world history which is now beginning, the period of docile masses governed by clocks, some men can still be found to offer resistance, like the victims of the past and, among them, the founder of Christianity.[166]

Notes

[1] Max Horkheimer, "Materialism and Metaphysics," in Critical Theory: Selected Essays [from Zeitschrift für Sozialforschung, 1932-1941], trans. Matthew J. O'Connell and Others (New York: Continuum-Herder and Herder, 1972), p. 23.

[2] See H.C.F. Mansilla, "Zwei Begegnungen in der Schweiz: Gedanken aus Gesprächen mit Max Frisch und Max Horkheimer," Frankfurter Hefte, 28, No. 4 (1973), 239-40.

For additional references to the left-wing consternation regarding Horkheimer's views on religion, see Hans-Joachim Birkner, "Max Horkheimer," in Die Religion der Religionskritik, ed. Wilhelm Schmidt (München: Claudius Verlag, 1972), pp.80-81; Wiebrecht Ries, "Die Rettung des Hoffnungslosen: zur 'theologia occulta' in der Spätphilosophie Horkheimers und Adornos," Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung, 30, No. 1 (1976), 70; and Helmut Gumnior, Vorwort, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen: Ein Interview mit Kommentar von Helmut Gumnior, by Max Horkheimer (Hamburg: Furche-Verlag H. Rennebach, 1970), p.5.

[3] See Ernst Ludwig Ehrlich, "Max Horkheimers Stellung zum Judentum," Emuna, 8, No. 6 (1973), 459.

In this short essay, Ehrlich seeks to demonstrate in what way Horkheimer's thought is rooted in Judaism, and suggests (pp. 457-458) that the late discovery of his bonds with Judaism by many may be attributable to the largely unknown, pluralistic diversity of Judaism, in which the thought of someone like Horkheimer also has its legitimate place.

[4] See Walter Strolz, "Sinnfragen nichtglaubender Juden," Frankfurter Hefte, 31, No. 3 (1976), 26-27.

[5] Rudolf J. Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion: The Relative and the Transcendent (Washington: University Press of America, 1979), p. ix. See also pp. 8-9, 20.

Many points of Siebert's analysis in this book can be found in shorter form in his earlier article, "Horkheimer's Sociology of Religion," Telos, 30 (Winter 1976-77), 127-44.

[6] Mansilla, p. 240, refers to a distinction, overlooked by some of Horkheimer's critics, between Horkheimer's longing for justice and a religious conversion.

For a brief discussion of the development of religious

themes in Horkheimer's thought over the course of his life and some of the relevant factors contributing to this process, see Birkner, pp. 85-89. Birkner is correct in suggesting that the development of Horkheimer's thought on religion is to be interpreted not as a radical shift in his position, but as the outgrowth of a critical social analysis sensitive to the movement of history, and thus in connection with his interpretation of the present and his vision of the future. In this regard, see also Georg Wolff and Helmut Gumnior, "Auf das Andere hoffen," Der Spiegel, 5 Jan. 1970, pp. 76, 78, a prefatory article to an interview given by Horkheimer which intensified the controversy surrounding him and the attacks against him. The complete publication of this interview, or rather, series of conversations, can be found in Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 54-89.

[7] See Max Horkheimer, "Threats to Freedom," in Critique of Instrumental Reason: Lectures and Essays since the End of World War II, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell and Others (New York: Continuum-Seabury, 1974), p. 150.

[8] See Helmut Gumnior and Rudolf Ringguth, Max Horkheimer in Selbstzeugnissen und Bilddokumenten, ed. Kurt and Beate Kusenberg, Rowohlts Monographien (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt Taschenbuch Verlag, 1973), p. 86.

[9] See Max Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," in Critique of Instrumental Reason, p. 49.

[10] See Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, p.ix et passim.

In this study, pp. 1-2, Siebert rightly observes that what is crucial for Horkheimer's theory of religion is the dialectical relationship between the relative and the transcendent.

[11] Julius Carlebach, Karl Marx and the Radical Critique of Judaism (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1978), p. 254, also postulates a fusion of Marxism and Judaism in Horkheimer's thought, although he tends to view this as a late phase in Horkheimer's theoretical development.

Regarding the relationship between the Jewish descent of the majority of its members and the radical social theory of the original Institut für Sozialforschung in Frankfurt (subsequently referred to as the Institute), see Martin Jay, The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923-1950 (Boston: Little, Brown, 1973), pp. 31-35. While Jay points out that the Institute's members tended to deny any significance to their Jewish ethnicity in relation to the

development of their ideas, he also suggests several ways in which their Jewish roots may be indirectly discernible in their work. As far as Horkheimer is concerned, certainly in the years following the period treated in Jay's account, Horkheimer acknowledged explicitly the influence of particular contents of Judaism on his work, especially on his theory of religion, but this influence can be found already in his earlier work.

[12] See Ehrlich, p. 458.

Concerning the link between Horkheimer's longing for justice and the Jewish tradition, see also Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, pp. 28-29; and Gumnior and Ringguth, pp.9, 42, 100. Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 7, 9, 17-18, 20, find this concern for justice expressed early in Horkheimer's life, quoting from a private letter written by him in 1916 at the age of twenty-one, as well as from journal entries of the same period, prior to his identification as a Marxist.

[13] See Gumnior and Ringguth, pp.45, 85.

On the question of a hidden theology in the work of Horkheimer and Adorno, see also Ries, pp. 69-70. In this regard, it should be noted that Horkheimer expresses already in his early writings the conviction that absolute justice cannot be realized in history; like absolute truth, it is unthinkable. See Max Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline: Notes 1926-1931 and 1950-1969, trans. Michael Shaw (New York: Continuum-Seabury, 1978), p. 32. (The first part of this work, Dämmerung, was originally published in Zurich in 1934 under the author's pseudonym of Heinrich Regius.)

[14] Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 206.

[15] Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 196.

See also Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 125-26, where they connect this relationship between suffering and hope with the principle that truth is revealed in negativity.

[16] Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, p. 28. See also p. 29.

For another characterization of Horkheimer's critical theory as "unhappy consciousness" (unglückliches Bewußtsein), see Gumnior and Ringguth, p.84.

[17] Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, pp. 221-22.

[18] Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, trans. John Cumming (orig. German ed., 1944; New York: Continuum-Herder and Herder, 1972), p. 199.

With reference to this passage, Gumnior and Ringguth, p. 90, argue that critical theory is determined by the

mindfulness of reconciliation.

[19] Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 133.

[20] Max Horkheimer, Foreword, The Dialectical Imagination, p. xii.

[21] See Ehrlich, p. 458; and Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, pp. 13, 20.

The biblical formulation of this prohibition can be found in Exodus 20:3-5. In connection with this prohibition, Ehrlich, on the same page, refers to the comparatively rare speculation in Judaism concerning the nature of God, and the secondary status of the concept of faith in relation to the emphasis on human conduct, characteristics that Horkheimer shares with the tradition. See also Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 57-59; and Charles Davis, Theology and Political Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), p. 136. These latter two sources also note Horkheimer's opinion that Judaism, with its primary emphasis on human action rather than belief, is closer to Catholicism than to Protestantism.

[22] See Strolz, pp. 26, 32-33.

On the question of Horkheimer's "negative theology," see also Davis, pp. 136-37.

[23] See Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, p. 23.

[24] Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, pp. 23-24.

[25] See Ries, p. 70.

In an interview regarding the work of Paul Tillich, Horkheimer stated that he interpreted the concept of "boundary" in the sense of a demarcation between the relative and the Absolute. See Max Horkheimer, et al., "Erinnerungen an Paul Tillich," in Werk und Wirken Paul Tillichs: Ein Gedenkbuch, ed. Wolf-Dieter Marsch (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1967), pp.18-19.

[26] See Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, pp. 21, 30-31.

In the view of Horkheimer and Adorno, Christianity has been especially guilty of the premature, and therefore ideological, proclamation of reconciliation, and the transformation of the hope for salvation into a certain possession, which, at the same time, becomes the religious root of anti-Semitism. See Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, pp. 176-79, from which the following excerpts are taken:

But, through the same factors by which Christianity carries on the interdiction on natural religion, it again stresses idolatry, though in a spiritualized form. To the precise degree that the absolute is made to approximate to the finite, the finite is absolutized. Christ, the spirit become flesh, is the deified sorcerer. . . . Among primitive peoples, the attempt to overcome immediate fear led to the organized ritual and became the sanctified rhythm of family and national life in Judaism. The priests were appointed to see that the customs were followed. Their function in the order of domination was apparent in theocratic practice; Christianity, however, wanted to remain spiritual even when it tended toward domination. It broke with the idea of self-preservation by the ultimate sacrifice, that of the man-god, but by that very action handed over devalued existence to profane use: the law of Moses was abolished but that which was Caesar's was rendered unto Caesar and that which was God's unto God. Worldly authority is confirmed or usurped, and the Christian faith acquires the rights on salvation. The instinct of self-preservation must be overcome by imitating Christ. Sacrificial love is stripped of naïveté and isolated from natural love, then set down as merit. The love mediated through devotion is said to be direct, reconciling nature and the supernatural. But here lies the falsehood: in the deceptively positive meaning given to self-denial.

The sense is false because the Church lives by the fact that men see the path to redemption in respect for its doctrine . . . , although it cannot guarantee the ultimate objective. The fact that the spiritual promise of salvation is not binding--this Jewish, negative component of Christian doctrine which relativizes magic and finally the Church-- is quietly accepted by the naïve believer, for whom Christianity or supernaturalism becomes a magic ritual, a natural religion. He believes only by forgetting his faith. He persuades himself that he enjoys knowledge and certainty, as if he were an astrologer or spiritualist. This is not necessarily worse than spiritualized theology. . . . But to the simple, religion itself becomes a substitute for religion. This fact has been half recognized since the early days of Christianity, but only the paradoxical Christians, the anti-official philosophers, from Pascal by way of Lessing and Kierkegaard to Barth, made it the cornerstone of their theology. With their

> new-found awareness they were not only radical but patient. But the others, who rejected this knowledge and persuaded themselves with a heavy conscience that Christianity was their own sure possession, had to affirm their eternal salvation against the worldly damnation of all those who did not make the dull sacrifice of reason. This is the religious origin of anti-Semitism. The adherents of the religion of the Father are hated by those who support the religion of the Son--hated as those who know better. It is the hostility to spirit of the spirit, grown obdurate in the conviction of salvation. For Christian anti-Semites, truth is the stumbling-block, truth which resists evil without rationalizing it, and clings to the idea of undeserved salvation against all the rules of life and salvation which are supposed to ensure that blessed state. Anti-Semitism is meant to confirm that the ritual of faith and history is right by executing it on those who deny its justice.

In this regard, see also Ehrlich, p. 459; and Gumnior and Ringguth, p.88.

In an interesing passage, Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 127, perceives that Christianity's guaranteed reconciliation relativizes the suffering of God (not only human suffering, the theological rationalization of which he consistently opposes). He argues:

> God's insufficiency . . . is acknowledged in Judaism when it speaks of God's feelings, wrath and grief, and in Christianity in the doctrine of God as the son of man. Both posit the suffering, the dependence of God, except that in Christianity the whole question has been settled in advance. One might say that the resurrection--a perennially accomplished fact--had rendered it theoretically innocuous.

[27] See Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, p. 114; and Gumnior and Ringguth, pp.86-87.

[28] In two paragraphs on anti-Semitism from the 1950s, Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, writes, "The Jews are the enemy because they witness the spiritual God and thus relativize what puffs itself up as the absolute: idol worship, the nation, the leader." (p.131)

> The justice which manifests itself in their nature and without their will is a protest against both the state capitalism in the East and the monopolistic society in the West. Jews are rooted

> in trade and liberalism, in the relations between individuals, in the bourgeosie. To whatever extent the life of any one among them may fail to conform to this pattern, their existence points toward a society of free and equal men, not to a people's community. (p. 165)

See also Strolz, p. 26.

[29] Jürgen Moltmann, The Crucified God: The Cross of Christ as the Foundation and Criticism of Christian Theology, trans. R.A. Wilson and John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 1974), p. 223.

[30] Moltmann, p. 224.

[31] Horkheimer, Foreword, The Dialectical Imagination, p. xii.

[32] See "Was wir 'Sinn' nennen, wird verschwinden: Spiegel-Gespräch mit dem Philosophen Max Horkheimer," An interview with Georg Wolff and Helmut Gumnior, Der Spiegel, 5 Jan. 1970, p. 81. See also Paul R. Mendes-Flohr, "'To Brush History Against the Grain': The Eschatology of the Frankfurt School and Ernst Bloch," Journal of the American Academy of Religion, 51, No.4 (1983), 635-36.

In the same interview, p. 81, Horkheimer distinguishes his appropriation of the Jewish religious tradition from that of Marx and Ernst Bloch; while for the latter two thinkers the messianic theme is of primary significance, for Horkheimer it is the idea of the non-representability of God that is most decisive.

[33] See Max Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory," in Critical Theory, pp.219-21; and David Held, Introduction to Critical Theory: Horkheimer to Habermas (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980), p. 196.

[34] Critical theory's resistance to the temptation to outline a positive conception of the rational society is emphatically expressed in Adorno's response to the question concerning the goal of an emancipated society: "There is tenderness only in the coarsest demand: that no-one shall go hungry any more. Every other seeks to apply to a condition that ought to be determined by human needs, a mode of human conduct adapted to production as an end in itself." Theodor W. Adorno, Minima Moralia: Reflections from Damaged Life, trans. E.F.N. Jephcott (orig. German ed., Frankfurt am Main, 1951; English ed., 1974; rpt. London: Verso-NLB, 1978), p. 156.

Compare this passage with Marx's speculation regarding the communist society's abolition of the "fixation of social

activity" resulting from the distribution of labour. Marx here sketches a rather idyllic picture of life in an emancipated society. See Karl Marx, The German Ideology, Part I, trans. S. Ryazanskaya, in The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. Robert C. Tucker, 2nd ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 1978), p. 160.

[35] Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, pp. 236-37.

[36] See Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, p. 24.

See also Ries, p. 70, who views this principle as decisive for Horkheimer's determinate negation of every positivity of traditional metaphysics and every absolutization of a reified appearance of the finite world.

[37] See Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, trans. Martin Milligan, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 72.

For comments regarding the social, secular basis of religion, see the following selections in The Marx-Engels Reader: Karl Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," pp. 144-45; and Marx, The German Ideology, Part I, pp. 154-55, 158-59.

[38] See Max Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," in Critical Theory, p. 130.

[39] Cf. Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," p. 131; and Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, pp. 120-21, in which he calls atheism "the advent of theoretic humanism," while communism is the latter's practical and positive fulfillment. See also pp. 85, 92-93 of the same work, where Marx argues that atheism, while a necessary first stage of communism, will itself become historically unnecessary since human positive self-consciousness will no longer require its establishment through the mediating act of the anullment of religion.

[40] See, in this regard, the discussions in Carlebach, pp. 235-40; Davis, pp. 134-36; and Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, pp. 15-16.

[41] See Karl Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," trans. T.B. Bottomore, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 54. The same paragraph in which "religious suffering" is characterized as "an expression of" and "protest against real suffering," in which religion is described as "the sigh of the oppressed creature," and "the sentiment of a heartless world," concludes with its denunciation as "the opium of the people."

[42] For a helpful analysis of Marx's critique of religion as alienation and ideology, see Richard Comstock, "The Marxist Critique of Religion: A Persisting Ambiguity," Journal of the American Academy of Religion, 44, No. 2 (1976), 327-42. In this essay, Comstock argues that in spite of Marx's double-edged critique of religion and his conviction that religion has no positive role to play in human liberation, his thought, as a result of the use of Feuerbach's transformative method (or method of inversion), does not escape the retention of religious contents in his utopian ideal of a human perfection yet to be achieved.

For another examination of Marx's critique of religion, which suggests, as Comstock also does, that the later Marx was not entirely satisfied with his early method of criticism, see Davis, pp. 123-32.

[43] Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," pp. 53-54.

For additional comments on religion, primarily as alienation, see Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, pp. 74, 78, 85, 107-08, 111, 119; and Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," p. 144. For a discussion of the production of ideological consciousness, see Marx, The German Ideology, Part I, pp.163-75.

[44] Karl Marx, "For a Ruthless Criticism of Everything Existing," trans. Ronald Rogowski, in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 15.

[45] Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," p. 53.

On p. 60 of this essay, Marx writes, "The criticism of religion ends with the doctrine that man is the supreme being for man. It ends, therefore, with the categorical imperative to overthrow all those conditions in which man is an abased, enslaved, abandoned, contemptible being. . . ."

See also Marx, "Theses on Feuerbach," pp. 143-45.

[46] Marx, "Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction," p. 54.

See also Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844, p. 119.

[47] Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," p. 129. See also Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 220.

Compare the last sentence in the paragraph quoted with Marx, "For a Ruthless Criticism of Everything Existing," p. 14, who seems to suggest a similar judgement when he states that religion is "the catalogue of the theoretical struggles of mankind."

[48] Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 58.

[49] Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," p. 129.

[50] Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," p. 130.

[51] See Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," pp. 129-30; and Ehrlich, p. 459.

In Dawn and Decline, p. 231, Horkheimer refers to Marx's and Engels' teaching regarding the end of human pre-history as "a pathetically secularized Messianism, infinitely inferior to the authentic one."

[52] Max Horkheimer, "Materialism and Metaphysics," in Critical Theory, p. 26. See also Davis, p. 142.

[53] Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," p. 131.

In connection with this passage, Siebert, "Horkheimer's Sociology of Religion," pp. 131-32, refers to Horkheimer's attempt to preserve religious hope through its secularization in order to retain it as a corrective against the dialectic of enlightenment.

[54] See, for example, Max Horkheimer, "Bemerkungen zur Liberalisierung der Religion," in Sozialphilosophische Studien: Aufsätze, Reden, und Vorträge, 1930-1972, mit einem Anhang über Universität und Studium, ed. Werner Brede, 2nd ed. (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag, 1981), p. 133; and Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, p. 52.

[55] Max Horkheimer, " Authority and the Family," in Critical Theory, p. 58.

In a similar vein, on p. 64, we read:

> It would be a mistake to see in religious ideas anything but mediated images of the earthly relationships which are imposed on men by their work. But it is also true, nonetheless, that these ideas have a definite social effect on the psychic development of each individual.

The materialistic theoretical approach to culture in general, including religion in particular, is carefully elaborated by Horkheimer in pp. 47-68 of this essay.

[56] See Max Horkheimer, "On the Problem of Truth," in The Essential Frankfurt School Reader, ed. Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (New York: Urizen Books, 1978), pp. 407-13.

Horkheimer also observes here that the search for meaning ensuing from the failure to apply reason to society leads just as well to the submission to a political personality as to the refuge of a faith. His allusion is to fascism, and calls to mind Tillich's analysis of

quasi-religions.

Concerning the compatibility of positivism with superstition and intuitionism, see also Horkheimer, "Materialism and Metaphysics," pp. 37-42.

[57] See Horkheimer, "On the Problem of Truth," pp. 439-42.

[58] Horkheimer, "On the Problem of Truth," p. 414.

In connection with this, Horkheimer recognizes an affinity between German philosophy and Jewish religion. They share not only the concern for reconciliation, but also the judgement that the finite must be deciphered and idols deposed. The deliverance of the true lies in the examination of the conditionality of that which appears true. See Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 98, 123-24.

[59] Held, p.176.

[60] Horkheimer, "On the Problem of Truth," p. 421.

[61] Horkheimer, "On the Problem of Truth," pp. 421-23.

[62] Horkheimer, "On the Problem of Truth," p. 422. For a fuller discussion of Horkheimer's concept of truth, see pp. 418-24.

For a helpful examination of Horkheimer's appropriation of Hegel and Marx in the construction of his epistemology and method, see Held, pp. 175-82. For another discussion of Horkheimer's dialectical and materialist theory of truth, see Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 46-50.

[63] Horkheimer, "On the Problem of Truth," p. 442.

[64] Horkheimer, "Materialism and Metaphysics," p. 27.

While maintaining his view regarding the contradiction between knowledge and theology, Horkheimer, three decades later, also noted, in Dawn and Decline, p. 235, the superiority of the latter to the former:

> Theology is the opposite of knowledge, it derives from levels of consciousness where perception was complemented by instincts, impulses and emotions which are no longer appropriate to contemporary experience, which is served by machines. Knowledge is ultimately governed by purposes. Theology wants to be free of earthly ends. It is both lower and higher than any form of knowledge.

[65] Cf. Max Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason (1947; rpt. New York: Continuum-Seabury, 1974) pp. 182-84.

[66] Horkheimer's critique of religion represents a particular instance of his critique of ideology, conducted according to the method of immanent criticism, by which a historical existent is confronted with the claims of its conceptual principles. This criticism of the relation between concept and reality is intended to salvage relative truths from the destruction of false claims to ultimacy. For a helpful discussion of Horkheimer's critique of ideology, see Held, pp. 183-87.

[67] Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, pp. 214-15. See also p. 224 of this volume; and Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, pp. 157-58.

[68] In a discussion that took place in 1965, Horkheimer also stated that, if his recollection was accurate, he had always approved of Christianity insofar as it had abided by the standard of sacrifice to the suffering out of love. See Horkheimer, et al., "Erinnerungen an Paul Tillich," p. 21.

[69] Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," p. 36.

[70] Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," p. 35.

[71] Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 222. See also pp. 27-31, 50-52. The alliance between the church and the ruling class is a fact that Horkheimer finds "all the more revolting because it is directed against the one element that might serve the church as an excuse: suffering men." (Dawn and Decline, p. 60.)

[72] Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," p. 129.

[73] Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 207.
In this paragraph, as on p. 215, Horkheimer, while acknowledging the necessity of the state of Israel, is critical of it in terms similar to his criticism of Christianity; temporal success compromises the principles that represent opposition to an unjust reality.
For further discussions of Horkheimer's objection to the identification of the good with power in history, see Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, pp. 224-25; Max Horkheimer, "Schopenhauer Today," in Critique of Instrumental Reason, pp. 63-83; Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason,p. 90; and Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, pp. 43, 51-52, 64.

[74] See Max Horkheimer, "The Arrest of Eichmann," in Critique of Instrumental Reason, p. 122; Gumnior and Ringguth, p. 125; Horkheimer, et al., "Erinnerungen an Paul Tillich," p. 20; and Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," p.

35.

[75] See Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," pp. 36-37; Horkheimer "Bemerkungen zur Liberalisierung der Religion," pp. 131-32; and Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, pp. 38, 42, 49-50.

[76] Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," p. 37.

[77] Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," p. 39. See also Horkheimer, "Bemerkungen zur Liberalisierung der Religion," p. 132.

[78] See Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," pp. 39-43. Concerning the neutralization of religion in the modern era, see also Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason, pp 12-19; and Horkheimer, "Bemerkungen zur Liberalisierung der Religion," p. 132.

[79] Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 54.

While Horkheimer views the privatization of religion in bourgeois society as an essentially negative occurrence insofar as religion becomes merely an ideological cloak for material self-interest, Marx sees this as a positive development, since, in his interpretation, it signals the stage of political emancipation and represents a great progress toward the final form of human emancipation. See Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question," in The Marx-Engels Reader, p. 35.

[80] See Max Horkheimer, "The End of Reason, " Studies in Philosophy and Social Sciences, 9 (1941), 373-74.

[81] Horkheimer, "On the Problem of Truth,", p. 440. See also Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," pp. 39-40.

In Dawn and Decline, p. 35, Horkheimer discusses the rationalization of inhumanity on the part of those who avoid helping people in a concrete case because they cannot help everyone in need and therefore consider futile the good that they could do. "There is a resemblance," he writes, "between them and the devout: both preserve their good conscience by pleading 'higher' considerations when they abandon you to your helplessness."

[82] See Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," pp. 40, 43-45; and Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 233.

[83] Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, pp. 88-91.

[84] See, for example, Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline pp. 168-69, 206, 233; and Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason, pp. 135-38.

For a discussion of the importance of Christianity's principle of free subjectivity, or subjective freedom, for Horkheimer, see Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, pp. 31, 33-44.

It may be noted that, as in Tillich's case, Horkheimer's concern for individual freedom also has a biographical root. In Horkheimer's case, this involved conflict with his father not only over his decision to pursue an intellectual life rather than continue in the family's manufacturing business, but also especially over his romance and marriage with Rose Riekher, a gentile secretary employed by his father and eight years older than Horkheimer. In this regard, see the discussions in Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 18-20, 24-27; Jay, The Dialectical Imagination, p. 35; and Martin Jay, Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukács to Habermas (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), pp. 211 ff.

85 Horkheimer, "Threats to Freedom," p. 149.

86 Horkheimer, "Threats to Freedom," p. 151.

In Dawn and Decline, p. 208, Horkheimer writes, "The imitation which is to distinguish the life of the Christian, the worship of the divine founder from which imitation arises, is clearly a mimetic process. It constitutes the core of Christian teaching."

87 Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 229.

See also Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason, pp. 136-38; and Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, p. 63, where he suggests that a more accurate translation of this commandment, following the dissertation of one of his students, would be, "Love your neighbour, he is as you."

88 Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 163. See also the discussion in Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 128-29.

In Dawn and Decline, p. 134, Horkheimer finds even in the observance of religious rituals a critical, objective meaning, "the detachment from the pragmatic, from what has effect and validity in this world," which testifies to "the suspicion that the world as it is at any given moment may not be right."

89 See Horkheimer, "Threats to Freedom," pp. 136-58; Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason, esp. pp. 128-61; Gumnior and Ringguth, p. 108; and Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, pp. 66-71.

90 Max Horkheimer, "Art and Mass Culture," in Critical Theory, p. 287.

[91] Horkheimer, "Threats to Freedom," pp. 155-56.

[92] See Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 59.

[93] Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 185. See also p. 196.

[94] Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason, p. 62. See also Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 123, where he suggests that pragmatism is almost an inherent and universal characteristic of religion; and pp. 196-97 of this volume, regarding the observation that the same religion may serve very different functions in the lives of specific individuals.

[95] For more extensive discussions of these points, see Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason, pp. 61-70, 86-91; and Horkheimer, "Art and Mass Culture," pp. 284-86.

[96] Horkheimer, "Art and Mass Culture," p. 286. Apart from Horkheimer's objection to the revival of metaphysical systems observed in the preceding paragraph, it should be noted that he rejects modern metaphysics as such, not only on the epistemological basis that, after Kant, claims to ontological knowledge are considered by him to be unjustifiable, but also on the practical grounds that the efforts of metaphysical philosophers generally display an indifference to human suffering and serve as an ideological sanctification of an evil world. Horkheimer writes, for example, in Dawn and Decline, pp. 45-46:

> Indeed, the fact that the flight toward the eternal is possible under existing class relationships will constitute a certain vindication of them, particularly when the metaphysician imputes absolute value to this flight. A society in which the person may fulfill his high destiny in such important respects cannot be altogether bad. At least its improvement does not seem a particularly pressing matter.
>
> I don't know to what extent metaphysicians are right. Perhaps there is an especially apposite metaphysical system or fragment somewhere. But I do know that ordinarily metaphysicians are not terribly impressed by what torments men.

See also, in the same volume, pp. 34, 66-67, 99-100, 111-12.

Also of relevance here is Mendes-Flohr's observation, on p. 635, that the quest for ultimate, or transcendent truth in the critical theory of Horkheimer and Adorno "was conceived not in metaphysical but in metachronic terms."

[97] See Horkheimer, Bemerkungen zur Liberalisierung

der Religion," p. 131.

98 Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," pp. 47-48. In this essay, dated 1963, Horkheimer criticizes the weakening of the concept of God that he detects in the symbolic interpretation practised by theologians like Robinson, but it appears that his critique also anticipates the emphatic "God-is-dead" theology, represented by theologians like Thomas Altizer, which arouses controversy only a few years later. See also Gumnior and Ringguth, p. 132, who refer to "God-is-dead" theology as an inverted dogmatism.

It is important to note that Tillich's symbolic interpretation of religious categories, which has provided much of the inspiration for the type of theology under discussion, also falls within Horkheimer's critique of the liberalization of religion. This point is addressed below.

99 See Horkheimer, "Bemerkungen zur Liberalisierung der Religion," p. 134; and Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 66-67.

Reflecting on the liberalization of religion in Dawn and Decline, pp. 222-23, Horkheimer even expresses sadness over the loss of naive religious faith. He writes:

> Now that science and technology have destroyed belief and paradise, not much remains of earthly paradise either. . . . The churches attempt to adapt to a disillusioned world, however, they . . . turn God into a symbol, hope into a principle, and paradise into a legend. But they do wish to continue as an auxiliary to the law, they want to carry on the work of religion as an aid to order in society. But as the intent becomes apparent, belief has already faded. . . . I mourn the loss of the superstitious belief in a Beyond. For the society that gets along without it, every step that brings it closer to paradise on earth will take it further from the dream which makes earth bearable. In pleasure in the comprehensive sense of that term, the memory of paradise was still present.

100 Horkheimer, "Threats to Freedom," p. 156.

101 The term, "the wholly Other," has prompted interpreters to speculate on its origins, with the result that Horkheimer's use of the term has been connected with both the Jewish and the Christian theological traditions. Strolz, on p. 27, is certainly correct in suggesting that this longing for the non-representable God links Horkheimer with the Jewish prophets; while Ehrlich, p. 458, makes the plausible but inconclusive argument that Horkheimer's concept has been influenced , consciously or unconsciously,

by the Jewish philosopher of religion, Hermann Cohen. On the other hand, Moltmann, p. 224, identifies this term as "a formula from early dialectic theology"; and Mendes-Flohr, p. 635, finds an affinity between this concept of transcendence and the conceptions of God in the thought of Rudolf Otto and of Karl Barth.

102 Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, p. 14, suggests that religion in this sense is, for Horkheimer, the essence of the human. On pp. 29 and 43-44, respectively, he refers to this essence as "the longing for complete justice" and as "freedom" which is still a possibility, not yet realized in existence. Horkheimer's social theory, concerned with justice and freedom, asserts the necessity of the theological hope, the hope for the reconciliation between human existence and its true essence. See also p. 21.

103 Cf. Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," pp. 129-31; and Mansilla, p. 240.

One can find intimations of this longing in Horkheimer's own life already in the mid-1920s. Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 17-18, provide excerpts from Horkheimer's unpublished writings that express a vaguely defined longing in connection with his abhorrence of the idea of a life in business and his desire for truth and justice.

104 See Gumnior and Ringguth, p. 84.

They also suggest, on the following page, that prior to Horkheimer's expression of a longing for a human solidarity that he assumed could be explained historically, he had already conceived an infinite longing which could only be understood as a longing for the Infinite.

105 An excerpt from Adorno's letter, accompanied by commentary, can be found in Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 84-86; and in Ries, pp. 74-75. The essay to which Adorno's letter refers is "Zu Bergsons Metaphysik der Zeit," which can be found in Max Horkheimer, Kritische Theorie: Eine Dokumentation, ed. Alfred Schmidt, Einbändige Studienausgabe (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1968), pp. 175-99.

106 Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, p. 256. See also Gumnior and Ringguth, p. 89; and Ries, p. 75.

107 See Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," p. 129; Horkheimer, "On the Problem of Truth," p. 412; Horkheimer, "Materialism and Metaphysics," pp. 21-23; and Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, pp. 42, 173-74, 184-85.

In Dawn and Decline, p. 177, Horkheimer determines the truth of religion to be its expression of human need: "It

is not the truth of religion that dawns on the person in need, it is the need that constitutes its truth, not only individual, but social need as well."

108 See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 59-60. See also Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, pp. 19-20, 52-53.

109 See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 56, 71. See also Ries, pp. 70-71; and Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 131-32.

110 See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 56-57; and also Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, pp.17-18.

Moltmann, p. 224, characterizes Horkheimer's position well when he writes:

> He does not assert that there is an omnipotent, righteous and gracious God, but he questions radically whether any immanent substitute could take its place. . . . There is no theistic answer to the question of suffering and injustice, but far less is there any atheistic possibility of avoiding this question and being content with the world.

111 See Jay, Marxism and Totality, p. 212; and Strolz, pp. 27,33, who, in this respect, likens Horkheimer to Job.

112 Max Horkheimer, Anfänge der bürgerlichen Geschichtsphilosophie (1930; rpt. Frankfurt am Main: Fischer Bücherei, 1971), p. 68; quoted in Gumnior and Ringguth, p. 45.

113 Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline , p. 163.

Compare this with Horkheimer's definition of religion in the good sense, n. 88 of this chapter.

114 Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, pp. 101-103.

See also pp. 31, 99-100, 182 in the same volume; Max Horkheimer, "Schopenhauers Denken im Verhältnis zu Wissenschaft und Religion," in Sozialphilosophische Studien, p. 146; and Ries, p. 71.

115 See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 57-58, 75; Horkheimer, "Bemerkungen zur Liberalisierung der Religion," p. 135; and Ries, p. 76.

116 See Horkheimer, "Schopenhauers Denken im Verhältnis zu Wissenschaft und Religion," p. 145, where he writes:

> Noch fragwürdiger ist Metaphysik, deute sie das Jenseits, das An-sich als ein Positives, das Gute, oder als ein Negatives, das Schlechte und das Nichts. Menschliches Denken vermag die Tatsachen der Wahrnehmung zu ordnen, nicht über sie hinauszugehen, es sei denn als die aus dem Theologishen stammende Sehnsucht nach einem anderen als diese Welt.

See also pp. 151-52 of this essay.

117 See Horkheimer, et al., "Erinnerungen an Paul Tillich," pp. 19, 23-24.

118 See Horkheimer, et al., "Erinnerungen an Paul Tillich," pp. 21-22; and Max Horkheimer, "Letzte Spur von Theologie: Paul Tillichs Vermächtnis," in Werk und Wirken Paul Tillichs, pp. 127-28, 130.

119 Max Horkheimer, "Meine Begegnung mit Paul Tillich: Eine Antwort in Form eines Briefes," in Impressionen und Reflexionen, vol. XIII of Gesammelte Werke, by Paul Tillich, ed. Renate Albrecht (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1972), p. 569.

120 Horkheimer, "Threats to Freedom," pp. 154-55. See also Horkheimer, "Letzte Spur von Theologie: Paul Tillichs Vermächtnis," pp. 128-29. Beyond this criticism of Tillich's work, Horkheimer also notes that Tillich's ontological vocabulary could be reduced to a set of slogans serving as ornamentation for existing reality. See Horkheimer, "Letzte Spur von Theologie: Paul Tillichs Vermächtnis," pp. 131-32; and Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 219.

121 Gumnior and Ringguth, p. 85, write:

> Absolute Negation, die den metaphysischen Sinn destruiert, gleicht der Klage an jener Klagemauer des zerstörten Tempels von Jerusalem, die noch in Elend, Mangel, Entzweiung und Tod, die noch im Hader mit Gott den Messias als Einheit von Herkunft und Zukunft, als die Figur unausdenkbarer Erlösung ersehnt.

122 Hegel writes, for example, "This self-identity, or negation of negation, is affirmative Being, is the other of the Finite, . . . is the Infinite (emphasis added). Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, Science of Logic, trans. W.H. Johnston and L.G. Struthers (New York: MacMillan, 1929), I, 149; quoted in Herbert Marcuse, Reason and Revolution: Hegel and the Rise of Social Theory (1941; rpt. Boston: Beacon, 1960), p. 138.

See also Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, pp. 20-21.

123 See Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline , p. 164. See also pp. 86-87.

124 See Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, pp. 20-21, 218-19; and Ries pp. 73-74.

125 Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline , p. 222.

Horkheimer's thoughts in this passage bear a certain resemblance to those expressed by Albert Camus in his novel The Plague (La Peste), trans. Stuart Gilbert (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1960), p. 210, when one of the characters is aware of a happiness that is conscious of evil: "Turning to Tarrou, he caught a glimpse on his friend's face of the same happiness, a happiness that forgot nothing, not even murder."

126 See Strolz, pp. 32-33; and Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 44-45.

It should be noted that, in Horkheimer's view, the conscious empathy for suffering is more important than its theoretical explanation. Thus, he writes:

> There are people who will not be disturbed about the existence of evil because they have a theory that accounts for it. Here, I am also thinking of some Marxists who, in the face of wretchedness, quickly proceed to show why it exists. Even comprehension can be too quick.

Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline p. 24. See also pp. 17-18 in the same volume; and Adorno, Minima Moralia, pp. 25-26.

127 Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, p. 219.

128 In this regard, Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline , p. 239, reflects upon the difference between critical theory and the idea of faith as follows:

> Faced with the sciences and the entire present situation, my idea of expressing the concept of an omnipotent and benevolent Being no longer as dogma but as a longing that unites all men so that the horrible events, the injustice of history so far would not be permitted to be the final, ultimate fate of the victims, seems to come close to the solution of the problem. . . .

129 See Mansilla, p. 240. See also Horkheimer,

"Schopenhauers Denken im Verhältnis zu Wissenschaft und Religion," p. 147.

[130] See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 61-62.

In the same interview, pp. 62-63, Horkheimer acknowledges that this longing is of Jewish and Christian origin, but identifies a decisive difference between the two religions, corresponding to their different emphases on the community and the individual; the martyrdom of Christians was endured with a belief in a personal share in eternal blessedness, while that of Jews was borne for the welfare of their people. Regarding the difference between Jewish and Christian attitudes toward death and redemption in relation to the relative importance of the community and the individual in these religions, see also Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, pp. 195-96; Horkheimer, "Threats to Freedom," p. 150; and Horkheimer, "Schopenhauers Denken im Verhältnis zu Wissenschaft und Religion," pp. 146-48.

[131] Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," p. 130. See also Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 68-69.

Insofar as Horkheimer views the secularization, or dissolution of the religious form of the human spirit's development as necessary for the realization of the religious spirit, he is in agreement with Marx. (See Marx, "On the Jewish Question," p. 39.) On the other hand, Horkheimer's efforts to preserve aspects of theology and religion in a secularized world indicate that he does not view the process of secularization as an entirely progressive one.

[132] See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, p. 67.

[133] See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, p. 67; and also the discussion in Siebert, "Horkheimer's Sociology of Religion," pp. 142-43.

[134] See Horkheimer, "Bemerkungen zur Liberalisierung der Religion," pp. 135-36; and "Was wir 'Sinn' nennen, wird verschwinden: Spiegel-Gespräch mit dem Philosophen Max Horkheimer," p. 81.

[135] Horkheimer, "Thoughts on Religion," p. 130. See also Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, p. 69; and Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 181.

[136] See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 75-76; and also Ries, p. 74.

[137] See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 55-56, 88.

Horkheimer expresses the idea of abandonment as a motive for solidarity also in his essay "Schopenhauer Today," p. 82, where he refers to it as "the motive for solidarity shared by men and all beings." He continues:

> No need is ever compensated in any Beyond. The urge to mitigate it in this world springs from the inability to look at it in full awareness of this curse and to tolerate it when there is a chance to stop it. . . . The merciless structure of eternity could generate a community of the abandoned, just as injustice and terror in society result in the community of those who resist.

[138] Horkheimer, "Bemerkungen zur Liberalisierung der Religion," pp. 135-36.

[139] Horkheimer, "Bemerkungen zur Liberalisiering der Religion," p. 136.

Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 126, 128, argue that after the destruction of the Jewish-German relationship, Horkheimer speaks of a relationship of solidarity between Jews and true Christians, and that, in his view, the latter constitute a new, potential, persecuted minority.

[140] Horkheimer, "On the Problem of Truth," p. 443.

In this regard, see Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, pp. 5-9, for a discussion of the post-war relationship between Horkheimer and Adorno and the Christian intellectuals, Eugen Kogon and Walter Dirks, and their attempts to build bridges between enlightenment and religion. See also pp. 50, 54, and 64 in the same volume for additional references to Horkheimer's appreciation of, and solidarity with certain Christians on the basis of their longing for justice and their opposition to ideologies and fascism.

[141] See Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, pp. 65-66, where he speaks of the tendency to make a new religion out of atheism, one that fetishizes human wretchedness and desolation.

[142] In Dawn and Decline , p. 223, Horkheimer writes:

> A person who denounces the catholic cult as crude superstition will usually decline to join others as they cross themselves during public or private ceremonies--for reasons of belief. He thus ritualizes the omission, the omitted gesture, as much as the believers. When the stakes were still

> smouldering, it was different. Resistance addressed itself to the reign of terror. Refusal then, like the refusal to give the Hitler salute in the Third Reich, was a signal for everyone who wanted something better. The smaller the number of sanctions that enforce a belief, the more pointless its negation becomes.

[143] Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," pp. 49-50. See also Ries, pp. 71-72; and Moltmann, p. 224, who writes, "In Horkheimer we find a protesting faith which takes us beyond the crude opposition of theism and atheism."

[144] Horkheimer, "The End of Reason," p. 376. Somewhat later, in Dawn and Decline , p. 162, Horkheimer observes the coincidence of technical progress and moral regression and writes, "The evil person has forgotten what longing is. He only knows its opposite, assent to what is."

[145] Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason, pp. 23-24. For further discussions of the consequences of the formalization of reason for personal and political morality, see also esp. pp. 24-32 of this volume; and Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 100 ff.

[146] See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 60-61; Horkheimer, "Letzte Spur von Theologie: Paul Tillichs Vermächtnis," pp. 129-30; and Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline , pp. 220, 226, 232-33.

In this regard, Davis, p. 137, is correct in noting that, for Horkheimer, "theology . . . is the opposite of positivism."

[147] See Ries, p. 72; and Mansilla, p. 240.

[148] See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 69, 72.

[149] See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 72-73. Horkheimer's awareness of this motive for moral conduct can be discerned at an early stage in his work. In Dawn and Decline , pp. 101-02, he writes:

> The difference between a good and a bad life applies exclusively to the present. . . . And friendliness, decency, justice are also instinctual satisfactions for the person that practices them. They become illusions when they are understood as earthly means toward an eternal end, or as symbols

> with a deeper significance. Neither life nor knowledge have such significance. Not the afterlife of individual existence in a Beyond but the solidarity with men who will come after us in this world prompts our interest in the future.

150 See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 64-66, for his discussion of the importance of the Jewish and Christian teaching of original sin and his indebtedness to Schopenhauer's interpretation of it.

151 See Mansilla, p. 240.

152 See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 88-89; Horkheimer, "Schopenhauers Denken im Verhältnis zu Wissenschaft und Religion," pp. 153-54; Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, pp. 182-83, 235; and Gumnior and Ringguth, pp. 111-12, 117-18.

153 In Dawn and Decline, p. 227, for example, Horkheimer writes:

> The law of the epoch is the affirmation of the nation in both East and West, and that means either the affirmation of the already existing totalitarianism or the affirmation of what is tending in that direction. Practical philosophy not only presupposes the autonomous subject but gave it the ultimate decision. Today, that decision is so narrowly prescribed that speculative thought is no longer required. The most the subject can do is switch sides or sympathize with the opposite camp. The decision to do so requires politicizing, not philosophy, which has attained to a new, ultimate degree of abstractness. Instead of taking the place of theology, philosophy follows its course.

See also pp. 174-75 of this volume; Horkheimer, "Schopenhauers Denken im Verhältnis zu Wissenschaft und Religion," pp. 149-50, 153; and Horkheimer, "Threats to Freedom," passim.

154 See Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline, p. 227; and Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason, p. 161.

155 Horkheimer, "Threats to Freedom," pp. 156-57. See also Horkheimer, "Schopenhauer Today," pp. 80-81.

156 Max Horkheimer, "The Soul," in Critique of Instrumental Reason, p. 61.

[157] Adorno confirms Horkheimer's intention in the concluding entry in Minima Moralia, p. 247, when he writes:

> The only philosophy which can be responsibly practised in face of despair is the attempt to contemplate all things as they would present themselves from the standpoint of redemption. Knowledge has no light but that shed on the world by redemption; all else is reconstruction, mere technique. Perspectives must be fashioned that displace and estrange the world, reveal it to be, with its rifts and crevices, as indigent and distorted as it will appear one day in the messianic light.

Acknowledging the impossibility of a theoretical standpoint unmarked by the distortion that it seeks to escape, he continues:

> The more passionately thought denies its conditionality for the sake of the unconditional, the more unconsciously, and so calamitously, it is delivered up to the world. Even its own impossibility it must at last comprehend for the sake of the possible. But beside the demand thus placed on thought, the question of the reality or unreality of redemption itself hardly matters.

See also Ries, pp. 80-81.

[158] See Horkheimer, Die Sehnsucht nach dem ganz Anderen, pp. 76-77; Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline , p. 58; and Gumnior and Ringguth, p. 86.

[159] See Horkheimer, et al., "Erinnerungen an Paul Tillich," p. 16.

See also Horkheimer, Dawn and Decline , pp. 120, 159-60, for further reflections on the theological element in philosophy.

[160] Horkheimer and Adorno, Dialectic of Enlightenment, p. 115.

[161] Max Horkheimer, Zur Kritik der instrumentellen Vernunft (Frankfurt am Main: S. Fischer Verlag, 1967), pp. 263 f.; quoted in Moltmann, p. 224.

Compare this translation, which seems preferable because of its greater clarity and consistency in the context of the passage from which it is taken, with that found in Horkheimer ,"Schopenhauer Today," p. 80, where the syntax makes the pronoun "it" the subject of the verb "guarantees" rather than its object. See also Gumnior and

Ringguth, p. 132, for the quotation in the original German.

[162] See Ries, p. 70.

[163] Horkheimer's thought has received serious attention on the part of at least some, primarily German, Christian theologians. See, for example, Moltmann, passim; Davis, passim; and the references in Siebert, Horkheimer's Critical Sociology of Religion, esp. pp. 5-9, 64-65.

[164] See Mansilla, p. 240.

Horkheimer also confirms in this interview that the hope for the Transcendent is identical with the old aim of idealistic philosophy to bring enlightenment to practical realization.

[165] Horkheimer, Eclipse of Reason, p. 161.

[166] Horkheimer, "Theism and Atheism," p. 49.

Religion in the Modern World:
The Teachings of Tillich and Horkheimer

> This is a generation to which even a God dying in history is more significant than one who dwells, unmoving, in eternity.[1]

> A Klee painting named "Angelus Novus" shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. This storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress.[2]

These two quotations from Emil Fackenheim and Walter

Benjamin provide a fitting characterization of the spiritual predicament in which the heirs of Western civilization find themselves at this historical juncture. At the least, it could be argued that the sad and anxious experience of loss suggested by these statements resonates in the minds of people who consider with equal seriousness the contents of the Jewish and Christian religions and the historical events and trends that belong to the most technologically advanced societies.[3] The images of a God dying in history and of the angel of history who is powerless to amend history's destructive progress offer acute revelations of the modern spiritual attitude, an attitude of pessimism toward both history and its redemption. The radical questioning of a religious faith characterized by its commitment to the God of history remains a disquieting experience today, in spite of the fact that the "death of God" has been a familiar theme in modern thought for at least a century. That this is so testifies to a desperation accompanying the suspicion of human abandonment, of having to live in our world without the presence of God.[4]

The roots of the present spiritual predicament are both deep and complex, and cannot be explored here. It may simply be noted that, among other factors, the radical doubt that has characterized modern philosophy and, to a large extent, permeated the contemporary mind;[5] the historical process of secularization, marked by the structural

differentiation of secular and religious institutional spheres, diminishing the authority of religion in society, and by the predominance of a functional rationality concerned with exercising control over a disenchanted or desacralized world;[6] and the cataclysmic event of totalitarianism and its continuing threat in our century[7] have all played a role in challenging, and provoking a necessary re-examination of religious life and thought. Both Tillich and Horkheimer were, of course, acutely aware of the threats to the human being constituted by the negative aspects that they recognized as belonging to the development of Western modernity, and both observed the erosion of traditional religious life as part of this historical process. In agreement upon the necessity of religion for a truly human existence, they sought, each in his own way, to interpret religion in a manner appropriate to their historical situation and thereby to preserve the essence of religion as an indispensable component of human life and consciousness. The teachings of both men serve as valuable guides for thought as we consider the meaning and significance of religion in the closing decades of our century. This chapter is therefore devoted to a comparative critique of the theories of Tillich and Horkheimer, based upon the discussion of these theories in the preceding chapters.

I. Comparative Critique of Tillich's and Horkheimer's Theories of Religion

The following critique of Tillich's and Horkheimer's theories proceeds according to a systematic comparison and confrontation of central aspects of these theories which, at the same time, are examined in relation to certain features of the present spiritual situation in modern, or, as Hans Küng would suggest, postmodern, Western societies.[8] The concerns which motivate this critique can be formulated as two questions. First, what do these theories contribute to our understanding of religion in the period of late modernity or postmodernity? Second, what elements of religion can and must be preserved for the sake of human life at this historical juncture? In the attempt to answer these questions through a critical examination of Tillich's and Horkheimer's theories the interests of both believers and unbelievers are at stake, since the future of religion and the future of Western societies cannot be considered in isolation from each other, as both Tillich and Horkheimer have recognized, notwithstanding the fundamental differences between their assessments of this relationship.

I. A. Method, Religious Experience and Truth

One of the most crucial disagreements between

Tillich's and Horkheimer's theories is found in an examination of their methodological approaches to the study and interpretation of religion. This disagreement is essentially a conflict between Tillich's deliteralization and Horkheimer's demythologization of biblical and theological ideas and symbols. Stated more precisely, Tillich, in the light of modern philosophy and science, attempts to bridge the chasm between religious and secular consciousness--the former characterized by a sense of the sacred and an orientation toward transcendence, the latter by a pragmatic attitude and empirical orientation--by interpreting religious categories and contents in symbolic terms without, however, undermining religious experience--the revelatory experience of the "Holy"--or calling into question the reality of the final and transcendent referent of religion connoted by the term "God." In contrast to this approach, Horkheimer interprets religious ideas and images in the historical and materialist categories of a revised Marxism that seeks to explain these contents as determined by the natural and socio-historical conditions of human existence and denies the possibility of human experience or knowledge of the Absolute, thereby leaving the question of the reality of God undecided and a matter of doubt and hope. In both cases, it is presupposed that the effects of the rise of modern science and the secularization of society have irrevocably undermined the

traditional and naïve faith that clings unquestioningly to the beliefs and dogmas of the Western religious traditions, even if such a faith still survives in semi-isolated religious communities that try to shield their religious life from the intrusion of doubt. Accordingly, Tillich and Horkheimer find inescapable the reinterpretation of religion if its important contents are not to be completely forgotten in the modern world.

While Tillich reocognizes the unavoidability of doubt in religious life, he does not wish to sacrifice the genuine experience of the Holy which, on the basis of his own early experiences, determines his method in the philosophy of religion. Tillich's method, therefore, despite its different formulations, presupposes the Unconditional as a reality which itself cannot be subjected to doubt. In agreement with Augustine, Tillich postulates the identity of the philosophical and the religious Absolute; God, Being, and ultimate truth are one. Moreover, claims Tillich, it is possible to have an immediate awareness of the Unconditional, whether this experience be described in existential, mystical, or other terms, and this awareness is itself considered to be unconditional.[9]

It is this unconditional and immediate experience of the Unconditional that, in Tillich's philosophy of religion, functions as the safeguard of religious truth. The reality of the Holy is guaranteed because the revelatory experience

in which it is encountered furnishes faith with a certainty that has the character of self-evidence, even if the concrete content of revelation and faith is open to doubt and uncertainty.[10] Tillich's recourse to the ontological approach permits him to assume the reality of God, not as a being but as unconditional Being,and his postulation of an immediate, intuitive awareness of the Unconditional means that the Holy is, in principle, accessible to human experience.[11] The obvious merits of this approach are that the reality of God as the final referent of religion is not precluded or avoided from the start, and that the possibility of human experience of the Holy is kept open. Furthermore, this approach provides the basis for Tillich's effort to analyse the religious dimension of human existence-- the aspect of depth or transcendence that cuts through the horizontal plane of life and does not exist beside other spheres of human activity--and to discern its manifestations in the various spheres of secular society.

Despite these characteristics of Tillich's methodological approach, which make possible the formulation of positive statements about God and lend support to living religious faith, this approach appears problematic to the modern secular mind precisely because of those characteristics that provide the basis for its principal merits. In the first place, the unconditional and immediate awareness of the Unconditional can only be self-validating.

The truth of the experiential basis of religion, the truth of the claim that religious life arises from an actual encounter between the human and the divine, can be neither proven nor refuted by an observer who stands outside the correlative revelatory situation. Intellectual honesty demands that the philosopher of religion consider the revelatory awareness of the Holy as a possibility, the certainty of which exists only for the person who has experienced it and cannot be present to the person who has not shared this experience. The claim of an immediate awareness of the Unconditional is a testimony of religious faith that provides the latter with explanatory support, without, however, being able to produce this faith in others. The secular person can comprehend intellectually the explanation of the genesis of religious faith, but, in the absence of a similar religious experience, must leave open the question of the truth claim involved, namely, whether the experience is really an experience of the Holy.[12]

It should be noted that this question is no closer to being resolved if one abandons the notion of pure immediacy in favour of an approach that considers all meaningful experiences of the Holy to be mediated and interpreted, as John E. Smith does, or if one complements Tillich's idea of immediate and unconditional awareness of the Holy with his theory of symbolic mediation.[13] Adopting an approach to the

interpretation of religion that emphasizes the mediated rather than immediate character of religious experience has the advantage of increasing the communicability of the experience to those outside the revelatory situation, because the experience now explicitly refers to elements of empirical, immanent reality that mediate the experience. On the other hand, this approach introduces a new problem, and not only for the secular observer but for the religious participant as well. If the experience of the Holy is considered to be mediated, the question arises regarding whether, and if so, how the Holy is present in and beyond the mediating elements of the experience. In the absence of a revelatory experience, the secular person must still leave open the question of the truth claim of this experience. Now, however, because of the recognition of mediating elements in the experience, the possibilities of interpreting the experience without reference to the Unconditional seem to multiply and become more plausible as explanations. This is also true for the religious participant insofar as the self-evident certainty of the Unconditional claimed by Tillich for immediate experience is undermined by the presence of mediating elements. No longer solely an awareness of the Unconditional, the presence of the Unconditional in the experience may now become a matter of doubt for the religious participant in a way that need not occur if the possiblity of mystical immediacy is left

open.

The second problematic aspect of Tillich's methodological approach is the presuppostion of the reality of God, or the Unconditional. This presupposition is problematic because the doubt that has arisen in the modern period, as articulated by Hannah Arendt, is so universal and radical that it affects even the claim of the reality of the Unconditional, and not only the symbols and attributes according to which the Unconditional is represented and interpreted. Tillich's contention that the Unconditional itself, as an ontological and religious reality, can never be subjected to doubt is a reflection of his own experience, and his formulation of a method that avoids separating the questions of the nature and truth of religion into empirical and speculative ones represents the attempt to express this experience in the terms of a philosophy of religion. However, it requires only that the reality of the Unconditional be a subject of doubt for others in order to render this contention questionable.[14] It then appears that Tillich's acknowledgement of doubt in the religious life does not go far enough, for it precludes in advance a doubt so deep that it penetrates to the level of what Tillich considers to be ultimate reality.[15]

One of the primary concerns of Tillich's philosophy of religion is to avoid the philosophical elimination of God and revelation from the start. The concern is a valid one,

but it is questionable whether it is necessary, for that reason, to presuppose the reality of God, or the Ultimate--a presupposition that does not fully take into account the doubt experienced by modern secular consciousness. A reformulation of Tillich's approach that would recognize this doubt in its full significance would seem to be demanded in the present spiritual situation. One could begin this task by rephrasing Tillich's statement as follows: The possibility, rather than the reality, of God is the presupposition of the question of God.[16] Revised in this manner, it seems that Tillich's approach could achieve a more adequate mediation between religious and secular consciousness, since it would, in principle, recognize radical, secular doubt without sacrificing the possibility of God.

If Tillich's methodological approach to the interpretation of religion presupposes the reality and human experience of the Unconditional which have become problematic for the modern secular mind, Horkheimer's approach expresses the skepticism of secular consciousness with respect to both the reality of the Unconditional and the possibility of metaphysical knowledge. Horkheimer's radicalization of the Jewish prohibition of images, his acceptance of Kant's critique of knowledge, and his revision of Hegel's dialectical method share a common epistemological consequence. All of these elements of his method preclude

the possibility of knowing and naming the Absolute. An untraversable chasm separates the finite human mind entangled in the dynamics of an unconcluded history from knowledge of the whole, or the Infinite, whether this be understood in religious or philosophical terms. Human knowledge of the Absolute is denied in principle.[17] The preclusion of metaphysical knowledge does not refute the possibility of the Absolute, or God, but it leaves the reality and nature of the Absolute undetermined, since no positive statements can be made regarding it. The final referent of religion is simply not an object of human cognition, whatever it may be in itself.

In Horkheimer's view, the assumed inability of the human mind to penetrate the level of ultimate reality does not render religion devoid of truth nor its study futile. On the contrary, it redirects attention toward religion as a social and historical phenomenon containing both ideological and utopian features. Horkheimer distinguishes these features through his historical-materialist interpretation of religion with the intention of preserving religion's conditional truths in a secular theory of society. As in the case of Feuerbach, whose method of interpretation transforms theology into anthropology, Horkheimer views the content of religion as the "psychic elaboration of earthly data."[18] When Feuerbach's methodological principle is incorporated into Marx's socio-historical analysis with its

interest in human emancipation from relations of domination, it becomes possible to interpret religion as a spiritualized historical record of the material suffering, needs, and desires of humankind.[19] Horkheimer's methodological approach is therefore one that demythologizes religious symbols following the initiatives of Feuerbach and Marx, but this demythologization is simultaneously intended to rescue the critical and utopian elements of religion--expressing dissatisfaction with earthly destiny and the hope for perfect justice and reconciliation--for a social theory that is seen as the replacement of religion in its opposition to earthly injustice at a time when religious consciousness is declining under the impact of secularization. Horkheimer attempts to ensure that the loss of religion does, indeed, leave its mark behind.[20]

Because Horkheimer's analysis of the symbolic and ideational contents of religion is undertaken with the purpose of differentiating these contents according to their ideological role in stabilizing relations of domination versus their emancipatory potential in challenging these relations, his approach offers the possibility of clarifying and preserving the critical and utopian elements of religion in a social theory motivated by an interest in creating a more just society. In this way, important theological elements can be freed from their confinement in a religious sphere that has been institutionally and intellectually

marginalized in modern society. If the process of secularization is irreversible, this procedure provides perhaps the only hope for retaining theological insights and recovering their effectiveness as a factor in directing social life.

Since, in Horkheimer's theory, the reality and nature of the Absolute is situated outside the limits of human knowledge, the question of the truth of religion becomes a purely anthropocentric one. Sociological explanation replaces metaphysical speculation and theological dogmatics as the approach for determining religious truth. In a Feuerbachian type of inversion, Horkheimer maintains that it is individual and social need that constitutes the truth of religion, and not independent religious truth that illuminates the person in need.[21] Religion contains truth insofar as it expresses human need--specifically, for Horkheimer, the need for justice and reconciliation--through its ideas and symbols. This need, and therefore the truth of religion, can be determined by a social theory concerned with human suffering and emancipation.

The strengths of Horkheimer's approach are considerable, especially for the philosophical and sociological study of religion. His approach implicitly presupposes the modern secular doubt that extends to the reality and knowledge of the Absolute, and thus begins by acknowledging the spiritual predicament of the twentieth

century. The extremity of this doubt is not diminished by *a priori* limitations, such as that maintained by Tillich, which permit theological affirmations. At the same time, however, the metaphysical skepticism reflected in Horkheimer's approach does not entail a positivistic rejection of, or indifference to the truth claims of religion. Rather, philosophical and socio-historical analysis is undertaken in order to salvage conditional truths from absolute claims that are, for many persons, no longer convincing. The transposition of theological motifs into the framework of social theory has two principal consequences. Extracted from a religious realm that is deemed to be receding under the impact of secularization, religious ideas can be retained in a form that is still widely comprehensible and may still have practical effect in a secularized society. Furthermore, the normative character of Horkheimer's approach provides a model for the study of religion that unites theoretical comprehension with practical intent. It challenges the philosophy of religion to be more than a logical and historical compendium of the categories and contents of religious thought, and the sociology of religion to go beyond a descriptive analysis of patterns of religious practice. In other words, it provides a model for the study of religion that embodies within itself a reflective, historical consciousness that makes it possible to distinguish those elements of the religious past

that need to be preserved for the sake of life in the increasingly secularized present.

The secular orientation of Horkheimer's approach to the study of religion, with its emphasis upon the critique of ideology, contains fruitful consequences for all scholars concerned with religion and society. However, this same approach is marked by a serious deficiency because of its predominantly materialist presuppositions. Because all religious contents are demythologized and rationalized, the question of an authentic divine-human encounter is precluded from the start. While Horkheimer's concept of rationality is, of course, much more comprehensive than the instrumental reason whose predominance he criticizes, it is not comprehensive enough to include potential knowledge of the Absolute within its scope. The highest truth claims of religion, pertaining to the reality and knowledge of the Absolute, cannot be adequately considered within an exclusively materialist dialectic since, on the basis of this orientation, mystical immediacy, like metaphysical speculation, is suspect. At best, religious assertions regarding the telos of the individual, history, and nature are considered to be pre-rational yearnings that can be perpetuated only in the form of hope without the certitude that pertains to knowledge. That these hopes can be incorporated into a secular social theory and thereby revitalized, Horkheimer has persuasively demonstrated.

Moreover, his analysis of the degeneration of religious faith into superstitious belief, fanaticism, and persecution, resulting from the repression of doubt, must not be forgotten. However, it remains questionable whether his own epistemological and methodological approach is sufficient by itself and whether it is the only valid one.

A theory of religion that seeks to do justice to its subject matter must at least leave open the question of the possibility of human knowledge of the Absolute, however partial and conditioned such knowledge is considered to be. This does not mean that claims to such knowledge are exempt from critique; criteria are necessary, for religious participants as well as scholars, to distinguish true from false claims of religious experience. It does mean, however, that such claims cannot be considered false in principle, and therefore dismissed as being without significance for a theory of religion in the period of late modernity. Doubt regarding experiential knowledge of the Absolute is not yet certainty of its impossibility. The philosophical rationalization of religion prominent since the Enlightenment needs to be balanced by a consideration of mystical traditions if the complexity of religion is to be adequately examined for its contemporary significance.[22] The antipathy toward mystical, religious experience begs the question of its claim to knowledge. In order for this claim to be considered seriously, the possibility must be conceded

that there are different ways to knowledge. Accordingly, Horkheimer's approach to the study of religion would have to be fundamentally revised and expanded in order to permit consideration on a theoretical level of possibilities that the secular theorist admits to be outside his or her personal experience.

I.B. Critique of False Religion

Fundamental convergencies can be found between Tillich's and Horkheimer's critiques of religion. While Tillich's critique tends to be more philosophically abstract and Horkheimer's more historically specific, common criticisms can be discerned. Tillich's discussion of false religion in connection with the concepts of "demonization" and the recurrence of idolatry has its parallel in Horkheimer's argument concerning the idolatrous and ideological perversion of religion, the false reconciliation of divine and earthly principles, for the sake of religion's self-preservation and self-aggrandizement in the world.[23] Similarly, both Tillich and Horkheimer oppose heteronomous, conservative and authoritarian tendencies in religion, as well as its liberal assimilation and subservience to secular culture.[24]

Before analysing the importance of these criticisms, it is worth emphasizing that these points of agreement

between Tillich and Horkheimer arise from two different theories that are religious and secular in their respective orientations. This suggests that, despite terminological and conceptual differences between the two theories, there are, at a rudimentary level, certain criteria of true religion that are shared by both the religious and the secular theorist. If this consensus can be demonstrated, then a crucial area of agreement for the study of religion from diverse theoretical and personal orientations will appear to be a promising possibility.

Hans Küng has postulated three criteria for the determination of true religion, the first two of which may be helpful in comparing the presuppositions behind Tillich's and Horkheimer's critiques of religion.[25] The first of these is what Küng calls the "general ethical criterion," which expresses the genuinely human element of religion. If religion cannot be restricted to this human element, the latter is, nonetheless, an indispensable part of true religion. To summarize concisely Küng's positive and negative formulations of this criterion, insofar as a religion "protects, heals and fulfills human beings" in their identity and existence, it is true and good, and "can with reason invoke 'the divine'"; insofar as a religion "oppresses, injures, and destroys human beings in their physical and psychic, individual and social humanness," it is false and bad, and "cannot with reason invoke 'the

divine.'"[26]

It is readily evident that this criterion is implicitly present in the critiques of both Tillich and Horkheimer. When Tillich speaks of the demonization of religion and its consequences--the suppression of doubt and criticism, and the brutality of religious wars--when he attacks the hypostatized authority of heteronomous religion that destroys a person's autonomous self-affirmation, and when he condemns the adaptation of religion to the manipulative trends of modern society, he is judging as false and unethical a religion that damages human beings instead of healing them.[27] Similarly, when Horkheimer decries the church's participation in political domination and physical oppression, and its sanctification of unjust conditions, when he refers to the Crusades, the Inquisition, and witch-burnings, and when he exposes the hypocritical religiosity and morality of bourgeois society, he is giving testimony to this same human and ethical criterion of true religion.[28]

Küng's second criterion is what he designates as a "general religious criterion," which refers to the original or canonical elements of a religion that constitute its normative standard and determine its authenticity. This criterion is used to judge a particular religion according to the doctrine and practice prescribed by its sacred texts and also, in some cases, according to the model provided by

its normative figure, or founder.[29] Again, both Tillich and Horkheimer in their critiques of religion and their interpretations of specific religions utilize this type of criterion, and both also derive from it a general principle that they consider normative for all true religion.

As has been noted, Tillich's determination of the truth of religion makes an appeal to what he regards as normative and canonical contents of Judaism and Christianity. His view of Judaism as the religion that expresses most radically the monotheistic struggle of God against idolatry and injustice, and his interpretation of Jesus' crucifixion as representing Christianity's negation of the finite for the sake of the Infinite are not only considered normative standards by which to judge these two religions, but also form the basis for the general religious principle that Tillich advocates for determining the truth of any religion. This is the radical distinction that is maintained between the Absolute, toward which religion in its fundamental meaning as ultimate concern is directed, and religion as a particular historical and symbolic expression of this concern. A religion is true insofar as it relativizes itself and affirms the Unconditional as such; insofar as it fails to do this, it succumbs to the temptation of idolatry and is untrue.[30]

In Horkheimer's critique of religion, reference is also made to intrinsic, normative contents of a religion

that are considered original or canonical. Thus, for example, Horkheimer's conception of Judaism as a religion opposed to idolatry and injustice is determined by the Decalogue's prohibition of images and the hope for reconciliation and justice expressed especially in the texts of the prophets.[31] Likewise, his immanent critique of Christianity measures Christianity's perversions according to the model of self-sacrificing love and the spirit of ethical freedom and non-conformity exemplified by its founder.[32] Moreover, for Horkheimer, as for Tillich, the general religious criterion by which to judge the truth of a religion, influenced by his normative interpretations of Judaism and, to a lesser extent, Christianity, is its adherence to the boundary between the Absolute and the relative.

It is evident, then, that Tillich and Horkheimer share certain criteria for the evaluation of religion and the distinction of its true and false manifestations. Without claiming too much for this agreement, or intending to obscure the differences between the two thinkers, the fundamental consensus that emerges with respect to general ethical and religious principles does indicate a basis in the study of religion for open and honest mediation between religious and secular viewpoints.[33]

Returning to Tillich's and Horkheimer's criticisms of false religion, these can be analyzed as three major types.

The first, stemming from their insistence upon the boundary between the Absolute and the relative, is the critique of idolatry. The significance of this critique can hardly be overstated, since it expresses opposition against not only the self-absolutization of religions but also totalitarian political movements. In Tillich's thought this connection is made explicit, as his discussion of the demonization of what he calls "quasi-religions" extends his analysis of the demonic absolutization of religion, and his examination of authoritarian religion recognizes its compatibility with fascism.[34] In Horkheimer's thought, the connection becomes apparent as he exposes the ideological perversion of religion and its subservience to the state for the sake of earthly power, and observes the interchangeability of religious and political heteronomous authorities.[35] An acute awareness of the distinction between the earthly and the Transcendent permits both Tillich and Horkheimer to detect the idolatrous nature of human systems when they are invested with total authority, whether this occurs in the religious or political sphere. The general religious principle that condemns idolatry is a crucial point of resistance against religiously or politically inspired totalitarianism, and must be preserved.

Tillich's and Horkheimer's other major criticisms of false religion pertain to the relations between religion and secular culture. They reject both the conservative defense

of a heteronomous religion antagonistic toward secularism and the uncritical adaptation of religion to secular society.[36] Neither option can preserve the truths of religion in the period of advanced secularization.

The retreat into conservatism fails because it seeks to avoid rather than acknowledge the deep and widespread doubt in our society, and it cannot build bridges that encourage communication between the religious and the secular. It reinforces the marginalization of religion and must resort to authoritarian defenses against the struggle for autonomy that it finds threatening. At best, it becomes irrelevant to life in the secular world; at worst, it performs an ideological role in supporting unjust social relations and moulding submissive, manipulable personalities.

The liberal or pragmatic assimilation of religion to secular culture also leads to the demise of religion in modern society. It dilutes the claims of religion for the sake of compromise with, and acceptance by secular culture, but, in the process, it weakens the principles that could offer unequivocal resistance against destructive social tendencies. Whether it is Tillich's critique of the attempt to justify religion on the basis of its usefulness to society and the duplication of capitalism's techniques of mass persuasion in the religious sphere, or Horkheimer's analysis of attempts to make religion more palatable through

symbolic interpretation and acquiescence to contemporary politics and science, what is at issue is the surrender of religion as a source of freedom, non-conformity, and opposition to harmful trends in society. A religion that accommodates itself to mundane reality loses the critical distance and transcendent orientation that distinguish it from the secular sphere and provide the prophetic impulse to challenge injustice and change conditions for the better.

It would be fair to say that for both Tillich and Horkheimer, true religion is neither conservative nor liberal, but critical and dialectical. With a consciousness of the separation between the Absolute and the relative, it must uncompromisingly condemn every form of idolatry. With an understanding of its historical context, it must communicate with secular society in terms of the latter's own concerns and in a language comprehensible to the secular mind, while retaining its prophetic independence and opposition to the negative features of that society.

I. C. Normative Theories of Religion

If Tillich's and Horkheimer's critiques of religion reveal general points of agreement, their normative theories of religion, like their methodological approaches, disclose decisive differences. Several major aspects of these theories will be considered below.

An appropriate starting point is their fundamental definitions of religion. For Tillich, religion is essentially the state of being grasped by an ultimate concern.[37] In Horkheimer's theory, religion is the longing for the wholly Other.[38] Both of these definitions express the idea of a relation between the human and the Transcendent and they do so in language that is sufficiently detached from the familiar vocabularies of specific religious and theological traditions that they invite, rather than repel, the engagement of a secular mind that has become indifferent to, or suspicious of traditional religious language.

However, the types of relations that are expressed in these definitions, and elaborated in the discussions of Tillich and Horkheimer, contain significant differences. Tillich's concept of religion refers to a revelatory or faith experience that unites the subjective and the objective, an act that evinces the individual's concern for what is ultimate and the Ultimate itself that "grasps" the individual in his or her attitude of seriousness. There is a moment of contact suggested here in which the Ultimate is present to the individual, and in which the individual, despite the doubt inherent in faith, knows that the Ultimate is, and that the Ultimate is a living presence in the religious experience. Of this, according to Tillich, the individual is unconditionally certain.[39] Tillich's

definition of religion, rooted in the experience of faith, asserts existential knowledge of the Ultimate.

For Horkheimer, on the contrary, there can be no such cognitive certainty. His concept of religion refers, not to faith, but to hope--a hope that appears all the more desperate for its lack of grounding in any positive experience of revelation or illumination that would seem to justify it. In Horkheimer's theory, the relation between the human and the Transcendent exists, at this point, subjectively in the human mind alone. Its objective realization will occur only in the future, if at all. What can be found in our world is the individual's concern for what is ultimate; the Ultimate, itself, is not present here. Thus, whereas the religious relationship is articulated by Tillich in primarily metaphysical terms, it is conceived by Horkheimer as an exclusively metachronic one.[40]

This distinction is a crucial one, and it is rooted in the differences between Christian and Jewish, as well as religious and secular orientations. Tillich's contention that a relationship between the human and the Ultimate is a present reality in the finite world of our existence, although it is not fully realized here, reflects not only the general attitude of the religious participant, but also the specifically Christian conviction that this relationship has received its definitive expression and promise of abiding power through the event that he considers decisive

in the history of religion, the appearance of Jesus as the Christ. Horkheimer, on the other hand, shares with traditional Jewish thought the anticipation of the messianic appearance in the future, but, from a secular standpoint, would interpret even what Fackenheim calls the "root experiences" of Judaism as manifestations of religious interpretation and expectation, without the actual presence of the Absolute.[41]

Can there be an actual relationship between the Absolute and the human in the world, or is the Absolute accessible to the human being only as an idea and potential object of anticipation? The answer to this question cannot be determined scientifically, and it is also apparent that consensus cannot be achieved on the basis of argument and discussion, however much serious dialogue serves to promote self-criticism and to remove obstacles to an accurate understanding of the other's position. In the end, it is the individual who must give a personal answer to this question, seeking to integrate his or her life experiences into a coherent and meaningful interpretive framework. Accordingly, only a few speculations will be ventured here regarding the relevance of Tillich's and Horkheimer's concepts of religion for spiritual life today.

Tillich's definition of religion, with its suggestion of a real relationship between the Ultimate and the human being, undoubtedly exerts a great influence on many

practicing Christians in the established churches, but it probably also contains a special appeal for persons who, while having abandoned traditional religious practice and questioned orthodox teachings and language, retain an orientation toward transcendent meaning. Attempting to preserve an essentially religious interpretive framework to structure their experiences, they will find support in Tillich's concept of religion and the symbolic language associated with it. How effectively religion in the sense of ultimate concern can be sustained in the absence of communal religious practice remains uncertain, however. In view of Tillich's own argument that the directedness toward the Unconditional remains dependent upon the symbolic structures of particular religions,[42] increasing secularization threatens not only traditional religious life, but also religious consciousness outside the church. On the other hand, it is possible, as Küng suggests, that religion may achieve a renewed importance in the postmodern world.[43] If the predominance of the secular orientation should be effectively challenged through a critique of its limitations and the experience of disillusionment with strictly finite concerns, Tillich's conception of religion may play a role not only in supporting those persons who retain a religious interpretive framework, but also in assisting others to recover the "dimension of depth" that Tillich calls religion.

Horkheimer's concept of religion, expressing the abandonment of human beings in the world, strikes a pessimistic chord that many people, reflecting upon the events of our century and the prospects for the future of life on our planet, will recognize as true to our historical situation. Unable to find any evidence of the presence of the Absolute, and able to integrate their experiences only within a secular framework, they may, nonetheless, be inspired by Horkheimer's thought on religion to retain the longing for redemption and the protest against earthly conditions, rather than adopt an attitude of resignation. Horkheimer, himself, feared the loss of religion even as the longing for the wholly Other, in view of the technical progress and positivistic thought associated with secularization.[44] While this remains a possibility, it should hardly be considered a foregone conclusion. For the present at least, religion has not been entirely forgotten, and, with Horkheimer as a guide in this period of uncertainty, it may be more widely preserved in the form of hope rather than faith.

Inextricably linked with Tillich's and Horkheimer's interpretations of religion is a second aspect of their theories, namely, their responses to the question of God. To contrast these responses as concisely as possible, one could say that for Tillich God is real, while for Horkheimer God is an idea. This disagreement lies at the heart of the

conflict between religious and secular perspectives.

In Tillich's theory, the term God is the symbolic expression for ultimate reality, or Being itself. It is clear that, although he does not dismiss the symbol of a personal God entirely, Tillich wishes to avoid the identification of God with anthropomorphic conceptions of a deity that can be taken in a literalistic sense. It is also apparent, however, that by utilizing the philosophical term "Being," or variants such as the ground or power of being, he intends to establish the positive reality of God. God as Being is not to be confused with any particular existing thing, or with conceptions of God as a person, and yet this Being is supposed to be unconditionally real. This is the "God beyond God," the suprapersonal source and goal of existence.[45]

Without denying the impact of Tillich's thought in the ecclesia, his conception of God and his symbolic approach to religious language as a whole seem to be suitably formulated to attract and encourage persons who have become disaffected by traditional religious thought and language but are still moved by impulses that inspire the search for a transcendent dimension of life. Where biblical literalism and ecclesiastical authoritarianism stifle the development of the religious life, Tillich's deliteralization of symbols may liberate persons in their religious quest, including those who have been isolated from their religious

communities through the conflict between their personal experiences or intellectual development and the restrictive approach of a narrow-minded traditionalism. It is uncertain, however, what the idea of God as Being--a God who is real but cannot be said to exist--actually means for persons who lack Tillich's philosophical training. Can the conception of God in such terms actually provide a meaningful interpretation of the final referent of religion and sustain religious life?

Answers to this question will vary according to the personal experiences and perspectives of the respondents. Different persons will find one or another religious conception as corresponding more closely than others to their own experiences and as being more helpful than others in shaping an interpretive framework that adequately synthesizes these experiences. Regardless of the degree of meaningfulness that one might ascribe or deny to Tillich's conception of God as Being, the intentions behind it are valid. As Smith observes, the reference to God's being or reality in Tillich's thought is intended to avoid the problems that apply to the concept of existence in relation to God. Not only does the latter concept imply that God is a finite existent within a system, but it suggests a distinction between the existence and essence of God--elements that remain thoroughly united if God is understood as the creative ground of both.[46] Tillich thus

seeks to place discourse about God on a new level, one that, by avoiding the identification of God with a particular being, may prompt a reconsideration of religion in secular circles and promote the recovery of religious consciousness where it has previously been lost. At the same time, a cautionary note should be sounded. The term "God," because of the concrete associations that it has acquired in the history of Western religion, provides a meaning-laden reference point for any religious-secular dialogue that the term "Being" cannot replace, but only interpret. Nor does this interpretation automatically remove secular doubt; rather, it avoids misconceptions that make such doubt, for many persons, the only honest response.

In the theory of Horkheimer, the term "God" designates an idea that embodies the suffering and hopes of humankind, not a reality that can be known under the conditions of finitude. Whether there is a reality that corresponds to this idea is a question that cannot be decided on the basis of earthly existence. Reflecting upon the horrors of this existence, Horkheimer fears that there is no God, but he does not abandon the hope for God. The essence of his theory expresses this hope as the longing for the wholly Other.[47]

In referring to God by the phrase "the wholly Other" Horkheimer adopts the method of a negative theology. This designation is negative in a two-fold sense. First of all,

it continues the intention of Judaism to preserve the absolute otherness of God. God is not to be named or represented by the elements of finite reality, since God cannot be adequately comprehended or defined in human categories. Furthermore, the phrase is negative not only in a theological, but also in a socio-historical context. God as the wholly Other, while remaining undefined in a positive sense, represents the implicit antithesis of the misery and unjust conditions that we know in this world.

Like Tillich's use of the term "Being," Horkheimer's concept of "the wholly Other " refers to the final referent of religion in language that avoids the habitually repeated phrases of daily religious practice. Yet, Christians as well as Jews would recognize Horkheimer's concept of God as derived from the biblical teachings that emphasize God's absolute transcendence and non-identity with the world, although many, to be sure, would dispute his claim that God is absent from the world and cannot be known. Except for those who have made atheism a dogma, secularists who doubt God because of the unredeemed history of human suffering and the apparent victory of evil over good would find his discussion of God understandable and, perhaps, would share his hope for justice and reconciliation in spite of the course of history thus far.

While Tillich's concept of God emphasizes the metaphysical aspect of the idea, Horkheimer's emphasizes the

metahistorical one. This difference in emphasis is significant, and may well reflect, in part, the respective Christian and Jewish roots of the two thinkers. However, this difference is not an absolute one that permits no contact between the two positions. Tillich's concept of Being is not a static one and Being does not remain only an object of contemplation; it encompasses a historical dynamic in which its power breaks through the horizontal movement of history and into the lives of individuals and communities in revelatory moments. Conversely, Horkheimer's metahistorical concept of God also implies a metaphysical aspect, however strongly he repudiates traditional metaphysics; that which is, or may be beyond history is also beyond the physical world. This analysis does not obviate the fundamental distinction between the two concepts, but it suggests that they may not be as far apart as they initially appear to be. Furthermore, whether one is more inclined to agree with Tillich's or Horkheimer's position, both interpretations of God provide important points of reference for religious-secular dialogue.

A third aspect of Tillich's and Horkheimer's theories of religion that has significance for the understanding of religion in a secular age is the question of faith and atheism. On one level, Tillich generously affirms the legitimacy of atheism as a protest against theistic idolatry and heteronomous authority. However, this atheistic protest

is not really atheistic at all when considered in the light of Tillich's fundamental definition of religion, that of ultimate concern. Now the protest is viewed as religious, since, according to Tillich, ultimate concern is a universal characteristic of human existence and God can be denied only on the basis of this concern. Atheists inescapably express religious faith in spite of themselves and against their will.[48]

While one can appreciate Tillich's attempt to offer a positive evaluation of atheism and, in doing so, to remove barriers between believers and unbelievers, his approach to this question is not entirely satisfactory. It is problematic in two respects. The first of these concerns the practical implications for religious-secular dialogue of the claim that atheism is impossible on a fundamental level since serious denial of God expresses, paradoxically, the affirmation of God. Whether this claim represents more than the extrapolation of Tillich's own experience is unclear, but insofar as he interprets the doubt of not only the God of theism, but also of the Unconditional itself as the expression of religious concern, he is converting atheists into religious persons by definition. The unity that thus exists between believers and unbelievers is theoretically imposed from the religious side, rather than the potential result of dialogue between the two parties. The denial of the possibility of atheism, with its implication that the

religious theorist knows the secularist at a deeper level than the secularist knows himself or herself, suggests that the self-consciousness of the secularist is not granted the same degree of validity as that of the religious participant. This characteristic of the predetermination of unity may well lessen the likelihood of its actual achievement through communicative efforts, in the same way that an atheist's attempt to nullify in advance the real validity of another's religious self-understanding would tend to discourage rather than promote open communication.

The second problematic feature of Tillich's approach to atheism is the justifiability of the claim of universality for religious experience, a claim that functions as the premise for his denial of real atheism. Even if one accepts Tillich's view that the radical doubt of God or the Unconditional is essentially religious because of the serious attitude in which it is expressed, is the crucial element of seriousness necessarily universal? An attitude of indifference toward transcendent concerns is conceivable under the impact of secularization, and, in the view of some observers, this attitude may well be the prevailing one.[49] Indeed, Tillich's own comments regarding the loss of the religious dimension of depth in modern society and the predominance of finite and relative concerns suggest precisely the occurrence of this phenomenon, and therefore seem to contradict his claim that an atheistic

orientation is fundamentally impossible.[50]

At the same time, however, there is an important element of validity in Tillich's approach, and this consists in the effort to discern the essence of religion in the secular, as well as the religious sphere, which remains perhaps his most distinctive and creative contribution to the theory of religion. The insights derived from such an analysis and the breadth of its application appear to be too important simply to be abandoned. Tillich's analysis of quasi-religions in the political realm, for example, provides an illustration of the illuminating capacity of this approach.[51] In view of the marginalization of religion as an institution in secular society, Tillich's suggestion that religious impulses have been transferred to the secular sphere provides scholars with a promising point of departure for the study of religion at this stage in our history.

Horkheimer's treatment of faith and atheism also seeks to build bridges between believers and unbelievers, but it does not attempt to convert one group into the other by definition. Proceeding from a historical analysis rather than a philosophical assumption, Horkheimer recognizes that both groups have been responsible for good and for evil, and he judges them in terms of their courageous non-conformity and opposition to earthly injustice versus their acquiescence to whatever powers happen to be dominant.

While he is inclined to think that, under the threat of totalitarianism, theism offers a greater promise of resistance than atheism, perhaps because of the dominance of secular groups in most contemporary states, his concern is to promote a solidarity of all persons who recognize prevailing conditions as unjust and wish to change them. The longing that the evil of earthly reality not be ultimate is to transcend the differences between religious and secular persons and to unite them in a common practice.[52]

Horkheimer's discussion of religious faith and atheism displays an ecumenical attitude from a secular perspective. Distinctions between the two are not denied, but relativized in relation to the shared responsibility of believers and unbelievers in struggling to create a more humane society. The task that he assigns to both groups is to preserve the religious impulse for change grounded in the longing for the wholly Other.

Horkheimer's effort to build solidarity between believers and unbelievers through the recognition of common interests entails the necessity of open and honest communication between the two parties. One can expect antagonistic reactions to this proposed solidarity from both sides, however. Fundamentalists who believe that religious truth can be protected only through complete opposition to secular society and dogmatic atheists who regard all religion as false will resist what they would regard as a compromise with the other side. Nevertheless, Horkheimer's

theory may stimulate the consciences of believers and unbelievers alike. Thoughtful believers can recognize that if they claim more for religion than does Horkheimer, their faith at least includes the longing for a still unconsummated redemption and entails the resolve to act in accordance with that hope. Critical unbelievers are encouraged to acknowledge that their conviction of humankind's abandonment does not invalidate the desire for justice, freedom and reconciliation that has formed the core of Western religion; rather, it accentuates the urgency of ameliorating earthly misery and oppression. Horkheimer's thought supports the kind of solidarity that can already be witnessed in various manifestations, even if the forces against it appear to be stronger.[53]

Finally, this section concludes with a consideration of Tillich's and Horkheimer's views on religion in a secular society and its prospects for the future. Tillich's analysis of the relation between religion and secular culture exhibits, from a religious orientation, a critical and appreciative attitude toward the secular realm. Under the conditions of human estrangement from the ultimate ground of meaning, both religious and secular institutional spheres are seen as necessary and serve to criticize the distortions of essential human life to which each of them is prone--religion's heteronomous and authoritarian claims to possess absolute truth and meaning, and secular culture's

pursuit of autonomous self-sufficiency and disregard of the transcendent dimension of life. It is Tillich's hope that this mutual criticism may prepare the conditions for the appearance of a new theonomous society, a society oriented toward the Unconditional and in which the meaning of the Unconditional suffuses every aspect of finite reality. In the meantime, it appears to be the privilege and task of the theorist to discern the import of unconditional meaning in the secular, as well as the religious realm.[54]

In view of the impact of secularization, it is especially the secular realm that interests Tillich and stimulates his efforts to interpret its religious significance. Not only does he find the manifestation of the unconditional character of religion to be more powerful when it appears in the secular sphere, but it is upon secular culture that he stakes his hope for the preservation of religion as ultimate concern. It is true that Tillich recognizes the threat to religion posed by the advance of secularization, and his speculations on the future of religion exhibit less confidence and thoroughness than is characteristic of his thought. However, it is from the negative cognitions and protesting attitude arising from secular consciousness, as well as from his interpretation of human nature as caught in the tension between finitude and infinity, that he derives his hope for the endurance of the religious orientation, the directedness toward unconditional

meaning.[55]

Horkheimer's view of the relation between religion and secular society emphasizes, from a secular perspective, the necessary and irreplaceable role of religion in human life. In his judgment, morality, meaning, and the individual's autonomy can only be grounded in the longing for the wholly Other, not in a positivistic secularism. Horkheimer seriously doubts that religion can survive as an institutional sphere; the advance of secularization is deemed to be irreversible. In order to resist the manipulated, meaningless, and standardized mode of existence that he foresees in a totally administered society, however, he attempts to preserve in secular consciousness the religious impulses that can relativize earthly existence and challenge the idolatrous elevation of the finite. It is the duty of the critical theorist, at this historical juncture, to secure the mindfulness of the religious hope for perfect justice and happiness, as well as the Enlightenment's goal of a free, rational and responsible life.[56]

In considering the future of society, Horkheimer fears that the process of secularization will dissolve not only the institutional sphere of religion, but also the essence of religion, the yearning for the Absolute. He does voice the faint hope that this yearning may endure even in the fully bureaucratic and regulated society that he anticipates, if the satisfaction of material needs serves to

produce an acute awareness of human finitude and the absence of ultimate fulfilment. Yet, the tenuity of this hope provides little solace. Rather, Horkheimer accentuates the negative features of a religionless society in order to provoke human efforts against the complete disappearance of the Transcendent from thought and memory.[57]

It is significant that both Tillich and Horkheimer identify the secular realm as the locus for the resurgence or preservation of religious motivations. Expecting the demise of religion as an institutional sphere, Horkheimer wishes to retain and transpose religious ideas into secular consciousness, and thereby to prevent the final triumph of the positivistic rationalization of thought and the unreflective subservience of individuals to the orders of a fully regulated social system. Aware of the serious erosion of the religious dimension of life and critical of superficial attempts at revival in the religious sphere, Tillich finds in the works of secular persons negative expressions of ultimate concern that may presage the recovery of a positive religious awareness and orientation. For both thinkers, the future of the essence of religion depends on its manifestation in secular consciousness.

In spite of the differences between their prognoses for the survival of the essence of religion--Tillich remains more confident than Horkheimer that the directedness toward the Transcendent will survive the decline of religion as an

institutional sphere--their agreement upon the central importance of the relation between the religious and the secular is instructive for a theory of religion in the postmodern world. Whether Tillich or Horkheimer will be proven to be more correct in his interpretation of the historical trajectory of this relation must presently be left an unresolved question. The strong arguments that can be made on either side appear, finally, to be rooted in attitudes of faith and doubt regarding the presence of the Absolute in the world. The affirmation of this presence speaks in favour of the likelihood of human beings continuing to be grasped by and directed toward it, even if the experience is not always understood in explicitly religious terms. If, however this presence is denied in the world and religious hopes rest entirely upon the mnemonic and critical efforts of the human mind, then the threat to transcendent impulses constituted by the preoccupation with technical progress and strictly immanent concerns becomes more grave.

For the theorist of religion, the contradiction represented by these attitudes does not obviate the possibility of mediation between them, regardless of the personal conviction of the theorist. Despite Tillich's discernment of latent religious content in the secular sphere, the aporetic features of his own thought regarding the survival of religion[58] suggest that there is no real

guarantee that the negative protests against meaninglessness voiced by secular consciousness will produce a new positive orientation toward the Transcendent and a shift toward a theonomous society. The survival of religion as ultimate concern presupposes the participation of both the Unconditional and the human in a revelatory experience. If the manifestation of the Unconditional cannot be controlled by the human through an experience that can be attained through an act of will, and if the historical transformation of human consciousness diminishes its receptivity to such an experience to the degree that the Unconditional itself is doubted, then it is possible that the experience of ultimate concern may itself disappear. Surely, Tillich's whole attempt to reinterpret religion in terms comprehensible to the modern secular mind is motivated, in part, by the recognition of the precariousness of authentic religious consciousness due to the contradiction between increasingly scientific thought patterns and the literalistic interpretation frequently accompanying the teaching of traditional religious ideas.[59] The scope and persistence of his efforts attest to the urgency that he accords this task, which Horkheimer identifies with nothing less than the struggle to preserve the positive moments of Western culture.[60] As the experience of ultimate concern recedes in secularized society, at least insofar as it is interpreted as a positive relation between the human and

the Transcendent, Tillich speaks of the loss of the religious dimension in life, diagnoses and tries to alleviate the widespread anxiety of meaninglessness arising from this loss, and occasionally refers, not to the positive experience of the presence of the Unconditional, but to the experience of a spiritual void and the necessity of waiting and looking toward the future for a positive manifestation of the Absolute.[61]

If Tillich's analysis provides no certitude of the survival of religion , neither does Horkheimer's speculation regarding its disappearance augur an inevitable occurrence. Horkheimer's presupposition of the absence of the wholly Other as a reality in our world may represent the experiential situation of an increasing majority in secularized society, but it does not disprove the possibility of a genuine religious consciousness and faith even at this stage in Western history. Moreover, Horkheimer, like Tillich, would have to admit that where the question of the ultimate meaning or meaninglessness of existence is still raised, a residue of religious longing remains in the secular mind. While Horkheimer fears that this residue may soon be lost, his attempt to preserve it connects him more closely with believers who share his critical attitude toward the world as it exists than it does with unbelievers who remain indifferent to the loss of religion and complacent about the ominous course that modern

society has been following.[62] The appeal to the wholly Other as a negative concept, as Horkheimer notes, was motivated by the interests of a critical and secular social theory. Although he never asserts the reality of this Other, he is not content for it to remain only an idea, but seriously hopes for the redemption that its religious origin signifies.[63]

II. Conclusion: Toward a Theory of Religion for the Postmodern World

With a consciousness of themselves as living in the period of late modernity, both Tillich and Horkheimer sought to articulate a theory of religion appropriate to the conditions of their time and to defend the essential substance of religion which they considered necessary for a truly human existence. If we are now entering a new stage in Western history, which can provisionally be called "postmodern," this certainly does not imply a severance of our connection with modernity. It does imply, however, the occurrence of a critical re-examination, diffuse and multi-faceted, of the course of modernity, a critique to which Tillich and Horkheimer have both contributed. Just as the developments associated with modernity remain with us while the events of our century, such as the unprecedented capacity of the human species to destroy our world through

nuclear annihilation or the synergetic effect of environmental abuses, rupture the continuity of Western history and challenge its intellectual and moral foundations, so the teachings of Tillich and Horkheimer offer valuable points of reference as we consider our present situation and the future prospects of life in our world.

Not the least of Tillich's and Horkheimer's contributions resides in their theories of religion. The efforts to understand and shape social life in the postmodern world, premised upon a thorough critique of the dominant tendencies of modernity, requires the active participation of scholars in many fields, including religion. As scholars engage in the construction of a theory of religion appropriate to a changing historical context, they can benefit from the work of Tillich and Horkheimer. The comparative critique of their theories in this chapter has attempted to indicate the major strengths and weaknesses of these theories with respect to the normative interpretation of religion in our historical situation. In spite of the specific criticisms that have been made, and apart from the particular insights that these theories offer, they are exemplary in the effort to mediate, from the standpoint of conflicting orientations, between the religious and the secular, and, in a deeper unity, to retain, as a genuinely human impulse, the thought of the

Transcendent against the despair of our finite existence and the experience of spiritual destitution prevalent in our century.

Notes

[1] Emil L. Fackenheim, "These Twenty Years: A Reappraisal," in Quest for Past and Future: Essays in Jewish Theology (Bloomington and London: Indiana University Press, 1968), p. 3.

[2] Walter Benjamin, "Theses on the Philosophy of History," in Illuminations, trans. Harry Zohn, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken Books, 1969), pp. 257-58.

[3] This contention is only seemingly contradicted by the opening paragraphs found in John E. Smith, Experience and God (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), pp. 3-4, where Smith observes that the predominant attitude toward religion in recent decades "has been chiefly one of indifference." He accounts for this attitude as the result of a mutual failure of communication between religious and secular consciousness, between an understanding of what the "religious dimension of life" actually means and an understanding of "the modern world, its political and social institutions, its technological organization, and the basic intellectual framework that determines the thinking of the secular mind." While the widespread attitude of indifference toward religion is a problem in itself and needs to be addressed, it remains preliminary to the difficulties--equally serious, if not more so--that arise in the genuine confrontation between the historical contents of religion and the modern world, as in the thought of Tillich and Horkheimer, and which are accompanied by attitudes that are anything but indifferent.

[4] Of relevance in this context is Rudolf Siebert's observation that the Western Enlightenment tradition has neither fulfilled nor removed the human need for consolation in the face of the horrors of our time. See Rudolf J. Siebert, The Critical Theory of Religion, The Frankfurt School: From Universal Pragmatic to Political Theology, Religion and Reason, 29 (Berlin, New York, Amsterdam: Mouton, 1985), p. xi.

[5] Cf. Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp. 273-80; and Hannah Arendt, "What is Authority?" in Between Past and Future: Eight Exercises in Political Thought (1968; rpt. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin, 1977), pp. 94-95.

[6] Cf. José Casanova, "The Politics of the Religious Revival," Telos, No. 59 (Spring 1984), pp. 4-6; Smith, Experience and God, pp. 59-60, 180-98; Jürgen Habermas, Reason and the Rationalization of Society, Vol. 1 of The Theory of Communicative Action, trans. Thomas McCarthy

(Boston: Beacon, 1984), pp. 346-50; and Mircea Eliade, The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion, trans. Willard R. Trask (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Janovich, 1959), pp. 13, 17, 178-79, 201-13.

[7] Cf. Hannah Arendt, "Tradition and the Modern Age," in Between Past and Future, pp. 26-27.

[8] Where the term "postmodern" is used in this chapter it is intended in Küng's sense as a heuristic concept that emphasizes the crisis of modernity and the uncertainty of a transitional period in our history. It is not intended to suggest an abandonment of modernity or the goals of the Enlightenment in favour of a return to premodern conditions, but to indicate the necessity of a critical examination of modernity and the possibility of recovering dimensions of experience or themes for reflection that havebeen largely neglected. See Hans Küng, Theology for the Third Millenium: An Ecumenical View, trans. Peter Heinegg (New York: Doubleday, 1988), esp. pp. 1-11, 175-77, 197-99.

[9] See ch. 1, pp. 9-14 and n. 26.

[10] See ch. 1, pp. 29-30.

While at many points in agreement with Tillich, Smith, in Experience and God, pp. 51-53, argues that experience of God must always be mediated and interpreted, and thus rejects the immmediacy found in mysticism as well as in Tillich's theory. However, this tenet of Smith's "radical empiricism," (p. 12) dissolves precisely the self-evident certainty that Tillich claims for the reality of the Holy in the revelatory situation.

[11] For a helpful discussion of the ontological approach in philosophy of religion that examines this argument for God in the context of its religious intentions and experiential basis, see Smith, Experience and God, pp. 122-34. Smith (p. 156) concurs with Tillich that the ontological approach is essential, if not sufficient, for a philosophy of religion that seeks to preserve the possibility of encounter with God.

[12] Cf. Emil Fackenheim, God's Presence in History: Jewish Affirmations and Philosophical Reflections (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1972), pp. 41-45. While Fackenheim argues, in agreement with the line of argumentation developed above, that faith and secularism are mutually irrefutable, his representation of the secularist position, although accurate with respect to some secularists, does not recognize the possibility of a secularist who may be "open to the possibility of a divine Presence even if that Presence is not actual" (p. 44) rather than resort to a

crude explanation of religious faith in psychological or other terms, which Fackenheim labels "subjectivistic reductionism." At the root of Fackenheim's treatment of secularism appears to be the radical opposition that he asserts between "existence" and "experience" as concepts for the interpretation of religion, in which the former is defended and the latter denigrated as mere subjectivity. See, for example, Emil Fackenheim, "In Praise of Abraham, Our Father," in Quest for Past and Future, p. 62. However, this way of contrasting religious and secular interpretations of religion is not very helpful in attempting to overcome the split between religious and secular consciousness. Not only is the limitation of experience to mere subjectivity inadequate, but it is also difficult to conceive of a religious existence without some sort of experiential basis. Conversely, a secular existence that remains open to the possibility of a religious experience that has not yet occurred should be considered as an actual option for persons outside the revelatory situation. The choice is not necessarily between nihilism and faith, as Fackenheim claims.

[13] Regarding Smith's position, see Experience and God, pp. 22, 51-53. For Tillich's view of the symbolic mediation of the Holy, see ch. 1, pp. 42-46.

[14] Cf. Arendt, The Human Condition, pp. 275-77.

[15] Tillich acknowledges, of course, the doubt that applies to the God of theism, but this God is not viewed as ultimate reality. Beyond this God is the suprapersonal God, or Being, the power of which is unconsciously affirmed even in despair over meaninglessness, presumably short of suicide, and this affirmation is essentially religious. See Tillich, The Courage to Be, esp. pp. 155-90.

This shifts the problem of doubt to another level but does not resolve it, unless one accepts Tillich's ontological approach. It is still possible to doubt whether there is anything ultimate at all.

[16] Cf. Tillich's statement, ch. 1, p. 13.

[17] See ch. 2, pp. 83-85, 98-102.

[18] See ch. 2, p. 97. Cf. Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, trans. George Eliot (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1957).

[19] See ch. 2, pp. 93-94.

[20] See ch. 2, pp. 95-96.

[21] See ch. 2, n. 107.

[22] The antagonism of rationalistic philosophy of religion toward mysticism is called into question by Gershom G. Scholem, in Major Trends in Jewish Mysticism, 3rd. rev. ed. (1954; rpt. New York: Schocken Books, 1961), pp. 1-39. Scholem's observations that mysticism represents a historical stage of religious consciousness that recognizes the gulf between the finite and the Infinite, and that both mystics and rationalist philosophers appear within Judaism once naive and unreflective religious life has become problematic, are sufficient to indicate that both mysticism and philosophy are responses to common religious-epistemological problems, which become more acute with the secularization of society, and that a theory of religion which seeks to mediate between religious and secular consciousness must seriously take into account the mystical option.

[23] See ch. 1, pp. 15-17, and ch. 2, pp. 104-111, respectively.

[24] See ch. 1, pp. 17-22, and ch. 2, pp. 113-119.

[25] See Küng, pp. 240-53. Writing as an ecumenical theologian, Küng formulates his third criterion in such a way that it addresses the Christian's approach to other religions, and does not relate directly to the purposes of the present comparative study of Tillich's and Horkheimer's theories. Also, Küng's second criterion is extended somewhat in its application to Tillich and Horkheimer in order to reflect their greater concern, as philosophers, with the principles ascribed to all true religion rather than with identifying the specific canonical elements of particular religions, which has been more directly the task of the theologian or scholar of comparative religion.

[26] Küng, p. 244. For a more extensive discussion of this criterion, see pp. 240-45.

[27] See ch.1, pp. 15-22.

[28] See ch. 2, pp. 104-111.

[29] See Küng, pp. 245-47.

[30] See ch. 1, pp. 30-36.

[31] See ch. 2, pp. 81-85.

[32] See ch. 2, pp. 103-13.

[33] This agreement demonstrates common ground between

Christian and Jewish, religious and secular orientations embodied by two men who share, to a large extent, the same historical, cultural, and intellectual heritage. To what extent this level of agreement could embrace Eastern, as well as Western, representatives is a question that will simply be left open here.

[34] See ch. 1, pp. 15-16, 19-20, 41-42.

[35] See ch. 2, pp. 104-111, 114-115.

[36] See ch. 1, pp. 17-22 , and ch. 2, pp. 113-119.

[37] See ch. 1, p. 23.

[38] See ch. 2,pp. 119-120.

[39] See ch. 1, pp. 24-30.

[40] See ch. 2, pp. 121-127 and n. 96.

[41] Cf. Fackenheim, God's Presence in History, pp. 8-16.

[42] See ch. 1, pp. 23-24.

[43] Cf. Küng, p. 10.

[44] See ch. 2, pp. 131-32, 139-40.

[45] See ch. 1, pp. 46-49.

[46] See Smith, Experience and God, pp. 118-19; and ch. 1, p. 47.

[47] See ch. 2, pp. 121-125, 127.

[48] See ch. 1, pp. 25, 50-51.

[49] Cf. Smith, Experience and God, p. 3.

[50] See ch. 1, pp. 52-54.

[51] See ch. 1, pp. 41-42.
Another fertile realm for the application of this type of analysis is art. See, for example, Tillich, The Courage To Be, pp. 142-48.

[52] See. ch. 2, pp. 132-36.

[53] The peace and environmental movements, self-

determined community organization and development efforts against the interests of multinational corporations and national elite groups, the campaigns to end apartheid in South Africa and human rights abuses worldwide, and expressions of opposition to superpower interference in the affairs of weaker states are some examples of the co-operative struggle of religious and secular persons against social injustice and evil--a struggle that derives from and strengthens human solidarity.

[54] See ch. 1, pp. 36-40.

[55] See ch. 1, pp. 40-41, 51-56.

[56] See ch. 2, pp. 136-45.

[57] See ch. 2, 131-32, 139-40.

[58] See ch. 1, pp. 54-55, and nn. 139, 140.

[59] See ch. 1, pp. 43-44.

[60] See ch. 2, p. 126.

[61] See Tillich, "The Lost Dimension in Religion," pp. 13, 18-19; Tillich, The Courage To Be, pp. 46-51, 61-63, 171-90; Tillich, "Religion and Secular Culture," pp. 66-67; and Paul Tillich, "Waiting," in The Shaking of the Foundations (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1948) pp. 149-52.

[62] See ch. 2, pp. 132-33.

[63] While it is unquestionable that Horkheimer shares Adorno's appreciation of the philosophical implications of the idea of redemption, it is extremely unlikely, considering his preoccupation with religion in his later years and his occasional formulation of its essence as the hope that the murderer may not triumph over the innocent victim, that he would give his personal agreement to Adorno's claim that the reality or unreality of redemption is of little significance. See ch. 2, n. 157.

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