

THE MORAL PHILOSOPHY
OF
PAUL TILLICH.

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PREFACE

The choice of the moral philosophy of Paul Tillich as the subject of a doctorate dissertation calls for some explanation.

For many years now Paul Tillich has held the reputation of being a philosopher-theologian in Germany and America. It was not until the publication of J.A. Robinson's book HONEST TO GOD, in march 1963 that his name came before intellectual circles in England and very shortly afterwards through the translation of Robinson's book, into different European languages, in other countries as well. This book, a paperback, claims to be a critique of traditional views in philosophy and theology on the nature of God and also traditional conceptions of the nature of morality. Paul Tillich is cited on every second page as the source of these views which Robinson is attempting to popularise and hence cannot but appear as Robinson's theological and philosophical guide. Weak philosophically and theologically, Robinson's book, was bound to draw criticism not only on himself but also on Tillich whom he so glibly quotes throughout the book. Mediated through such a work, Tillich appears to the Linguistic Analysts as a throwback to the verbal confusion of late 19th century German Philosophy; his views on morality make him appear as playing into the hands of many continental philosophers who affirm that a thing is right because we make it right and wrong as we make it wrong; to many Thomists it was Robinson's chapter on morality that called forth the sharpest criticism on Tillich as providing a basis for a contemporary moral philosophy.

There is so much slip and uncritical quotation of Tillich

in this book that one cannot but be left with this impression. Those who are not familiar with Tillich's own writings, -- and not just his ethical works but the whole framework of his thought are bound to get this impression. Tillich's ethical philosophy must be seen in the light of his metaphysical and anthropological ideas if they are to be justly and critically evaluated. This is the main purpose of this dissertation, namely to examine Tillich's ethical philosophy on its own merits, in its own context, and trying to prescind at the same time from any presuppositions one's own particular formation in Thomistic moral philosophy that may restrict one's vision.

In the course of this study other considerations encouraged me to persevere in this task. Far from finding that Tillich's moral philosophy ~~was~~ superficial, I found that he was continually engaged in a dialogue, not only with contemporary philosophers such as Heidegger and Husserl but also ~~but also~~ with the key moral ideas of classical philosophers of the last and previous centuries such as Kant, Hegel, Nietzsche, Schelling and others. In other words he is engaged in a dialogue with ~~the moral~~ a philosophy which Thomists have regarded as inadequate for providing a solid basis to an ethical philosophy, and which they themselves have consistently ignored. The success or failure of such a project cannot but be of interest even to Thomists.

Consequently one finds in Tillich's moral philosophy a serious effort to integrate the present day emphasis on the historicity of and the dynamic element in man

with metaphysical and anthropological doctrines stemming from the classical philosophical tradition. If it is true that there is a crisis in Thomist moral philosophy today about its ability to incorporate such findings about the historicity of man and his dynamic nature, as revealed and discussed by existential phenomenologists, and psychologists attached to the same movement -- such a crisis would seem to centre around the notion of natural law--- it is interesting to see how Tillich, rooted in a different philosophical tradition and sources comes to terms with these same discoveries.

Finally one other thing we found stimulating in the study of Tillich's ethical philosophy was the fact that he is trying to stand on the borderline between the Catholic and Protestant approach to ethics. Though the Protestant religion is ~~only~~ an external factor in the formation of Tillich's ethical philosophy, turning his mind in certain directions for the solutions of various problems, his chief moral doctrines are sustained by metaphysical and anthropological considerations, which bring him closer to the Catholic approach to ethics wherein it is conceived as an autonomous science. A case in point is his opposition to law which cannot be equated with the traditional negative Lutheran opposition to this concept, but is a consequence of his basic philosophical principles.

It is as well to forewarn the reader about Tillich's terminology. Whatever about the conciseness or clearness of his German writings, it was inevitable that a man who

first began to write in English at the age of 47, was going to be handicapped as regards accurate and concise terminology. Even to English readers this terminology has appeared somewhat strange and unusual. His German background and the fact that the English at his disposal was of the American variety account in some part for the seeming vagueness of his terminology. Hence an effort is required at times to penetrate this terminology he uses in order to understand what Tillich is trying to convey.

CHAPTER I.BIOGRAPHICAL INTRODUCTIONLIFE, INFLUENCES, WORKS.

Because of the number and the diversity of factors that exercised an influence on the formation and the development of the mind of Paul Tillich, it is necessary to commence this study of his moral philosophy, with an introductory survey of pertinent biographical material. The genesis, nature, and development of his ideas - philosophical and theological - are intimately linked to hereditary, geographical, emotional, artistic, intellectual and religious influences, he endured, not only in his early years of formation, but throughout the whole course of his long academic career. He himself has provided us with a key to the developing structure of his thought, as it was shaped by the different influences brought to bear on him, in three autobiographical essays, written at three different periods of his life.

The first essay forms the opening chapter of ^{STAY} THE INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY, published in 1936, three years after his arrival in the United States, as an emigrant from Nazi Germany. The longest of the three essays, it gives one an insight, not only into the actual genesis of Tillich's ideas in concrete situations of his early life but also ~~in~~ Tillich's interpretation and evaluation of these early influences. A second autobiographical essay appeared in 1948, as an introduction

to another collection of essays., THE PROTESTANT ERA. It is particularly useful for appreciating the development of his ideas between the two World Wars. A third essay - 'Autobiographical Reflexions' - serves as an introduction to a collection of essays of interpretation and criticism on Tillich's work itself, entitled THE THEOLOGY OF PAUL TILlich and published in 1952. This third essay recapitulates some of the earlier material, adding to it, what he considers the effects, his departure from his native Germany, have had on his thought, and also what new influences he has undergone in the United States.

Though there is considerable overlapping in these three essays, each one of them could be said to correspond to the three great periods of his life (I). The first period comprises his early years of formation, his secondary school and university education and his period of service in the German army during the 1914-18 War. The second period covers the fifteen years of lecturing in various German universities beginning in 1918, and extending up to 1933, the year in which he was forced to leave Germany. In the Third period - that which one could call 'The American Years', he sets about a complete reconstruction or systematization of his thought. In this introductory chapter we will concentrate on the abundant biographical material provided in these three essays, as other writers on Paul Tillich's work have done. We will follow the threefold division of his life and work outlined above.

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- (I). We accept the division of Tillich's thought and work into three phases or periods as outlined by G.H. TAVARD in his work ; Paul Tillich and the Christian Message p 3. This division corresponds to a natural development in his intellectual development, as well as to decisive events in his life.
- (2) KEGLEY AND BRETALL ; The Theology of Paul Tillich p 16.

In letting Tillich speak for himself, in these essays, one becomes aware of his subjective intention, at different periods of his life. It is true that the subjective intention of the writer may not correspond with the objective ^{NATURE} intention of the work proposed, or that his evaluation of a particular influence on his thought or shift of emphasis may not correspond with our evaluation of the importance of the same factor of influence or change of direction in his work as a whole. Nevertheless, an examination of the autobiographical material Tillich provides us with, offers us a unique insight into the 'genesis of his thought' and 'the intentionality of the product' (1), both of which are invaluable for a proper understanding of his philosophy, in particular, his moral philosophy and a subsequent impartial critical evaluation of the latter.

ARTICLE I. Early Years : The Period of Preparation

Tillich regards the concept of the 'Borderline' as the most fitting symbol by which to describe the whole of his personal and intellectual development

"It has been my fate, in almost every direction, to stand between alternative possibilities of existence, to be completely at home in neither, to take no definite stand against either " (2)

To begin with the fact that he was born on the 20th. August 1886, places him on the boundary between the 19th. and 20th. centuries, especially if one regards the 19th. century as ending on August 1st. 1914, the day the 1st world war started, as Tillich himself does (3). Partaking in, or at least in

(1) Expressions used by TAVARD : Paul Tillich and the Christian message. p I.

(2) The Interpretation of History p 3

(3) Ibid. p8.

touch with, all the revolutionary movements of the late 19th. and early 20th. centuries, he nevertheless admits a nostalgic longing for the relative stability of the 19th century. This manifested itself in particular, he says, in the sphere of thought, in a hankering for the security of the great German Idealist systems, even though he recognised that they were now outmoded. (1).

Tillich was born in the village of Starzedel, a small industrial town in the province of Brandenburg. Four years later the family moved to Schönfliess, Neumark, where his father, a minister of the Prussian Territorial Church was appointed superintendent of the diocesan schools. In regard to his parents he has seen himself as sharing in two temperaments, that of the Rhineland, inherited from his mother, and that of Prussia inherited from his father. From the former he says he derived a 'zeal for living, sensuous concreteness, mobility, rationality, and democracy', from the latter 'a meditative bent, tinged with melancholy, a heightened consciousness of duty and personal sin, a strong sense for authority and feudal tradition' (2). His life is a battleground between these two opposing sets of qualities, in which the preponderance of ^{the} his fathers influence prevailed for many years and entailing a severe reaction in later life against heteronomy in all its forms.

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- (1). HEYWOOD THOMAS in his book Paul Tillich an Appraisal thinks that the great German Idealist systems made such an impression on the mind of Tillich that he could be called "a 19th. century thinker in 20th. century dress" p. 176. He underestimates the element of originality in Tillich's philosophy, ^{As we shall see}.
- (2) This word 'heteronomy with its counterpart 'autonomy' and that which is a synthesis of the two—'Theonomy', form a trilogy of concepts that pervade Tillich's whole work. Applied in many different areas Heteronomy usually signifies an oppressive force, coming from outside, and foreign to the organism or person itself.

All the great memories of his childhood, he associates with this little town of Schönfliess and its surrounding countryside, where he lived from his fourth to his fourteenth year - the soil, the winds, and the forests. His regular visits to Berlin developed in him a counter attraction to the life of the big city.

"It saved me from romantic enmity against technical civilization and taught me to appreciate the importance of the big city for the critical side of artistic and intellectual life" (1).

His experience of country life, he suggests, may partly account for the Romantic trend in his feeling and thinking and which explains 'the tremendous emotional impact' (2) Schellings philosophy of nature made upon him. The influence of German poetic literature and his Lutheran background he also acknowledges as causal factors in this matter.

From the age of four to fourteen Tillich attended a Common School in his home town. For the next two years he travelled to the nearby city of Königsberg to attend the Gymnasium there. Continuing his classical education in Berlin in 1900, where his father was appointed to a new post, he graduated from the gymnasium there in 1904. The conflict between the classical education he received at these schools and his home environment was the cause of another boundary situation. The effects of a life in a parish house attached to a 'beautiful gothic church', where his father was a successful pastor, provided him with an experience of the 'Holy' which he claims was the foundation of all his religious and theological work (3). From this experience,

(1) Interpretation of History p 6

(2) "Schellings philosophy of nature which I read in a state of intoxication, as it were surrounded by the beauties of nature, became for me the direct expression of the experience of nature". Interpretation of History p 7

(3) KEGLEY AND BRETALL . The Theology of Paul Tillich p 4

- mystical sacramental and aesthetic - of the presence of the Divine, he derived the ethical and logical elements of religion and not vica-versa. The significance of this will become apparent when we come to examine the place of God in his ethical philosophy. Counteracting this experience of the Divine, even at this early age , was the severely classical education he received at the schools he attended. The ensuing conflict is the starting point of his vocation of standing on the borderline between religion and culture , philosophy and theology. It culminated in the three volumes of his SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, published forty years later, which contains his final and definitive solution to this problem.

Matriculating in the theological faculties of Berlin, Tübingen and Halle, he took his first theological exam in 1909 and his second in 1911. From his last years at the gymnasium he had been attracted towards philosophy (I), and while there he had used ^{Every} ~~any~~ available moment to read any philosophical works he could get his hands on. Before coming to the university he had read SCHWEGLER'S History of Philosophy, FICHT'S Theory of Science and KANT'S Critique of Pure Reason . Philosophical discussions with his father at home and with students of similar interests at the university had whetted his philosophical appetite. It was the writings of FRITZ MEDICUS - a professor at the university of Halle-that had stimulated his interest in Ficht's philosophy. However it was the philosophy of SCHELLING that really captivated his mind at this time. It shaped his thought more profoundly than any other thinker

(1) Interpretation of History p 30.

"Partly by chance of a bargain purchase and partly by inner affinity, I came under the influence of SCHELLING, whose collected works I read through several times, with enthusiasm" (1).

It is not surprising then that the subject of his thesis, presented at Breslau University in 1910 for the degree of doctorate in Philosophy was entitled ; THE RELIGIOUS-PHILOSOPHICAL CONSTRUCTION OF SCHELLING'S POSITIVE PHILOSOPHY : ITS PRESUPPOSITIONS AND PRINCIPLES and that the title of his licentiate thesis in theology, presented a year later at Halle university was MYSTICISM AND THE SENSE OF GUILT IN SCHELLING'S PHILOSOPHICAL DEVELOPMENT. Though he was to experience philosophical influences from other sources, some years later one can see that it was on German Idealism and Neo-Kantian thought his mind fed during his early years of formation.

It is important too to mention the theological influences he came in contact with at this time, too , as they also made a definite impression on his philosophical thought and method. MARTIN KAHLER, a professor of theology at Halle university, seems to have made the greatest impression on Tillich in this sphere. To KAHLER he attributes his insight into the all controlling character of the Pauline and Lutheran idea of justification

"It rends every human claim in the face of God and shows how the decadence of human existence guilt and despair, is overcome by the paradoxical judgement that the sinner is just before God (2).

This principle of justification which he says constitutes the universal validity of Protestantism, has an all pervading influence on Tillich's thought even his strictly philosophical ideas. He acknowledges that it is the

(1) The Interpretation of History p 30.
 (2) Ibid p 32.

Protestant principle that prepared his mind for the acceptance of Kierkegaard's and Heidegger's analysis of human existence some years later. "or the moment, however it is SCHELLING who dominates his thought. He finds in him, especially in the later Schelling, the way to reconcile his Protestant religion and his Idealist orientated philosophy.

" I thought that fundamentally I had found the union of theology and philosophy in the philosophical explanation of the Christian doctrines through the older Schelling, in his founding of a Christian philosophy of existence in contrast to Hegel's ~~humanistic~~ humanistic philosophy of essence, and in his interpretation of history and the history of salvation" (I).

Under the combined influence of Schelling and Kahler he became familiar with the 'method of dialectics ' which will dominate all his later work in Philosophy and Theology. He describes dialectics as the way of seeking for truth by talking with others from various points of view, that is through 'yes' and 'no' until a 'yes' has been reached which is hardened in the fire of many 'nos' and which unites the element of truth promoted in the discussion (2). This leaves room for mediation, according to Tillich, not only between one philosophical doctrine and another but also between philosophy and theology. Calvinism and Puritanism oppose such mediation because they oppose the participation of nature in the process of the Fall and Salvation. Ritsch allows for no mediation either as an infinite gap is established between nature and personality. With Tillich however, the combination of his early romantic attitude

(1) Interpretation of History p 35

(2) The Protestant Era. p xiii

towards nature with 'the tremendous emotional impact' of Schellings philosophy of nature upon him (1), demanded some kind of mediation between philosophy and theology, or to be more precise for some kind of mystical participation of man in nature. According to Tillich the method of 'dialectics' makes this possible. By it one can show that 'nature is the finite expression of the infinite ground of all things' (2)

In 1912 Tillich received ordination in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the province of Brandenburg. When the ~~war~~ war broke out two years later, he joined the army as a chaplain, and served at the front for the four years of the war. The steady intellectual development, naturally, came to a halt but during these four years his mind received a drive in a completely new direction by his 'discovery' of painting. He refers to this discovery as an 'experience of decisive importance' (3). Home on leave from the front he had sought relief from the 'gruesomeness' and 'destructiveness' of the war in studying reproductions of paintings and in reading the history of the arts. From this study there came what he calls the 'experience of art', the culminating climax of which arrived at his seeing a picture by Botticelli, in Berlin during his last furlough from the front.

"Upon experience followed reflexion and philosophical and theological interpretation which lead me to the fundamental categories of my philosophy of Religion and culture, namely form and content" (4).

- (1) KEGLEY AND BRETALL ; The Theology of P. Tillich p 4
- (2) Ibid p 4.
- (3) Interpreation of History p 15
- (4) Ibid p 16.

His interest in painting then was not ^{PERIPHERAL} ~~peripheral~~. His application of these two notions of form and content in the sphere of moral philosophy will be of particular interest to us.

His interest in painting also lead him to a more sympathetic approach to the Roman Catholic Church - in fact at one stage to contemplation of joining it. The overwhelming impression made upon him by early Italian Christian art aroused his interest in older forms of Catholicism in the early centuries of the Church as well as in the middle ages. Here it seemed to him that the 'old church' had steered a middle course between heteronomy and autonomy towards theonomy. The catholicism of today he thinks has lost its theonomous structure and he considers it to be the most potent system of religious heteronomy. Whenever one breaks through its hardening crust however he adds that it can exercise a peculiar fascination on the beholder. So, far from joining the catholic church he was driven to a deeper interpretation of Protestantism. The continuing effect of essentially Protestant theological attitudes on Tillich's philosophy - even though it be only extrinsic -- cannot be considered negligible by any means. (I)

(I) It should be added here that, even though Tillich's interest in the catholic church grew along side his interest in painting, the religious crisis in which he considered seriously joining the Catholic Church, did not occur until over fifteen years later and that, at a time, when the only alternative to Catholicism for Tillich appeared to be a National Socialist Protestant church under the Hitler regime.

ARTICLE II. Post War Years :
The Period of Construction.

If, as we said earlier, the war marked a pause in Tillich's intellectual growth and development, it could also be said to constitute the dividing line between Tillich, the Student and Tillich the Teacher. It is the dividing point between the period of formation in which he became imbued with the Idealist philosophy of the late 19th. century and the period of construction in which he starts to work out his own personal philosophical positions, in the wake of the break-up of the German Idealist systems, and under the influence of new philosophical currents pioneered chiefly by Nietzsche and Heidegger.

Tillich's first teaching assignment at the end of the war was as a 'privatdozent' in theology at the university of Berlin, a post which he held for the next five years. His experiences as an army chaplain at the front, contributed to the elimination of illusions he had harboured before the war of an easy synthesis between the Christian religion and German Idealist philosophy. Besides destroying many other illusions, the world war, according to Tillich also shattered Idealist philosophy, so much so that he was convinced that it could not be reconstructed again. It was the experience of the 'abyss of our existence' that made this impossible.

"If a reunion of theology and philosophy should again become possible, it could be achieved only in such a way as would do justice to this experience of the abyss of our existence (I).

What does Tillich mean by 'the experience of the abyss of our existence'? In the context of the passage just quoted

it would appear to denote the experience of horrifying scenes of carnage and human suffering at the war front. Other passages would seem to link this experience of the abyss with the Protestant principle and hence the gulf that separates the sinner from the all 'holy' God. More probably both these significations point to a more basis experience—that of our finitude but a finitude in which the dimension~~al~~ of the unconditional or of the infinite somehow explodes. His lectures during these first years as a professor at Berlin were an effort to explore this experience of the abyss or of the unconditional in widely divergent fields. And because this experience of the abyss was basically a religious experience these lectures took the form of the relation of religion to Philosophy, Art, Politics, Psychoanalysis etc, in which he was trying to work out a new synthesis between religion and these different branches of knowledge ^{AND} in which the dimension of the unconditional would be properly accommodated. He describes this 'Philosophy of Religion' as

"An attempt to express in philosophical concepts the experience of the abyss and the idea of justification as the limitation of philosophy" (I)

These lectures formed the material of his first published work, THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION (2), in which he analyses the whole contemporary situation in art, science, education, politics, philosophy, psychoanalysis etc. from the point of view of the dimension of the unconditional or in other words the religious values they contain. In all of them the experience of the abyss~~s~~ is expressed in some particular way.

(1) Interpretation of History p 35-36

(2) First published in 1926 under the title DIE RELIGIOSE LAGE DER GEGENWART. It was translated with an introduction by RICHARD NIEBUHR in 1932.

According to Tillich there were three ~~phi~~ kinds of philosophical tool at hand, at this time, for the elaboration of this 'theonomous interpretation of culture'. Each of them he finds defective. They were Neo-Kantianism the Philosophy of Values and Phenomonology. It was in opposition to all three that his own philosophical attitude developed. Each of them implied some contradiction, so that he could not subscribe to any of them;

- "Not to Neo-Kantianism, because in consequence of its panlogical tendency it was not able to give expression to the experience of the abyss and to the paradox...
- not to the philosophy of Values because it is still Neo-Kantian and because its attempt to comprehend Religion as a sphere of values, contradicts the transcendence of value that is assumed in the abyss...
- not to Phenomonology because in it the dynamic element is lacking and because it furthers Catholic conservative tendencies" (I)

What he felt most attracted to at this time was Nietzsche's Philosophy of Life. He found that the experience of the abyss was expressed there, most clearly and because of its historical dependence on the philosophy of Schelling it was easy for him to approach it with sympathy. During these years then from 1919 to 1925 it was Nietzsche, more than any other philosopher who influenced him and provided him with the philosophical tools he needed to elaborate a philosophy of religion.

Tillich acknowledges that his philosophical development might have continued to move in the direction of Nietzsche's Philosophy of life - assuming pagan elements into it instead of Jewish and Catholic ones -- if a non-philosophical factor had not commenced to influence him and dominate his

thought, giving it a new direction. This new factor was the experience of the social and political upheaval or what Tillich calls 'The German Revolution' that took place after the war. The social aspect of philosophical and theological problems was to come to the forefront of his mind and to continue to dominate it right up to the end of this second period. Philosophical questions, that treated the individual as an individual, receded into the background for the moment.

"My mind was now directed to a sociologically orientated and politically formed philosophy of history... " (1)

"Together with my whole generation, I was grasped by the overwhelming experience of a nation wide community... of the end of a merely individualistic and predominantly theoretical existence (2).

Up to the end of the war Tillich's attitude to the socialist movement, like that of most intellectuals in Germany was one of indifference. It was only during the last months of the war, when collapse was setting in all around him, that the interrelation between capitalism and imperialism the crisis of bourgeois society, the class struggle and other social concerns became real for him.

"Thus when soon after the revolution the call was sounded for the religious socialist movement, I could not and would not resist it" (3).

Tillich now found himself in another boundary situation, that between Lutherianism on the one hand and Socialism on the other and though not believing in the socialist hopes of utopian dreams of a heaven in this world he did envisage the possibility of a synthesis between the transcendent message of God about the 'Kingdom of God' and the immanent hopes of the revolutionary movement concerning social reconstruction.

Religious Socialism then would be the drive towards the Kingdom of God on earth. If the Kingdom of God could never become, as Tillich fully realised, a concrete reality on earth, he did think that it could act as an ideal which would map out and enlighten the way to social reconstruction.

What is the significance of this change of direction in Tillich's thought ? Socialism stressed the importance of history and it was in history that Tillich now discovered one of the foremost themes of all his subsequent philosophical ~~work~~ and one might add- theological investigations. At the moment it was the historical dimension that became the focal point of all his interest. The reason he states as follows.

"It was because of the historical reality as I found it, when I returned from the 1st World War: a chaotic Germany and Europe, the end of the period of victorious bourgeoisie and of the 19th. century way of life, the split between the Lutheran Church at the Prolateriat, the gap between the transcendent message of Christ and the ~~imane-~~ immanent hopes of the revolutionary movement" (I). New ~~for-the~~

Now for the first time the concept of Kairos begins to play a predominant role in his thought. Intimately connected with his philosophy of History this concept of Kairos signifies 'the right moment', that point in time when the unconditional breaks through the finite. The ramifications of this concept in the ethical sphere, for instance, in regard to the possibility of an unchanging natural law, will be of special interest to us later on.

Tillich's interests in the philosophical, political,

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and economic aspects of religious socialism lead to the publication of his book THE SOCIALIST DECISION (1) in 1933, and leading also to his expulsion from Germany in the same year.

We must retrace our steps , however, to the year 1925, when a change of residence, brought Tillich under a new source of influence. In that year Tillich left Berlin to become professor of Theology at Marburg where Martin Heidegger was influencing some of the best students of the university in his lectures there as professor of Philosophy. Tillich leaves us in no doubt that he too fell under the spell and that the appearance of existentialist philosophy in Germany lead him to a new understanding of the relation between philosophy and Theology (2). In 1936 he stated three reasons why he was so ready to accept this new way of thought :-

- "Firstly, because of an exact acquaintance with Schelling's final period in which he attempted, in opposition to Hegel's philosophy of being, to pave a way for a philosophy of existence...
- + Secondly, by my-even if limited - knowledge of Kierkegaard, the real founder of the philosophy of existence
- and thirdly by my dependence on the Philosophy of life.. " (3).

There is a fourth reason which he mentions elsewhere. The existentialists present a doctrine of man and of human freedom and its finiteness which is closely linked to the Lutheran conception of the Fall of Man (4)

Sixteen years later Tillich's attitude to existentialism

 (1) The German title is Die Sozialistische Entscheidung.
 (2) Interpretation of History p 39
 (3) Ibid. p 39.
 (4) Systematic Theology III 145. (2)

had changed somewhat. In 1952 he remarked:-

"It took years before I became fully aware of the impact of this encounter (it is the encounter with Heidegger's existentialism he has in mind), on my own thinking. I resisted, I tried to learn, I accepted the new ways of thinking more than the answers they gave" (I).

Such a statement puts one on ones guard against any hasty conclusion that Tillich is an existentialist in any of the accepted meanings of that word, or even that he has been profoundly influenced by the German brand of existentialism. It will be one of our tasks to determine the nature and extent of such an influence, positive or negative, on his ethical philosophy

There is one other current of thought that confronted Tillich during this second period and which has left a mark on his thought even if only a negative one. It is that of the so-called Neo-Orthodox theology of the Swiss theologian Karl Barth. It was only when he moved from Marburg to Dresden in 1928 becoming professor of the Philosophy of Religion there, and in the following year to Frankfurt, that he was continually being faced with the task of defining his own dialectical method in relation to that used by Barth in his so called 'Dialectical Theology'. Barth in his 2nd, edition of his COMMENTARY ON THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS ~~EVEN WHICH in which he~~ denied any possibility of correlation or interaction between philosophy and Theology, between God and creation. For a time Tillich had been considered one of the group of 'dialectical theologians' who thought along Bartian lines. Now however their ways parted. Barth's stand in 1922 was an absolute denial of Tillich's whole conception of the relation of Religion to culture. It cut across his key concept of his

Philosophy of Religion, namely that a correlation is possible between philosophy and theology. In several articles in 1923 and 1924 Tillich was hammering home this point. Even then, and as time progressed and Tillich began to lay down the foundations of his own theological system, it became increasingly clear that there was nothing in common between Tillich's method and that of Barth's. In fact they were diametrically opposed. In 1951 Tillich remarked that it was most unfortunate that the name dialectical theology had been applied to a theology that was strongly opposed to any kind of dialectics or mediation (1). It was in opposition to Barth then that Tillich made more precise his method of correlation (2). The point is important because the general framework of Tillich's thought and his method of correlation which is one of the essential aspects of that framework, has had an extrinsic influence on some of Tillich's central ethical ideas, not to speak of his philosophy as a whole.

Influenced by Nietzsche, Heidegger and Barth during this second period, we have seen how Tillich, commenced work on his Philosophy of Religion. Under the impact of the German Revolution, however, most of his energy was now directed towards social and political philosophy and of course the relation of the Unconditional dimension to both. Most of his essays and books published during this period, including INTERPRETATION OF HISTORY and certain articles, published for the first time in english in 1952 in THE PROTESTANT ERA, but dating from this period, evidence his interest in political, social and historical matters. In the next period his thinking returned to some of his earlier interests.

 (1) The Protestant Era, xxviii

(2) We will examine this method of correlation in the next chapter.

ARTICLE III. The American Years:
 the Final Synthesis

On his dismissal from his professorship of Philosophy in Frankfurt University in 1933, Tillich was forced to begin life anew in the United States, at the age of 47 and with very little knowledge of the English language. He acknowledges that he found it difficult at first to adapt himself (1) but that his reception into Union Theological Seminary in New York, on the invitation of Reinhold Niebuhr, did smooth matters somewhat for him. His interest in religious socialism, ⁴⁵ we have just said, receded into the background and he returned with new vigour to examining the unconditional dimension in the personal sphere of the individual rather than in the social sphere. He was now able to turn his attention to the formulation of his Systematic Theology, a project begun as early as 1925. Because of lecture commitments in Union Seminary and elsewhere progress on this work was slow. The 1st volume did not appear until 18 years later (1951), the 2nd. volume, six years later and the final volume in 1963. It has been described as a 20th. century Protestant Summa Theologica. (2) Comprising over a thousand pages of close philosophical and theological reasoning, it is a synthesis of his key ideas in all spheres of thought, in which the particular interests of his second period in social and political matters are given their restricted place. "As the following chapter will be devoted to an analysis of the central ideas in the three volumes of the SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, we will concentrate in the remainder of this chapter, on the chief factors that influenced him *THOUGH*

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- (1) KEGLEY AND BRETALL : The Theology of Paul Tillich p 16
 (2) We will say later what qualifications have to be attached to this expression, *in TILICH'S eyes*.

during his American years.

Besides finding in Union Seminary, a platform for his philosophical and theological ideas, he found there also a place of common worship which was a new and significant experience for him.

"It placed on me the obligation of expressing myself in meditations and in Sermons as well as in the abstract theological concepts of lectures and essays" (1).

So far three collections of these sermons have been made and published :- THE SHAKING OF THE FOUNDATIONS (1950), THE ETERNAL NOW (1956), and THE NEW BEING (1963). In these sermons some of his more abstract and philosophical and theological concepts of his SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY have been given a popular form, providing us at times , with some interesting insights into certain ethical ideas.

During his early years as a professor in Berlin and Marburg (1919 - 1925), Tillich had lectured on the relationship between religion and psychoanalysis. In 1940 New York, from 1940 onwards, he entered into closer contact with the psychoanalytic movement. The problem of the relationship between the theological and psychotherapeutic understanding of man had come more and more to the forefront of his interest. This was due partly to university seminars, held close by him, on such subjects as religion and health, and partly also to the great practical and theoretical interest that Depth Psychology had aroused in Union Seminary . Lastly personal friendship with older and younger analysts, kept him in touch with the main trends in the psychoanalytical movement. (2).

 (1). KEGLEY AND BRETALL : The Theology of Paul Tillich p 18
 (2) Ibid. p 18-19.

We will find that his statement that it is impossible today to elaborate a Christian doctrine of man without using the immense material brought forth by depth psychology especially significant when we come to examine what kind of anthropology his ethics is built on. (1). Much of the material, in what is his most widely read book, THE COURAGE TO BE, (2) gives copious ^{as} evidence of his interest in psychoanalysis and his critical, though positive attitude, towards it. He examines the idea of courage - and its counterpart, anxiety - on different levels, --- theological, philosophical, sociological, psychological. The psychological analysis must be integrated into the philosophical and theological dimensions of the courage and anxiety, if present day findings in psychoanalysis are to be properly appreciated.

One must mention one other factor that had a bearing on Tillich's thought during this latter period, even if it was only a negative one. Some years after his arrival in New York he was invited to become a member of the 'Philosophy Club' and to partake in its monthly meetings. It put him in touch with the mainstream of contemporary American philosophy, which he says influenced ^{him} in the following way :-

"American theology and Philosophy have influenced my thinking in some respects. The spirit of the English language has demanded the clarification of many ambiguities of my thought which were caused by the mystical vagueness of classical German Philosophy. The interdependence of theory and practice in Anglo-Saxon culture has made me free from the fascination of that kind of abstract idealism which enjoys the system for the systems sake (3)."

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- (1) Kegley and Bretall : The Theology of P.Tillich. P 19.
 (2) This book is the material of the Terry lectures delivered at Yale University and published in 1952
 (3) The Protestant Era xxiv

Other books to appear around this time were THE PROTESTANT ERA, (1948) and THE THEOLOGY OF CULTURE (1964), both being collections of articles, published previously in various journals. The PROTESTANT Era includes articles written between 1929 and 1946 on such diverse subjects as Religion and History, Religion and Culture, Religion and Ethics, Protestantism etc. THEOLOGY AND CULTURE contains material on similar subjects written for various journals between 1946 and 1957. One sees from the predominant themes in both books, that the problem that engages all his intention is the presence of the religious dimension in every type of cultural creation, even if they seem to show no relationship to religion in the narrower sense of that word.

In 1955 another book BIBLICAL RELIGION AND THE SEARCH FOR ULTIMATE REALITY appeared in answer to a recurring objection to all his work, namely, that there is an opposition between the ~~theological~~ philosophical language used in his theological works and the concrete imagery of Biblical language (I). He maintains that theology does not have to abstain from using ~~theological~~ philosophical terminology but that on the contrary biblical symbols drive inescapably to an ontological question and that the answer given by theology necessarily contains ontological elements.

Apart from the above works and the three volumes of SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY--~~WHICH~~, which we will deal with later--two other works were published during this latter period,

(I) This book is a slightly extended version of the Richard Lectures delivered at the University of Virginia in 1951.

which are of special interest to us. They indicate an increasing interest in ethical problems. In the first work LOVE, POWER, AND JUSTICE he is concerned, not just with an ethical analysis of each of these three concepts, but with showing their ontological roots in the concept of being itself, and the interrelationship of ~~the~~^{each} concept to each of the others (1). The other work MORALITY AND BEYOND (1964) contains five chapters on the different aspects of the relation of morality to Religion as the titles of the various chapters indicate :- The Religious Dimension of the moral Imperative, The Religious source of the Moral Demands, The Religious element in Moral Motivation, The Trans-Moral Conscience, and lastly, Ethics in a Changing World (2). To what extent this interest in ethical problems, constitutes a new direction in his thought, or to what extent it was latent and implicit in his earlier works, we will have to determine in later chapters of this study.

In no sense does Tillich see this third period of his life as a conversion to new ways of thought. Arriving in the United States at the age of 47 his mind had already been moulded by continental ~~but~~^{AND} in particular ^{by} German streams

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- (1) This work contains the matter of the Firth Lectures delivered in Nottingham, England, in 1953 and modified in the light of seminars he gave on similar subjects he directed in Princeton University U.S.A.
 - (2) The first three lectures were originally the Jacob Ziskind Memorial Lectures delivered at Dartmouth College U.S. The last two are taken from his book THE PROTESTANT ERA.

of thought and any changes that occur are accidental and secondary. Even if he does see himself now on a boundary between the Old world and the New , he regards his task as the preservation of the old values and their translation into the terminology of the new culture (1). He does acknowledge that his protracted residence in the United States did enable him to rise above a formally unconscious provincialism but that this did not entail in any way ^{THE REJECTION OF} his German formation or the continental European tradition on which he was nurtured.

"That would mean that I had fallen
from one provincialism into another".(2)

Tillich remained as professor of Philosophical Theology in Union Seminary up to 1955 when he reached the retiring age. He was then invited by Harvard University to become one of its visiting professors, where he has remained up to the present day , though concentrating on completing his three volume work 'Systematic Theology.'

Conclusion

This introductory biographical survey of the various influences that moulded the mind and work of Paul Tillich, gives one some insight into the complex nature of his thought and the variety of factors that influenced his work. One is immediately put on ones guard against labelling him as a German Idealist of the last century (3) or of a Phenomonologist or Existentialist of the 20th(4). As he suggests himself the concept of the

- (1) KEGLEY AND BREWALL : The Theology of Paul Tillich p 19
- (2) Theology and Culture p 159
- (3) HEYWOOD THOMAS : Paul Tillich ; an appraisal Passim
- (4) BREISACH : An Intoduction to Existentialism ~~a~~
One chapter on Tillich in which he is treated as an existentialist.

borderline, denoting that he stands between different philosophical streams of thought rather than in any one of them, is the most fitting symbol to describe his philosophical position. He is, then, neither an existentialist, nor an idealist in any of the accepted senses of these two words but both Idealism and Existentialism - paradoxically as it may seem - have made contributions to his thought, as have other philosophical traditions. It will be our task to examine these various contributions in detail when we come to consider his ethical philosophy in detail.

Can one point to significant developments or changes in Tillich's philosophy, in particular in Tillich's ethical philosophy ?

There are ~~of course~~ changes of style, temper, and the manner of formulating problems. These of course are part and parcel of every academic career, and can be expected especially in Tillich who attended or lectured in so many different German universities before making his biggest change of all - that from the 'old' world to the 'new'. However Tillich himself denies that there are any far reaching or basic changes in his doctrine or in his ideas. As late as 1952 he remarked :-

"I was struck by how much I thought to be a recent achievement, was already explicitly or at least implicitly contained in them. (his earlier writings)" (I).

Such a statement puts one on one's guard against reading development into his thought where perhaps all was implicitly contained there before hand. What appears to be the most significant change in his thought, was the swing towards historical, social and political problems during the 2nd period and the return to problems where

the individual comes to the forefront again in the 3rd. period. It is debatable whether or not one could call this a radical development or change in his thought. He is concerned with the unconditional dimension in both the social aspect of reality at one period and the in its individual and personal aspect at the next. Moreover in his final synthesis SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY , both are considered by him and finally synthesis^{EP}, so much so, that he remarks one cannot be separated from the other (I).

It is only after we have examined each aspect of Tillich's ethical doctrine in detail, and considered it in relation to his philosophy as a whole that we will be in a position to discuss this problem of development in his thought and especially ^{development} in his ethical thought.

(I). Cf. Systematic Theology Vol I. p 74.
and Vol II. p 317.
Also Love, Power and Justice p 91-99.

CHAPTER II.

DOCTRINAL INTRODUCTION :

THE INTELLECTUAL FRAMEWORK

As Paul Tillich's SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY is the crowning synthesis of his life's work, a brief analysis of the contents of it's three volumes, together with occasional references to earlier works, will serve not only as a doctrinal introduction to his thought but will also indicate the general framework -- philosophical and theological -- in which his moral philosophy is to be found. Just as there is an increasing awareness of the necessity of taking into consideration the overall contents and general plan of the Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas, when investigating any particular philosophical doctrine found therein (I), so also it is necessary to see the general framework of Paul Tillich's SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY, if we are to appreciate adequately, the relationship and the place of his moral philosophy, to the rest of his thought. His ethical doctrines cannot be torn away, tout a fait, from their philosophical and theological context without certain points getting out of focus. A clear understanding of the nature of this intellectual framework, then, is an indispensable requisite for understanding his ethical philosophy.

(I) For instance cf R.P.L. 1945, p 5-20 and 301-316 where VAN STEENBERGHEN makes this point in regard to St. Thomas' natural Theology. Also his book Dieu Caché and Edward SILLEMS : Wayse of Thinking about God. p 28
The same could be said of St. Thomas's moral Philosophy. cf S.PINCKAERS : Le Renouveau de la Morale passim.

In this chapter then we will consider in turn :- what Tillich conceives the nature and method of philosophy to be, in contrast with the nature and method of Theology (Art. I.); what the essential philosophical themes of the five parts of this work are (Art. II.) ; and finally the place of moral philosophy in this overall synthesis (Art. III.).

Article I. The Nature and Method of Philosophy.

A. The System In the Preface to Systematic Theology Tillich remarks that his system is, in no way, a 'Summa' according to the Scholastic meaning of that word. It makes no attempt to give an exhaustive treatment to all theological and philosophical problems. His aim, he says, is to present the method and structure of a theological system, carried through in a 'continual correlation' with Philosophy (I). It is this correlating of theological and philosophical doctrines that leads him to describe the overall synthesis as a system. In each of the five parts of Systematic Theology, there are two sections, the first being a philosophical analysis of some aspect of human existence, culminating in some paradox or ambiguity, insoluble at the philosophical level and the second is the theological answer to this paradox or ambiguity, in the light of theological sources and norms. This correlating process runs through the whole work from beginning to end and is implicit in many of his earlier works.

He maintains that the system is not deductive in the

(I) Systematic Theology Volume I. Preface p ix - x
The three volumes of Systematic Theology will be referred to henceforth as Systematic Theology I, II, and III. respectively.

in the sense that a mathematical system can be said to be so. There is no derivation or deduction of theological assertions from philosophical starting points. He remarks that such has often been attempted in philosophy but with little success. "hat characterises his system is not deduction but consistency.

"It is a totality made up of consistent but not of deduced propositions" (I).

Neither does he regard his system as a body of eternal truths, definitively achieved once and for all time. His system is not a prison of thought turned in upon itself in which all creative thought is stifled. Rather does he see it as a dynamic and flexible unity, open to new insights and in a continual state of reconstruction. This pertains to his moral philosophy as much as to any other part of his system. In conclusion he remarks that the 'system' stands between the 'summa' and the 'essay'.

"The 'summa' deals explicitly with all actual and many potential problems. The 'essay' deals explicitly with one actual problem. The 'system' deals with a group of actual problems, which demand a solution in a special situation" (2)

B. Philosophy and Theology. Tillich's concept of Philosophy is closely bound up with his definition of Theology. He gives two formal criteria of the latter.

"The object of Theology is what concerns us ultimately. Only those propositions are

 (1) Systematic Theology I. p 66
 (2) ibid. p 67.

theological, which deal with ^{their} object~~s~~ in so far as it can become a matter of ultimate concern for us" (1).

The word concern here conveys the idea that a theological problem cannot be approached with detached objectivity ; there is subjective involvement. It is a matter of 'total surrender', of 'infinite passion' . It is ultimate or unconditional concern unlike all the problems that arise in philosophy or in the particular sciences which for Tillich are all conditional in some way or another. The basic characteristic of theology then, is that it is existential in the sense outlined above.

As if this were not enough, Tillich adds a second formal criteria of Theology. "The ultimate concern that Theology deals with is one "that determines our being or non-being" (2). Our existence is continually threatened by things and events. Many of these have never any ultimate concern for us. It is only when our being -- that is the whole of human reality, its structure and its meaning -- is threatened, that we are faced with a theological problem. This second criteria also brings out the existential aspect of theology according to Tillich.

What is Philosophy concerned with or is it contradictory to speak about philosophical concern after what we have said about theology ?

As he can find no generally accepted definition of philosophy he formulates his own.

"Philosophy is that cognitive approach to reality, in which reality as such is the object (3)

or

"Philosophy is that cognitive endeavour in which the question of being is asked " (4)

(1) Systematic Theology I. p15

(2) Ibid. p17

(3) Ibid. p22.

(4) Biblical Religion and the search for Ultimate Reality p 5.

Philosophy tries to understand 'being as such' or 'reality as such'. It is an enquiry into the structures, categories and concepts which are presupposed in the cognitive encounter with every realm of reality (1). To ask what is the general structure of reality that makes experience possible is for Tillich to ask a philosophical question. What characterises Philosophy then is that, even though it is concerned with reality or being as such, there is an absence of existential involvement.

Matters become complicated when we consider the relation of one to the other, of Philosophy to Theology. Tillich acknowledges that theology necessarily asks the same question as philosophy. That which concerns us ultimately must belong to reality as a whole.

"Theology, when dealing with our ultimate concern, presupposes in every sentence, the structure of being, its categories, laws, and concepts" (2)

He hastens to add however, that though both theology and philosophy deal with the structure of reality, they both deal with it in different ways. Philosophy deals with the structure of being itself; theology deals with the meaning of being for us (3). From this basic difference flows all other differences. The philosopher, like the scientist tries to maintain a detached objectivity towards being; the Theologian on the other hand is involved, engaged, 'looking at being with passion, love, and commitment'. Moreover the philosopher looks at the whole of reality in seeking the structure of being; the theologian restricts himself to that place where that which concerns him ultimately is manifested, namely, the ^oLogos

 (1). Systematic Theology I. p 22.
 (2). Ibid. p 24.
 (3): Ibid. p 25.

manifesting itself in a particular historical situation or event' (I). The primary interest of the philosopher is theoretical ; that of the Theologian is existential.

Tillich has defined philosophy and theology in such a way that the points of divergence are counterbalanced by points of convergence. It is necessary to show not only the points of difference or separation but also the points of contact or identity. His whole method of correlation rises or falls on this point.

The converging trends are at work from both sides.

"Every creative philosopher is a hidden theologian. He is a theologian in the degree to which his existential situation and his ultimate concern shape his philosophical vision" (2).

The divergence however remains, as the Philosopher does not intend to be a theologian. The Philosopher tends to turn away from his existential situation towards pure reality. The tension and conflict that this causes is part of the burden and greatness of the philosopher.

The theologian carries an analogous burden. He turns towards the existential situation in order to make clear, the universal validity of what concerns him ultimately. An element of philosophical detachment is called for, but it is this very detachment that can destroy the necessary involvement of Faith. The conflict and tension that ensues is part of the burden and greatness of every theologian.

Finally Tillich maintains that because of the particular way he has defined philosophy and theology, there can not be on the one hand any conflict between them. A conflict can only arise within theology or within philosophy ; it cannot

(I). Systematic Theology I. p 23. Tillich is referring here, of course to the Incarnation of the 'New Being' - Christ. Systematic Theology I. p 29.

arise between them. On the other hand the concept of a 'Christian Philosophy' is also excluded.(1).

C. The Method
of Correlation.

As was said earlier, Tillich has defined philosophy and theology in such a way that correlation necessarily follows. The method of correlation he proposes seeks to avoid supernaturalist, naturalist and dualist methods of relating philosophy and theology. It explains the content of the Christian revelation in the light of a philosophical analysis of human situations. Philosophical questions and theological answers are in mutual interdependence. The Christian religion is only meaningful, Tillich contends, in so far as it is correlated with questions arising out of such analysis. He states for instance that only those who have experienced the shock of transitoriness or the anxiety in which they become aware of their own finitude, which is the threat of non being, can understand what the notion of God means. (2). The problem of the nature of being, then, particularly my own being, leads ultimately to the problem of God and the problem of God for Tillich is a 'theological' problem in his own sense of that word, or rather the problem of the nature of being calls for a Theological answer which Revelation alone can give.

Tillich warns us that in this process of correlation both the philosopher and theologian remain autonomous. As a theologian he does not tell himself what is philosophically true; as a philosopher he does not tell himself what is

(1) Tillich arrives at these conclusions after some detailed and close reasoning in the Introduction to Systematic Theology I. p 3-74. We merely state the conclusions here.
(2) Systematic Theology I. p 69.

Theologically true. However as a philosopher he cannot help seeing human existence and existence in general in such a way that the Christian symbols appear meaningful and understandable. Even as a Philosopher his eyes are partially focussed by his ultimate concern'(1). He falls back finally on a distinction between matter and form to indicate the relation between philosophy and theology.

"In respect to content, the Christian answers are dependent on the revelatory events in which they appear ; in respect to form they are dependent on the structure of the question which they answer" (2).

As we shall see later Tillich's definitions of Philosophy and Theology and their relationship to one another have had consequences in the ethical sphere. In fact here is the source of one of the chief difficulties that can be brought against his moral philosophy, namely that of its rational autonomy. However , it is as well to remark at this stage that Heywood Thomas oversimplifies Tillich's treatment of the relationship of Philosophy to Theology in asserting :-

"His method of defining philosophy and Theology.... is exceedingly like a mathematical formula in which $X = Y$, $Z = Y$ and therefore $Z = X$ " (3).

According to Thomas, Tillich's definitions would be tautologous. Such a comparison to a mathematical formulation can in no way do justice to the complex relation of Philosophy and Theology outlined by Tillich, where the points of convergence and divergence are carefully established.

(1). Systematic Theology I. p 71.

(2). Ibid. p 72.

(3). Paul Tillich ; An Appraisal p 42.

Article II. Survey of Philosophical themes
in Systematic Theology .

We have seen how the method of correlation demands that each of the five parts of his work Systematic Theology include two sections, of first of which contains a philosophical analysis of some aspect of human existence, leading up to some question or paradox, and the succeeding section containing the theological answer to this question or paradox.

"This division is the backbone of the structure of the present system" (I).

What follows is a brief summary of the philosophical sections of the five parts, or rather the central philosophical themes that play a basic role in his philosophy as a whole and which have some essential bearing on his moral philosophy. We will examine the philosophical section of each of the five parts in turn.

PART I. Tillich is of the opinion that Epistemology should run through the whole system but for practical reasons he decided to 'split off' some of the material from each of the other parts, combining it together to form an integral critical section. Because the nature of reason and the norms and sources of Theology are presupposed in the whole system, he decided eventually to treat them in a place apart. This introductory critical section, then, which constitutes the first part of

(I) Systematic Theology I. p 74.

Systematic Theology, presents us with an analysis of mans rationality, and the questions and paradoxes implied in the finitude, estrangement and ambiguities of reason. It also deals with the answers Revelation provides to these questions or paradoxes. Hence the title of this section is Reason and Revelation.(1).

Tillich , first of all, makes a distinction between 'ontological reason' and 'technical reason'. Ontological reason is the structure of the mind which enables it to grasp and to transform reality (2). Its cognitive nature is only one of its components. In addition there are aesthetic, theoretical, practical, detached, passionate, subjective and objective elements in Ontological Reason. Technical reason on the other hand reduces ontological reason to the mere capacity of reasoning;-

"Only the cognitive side of the classical concept remains and with the cognitive realm only those cognitive acts which deal with the discovery of means for ends" (3)

Technical reason, then, impoverishes reality.

Tillich then makes a further distinction within ontological reason itself. One must distinguish between ontological reason in its essential perfection, and ontological reason in the different stages of its actualization, in existence, life, and history (4). It is only reason in the second sense that becomes subject to finitude, ambiguity, conflict and division. In reason in its actualised or existential state all kinds

(1) The philosophical analysis of reason corresponds to Systematic Theology I. pp 79-II2.

(2) Ibid. p 80

(3) Ibid. p 81

(4) Ibid. p 83.

of tensions and divisions can arise, which militate against one another and which call for some kind of solution. For instance the polar conflict between subjective and objective reason and the ensuing ambiguities and conflicts that arise because of it, points to something which transcends them both, Neither Realism, Pluralism, Monism, or Idealism have provided a satisfactory answer according to Tillich. Only what he refers to as the 'Depth of Reason' or 'estatic Reason' can do so.

"The 'depth of reason' is the expression of something that is not reason but which precedes reason and which is manifest through it. Reason in both its objective and subjective structure, points to something which appears in these structures but which transcends them in power and meaning " (1).

This pointing of reason to something beyond itself in this epistemological section , has its counterparts in all the other parts of Tillich's philosophy and hence in all the other parts of Systematic Theology. One is not surprised to come across expressions such as the God beyond all the Gods of natural Theology or a moral philosophy beyond morality (2) Here he has found a name for reason which is beyond reason ; it is the depth of reason and it coincides with essential reason (3).

It is this 'depth of reason' then , that unites the two poles of subjective and objective reason and which surmounts all the ambiguities and tensions which

(1) Systematic Theology I. p 88

(2) The title of one of his books on ethical philosophy is Beyond Morality.

(3). This latter statement calls for more qualifications which we will pass over here.

arise in our existential situation. For Kant it was in the sphere of moral experience that the Unconditional broke through. It was the only point at which the prison of finitude was open. For Tillich the Unconditional is manifest in reason itself that is in the 'depth of reason'

"The depth of reason is essentially manifest in reason. But it is hidden in reason under the conditions of existence"(I)

It is only at certain passing moments now that the depth of reason breaks through. Participating in the ambiguities and contradictions of existence, actual reason moves through finite categories, through self destructive conflicts, through ambiguities in its quest for what is unambiguous. For Tillich this is the quest for Revelation.

We will note here three forms of conflict, or ambiguity that pertain to reason in its existential state and which have ramifications also in the moral order.

(a) Autonomy and Heteronomy.

In reason in its existential state a conflict occurs between autonomous and heteronomous reason. Autonomy in this context means the law of reason, which he finds in himself as a rational being. Heteronomy on the other hand comes from outside and imposes a strange law on all or on one of the functions of reason (2). The real conflict arises when this law from outside represents the Depth of reason itself but the individual is unaware of it.

For Tillich autonomy and heteronomy are both rooted in theonomous reason which he describes as

(1). Systematic Theology I. p 89.
 (2). Ibid. p 93.

'autonomous reason united with its own depth' (1).
 However in our actual existence theonomous reason
 has broken apart and autonomous and heteronomous reason
 have both gone their own way. There is continual striving
 towards the 'theonomous situation' in our present state. It
 can be only partially realised. This striving, Tillich
 interprets, as the quest for Revelation. (2)

(b) Relativism and Absolutism. (3)

Essential reason
 unites in harmony an absolute and relative polarity which
 corresponds to static and dynamic elements. The static
 element prevents reason from losing its identity. The
 dynamic element is the power of reason and it actualises
 itself rationally in the process of life. Under the
 conditions of actual existence, the two elements are torn
 from each other and move against one another. Tillich
 applies these two notions in many different spheres -- in
 the fields of science, politics, aesthetics etc. Their
 application to Moral philosophy, where we are concerned
 with the absolute and relative, static and dynamic
 elements of the moral law will be particularly interesting
 to us.

(c) Formalism and Emotionalism. (4)

In essential
 reason are united but again as in the previous two cases
 their unity is disrupted under the conditions of
 existence. Neither is this polarity an exclusively

(1) Systematic Theology I p 94.

(2) The answer to this quest is to be found in
Systematic Theology I. pp 118-174.

(3) Ibid. pp 96 - 99

(4) Ibid. pp 99 - 104.

epistemological one. In legal justice for example formalism places exclusive emphasis according to Tillich on the structural necessity of justice, without considering the adequacy of the legal form to the human reality it is supposed to shape.

"The tragic alienation between law and life is a consequence of the separation of form from emotion " (I).

This separation of form and emotion is again a quest for a truth that is beyond reason. It too is a quest for revelation. Consequently the whole of the 2nd section of this first part of Systematic Theology is devoted to the theological answer to all these questions. The reconciliation of all these conflicts must all be sought for beyond philosophy. They must be sought for in the Christian Revelation.

Though we have only given a bare outline of the philosophical section of this 1st . Part, sufficient has been said to indicate the repercussions some of his epistemological doctrines will have in the ethical sphere. This is particularly true of the three polarities of Autonomy and Heteronomy, Absolutism and Relativism, and Formalism and Emotionalism, outlined above, all of which have consequences in the ethical sphere.

(I) Systematic Theology I. p 100.

PART II. The philosophical section of this part, analyses mans existence as it actually is, its character of self-contradiction and estrangement. It reveals the finitude of man and because of his Heideggerian starting point that man is the gateway to being it reveals, also, the finitude of everything that has existence. To this philosophical analyses of being, corresponds the theological answer which is the Infinite. Hence the title of this second part of Systematic Theology is 'Being and God'.

For Tillich the question of being arises as a shock to man - a metaphysical shock of the possibility of non-being. (I). However he does not commence with an analysis of being as such but with what he calls 'concepts' or 'principles' of being:-

"Ontology is possible because there are concepts which are less universal than being but more universal than any ontic concept - that is more universal than any concept designating a realm of being " (2).

These concepts, he states have been called 'principles' 'categories' or 'ultimate notions' and the human mind has worked for thousands of years in their discovery, elaboration and organization. He himself distinguishes between four levels of ontological concepts:

- I. The basic ontological structure which is the implicate conditional of the ontological question
2. The elements which constitute the ontological structure.

(I) Systematic Theology I. p 181.
 (2) Systematic Theology I. p 181.

3. The characteristics of being which are the conditions of existence.
4. The categories of being and knowing.

As we are concerned here with the basic framework of Tillich's metaphysics, on which his moral philosophy ultimately is built, a brief analysis of each of these four levels of ontological concepts or principles is necessary.

I. The Basic Ontological structure.

When Tillich speaks about the basic ontological structure he has in mind the subject-object structure of being, or what he refers to, at times, as the Self-World structure. This interdependence of the self and the world is the basic ontological structure, on which all the others depend. Man experiences this structure in himself. He experiences himself as having a world to which he belongs (I). His ability to do this is an essential prerequisite. the essential prerequisite, for the constitution of the moral act, as we shall see later.

Here as in many other places in Tillich's philosophy, one will notice similarities between Tillich's ideas and those of the contemporary current of continental philosophy, known as existential phenomenology. For instance Tillich's analysis of the subject-object structure of being, seem to indicate many points of contact with what has been been stated to be the primitive fact of existential

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(I) Systematic Theology I. pp 186-190.

phenomonology, as presented by Luijpen and Dondeyne (I) Without going into the matter further at this stage one could remark that though Tillich was intimately acquainted with the works of Husserl and the earlier writings of Heidegger, the two founder - fathers of existential phenomonology, any similiarities between his thought and this movement must be tempered with the fact that he was profoundly influenced also by late 19th. German Idealist Philosophy and also by the fact that he takes usually an original stand against any philosophy he comes in contact with.

2. The Elements which constitute the ontological structure

The elements, the second kind of principle or concept that Tillich deals with in his ontological analysis of being, are twin structures, which show the threefold polar character of the basic subject-object structure of being. (2) They are Individualism and Universality (or participation), Dynamism and Form, Freedom and Destiny. Again all three have consequences in the ethical sphere, so we will take a quick review of each pair.

(a) Individualism and Participation. (3)

These elements

are not characteristics of a special sphere of being. They are both ontological elements and therefore qualities of everything that exists. The fact that the two poles are interdependent is particularly evident, when one considers this structure in man.

- (I) cf. WILLIAM A LUIJPEN : Existential Phenomomology p 34
 Albert DONDEYNE : Contemporary European Thought
 and Christian Faith p 25 -
- (2) Systematic Theology I. pp 193 - 206.
- (3) Ibid. p 193.

When individualization reaches its perfect form in man we have a person and when participation reaches its perfect form we have a communion of persons. In other words there is reciprocal causality between the two poles , one impling the other and the proportion of perfection that is ~~98~~-attained in one pole is proportionate to that attained in the other .

"Communion is participation in another completely centred and completely individual self" (1).

The person as the fully developed individual self is impossible without communion with other fully developed selves. Each individual discovers himself through the resistance he meets with in other persons. In the resistance of the other person, the person is born and so also, we may add is morality. The twin-ontological elements of Individualism and participation have much to say concerning the starting point of Tillich's moral philosophy, as we shall see later.

(b) Dynamics and form.

It is easy to see how both these elements also apply to every being (2) if we keep in mind that dynamics for Tillich corresponds to potency , that is to the potentiality of being. In man's immediate experience this polarity of dynamics and form appears as the polar structure of vitality and intentionality. Vitality is the power which keeps a living being alive and growing. In man this growth is bound to no a priori limitations.

"Man is able to create a world beyond the given. He creates the technical and the spiritual realms".(3)

(1) Systematic Theology I. p195.

(2) Both these elements apply even to God but how this is explained is not our concern here
cf. Systematic Theology I p 199 and pp 261-280.

(3) Systematic Theology I. p199.

Mans vitality , however, is conditioned by his intentionality. or what Tillich says could be called 'actualising reason'. The dynamic or vital polarity in man is creative but it ~~alone~~ is undirected or chaotic. It is directed or formed by the pole of intentionality by which it is related to meaningful and universal structures. In short these two elements, correspond to the static and dynamic elements in man and they are such that their mutual interdependence cannot escape us. Ethical norms and laws will have to be in line with this twofold structure so that what one considers to be the place of static and absolute elements or contents in the ethical sphere as well, as dynamic and relative factors, will have to be in accord with this basic metaphysical polarity of dynamics and form.

(c) Freedom and Destiny (I).

It is obvious that Tillich's views on the nature of freedom will have consequences in the ethical sphere. Man is man because he has freedom. He has freedom however according to Tillich only in polar interdependence on destiny. The counterpart to freedom is not determinism but a complex pole called Destiny, which has ramifications throughout the whole of his philosophy. Here it will suffice to say that destiny points to the situation in which man finds himself, facing the world , yet belonging to it at the same time.

"Destiny is myself as given, formed by nature, history and myself. It is the basis of my freedom" (2).

This polarity no more than the other two is not confined to man. Since they both constitute an ontological polarity, everything that participates in being must participate in this polarity. As man is the only being

- (1) Systematic Theology I pp 201-206
 (2) Ibid. p 202.

who possesses freedom in the strict sense the application of this polarity to other beings is possible only by way of analogy. Hence Tillich will speak of the polarity of spontaneity and law, in regard not only to living beings but also in relation to the inorganic world.

Tillich's concept of freedom is a complex one, constituting an integral part of his whole system. It plays a crucial part not only in his ethics of the individual but also in his social ethics (I).

3. The Characteristics of being which are the conditions of existence.

This third level of ontological concepts expresses the power of being to exist and the difference between essential and existential being. In all ontologies the duality of essential and existential being is seen according to Tillich, and in all, the question of their relation to one another is raised. The answer is prepared by the polarity of freedom and destiny on the second level of analysis but freedom as such is not the basis of existence but rather freedom in unity with finitude

"Finite freedom is the turning point from being to existence" (2)

It is the analysis of finitude in its polarity with infinity as well as in its relation to freedom and destiny, to being and non being, to essence and existence, which is the task of Ontology in this third level.

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- (1). Tillich's concept of freedom will be examined in the following chapter in relation to his concept of the moral act and moral imperative..Its social aspect will be dealt with in the chapter on 'Social Morality'
- (2) Systematic Theology I. 184.

It is at this level that he introduces the concept of anxiety as expressing finitude from the inside. It has here an ontological connotation, signifying 'man directed towards nothingness'.

4. The categories of being and knowing.

At the fourth and final level of ontological concepts Tillich analyses are the categories of Time, space, causality and substance. They are the basic forms of thought and being and participate in the nature of finitude. They are not logical but ontological forms and so are present in everything. They reveal their ontological nature through their double relation to being and to non-being.

"They express being but at the same time they express non being to which everything is subject"(I)

This is the reason why he can refer to them as forms of finitude. Each category expresses not only a union of being and non being—that is in relation to the world, 'from the outside,—but also a union of anxiety and courage,—that is as seen from the inside in relation to the self. (2).

This summary account of the analysis of being, carried out by Tillich at the four levels outlined above, gives one some idea of how vast and how complex is the ontological foundation on which his ethical philosophy is built. In the light of this foundation, many of the statements he makes about moral matters, which at first sight appear disconcerting, acquire a new force and and a new consistency

(I) Systematic Theology I. p 214.

(2) His analysis of these concepts of Time, space, causality and substance have much less bearing on his moral philosophy than other parts of his ontology, so there is no need to develop them further here.

PART III.

This part studies the gap that exists between mans essential nature and it's distortion in existence. The estrangement of our existential state and the ambiguities of life as delineated in this part, are consequences of mans finitude as examined in the previous part. Corresponding to mans existential self-estrangement, and the questions and paradoxes implied in this situation, is the answer or answers that Revelation gives in 'The New Being' - Christ. Hence the title of this third part is 'Existence and the Christ'.

Tillich uses a dymythologised account of the Old Testament story of the Fall to indicate the transition from essence to existence. It is finite freedom working within the framework of universal destiny that makes this transition possible. Tillich follows Kierkegaard closely here in his analysis of mans finite freedom. Man is aware of his finite freedom and this awareness is anxiety. This anxiety reveals to him the possibility of the non-fulfillment of his potentialities. It indicates that he is a being directed towards nothingness. It reveals to him the split between his essential nature and his actual existence. This transition from essence to existence is a universal quality of all finite beings. It is manifest in every individual person in 'the transition from dreaming innocence to actualization and guilt'. (I) In other words it is apparent in anxiety in all its forms.

As will be seen this distinction between mans essential nature and his existential estranged state is central to Tillich's moral philosophy. The very notion of command, or of norm, or of law are rooted in it and flow from it.

(I) Systematic Theology II. p 42.

Tillich gives a detailed description of mans existential estrangement in this part, and also its destructive implications. He interprets traditional concepts such as sin, unbelief, hubris (total self centredness) and concupiscence as marks of this estrangement, giving them a connotation that fits in with his own particular view of things.

All these different forms of estrangement contradict mans essential being. The elements of essential being which should move in harmony with each other, now tend to annihilate each other and the whole to which they belong. Disruption of the self-world structure, for instance, means that man loses not only himself but also his world. The loss of one implies the loss of the other. For Tillich this disruption of the self is the basic mark of evil

"Self-loss, as the first and basic mark of evil, is the loss of one's determining centre ; it is the disintegration of the centred self by disruptive forces which cannot be brought into unity" (I).

He conceives moral evil in terms of psychological disruption. The farther the disruption goes the more the being of man as man is threatened. Tillich develops this point further in Part IV of Systematic Theology when examining the nature of the moral act as such.

This disruption of the basic self world structure of being which corresponds to moral evil in man, leads also to the disruption of the other polar elements of being. The harmonious tension that should exist between Freedom and Destiny can be so disturbed in our

existential state that it can appear on the one hand as arbitrariness and on the other hand as mechanical necessity. Where dynamics and form are separated or disrupted, dynamics can become a formless urge for self-transcendence; form can become external or heteronomous law(I). In this situation there is a continual flight from chaos to law and from law to chaos. It is evident from this statement of Tillich's that he shares the Lutheran opposition to law as such and that his ethics is not going to be an ethics of law. Law must be transcended he says. However it should be also evident that his opposition to law cannot be reduced to an inherited Lutheran prejudice. No doubt this conditioned his attitude to law and may even have given his mind the vital push which turned his mind in another direction. Be that as it may, his attitude to law is now underpinned by basic metaphysical attitudes towards this polarity of dynamics and form (2). Lastly the disruption of the balance between participation and individualization can lead on the one hand to the individual being isolated and imprisoned in his own finitude and on the other his being swallowed up by some all pervading totalitarian forces in which he becomes a mere object.

Tillich develops further consequences of this state of estrangement in his analysis of Death, Finitude, Guilt, Suffering, Loneliness and Despair. As in the two previous parts a theological section follows in which the

 (1). Systematic Theology II. p 74

(2). This point will be further developed in the chapter devoted to Tillich's concept of law.

solution to all these disruptive forces at work in the state of estrangement , is stated to be found in 'The New Being' - that is in Christ. Revelation indicates the way in which the gap between essence and existence , our essential nature and our state of existential estrangement can be overcome.

PART IV. This part is based on the fact that the essential as well as the existential characteristics pointed out in the previous sections are abstractions and that in reality they appear in the complex and dynamic unity which is called 'life'.

"The power of essential being is ambiguously present in all existential distortions" (I).

Life, that is, being in its actuality displays such a character in all its processes. This part therefore gives an analysis of man as living and to the question implied in the ambiguities of life it gives the answer which is the Spirit. So the title of this part is Life and the Spirit.

Tillich rejects 'all hierarchical conceptions of different realms of being' - organic, inorganic, psychological, spiritual and replaces them by the complex notion of 'the multi-dimensional unity of life'. He replaces the idea of level by that of dimension - another metaphor he admits but one which connotes the different realms of being in such a way that there cannot be mutual interference. The unity of life is seen above its conflicts.

These conflicts are not denied but they are not derived from the hierarchy of levels. For Tillich they are the consequences of the ambiguity of life

processes. No longer is there a sharp distinction between different levels. There is rather a progressive realization from one level into another and because Tillich thinks that the word 'dimension' conveys this idea better he prefers to use it. It also covers better the instances, where the actualization of one 'level' is dependent on the actualization of another. (I).

What is of particular interest to us in Tillich's doctrine of multi-dimensional unity of life is the relation of the psychological and spiritual dimensions and the bearing this has on morality.

Tillich distinguishes between three functions of life which correspond to the three polarities of being we have already met with in Part II of Systematic Theology.

A) Self - Integration ^{is the function} in which self identity is established. Corresponding to the polarity of Individualization and Participation it is a continuous movement from centredness to alteration and from alteration back to centredness (2).

B) Self - Creation is the function of producing new centers. It is the principle of growth which determines the process of self creation, so it is not surprising that it corresponds to the polarity of dynamics and form in being.

C) Self- Transcending function is the process in which life drives beyond itself as finite life. It pertains to the polarity of Freedom and Destiny.

(1) Systematic Theology III. p 33. 16.
 (2) Ibid. p 33.

In our actual estranged state, the internal functioning of each of these three processes is disrupted as is also the external harmony that should exist between them. Selfintegration can be disrupted by disintegration, self creation by destruction and self transcendence by profanity. The unity of each process ^{is} threatened. For instance in the self-integration process there occurs the ambiguities of the moral law, of the moral imperative and of moral motivation. Corresponding to the process of self-creation are the ambiguities of culture and to the self-transcending function, the ambiguities of religion. The process of self-integration will be examined in greater detail in the next chapter as it is directly concerned with the moral sphere. Here we have merely condensed in a very summary way the chief headings and divisions of the philosophical section of this fourth part of Systematic Theology. It will at least give some indication of the over-all pattern or framework in which Tillich's moral philosophy is to be found in this final work and which is presupposed in other works of Paul Tillich

All these different kinds of ambiguity are a quest for unambiguous life, which the Revelation of the Spiritual Presence or simply the Spirit provides, in some measure or another.

PART V. The final part of Systematic Theology gives an analysis of mans historical existence. To the questions implied in the ambiguities of history comes the answer 'The Kingdom of God! Hence the

title of this part is History and the Kingdom of God . He acknowledges that the historical dimension is intimately bound up with the other parts of Systematic Theology but for practical purposes - as with Part I - he decided to treat it apart. He asserts also that the problem of history has traditionally been treated separately

"Every doctrine of life must include a doctrine of the historical dimension of life in general, and of human history as the most comprehensive life process in particular...Any description of the ambiguities of life must include a description of the ambiguity of life under the historical dimension(I)."

We see then that this final part is a logical extension of the fourth Part. It is the all-embracing character of the historical dimension - which is present in all other dimensions that finally makes him decide to treat it apart.

Briefly this part deals with the structure of historical processes, the logic of historical knowledge, the ambiguities of historical existence, the meaning of the historical movement and the relation of all these to the answer Revelation provides - namely the Kingdom of God.

Like all the other parts it too has certain sections which have a particular bearing on our study of Tillich's moral philosophy, in particular his key concept of his Philosophy of History - that of Kairos. Everything he says about the possibility or non-possibility of an immutable natural law or about the absoluteness of ethical contents is said in the light of this concept of Kairos - the concept of the 'right moment'.

This introductory survey of the principal philosophical themes in Tillich's *Systematic Theology* has been concerned with indicating the vastness and complexity of his thought as a whole. I have treated many important points in a summary way in order that one may be able to envisage the over-all framework in which his moral philosophy is to be found.

More than that I have emphasised the many points of contact that exist between his moral philosophy and the metaphysical and psychological groundwork on which it is built. These points of contact will be reconsidered and further elaborated, where it is necessary, in the chapters that follow

It will be maintained that the significance and originality of Tillich's ethical philosophy spring directly from the framework in which his moral philosophy is placed. No doubt it can be said of every ethical philosopher of note that the anthropological and metaphysical background to his ethics is vital to the understanding of his thought - even where he may deny that there is such a metaphysical background (1). With Tillich it is doubly necessary as he himself intentionally builds up his ethics in the light of the metaphysical doctrines he has already elaborated and one of his chief concerns is that a complete consistency exist between the two (2).

(1). This is particularly true of much of the ethical discussions among contemporary exponents of Linguistic Analysis, where they claim to prescind from metaphysical considerations. cf. CHARLESWORTH : Philosophy and Linguistic Analysis. p 185 -

Also Philosophical Studies XIII §964 Article on Moore by Daly.

(2) The entire theme of Tillich's book Love, Power and Justice centers on this point.

Article III. The Place of Ethics in Tillich's
Thought.

In sketching the general themes of Tillich's philosophy in the previous article, we have already implicitly indicated the place of ethics in his thought as a whole. However a more explicit treatment is needed of his conception of moral philosophy and its relationship to the rest of his thought. At first sight there would appear to be a marked difference between his approach to moral philosophy in Systematic Theology and his approach to it in some of his other works (I).

Taking his Systematic Theology first, one sees how opposed he is to any separate treatment of moral philosophy in this work. He thinks that in doing so one raises an insoluble conflict between philosophical and theological ethics. Such a conflict arises he says when ethics is separated from 'Dogmatics'. He is in favour of what he calls 'the present day neo- orthodox movement ' which rejects such a separation.

"A theology which like the present system emphasises the existential character of theology must follow this trend (integration of ethics with theology) all the way to the very end."(2).

For Tillich the ethical element is a necessary -and often predominant ~~the~~ element in every theological statement. Even such formal statements of the critical principles, outlined in the first part of Systematic Theology he regards, as pointing to the decision of the ethical individual about his being or non-being. Likewise he

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- (1) The other work we have in mind here is principally Love, Power and Justice, but Beyond Morality and The Protestant Era convey the same impression.
- (2) Systematic Theology I. p 36.

considers the doctrine of finitude and existence, of anxiety and of guilt as not only ontological in character but also ethical and in his consideration of the social and personal dimensions of the individual, he asserts that the ethical element is predominant. Tillich gives all these reasons or examples to indicate that existential Theology (his Systematic Theology) implies ethics in such a way of its very nature that no separate treatment of moral philosophy is necessary or even desirable

"From beginning to end (of the Systematic Theology) everything is ethical by implication" (I).

At first sight it would appear that ethics has been swallowed up by Theology or that the notion of ethics implicit in the above statements is very far from the generally accepted ideas about this subject. If one considers these statements, however, in the light of the method of correlation, they appear less disconcerting. By the use of this method he takes philosophical elements - be they metaphysical, psychological or moral - into the system itself, using them as the material out of which questions are developed. The questions arise out of a philosophical analysis but they are answered by theological concepts. Because of this method of treatment one will not find an exclusive, self contained philosophical section in Systematic Theology which is not directed in some way to Theological doctrines.

In the case of ethics, there is another reason, as the assertions above indicate. Tillich is using the word 'ethical' in these statements? in what appears to be a very loose sense. Whatever is a matter of unconditional or theological concern is also a matter of ethical concern.

But the whole of Systematic Theology is a matter of ultimate concern, because it is the same theological concern that is the driving force of every part of it - both philosophical and theological. (1). Hence he can say of Systematic Theology, not only that every part of it is a matter of ultimate concern but also that everything in it is ~~everything~~ ethical by implication. Wherever there is ultimate concern the ethical dimension appears.

In his other works, especially those which deal with ethics, he gives a much more restricted meaning to this adjective 'ethical' and its corresponding noun. For instance in Love, Power and Justice, he defines ethics in the following way:-

"ethics is the science of mans moral existence, asking for the root of the moral imperative, the criterion of its value, the source of its contents, and the forces of its realization" (2).

This definition would appear to correspond much better to our traditional concept of moral philosophy as an autonomous science, accessible to natural reason and completely self contained.

Is there an opposition then between his concept of ethics in his last and definite work Systematic Theology and his conception of ethics in his other works? The fact that he wrote these latter works or rather two of them at the same time as he was engaged in writing the 1st and 2nd. volumes of Systematic Theology would appear to militate against such a conclusion. It excludes an explanation of the difference of approach in terms of a

(1) Cf. pp 29-30 on the relation between Unconditional and theological

(2) Love, Power and Justice p 73.

development of his thought. However this does not mean that we have to try and explain the difference away. It would appear to me that it signifies a definite tension in Tillich's thought which will come more to light when we examine each of the key concepts of Tillich's ethical philosophy in turn. Tillich seems to be trying to reconcile the traditional Protestant attitude towards ethical philosophy in which it is made ancillary to scriptural or theological studies and another tradition or attitude in which it is treated as autonomous philosophically and related to metaphysics or other philosophical disciplines.

In what he says explicitly about ethics in Systematic Theology (I) he is being faithful to the Reformers of the 16th. century to a certain extent and only to a certain extent. They had rejected any source of morality that is distinct from the Revealed word of God. Tillich does not go so far. He opts for a compromised solution. It is philosophy that proposes the ethical questions ; it is Theology that provides the theological answers. At least his starting points are philosophical whatever about the nature of the definite solutions proposed.

The definition of ethics he gives in Love, Power and Justice emphasises the tendency towards autonomy in Tillich's ethical philosophy - that is autonomy in the sense of prescinding from theological considerations. Here again, however, the ultimate solutions proposed invoke theological considerations.

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(I) I say 'explicitly' here because implicitly the autonomous tendency in his thought appears in many places.

It is because of these two tendencies in his thought— which he tries to harmonise—that one could say he lies half-way between the traditional Lutheran attitude towards ethics in which it has no autonomy and the Catholic attitude in which it is autonomous - that is as a philosophical science. One consequence of this borderline situation is that Tillich rejects any such thing as a secular ethics (1). Both these tendencies in Tillich's Ethical thought - that is towards philosophical autonomy and towards theological dependence, are summed up very succinctly in a definition of ethics he gives in one of his earliest works, THE RELIGIOUS SITUATION :-

" Ethics is the Question about activity (philosophical) directed towards the Unconditional (theological).(2).

The purpose of the rest of this dissertation will be to examine in detail, how successful Tillich has been, in standing on this borderline between the Protestant and Catholic attitudes towards ethical philosophy.

(1) The chapter on Ethics and the Unconditional will treat this point later

(2) The Religious Situation p 150

CHAPTER III.

THE MORAL IMPERATIVE.

Introduction. In defining ethics as the science of man's moral existence, asking for the root of the moral imperative, the criteria of its validity and the forces of its realization (I), Tillich indicates how essential to his thought this notion of the moral imperative is. Before considering however its nature, source, criteria and ^{the} force of its realization we will examine the anthropological foundations in which it is rooted. (ART. I.). Then we will analyse the nature of the moral imperative itself as outlined by Tillich. His treatment here is both negative and positive. He engages first of all in a dialectical discussion with the findings of other philosophers on this subject, accepting, rejecting and criticising what they have to say. While rejecting everything that is defective and incomplete in their solutions he is careful to point out, also, what is of value (ART. II). More positively however his own solution is the direct outcome of his own basic ontological and anthropological principles. This we will outline briefly , concentrating on what he considers to be the immediate source of the moral imperative in our experience (ART. III). Finally we will deal with the 'limitations' and ambiguities of this solution as Tillich himself sees them, despite the fact of having reached the conclusion that the moral imperative did contain an absolute factor. As we shall see later one must go beyond morality itself to a

solution that is 'trans-moral' in order to escape all ambiguity (ART. IV).

ARTICLE I. ANTHROPOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS.

Tillich draws no sharp and clear-cut distinction between the moral imperative and the moral act in his works. The moral imperative ^{demands} ~~is~~ the moral act and vica - versa. Moreover the moral act does not belong to a moral dimensioned that is self enclosed and self contained, cut off from the other dimensions in man . The moral dimension is intimately related to the other dimensions in man. Thirdly the moral act could be said to constitute the moral dimension rather than presuppose it. It is the moral act that establishes man as a spirit and in so doing, it brings the spiritual dimension or the moral dimension in man into being. (I).

To understand in any depth these statements necessitates an examination of the anthropological foundations of the moral imperative -- that is an analysis of the multi-dimensional unity that is man and in particular the spiritual dimension, of which, the moral act is one of the constituting factors (2). There is no doubt that Tillich's moral philosophy has been determined to a great extent by his anthropology. However in no place in his works are the two explicitly coordinated, so that our immediate task is to describe the chief points of contact.

(1) Cf. Morality and Beyond p 20.

(2) We have already given an outline of what Tillich means by the 'multi-dimensional unity of man'
Cf. Chapter II pp 51-53.

A. The Uniqueness of the Spiritual Dimension. (I).

Tillich maintains that in his description of the spiritual dimension in man -- particularly its relationship to the psychological dimension -- he avoids any dualist conception of man in any form. His concept of 'the multi-dimensional unity of man' is opposed not only to Dualism ; it is also opposed to psychological monism. It refutes :-

"a dualistic contrasting of the spiritual with the psychological and also a dissolution of the spiritual into the psychological, out of which it arises (2).

Each encountered dimension of life shows a unique structure, whether it concerns the inorganic, organic, psychological or spiritual dimension. Though each dimension is established under flexible criteria one is justified in speaking about a particular dimension if an encountered reality possesses a unique structure. For instance in the inorganic dimension we encounter realities with potentialities which become actual in time and space and which are subject to physical analysis - that is subject to causal relations which are measurable in terms of space and time (3). The organic dimension is characterised by self-relating, self-preserving and self-constructing wholes. It is the last two dimensions that are of special interest to us. The ^{spiritual} ~~psychological~~ dimension actualises itself within another dimension -- that of the ~~psychological~~ ^{spiritual}. How does this take place ?

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- (1). In his description of the relation of the psychological to the spiritual dimension in man Tillich acknowledges a certain dependence on Nietzsche 'Thus Spoke Zarathustra' where he says the spirit is described as 'life cutting into life'. *cf. SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY III p 29.*
- (2) Systematic Theology III. p 29.
- (3) Ibid. p 19.

Just as it is a constellation of conditions that makes it possible for the organic dimension to appear in the inorganic, the psychological dimension in the organic, so also another constellations of conditions makes it possible for the spiritual dimension to become actual in the psychological. The crucial problem is how this actualization of the spiritual dimension can follow from this constellation of psychological factors. Tillich states that it is only when certain psychological conditions are present that the leap takes place, which brings about the domination of the spiritual dimension over the psychological. The very fact that man can miss this creative act constitutes for Tillich the essence of the moral problem (I).

It is in speaking about the multi-dimensional unity of man, rather than in terms of body and soul, that he hopes to safeguard the unity of the spiritual and psychological elements in man and their complex relationship. To speak of body and soul is for him not only to distort the idea of the multi-dimensional unity of man; it is also to make incomprehensible the dynamism of the human personality. Every act of the spirit presupposes given psychological material, and at the same time constitutes a leap which is possible only for a totally centred self. This leap can be on the cognitive or moral plane. In other words there is an interaction between the spiritual and psychological dimensions in man on both the cognitive and moral levels. One throws light on the other.

Knowledge presupposes the presence of different material -- that of sense impressions, past experiences as well as volitional and emotional elements. In order to transform this material into knowledge something must be done to it.

"It must be split, reduced, increased and connected to logical criteria and purged according to methodological material ". (I).

This is done by the personal centre, which is not identical with any particular one of the constituting elements, It is the transcendence of this centre over the psychological material that makes the cognitive act possible and this act is a manifestation of the spiritual dimension in man. On the other hand one cannot say that an additional element has been added to the psychological material. If it were it would be psychological material itself and not the bearer of the spirit according to Tillich. This does not make the personal self foreign or strange to the psychological material.

"It is THEIR psychological centre but transformed into the dimension of the spirit".

When the dimension of the spirit dominates, the psychological centre offers the unity of its own contents to the unity of the spiritual or personal centre. This happens through deliberation and decision . It is in doing this that the psychological centre actualises its potentialities and in actualising its potentialities it transcends itself bringing the dimension of the spiritual into being. (2)

A parallel process takes place in the moral act.

 (I). Systematic Theology III p 28
 (2) Ibid . p 28.

Here also a large amount of material is present in the psychological centre -- drives, inclinations, desires etc.. But the moral act is not the diagonal in which all these vectors limit each other and converge . It is the centred self which actualises itself as a personal self by distinguishing, separating, rejecting , preferring connecting, and in so doing it transcends its elements (1). It is this aspect of freedom -- which is one of hall-marks of the moral act -- which makes possible the total reaction of the centred self which deliberates and decides. (2).

One can see that this concept of a centred self is at the heart of Tillich's distinction between the psychological and spiritual dimensions in man. Furthermore, elucidation of this concept, provides valuable anthropological background on Tillich's conception of moral good and moral evil.

B. Centredness and self-Integration.

What is the specific kind of centredness that characterises the moral dimension in man. For Tillich there is a

(1) Systematic Theology III. p 29.

(2) Though there is no reason for examining it closer at this stage it is interesting to note that Tillich links up this whole analysis of the moral act, with the ontological polarity of Freedom and Destiny which we referred to in the previous chapter. Cf. p 45 - 46. The Freedom present in the moral act is united with Destiny in such a way that the psychological material that enters the moral act, represents the pole of destiny, while the deliberating and deciding self represents the pole of freedom

Cf. Systematic Theology III. p 29.

centredness in all life . Basically this is because the notion of centredness is bound up with the polarity of individualization and participation which characterises all being (1).. Centredness is a quality of Individualization in that the indivisible thing is a centred self. A fully individualised being is a fully centred being and in man the quality of centredness is unlimited (2).

In man this centredness is not something static. It is a dynamic process of outgoing and returning. The most individualised being is the most unapproachable and yet at the same time it has the greatest potentiality for universal participation. Man can participate in the universe in all its dimensions.

Only in man do we , or can we, find complete centredness. The act in which man actualises his essential centredness is the moral act (3). Though not completely identical with the spiritual dimension, morality for Tillich is the constitutive function of the spiritual dimension (4). Morality is seen primarily by Tillich as the act of constituting this spiritual dimension -- and not as obedience to some Divine or human law. The moral act is the act by which the spiritual dimension is actualised or brought into being

" Morality is the function of life , in which the centred self, constitutes itself as a person; It is the totality of those acts in which.

(1) This polarity we have also described in the last chapter Cf. pp 43-44.

(2) Systematic Theology III p 35

(3) Ibid. p 40.

(4) 'Not completely identical' because we have already seen that the spiritual dimension is also characterised by the activity of knowing. However Tillich often ignores this and treats the expressions 'spiritual dimension' and 'moral dimension' as synonymous.

a potentially personal life process becomes an actual person " (1)

A unique type of centredness then is reached in the moral act , one, which itself, constitutes the moral dimension in man .

The centredness of the spiritual dimension , by which morality comes into existence is not something man is born with or something he acquires tout a fait at one particular moment . This centredness is something man actualises, and actualises repeatedly , in the course of time . It is a a life long process.

" The constitution of the person as a person never comes to an end during the whole life process " (2).

One observation is called for at this stage. In his manner of conceiving the moral act Tillich touches upon one of the fundamental themes of the current of thought known as Existential Phenomonology. It is that of the historicity of man with all the consequences this idea has in the sphere of moral philosophy. Tillich too makes room for the dynamic and creative element in the moral act. There is a sense in which Tillich would admit to the statement that 'Icreate morality'. However as we shall see later this element of creativity is but one aspect of the moral act. It is to thinkers such as Nédoncelle and Madinier rather than Sartre that one should look for parallels to the way Tillich conceives the moral act (3)

(1). Systematic Theology III p 40

(2). Ibid. p 40.

(3). NEDONCELLE:Vers Une Phil. de L'Amour et dela Personne
Madinier ; La Conscience Morale.

In both these books the dynamic and creative element in morality are well to the fore, thought qualified.
~~AND IN THEIR PLACE~~

C. Two Presuppositions of the Moral Act.

How Tillich conceives the moral act by outlining two presuppositions which ~~Tillich~~^{he} says underpin it.

Man's ability to transcend his environment and to become a totally centred self is the first presupposition of morality according to Tillich.

"Total centredness is the situation of having face to face with oneself a world to which one at the same time belongs as a part" (1).

Because of his total centredness man is liberated from the bondage of his environment which binds every other being that exists.

"Man lives in an environment but unlike all other beings he has at the same time a world" (2).

World in this context means for Tillich a "structured whole of infinite potentialities" (3). In his encounter with his environment man experiences both his environment and his world or rather it is in and through his encounter with the things of his environment that man encounters a 'world'. It is because man can transcend the merely environmental quality of the things he encounters that he is a completely centred self. Otherwise in some part of his being he would be part of his environment and this part would not be an element in his centred self. However man can oppose himself to every part of his world, 'including himself as part of his world' (4). "his distinction between having an 'environment' and having a 'world' is the essence of the first presupposition of morality.

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- (1). Systematic Theology III p 41.
 (2). Ibid. p 41.
 (3). Ibid. p 41.
 (4). Ibid. p 41.

The second presupposition follows from the first. Because man has a world which he faces as a totally centred self, he can ask questions and receive answers and commands (1). This is a unique characteristic of the spiritual dimension. It implies not only freedom from ones environment ; it also implies norms which determine the moral act through freedom. This presupposition of being able to ask questions and receive commands , implied in our freedom from environment is so central to his thought that we will quote the passage in full where he describes it.

" These norms (or commands) express the essential structure of reality, of self and of world, over against the existential conditions of mere environment. It becomes manifest that freedom is openness to norms of unconditional or essential validity. They express the essence of being and the moral side of the function of self-integration is the totality of acts in which the commands coming from the essence of the encountered world are obeyed or disobeyed. " (2)

It is because of this dual relationship to environment --belonging to it and yet at the same time separated from it and thus having a world -- that man can, first of all, receive commands and, secondly, can obey or disobey them. He is free to obey or to disobey the moral demand.

Here again there are points of contact between Tillich's analysis of the presuppositions of morality and the phenomenology of freedom as outlined for instance by Luijpen in his work EXISTENTIAL PHENOMONOLOGY (3), though the terminology is different. Luijpen speaks about this freedom in man as 'Distance', as 'having to be' as 'project' and as for Tillich 'to be free is to be ethical' (4). In both there is the opposition between a personalist conception of man and a legalist conception of being ethical.

(1) Systematic Theology III p 41

(2) Ibid. p 41

(3) Even the title heading of Chapter 4. which we have in mind here, reminds one of Tillich. 'Phen of Freedom & Destiny'

(4) EXISTENTIAL PHENOMONOLOGY : p 281.

The way both Luijpen and Tillich describe the presuppositions of morality is a refusal to substitute a process-like acting according to the law, for the creative aspect of moral life. Finally the fact that freedom implies norms is also common to both. (1).

The fact that one finds so many points of contact in Tillich's work with present day existential phenomenology does not indicate that he is in direct contact with this movement. It points to the fact that Tillich too has drawn from the same sources Husserl and Heidegger. As we shall see later it is to German Idealists - Kant, Hegel and Schelling - that Tillich acknowledges, in the first place, as sources of his thought. The difference between Tillich and certain exponents of existential phenomenology such as Sartre and Merleau-Ponty lies in the fact that with Tillich the Idealist sources of his thought are acknowledged; with Sartre and Merleau-Ponty they are rejected or denied. As Dondeyne points out this is where they may be deceiving themselves (2).

D. The Anti-Moral Act.

Consideration of what Tillich refers to as the anti-moral act can throw further light on his conception of the moral act. The anti-moral act is one in which an individual gives way to the forces of disintegration. The moral act is one in which the harmonisation and integration of these same forces is achieved. In the anti-moral act man surrenders to the forces of disintegration. In the moral act

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- (1) Existential Phenomenology ; "Man's being is not a being necessitated, but a being-free that is a being-obliged"
Cf. p 287.
- (2) Contemporary European Thought and Christian Faith p III-II3.

he dominates these forces. To understand what Tillich means by disintegration ~~at~~ the moral dimension it is worth while seeing what he means by this concept on other dimensions. (1).

In all dimensions disintegration is the failure to reach or to preserve self-integration. It can be due to either of two things -- the inability to go out from oneself and to overcome a limited, stabilised and immovable centredness, or the inability to return to, recover, or stabilise ones centred self. At the organic or biological dimensions, health and disease can be defined in terms of these integrating or disintegrating forces. Elements, foreign to the organism, but which must be assimilated, have the tendency to become independent, within the centred whole and to disrupt it. On the other hand self restriction of the centred whole in which the organism tries to remain in a static self identity, can also lead to disintegration and disease. (2)

The self integration of life in the psychological dimension, also follows this basis outwards and inward movement. Here the movement is on the level of self-awareness. There are forces driving outwards towards self-alteration, or inwards towards self-identity (3). On the one hand the psychological self can be disrupted by its inability to assimilate. It can also be disrupted by its inability to resist the destructive impact of pressures drawing the self in too many different directions or in failing to keep particular psychological functions balanced by others.

The moral and anti-moral act are analogous to the

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- (1). Systematic Theology III p 37.
 (2). Ibid. p 37.
 (3). Ibid. p 39.

integrating and disintegrating forces , working at the above levels or dimensions. Man can surrender to the disintegrating forces which tend to control his personal centre or he can dominate them and achieve integration by obeying the moral commands coming to him from the centre of his being. What happens when man does not obey ? What happens in the anti-moral act ? What are the characteristics of the anti-moral act which distinguish it from disintegration at the organic and psychological dimensions ? Even in his anti-moral acts man constitutes himself as a completely centred self.

"Man acts against the spirit in the power of the Spirit" (I).

Anti-moral acts express moral centredness even when they tend to dissolve the moral centre. The anti-moral act is not seen primarily as a transgression of a Divine or human law. It is an act which impedes the realization of the person as a person. In Morality and Beyond he describes this in some detail:-

"The anti-moral act is not the transgression of one or several prescribed commands. It is an act that contradicts the self-realization of the person as a person. It drives towards disintegration. It disrupts the centredness of the person by giving predominance to partial trends, passions, desires, fears, and anxieties. The central control is weakened, often almost removed. The self is split and the conflicting trends make it their battlefield...freedom is replaced by compulsion...the voice of man's essential being is silenced step by step "(2)".

The depersonalization of man is the first consequence of the anti-moral act that Tillich envisages. This is the essence of the anti-moral act. Whereas the moral act is

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- (1) Systematic Theology III p 42.
 - (2) Morality and Beyond p 20.

always a victory over disintegrating forces ; the ~~anti-~~ anti-moral act is defeat in the face of these same forces. Tillich has incorporated psychological findings about the existence of the unconscious and the dynamic nature of man into his anthropology which have influenced the way he conceives the moral and anti-moral act. (I).

Conclusion. In examining the anthropological foundations of the moral act or moral imperative, we had to describe its place in the spiritual dimension of man and the intimate relationship of this ^mdimension to the psychological. We also saw how the notion of centredness or integration runs through all the dimensions in man culminating in mans total centredness. Then we considered two important presuppositions of the moral imperative -- the distinction between mans environment and his 'world' leading to freedom and the fact that this freedom implies norms. Lastly we examined Tillich's concepts of good and evil in describing what he means by the moral and anti-moral act. These he describes in terms of personalising and depersonalising forces, integrating and disintegrating forces or rather the domination ^{of} or submission to, these SAME forces.

However we have not yet come to grips with our main problem -- the nature and source of the moral imperative. We did touch upon the important statement that the essential aspect of the moral act is 'its openness to norms of unconditional validity' and that 'morality in the first place is the expression of the moral imperative

(I). We have already pointed out was deeply interested in the works of Freud as early as 1920 - Cf Chapter I p.12 and that later in the United States he came into contact with the psychoanalytic movement there C.f p20-21.

These statements do not tell us very much, however about the sources, the nature , or the content of the moral imperative or how we become immediately aware of it. In presenting Tillich's anthropological foundation to the moral imperative we have laid the groundwork of his response to these problems.

ARTICLE II~~4~~. Defective or Inadequate Solutions to the source and nature of the Moral Imperative.

Introduction. Before examining Tillich's own solution to the question of the nature and immediate source of the moral imperative in our experience, we will review first of all his attitude to other solutions, indicating what he rejects or criticises in them, and also what he retains as of value in each of them. It is in a continual dialectic with the solutions of other philosophers that Tillich determines his own position. In no case is it a matter of total rejection. He carefully points out the element of truth in each solution he rejects or criticises. (I).

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- (I). There are three places in Tillich's works where he is concerned with the nature and source of the moral imperative :- Morality and Beyond pp 13-47, Love, Power and Justice pp 72-82. and Systematic Theology III pp 47-53. There is a good deal of overlapping in the three places. However in the latter work there is a more condensed and synthetic treatment of the nature and source of the moral imperative and the distinction between an ultimate source and an immediate source becomes more apparent though Tillich in no place explicitly makes this distinction. This slight evolution in the manner of approach, ten years after the appearance of the first two books, does not justify us in speaking of a development of his thought in the intervening time.

One should keep in mind also that in each of the solutions Tillich examines, the problematic, no more than the solutions proposed is continually changing. At one moment Tillich is examining a solution proposed as the ontological foundation of the moral imperative, at another the theological presuppositions, at another the psychological processes that accompany the moral act or precede it or lastly what he refers to as the moral aim of the moral imperative. Moreover in his attitude to these solutions he nowhere makes explicit when he is referring to an immediate source of the moral imperative and when he is referring to an ultimate source. His resulting critique then gives a certain kaleidoscopic effect to his views. After outlining these we will return in the next article to a more precise and positive treatment of Tillich's views.

I. The Pragmatic Solution.

Tillich refers to the proponents of this solution as adherents of the 'Philosophy of Life'. He has in mind Bergson but ^{also} ~~more~~ ^{likely} Dilthey, James and Dewey. According to Tillich they advocate that ethical norms or the moral imperative is the 'objectivation of human experience' (I). Life then is its own criteria.

In so far as this solution maintains that the norms of life do not originate outside life Tillich agrees with it. It is consistent with Tillich's doctrine of the multi-dimensional unity of life and his rejection of different levels. For Tillich too the norms or criteria of life are

immanent in life itself.

The pragmatic solution however fails in Tillich's eyes in that it does not and cannot, according to its basic metaphysical principles, transcend life in order to judge life. It cannot explain how particular expressions of life can become norms for life as a whole. It cannot indicate how one can escape complete and total relativism in ethics, no more than how it can indicate how one can escape relativism in other spheres. Tillich points out, however, that it is never faithful to its basic assumption :-

"Wherever the pragmatic method is applied consistently to ethical, political or aesthetic judgements, it selects criteria which themselves must be measured by higher and finally highest criteria, and when this point is reached, the pragmatic method is replaced, without explicit recognition, by an ontological principle which cannot be tested pragmatically, because it is the criterion of all testing. Pragmatism cannot get away from some transcending factor in ethics" (I).

The transcending factor appears somewhere and what Tillich has in mind is the moral imperative. It is never acknowledged. It tries to explain away the moral imperative but ends up by presupposing it.

2. The Solution of the Philosophy of Values.

When one speaks of the Philosophy of Values today, it is Scheler, Lavelle and certain Existentialist philosophers ~~one~~ that come to mind. Tillich uses the expression in a technical sense referring, not to these ^{primarily} but to 19th century philosophers such as Lotze, Ritschl and in all likelihood Nietzsche (2).

(1) Systematic Theology III pp 29-30

(2) In three places in his works Tillich deals with this solution : Morality and Beyond p 25, Love, Power and Justice p 73 and the place referred to above in Systematic Theology III

This solution he regards as one of the most important attempts to make ethics independent of Ontology. Because of the breakdown of classical German Idealism -- especially that of the Hegelain system -- the interpretation of man was delivered into the hands of a mechanistic science and a materialist ontology. Ethics then became the property of psychology and sociology. Every 'ought to be' was transformed into an 'is', every norm into a fact. The only way left open to defend the validity of ethical norms was by a philosophy of values, where values, practical and theoretical, were given an independent foundation of their own. They were made independent of the order of being so avoiding the attacks of materialist and naturalist philosophers. (1).

The great merit of the solution proposed by the Philosophy of values , according to Tillich was that it tried to establish the validity of norms, without taking refuge in heteronomous theology on the one hand or in the absolutist metaphysics of Hegel on the otherhand , which was in the process of disintegrating.

"They wanted to save the validity of ethical norms, without appealing to pragmatic relativism or metaphysical absolutism" (2).

So they tried to establish norms in values themselves. The moral imperative is now rooted in each value , independently of the others. Consequently there is no basic unified source of the 'ought to be'. The value of the / 'Holy' may crown the hierarchy of values or it may not. The other values

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- (1) Love, Power and Justice, p 73
 (2) Systematic Theology III p 30

can subsist without it. In any case if it is there it takes its place in the hierarchy of values independently of the others. The values in the hierarchy lie above and below one another without their being any immanent relationship between one or another. Consequently the removal of one does not entail the removal of anotherⁿ.

As Tillich's moral philosophy is characterised by its attempt to establish a relationship between ethics and ontology he is radically opposed to such a solution. If there is no ontological participation of values in existence but only an unbridgeable gap between the two, how can a command coming from beyond existence have any bearing on existence ? What is the basis for the claim that such values have a relevance to life ?. Its root failure in Tillich's eyes is that :-

"At no instance does the Philosophy of Values show the relationship of obligation to being" (I).

Hence it cannot show how any particular value can involve obligations for existing beings.

Furthermore Tillich demands how values $\forall$ can become valid of their very nature if they always presuppose an evaluating subject. How can such absolute values be discovered ? How can they be related to reality. The Philosophy of Values provides no solution to the source of the 'ought to be' because it has divorced ethics from ontology. It has cut itself off from a Philosophy of being which alone - in Tillich's eyes -- can provide an adequate

(I). Systematic Theology III. p 30.

solution to the source of the moral imperative.

"Values have reality only if they are rooted in reality. Their reality is the expression of their ontological foundation" (I).

3. 'The Will of God' as Source of the Moral Imperative.

To assert that the will of God is the source of the moral imperative is to assert its intrinsically religious character. This can be understood in a certain way which is completely unacceptable to Tillich.

"Theology can strongly affirm the unconditional character of the moral imperative, but deny that this character makes it religious. Moral commands one argues then, are religious because they are Divine commandments. This alone makes them unconditional. God could have willed otherwise. (I).

Such an argument to Tillich's mind would exclude any kind of secular ethics. Not only the content but also the unconditional character of the moral imperative would have to be sanctioned by a Divine commandment. (2).

Tillich completely rejects such an interpretation of the expression 'the will of God' as source of the moral imperative. It is not an external will imposed on us from outside. If the expression means an arbitrary law that is strange to our essential nature it cannot be said to be the source of the moral imperative in any acceptable sense. On the other hand if it signifies our potential being, with all its potentialities as derived from God, it is acceptable to Tillich and in this sense can be said to be the source of the moral imperative. He is adamant in maintaining that the

(I) Morality and Beyond p 23

(2) Tillich's attitude to 'secular' ethics is somewhat ambivalent as will be seen later in the chapter on ethics and the existence of God.

moral imperative does not imply a strange law external and foreign to our nature but that it coincides with the 'silent voice of our own nature as man' and as man with an individual character. (1).

4. The Psychological and Sociological Solution.

Here Tillich is confronting the claim of Psychologists and Sociologists, of the past hundred years, with a deterministic frame of mind, who try to explain away the moral imperative. They maintain that consciousness of a moral imperative is a matter of feeling -- a feeling of something unconditionally serious. Added to this is the presupposition of sociologists that we can account for the presence of a moral imperative in the mass of people by the different pressures exercised by ruling groups, using various tools of suppression -- military, legal, educational, and psychological.

"From generation to generation, this pressure produced an increasing internationalization of commands, namely the sense of standing under an inner unconditional command, an absolute moral imperative" (2).

We have already anticipated Tillich's response to this solution in the way he describes the spiritual and psychological dimensions in man. The above solution ignores the spiritual dimension or reduces it totally to the psychological. For Tillich a delicate balance must be maintained between the two dimensions, such that the moral act can be said to arise out of a constellation of factors without being reducible to them (3). In the moral act, which is the response

(1) Morality and Beyond p 24

(2) Ibid. p 26

(3) Cf. Systematic Theology III p 28 and above p 65-66

to the moral imperative, a large amount of psychological material is present to the centre but as we said earlier the moral act is not the diagonal in which these different factors converge. The moral act is the centred self actualising itself, in face of the psychological material presented to it. Once one has established the existence of the spiritual dimension in man one has to reject the solution of the psychologists who explain the moral imperative away.

The reason this solution appears attractive is that it presupposes what it tries to prove -- the identity of two qualitatively different structures. There is no denying the presence of psychological factors in the moral act or what Tillich refers to as psychological causation. But within this structure of causation another is manifest according to Tillich, the 'structure of meaning' or of 'intentionality'. This structure is evident in the case where a mathematician discovers a new mathematical proposition. The validity of the proposition is independent of the series of conditions which make the discovery possible. In a similar way the moral imperative or 'ought to be' appears within the psychological and sociological processes which make its appearance possible. Its validity is not dependent however on the structure in which it appears. Psychological and social pressures may provide and do provide the occasion for the appearance of the moral imperative. They cannot produce or explain the meaning of the unconditional (I). Tillich's reasoning is as follows :-

"However strong the pressures be they are themselves conditional and it is possible to contradict them and be liberated from them, as for example from the father image or from the socially produced conscience. This is not possible in regard to the unconditional character of the moral imperative..... One can of course

disregard every particular content for the sake of another but one cannot disregard the moral imperative itself without the self-destruction of one's essential ~~being~~ nature" (I).

We saw earlier the deadening effect the anti-moral act progressively has on the moral centre in man. Where moral disintegration sets in the freedom of the centred self can be gradually replaced by purely compulsive behaviour. In a sense this is the only way one can be liberated from the unconditional commands of the moral imperative. But what one is left with is not liberty but servitude. For Tillich the moral imperative is part of our essential nature.

5. Incomplete Solutions.

According to Tillich the solutions proposed as to the nature and source of the moral imperative vary according to the moral aim of each particular ethical philosophy. "gain the problematic has changed somewhat. What one decides is man's intrinsic aim or 'telos' will determine your conception of the moral imperative. If the moral aim implies something above finitude and transitoriness it will possess a moral imperative which is unconditional in nature. On the other hand if the moral aim consists in the greatest amount of pleasure to be attained in this life, as is the case with Hedonist Philosophy, then no unconditional moral imperative can be said to be present (2). There is just the conditional advice to calculate well.

There are many intermediate solutions between these two poles which formulate a finite moral aim but where an unconditional element in regard to the moral imperative breaks through.

(1) Morality and Beyond p 27
 (2) Ibid. p 28

Because Utilitarianism demands the greatest happiness for the greatest number, it necessitates a certain self restraint on the part of each individual and consequently an unconditional element appears.

"A demand appears which cannot be derived from the merely natural trends of the individual, a demand which implies the acceptance of the other person as a person (1).

For Epicurianism happiness consists in 'the life of the spirit in community with friends'. This demands unconditional subjection to the norms and structures of 'friendship, knowledge and beauty'. In Aristotles eudonomistic ethics an unconditional element also appears. Mans highest aim is participation in the eternal Divine self-intuition.

"To reach this goal is an unconditional imperative" . And since the practical virtues are the preconditional, for fulfillment through participation in the Divine, they also have unconditional validity. " (2)

Only in Hedonism according to Tillich is the unconditional or absolute ~~or~~ element of transcendence denied. Only then is man totally imprisoned in his finitude (3). All other ethical philosophies introduce a moral imperative in some form or another and consequently some dimension of the unconditional. The fact that other elements such as happiness, eudonism, emotional awareness of fulfillment etc. are also present does not exclude the presence of a moral imperative .

However all these ethical philosophies are defective or incomplete in that they associate the unconditional moral

(1) Morality and Beyond p 28-29
 (2) Ibid. p 29
 (3) Ibid. p 30.

with the wrong ethical content. For Tillich the basic moral aim is 'to become a person in a community of persons'. It could be described as the 'primitive fact' of Tillich's ethical philosophy. The recognition of the inalienable dignity of the human person is the primordial significant datum of Tillich's moral philosophy. (I)

ARTICLE III. TILlich'S SOLUTION.

As was remarked earlier, it is in a dialectical discussion with the solutions just examined in regard to the ontological, theological, psychological and moral aspects of the moral imperative, that Tillich takes ~~his~~ up his own position. A summary of the positive elements of his position in face of these other philosophies will indicate where his sympathies lie.

Though wrong in reducing the moral imperative to a particular life process, the Pragmatic Solution was right in maintaining that the moral imperative or the norms of morality have a direct bearing on life itself. The Philosophy of Values was justified in searching for a solution that avoids pragmatic relativism and metaphysical but wrong in thinking that this leads to the separation of ethics and metaphysics. According to Tillich one can synthesise the positive ~~elements~~ in these two solutions and avoid their errors by regarding "the essential nature

(I). We are using this expression 'primitive fact' in the sense outlined by Professor Dondeyne in his book. Contemporary European Thought and Christian Faith p 25-27.

of man or of being , 'the logus determined structure of reality", as the source of the moral imperative. The essential or essential thing in man , which is the source of the moral imperative, is the fact that he is potentially a person in a community of persons. For Tillich this has a metaphysical foundation in reality itself (1). We have already seen how the moral act, by which the spiritual dimension comes into being, presupposes the freedom to receive commands, the freedom to obey or disobey them.

"The source of these commands is the essential structure of encountered reality, in man himself and in his world." (2)

The essential nature of man -- and not his estranged existential nature as the Pragmatic solution would have it, or independent values, isolated from their ontological foundation as the adherents of the Philosophy of values propose --- is the source of the moral imperative. Tillich's basic distinction between man's essential nature and his estranged existential state^{UNDERLIES HIS THOUGHT} is that it is only because such a distinction exists that man is confronted with a moral imperative in the very first place. To fulfill one's essential being is the basic moral command.

One observation is called for at this stage. Despite the affinities he claims his moral philosophy has to that of Kant, it will be apparent from what has been said above, that he is much more closer to Aquinas than to Kant in regard to the metaphysical basis of the moral imperative. It was because Kant had eliminated metaphysics that he tried to make the moral imperative self-subsisting and hence

 (1). Systematic Theology III p 42
 (2) Ibid. p 42.

a categorical moral imperative. What Tillich is saying is that you necessarily seek this end, conforming your actions to your essential nature, because you are what you are. Because it is in this sense that the moral imperative is absolute and unconditional Tillich here comes much closer to St. Thomas Aquinas than to Kant. In fact Kant would have called this imperative of Tillich's not a categorical moral imperative but an ~~but an~~ assertoric hypothetical imperative. However Tillich no more than St. Thomas Aquinas seems to be convinced that though the moral imperative is in a real sense unconditional and absolute, a rational analysis can be given ^{of it} ~~it~~ ^{as above} ~~as above~~ which indicates its metaphysical foundation in reality. (1).

When examining the 'Will of God' as the source of the moral imperative, the problematic has evolved one stage further. Here Tillich is concerned with the 'theological aspect' of the moral imperative. Conceived in any heteronomous fashion, the will of God cannot be said to be the source of the moral imperative. However if the will of God is connected with our essential being confronting us with all its potentialities it too can be said to be the source of the moral imperative. (2)

The problematic has again shifted when we are examining the psychological and sociological solution. Here it is not a question of denying the psychological factors underlying the moral imperative but of giving them their lawful but limited position in relation to the spiritual

(1). F.C.Copleston's AQUINAS) pp 216 - 217.

(2). The relation of morality to the existence of God will be examined in a later chapter.

dimension in man.

The perspective has again altered somewhat when examining the solutions to the aim of the moral imperative. Though the moral aim changes with each philosophy a transcendent or unconditional element is present in the moral imperative of each -- implicitly at least -- that is, apart from Hedonism. In the particular context where Tillich discusses the moral aim he is at first content to affirm the existence of the moral imperative. He is aware however that one must go further and ~~affirm~~ describe the nature and content of the moral imperative in relation to the authentic moral aim of man. In other words Tillich is aware that just as all philosophies possess some concept of truth, of unity, of goodness, they also contain some concept of an 'ought to be' or of a moral imperative. The basic question is not so much that a particular philosophy possesses these concepts. It is to ~~make~~ make precise what its concept of truth is, what its concept of goodness is, what its concept of unity is and finally what its concept of the moral imperative is. (I). One could say that Tillich has already gone a certain distance in this direction in indicating the metaphysical basis of the moral imperative. He has ~~one could say~~ indicated its 'ultimate foundation'. It is in going further and indicating its immediate source in our experience that he makes us aware of what the authentic moral aim should be, as far as he is concerned. By doing this he makes more precise the nature and source of the moral imperative.

(I). C.f Contemporary European Thought and Christian Faith p 27-28.

The Immediate source of the Moral Imperative.

As we indicated earlier (1) Tillich himself does not make the distinction between an immediate source and an ultimate source of the moral imperative. Because such a distinction is implicit in his latter work -Systematic Theology -- we feel justified in using it. For Tillich however, one of the reasons why he did not make such a distinction is probably because the two are quasi-identical. What he takes to be the ultimate source and the immediate source of the moral imperative constitute the primitive fact of his moral philosophy and that, because there is such a close connection between ethics and metaphysics in his thought (2). Granted that the ultimate source of the moral imperative is being itself, this central intuition has its immediate source in our immediate experience or rather in one particular meaningful moment of our experience.

In affirming that the answer to the question of the immediate source of the moral imperative has been provided with increasing unanimity in contemporary ethical discussions on the basis of Protestant and Kantian insights, he asserts :-

"The immediate source of the moral imperative is in the encounter of a person, who is already and not yet a person, with another in the same condition, in which both are constituted as real persons" (3).

The experimental root of morality then - the immediate

(1) Cf Footnote (I) p 75.

(2) This will become more evident later when we examine his metaphysical analysis of the concepts Love, Power and justice.

(3) Systematic Theology III. p42

source is the person to person encounter. In this very encounter, the dimension of the spirit or the moral dimension is constituted.

"The moral imperative is the command to become what one potentially is, -- a person within a community of persons." (I)

It is, in the person to person encounter, that the moral dimension is constituted. It is the beginning and the end the source and the goal of the moral imperative.

One remark is called for at this point. There is no doubt that the moral philosophy of Kant has exercised an influence on contemporary moral philosophy but it is an influence that is difficult to estimate (2). Without a doubt there are a certain number of general intuitions, extremely new, in Kant's ethics and the one Tillich is probably thinking of here is Kant's formulation or rather one of his formulations of the Categorical Imperative. "So act as to treat humanity, whether in your own person, or in that of any other, always at the same time as an end and never as a means" (3). It is true that Kant could be said to be a point of departure for the important place given to the person to person encounter in contemporary ethical philosophy but one should not forget however that the whole trend in Kant's ethical philosophy lay in another direction. The remark of Lacroix in this context seems to me

(1). Morality and Beyond p 19.

(2). Cf. LERLERCQ : Les Grandes Lignes de la Phil. Morale. P 154

(3). Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals

Cf. also the Introduction of Delbos to the french edition of the same work : Fondements de la Metaphysique des moeurs (Delagrave) P45 46.

appropriate.

"Fundamentally value with Kant is not on the side of the person but on the side of the law, or rather the person is of value in so far as he can be but at the service of the law; he has not his own proper value. If there is something of a personalist in Kant it is destroyed by that which is of the legalist in him" (1)

To return to Tillich's exposition of the immediate source of the moral imperative one could ask 'Why is it that the moral imperative is expressed primarily in the person to person encounter ?

The reason lies in the difference between an encounter of one person with another and the encounter between a person and a non-personal reality. Man in his encounter with non-personal realities is set no limit in the way he can deal with them. He can treat them as objects ; he can dissect them, analyse them, construct something new out of them. Because man can transcend himself in all directions, he can use all non personal realities for his own purposes.(2) In facing the world, man has the whole universe as the potential content of his centred self. Certainly there are actual limits, Tillich acknowledges, because of the finitude of every being but the world he says is indefinitely open to man and can become a content of the self.(3)

"Nobody can say where the final limits of human power lie. In his encounter with the universe man is able to transcend every imaginable limit"(3).

(1) Personne et Amour. Paris 1955. -- p 40-41.

Quoted in Luijpen: Existential Phenomenology p 281

(2) Theology and Culture p 78

(3) Systematic Theology III p 42.

There is however one limit to mans tendency to draw all things into himself and to treat them as objects -- this is the other self, the other person.

"One can subject and exploit another in his organic basis, including his psychological self but not the other self in the dimension of the spirit. One can destroy the other as a self but one cannot assimilate him as a content of ones own centredness.... Nobody can deprive a person of his claim to be a person and to be treated as a person. Therefore the other self is the unconditional limit to the desire to assimilate ones whole world and the experience of this limit is the experience of the 'ought to be' (I).

It is in respecting this unconditional limit in the encounter with the other person that the moral dimension in man is constituted. It begins and grows and developes with this experience.

"Personal ^{Life} ~~encounter~~ emerges in the encounter of person with person and in no other way" (2)

An isolated being with the psycho-somatic structure of man could never actualise the ~~potential~~ spiritual dimension that is potential in him. And even when it is actualised , continual encounters with other people ~~are~~ necessary if the self-integration of the person is to be maintained and progressively perfected. There is mutual self~~i~~integration in these mutual encounters.

The opposite is also true. He who refuses to respect the unconditional limit in the person to person encounter who refuses the intrinsic claim of the other person to be treated as such, destroys himself as much as he destroys

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 (1) Systematic Theology III p 43
 (2) Ibid. p 43.

the other person. 'In destroying the other he destroys himself. The resistance he meets with in the other person forces him or compels him to treat the other as a person or to give up his own 'person' quality (1).

"The master who treats the slave not as a person but as a thing, endangers his own quality as a person. The slave by his very existence hurts the master as much as he is hurt by him (2).

The influence here of Hegel is undeniable (3). Tillich does not deny this. However he attributes the importance of the person to person encounter in his thought not to Hegel but to Martin Buber. It was Buber, he points out, that distinguished the 'I'-'thou' from the 'I'-'it' relationship before the existentialists got to work on this theme

"Long before the recent existential thinking appeared Buber had asked and answered these questions (how to become an I and not an 'it' ; how to become a person and not a thing) on the basis and by the power of prophetic religion. There is no other way of becoming an 'I' than by meeting a 'Thou' .. and there is no way of meeting a 'thou', than by meeting and accepting the 'eternalThou' in the finite 'Thou'. (4)

In his final work Systematic Theology Tillich adds a point that did not appear in his earlier expositions of the central place of the person to person encounter in his philosophy. He remarks that if man did not run up against this resistance in the other person, he would try to make himself absolute. The resistance of the other self is unconditional and because it is so man is not absolute in himself. More than likely it is Sartre he has in mind

(1) Morality and Beyond p 78

(2) Ibid. p 78

(3) Cf. La Phenomenologie de L'Esprit, Translation of Hyypolite, pp 161-166.

(4) Theology and Culture p 189.

in this last remark.

It is ~~on~~ this unconditional element, ^{which} ~~that~~ appears in ones encounter with other persons that Tillich takes as the source of the unconditional element in the moral imperative and to which the ~~element~~ ^{essence} of command in every moral situation can be reduced. If man does not want to destroy the other person as a person and if he does not want to destroy himself as a person he must enter into communion with the other. The acknowledgement of the existence of this necessity is the acknowledgement of the existence of the moral imperative in the person to person encounter.

Does Tillich's ethical philosophy merit the title of a personalist philosophy in virtue of his analysis of the immediate source of the moral imperative as outlined above. It would be premature at this stage to answer such a question. ^{we} ~~We~~ have yet to deal with his concepts of law and love. In comparison with such philosophers as Nédoncelle, Madinier and Lacroix it could be noted that he leans towards a negative type of personalism in which the notion of resistance, strife and command come much to the fore. This may be because he has taken the moral imperative to be at the core of ethical philosophy rather than in subordination to more primitive notions such as the good. He is right in thinking that Kant and the Protestant religion have influenced his ethical philosophy. Kantian formalism and the protestant emphasis on duty, so aligned to it, are so central to moral philosophy in Tillich's eyes that he can only escape them by going beyond the moral sphere altogether.

ARTICLE IV. LIMITATIONS AND AMBIGUITIES OF
THE MORAL ~~LAW~~.IMPERATIVE

It would appear , at first sight, that Tillich has reached in the person to person encounter, a bedrock foundation for the unconditional character of the moral imperative. This is not so. He himself is the first to add that the last word has not been said about it. In fact- he adds a series of qualifications to his own solution, which indicate the limitations and ambiguities that still remain attached to this starting point of his moral philosophy in the person to person encounter .

LIMITATIONS.

Tillich first of all points out that the person to person encounter is not a complete or total explanation of the origin and source of the moral imperative. Granted that to fulfill ones nature as a human person is a moral demand evidenced in the person to person encounter, one can still ask, he says, why one has to fulfill this demand. Have I not the right to leave my potentialities unfulfilled. Can I not remain less a person even if that involves that others are also so restricted.? Why cannot I not restrict my own essential goodness and even that of others ? If I have a right to these possibilities it would follow that the moral imperative is unconditional only if I choose to affirm my own essential nature and this he says would in a sense be to make the moral imperative conditional.

Though he does not acknowledge it explicitly, what Tillich falls back on, are Kants postulates of the practical reason to buttress the moral imperative.

Though the encounter with other persons is the immediate source of the moral imperative and puts in evidence that the moral imperative is our own essential nature confronting us in the form of commands, we have to go beyond it, that is to a trans-moral realm in order to find its ultimate vindication. We are concerned then with the religious quality of the moral imperative. The ultimate reason why one must fulfill one's spiritual nature rather than destroy it is because in the person to person encounter we somehow become aware that our ~~finite~~ beings are of infinite value and they can somehow share in the Divine life. He appeals to the immortality of the human being and the existence of God, not ~~so much~~ ^{precisely} as philosophical postulates as Kant does, to buttress the moral imperative but as answers provided by theology to the philosophical question of the nature and source of the moral imperative. It will be sufficient to say at this point that our experience of the moral imperative puts us into some kind of contact -⁺ 'transcendent union with a spiritual presence', which calls for the fulfillment of the moral imperative. (I). The fact that one must eventually appeal to Theology, for the answer to a philosophical problem about the source of the moral imperative is in accordance with Tillich's method of correlation. It indicates also a limitation in his treatment of the moral imperative, which he himself is aware of. For Tillich this limitation is due to our existential estranged state; but so also is the moral imperative itself. (2)

He points to another limitation of the moral imperative as he has outlined it in saying that it is the form alone

(I). Systematic Theology III. p 169.

(2). The relationship between morality (moral imperative) and the existence of God will be treated in a later chapter.

that is unconditional. The content of the moral imperative is distinct from the form and it is not unconditional ~~ar~~ absolutely commanded. (1). Because the ethical content is the product it shares all the relativity of cultural creativity. In maintaining that the form alone of the moral imperative is unconditional he claims he is adopting Kants position. It is this limitation in Kants doctrine thatt he regards as the most valuable part of the Kantian theory. If the Kantian position is accepted the relativity of all concrete contents of ethical propositions are accepted and emphasised.

"The endless material of the anthropologist, psychologist and sociologist about the differences of ethical ideals is then no argument against the unconditional validity of the moral imperative (1).

But this relativity of the material content of the moral imperative or even the fact that there is a certain risk of error involved when one is confronted with a moral alternative does not affect the moral imperative as such. Whatever the content is, or whatever the alternative chosen, the unconditional aspect of the moral imperative is dependent only on the pure 'ought to be', that is on the formal aspect of the moral imperative.

"Should anyone be in doubt as to which of several possible acts conforms to the moral imperative, he should be reminded that each of them might be justified in a particular situation but that whatever he chooses must be done with the consciousness of standing under an unconditional imperative (2).

It would appear that we have here a very severe limitation to the unconditional aspect of the moral imperative. ~~48~~

(1). Theology and Culture p 135.
 (2) Morality and Beyond p 23.

If the form alone is unconditional, we cannot, because of the relativity of all content, derive any universal or concrete norms from this formal principle. As we shall see later it is because of this that he is opposed to an ethics of law in any form (1). Does it follow that the search for universal norms in ethics is an utopian dream as far as Tillich is concerned? Not exactly. The unconditional aspect of the moral imperative is not built on the absoluteness of a universal norm but on an absoluteness of a different nature. In linking the unconditional aspect directly to the person to person encounter rather than to a universal law or norm Tillich is opting for an ethics of love rather than an ethics of law.

"In the person to person encounter, we have more than an abstract knowledge of a moral imperative. One is now in the dimension of agape or love, which affirms the other one in an act of reunion.... Here the moral imperative and the ethical content come together and constitute the theonomous morality of the spiritual community " (2).

As we shall see later in this article it is trying to break through to an ethics of love rather than an ethics of law, centred on the person to person encounter, that Tillich hopes to safeguard an absolute element not only in the form of the moral imperative but in the content also -- and that despite what he says about the relativity of all ethical contents. To be more accurate, however, it is in going beyond these distinctions between form and content between absolute and relative elements that he hopes to escape the limitations of the moral imperative outlined above. He thinks his concept of agape enables him to do this. (3)

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- (1) Tillich's stand on the relativity of contents of the moral imperative must be seen in the light of his metaphysics especially that of the polarity of form and dynamics. His position is not as extreme as at first appears.
- (2). Chapter V. will be devoted to this concept, of agape.

Tillich's position in regard to the relativity of all ethical contents will appear less extreme in the light of a distinction between an 'absolute absolute' and a 'relative absolute' that Leclercq makes. (1). One has a moral imperative that is absolutely absolute when it corresponds to specific exigencies of the human species. It is absolutely demanded on all occasions. One has a moral imperative that is relatively absolute when it corresponds to the individual nature in certain particular circumstances. It is absolute from the personal point of view in that I am unconditionally bound to realise my perfection. Tillich denies the existence of the former, the absolutely absolute and to understand Tillich's position here one must get rid of all presuppositions about an unchangable natural law or a universal human nature typical of Thomist ethical philosophy and see Tillich's position in the light of his own anthropological and metaphysical presuppositions. (2). Tillich, to my mind does not deny the existence of a moral imperative that is relatively absolute, in form or in content. He does not of course use this terminology.

AMBIGUITIES.

After what was said about the ambiguities of all life processes in the previous chapter it is not surprising that they penetrate also ~~the~~ to the spiritual dimension in man where the moral imperative is situated. Because of the overall framework of his philosophy, ambiguities are

 (1). LECLERCQ: Les Grandes Lignes de la Philosophie Morale
 pp 399-400.

(2) It is his doctrine of the Kairos that excludes law as the foundation of Ethics as we shall see in the next chapter.

bound to appear in the person to person encounter as source of the moral imperative.

As in every other form of self-integration the personal centre moves between the two poles of self-identity and self-alteration, in constituting the moral dimension. Both movements are always effective in actual life processes under the conditions of existential self-estrangement. Personal life is ambiguously pulled between forces of essential centredness and existential self-estrangement or disruption. Faced with innumerable possibilities of action, I try to increase the content of my centred unity, by accepting some of them, though seeking to maintain this unity at the same time. There is always the possibility of imbalance or disruption. To keep a balance between the amount of encountered and accepted reality -- quantitatively and qualitatively -- one accepts or rejects in the centred self involves sacrifice and risk at every stage of the procedure. Both imply the possibility of ambiguity -- ambiguity that cannot be avoided.

"The risk must be taken in full awareness that it is a risk and not something unambiguously good or categorically commanded" (I)

It is the relativity of all ethical contents that is responsible for this element of risk in all ethical decisions. It is an ~~ambiguity~~ ^{ambiguity} inherent in the moral imperative itself, a consequence of the conflicts, ambiguities and contradictions involved in personal self-integration. These ambiguities are part of the moral imperative itself because the latter is itself a feature of our estranged state.

"We have an instance of the ambiguity of the moral imperative in that it does not provide a criteria of what

kind of person to person encounter leads to the experience of the moral imperative. Who or What can be regarded as a person ? One could reply, Tillich suggests, by saying that every human being is a person meaning by that beings who according to their psychological structure are potential persons. One includes there all the degrees of actualization of human personality. According to Tillich uncertainty and ambiguity will still remain. There are innumerable non-personal encounters which might satisfy this definition but which would not lead to the apprehension of the moral imperative. When walking with other people in a crowd or when reading a newspaper one is encountering other people (1). These are potentially personal encounters but they never become actual. Hence it follows that :-

"The transition from the potentially personal encounter to the actual one is a ~~field~~ field with countless ambiguities, many of which put before us painful decisions" (2)

This uncertainty in respect to beings who are encountered as persons indicates, according to Tillich, that one cannot escape the relativity of ethical principles even by pointing out the unconditional element in the moral imperative. The latter is purely formal in Tillich's eyes. (3). To maintain the existence of an unconditional moral imperative does not ensure the existence of an unchanging ethical content.

"In the very moment the principle must be applied, traditions, conventions, and authorities on the one hand (all implying relativity for Tillich) and personal risk on the other determine the ethical demand (3).

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- (1). Systematic Theology III. p 46.
 (2). Morality and Beyond p 36.
 (3). Morality and Beyond p 37.

The basic reason for all this ambiguity is our estranged existential situation. It is in fact a mixture of essential and existential elements. Hence the possibility of separating all our ethical decisions into those which are absolutely good and those which are absolutely evil, or even into good and evil in an unambiguous way is impossible. In the person to person encounter then we do experience a moral imperative. It is unconditional in its form alone. It does not enable us to escape the ambiguities of our estranged state.

Again the question arises is the search for an unambiguous moral content incapable of fulfillment? It would appear so if one restricts oneself to a morality of the categorical imperative. Tillich however has no intention of doing this. In analysing the person to person encounter one stage further, one does not so much get rid of the ambiguity^{ies} of ethical contents as bypass them.

Even in our estranged state there is still the possibility that man's essential nature can manifest itself in an unambiguous way -- not in the form of a moral imperative or as a command but as agape. One goes beyond the abstract notion of acknowledging the other person as a person, which is all we have reached so far in our analysis of the person to person encounter.

"This encounter becomes concrete only in the notion of participating in the other person" (I).

Without participation one would not know what the other self means or be able to make the distinction between a 'person to person encounter' and a 'person - object encounter'.

(I).

What characterises the participation in the other person that leads to this insight ? It cannot be a participation in the particular characteristics of another self with our own particular characteristics. This would be the more or less successful convergence of two particularities which could lead to sympathy or friendship. However According to Tillich this would only be a matter of chance and this kind of participation would not constitute a moral imperative.

"The moral imperative demands that one self participate in the centre of the other self, and consequently accepts his particular characteristics even if there is no convergence between the two individuals as individuals. The acceptance of the other self by participating in his personal centre is the core of love in the sense of agape" (1) .

For Tillich then real encounter with another person cannot be performed with legal detachment or cool objectivity. There is an element of involvement and mutual sharing in every genuine personal encounter.

It is thus by extending his analysis of the person to person encounter that Tillich ensures that his moral philosophy will not be merely an ethics of moral imperatives (or of law as we shall see in the next chapter). He goes beyond this so that his ethics will be primarily an ethics of love or of agape (2). To the preliminary formal answer that the unconditional character of the moral imperative is experienced in the person to person encounter he now adds that :-

- (1) Systematic Theology III. p 48.
 (2) Morality and Beyond p 36.

"it is in agape that concreteness is given to the moral imperative, centredness to the person and foundation to the life of the spirit" (1).

Agape goes beyond all distinction of formal and material elements ^{IN} of the moral imperative. It goes beyond the question of absolute and relative elements. Or to be more accurate it fuses all these elements together. The limitations and ambiguities of the moral imperative cannot be avoided because they are part of the moral imperative. Nevertheless they can be circumvented if one takes this concept of agape as having a central role to play in moral philosophy.

To the objection that agape too can lead to ambiguity, or to ambiguous decisions, which are also lacking in unconditional validity from the point of view of ethical content, Tillich replies that ambiguity is unavoidable. The alternative is radical ethical formalism and he points out that this is a logical impossibility that not even Kant could consistently maintain. The form always keeps traces of that from which it has been abstracted.

To my mind Tillich takes an intermediate position between the formalism of Kantian ethics and the relative ethics of pragmatic philosophers. By finding at the root of the moral imperative the notion of agape, he claims to find there 'the radicalism of the pure form united with the relativity of the pure content

"In agape the moral imperative and the ethical content come together and constitute a theonomous morals" (2).

It is here finally that all ambiguities and all limitations are transcended.

(1). Systematic Theology III p 48.
(2).

CONCLUSION

At first sight this may appear to be an artificial solution to the question of the limitations and ambiguities of the moral imperative. Have we here nothing more than a mere ~~juxt~~^a-positioning of conditional and unconditional elements, of absolute and relative elements in this concept of agape?

The answer to this question must be left aside until we examine in ^{de}tail, not only his concept of agape to which he devotes a good deal of attention in his works, but also the relationship of this concept to the moral imperative, to law and to other ethical concepts with which it forms a unified whole. As we shall see, the original element in Tillich's ethical philosophy consists not only in the personal way he analyses such basic concepts as law, agape, or the moral imperative but also, and even more so, the way he relates these concepts to one another to form a balanced whole. We need not only a knowledge of his treatment of these concepts individually but also ^{a knowledge of} the intricate way they are united to form a consistent moral philosophy -- consistent not only in itself, but also consistent with the rest of his philosophical thought.

As to the validity of this ethical philosophy that will be one of our future tasks to determine.

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