TRUTH IN RELIGION: A POLANYIAN APPRAISAL OF WOLFHART PANNENBERG'S THEOLOGICAL PROGRAM

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Abstract. This essay attempts to explore the senses in which religious meanings may be understood to be grounded ontologically and in which they may be validly accepted as true. It begins by outlining Wolfhart Pannenberg's proposal for conceiving the scientific status of theology and his formulation of the question of theological truth. Then certain epistemological presuppositions are challenged in light of Michael Polanyi's theory of knowledge. Finally a revised understanding is proposed in Polanyian terms. Here in their primordial sense religious meanings are based in the act of breaking out toward the ground of our tacit foreknowledge. In their primary sense religious symbolizations are accepted as human creations and judged to be valid insofar as they integrate meaningfully all the disparate elements of our experience.

Ever since the cultural ascendency of modern science, the status of religious claims has become problematic in certain specifiable ways. By the eighteenth century the mechanistic picture of the universe as a self-sufficient totality rendered the "God-hypothesis" unnecessary. During the nineteenth century Charles Darwin's proposals removed the "spiritual" dimension of human life as a special preserve for religion. The critiques of Ludwig Feuerbach, Karl Marx, and later, Sigmund Freud continued the assault by providing genetic accounts of the origin of religious beliefs that presumed to explain their origins in intraworldly terms. Intellectual forces such as these coalesced with the Enlightenment's scepticism toward traditional authority and helped to shape, in great measure, the unexpressed background of modern secular consciousness of religion. This awareness was shaped by the implicit beliefs that the world of empirical experience, including

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human life itself, could be understood on its own terms and that sociological and psychological factors gave rise to religious aspirations. Within such a context it is not at all surprising that many thinkers have come to view the putative "transcendent referents" of religious claims as an ephemeral mist of precritical ignorance or superstition.

Admittedly, this bleak portrayal merely encapsulates the extreme posture that may be adopted toward religion in the modern context. Nevertheless, the challenge to the integrity of religious life is real and theologians from Friedrich Schleiermacher to Paul Tillich have used a variety of conceptual systems to refute (or perhaps simply to circumvent) these objections.

One such conceptual system whose implications are currently being developed by some theologians is Michael Polanyi's theory of personal knowledge. Many of Polanyi's insights seem to provide conceptual tools which would enable one to articulate and defend the meaning and validity of religious claims. His theory maintains, for example, that all forms of knowing are based on an integration of subsidiarily known particulars from which we attend in order to focus on a whole, that this implies a hierarchically structured reality, and that ultimately our thought is grounded in indemonstrable commitments or beliefs—faith in a broad sense. All that need be done, presumably, would be to extrapolate consistently from his thought to a theory which would give rational support for religious belief.

Recently, however, Harry Prosch, who collaborated with Polanyi in preparing *Meaning* for publication, has expressed some reservations concerning the propriety of a theological extension of Polanyi's thought.[1] The point Prosch is making, if I understand him correctly, is that a theological use of Polanyi's thought typically fails to take into account certain subtle distinctions made by Polanyi and that this failure leads to conclusions that are unwarranted on the basis of his thought.

The basic distinction Prosch points to is between the kinds of meaning we have in scientific knowledge and in "works of the imagination" such as symbols, art, literature, and religion.[2] Other distinctions in Polanyi's thought are associated with these two kinds of meaning. Scientific hypotheses are subject to verification, whereas the realms of mathematics, religion, or the arts are more properly accepted by a process of validation.[3] The integration by which we perceive a physical object is "self-centered" insofar as the thing is seen from the self as a center to the object of our focal attention, whereas a symbolization is "self-giving" insofar as the self is integrated by being carried away by the symbol.[4] Integrations of particulars in science are "natural" in that once discerned we can use them quite readily in our mundane con-

cerns, whereas those of art and religion are "transnatural" in that the integrated particulars here remain incompatible unless joined together by a new act of our imagination every time we contemplate them.[5]

From these distinctions Prosch concludes that perception and scientific knowledge have as their object the discovery of the rational coherences in nature which exist independently of our knowing them. Works of the imagination, on the other hand, are created by us and through this activity become realities. Consequently works of the imagination cannot have the same ontological status as the natural coherences discerned by science, even though the same underlying structure of knowing is operating in both instances. Religion may be valid insofar as it enables us to attain more moving meanings, but it does not aim at discovering "deeper" realities, somewhat analogous to, though beyond the range of, scientific discoveries. Polanyi's intention in his discussion of art and religion, according to Prosch, was a quite modest one: it was to recall us to take seriously our traditional values, for it is only through a commitment to the meaningful world portrayed in the ideals of a free society that even the commitment to science could flourish. Our works of the imagination, including religion, are useful, perhaps even necessary, constructs which create a world of meaning that allows us to exist as responsible human beings. In this derivative, though important, sense they are real and may be valid if we can come to appreciate their meaning.[6]

There is evidence that what has just been characterized as Prosch's interpretation of the place of religion in Polanyi's thought may have been close to Polanyi's personal beliefs.[7] Nevertheless, the question concerning the status of religious meaning as it may be interpreted in a Polanyian perspective can only be settled by a more careful study of both religious phenomena and the internal structure of Polanyi's thought. The distinctions to which Prosch has drawn our attention and the questions he has raised in light of them invite such reflection.

In this essay I shall try to clarify certain aspects of the question of the status of religious meaning by means of an appraisal of Wolfhart Pannenberg's proposal concerning religious truth developed in his theological program. There are several reasons for this choice. Pannenberg's understanding of the meaning of historical events as discernable in the context of the history of the transmission of traditions has certain affinities to Polanyi's understanding of integration, although I have serious reservations concerning some of his epistemological presuppositions.[8] Further, since part of the issue involves an adequate analysis of religious phenomena, it should be instructive to examine how a leading Christian theologian formulates his understanding of the meaning of the Christian religion. Most significant for

our purposes is the fact that one of the major concerns of Pannenberg's theological program is to demonstrate the "objective truth" of Christianity.[9] I propose therefore to outline those features of Pannenberg's theology which are crucial to his formulation of the question of truth in religion. Then I shall assess some of Pannenberg's epistemological presuppositions in terms of Polanyi's theory. Finally I shall try to demonstrate how the question of religious truth may be formulated in a manner that is consistent within Polanyi's theory of personal knowledge and at the same time is structurally similar to an epistemologically revised understanding of Pannenberg's formulation.

Pannenberg's Formulation of the Status of Truth in Theological Inquiry

Early in his career Pannenberg outlined an ambitious vision of theology in his programmatic essay, "Dogmatic Theses on the Doctrine of Revelation."[10] His intention was to conceive the theological task in an open, rational way in contrast to what he took to be dogmatically closed or subjective views, which held theology to be discontinuous with other forms of knowledge (Karl Barth) or to be grounded in an uncritical existentialist self-understanding (Rudolf Bultmann). While this early proposal was dependent upon and expressed in terms of the results of certain exegetical scholarship, we can indicate its main elements independently for the sake of exposing the task of theology as Pannenberg understood it.

Revelation is to be understood, according to Pannenberg, as the indirect self-disclosure of God in history. Since it is thus historical, the claim of Christianity to be the bearer of divine revelation is open to any impartial historical investigation. In order for such an inquiry to be carried out, however, two of its important features must be recognized. First, the scope of this indirect self-revelation of God in history must be the totality of history or universal history. Obviously, the fact that we do not know, in any straightforward sense, the meaning of the totality of history requires that any event which may have unique revelatory significance (such as the history of Jesus of Nazareth) must be "proleptic," that is, it must anticipate the end of history without thereby closing history in the sense of predetermining it. Second, all historical events must be understood in the context of the "history of the transmission of traditions." This is to say that the meaning of events can only be discerned in the unfolding context of their histories, including their relation to some conception of universal history. These features must be taken into account in any objective historical inquiry that seeks to demonstrate the truth of Christianity's (or, in principle, any religion's) claims.

Essentially Pannenberg is arguing that we must base our knowledge of God—or more generally the truth claims of any religion—on the indirect evidence that is observable in the meaning of the actual unfolding of events. If this meaning "proves" itself in the process of historical development understood in a universal context, it is to be judged true. Pannenberg emphasizes that such judgments are made independently of any personal involvement of the inquirer in those events. His intention is to conceive the theological enterprise as fundamentally continuous with empirical science, though obviously taken in a more comprehensive sense which would allow theology to verify by the indirect evidence of historical events philosophical notions like a particular expression of the meaning of universal history.

The task Pannenberg set for himself in this early essay is truly monumental. It required nothing less than a demonstration that theology satisfied broadly conceived conditions of scientific inquiry. Pannenberg's response to this task is contained in a major work published in English under the title of *Theology and the Philosophy of Science*.[11] The first part of the book attempts to establish these points: First, the currently dominant understanding of natural science as portrayed by analytic philosophy requires an expanded notion of science and its methodology in order to account for the very meaning discovered by the scientific enterprise. Second, the methodology of the human sciences is not radically discontinuous from that of natural science; rather the expanded understanding of natural science itself shows that both operate in the same fundamental context of meaning with only appropriate emphases of aim and subject matter distinguishing their methodologies. Last, hermeneutics provides the overall methodology for understanding meaning and the fundamental operation of the scientific enterprise as such. The second part of this work, after surveying various historical conceptions of theology as a science, tries to demonstrate the scientific status of theology on the basis of this reconstructed understanding of scientific inquiry.

In order to appreciate Pannenberg's conception of theology, it is necessary that we sketch certain elements of his argument for his reconstruction. This sketch will be limited to aspects of the argument which, in my estimation, reveal important presuppositions in Pannenberg's thought that have a bearing on his conception of theology. It is not to be taken, therefore, as a synopsis of his whole argument, for that would include a broad range of issues far beyond our scope; rather, the sketch's more modest intention is to allow the overall coherence of his position to be discerned.

Pannenberg begins his assessment of the analytic tradition's understanding of science by indicating the inherent difficulties of logical positivism. Moving on to Karl R. Popper's "critical rationalism," Pan-

nenberg explores the problems involved in applying the principle of "falsifiability" as a criterion of meaning. Within the framework of critical rationalism "truth" functions as a "regulative principle" placed at the end of an indefinite process of inquiry. Such an understanding of truth has difficulty in establishing any correspondence between currently held scientific propositions and the state of affairs they putatively describe. This raises the question of how the falsifiability criterion can even be applied. An appeal to "observation statements" is meaningful only in a broader context—which, as Thomas Kuhn has shown through historical examples—may be rejected. Clearly, then, observation alone cannot be a sufficient criterion for the meaning of scientific assertions, because the very logic of science requires a consideration of "metaphysical" presuppositions about reality.[12] Pannenberg's analysis of the analytic view of science leads to the negative conclusion that, since truth is accessible only in anticipation, science cannot exclude the broader context of history nor, ultimately, of philosophy. An arbitrary exclusion of philosophy from the realm of science is self-defeating because only on some sort of conception of the totality of reality proposed by philosophy can the meaningfulness of science be theoretically established.[13]

The second phase of Pannenberg's argument is to demonstrate the structural unity of the "human sciences" with scientific knowledge in the context of hermeneutical theory, that is, a general philosophical theory for understanding the interpretation of meaning. The point is that Pannenberg wants to avoid any simple extension of an analytic view of natural science into the human sciences on the one hand, and a dualistic separation of methods into natural science and human science on the other. One strategy of this argument is to show that the attempt to establish the human sciences on an objectively conceived sociology (whether founded on patterns of actions or on interests/intentionality as objectified in culture) always presupposes a semantic context that is related to an implied totality of meaning. Consequently the "meaning" that is fundamental to sociology cannot be accounted for on sociological terms alone. A theoretical account of historical knowledge must be developed to ground the human sciences so conceived.[14] Another strategy of this argument includes critical analyses of various attempts proposed in recent times to distinguish the human and natural sciences on the basis of distinctive methodologies. One such appraisal deals with the dualism which contends that history tries "to understand" (*verstehen*) whereas science tries "to explain" (*erklären*). This dichotomy is inadequate for Pannenberg because both activities are types of a more basic process of systematic explanation "understood as the fitting of what is to be explained into its appropriate systematic framework. In historical explanation this system is

provided by the series of events, and in scientific explanation by the theoretical framework of a 'natural order'. . . ."[15] Similarly, there is no basis for distinguishing historical and hermeneutical explanation since all explanation is "the fitting of particulars into a whole which could provide a common basis for a theory of explanatory procedures in both hermeneutic and the natural sciences."[16]

With this Pannenberg believes he has achieved a sound preliminary analysis of scientific knowledge that consists in understanding meaning as the relationship of parts to wholes (or elements to systems) with appropriate modifications for subject matter and method for the various disciplines. The third phase of his argument, then, is to propose an interpretation of hermeneutics as the philosophical framework for understanding all meaning and thereby to provide a basis for a unitary view of knowledge. Pannenberg attempts this by means of a wide-ranging analysis of the contemporary German discussion of hermeneutics and critical theory. Our focus, to repeat, will be limited to a few features helpful for understanding Pannenberg's presuppositions and overall position.

A major issue that Pannenberg must face in the contemporary debate centering on philosophical hermeneutics is Hans-Georg Gadamer's contention that hermeneutics is not a "detached, objectifying" way of knowing but that its statements are always expressed in an implicit horizon of meaning derived from the tradition in which one stands.[17] While recognizing that this is correct, Pannenberg maintains Gadamer's development of this insight is problematic because it does not allow the full theoretical legitimacy of objectification in statements.[18] Pannenberg's concerns are directed particularly against the theological use to which this is put by Bultmann, Ernst Fuchs, and Gerhard Ebeling. These hermeneutical theologies use the notion of the "unexpressed horizon of meaning" to avoid objectifying statements by claiming to uncover the mode of existence presupposed in the tradition. Pannenberg points out, however, that objectifying statements are crucial for understanding the tradition and for conveying the meaning of its mode of existence. To restrict the complex function of language to its existential import is illegitimate, as recent developments in linguistic analysis have discerned.[19] Still, even in the later work of Ludwig Wittgenstein, "ordinary language" functions similarly to "tradition" in Gadamer's thought. Consequently Pannenberg must insist at this point that objectifying knowledge expressed in statements is necessary as a corrective to the tradition and for its social communication. Hence the objective content of a statement must be separable from the subject expressing it. Of course, the unexpressed horizon of meaning (in a tradition or language game) is normally presupposed. Where such understanding becomes problematic, there

must be further clarification, and thus further objectification, of the normally presupposed unexpressed horizon of meaning.[20]

A further element of Pannenberg's general argument consists in deploying some of the insights of critical theory, especially the thought of Jürgen Habermas, to counter the subjective interpretation of meaning implicit in an existentialist hermeneutic. Here Pannenberg tries to avoid the apparent circularity of hermeneutical arguments by distinguishing between the rather indeterminate preunderstanding of reality, which is presupposed in direct familiarity of social life, and the preconcept of reality, which is expressed with theoretical precision. "However much an existential relation with the matter with which the interpretation is concerned is presupposed in establishing the interpretation, the explicit preconcept always remains distinguishable from the matter as a hypothetical description of its structure."[21] Even though all meaning stands in a dialectical relationship of part to whole, hermeneutical analysis displays its inner logic by making explicit the implicit components of understanding. Contrary to Habermas's insistence that hermeneutics must be grounded in "life activity," Pannenberg maintains that this distinction allows hermeneutics to take into account all reality as it historically unfolds through ever more adequate expressions of it.[22] Further, it enables Pannenberg to hold that all meaning, whether understood in a referential or intentional sense, is dependent upon the contextual sense. Implicitly, at least, the whole is involved in every experience of particular meaning and is capable of precise, though incomplete, theoretical formulation in that semantic context.[23] This conception of meaning finally allows truth to be understood as both coherence and reference. The meaning expressed through the internal coherence of a semantic whole is true insofar as it embraces all experience. Alternatively, all assertions comprising systematic networks of meaning correspond to reality insofar as they anticipate truth by laying themselves open to refutation.[24]

Based on this understanding of meaning and truth, Pannenberg concludes the first part of his program by outlining a unitary view of knowing where every form of knowledge operates in some sort of relationship to the totality of meaning.[25] The natural sciences restrict their statements to formalized language and with this language offer hypotheses to be tested against specific kinds of empirical data. The historical disciplines similarly offer hypotheses which are tested not by falsification as such but by their ability to integrate the unique events examined into a meaningful whole. Philosophy, too, offers hypotheses, but these attempt to describe the totality of meaning that is implicitly present in philosophy's reflections and thus only partially defined with theoretical accuracy. Philosophical hypotheses are tested by their ability to integrate all actual experiences of meaning.

This foundation of a unified view of knowledge is assumed by Pannenberg, in order to allow him, in the second part of his work, to accomplish his goal of articulating an understanding of theology as a "science of God." In order for theology to be scientific the idea of the reality of God must function as a hypothesis, not as a presupposed dogma.[26] Pannenberg holds that theology can be a science of God and at the same time have its "object," namely the idea of God's reality, function as a hypothesis because by definition this idea is measured and verified on its own implications. Insofar as it is supposedly the reality that determines everything, it must be substantiated through the experience of the reality (by the experienced reality) of man and the world. This conception requires the further assumption that the reality of God is cogiven in other objects and is accessible for theological investigation only indirectly. These conceptual elements require that God hypothetically be cogiven in every object of experience. "Theology as the science of God would then mean the study of the totality of the real from the point of view of the reality which ultimately determines it both as a whole and in its parts."[27]

Since we are in time and the totality of reality is not directly accessible to us, what can be the source for a concept of God as an all-determining reality? Recall that the totality (or semantic whole) is the necessary framework for experiencing meaningfully any element of reality. Consequently the totality is an anticipation that is imagined by transcending what is directly experienced as real at any particular time. Because of this element of human experience, "the reality of God is always present only in subjective anticipations of the totality of reality, in models of the totality of meaning presupposed in all particular experience. These models, however, are historic, which means they are subject to confirmation or refutation by subsequent experience."[28]

Such conceptions of an all-determining reality have appeared historically in religions. Insofar as this is the case, the comprehensive structure of knowing requires that theology fulfill its task by being a "science of religion." This science operates, clearly, on much more than the descriptive level of meaning. Rather it is theological in the specific sense that it examines every religion's claims about and evidence for the self-communication of a divine reality. The science of religion, thus conceived theologically, would be an overarching discipline that would test each religion's claims. The claims of any given religious tradition would be treated as hypotheses to be tested by their ability to integrate the complexity of modern experience into the meaning of the totality of reality expressed in the religion.[29] The theology of Christianity, accordingly, would be a specialized branch of theology in general.[30]

Granted this conception of theology, the question that remains is to explain how scientific status is to be attributed to it. Pannenberg attempts this by accepting the three minimum requirements for a science formulated by H. Scholz in his critique of Barth's understanding of theology as a science. The second of these requirements, the postulate of coherence, demands that the propositions used in the science refer to a single area of study. Pannenberg's conception of theology as a science of religion appears to meet this requirement. Theology investigates the indirect manifestations of the all-determining reality as these are conceived in the historical religions.[31]

The first requirement, the postulate of propositions, demands that any science must make statements whose truth is being asserted, that is, that theological statements have a cognitive character. Undoubtedly, members of any religious tradition who express their faith intend to assert something they believe is true. Whether such use of language in fact does so is another matter. Normally in a scientific proposition about reality the state of affairs being affirmed is distinguishable from the assertion itself. In the contemporary world, however, the destruction of the traditional metaphysical notions of God makes it appear that the reality of God is indistinguishable from the subjective claims of believers and theologians. The second requirement, that the subject matter be a unified area of study, presupposes the possibility that the reality of God as the object of theology is distinguishable from the statements made about this all-determining reality. The only way to establish this possibility is to demonstrate, if possible, some conception of God as in fact an explicit formulation of an all-determining reality implicit in all finite reality. Consequently these first two requirements are bound up with the third, the postulate of control. Essentially this requires some method of testing theological statements other than by an appeal to criteria of a doctrinal tradition. Theological statements about God can meet this test, not by a direct verification of their object, but indirectly by their implications. Theological assertions thus can be cast as hypotheses whose implications can be tested. If all three minimum requirements are viewed together in this way, they show that theology's claim to scientific status is fulfilled provided that it is able to verify (or falsify) its claims.[32]

Since the statements of theology are derived from the historical religions and are also hypotheses about the all-determining reality, they are to be tested and verified in a manner comparable to the way history and philosophy verify their claims.[33] From the point of view of the reality which determines everything, theological theories are to be tested by criteria which apply to philosophical hypotheses. From the point of view in which the divine reality has made itself known in

religious consciousness, theological theories must show that the human embodiment of the experience of the divine reality is verified in its historical implications and hence must satisfy criteria for historical and hermeneutical hypotheses.

These considerations permit Pannenberg to conclude that it is possible to verify theological statements, although he admits that we may never come to a final conclusion.[34] The reason for this is not only that verification is a difficult procedure even in the physical sciences. Beyond this the difficulty lies in the fact that theological hypotheses concern reality as a whole and we are still within its temporal processes. Unfortunately, decisions about theological hypotheses are unavoidable; we must face such questions in one way or another. At least any decision we make would not be arbitrary insofar as the implications about reality as a whole "prove" themselves in our experience. Pannenberg's criterion for testing theological hypotheses turns out to be this: "traditional statements or modern reformulations prove themselves when they give the complex of meaning of all experience of reality a more subtle and more convincing interpretation than others."[35]

A Polanyian Assessment of Epistemological Presuppositions in Pannenberg's Proposal

Any attempt to appraise Pannenberg's proposal is at first almost overwhelmed by admiration of the impressive scope and creativity of his vision. His position is advanced through a reflective dialogue not only with the main currents in the history of Christian thought, but also with major conceptions of science, social science, history, and philosophy found in modern and contemporary Western thought. Moreover, he has creatively—and, he believes, coherently—integrated these diverse conceptions into a unified view of knowledge which provides a scientific status for theology.

In addition it should be acknowledged that there is much in Pannenberg's thought that recommends itself to a Polanyian way of thinking. His critique of a reductionist view of science and his claim that science must be placed in a broader context of meaning for the sake of its own intelligibility is precisely the issue that provoked Polanyi's reflections. His attempt to transfer theology from what he conceives to be an authoritarian (i.e., dogmatically closed) way of thinking to a view that is open to reformulation is reminiscent of Polanyi's distinction between "specific" and "general" authority. His understanding of meaning as comprised of the relationship of parts to whole appears to have certain affinities with the understanding of meaning achieved in the integration of particulars into a focal whole. Similarly his understanding of the structure of assertions as anticipating a fuller under-

standing of truth brings to mind Polanyi's criterion of reality as that which reveals itself in indeterminate ways in the future. Finally, Pannenberg's understanding of God as indirectly accessible in all of reality is, I shall argue, structurally similar to the way Polanyi's theory of knowledge would portray the question.

Nevertheless, in spite of—or perhaps precisely because of—these common insights, Pannenberg's proposal for understanding knowledge appears to be weakened by an underlying incoherence. Implicit in Pannenberg's proposal is an understanding of knowing, which he has termed "historical reason,"[36] that requires impersonal, theoretical assertions and at the same time the recognition of their incompleteness and their anticipation of the still undisclosed totality of reality. Unless Pannenberg can bring both of these elements together in a structural relationship constitutive of knowing, he cannot explain how one can know that the assertion has anticipated, even partially, the totality of reality. In point of fact, Pannenberg admits that truth is known in a presupposed context of the totality of meaning and implicitly this functions in his proposal. Yet he dismisses this from the realm of knowledge as such, and this is what constitutes the conceptual inadequacy in his system.

The reasons Pannenberg wants to formulate knowledge in impersonal terms are extrinsic to his system. He is very much concerned with the apologetic task of demonstrating the truth of Christianity and intends to avoid any special role for "faith" as a subjective or psychological factor in this demonstration.[37] This avoidance, however, is clearly dependent upon the current cultural dominance of the impersonal ideal of knowing.

As we saw in the previous section, the way Pannenberg deals with this problem is to argue that the subjective anticipation of the totality of meaning given in any context is separable from its theoretical expression.[38] This means, for example, that the subjective anticipations of meaning by a sociologist or historian are unavoidable in the formulation of their theories but are irrelevant in the analysis of their conceptual adequacy. This distinction has a certain plausibility in the natural sciences where the aim of the theoretical constructs is to discern an empirical coherence. But even in this case the applicability of a particular theory to any set of data depends upon a broader context of meaning—something which Pannenberg himself has demonstrated.[39]

Pannenberg's attempt to apply this distinction to theology illustrates the problem very well. Using Hans Reichenbach's distinction between the heuristic and probative contexts of statements, Pannenberg asserts that the theologian's private religious affiliation belongs to the former while the theoretical expressions of theology belong to the

latter.[40] Insofar as all knowledge must be expressed in theoretically precise statements, there must be explicit criteria for determining whether a statement belongs to the heuristic or probative context. Pannenberg recognizes this need and admits that they have not yet been formulated. Further, he acknowledges that this distinction must be qualified insofar as the "pragmatic situation," which is an element of the heuristic process, must be taken up into a theoretical expression. This is especially important for theology (and philosophy) because the "vital context" of the theologian is often the object of investigation. Consequently, the attempt to carry out this distinction on the theoretical level appears to lead to an infinite regress[41] or, as Pannenberg states it, the "problem of relativity."

The crux of the issue is the question whether the personal act of integrating particulars into a meaningful coherence is an incidental psychological concomitant of knowing or a necessary constituent of knowledge. For Pannenberg the former is clearly the case. In his only reference to Polanyi, Pannenberg claims that Gadamer's "unexpressed horizon of meaning" is related to Polanyi's "tacit coefficient of speech," but Pannenberg criticizes Polanyi's proposal for failing to distinguish between "the inexpressibility of rational structures of meaning and emotional components such as attention, passions and commitments."[42] Because of his own commitment to the ideal of impersonal knowledge expressed in theoretical assertions, Pannenberg has fallen victim to a common misunderstanding of Polanyi's thought which fails to recognize that Polanyi is doing more than, say, describing the effects of myopia in perception. It is my contention that Polanyi's theory of personal knowledge can aid in resolving the conceptual inadequacy which, I am arguing, inflicts Pannenberg's proposal. If we acknowledge that the focal meaning of an explicit statement about reality is grounded in our tacit reliance on subsidiary clues, including the aspects of reality it intends to express, then we can account for the anticipatory character of our knowledge as well as its dynamic structural relationship to explicit theoretical formulations. Furthermore, this should contribute to the clarification of certain problems that arise in Pannenberg's theology as a result of his reliance on an impersonal conception of knowing.

One such problem concerns Pannenberg's analysis of the structure of dogmatic and theological statements as "doxological." This structure is fundamentally a heightened instance of the general anticipatory character of all statements. In religious utterances the person surrenders the self in an act of worship of God.[43] The worshiper's attention is focused on God and drawn away from the self.[44] The usual meanings of the words are removed from their ordinary contexts and are discerned in terms of their use in praising God. This

structure applies not only to properly religious utterances used in rituals but to theological statements derived from such usage as well. This means that a theologian cannot show the meaning of religious statements in a deductive manner based on a concept of God. Rather the integral meaning of theological statements must be understood "by a deeper penetration into the event in which God is revealed." This doxological structure is proleptic because "dogmatic statements rest entirely on an anticipation of the eschaton."[45]

Pannenberg maintains that the basis of such doxological use of language is the recognition of a specific experience of a divine act in history. If anyone grasps the totality of reality mediated indirectly in a finite event, the individual must transfer terms from the ordinary use of language to a special (religious or theological) use in order to speak about the meaning of that event.[46] All this implies that the use of doxological statements requires a simultaneous awareness of their proleptic anticipation of the totality of reality, because this is the source of their meaning. Unless Pannenberg can account for both elements, his claim that there is a ground for doxological statements dissolves. Again, Polanyi's recognition that the focal meaning of a term is grounded in the tacit integration of particulars can contribute to a resolution of this difficulty.

While there are additional examples that can illustrate how Polanyi's theory may clarify difficulties in Pannenberg's proposal,[47] we shall focus on the problem involved in applying his criterion for testing the truth of religious traditions. Granted an adequate expression of a religious tradition's conception of the totality of reality and of its integration of all of contemporary experience, such theoretical formulations prove themselves "when they give the complex of meaning of all experience of reality a more subtle and more convincing interpretation than others."[48] The difficulty with this is not primarily that it is vague. To be sure, what counts as "a more subtle and convincing interpretation" is very difficult to specify. Yet the intention behind it is accessible. Pannenberg wants to affirm that theology cannot base its inquiries on any sort of subjective self-certainty immune from external criticism but that it must offer "reasons" which "count" toward substantiating (or not substantiating) the claims of a religious tradition.

The difficulty that I see with this is that, insofar as it is a criterion conceived to function in a totally explicit manner independently of any knower, it is tautologous.[49] It says, in effect, that a theology proves itself when it proves itself. Obviously this is not what Pannenberg intends. He knows that a theological formulation cannot compel anyone only by the force of its logic, because the person's experience may close the person off from some of its premises. Consequently the

attempt to test theological assertions cannot achieve an impersonal, theoretical certainty.[50]

Is there any value, then, for theology to try to state, with as much theoretical precision as possible, the way in which a religious tradition can interpret the complex of all experience of reality "more subtly and convincingly"? I believe there is, provided we acknowledge the personal participation of the knower in the process of judging the truth of the theological formulation. In spite of himself, Pannenberg implicitly acknowledges this in his proposal when he talks about theological formulations enlightening all our present experience of reality. Even though he tries to formulate this in impersonal terms, through techniques such as theoretical models of systems of meaning, he still presupposes knowing subjects who experience reality in terms of such theoretical constructs. Polanyi's analysis of the way we dwell in a system of thought to interpret our experience of reality, the way we come to validate a system of thought, and the way we change, modify, or abandon systems of thought should prove helpful for dealing with this question.

So far we have merely indicated areas where Polanyi's theory of knowledge might serve to overcome epistemological problems in Pannenberg's theology. Our reason for not providing any thorough analysis is that, even if these suggestions do help in solving these problems, there is the complementary question concerning the truth of theological assertions. This is the issue that is of paramount importance for Pannenberg. Our appraisal of his position has intended to show that his formulation of the question could be helpful for us insofar as a Polanyian understanding of knowing might remove the underlying epistemological difficulty in his program. Consequently, we have postponed a more thorough analysis of Polanyi's (potential) contribution to understanding religious truth. Our task now will be to outline briefly how Polanyi's theory permits us to accredit our knowledge of reality and, taking a cue from Pannenberg, to explain in what sense religious claims may be said to be grounded "ontologically."

A Polanyian Revision of Pannenberg's Proposal for Understanding the Status of Truth in Religion

An attempt to express theologically the kind of truth in religious faith by means of categories derived from Polanyi's thought must be cognizant of the overall objectives of his position. Polanyi's theory of personal knowledge is his response to the crisis concerning the foundations and nature of science occurring earlier this century.[51] He found that his attempt to defend science as an open inquiry seeking truth about the nature of reality required a thorough reappraisal of our ability to know. This project, in turn, had implications far beyond

the domain of science. In working out these implications Polanyi's understanding of scientific inquiry functioned as his primary frame of reference. Consequently his analysis of religion was inevitably informed by this perspective. Even though he was able to offer many profound insights about religious meaning and the function of theology, Polanyi never claimed to do so, to my knowledge at least, from a theological perspective. Accordingly an expression of the properly theological implications of Polanyi's thought requires that we work through the dynamics of his analysis of knowledge and religious meaning with specifically theological questions in mind. Only such a procedure will provide an analysis that is faithful both to the inner logic of Polanyi's thought and to the meanings inherent in theological reflection.

To this end we shall begin with Polanyi's fundamental insight that knowing is an achievement, a dynamic process, whereby we become aware focally of something in terms of our subsidiary reliance on the elements that constitute it. All forms of knowledge display this vectorial structure of moving from particulars to their focal meaning. Our explicit knowledge is thus an act grounded in a tacit integration of the particulars constituting it. This implies that knowledge cannot be conceived impersonally, for we cannot rely on something and focus on it in the same way at the same time. All our knowledge therefore is personal. It consists in an act whereby we rely on subsidiary clues whose meaning we integrate into a focal whole. Polanyi's theory consists in a systematic explication of this insight.

Polanyi specifies the range of this structure through the concept of "indwelling." Its fundamental sense is the personal one in which we attend from the subsidiary awareness of the sensory clues of our bodies to the focal awareness of their joint meaning. Insofar as we can "interiorize" elements of our cultural heritage, Polanyi extends this concept "in a logical sense as affirming that the parts of the external world, when interiorized, function in the same way as our body functions when we attend from it to things outside."[52] Our knowledge of reality unfolds through our tacit reliance on this linguistically and practically mediated cultural background. The cultural heritage in which we dwell serves as a vast reservoir that permits us to comprehend meaningfully our experience of the world. It comprises all our systems of thought, our criteria of rationality and truth, our values and ideals, and our visions of the ultimate scheme of things.

Since we rely on such cultural systems in order to understand meaningfully our experience of the world, they cannot be impersonally established. A conflict that arises between two opposing frameworks concerning the meaning of a particular range of experience, for example, cannot be settled by an appeal to criteria within one or the

other position. What takes place, rather, is something like a "conversion" where one party tries to express, in general terms both might understand, the framework's presumed greater adequacy for understanding the experience provoking the conflict. If one of the discussants begins to appreciate the other position as providing a more meaningful way of understanding the point of the controversy, what happens is that this person comes to accept the position's tacit grounds by dwelling in them.[53] Because the individual finds a more meaningful interpretation of his experience, he expresses his insight with universal intent.[54]

The process by which anyone comes to accept a particular system of thought is one of "gradual appreciation." Within science conflicts are more specifiably related to factual experience, so that here the acceptance is justifiably said to be verified. In other articulate systems, such as religion, this process Polanyi calls validation. "But both *verification* and *validation* are everywhere an acknowledgment of a commitment: they claim the presence of something real and external to the speaker."[55]

A further implication of Polanyi's theory of personal knowledge comes to light here. The claim of tacit knowing, even though it is never wholly indefeasible, is that what it asserts has a bearing on reality. Polanyi tries to account for this by speaking of the "ontological aspect" of tacit knowing.[56] Succinctly, this means that the subsidiary elements lead us beyond ourselves to the comprehension of something real insofar as they represent the particulars of something we incorporate into our bodily existence. By relying on these clues we integrate them into a focal whole endowed with meaning derived from our reliance on our articulate framework. "The act of tacit knowing thus implies that its result is an aspect of reality which, as such, may yet reveal its truth in an inexhaustible range of unknown and perhaps still unthinkable ways."[57]

This joint operation of our dwelling in the articulate systems of culture and of our tacit reliance on reality which may reveal itself in still unknown ways may be discerned in our knowledge of a problem. The conundrum concerning how we come to know something which we do not yet know (explicitly), particularly in the case of scientific discovery, displays this joint operation in a heightened form and thus is paradigmatic for Polanyi's understanding of knowing.[58] By dwelling in the framework of science, a particularly creative individual may become aware of incohate potential meanings insofar as the present body of scientific knowledge has a bearing on reality. At first, the scientist merely surmises that a yet undiscovered aspect of reality is present by means of a tacit foreknowledge of it.[59] The scientist's quest is thus guided by an intimation of a deeper coherence tacitly fore-

known, an intimation originally suggested by his reliance on the currently held theories and presuppositions of science. If the original problem proves to be a good one, the scientist eventually is enabled to comprehend a new coherence which he expresses with universal intent. For Polanyi, all our explicit knowledge, even prosaic forms of it such as identifying an entity by means of a class term, displays this dynamic structure of relying on the tacitly held meanings of our systems of thought and an active foreknowledge guiding their use.[60] Thus, such tacit foreknowledge is "never quite absent from the act of knowing."[61] It is in this way that our explicit statements affirmed with universal intent are grounded "ontologically."

This ontological aspect of tacit knowing permits an understanding of a further implication. Recall that in an ordinary comprehension of an entity we integrate its subsidiarily known particulars in order to attend focally to their joint meaning. This suggests that the two terms of tacit knowing correspond to two levels of reality in the entity. Our focal awareness is directed toward the upper level which is the joint meaning of the particulars while our subsidiary awareness is of the lower level on which it depends. Polanyi's account of this insight is one of the most ingenious elements of his theory.[62]

Any relatively stable comprehensive entity that has a purpose, such as a machine, exhibits at least two irreducible levels of reality. The lower level of the machine is constituted by the laws of physics and chemistry. These laws continue to function under any number of restrictions that we may place on them. The conditions under which they operate are thus open and cannot be determined by physical and chemical laws themselves. Polanyi calls these the "boundary conditions" of physical and chemical laws. The higher level of the machine constitutes a set of operational principles which control the boundary conditions left open by the physical and chemical laws. As such the operation of a machine is subject to a "dual control." It is thoroughly dependent on the operation of physical and chemical laws but is inexplicable on their terms alone.

From this Polanyi conceived a whole range of comprehensive entities subject to dual control wherein the boundary conditions left open by the lower operational principles are controlled by a set of higher principles. In every case the higher operational principles, which characterize the comprehensive entity, cannot be understood in terms of the lower level of principles which the entity controls and which apply only to its component parts. With the appropriate modifications this idea of dual control permits an understanding of the universe as constituted by an emergence of higher levels of reality from the inanimate through the biotic to human thought.

At the level of human thought emergence takes on a new significance. Here the mind itself unfolds through an ascending sequence of

meanings, which are defined by principles controlling the boundaries of lower levels of meaning and which culminate in principles of responsible judgment.[63] This vast network of meaning that comprises our cultural heritage constitutes a "heuristic field" guiding human thought toward an ever greater understanding of reality. The meanings which shape our heuristic field are human achievements which always presuppose a "bearing on reality."[64]

For Polanyi, then, the highest human achievements are our transcendent ideals, expressed as truth, beauty, justice, responsibility, and religious devotion. The appreciation of their meaning requires that we integrate the lower levels of meaning over which they exercise a control. In his early writings Polanyi identified such transcendent meaning with a "spiritual reality."[65] Subsequently, however, he understood them as emerging meaning or truth. Since our highest ideals are human achievements—that is, they have emerged as the highest forms of integration of human thought—their bearing on reality is not straightforward.

There is a sense, for example, in which value may be said to be grounded ontologically within the framework of Polanyi's thought. Granted the distinctive levels of reality in the emergence of life, individuals on either the animal or human level act in terms of goals inherent in the structure of their lives. Their actions are thus susceptible to assessments of rightness and error.[66] However, such an appraisal requires that we dwell in the reality of their achievements and failures. Values are not grounded, in other words, in the lower levels of operational principles whose boundary conditions the level of values controls. In the human sphere, therefore, values are a creation of human beings because they discover through them a more meaningful, and thus more valid, ordering of action whose lower levels are comprised of physical needs, pragmatic necessities, perversions of greed, and the like. To the extent that an individual dwells in the moral frame of reference, these values can be appreciated as having a genuine bearing on human activity. In this sense they are not arbitrary but are true.[67]

Whatever one may judge to be the legitimacy of this interpretation of the reality of our moral standards, a religious vision is not completely susceptible to such an analysis insofar as it purports to embody a meaning for all reality, not only for human action. Since the heuristic visions of religions are typically expressed in literary or artistic forms, Polanyi's appraisal of the meaning in art should be a helpful stage in furthering our analysis.

An artistic work, such as a metaphoric expression, is meaningful insofar as its similar and dissimilar elements, its "tenor" and "vehicle," have intrinsic interest in themselves and are able to integrate other-

wise disparate experiences in our lives.[68] An appreciation of the meaning of the similar and dissimilar elements requires a self-giving integration whereby we are "carried away" into the joint meaning of the metaphor. The meaning of a play or poem, therefore, is found in the integration of incompatibles which our imagination is able to recreate by dwelling in its elements. The "frame" effect of the artistic work allows it to embody its own meaning and this is its reality.[69] Accordingly, a work of art does not establish a deeper coherence in nature; rather it is a "transnatural" integration, joining meaningfully normally incompatible experiences of our lives.[70] Some works of art carry meanings which "are of sufficient depth and universality to embody those basic aspects of human experience that remain unchanged through time."[71] Such art is called "immortal" or "classic."

This provides an important preliminary account for understanding the validity of a religious vision. Religious expressions are the work of the human imagination. Their aim is to integrate all the incompatible experiences of our lives to the extent that we dwell in them and are carried away by their meaning. The "genuine" or "authentic" mode of human existence is thereby revealed to those who accept them.

This sort of interpretation of religious symbolism as embodying a meaning disclosing the profound significance of human existence is similar to the one proposed by existentialist theologies. Insofar as theological reflection should provide an intelligible account of the heuristic vision of a religion, however, this explanation is not complete. Its limits are due to the fact that the extent of the integrations presumed in religious symbolizations is more complex than this. Religious meanings claim not only to integrate the incompatible elements of our individual existence but also to permit us to "participate in an ultimate meaning of things."[72] If we return now to an analysis of the structure of tacit knowing proposed by Polanyi, we shall have the conceptual tools to indicate how this may be understood.

In an intriguing image, Polanyi has described the Christian religion (and by implication all religions) as a heuristic vision fostering an attempt at "breaking out."[73] I maintain that what he meant by such a breaking out in the case of religion is that in the act of genuine worship or devotion, which is dependent upon dwelling in the complex of myth, symbols, and rites of the tradition, the worshiper is carried away in detached, self-giving contemplation toward the totality of reality present to his tacit foreknowledge. A heightened form of this is mystical experience, which Polanyi has interpreted in this way:

> The religious mystic achieves contemplative communion as a result of an elaborate effort of thought, supported by ritual. By concentrating on the presence of God, who is beyond all physical appearances, the mystic seeks to relax the intellectual control which his powers of perception instinctively exercise over the scene confronting them. His fixed gaze no longer scans each

object in its turn and his mind ceases to identify their particulars. The whole framework of intellectual understanding, by which he normally appraises his impressions, sinks into abeyance and uncovers a world experienced uncomprehendingly as a divine miracle. . . . [The mystical tradition] invites us, through a succession of "detachments," to seek in absolute ignorance union with Him who is beyond all being and all knowledge. We see things then not focally, but as parts of a cosmos, as features of God.[74]

What Polanyi is saying here, I contend, is that a mystic's focal awareness converges toward the tacit ground of his foreknowledge of reality, breaking out through the mediation of a heuristic vision. In this state of awareness the objects of the world to which we normally attend are subsidiarily known by being taken up into an incomprehensible integration.[75]

This is the "primordial sense" of religious expressions and their ontological ground. The source of religious expressions is an experience of "salvation" or "contemplative communion" insofar as their meanings point beyond themselves toward the source of all meaning. In this primordial sense religious faith enables believers to participate in an ultimate meaning of things. That toward which their dwelling in the heuristic vision of a religion enables them to break out is known, as Pannenberg has expressed it, indirectly and proleptically.

Consequently, in this strictly defined sense the meanings embodied in the explicit complex of symbols of a religious tradition can be neither true nor false.[76] The structure of our knowledge explains why this is so: the meanings of the religious expressions do not allow us to comprehend their ontological ground. We do not rely on these meanings, in other words, to focus on a specifically discerned comprehensive entity (i.e., God) in the manner of a self-centered integration. Rather, these meanings are works of the imagination, human responses to the reality uncomprehendingly revealing itself in the human process of breaking out.

In any particular religious tradition, moreover, the meanings expressed in myth, ritual, doctrine, and the like are valued in their own right. This is the "primary sense" in which meaning is understood in a religious tradition. In their ordinary functioning in a religious community, these meanings provide the occasion for a believer who accepts them to achieve transnatural integrations. The ability to achieve such transnatural integrations and be carried away by their meanings is better understood as a skill rather than as a form of theoretical knowledge.[77] This is to say that believers, through a more or less faithful process of growth and development in devotional practice, learn to rely on these symbolizations to integrate meaningfully all the disparate elements of their lives in an act of worship. Such a skill, which exhibits the structural form of a tacit integration, presupposes an intelligent and practical stance toward the world of our ordinary

experience. The presuppositions of this stance, which are embedded in the symbolic expressions of the transnatural integrations fostered by the religious tradition, include aspects such as a way of viewing the universe, a transcendent meaning of history and human life, special events which are pivotal for discerning these meanings, and institutions or practices which transmit them. If the heuristic vision of a particular religion, which includes its primordial ontological ground and the presuppositions of its primary meanings, permits its believers to integrate adequately all the incompatible aspects of their lives in the act of breaking out, they validate it and accept it as true.

A validation of this sort, of course, is performed a-critically by believers in the act of worship and in their acceptance of the meanings of the tradition to guide their normal understanding of the world. A theologian on the other hand, attempts to provide a theoretical justification for such a validation. Because the primordial sense of the meanings embodied in the tradition's heuristic vision can only be apprehended in the act of breaking out, the theologian must dwell in the tradition. This permits the theologian to recognize that, although the transnatural integrations fostered by the expressions of the tradition do not comprehend their "object," they adequately direct a believer toward their primordial ground in their capacity as symbols.[78] In order to perform the theological task, in other words, the theologian must be able to achieve the kind of integration that the religious symbols promote.

Even though the theologian's dwelling in the tradition functions as a necessary condition for theology, the inquiry into the implications of the primary sense of religious symbols can be understood to function along the lines suggested by our revised version of Pannenberg's proposal.[79] This means that the theologian must theoretically justify a series of increasingly comprehensive integrations which include data from a broad range of disciplines such as physics, biology, philology, linguistics, psychology, sociology, literary and historical criticism, and hermeneutics and philosophy. Here the theologian must justify the implications of the primary sense of the religious symbols through self-centered integrations that rely on the criteria of the various disciplines. At these levels of theological inquiry, the results are "scientific" and "public" to the extent that the implications of the tradition are coherently expressed and demonstrably shown to integrate the significant aspects of our experience examined by these disciplines. These results, therefore, provide a validation of these meanings in the sense that the symbols of the tradition can be accepted responsibly, with universal intent, as transnatural integrations expressing worthwhile ideals for guiding human life.

The final, properly theological integration, however, relies on tacit criteria that are accessible only at the level of the primordial sense of

religious symbols. It requires a tacit inference whereby all the conclusions previously established serve as subsidiaries that tend toward the primordial referent experienced by the theologian's tacit foreknowledge in the act of breaking out. Such a tacit inference cannot be formulated explicitly without destroying the "focus" toward which it is tending. It may be achieved only by the conscious act of a person.[80] Insofar as all the conclusions previously established can be so integrated, the theologian judges the religion's heuristic vision to provide a more subtle and convincing demonstration because it is grounded primordially and in this ontological sense is true. The theologian affirms this with universal intent and with the expectation of still unknown revelations of this reality in the future. Alternatively, since theology is a genuine inquiry, insofar as these conclusions cannot be so integrated, the theologian responsibly must affirm that the heuristic vision of the religion is not true.[81]

NOTES

1. These may be found in Harry Prosch's review of Richard Gelwick's *The Way of Discovery* in *Ethics* 89 (January 1979): 211-16. Prosch also discussed these issues at the 1979 American Academy of Religion meeting, and a report is contained in the *Polanyi Society Newsletter* 7 (Winter 1980): 5.

2. Michael Polanyi and Harry Prosch, *Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 104.

3. Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (New York: Harper & Row, Harper Torchbooks, 1964), p. 202.

4. Polanyi and Prosch, pp. 71-75.

5. Ibid., p. 125.

6. This synopsis hardly does justice to all the nuances of Prosch's interpretation, although I trust it is fair. In order to appreciate how he interprets the "reality" of our imaginative works, especially values, one should consult Harry Prosch, "Polanyi's Ethics," *Ethics* 82 (January 1972): 91-113.

7. See the concluding paragraphs of Polanyi and Prosch, pp. 215-16.

8. See John V. Apczynski, *Doers of the Word* (Missoula, Mont.: Scholars Press, 1977), p. 186.

9. The importance of this for Pannenberg can be seen, for example, in the discussion of Pannenberg's theology presented in *Theology as History*, eds. James M. Robinson and John B. Cobb, Jr. (New York: Harper & Row, 1967). In his "Response to the Discussion" Pannenberg almost laments the fact that the focus was on conceptual issues instead of the "substantive" one concerning the truth of the historical relationship between the preaching of primitive Christianity and the present, p. 223.

10. Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Dogmatic Theses on the Doctrine of Revelation," *Revelation as History*, trans. David Granskou (New York: Macmillan, 1968; original German edition, 1961), pp. 125-58.

11. Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Theology and the Philosophy of Science*, trans. Francis McDonagh (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1976). The original 1973 German edition is entitled *Wissenschaftstheorie und Theologie*.

12. Ibid., pp. 35-55.

13. Ibid., pp. 69-70.

14. Ibid., pp. 102-3.

15. Ibid., p. 149.

16. Ibid., p. 151.

17. Ibid., p. 163.

18. Ibid., p. 168.

19. Ibid., pp. 176-77.
20. Ibid., p. 184.
21. Ibid., pp. 194-95.
22. Ibid., pp. 202-5.
23. Ibid., pp. 216-17.
24. Ibid., p. 220.
25. Ibid., pp. 220-24.
26. Ibid., p. 300.
27. Ibid., p. 303.
28. Ibid., p. 310 (original in italics).
29. Ibid., p. 315.
30. Ibid., pp. 321-22.
31. Ibid., pp. 326-27.
32. Ibid., pp. 327-32.
33. Ibid., pp. 336-41.
34. Ibid., p. 343.
35. Ibid.
36. Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Faith and Reason," *Basic Questions in Theology*, trans. George H. Kehm, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1970-71), 2: 59-63.
37. See, for example, Pannenberg, "Insight and Faith," *Basic Questions*, 2:32-34.
38. Pannenberg, *Theology and the Philosophy of Science*, p. 194.
39. Ibid., pp. 42-43, 50-55.
40. Ibid., pp. 320-21 and p. 321, n. 630.
41. This is the problem Michael Polanyi describes at the beginning of *The Study of Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books, 1963), pp. 11-12.
42. Pannenberg, *Theology and the Philosophy of Science*, p. 217, n. 433.
43. Wolfhart Pannenberg, "What is a Dogmatic Statement?" *Basic Questions in Theology*, 1:203.
44. Pannenberg, "Analogy and Doxology," *Basic Questions*, 1:216.
45. Pannenberg, "What Is a Dogmatic Statement?" *Basic Questions*, 1:204.
46. Pannenberg, "Analogy and Doxology," *Basic Questions*, 1:226-30.
47. As additional examples we may note briefly Pannenberg's claim that the "resurrection" is a metaphor whose meaning Christians do not really know. See Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Jesus-God and Man*, trans. Lewis L. Wilkins and Duane A. Priebe (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1968), p. 187; "The Revelation of God in Jesus of Nazareth," *Theology as History*, pp. 114-15; and "What Is Truth?" *Basic Questions*, 2:24. Part of what Pannenberg intends to affirm by this is that a literal picturing of the resurrection as the resuscitation of a corpse is inadmissable. He must emphasize this because he holds that the resurrection is a historical event in the sense that we can assess the claim of the earliest Christian testimony concerning it. On the other hand, however, he must hold for systematic reasons that, even though the resurrection anticipates the totality of history, it still must allow the future to be open: if we do not know what it means, history apparently remains open. Polanyi's understanding of "metaphor" as a transnatural integration whose meaning is discerned by a self-giving integration would achieve most of Pannenberg's major points without the strange requirement that Christians would not really know what one of their central terms meant.

We may also note that Pannenberg recognizes that an "intuition" is necessary for discerning the relationship between historical events. Yet he affirms that such a relationship, once discerned, must be expressed in historical hypotheses for confirmation. See "Redemptive Event and History," *Basic Questions*, 1:50-51, n. 91. Against what are the hypotheses to be tested if the intuition is not allowed to function as an integral part of knowledge? Polanyi's understanding of our tacit reliance on particulars to discern their joint meaning could assist in clarifying Pannenberg's intention here.

48. Pannenberg, *Theology and the Philosophy of Science*, p. 343.
49. This critique is similar to the one made by Polanyi against the misconception that scientific hypotheses are impersonally tested against observation. See Michael Polanyi, *Science, Faith and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, Phoenix Books, 1964), pp. 28-29.
50. Pannenberg, *Theology and the Philosophy of Science*, p. 344.

51. See Polanyi's account, for example, in *Science, Faith and Society*, pp. 7-19.

52. Michael Polanyi, "Science and Man's Place in the Universe," *Science as a Cultural Force*, ed. Harry Woolf (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1964), p. 63.

53. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge* (n. 3 above), p. 378.

54. See Michael Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Company, Anchor Books, 1967), p. 78 for one instance of Polanyi's explanation of this concept.

55. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, p. 202.

56. Polanyi has actually described four aspects of the structure of tacit knowing: the functional, phenomenal, semantic, and ontological. See *The Tacit Dimension*, pp. 9-13 and Michael Polanyi, "The Logic of Tacit Inference," and "The Structure of Consciousness," *Knowing and Being*, ed. Marjorie Grene (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), pp. 141, 212.

57. Polanyi, "The Logic of Tacit Inference," *Knowing and Being*, p. 141.

58. Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension*, p. 24.

59. Ibid., p. 23.

60. Michael Polanyi, "Faith and Reason," *Journal of Religion* 41 (1961): 243.

61. Polanyi, "Knowing and Being," *Knowing and Being*, p. 129.

62. See Polanyi, "The Structure of Consciousness" and "Life's Irreducible Structure," *Knowing and Being*, pp. 211-24 and 225-39; and "Order," in Polanyi and Prosch (n. 2 above), pp. 161-81.

63. Polanyi, "Life's Irreducible Structure," *Knowing and Being*, p. 238.

64. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, p. 403.

65. See, for example, Polanyi, *Science, Faith and Society* (n. 49 above), pp. 56-7 and his later rejection of this view in his new introduction to the Phoenix edition on p. 17.

66. Polanyi, *The Study of Man* (n. 41 above), pp. 58-62.

67. This interpretation is similar to Marjorie Grene's. See her *The Knower and the Known* (London: Faber & Faber, 1966), pp. 157-82.

68. Polanyi and Prosch, pp. 78-79.

69. Ibid., p. 92.

70. Ibid., p. 125.

71. Ibid., p. 109.

72. Ibid., p. 153.

73. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, p. 198.

74. Ibid., pp. 197-98; see also Polanyi and Prosch, pp. 128-30.

75. An earlier and more detailed expression of this may be found in Apczynski, *Doers of the Word* (n. 8 above), pp. 163-67.

76. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, p. 281.

77. This appears to be the way Polanyi understood what I have termed the primary sense of religious meaning. See *Personal Knowledge*, p. 282. For a similar understanding of Christian belief as a skill, see Nicholas Lash, *Theology on Dover Beach* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979), pp. 45-59. Lash bases his analysis on insights derived from John Henry Newman.

78. My use of "symbol" here is theological and includes properties that Polanyi ascribes to both "symbol" and "metaphor." That is, in the primary sense of the meanings of religious expressions both the subsidiary and the focal elements are of intrinsic interest while at the same time in their primordial sense they stand for the ontological ground to which they point. This is a commonly, though not universally, accepted understanding of religious meaning. See, for example, Avery Dulles, "The Symbolic Structure of Revelation," *Theological Studies* 41 (1980): 51-73.

79. This revised understanding does not restrict the meaning of revelation to the objective event conceived impersonally in its context in the history of the transmission of traditions; it requires rather the participation of the knower in the tradition so that the "doxological" character of the language of the tradition which indicates the religious meaning of the event can be understood.

80. See Polanyi and Prosch, pp. 39-41 for an example of Polanyi's analysis of the kinds of unspecifiability of subsidiaries in tacit inferences.

81. For a more detailed treatment of this issue from a Polanyian perspective, see John V. Apczynski, "Integrative Theology," *Theological Studies* 39 (1979): 35-37.