
ARTICULATING TILLICH'S SPIRITUAL PRESENCE

With Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* and Rogers' Person-Centered Therapy

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Abstract

Articulating Tillich's Spiritual Presence With Sartre's *Being And Nothingness* and Rogers' Person-Centered Therapy

Due to the formation of Paul Tillich's symbolic claim of Spiritual Presence and universal essentialization, in *Systematic Theology III*, the genuineness of his claim was never examined. Because of this, the apex of his work, Spiritual Presence, remained speculative at best. It was unarticulated, underdeveloped, and gave no justification for why readers should give it weight. This thesis will argue the significance and validity of his work did not reach its full potential because of this.

While existentialism caused the development of Tillich's theological claims, it is also a method able to test the speculations within it. While Tillich claimed universal Spiritual Presence was essentializing humanity through the structures of life, existentialism is used in this thesis to test that claim, through its observational analysis. This thesis seeks to take the work of Jean-Paul Sartre and Carl Rogers to examine how Tillich's Spiritual Presence might present itself in everyday life and then articulate those observations to contribute to a more developed understanding of Spiritual Presence.

This articulation of Spiritual Presence remedies Tillich's claim from speculation to something justifiable, by Rogers' clinical and Sartre's analytical observation. The elements surrounding essentialization, like the idea of people having a true Essence, is also given definition, based upon existential observation.

Out of this existential articulation of Spiritual Presence, the idea of *existential pneumatology* is presented. The term *existential pneumatology* is a term that is original to myself, the author. An *existential pneumatology* represents my summarized findings of Tillich's Spiritual Presence, existentially. Those findings are repackaged and re-described as the interplay of two concepts: (a)uthenticity and (A)uthenticity. They exhibit the results of the research on essentialization, within this thesis, in brevity.

Chapter One

Introduction

Defining The Problem of Tillich and Spiritual Presence

1.1 The Impetus for The Project

The impetus of this project is grounded in personal experience with several combat tours and a religious examination that took place at seminary after those tours. During a two-hour ambush of my team in Afghanistan, and witnessing the death of a teammate five days prior, I an existential awakening and concluded life is short and I should live it doing what was most meaningful to me. After eleven years of active duty, I went to train Brazilian jiu-jitsu full time, while studying the Bible at seminary. In essence, this thesis is grounded in my own existential crises.

At seminary I became bothered by the concept of the Holy Spirit. Nobody seemed able to articulate with their own words, in their own experience, how the Holy Spirit worked within them. The responses were informed, not by their own words, but by what the Bible said their experience was. It troubled me that something that is said to be so personal could not be articulated by the people themselves. It seemed to me that a lack of articulation might signal that either the Bible is incorrect about how the Holy Spirits works inside of them, or, the Holy Spirit is an untrue concept, so people cannot know how it is working inside of them and speak for themselves.

I later began to read Tillich's work, and was equally troubled by his concept of Spiritual Presence. Much like the Holy Spirit, Tillich had made a statement with zero experiential

grounding behind or articulation of it. He stated that a universal Spiritual Presence was guiding humanity in a process of essentialization, through life itself. But what indicators did he have to even initially think this was happening? And if it is, what sort of Essence is humanity being led to embody and how is humanity being led to embody it? Surely he would know and be able to say it, if the reason he said it in the first place was because he had experienced it or was observing this in some way all over? Or maybe it was just a mere idea, that is untrue for all of us.

This drove the need to discover what Spiritual Presence and essentialization means, existentially. If humanity is guided to embody a higher Essence through life, and if it can be seen and articulated from within life itself, then completing Tillich's project would deliver a new understanding of the human condition and how to live better, alongside the aim of life. What is located from within an existential *pneumatology* is the insight of the function of life, and the role of the human within that life. The term *existential pneumatology* is one which is original to me, the author, and it seeks to observe Spiritual Presence, not theoretically, but observed existentially.

This new understanding has potential to impact military veterans suffering from PTSD and moral injury. The information gathered from this research has served to benefit veterans with PTSD seeking treatment through nonprofit organizations. Understanding the function of life and the purpose of the individual within that life, has given a tool of self-orientation to help transcend the traumas of war and moral injury.

1.2 Why Tillich?

Paul Tillich's rigorous examination of faith linked past philosophical and theological traditions forming a stimulating conversation of faith and human existence. He illuminated theological ideas by expressing them in non-traditional, non-biblical ways. In dialogue with science, psychology, and existentialism, his theological perspective applied Christian faith to the wider domain of universal being.¹ Dogma was set aside in pursuit of the "God above God" making him the theologian of choice for a new generation attempting to radicalize theology in the 1960s.² In a 1967 dissertation on Spirit, WW Brannan stated that Tillich's latest contribution to religious thought was to bring the concept of Spirit into a "sophisticated academic theology and philosophy" as few thinkers have.³

The provocative dialogue on faith in a wider domain made Tillich's work more profound than perhaps expected.⁴ Russell Re Manning remarks that Tillich was lauded at his death as something of a theological celebrity whose influence has been both pervasive and subtle.⁵ His ideas and terminology have "leaked out into the wider theological atmosphere and it is constantly surprising just how much of Tillich's thought can be found lurking, often unacknowledged, in the background of a diverse range of debates."⁶

¹ John Dourley, "Tillich in Dialogue with Psychology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, ed. Russel Re Manning (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 245. & Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (New York City, NY: Oxford University Press, 1964), 114.

² *Ibid.*, xv.

³ Martin Marty, "The Spirit's Holy Errand: The Search for a Spiritual Style in Secular America," *Daedalus*, 96, 1 (1967): 99-115. Retrieved January 24, 2020, www.jstor.org/stable/20027026.

⁴ John Dourley, "Tillich in Dialogue with Psychology," in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, ed. Russel Re Manning (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 245. & Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (New York City, NY: Oxford University Press, 1964), xv.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Russell Re Manning, Preface to *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, ed. Russell Manning (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009), xv; Thomas Bandy, *Why Tillich, Why Now?* (GA: Mercer University Press, 2021), xi.

Tillich's theology, while titled revolutionary by many, is equally viewed as insufficient by just as many. For instance, in Vernon Bullock's *Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of Spirit*, he said that:

The brevity of his treatment of the objective aspects of the Atonement; under the respective headings of regeneration, justification and sanctification, such as one finds in Volume II of his *Systematic Theology*, compares unfavorably with his more detailed analysis of these themes from the subjective standpoint with which we shall be concerned in our study of the Spirit. This could suggest that either his *pneumatology* is not sufficiently Christologically based, or that the Spirit-orientated experience is of more significance.⁷

Tillich's work remains blurry due to an unarticulated symbol of Spiritual Presence that he also designates as the catalyst responsible for the transformation of all human beings into his concept of New Being. A universal Spiritual Presence as the catalyst of New Being is something new that is introduced within his work when compared to his previous writings in volume one⁸ and two. Previously, volume two described Spirit as the Spirit of Jesus the Christ.⁹ Therefore, Christ made the power of New Being possible. Volume three moves beyond Christ, and is therefore, slightly confusing to readers, as the responsible agent for New Being is no longer the Christ of volume two.¹⁰

His work turns into a cliff hanger in volume three as the introduction of this universal catalyst, as the sole catalyst for New Being appears, and then then is left without further articulation in his work. Spiritual Presence, as with the other elements of his work related to God, remain an abstract symbol. With a newly introduced and incomplete understanding of

⁷ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 29.

⁸ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol I* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 249.

⁹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 156-57.

¹⁰ Keith Ka-fu Chan, *Life as Spirit a Study of Paul Tillich's Ecological Pneumatology* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2018), 78.

Spiritual Presence with its functioning now responsible for essentialization, questions arise and remain, as Tillich's statements from volume one and two are seemingly contradicted in volume three. The process of essentialization and the path to New Being now have a new understanding. Human evolution now takes place on behalf of a Spiritual Presence that works directly with all humans, as introduced in volume three.

The volume of unfriendly criticism his work attracted, through his eclectic mix of academic language and intertwining topics, is perhaps a measure to the level of curiosity and reflection that his writing provoked in his readers. Though many of his students and readers developed thoughts that diverge sharply from his own, each must acknowledge the stimulation they received from his writings, and the development to their own thinking it produced.¹¹

Tillich's unflinching, and perhaps most enduring legacy,¹² is his commitment to a *both/and* engagement between faith, the critical thinking of science, culture, and forms of religious fundamentalism.¹³ This situational dynamic present to Tillich's day has not disappeared in our present day.¹⁴ This makes Tillich's call for a theology of correlation (the "both/and"), once again urgently relevant.¹⁵ The need for the theologian to engage the risky enterprise of theological reflection that connects to the dynamics of life, though it may "convulse everything and build everything anew,"¹⁶ is necessary to bring to light something *actual*¹⁷ out of the

¹¹ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 177.

¹² Russell Re Manning, Preface to *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, ed. Russell Manning (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2009), xvi.

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ "Tillich's influence lies behind the very influence of the American Academy of Religion." Russell Re Manning, introduction to *Retrieving the Radical Tillich: His Legacy and Contemporary Importance. Radical theologies*, ed. Russell Re Manning (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 1.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (London: Oxford University Press, 1964), 25.

¹⁷ The God behind God, as Tillich would put it. Tillich's God is the "God beyond God," the God beyond the God of theism. When Tillich hunts for something actual, he is seeking what is behind the appearance of God as religion has claimed it. Here is where he leans towards calling God the ground of being and confines himself to symbol as to not

fundamental mystery of being and blurry concepts of faith.¹⁸ The hunt for the *actual* and the stimulation of social thought towards a collective hunt of the actual is a task that should not be abandoned at the death of Tillich.

By *actual*, when concerning Tillich, is referencing the actuality of the symbol called God in time and space existence (aka, life itself). The *actual* is the non-symbolic statement of this concept or symbol labeled as God; the *actual* is the attempt to make explicit what is implicit in religious speak and expression.¹⁹ He attempts to do so by collaborating with the likes of science, psychology, existentialism, and other disciplines that study existence and the human being. He is very much on the hunt for something *tangible* or *concrete* and not something simply implied to be, as is done with religion. He chooses to speak of the divine in symbol as to not make a false statement about God, as he felt religion had done.

However, this sentiment can be viewed as backfiring in his work. Because, in only speaking in symbol to develop a new theology using a new language about God and God's relation to humanity, he ends up saying and explaining very little at all. In attempting to be more concrete about the God behind God, to make explicit what is implicit, he ends up being vague and that comes at the cost of several criticisms to his theology.

The hunt for the actual, or Tillich's God behind God, or the ground of all being, quickly becomes a collective hunt. It is *collective* in the sense that Tillich dare bring the notion of God into a discussion with various fields, a collective field, of science, psychology, and philosophy. For Tillich, he is engaging with several fields outside of Christian theology, to *collectively*

make a statement about God that is not actual. Paul Tillich, *The Courage to Be*, (New York: Yale University Press, 2014), 178.

¹⁸ Langdon Gilkey stated "Tillich is a theologian of being, being is misunderstood if it is not seen as a theologian of Spirit." Langdon Gilkey, *Gilkey On Tillich* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 164.

¹⁹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology I* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973) 264.

understand the actual, or the God behind the God of religion. It is in this sense, that hunt for God becomes collective.

Either by sparking offense, or by sparking curiosity, the hunt for the actual become a multifield collective study of God, encompassing many studies life. Another way to put it, is the actual is the principle of God, as it appears in true life, as the grounds of life itself, that is far beyond the confines of religious inference.²⁰ Understood as such, Tillich maintains that philosophy is essentially ontology.²¹ It asks the question of reality as a whole; it asks the question of the structure of being, by wanting to explain the ground of being itself.²²

1.3 Tillich's Systematic Theology: Opportunities For Development

As Tillich's thinking continues to be profoundly suggestive today, his work has further potential, yet to be teased out. In volume three of *Systematic Theology*, Tillich makes Spiritual Presence the responsible restorative principle of his system.²³ Spiritual Presence moves the human being into an authentic expression of their true essence. It serves to actualize the 'antecedent Godlikeness' the human spirit possesses.²⁴ Spiritual Presence is described by Tillich as universal, since being-itself is universal. Logically, the movement of Spirit in concrete existence, towards this essentialization, is also universal.²⁵

²⁰ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 55.

²¹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology I* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 7.

²² Ibid, 24.

²³ Frederick Parrella, "Tillich's Theology of the Concrete Spirit," in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, ed. Russel Re Manning (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 79.

²⁴ Paul Tillich, "What Is Wrong with the 'Dialectic' Theology?," *The Journal of Religion* 15, no. 2 (1935): 127-145, <https://doi.org/10.1086/481595>, 141.

²⁵ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 283.

The weight Spiritual Presence is given in volume three, as Tillich had come to understand it, was that of the universal catalyst. This understanding made for a lack of synthesis to the whole of his *Systematic Theology*. Tillich's last volume was never expanded upon in order to create synthesis. This dynamic has been left up to the presumptions of its readers to put together. Further, Spiritual Presence held a much broader application to the entire history of religion and culture than Tillich was able to work through before his death. This broader application would have perhaps been realized alongside a thought-out dynamic of Spirit.

After his dialogue with Buddhist and Shinto monks between 1950-1960, Tillich became aware of limitations to his *Systematic Theology*. He had recognition of a more expansive and inclusive understanding of a universal Spirit and feared his work would "be relegated to the dust heap of the past"²⁶ before his death. In his last lecture, he explored elements to a universal experience of the holy.²⁷

He didn't wish to abandon his *Systematic Theology*, but to see it in a new and more expansive context. He wanted to place his system in the context of a theology of the history of religions, to explore the inner *telos* of such a history, that he described as the religion of the concrete Spirit.²⁸ His goal, according to Mircea Eliade, who shared in his final seminar, was not a theology of the history of religions but a renewal of his own *Systematic Theology*.²⁹

This desire to expand on and clarify his statements further is echoed again, as Tillich sought to develop a German edition of his systematic theology. This German edition was made, in particular, to develop a clearer comprehension of his thoughts in volume III. This German

²⁶ Wilhelm Pauck and Marion Pauck, *Paul Tillich, His Life and Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 244.

²⁷ Paul Tillich, *The Future of Religions*, ed. by Jerald Brauer, Wilhelm Pauck and Mircea Eliade (New York City, NY: Harper Row, 1966), 86.

²⁸ *Ibid*, 88.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 33.

edition, which was to act as a second edition to his volumes of work, would seek to clarify what he felt was still an unclear picture that he had left for his readers.³⁰ As Renate Albrecht said in

Reader's Guide to Tillich's Systematic Theology:

There are a number of unclarities or infelicities, and few major errors, in Tillich's Systematic Theology. Tillich worked on the German translation, *Systematische Theologie*, with Renate Albrecht. Her memories of this process include Tillich's frustration about the English version and his desire to make corrections in the German. This makes the German version in many ways a second edition of the first English version. Volume III is in the worst shape, including one place where an entire section is promised in the text but is strangely just missing (it is included in the Reader's Guide).³¹

The most recent effort of the North American Paul Tillich Society seems to be assembling an English version of Tillich's Collected Works, which would present an opportunity to make a corrected English edition of the *Systematic Theology*. Whether it will be a more successful effort than the attempt at a critical edition, none can say at this point.

As previously mentioned in paragraphs prior, there is an incompleteness to Tillich's work by the weight he had given Spiritual Presence in volume three of *Systematic Theology*. The experience of *how* Spiritual Presence universally catalyzes all humanity to the symbol of New Being remained unexplored at the time of Tillich's death. The *how* of Spiritual Presence, meaning an articulation of the universal experience of essentialization is vital to the interpretation and validity of his whole work.³²

³⁰Wesley Wildman, "Reader's Guide to Tillich's Systematic Theology," Paul Tillich Resources - Reader's Guide, accessed December 16, 2021, <http://people.bu.edu/wwildman/tillich/stguide/stguide.htm#:~:text=Tillich%20worked%20on%20the%20German%20translation%2C%20>

³¹ Ibid.

³² Frederick Parrella, "Tillich's Theology of the Concrete Spirit," in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, ed. Russel Re Manning (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 74.

Langdon Gilkey, one of Tillich's finest interpreters,³³ reminds us that "Tillich is in truth a theologian of being; but what he means by being is often misunderstood if he is not also seen as a theologian of Spirit."³⁴ And yet, Spirit as the constitutive element in understanding God and humanity, is the least examined and discussed. It is also the most necessary if to validate and make sense of Tillich's life work that lands on the concept of a universal Spirit, catalyzing the human being.

Dr. James McCord, President of Princeton Theological Seminary, projected that the new emphasis in theology will be on the Holy Spirit--"the God of the present."³⁵ The theological emphasis following the Reformation was on the Father. Barth and Bultmann, contemporary theologians, have made the Son central.³⁶ Recent developments indicate serious consideration of the Holy Spirit as the emphatic theological symbol expressing the reality of God to contemporary man. Some might say that McCord had hit the nail on the head. Beyond Barth and Bultmann, Bonhoeffer took a turn for spiritual necessity as he wrote in *Letters and Papers from Prison*:

What is bothering me incessantly is the question what Christianity really is, or indeed who Christ really is, for us today... We are moving towards a completely religionless time. What does it mean for "Christianity"? If religion is only a garment of Christianity- and even this garment has looked very different at different times-then what is a religionless Christianity?

There is need for spiritual vitality... Our relationship to God is not a religious relationship to a supreme Being, absolute in power and goodness, which is a spurious conception of transcendence, but a new life for others, through participation in the Being of God.³⁷

³³ Josh Schonwald, "Langdon Gilkey," The University of Chicago News Office, November 21, 2004, <http://www-news.uchicago.edu/releases/04/041121.gilkey.shtml>.

³⁴ Langdon Gilkey, *Gilkey On Tillich* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 164.

³⁵ *Time*, Radical New Voice, 1966, 69-70. Has this come true? Sort of yes and no. In Christian spheres I think an emptiness exists as to dynamics of Spirit as a whole, as so, it has not evolved. In the way that American society is Spiritual but not religious, yes.

³⁶ *Ibid.*

³⁷ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison* (London: Fontana Books, 1959), 91.

In 2018, Veli-Matti Kärkkäinen described the recent global and ecumenical interest to be a theology of the Holy Spirit. He stated that theology is in a “*pneumatological* renaissance.”³⁸ Doctrines of the Holy Spirit and reflections of the Holy Spirit are no longer the topic of Christianity’s Pentecostalism, but the emerging creative thought of theology. Kärkkäinen adds that a distinctive feature of this new search for the Spirit and the spiritual life is rather than looking for abstract generalizations and abstract definitions, as too often has been a case in the past, people are experiencing a hunger for a concrete lived experience of the Spirit.³⁹

Cambridge’s David Ford in his 2011 book titled *The Future of Christian Theology* fortified Kärkkäinen’s vision of the future of theology as focused on the Spirit. Doctrine of Spirit is the contemporary medium to illuminate the search for wisdom and understanding in the increasingly complex religious and secular world of the twenty-first century. Yale’s David Kelsey seconds Ford’s vision of Spirit as the future of theology as he reviews and praises his stance.⁴⁰ Diana Butler Bass says “this awakening has been underway for some time now and has reached a crucial stage, as a new ‘age of the spirit’ has dawned.”⁴¹

Theologian Harvey Cox stated this is demonstrable from even inside Christianity as “Charismatic congregations and the appeal of Asian spiritual practices, demonstrate that, as in the past once again today, large numbers of people are drawn more to the experiential than to the doctrinal elements of religion.”⁴² Princeton sociologist Robert Wuthnow estimates that 40% of Bible study groups hosted by megachurches in America are joined because they were “interested

³⁸ Kärkkäinen Veli-Matti, *Pneumatology: The Holy Spirit in Ecumenical, International, and Contextual Perspective* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018), 1.

³⁹ *Ibid*, 4, 5.

⁴⁰ David Kelsey, introduction to *The Future of Christian Theology*, ed. David Ford (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2011), 1.

⁴¹ Diana Butler Bass, *Christianity After Religion The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening* (California Harper One, 2012), 6.

⁴² Harvey Cox, *The Future of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper One, 2010), 14.

in deepening their spirituality” and not their religion.⁴³ Cox adds on to this research estimate by noting that these mega-churches have come with “soft-peddling theology” in place of religious doctrines, and offer spiritual principles as the focus. These spiritual principles are “spiritual principles that emphasize love, forgiveness, humility, and self-acceptance.”⁴⁴

Doctrine of Spirit is not only the future of theology, the “*pneumatological* renaissance” is having its renaissance beyond Christianity’s borders. Theologian Clark Pinnock’s book *Flame of Love* questions the Christian perspective that the Spirit belongs to only to the Christian church. He implies a universal presence that is beyond Christianity and engages in all of life. Spirit’s agenda and function has little to do with the confines of church walls for Pinnock.⁴⁵ It is a Spirit beyond Christianity itself, much like Tillich’s understanding by the time he arrives at the notion of a universal Spirit in volume III.

Slovenian philosopher Slavoj Zizek forms a Doctrine of Spirit of his own. He identifies the Holy Spirit with a bond of love, but then identifies the Holy Spirit as the consequence of the crucifixion as the death of God, or public revelation of the impotence of the big Other.⁴⁶ The Holy Spirit as the bond of love is dialectically identical to the death of God, bodying forth the negativity of the cross. The Holy Spirit is communal and purely materialistic.

His Doctrine of Spirit would find its way to the Occupy Wallstreet protests in 2011 as protestors proclaimed that they are the Holy Spirit.⁴⁷ Zizek carries on in his 2018 book, *Slavoj Zizek and Christianity*, “the God of eternity is dead...its now holy spirit as humanity....universal

⁴³ Robert Wuthnow, *Sharing the Journey: Support Groups and the Quest for New Community* (D.C.: FreePress, 1996), 17.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Clark Pinnock, *Flame of Love: A Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Illinois.: Intervarsity Press, 2022).

⁴⁶ Adam Kotsko, *Zizek and Theology* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 97.

⁴⁷ Slavoj Zizek, “Zizek at Occupy Wall Street (Transcript),” Zizek.UK, October 9, 2011, <https://zizek.uk/zizek-at-occupy-wall-street-transcript/>.

interiorization.”⁴⁸ The focus on the Spirit, and the Spirit being regarded as interior to people, as universal, and as within the material world and not separate from it, become the topics.

These are the same sort of appeals that Tillich makes at the end of his *Systematic Theology volume III* as an immanence that is catalyzing people in a universal way and has some sort of interiority that is also guiding them. Zizek speaks of Spirit as a collective purpose,⁴⁹ for Tillich, there is a universal *telos*, a true Essence, that all people are coming to embody at the hand of this Spirit.

The notion of Spiritual Presence is presenting itself in the world population with a variety of experiential experiences, outside of the church.⁵⁰ UK and American polls, while holding very different statistical positions on religiosity, both show a downward lean in religiosity, with a upward lean in spirituality.⁵¹ For the UK, “a steady decline in belief in a personal God has been matched by an increase in belief of some sort of spirit, or life force, or an increase in not believing in God.”⁵² Regardless of the difference in degree of religiousness, spirituality, or lack thereof between the US and the UK, a rise in what can be called mystical or spiritual experiences among the populations has grown from inside both.

⁴⁸ Slavoj Zizek, *Slavoj Zizek and Christianity* (New York: Routledge 2020), 95.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Diana Butler Bass, *Christianity After Religion The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening* (California: Harper One, 2012), 3,5,7.

⁵¹ Michael Lipka and Claire Gecewicz, “More Americans Now Say They’re Spiritual But Not Religious, Pew Research Center,” Pew Research Center, Sept 6, 2017, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/09/06/more-americans-now-say-theyre-spiritual-but-not-religious/> & Clive Field, *Soul of Britian, 2000 – A Tribute to Gordon Heald*, British Religion In Numbers, Jan 22, 2022, <http://www.brin.ac.uk/the-soul-of-britain-2000-a-tribute-to-gordon-heald/>.

⁵² Clive Field, “Soul of Britian, 2000 – A Tribute to Gordon Heald,” British Religion In Numbers, Jan 22, 2022, <http://www.brin.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Soul-of-Britain-B-press-release.pdf>

In Britain, a 2000 survey conducted by David Hay showed an increase (76%) from a previous 1987 survey (48%) about mystical or spiritual experiences.⁵³ He suggested this increase is because it is now culturally more acceptable by the millennium to acknowledge spiritual dimensions. He notes, people who have had mystical experiences “are afraid of being ridiculed or preached at,”⁵⁴ and as the world dynamic changes to a more secular and spiritual tone, the willingness for mystical experiences to be shared also increases.

This follows suit to a 2009 Pew research poll for the American population encountering mystical experiences.⁵⁵ The Gallup poll also depicts an increase in spiritual experiences and phenomena among individuals over the decades.⁵⁶ The increase in a variety of experiences of involving mystical or a spiritual presence, that are willing to be shared, has led to an increase in scholarly research dealing with all sorts of spiritual encounters.

The uptick of vocalization of these often embarrassing encounters are including but not limited to past life memories, near-death experiences in which someone dies and encounters the divine or divine beings, and mediumship, to name a few. Tagging along with these more extreme encounters are the more common spirit type encounter or interaction, such as seeing your dead grandma at your bedside, sensing or hearing a presence around you, etc. 83% of American

⁵³ Larry Culford, “Spiritual Experiences – 8 Major Types, Psychology Today,” Jan 27, 2014, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/spiritual-wisdom-secular-times/201401/spiritual-experiences-eight-major-types>.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Russell Heimlich, “Mystical Experiences,” Pew Research Center, Dec 29, 2009, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2009/12/29/mystical-experiences/>

⁵⁶ Frank Newport and Maura Strausberg, “Americans’ Belief in Psychic and Paranormal Phenomena Is up Over Last Decade,” Gallup, June 8, 2001, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/4483/americans-belief-psychic-paranormal-phenomena-over-last-decade.aspx#:~:text=The%20Gallup%20Poll%20recently%20updated%20its%20audit%20of,Halloween-related%20issues%20as%20haunted%20houses%2C%20ghosts%20and%20witches.>

households experienced paranormal activity in their home, according to a 2021 survey.⁵⁷ This includes but is not limited to sensing, hearing, or seeing a spiritual presence.

Because of these growing direct personal encounters with a spiritual realm, researcher Diana Butler Bass stated that “the numbers indicate that, during the past 30 years, American faith as undergone a profound and extensive reorientation away from externalized religion toward internalized spiritual experience.”⁵⁸

Research centers like the division of perceptual studies at the University of Virginia exist to study and collect data from, what has become this increasing number of people around the world that are reporting near death experiences, as well as young children around the world that are having spontaneous past life memories that are able to be validated by the university.⁵⁹ These sorts of mystical or spiritual experiences were not something that were studied at a research level in prior years, but are frequent enough now, that research is underway.⁶⁰

People, across countries and with different religions or lacks of religion are having experiences of a variety of kinds with, for lack of a better term, spiritual presence. Again, this is probably because people feel less judged when sharing them as the world becomes more secular and spiritually diverse. Regardless, discussion and research around spiritual presence in all its varieties is occurring outside the church. Diana Butler Bass says “in more recent years, however,

⁵⁷ Americans report on their paranormal experiences in their home [Survey], Cinch Home Services, Oct 12, 2021, <https://www.cinchhomeservices.com/view-blog/-/blogs/americans-report-on-their-paranormal-experiences-in-their-home-survey>.

⁵⁸ Diana Butler Bass, *Christianity After Religion The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening* (California: Harper One, 2012), 4.

⁵⁹ University of Virginia, Division of Perceptual Studies, <https://med.virginia.edu/perceptual-studies/>

⁶⁰ Daiga Bitena, “Mystical experience has stronger relationships with spiritual intelligence than schizotypal personality traits and psychotic symptoms,” RSU Research week 2021: Society. Health. Welfare - Rīga, Latvia Duration: 24 Mar 2021 - 26 Mar 2021 Conference number: 8, accessed July 19, 2022: <https://science.rsu.lv/en/publications/mystical-experience-has-stronger-relationships-with-spiritual-int>.

something else has become clear. Not everyone who has experienced God afresh is an evangelical, fundamentalist, or Pentecostal. Indeed, they hail from all sorts of faiths, and many are not Christians.”⁶¹ Theologian Harvey Cox pointed out that this turn toward spirituality as the new form of faith started in the previous century.⁶²

Rather than the Christian pastor, encounters with the divine or the mystical are now being studied to be understood on a wider scale, outside of religion, to the likes of neuroscientists, psychiatrists, and scientists to address these global instances of spiritual encounters with individuals.

With this growth, the curiosity of connecting to and building a connection with spirit has become more mainstream. With the rise of spirituality seems to come the rise of New Age beliefs also. "The data suggests the fastest growing religious group in America, are people who don't hold any firm religious beliefs," Teixeira, a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress, said on "What America's Thinking."⁶³ He continues to say that "perhaps these New Age beliefs are in a sense, at least partially, a reflection of more and more people not having an orthodox religious set of beliefs."⁶⁴ So it can be also said, that perhaps the idea of Spiritual Presence is taking off because the idea of orthodox religion has decreased, at least in America.

⁶¹ Diana Butler Bass, *Christianity After Religion The End of Church and the Birth of a New Spiritual Awakening* (California: Harper One, 2012), 4.

⁶² Harvey Cox, *The Future of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper One, 2010), 8.

⁶³ Julia Manchester, "Analyst Says 'New Age' Beliefs More Popular as Fewer Americans Follow Traditional Religions," *The Hill*, May 14, 2019, <https://thehill.com/hilltv/what-americas-thinking/414129-analyst-says-new-age-beliefs-are-partially-a-reflection-in-more>.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

A 2018 Pew Research Center poll⁶⁵ that found 62 percent of Americans hold New Age beliefs, such as astrology and the presence of spiritual energy held in trees or mountains, etc. Seventy-eight percent of those who held at least one New Age belief said they did not affiliate with any particular religion.⁶⁶

It seems evidenced that discussions of Spirit, made visible through the tracked uptick in spirituality with belief in modalities such as the New Age movement, as well as individual spiritual encounters and phenomena is the onset of the “*pneumatological* renaissance” that was predicted by Kelsey and Ford. It is also more expansive in character than Christianity alone, as told by Pinnock. This further coincides with Harvey Cox when he writes that this “constitutes a sign of the jarring transition through which we are now passing, from an expiring Age of Belief into a new but not yet fully realized Age of Spirit.”⁶⁷

This thesis adds to the discussion and examination of Spirit to stimulate further reflection on faith in modernity, continuing in the risky business of theology, or perhaps beyond theology, as religion fades in some societies, in light of Tillich’s aim towards the *actual*.⁶⁸ It is the purpose of this thesis to do so by making concrete his concept of a universal and catalyzing Spiritual Presence that is said to essentialize humanity.

This will be done by developing a verification process for Tillich’s concept of Spiritual Presence, and within the verification process, to illuminate *how* Spiritual Presence guides

⁶⁵ Claire Gecewicz, “‘New Age’ Beliefs Common among Both Religious and Nonreligious Americans,” Pew Research Center (Pew Research Center, August 27, 2020), <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/10/01/new-age-beliefs-common-among-both-religious-and-nonreligious-americans/>.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Harvey Cox, *The Future of Faith* (San Francisco: Harper One, 2010), 14.

⁶⁸ Paul Tillich, *Eternal Now* (New York City, NY: Scribner, 1963), 84.

humanity to embody what he called true Essence.⁶⁹ This will be done by utilizing the work of Jean-Paul Sartre and Carl Rogers to examine where, and then articulate how, in existence, Tillich's Spirit has come to guide people on a universal scale, to embody a true Essence.

1.4 An Exposition of Tillich's Spiritual Presence

In understanding the character and manifestation of Tillich's Spiritual Presence, the nature of "spirit" with a small "s" opens up for us something of the nature of "Spirit" with a capital "S," and in this way the human spirit and the divine Spirit are correlated, and the human spirit becomes an effective symbol of the divine Spirit.⁷⁰

Humanity experiences in its own life the unity of power and meaning that is characteristic of "spirit," and because humanity thus knows what "spirit" is, he is able to speak effectively of God as "Spirit", the unity of power and meaning that transcends and underlies all life.⁷¹ The life of God and the life of the world, particularly as it reaches its climax in human life, are intimately connected. God is present within God's world in a relationship of mutual participation. The symbol of the Spirit above all points to this intimate presence of God within the world. The Spirit of God, Tillich says, is the presence of the Divine Life within creaturely life.⁷²

Spirit "dwells and works *in* the human spirit."⁷³ What is meant by Tillich when he says that Spirit works *in* spirit? He further states:

⁶⁹ Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre and Theology* (Bloomsbury, 2017), 12. "It is widely acknowledged that Tillich 'answered' questions posed by many philosophers, in particular existentialist thinkers. But to date no research has explored the question of whether, or indeed, *how*, Tillich's theology answers those questions."

⁷⁰ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (UK, Welwyn, 1964), 111.

⁷¹ *Ibid*, 188.

⁷² *Ibid*, 114.

⁷³ *Ibid*, 111-112.

The question of the relation between Spirit and spirit is usually answered by the metaphorical statement that the divine Spirit dwells and works in the human spirit. In this context, the word “in” implies all the problems of the relation of the divine to the human, of the unconditional to the conditioned, and of the creative ground to creaturely existence.⁷⁴

As Tillich puts it, “This is what the Divine Spirit means: God present to our spirit. Spirit is not a mysterious substance; it is not a part of God. It is God himself. But not God as the creative ground of all things and not God directing history and manifesting himself in its central event, but God as present in communities and personalities, grasping them, inspiring them, and transforming them.”⁷⁵ Again, this is done from divine Spirit dwelling *in* human spirit.⁷⁶

The next question is how the Spirit of God has come to be manifested in the spirit of the human, and within creaturely life itself. Tillich answers this by using his concept of dimensions. As Tillich states, “but it is the ground of being of them all and the aim toward which they are self-transcendent.”⁷⁷ The infinite Spirit as the grounds of the finite spirit, is then posited to guide spirit in the task of transcending itself to embody Spirit within its finite existence.⁷⁸ The dimension of spirit, holds Spirit, making existence, or life as we know it, the grounds of catalyzation (transcendence) into the greater Spirit.⁷⁹

Spiritual Presence isn’t a further dimension of life separate or living alongside life itself. For the Spirit is rather the ultimate dimension of life, the “dimension of depth,”⁸⁰ the ground of every other dimension and the “aim toward which they are self-transcendent.”⁸¹ To refer to

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Paul Tillich, *The Eternal Now* (New York: Scribner, 1963), 70.

⁷⁶ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (UK, Welwyn, 1964), 111-112.

⁷⁷ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 113.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (UK, Welwyn, 1964), 120.

⁸¹ Ibid.

Spiritual Presence as the dimension of depth means that in this dimension, all dimensions are rooted and negated and affirmed.

So, while in the existential situation, we need to correlate the human spirit, including all other dimensions, with the divine Spirit. It would be wrong to see this as setting them over against each other in a dualistic fashion, for essentially there's a mutual immanence based on the fact that the Spiritual Presence is the depth-dimension of Being-itself. The finite and the infinite are essentially one.⁸²

Successful transcendence into Spirit is termed by Tillich as ecstasy. Ecstasy is defined by Tillich as when "the spirit, a dimension of finite life, is driven into a successful self-transcendence; it is grasped by something ultimate and unconditional. It is still the human spirit; it remains what it is, but at the same time, it goes out of itself under the impact of the divine Spirit. Ecstasy is the classical term for this state of being grasped by the Spiritual Presence. It describes the human situation under the Spiritual Presence exactly."⁸³

This now leads Tillich to explain his symbol of Spiritual Presence. Tillich develops the term from his understanding of ecstasy. He says "although the ecstatic character of the experience of Spiritual Presence does not destroy the rational structure of the human spirit, it does something the human spirit could not do by itself. When it grasps man, it creates unambiguous life...man in his self-transcendence can reach for it, but man cannot grasp it, unless he is first grasped by it."⁸⁴ The experience of ecstasy, or the experience of revelation of the

⁸² Paul Tillich, *The Shaking of the Foundations* (London: SCM Press, 1949), 57.

⁸³ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (UK: Welwyn, 1964), 112.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

infinite, Tillich says is “the ground and aim of all being ...The divine direction of life’s processes.”⁸⁵ The process of life is revelation at the hand of Spiritual Presence.

So, what is ecstasy again? The human spirit driven into self-transcendence by Spirit. Spiritual Presence is the transcending act of Spirit in spirit. The transcendence of spirit to the embodiment of Spirit in life, is marked by moments of ecstasy. Tillich states “this immediate experience makes it possible to speak symbolically of God as Spirit and of the divine Spirit. These terms, like all other statements about God, are symbols.”⁸⁶

The definition of Spiritual Presence is defined by Tillich only in as much as God, as a symbol, has been defined. Spiritual Presence is the guidance of spirit into Spirit, and that is not exactly defined, but marked as a moment of ecstasy.⁸⁷ Points of ecstasy serve as markers of revelation, or indicators of revelation, according to Tillich.⁸⁸ Tillich comments that this does not mean that man receives an informative lesson about God and divine matters,⁸⁹ as certain schools of biblical interpretation would suggest.

In his point of view, the role of the Spirit is not that of a teacher but of a meaning bearing power which grasps the human spirit in the experience he calls ecstasy.⁹⁰ Ecstasy is revelation of a “liberating self-awareness.”⁹¹ The outer objective manifold of the world is transcended by the “Spiritual Presence’s inner infinity”⁹² through the liberating self-awareness, marked by an experience of ecstasy.

⁸⁵ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (UK: Welwyn, 1964), 115-119.

⁸⁶ *Ibid*, 111.

⁸⁷ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1966), 124.

⁸⁸ *Ibid*.

⁸⁹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (UK: Welwyn, 1964), 122.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 119-120.

⁹² *Ibid*.

Such a life is characterized, therefore, by a reunion of essence and existence, subject and object, the divine Spirit and the human spirit, which is made possible not through any act of transcendence that man is able to achieve for himself, but only through the impact of the Spiritual Presence. An unambiguous life of transcendent unity is created by the Spirit which Tillich calls “the transcendent unity of un-ambiguous life.”⁹³ The unity of Essence, existentially, is defined as *agape* or love. This transcendent unity of unambiguous life, the creation of the Spirit, appears in man both as faith and as love, which are thus two aspects of the same thing. Faith, says Tillich, “is the state of being grasped by the transcendent unity of unambiguous life - it embodies love.”⁹⁴

Terms used by Tillich such as ecstasy or ecstatic,⁹⁵ *agape*,⁹⁶ faith,⁹⁷ love, unambiguous life, undisrupted essence in existence, self-transcendence, and New Being⁹⁸ are all terms that speak under the umbrella definition of Spiritual Presence. Spiritual Presence is the self-transcendence in motion, in existence, towards essence, that all the above terminology also represents. It is the unity or balance of infinite Spirit (God) expressed in finite spirit (the human).

Tillich's understanding of God as love “is not love in the full sense of the word. Love, for Tillich, is just the dialectical union of opposites.”⁹⁹ Tillich says the above mentioned is the

⁹³ Ibid, 137.

⁹⁴ Ibid, 138.

⁹⁵ The way of ecstasy is the way of self-transcendence. Ibid, 126.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 146.

⁹⁷ Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith* (New York: HarperOne, 2009), 1.

⁹⁸ Spiritual Presence/New Being/Agape: “When we say ‘Spiritual Presence’ or ‘New Being’ or *agape*, we point to something unambiguous. It may be drawn into the ambiguous actualizations of life, especially of life under the dimension of the spirit. But in itself it is unambiguous. However, it is fragmentary in its manifestation in time and space”; “The New Being is fragmentarily and anticipatorily present, but in so far as it is present it is so unambiguously . . . This distinction between the ambiguous and the fragmentary makes it possible for us to give full affirmation and full commitment to the manifestations of the Spiritual Presence while remaining aware of the fact that in the very acts of affirmation and commitment the ambiguity of life reappears.” Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (UK: Welwyn, 1964), 140.

⁹⁹ Martin Luther King Jr, “A Comparison of the Conceptions of God in the Thinking of Paul Tillich and Henry Nelson Wieman,” in *The Papers of Martin Luther King, Jr. Volume II: Rediscovering Precious Values, July 1951-*

content of the manifestation of Spirit in the life of man.¹⁰⁰ In fact, faith draws every element of life into itself. It grasps the total personality and every part of life becomes ecstatically opened towards the Spiritual Presence. This means that the intellectual, volitional, and emotional elements of life are all included.¹⁰¹ The content, or demand, Tillich says, by the Spiritual Presence is to self-transcendence, and all the elements of life are included in this process.

How then are we to define love in relation to the emotions? Tillich's answer begins with the assertion that "the emotional element in love is "the participation of the centered whole of a being in the process of reunion, whether it is in anticipation or fulfilment."¹⁰² Whenever a person anticipates reunion or experiences it, the emotions are involved. But this is rather different from saying that the emotions are the driving power in love. Emotions seem to be an indicator of this union of Spirit and spirit.

The drive towards reunion belongs rather to the "essential structure of life and, consequently, is experienced as pleasure, joy, or blessedness, according to the different dimensions."¹⁰³ The emotional element then does not come first, it is rather that the anticipation and experience of reunion, as far as man is concerned, expresses itself in emotional ways. It also seems that the emotions are an indicator of union in the sense that union is expressed or indicated through specific emotions. These emotions are generally, universally, understood as *good* emotions or wanted emotions. He states emotions like pleasure, joy, and blessedness to be an

November 1955, ed. by Clayborne Carson, Ralph Luker, Penny A. Russell, and Peter Holloran (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), 339-544.

¹⁰⁰ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (UK: Welwyn, 1964), 137.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*, 141.

¹⁰² *Ibid*, 144.

¹⁰³ *Ibid*.

experience that is held in response to reunion or balance or essentialization of Spirit to spirit in existence.

In every instance of Spiritual Presence, its presence is both hidden and manifest. Tillich says of Spiritual Presence that “it is as manifest and as hidden as the central manifestation of the New Being in Jesus as the Christ; it is as manifest and as hidden as the Spiritual Presence which creates the New Being in the history of mankind, and indirectly, in the universe as a whole.”¹⁰⁴ It is manifest in its hiddenness.

Spiritual Presence is universal. Tillich says “the Spiritual Presence which creates the Spiritual Community does not create a separate entity in terms of which it must be received and expressed; rather, it grasps all reality, every function, every situation. It is the ‘depth’ of all cultural creations and places them in a vertical relation to their ultimate ground and aim.”¹⁰⁵

As a whole, in Tillich’s attempt to define Spiritual Presence, what develops is the assertion that Spiritual Presence be defined as the cause of a unity between man and God in existence. This unity is a universal experience, and has a very precise task in the life of all mankind, through its unity. That task is self-transcendence. This self-transcendence takes place in the whole experience of man. This includes man’s life and personality and emotions and will. It is an experiential process. God is hinged to man, and life’s purpose in this unity is self-transcendence, to a clearer reflection of God, the infinite in the finite. Spiritual Presence is the term that represents this aim of unity, that is ever ongoing.

The problem, or aspect of Spiritual Presence as presented by Tillich, as it affects the assessment of Tillich's doctrine of the Spirit is this: If the power of being in God and man are

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 171-172.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 158.

continuous, then it would seem to follow that between the divine Spirit and the human spirit there is some point of identity, or perhaps even that the human spirit is the finite aspect of the divine Spirit in which it participates.¹⁰⁶

This is to say that while Tillich only spoke symbolically of God, and Spiritual Presence, it would seem that if Spiritual Presence is factually guiding mankind to embody the image of God, in unity, what humanity is being guided to embody, is also what can be identified as the image of God. To identify where mankind is universally guided towards, is to also identify the image of God. This is to move Tillich beyond claims of God as mere symbol and into something more tangible and identifiable. Likewise, to locate the direction that humanity is supposedly being guided towards universally, is to validate Tillich's claim of Spiritual Presence. If Spiritual Presence is as Tillich indicates, such guidance universally should be traceable in life itself, and people themselves.

As stated very well by Vernon Bullock in his *Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*:

One other comment, which is not unconnected with the above remark, arises from Tillich's suggestion that because the structural elements of our finite life are grounded in being-itself we are thereby able to understand something about God through an examination of the structure of our own life and beings. This is really to say that there is a universal, ontological revelation of God which stems from man's participation in the life of God through the structures of being.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham: Durham University, 1971).

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 39.

Spiritual Presence is the connector between embodying God in our own existence, and also, revelation of God through our very existence. Yet, Tillich has only left his readers with indicators of what/where Spiritual Presence is. That is to say, he states over and over again that Spiritual Presence is Spirit within spirit, guiding spirit into Spirit in life, universally. The importance of the Spirit's work in resolving life's ambiguities by means of an unambiguous life of transcendent unity is indicated, over and over. But he goes no further than to indicate that this is so, without evidencing how it is occurring. Further, at a minimum, he should be able to deliver any amount of plausibility to his claims.

It is problematic that he indicates essentialization through Spiritual Presence with certitude and yet cannot then describe that indicated relationship of Spirit to spirit with equal certitude or validation. Summarizing an examination of Tillich's Spiritual Presence, Vernon Bullock emphasizes this as the main problem in Tillich's work. He says:

In the last few pages of his *Systematic Theology* Tillich has this to say: 'It is appropriate to ask about the relation of the Divine Life to the life of the creature in the state of essentialization or in Eternal Life. Such a question is both unavoidable and impossible to answer except in terms of the highest religious-poetic symbolism.'¹⁰⁸

So any talk of the individual self in relation to God, any attempt to describe the relation between the human spirit and the divine Spirit in the context of eternal life, is really nothing more than a piece of religious poetic symbolism. Beyond this, Tillich is unwilling to go.¹⁰⁹

My point is this, if Tillich can claim that something is ongoing between the infinite and the finite, so much so that he is able to claim that there is an ongoing catalytic

¹⁰⁸ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (UK, Welwyn, 1964), 450.

¹⁰⁹ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 434.

event taking place inside every human being, then he should also have the ability to describe it much better than symbols and simple assertions, that go in circles.

If his prescribed event is happening in existence, it is able to be investigated or observed. The inability to describe what is claimed to be occurring, looks more like a false assertion on Tillich's part. He cannot describe it, perhaps because it does not exist in his actual experience or observation. Even more so, the unwillingness to describe what is claimed to be occurring, looks like an awareness of one's own speculation over a known reality; an admittance that his statements are more creative than truly realistic.

1.5 Key Issues To Be Addressed

1) *Tillich's Systematic Theology is Incomplete*

This is the first and main limitation of Tillich's theology that gives rise in an interconnected manner to the other three. The first limitation regards Tillich's key-notion of essentialization through Spiritual Presence. Essentialization through Spirit completes Tillich's entire work, yet, the writing available by Tillich is restricted to the last few years of his life. Due to such, extensive writing on the topic is unavailable. Arguably, in the opinion of several scholars, its concepts remain incomplete.¹¹⁰

It isn't just scholars that take Tillich's work to be incomplete and lacking synthesis. Tillich himself viewed it as incomplete prior to his death. After writing volume three of

¹¹⁰ David Kelsey, *The Fabric of Paul Tillich's* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1967), 82; Wolfhart Pannenberg, "Review of Systematic Theology Vol 3 by Paul Tillich," *Dialogue*, no. 14 (1965): 229-32; John Heywood, *Paul Tillich* (Richmond, VA: John Knox Press, 1968), xv.

Systematic Theology in which his evolution of thought is evident, and after spending a decade in dialogue with Buddhist monks to assist that evolution, he became aware of his work's limitation.¹¹¹

He concluded *Spiritual Presence* more expansive, universal, and weighty than *Systematic Theology* had depicted prior and sought to redeem his life's work.¹¹² John Heywood, a companion whom Tillich asked to help fix volume three of its limitations said of Tillich: "my memory of him in that last summer of his life is of someone who was fully engaged in the work he saw as incomplete. The third volume of *Systematic Theology* had been published and its faults weighed on him."¹¹³

2) *No articulation of Spiritual Presence given*

Because his theology is indebted to the dialectal ontology of Hegel, it is the work of speculative reason projecting itself upon the external world and arriving at formal, general principles which the realm of existence is said to presuppose. For Tillich, *Spiritual Presence* is expressed as a presupposed concept, a symbol, not an observed reality.

As something presupposed, his work lacks descriptive content, stopping short of any articulation of the concept as it plays out within existence itself.¹¹⁴ Tillich did not get around to articulating essentialization (a dynamic of Spirit), because of the elements noted within the first

¹¹¹ Wilhelm Pauck and Marion Pauck, *Paul Tillich, His Life and Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 244.

¹¹² Ibid; Paul Tillich, *The Future of Religions*, ed. by Jerald Brauer, Wilhelm Pauck and Mircea Eliade (New York City, NY: Harper Row, 1966), 33.

¹¹³ John Heywood, *Theology and Issues of Life and Death* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2013), xix.

¹¹⁴ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 165.

limitation. He had an evolution of Spiritual Presence positioned at the end of his life and it left a lack of articulation about Spiritual Presence and synthesis of his work.

Scholars have called Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence too formless along with the rest of his trinitarian concepts. It sits as a presupposition, unable to expand beyond its symbology. This leaves it as vague and questionable for many.¹¹⁵ Theologian Adrian Thatcher stated that "great confusion was detected over the issue whether any non-symbolic statement could be made about God, and if so, what the statement was."¹¹⁶

Because the concept of Spiritual Presence and essentialization is posited in Tillich's earlier doctrine of God (how God relates to his creatures), and that doctrine is explained with symbology through Hegelian dialect, it is an undefined presupposition.¹¹⁷ A statement about God, the image of God in humanity, beyond symbology, should be possible because essentialization through Spirit is to arrive at a statement of how humanity grows into the image of God.¹¹⁸ Likewise, to make a statement about essentialization through Spirit, is to discover something about the image of God, beyond symbol.

A non-symbolic statement about God should be articulated based upon the discovery of an articulation of Spiritual Presence towards essentialization.¹¹⁹ Hegelian dialect used at the onset of Tillich's work simply did not set him up for entertaining a greater discussion of universal Spirit at the end of his life. The under developed *how* of Spirit made his work

¹¹⁵ Michael Palmer, "Correlation and Ontology: A Study in Tillich's Christology," *Downside Review* 93, no. 323 (1973).

¹¹⁶ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 161.

¹¹⁷ Kenan Osborne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 21. Spirit is not isolated and can't be capsulized because it is within the Hegelian dialect of essence – existence.

¹¹⁸ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 167.

¹¹⁹ Kenan Osborne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 21.

unverifiable, and therefore, a wobbly theology for many critics. This follows that a statement about the image of God could have followed up an articulation of Spirit towards true Essence.

As Vernon Bullock has concluded in his *Examination of Tillich's Doctrine of Spirit*: “Our only comment here is that, interesting as this point of view may be, we have really moved outside the realm of theological assertion to that of metaphysical speculation.”¹²⁰ Tillich must evidence that what he indicates to exist, as far as essentialization at the hand of a universal Spirit, actually exists, in some fashion.

Bullock goes on: “But by far the most important problem that arises from the Spirit - initiated participation of man in the transcendent unity of unambiguous life is the nature of the relationship between man and God, between the human spirit and the Divine Spirit.”¹²¹ This problem is what it sought to be resolved through the development of an articulation of Spiritual Presence in time and space existence towards essentialization.

3) Willful Suspension of Disbelief

The third limitation is the need of a willful suspension of disbelief to get through the entirety of Tillich's work. Platonic concepts of Essence and German Idealism's immanence form the basis of his theology. Hegelian dialect fuses both together to create the essence – existence – essentialization axis. To be on board with Tillich's theology, the reader has to believe immanence is a feasible reality and the same feasibility also apply to Plato's concept of Essence.

¹²⁰ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 436.

¹²¹ *Ibid*, 438.

However, no verification or plausibility to these concepts is provided in order to build the case for his theology that follows after.

The under-developed claims without verification behind them make for a wobbly theology. Tillich scholar, Keenan Osbourne states that because Tillich cannot move beyond a hypothesis, his theology as a whole is worthless. He makes it a point in his 214-page book titled *New Being* to show how questionable Tillich's basic concepts are and consequently how questionable his system is as a consequence.¹²²

Tillich encountered a philosophical demand for verification of his theological and metaphysical statements. Friedrich Waismann, a philosophical mathematician said that, "A statement which cannot be conclusively verified cannot be verified at all. It is simply devoid of any meaning."¹²³ Philosopher Alfred Ayer agreed with this principle¹²⁴ and in turn developed the *verification principle* that challenged religious language with discussion of its meaningfulness.¹²⁵ Since metaphysical and religious statements did not correspond to either analytical or synthetic statements, they were seen as meaningless. This included the term "God."¹²⁶ Because God is a metaphysical term, under the verification principle, it cannot be probable that God exists. And by the same criterion, "no sentence which purports to describe the nature of a transcendent god can possess any literal significance."¹²⁷ Under the verification principle, for a synthetic statement to be true, like "God exists," it has to be possible to test the truth of the statement.¹²⁸

¹²² Kenan Osbourne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012).

¹²³ Frederick Waismann, *Verifiability: Logic and Language vol 1* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1951), 119–123.

¹²⁴ Alfred Ayer, *Language, Truth and Logic vol 1*(MA: Courier Corporation, 2012), 37.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, 5.

¹²⁶ *Ibid*, 115.

¹²⁷ *Ibid*.

¹²⁸ *Ibid*.

The challenges of verification put the meaningfulness of Tillich's work in jeopardy. There was a desire to dismiss all talk about the supernatural, God, life after death, and all theological concepts.¹²⁹ It threatened to invalidate his theology and metaphysical discussion altogether, by illuminating a lack evidence and showing it to be invalid and meaningless.

The main passage where Tillich deals with verification is a short passage in volume one titled *Truth and Verification*.¹³⁰ Thatcher writes, "it unfortunately does not provide an answer to the philosophical demand for verification."¹³¹ Tillich's counter to the verificationist rests largely on Platonic suppositions which his philosophical adversaries would not see as acceptable answers for a single moment.¹³²

Tillich did not meet the challenges in a satisfactory way, and no attempt was made to contribute to the verification debate of his time which would have great impact in the field of philosophy of religion.¹³³

4) *Narrow definition of philosophy*

The final limitation is Tillich's narrow definition of philosophy as a whole and existentialism in particular. Tillich adopted his definition of philosophy from Heidegger's

¹²⁹ Libby Ahluwalia, *Understanding Philosophy of Religion* (2008), 303-304.

¹³⁰ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 112-117.

¹³¹ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 169.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ Ibid, 171.

existentialism.¹³⁴ Philosophy for Tillich, via Heidegger's influence, was understood as "the attitude of explicit enquiry."¹³⁵

This gave philosophy the specific function of basic questioning in Tillich's work; specifically asking the question of the meaning of being.¹³⁶ Further, Tillich committed himself to existentialism in his work under the assumption that existentialism simply elucidated the question of what it means to be.¹³⁷ Theologian Oswald Bayer wrote, "Tillich, far from embracing existentialism and drawing out its theological consequences, rather limits its theological significance with his chosen horizon of questioning."¹³⁸ This is problematic because the great majority of modern philosophers do not understand their work in those terms;¹³⁹ the great majority of existential philosophers do not understand their existentialism in those terms.¹⁴⁰

Secondly, Tillich is criticized for defining philosophy as a sort of empiricism.¹⁴¹ This definition seemed to have bloomed out of the philosophical demand that emerged for verification of his theological and metaphysical statements by philosophers. He refuted the demand for verification because he saw it as empirical positivism that devalued the classical concepts of reason and knowledge.

¹³⁴ Paul Tillich, *On the Boundary: An Autobiographical Sketch* (New York City, NY: Scribner, 1966), 48. & Reinhold Niebuhr, *A Prophetic Voice In Our Time* (Whitefish: Literary Licensing, 2011), 45.

¹³⁵ A translation appears as 'The concept and nature of philosophy', in *Twentieth Century Theology in the Making*. See: Jaroslav Pelikan, *Twentieth Century Theology in the Making* (Louisville, KY: Harper & Row, 1971), 248.

¹³⁶ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 5. & Robert Scharlemann, "The Scope of Systematics: An Analysis of Tillich's Two Systems," *Journal of Religion* 144, no. 17 (1968): xlviii. & Robert Scharlemann, *Reflection and Doubt in the Thought of Paul Tillich* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1969), 51.

¹³⁷ Oswald Bayer, "Tillich as Systematic Theologian" in Russell Manning's *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 32.

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 169.

¹⁴⁰ Sartre, for starters. He was not concerned about the meaning of being, rather what "is" being.

¹⁴¹ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 169. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 112-117.

What for Tillich was ultimately knowable and ultimately worth knowing was by his definition beyond the bounds of empirical verification. Tillich's counter to the philosophical demand rested largely on Platonic suppositions¹⁴² which his philosophical questioners did not accept for a single moment.¹⁴³ He sought to widen *empirical*, or, *experimental* verification to *experiential* verification to include the whole of a person's experience, emotions and all.

Tillich's narrow definition of philosophy as being 1) merely asking questions to the meaning of being and 2) as empiricism for verification, established limitation within Tillich's work. Existentialism, and philosophy as a whole, do function beyond the question of just the meaning of being and empiricism. Existentialism, oddly enough, is considered to be a verificationist philosophy, but not in the negative empirical or logical sense that Tillich had in mind.¹⁴⁴

Such a philosophy verifies through the whole of the individual's experience, not by experimentation. This is suitable to Tillich's stated desire for a mode of verification that was "experiential, to include the whole of a person's experience."¹⁴⁵ Sartre's existentialism, for example, was not speculative, but descriptive to the whole person's experience of being. It did not ask the meaning of being, but was descriptive to the experience of being, in the conditions of existence itself.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴² Platonic epistemology whereby one participates in, and is united with, what one knows.

¹⁴³ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 169.

¹⁴⁴ John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 190.

¹⁴⁵ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 172.

¹⁴⁶ John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 190.

Theologian and existential philosopher Adrian Thatcher, famous for studying under John Macquarrie,¹⁴⁷ confirms Macquarrie's view of existentialism as one that "provides the sort of account of ontology towards which Tillich was striving."¹⁴⁸ Macquarrie stated that existential analysis was "ontological insight"¹⁴⁹ because it is in principle, knowable.

Because existentialism for Macquarrie is a knowable ontology (compared to the others), he reckoned it "the most precious knowledge we have"¹⁵⁰ for verifying ontology. For Macquarrie and Thatcher, existential analysis as way to confirm ontology in the existence of the persons who adhere to it, is identical with what Tillich had in mind by *experiential* verification.¹⁵¹ The method Tillich desired to respond to the demand for philosophical verification was available to him in his day. He simply perhaps didn't see its availability because he understood existential philosophy in a restricted sense, something more confined to Heidegger.¹⁵²

1.6 Resolving Limitations In Order to Articulate Tillich's Spiritual Presence

In order to address the four key limitations of Tillich's work, an economy of association is conducted. Each limitation is matched with a resolution in order to remedy the limitation and arrive at the end goal of the dissertation. The end goal is to ultimately articulate how a universal

¹⁴⁷ Maquarrie's theology has been stated to be perhaps nearer than any other well-known theologian to Tillich's. Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 172. & John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 190.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 190, 199.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid, 199.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, 155, 199. & Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 172. Existentialist ontology is in principle knowable because one knows the truth of ontological descriptions by recognizing their features in one's own existence, illuminating and interpreting it. One participates in the structures to which existentialist analysis draws attention to. This ontological insight is "the most precious knowledge that we have" according to Maquarrie.

¹⁵² James Anderson, *Paul Tillich: Basics in His Thought* (Albany: Magi Books, 1972), 13.

Spiritual Presence guides the human being into Tillich's true Essence, in time and space existence.

1) A completeness to Tillich's theology is developed through the use of existential analysis and existential observations provided by the work of Jean-Paul Sartre and Carl Rogers. This work articulates a dynamic of Spirit, or better yet, a concrete articulation of Spiritual Presence as it guides human beings to embody Tillich's true Essence in everyday life. This dynamic of Spirit fulfills Tillich's late intention for a universal and more expansive context of Spirit. It provides a sense of harmony within his *Systematic Theology* as a whole, while adding a sense of completeness to his work through a discussion and examination of his under-developed doctrine of Spirit.

2) An articulation of Spiritual Presence is met in two ways. Spiritual Presence from within the human being is met by studying the clinical observations of psychotherapist Carl Rogers and the existentialism of Jean-Paul Sartre to recognize how Spirit guides humanity from the interior world of the human, in relation to the exterior world and its people it lives in relation to.

3) The need for a suspension of disbelief is replaced by seeking verification for Tillich's ontological claims. This is done by utilizing existentialism to recognize the features of his ontology of Spiritual Presence in human existence. Tillich's presupposition of immanence and Plato's ideals forming his concepts of God and Spiritual Presence are asked to reveal their sense of reality through any means of existential evidence. Why existentialism? Existentialism is fixed to Tillich.

4) A narrow definition of philosophy is thrown aside by allowing existentialism to function in a fuller capacity as a modality that observes and describes what is happening rather than a

modality that produces questions about what is happening. As it reports its descriptive findings, Tillich's claim of an existing universal Spiritual Presence that guides humanity from within the internal world of the human and in relation to the external world of the human being, is put to the test of existential verification.

1.6.1 Why Existentialism?

Existentialism is picked out from other forms of philosophy because it is fixed to the conversation of Tillich's work. It is used as a descriptive rather than theoretical method of observing the environment within this paper. This is a different function than what Tillich assumed existentialism to be capable of. This different function fits Tillich's requested resolve to answer to the demand of philosophical verification of his day: one that is full-bodied and experiential, not empirical or experimental.

Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence is definitive of a universal divine self-disclosure to humanity in existential experience.¹⁵³ The aim of this dissertation is to locate Tillich's guiding Spiritual Presence within existence and illuminate how it essentializes all humanity. The problem itself is existential.¹⁵⁴ When religious knowledge is the object of man's search, the knowledge of God is an existential problem. Thus, existentialism is the proper tool for this aim to be reached.¹⁵⁵

In short, existentialism is selected because Tillich attached his work to it and existentialism's narrow definition formed many limitations to his work. This was caused by his

¹⁵³ Wilbur Brannon, "The Concept of Spirit as Related to the Knowledge of God in the Thought of Paul Tillich and Nicholas Berdyaev," Ouachita Baptist University Archives and Special Collections, accessed January 29, 2020, https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1005&context=grad_theses.

¹⁵⁴ God was not identical with every moving atom, but for Tillich, God was *in* everything as its creative ground. Mackenzie Brown, *Ultimate Concern: Tillich in Dialogue* (New York, NY: Harper colophon book, 1970), 173.

¹⁵⁵ Elton Trueblood, *Philosophy of Religion* (New York City, NY: Harper & Brothers, 1970), 23.

Heideggerian view that existentialism asked the meaning of being and existentialism was empirical and positivist following the demand of verification. Meanwhile, existentialism truly had more to offer than what Tillich allowed and functions in agreement to Tillich's desired method of verification that is not empirical but experiential.

1.6.2 Why Sartre?

Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* is a descriptive work of consciousness in relation to its environment. His work is fitting to verify Tillich's ontology of a Spiritual Presence embedded in existence itself. Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* focused on human reality in relationship to a world outside itself. This relation between the world and the individual is precisely where Tillich's Spiritual Presence is supposedly active in guidance towards true Essence. An analysis of the individual in relation to the outside world makes Sartre a fitting study for a guiding Spiritual Presence.

Dr. Benedict O'Donohoe, of the *UK Society for Sartrean Studies*, states "Sartre's project in *Being and Nothingness* was to try to describe the real nature of human existence in a material world of which we are (as bodies) constituent parts, and yet of which we are simultaneously conscious as though we were, in some sense, not a part of it."¹⁵⁶

This insight produces what is perhaps his most profoundly true paradox, that a human is that being which is not what it is, and is what it is not. This translates to a relationship between the individual and the world it lives in as one that guides the individual to awareness that its Essence is freedom. Freedom is not itself a matter of choice. Sartre insists, it is the ineluctable,

¹⁵⁶ Benedict O'Donohoe, "Why Sartre Matters," *Philosophy Now*, 53, 2005, https://philosophynow.org/issues/53/Why_Sartre_Matters.

inherent and foundational quality of human being. It is the irreducible nature, a founding principle, of each person.

Why Sartre? Existentialism is most closely related to Sartre's mainstay *Being and Nothingness*. It produced the tenets, or fundamentals of, human nature through its relation to the outside world. These tenets have carried their way through time into the present day. *Being and Nothingness* was an attempt at an unbiased analysis of human nature, unsuccumbed by a belief in God.¹⁵⁷ If Tillich's Spiritual Presence exists as indicated, an analysis without such a bias or superstition that is based in favor of religious belief, is the favorable route of analysis. The task is to describe life and not to prove or disprove God.

1.6.3 Why Carl Rogers?

Existentialism is widely influential in psychology and psychiatry. It functions so well as a method of verification that existential analysis of specific psychological illnesses and psychotic conditions are used in the diagnoses of mental patients and the prescriptions of therapies.¹⁵⁸ Existential Psychiatrist and psychologist use existential analysis to illuminate the condition of their patients and relate the condition to the wider forms of existence.¹⁵⁹

Rogers, begins with an intense focus on the condition of the individual themselves – the subjective experience of a person. Rogers' focus on the person alone provides a mode of

¹⁵⁷ Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre and Theology* (Bloomsbury, 2017), 145.

¹⁵⁸ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 173-174; Victor Frankl, *Psychotherapy and Existentialism* (London: Pelican Books, 1973), 22; Joel Vos, "Death in Existential Therapies: A Critical Review," in *Curing the Dread of Death: Theory, Research and Practice*, eds. R. E. Menzies, R. G. Menzies & L. Iverach (Queensland: Australian Academic Press, 2018), 145–166; Ernesto Spinelli, *Practicing Existential Therapy: The Relational World* (Washington D.C.: Sage Publications, 2015).

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

descriptive verification whereby to test the scope of Tillich's generality that universal Spiritual Presence is guiding within each human's very being.¹⁶⁰

While Sartre does an exemplary job of analyzing human nature in relation to the world it participates with, Rogers offers a closer examination of the human being in relation to its own inner world of thoughts, as it relates to the external world and people. His clinical observations provide an insightful discovery of an internal guidance system that exists within each human being. It exists in the form of emotions to guide the individual into her or his authentic self, as the individual lives in relation to an external world. Rogers' clinical observations are favorable because they speak for themselves rather than him making an interpretation of his observations based upon prior philosophies or formulas given by psychology. He sticks to what he has observed, no more and no less.

Much like Sartre, he described what he observed, which led to a new way of seeing and understanding human nature. The human being is free, the human being has innate worth, and when the human being does not live according to those two fundamental truths, an internal guidance system within the human body itself responds in an effort to autocorrect. The internal guidance system of the human being desires to guide the individual into a life that is lived according to its true essence, where it can then thrive. Authentic thriving is called the good life.

Rogers' observations have a clear correlation to Tillich's statements about what Spiritual Presence does for the human being as far as guidance goes, and where this guidance operates. This makes Rogers a favorable study when seeking to implement a verification process for

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

This has proven fruitful for the validity of his claims as Rogers remains one of the most influential figures in psychology today. A study¹⁶¹ found that since his death in 1987, publications on his client-centered approach have increased and present-day research has continued to confirm the importance of many of his ideas, including unconditional positive regard. Rogers' ideas about acceptance and support have also become the cornerstone of many helping professions, including social work, education, and child care.

Sartre and Rogers, together, form an insightful framework that was able to observe guidance that exists universally for each individual to grow towards the embodiment of a true Essence. That true Essence runs parallel to Tillich's concept of a true Essence through a universal and essentializing Spiritual Presence. This serves to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

1.7 What The Critics Say: Tillich's Unclear Through Multiplicity of Systems and Symbols

What stands out among those that are critical of Tillich's writing, is a general theme that is critiquing his lack of clarity, in one way or another. As Hans Cornelius put it, Tillich's publications are "banal and unclear."¹⁶² Some attribute this lack of clarity to the ontology that

¹⁶¹ Howard Kirschenbaum, "The Current Status of Carl Rogers and the Person-Centered Approach," *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 42, 1 (2005): 37–51, accessed Dec 4, 2019, <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-3204.42.1.37>.

¹⁶² Werner Schüßler, "Tillich's Life and Works" in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, ed. Russell Re Manning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 10.

seemingly halted his work from ever becoming clear, by nature of itself. Others attribute the lack of clarity to a “multiplicity of systems” found within his work.¹⁶³

The “multiplicity of systems” combined with an eclectic mix of concepts from multiple fields of study created an “endless shaping and reshaping,” that for many, confirmed an indeterminacy within his work. Tillich seemed to be “spinning and re-spinning his web of concepts and symbols into baroque constructions.”¹⁶⁴ Lack of clarity, in this sense, expressed itself by many critiques of his work being “deliberately unstable.”¹⁶⁵ It also led to people calling Tillich himself “confused.”¹⁶⁶ His work it seems, is critiqued as being so complex and multifaceted that it simply ends up saying nothing at all. Nothing is clear, no precise statements have been made that truly translate beyond being something deeply abstract.

When it is not a critique of lack of clarity stemming from multiplicity of systems and concepts, it seems to stem from his “insistence that theology is symbolic.”¹⁶⁷ His insistence on describing theology with symbol created a lack of clarity, because he basically avoided describing anything. This is seen with John Hick who criticized Tillich, specifically about his use of symbol. For Hicks, his work was “unclear” because Tillich never made clear what exactly participating in a symbol was.¹⁶⁸ He called it a “simplistic idea” because he did not articulate

¹⁶³ Russell Re Manning, introduction to *Retrieving the Radical Tillich: His Legacy and Contemporary Importance. Radical theologies*, ed. Russell Re Manning (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 9.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁶ Paul Edwards, “Professor Tillich’s Confusions,” *Mind Journal* 74, no 2 (1965): 192-214.

¹⁶⁷ Russell Re Manning, introduction to *Retrieving the Radical Tillich: His Legacy and Contemporary Importance. Radical theologies*, ed. Russell Re Manning (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 16.

¹⁶⁸ John Hick, *Philosophy of Religion* (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1983), 7-8,62-64,117,136.

anything, really.¹⁶⁹ Hick believed Tillich's idea of participating in symbols "scarcely constitutes a fully articulated philosophical position."¹⁷⁰

Hammond spoke to Tillich's lack of understanding how God is a personal God, because his concept of the divine-human encounter is problematic as he had given insufficient detailed attention to the relation between his ontology and his understanding of personal existence.¹⁷¹ Moreover, the content of his ontology can't be adequately understood in order to understand how the divine-human encounter works.¹⁷² He does not articulate beyond repeating the phrase "the basic ontological structure" between the symbols the ground of being and finite being.¹⁷³

The symbols themselves failed to clarify much for his readers. And replacing one symbol with another symbol, like the symbol of God for Being Itself, "is as much of an illusion as any other name for God."¹⁷⁴ Because his symbols did not define anything for his readers, and because of the multiplicity of concepts used and symbols also did not define anything in themselves for his readers, his critics are often found to criticize his work as unclear. Through "the spinning and re-spinning" of his "web of concepts and symbols into baroque constructions," Tillich manages to say everything and nothing, all at the same time, for many critics.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid.

¹⁷¹ Guy Hammond, "Tillich on the Personal God," *The Journal of Religion*, vol 44 no 4 (1964): 289-293.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Michael Novak, "The Religion of Paul Tillich," *Commentary*, April 1967, <https://www.commentary.org/articles/michael-novak-2/the-religion-of-paul-tillich/>.

1.7.1 A Review of Tillich's Critics In Relation to His Unclarity

The following is a short sample of what Tillich's critics throughout the years have had to say about his work. It can be noted that much of their critiquing is coming from the "deliberate instability to Tillich's thought."¹⁷⁵ As previously mentioned, this instability has generally stemmed from his multiplicity of systems and use of symbols within his work. It drives a lack of directness, articulation, explanation, and understanding, which is expressed below, through his various critics.¹⁷⁶

1.7.2 Reinhold Niebuhr, Don Browning, & Vernon Bullock on Replacing Christian Symbols With New Meaning

One of the most penetrating criticisms of Tillich is by Reinhold Niebuhr.¹⁷⁷ Niebuhr questioned whether Tillich's penchant for ontological speculation undermined a serious consideration of biblical anthropology. By re-interpreting traditional biblical themes and symbols that have long standing meaning associated with them (such as the fall and human responsibility) with ontological speculation, not only is the meaning of the fall lost, but in mixing already developed concepts, a loss of meaning and definition occurs within Tillich's own theology.

In re-interpreting traditional biblical stories like the fall through ontology, Niebuhr felt it detracted from the important message of self-responsibility. Tillich's use of ontology didn't just

¹⁷⁵ Russell Re Manning, introduction to *Retrieving the Radical Tillich: His Legacy and Contemporary Importance. Radical theologies*, ed. Russell Re Manning (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), 9.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷⁷ Reinhold Niebuhr, "Biblical Thought and Ontological Speculation in Tillich's Theology," in *The Theology Of Paul Tillich*, ed. Charles Kegley and Robert Bretall (New York: MacMillan, 1952), 216-27.

re-interpret symbols and themes but created a negative spin wherein sin was due to fate. This contradicts the traditional biblical articulation of sin as humanity's responsibility.

Niebuhr's critique of Tillich moved the two into deeper disagreement with each-other. Niebuhr remained suspicious of Tillich's ontology. He wanted to preserve the language and the meaning that had been associated with biblical stories while Tillich wanted to make ontology explicit. The explicit use of ontology upon biblical interpretation, Niebuhr called speculation.¹⁷⁸

Tillich criticized Niebuhr for taking philosophical opinions out of context and out of time and finding them to be in error in comparison to biblical views. He urged Niebuhr to use ontology in thinking about freedom and destiny, pride, and self.¹⁷⁹ The reinterpretation associated with biblical story proved too much for Niebuhr, as for other theologians. He responded to Tillich's criticism of his view of ontology by re-asserting that he would not place ontology as primary, and would stick to biblical views and the description of the symbols provided by those views.¹⁸⁰

Scholar Don Browning shares this view with Niebuhr, and for the same reason. Browning feels that in mixing ontology to re-interpret the fall, the important theme of self-responsibility that accompanies it, is lost. He is not willing to lose the long-standing theme and replace it with a less than helpful theme of fate from Tillich's ontological symbolic fall.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁸ Ibid.

¹⁷⁹ Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich, *Reinhold Niebuhr: A Prophetic Voice in Our Time* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 120.

¹⁸⁰ Reinhold Niebuhr, "Reply to Interpretation and Criticism," in *Reinhold Niebuhr: His Religious, Social, and Political Thought*, ed. Charles Kegley and Robert Bertall (New York: MacMillan, 1961) 429-51.

¹⁸¹ Terry Cooper, *Don Browning and Psychology: Interpreting the Horizons of Our Lives* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2011), 68.

In Tillich's analysis of the doctrine of the Trinity, it is noted how the Spirit was described as a "moment" in the eternal dialectic of the divine life, the ontological principle which unites every finite expression with its infinite ground. Just as this interpretation of the Trinity stems from philosophical speculation based on an essentially monistic view of reality rather than biblical revelation, so also Tillich's understanding of the Spirit as "moment" is rather different from the personal, active and living Spirit of the New Testament in Christianity.

As Vernon Bullock stated in speaking to Tillich's use of Christian symbol and lack of definitions: "The symbol of the Trinity for Tillich suggests that the Spirit for Tillich cannot be adequately described...Certainly, he uses personal symbols when talking about the Spirit, but it is far from clear what the personal nature of these attributes mean in the context of the divine life."¹⁸²

This is the lack of description that followed Tillich's use of symbol when it was taken away from its originating religious description. Christian readers found it to be too void and vacant of any description, that would make them willingly replace their own an active description of that same symbol, as discussed by Niebuhr and Browning.

It becomes evident that tearing longstanding meaning and definitions away from their established symbols within a religious community and replacing them as symbols that refer to philosophical speculation (transcended unity of the finite and infinite, in this case), when left undefined and unvalidated, leave such an attempt incompatible with the community itself, and thus, rejected. A tearing of symbols away from longstanding traditional meanings and definitions within Christianity did not prove fruitful for Tillich. Tillich's ontological system, for the majority

¹⁸² Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham: Durham University, 1971), 439.

of theologians, as stated by Kenneth Hamilton, became a procrustean bed with which only a deformed Christianity can come to terms.¹⁸³

1.7.3 George Tvard & Michael Palmer On Tillich And His Use of Christ as Symbol

Translating traditional time-founded meaning into something different developed into a distrust of Tillich's system, in general, as articulated by scholars George Tvard and Keenan Osbourn.¹⁸⁴

Tvard deals with Tillich's eclectic mixing of concepts and ideas that result in his concept of New Being as symbolized as Jesus the Christ. Tillich asserts that a historical Jesus does not matter, while also describing a human existence as one that conspires against the human being itself to embody unbelief, desire, and pride. He calls these qualities the elements of a decomposed true Essence.¹⁸⁵ Tvard retorts that a historical, earthly Jesus, should not be pushed aside in value as a focus on Christ takes over, because it is the saving element of the human being and Jesus.

Tvard wants to say there can be no New Being without applause given to the earth-bound Jesus, whose very earthliness enabled a sort of alchemy to distortion, and in being historically real, became the Christ. As Tillich states historical Jesus is not an important element, Tvard says instead that the historical Jesus is the important element. He insists that New Being

¹⁸³ Donald Keefe, *Thomism and the Ontological Theology of Paul Tillich* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971), 145.

¹⁸⁴ George Tvard, *Paul Tillich and the Christian Message* (London: Burns and Oates, 1962), 188.

¹⁸⁵ Michael Palmer, *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Art* (Boston: De Gruyter, Inc, 2017), 166. & George Tvard, *Paul Tillich and the Christian Message* (London: Burns and Oates, 1962), 109.

is impossible if the earth-bound, ordinary man Jesus, did not exist. This contradiction in Tillich's theology is the crux of Tavad's Christology.

This theological misfire within Tillich's writing that Tavad has latched onto is the result of Tillich's statement that immanence is a reality. Immanence is the concept that serves as the foundation for Tillich's theological thinking that he uses to assert and reshape much of the traditional Christian symbols into new concepts. The axis of Essence – existence – essentialization is set to the presupposition of immanence. Kenan Osbourn says that Tavad will never be able to untangle Tillich's Christological contradiction because the contradiction is rooted in Tillich forcing all his mixed ideas and concepts to fit the presumed concept of immanence.¹⁸⁶

This was touched on in the prior remarks of pulling meaning from the symbols of an already established religious concept out from their roots, with the statements made by Niebuhr and the other scholars that had elaborated upon his statement. What is seen is Tillich's imposing of philosophical speculation of the infinite within the finite all over again, but through Tavad, within the argument of historical Jesus. Tillich's philosophical speculation at the base of his theology form the root of many other disagreements that readers have with his work. As with Tavad, it isn't simply the Christology, but the philosophical speculation implemented by Tillich to form into Christology, that Tavad has such disagreement with.

Tavad drives his critique of Christology further. If it is not a historical tangible Jesus that Tillich is specifying an understanding of his concept of New Being from, then the transition from a historical fact into a symbol erodes his entire work, by making it formless.¹⁸⁷ Without a

¹⁸⁶ Kenan Osborne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 198.

¹⁸⁷ George Tavad, *Paul Tillich and the Christian Message* (London: Burns and Oates, 1962), 172.

tangible historical Jesus whose earthly existence developed the concept of New Being, “no single instance for its creation can be realized.”¹⁸⁸ Tvard continues that his symbol of Christ and New Being lacks specifics, description, details, particularities, and becomes unidentifiable anywhere as it mere symbol without definitions and statements. Tillich’s theology is described as “formless” by many due to his symbology that is rooted ontologically. Michael Palmer speaks to this sense of formlessness at the hand of Tillich’s use of symbology in *Paul Tillich’s Philosophy of Art*.¹⁸⁹

1.7.4 Keenan Osbourne, Donald Keefe, & James Hayward Thomas on Issues with Tillich’s use of Immanence

For Keenan Osbourne, the founding error of Tillich’s theology, the root of all contradictions and ambiguity, is the forced and necessary belief for immanence. Osbourn, for example, could not even begin to consider Tillich’s theology as something serious because he noticed his system was one that forced religious symbols and philosophical concepts to fit into the shape of presumed immanence. The lack of reason for why Tillich’s eclectic use of sources *had* to fit inside the idea of immanence was never sufficiently supported or explained in his writing.

Again, there is a mixing of sources from various fields of study being forced together that do not necessarily fit together or have an association with one another. Within the attempt of synthesizing so many diverse concepts and ideas to create something new, Osbourn is unable to buy into Tillich’s work, starting at its onset, because he assumed immanence was a given. For

¹⁸⁸ Michael Palmer, *Paul Tillich’s Philosophy of Art* (Boston: De Gruyter, Inc, 2017), 203.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 204.

him, it isn't even that the concepts have lost meaning as they collide to make something new and creative, but that no premise exists for certain concepts to even be asserted, mainly immanence. The lack of premise makes Tillich's theology completely meaningless to him. He is unable to take the rest of Tillich's work as something relevant when it is all based upon philosophical speculation at its base.

Donald Keefe expressed the same concern as Osbourne over Tillich's presumed rightness and his necessity of immanence over any other ontological concept. In *The Ontology of Paul Tillich*, Keefe stated that his work *explicitly excludes* an examination of other ontological possibilities.¹⁹⁰ James Haywood Thomas treats this same concern at greater length by calling out Tillich's frequent assertions that his method of correlation and immanence are the only legitimate ones to be used.¹⁹¹ This assertion by Tillich is criticized because it is seen as creating a theology that turns a blind eye to examining the validity of what he is asserting.

Osbourne analyzed Tillich's use of dialect and located it in almost every sphere of theological thought that Tillich's writing encompasses.¹⁹² Few would deny that dialect is a type of thinking that may enrich the interpretation of certain theological concepts. But Tillich is errored, according to Osbourne, with confusing the triadic structure of dialectal thinking with the triadic structure of trinitarian thinking.

The two are very different. Hegelian dialect determines the tune; not trinitarian thinking. This is the sort of source mixing, or eclecticism, that Osbourne, Tavard, and the other readers

¹⁹⁰ Donald Keefe, *Thomism and the Ontological Theology of Paul Tillich* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1971), 320.

¹⁹¹ Charles Kegley, *The Theology of Paul Tillich* (New York: Pilgrim Press, 1982), 126.

¹⁹² Kenan Osborne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 20, 80, 158.

contended acts as a means to only create confusion as pre-existing symbols that hold pre-existing meanings are mixed in incompatible, unnecessary, and therefore, unhelpful ways.

All this confusion stems from the dialectical triad in the Hegelian concept of reality, which he felt was a valid ontological reinterpretation of the doctrine of the Trinity. And this ontological reinterpretation using a dialectal triad is the foundational element to his fundamental idea that the infinite Spirit, or the Absolute, actualizes itself in time and space, finally reaching the point of consciousness in man himself, and particularly in man's awareness of the Absolute.

As Bullock further asserts in line with Osbourn's view of Tillich's underdefined symbols and assertion of immanence: "In order to restore the balance, there must indeed be a new theological assessment of the nature and role of Spiritual experience, which must inevitably lead to a much more comprehensive understanding of *pneumatology*."¹⁹³ Elaborating further, Tillich's very emphasis on the experience of the Spirit, which one might certainly affirm to, would then be denied based upon the denial of the purely ontological basis for that experience which Tillich asserts. Assertion of philosophical speculation without assessment of what Tillich is imposing to be true leaves Tillich's work too loose and ungrounded to be taken seriously.

1.7.5 Adrian Thatcher, Julia Mezaros, Alistar Macleod, Jon Stewart, & Vernon Bullock on Tillich's Lack of Definition

While eclecticism might make Tillich creative in crafting theology, the negative view of that eclecticism continues with scholars such as Julia Mezaros, Alistar Macleod, Jon Stewart, and

¹⁹³ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham: Durham University, 1971), 439.

Adrian Thatcher. They contend the eclecticism to be an attribute that turns his work vague and formless, thus, ultimately damaging through a loss of meaning. Macleod, critiques Tillich's eclectic use of sources, to contain a range of conceptual unclarities, to the point that he remarked "there cannot be a single correct account of his ontological position."¹⁹⁴ Macleod contends the reader is never able to put their finger on a definitive statement about anything. Macleod called the result of Tillich's method of mixing and matching ideas and concepts, *confusing*.¹⁹⁵

Scholar Jon Stewart drives this deeper when he says it is evident in this account that Tillich's thought is so eclectic and betrays so many divergent influences that it has become difficult to isolate and analyze his relation to anything particular.¹⁹⁶

Thatcher speaks in the same vein stating theologians have difficulty in understanding Tillich's work, because of the divergent influences and the betrayal of meaning from original sources.¹⁹⁷ He writes "basic ontological concepts and ideas have become almost indistinguishably merged together, sometimes with the result that quite incompatible meanings are fused together beneath a single general term."¹⁹⁸

An example of eclecticism producing a loss of meaning is pointed out by Thatcher in Tillich's use of the term *Essence*. Thatcher traces its use and it is seen to have different meanings throughout Tillich's use of it in his *Systematic Theology*. Thatcher found it to have been identified with several other concepts in the whole of his work, thus, "making its usage

¹⁹⁴ Alistair M. Macleod, *Paul Tillich: An Essay On the Role of Ontology in His Philosophical Theology*, Contemporary Religious Thinkers Series (London: Allen & Unwin, 1973), 18.

¹⁹⁵ Mary Ann Stenger and Ronald Stone, *Dialogues of Paul Tillich* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2002), 196.

¹⁹⁶ Jon Stewart, *Kierkegaard's Influence On Theology* (New York City, NY: Routledge, 2016), 346.

¹⁹⁷ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978).

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 158-9.

impossible to elaborate or define.”¹⁹⁹ While Thatcher commends Tillich for linking Christian theology to modern existentialism, the unprincipled eclecticism creates needless confusion that weakens the effectiveness of the ontology.²⁰⁰

Scholar Andrew O’Neill follows the trending criticism, as he speaks from a more current platform (*Tillich: A Guide For The Perplexed* written in 2008), in which he stated that Tillich’s theology was “ultimately too formless, and that the ontological category of New Being lacks specificity.”²⁰¹ This view, again, comes from Tillich’s use of ontology that leaves him speaking symbolically rather than giving definitions and showing plausible grounds to what he speculates.

Psychology professor Terry Cooper continues in the same tone as O’Neill, but critiques from the field of psychology, rather than theology. Cooper expresses that Tillich’s ontological equations mixed with biblical themes alongside a use of psychological language turn his work into an obscurity from a psychological point of view.²⁰² In other words, the use of meaning associated with psychological language becomes lost to Cooper, the psychologist, just as the use of meaning associated with theological symbols became lost to the theologians.

Cooper continued his critique by reasoning that Tillich’s theology is ultimately obscure because it arrived at a place where it is unable to say anything that is non-symbolic. Theologian Adrian Thatcher had concluded the same as he critiqued the same noticeable lack of definition in Tillich’s work from all the eclectic symbology Tillich has used. Cooper adds on to his conclusion by saying that if something was to be said by Tillich, what would it even be?²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978).

²⁰⁰ Ibid, 176.

²⁰¹ Andrew O’Neill, *Tillich: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 81.

²⁰² Terry D. Cooper, *Paul Tillich and Psychology: Historic and Contemporary Explorations in Theology, Psychotherapy, and Ethics* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2006), 80.

²⁰³ Ibid.

This frustration with Tillich's theology going on and on without offering any definitions or concrete statements truly being made is shared by Bullock when he points out Tillich's words pertaining to his fundamental assertion in volume three on the role of Spiritual Presence.

Spiritual Presence is uniting the infinite to finite inside mankind within life itself. When pressed to describe how, to clarify, to expand more, or to articulate further on what this might all mean in our reality, Tillich makes this statement: "It is appropriate to ask about the relation of the Divine Life to the life of the creature in the state of essentialization or in Eternal Life. Such a question is both unavoidable and impossible to answer except in terms of the highest religious-poetic symbolism."²⁰⁴

In response to this statement, Bullock says what is obvious to him: "So any talk of the individual self in relation to God, any attempt to describe the relation between the human spirit and the divine Spirit in the context of eternal life, is really nothing more than a piece of religious poetic symbolism. Beyond this, Tillich is unwilling to go."²⁰⁵ You cannot get beyond the symbolism, so one must go back to what Cooper asked earlier in relation to his frustration about the vagueness of Tillich's work: "If something was said by Tillich, what would it even be?"²⁰⁶

1.7.6 Judith Plaskow on Psychological Language and Tillich's Contradicting Meaning

Judith Plaskow draws on the obscurity of Tillich's work, with reference to psychological language, as did Cooper. She takes issue to Tillich's remodeling of psychology as he mixes

²⁰⁴ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 450.

²⁰⁵ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 404.

²⁰⁶ Terry D. Cooper, *Paul Tillich and Psychology: Historic and Contemporary Explorations in Theology, Psychotherapy, and Ethics* (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 2006), 80.

psychological language with other notions. Her critique is a little more severe than Cooper's was, as she points out how Tillich contradicts the work of psychology by pushing against it.

Her critique of Tillich is that his theology stands at odds with psychological issues concerning the meaning of self-actualization, as a result of his eclectic use of sources that form his theology. Plaskow says that Tillich's pre-occupation with the God-human unity eclipses his emphasis on the dilemmas of self-hood. By equating self-actualizing with the fall into his concept of estrangement, his theology indirectly chastises the movement toward personal freedom and independence that psychological well-being has found to be true. Tillich, therefore, concentrates too much on the active sin of striving for self-hood and not enough on the passive sin of refusing the journey to self-hood. She says that according to Tillich, to assert oneself is to fall into sin.

This contradiction presented by Plaskow, from her psychologist standpoint, is reflected in an interview between psychotherapist Carl Rogers and Paul Tillich.²⁰⁷ Tillich shares that he has hesitancy about the individual taking a journey to self-hood, and views autonomy as a negative thing. Reversely, Rogers responds with the trends from within his clinical observation. These observations state that well-being is a direct result of the individual journey into self-hood, or authenticity. This journey is enabled by an embrace of autonomy.

As a result of these types of concerns, Plaskow wonders if Tillich's richest insights into what she terms his "theological anthropology" have been sacrificed on the altar of his

²⁰⁷ Paul Tillich, interview by Carl Rogers, February 13, 1960. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gHSKdX66tY>.

ontology.²⁰⁸ Plaskow emphasizes that Tillich's solution of reunion with the ground of being effectively eliminates self-actualization, individual person-hood, and autonomy.

For Tillich, as far as Plaskow understands him, is saying that self-affirmation created our estrangement.²⁰⁹ A failure to pursue self-actualization may all be viewed as marks and guarantors of a close and fervent God-human relationship throughout life. To subscribe to this, she writes, is to oppose changes in life and in one's self. She concludes that to the extent that this is the hidden message of Tillich's ontology, his theology reinforces the status-quo.²¹⁰

Plaskow has other issues with Tillich's eclectic mix of archetypal symbols as they combine with psychological symbols, Christianity, and his fundamental ontological claim of Spiritual Presence as unifying the finite with the infinite. She says that Tillich takes the symbol of God as a father, and then he turns about and speaks of God as a mother, and in doing so creates contradiction. For those having a mythological base of understanding and the symbols that exists within the field of mythology, these symbols contradict and express different meanings.

Plaskow states that Tillich used Erich Neumann's mythological archetypal portrayal of God as the great mother to express the symbolic nature of God as his concept of the ground of being.²¹¹ However, he wants to suggest that God is also as the archetype of mother as seen via Neumann's archetype. God as father gives an image that encourages autonomy, individuality, and self-actualization.

²⁰⁸ Judith Plaskow, *Sex, Sin, and Grace: Women's Experience and the Theologies of Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich* (Washington: University Press of America, 1980), 111.

²⁰⁹ Ibid, 119.

²¹⁰ Ibid, 118.

²¹¹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 293-94.

Yet, on the other hand, Plaskow writes there is an image of a mothering God from Tillich. A mothering God, when used in Tillich's writing, portrays a mother whose children have *left home* without her permission, who have alienated themselves from her, and who need to be brought back into reunion with the Great Mother.²¹²

The archetypal models of mythology when intertwined with symbols from several other fields of study and reinvented to support Tillich's new concepts are quick to cause contradiction. Using an archetypal symbol to stand for the ontological concept of the ground of being, as Plaskow critiques it, only adds to the lack of clarity and specificity. Thus, as Plaskow argues, Tillich's theology basically cancels itself out as a giant contradiction that is never clarified in a sea of symbols and unrelated ideas and concepts.²¹³

1.7.7 Alan Race & Paul Knitter on Tillich's Abstract Concepts

Alan Race provided a comprehensive study in the options for relationships between Christianity and other religions. He adopted a three-fold typology of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. Race referred to Tillich as a pluralist within his threefold typology and critiqued that Tillich was vulnerable in his concept of the Religion of the Concrete Spirit.²¹⁴

The Religion of the Concrete Spirit can be traced back to what Tillich referred to in earlier years, as the religion of grace, as he sought to tease out some sort of *telos* within the chaos of the history of religion. Race found Tillich's Concrete Spirit vulnerable because he found it to

²¹² Judith Plaskow, *Sex, Sin, and Grace: Women's Experience and the Theologies of Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich* (Washington: University Press of America, 1980), 166. & Erich Neumann, *The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype* (NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015), 25.

²¹³ *Ibid.*

²¹⁴ Frederick Parrella, *Paul Tillich's Theological Legacy: Spirit and Community* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1995), 36.

be “too abstract a concept.”²¹⁵ Whereas with the early version of Tillich, there was a tendency to see the religion of grace actualized in the Christian religion, Tillich realized in his later work that the Christian religion alone cannot fulfill this role. He broadens his scope to the concept of universal Spiritual Presence as a result. Christianity becomes a singular available method, among all off the religions that exist as other methods, in which a universal Spiritual Presence guides humanity into essentialization, from within *any* of them.²¹⁶

Tillich believed there could be other Christs in other religions, as the Christ of Christianity was merely a symbol, and Spiritual Presence was the true mediator, however, an undefined one.²¹⁷ The lack of definition struck scholars like Race and Knitter with a sense of abstractness towards Tillich, and with that abstractness, a loss of credibility. Again, Tillich’s use of symbol developed into vague concepts that did not attempt to make any clear statements as his theology progressed.

Race is accompanied by Paul Knitter who follows Race in faulting Tillich’s concept of the Religion of the Concrete Spirit as being something that is too abstract. He stated that Tillich’s description of the whole history of religion was “an unsuccessful search for a ‘concrete symbol of grace,’ that is, a symbol or form of revelation that would truly mediate the mystery of the Ultimate without identifying itself with that ultimate.”²¹⁸

²¹⁵ Ibid, 24.

²¹⁶ Ibid, 37.

²¹⁷ Ibid, 36.

²¹⁸ Ibid.

1.7.8 Tillich's Lack of Clarity and its Consequence on the Symbol of Spiritual Presence In This Thesis

Tillich's eclectic style of merging, meshing, and re-interpreting several philosophical concepts and religious symbols with psychological language is popularly viewed as damaging to his work. This is because in re-assigning new meaning to already solidified traditional concepts, it tends to lose all meaning. This loss of meaning leaves his theology with a sense of formlessness and vagueness, that readers from various fields of study seem to have a negative critique of.

Tillich's vagueness is often interpreted to be a result of his imposed philosophical speculation, particularly speculation about immanence.²¹⁹ It is not just the eclecticism with his use of symbols that present a vagueness as they contradict one another, but also Tillich's use of imposed immanence. Because the concept of immanence is imposed rather than explained, it has trickle-down effect on the symbols he utilizes on behalf of it. They too remain without definition or further explanation. This adds to the continuing shapelessness of his theology. This lack of definition or articulation can be seen in Tillich's use of the symbol of God and Spiritual Presence.

Nothing can be said about God because how God relates to the human being is based upon Tillich's unexamined or articulated use of immanence. Nothing can be said about Spiritual Presence because it is based upon the un-articulated or explained concept of God, which is just

²¹⁹ And, although the truth of the "symbolical" statements of the Christian message is not supposed to be affected by being interpreted by theology, yet these statements are compelled to witness to a God given in ontological speculation. Consequently, they are allowed no more than that measure of meaning which they receive from being placed within the ontological system. Kenneth Hamilton, "Tillich's 'Method of Correlation,'" *Canadian Journal of Theology* 5, no. 2 (April 1959): 87-95, accessed December 4, 2017, https://doi.org/https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/pdf/cjt/05-2_087.pdf, 9.

an extension of the concept of immanence. When God and Spiritual Presence are based upon immanence, and immanence is not explained, God likewise cannot be explained nor any articulation of how Spiritual Presence guides the human being. The philosophical speculation of immanence almost enforces the use of symbol, and therefore, the vagueness of Tillich's work.

The assertion of immanence that Tillich treats as an unquestionable fact sits as the base of his entire theology. It is this assertion that serves as a focal point of this dissertation. Tillich's assertion is to be moved from the point of speculation, to investigation, and into the formation of something more concrete, making descriptives available through observation in actual existence. The fundamental conclusion of his entire *Systematic Theology* is that a universal Spiritual Presence is the sole essentializing factor of the finite and infinite in mankind. This fundamental conclusion, while he arrives at it, remains baseless and vague.

It is baseless, and in turn meaningless to readers. Like Osbourne states, it simply isn't worth believing, because he hasn't truly made any statements. It appears as though, the loss of meaning through intertwining language across several fields of study, and asserting immanence without reasoning, created a baselessness at the core of his theology. This speculation in the foundation of his work will need addressing to develop his theology as a whole into a more solidified, reasonable, way of thinking. Immanence needs a reason or some evidence behind its assertion. In doing so, as it is the foundation of everything that follows in his theology, his symbols can move into articulation.

Tillich, through his insistence on the use of symbol alone, and in offering no effort to elaborate further upon the symbols with statements, definitions, or articulations, offered no path for the reader to trust or truly get on board with his assertions. Meanwhile, it seems that what he

is asserting truly could be accompanied by an articulation, particularly in the case of the symbol for his concept of Spiritual Presence.

To land his theology on the case of universal essentialization towards New Being, and to shift the catalyst to Spiritual Presence for playing out this essentializing of the finite to the infinite in life itself, one would think there was an epiphany behind his statement, and that epiphany would hold an observation of how it's taking shape in the world. In fact, he might have seen it taking shape somehow in the world, or in people around him, or himself, in order to conclude that this idea of essentialization is occurring. Regardless, such a statement should inevitably lead to a much more comprehensive understanding of *pneumatology*. One that can be examined as it can be experienced, universally, for all human life, and therefore articulated.

Secondly, not unconnected with the above remark, arising from Tillich's suggestion that because the structural elements of our finite life are grounded in being-itself we are thereby able to understand something about God through an examination of the structure of our own life and beings. This is really to say that there is a universal, ontological revelation of God which stems from man's participation in the life of God through the structures of being.²²⁰

If Spiritual Presence can be articulated in life, moving it beyond symbol, because it is an actual experience that comes with life, so too can there be an articulation of the symbol of God. What is being revealed can be progressed into a statement of God, through what is revealed, in the experience of life. In any account, it can be expressed beyond symbol, to provide grounds for further investigation and consideration towards its validity.

²²⁰ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 39.

Tillich's work is resigned to a sort of standstill in and of itself, because in asserting concepts, there remained no avenue to investigate any of his thought. There is no start point for a good evaluation of the fundamental conclusion of Tillich's theology: the role of a universal Spiritual Presence in some sort of essentialization to some sort of un-named true Essence. It remains as a sort of, take it or leave it, as is, type of theological claim. Without any attempt at an explanation towards the validity or more tangible reasoning of his remarks, and without the how and the why towards what he asserts about them, there isn't any weight to them. Is any of what he says valid? To play off of Cooper's critique earlier, what would Tillich actually say about Spiritual Presence, or God, or essentialization, if anything at all beyond a symbol?

1.8 Summary of Chapters to Come

Beyond this chapter, chapters two through ten are broken into two parts. Part one contains chapters two through four. It intends to make the case for existentialism's use within this thesis. It will do so by building an understanding of how it is being used and also why it is being used, through considering its core qualities and its impact on other fields of study, as a means to investigate the genuineness of Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence, through the framework of life itself.

Part two contains chapters five through ten. Part two will aim to utilize existentialism provided by the works of Sartre and Rogers in order to observe and therefore articulate how Tillich's Spiritual Presence guides humanity from within the structure of life. Further, to observe what the true Essence is that Spiritual Presence is essentializing humanity towards.

The remainder of this chapter includes a small debrief of all remaining chapters within this thesis in order to provide an evolving overview of things to come. They will progress towards the implementation of a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, the illumination of the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

In chapter two, a review of how existentialism will be used for variety of purposes in the 21st century is given. It goes to describe how some use the descriptives given by Sartre to understand our ever-increasing use of virtual reality today. Others, to expand into new insights within the medical field. The world of art and performance has utilized existential analysis to create a new method of artistic interpretation. In philosophy, it has acted as the building blocks for new concepts of anthropocentrism. Other philosophers have built their career on arguments against the statements made by Sartre in *Being and Nothingness*. The descriptions of a radically free nature of consciousness provided in his analysis are a mainstay of debate, investigation, and innovation in the 21st century. Overall, the contents of this chapter will provide a literary review of several 21st century scholars and the manner they have utilized existentialism towards their own research developments.

While Sartre's existentialism is used in a variety of capacities outside the field of philosophy and within it, its use within this thesis is towards ontological verification. The use of Sartre's analysis of consciousness is different, in that regard, to the manner it is used by other present-day scholars. It is used to verify, through observation, Tillich's theory of Spiritual Presence, and observe what process Tillich's Spiritual Presence takes to guide humanity to true Essence. Existentialism is used as a point of verification, through observation of consciousness

in relation to the world, in order to state what *is* and *how* it is occurring, in the case of essentialization and Spiritual Presence towards true Essence.

Chapter three will shape the reader's understanding of what existentialism is and its evolution up to Jean-Paul Sartre. This is necessary for two reasons. First, the problems that this thesis seeks to resolve within Paul Tillich's work were created by existentialism's heavy influence in modern society. Second, the work used to resolve these problems is Sartre's existentialism and the existentially principled psychology of Carl Rogers.

To understand the limitations of Paul Tillich's theology as they are in response to the popular rise of existentialism, and to understand the value of Sartre and Rogers in solving those limitations, knowledge of existentialism's roots and the evolving observation of human nature from those roots is essential. A basic preliminary comprehension takes place in this chapter as a primer to the bigger task of this thesis: to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

The roots of existentialism reveal an inner guidance that exists within the person, that is also beyond the person, and yet apart of the person. This sort of relationality, relates to Tillich's Spiritual Presence on many levels of similarity and characteristics. Carl Rogers will weigh in on this same link of an inner guide that is brought up prior, by the forefathers, as well as Jean-Paul Sartre, in examining subjectivity, emotions and the world lived in relation to. However, it begins here, with the forefathers, examining their own life in relationship with the world.

Their experience of living in relation to the world had much to do with being grasped by an inner guidance, whilst living in relation to the world, and then articulating what that

experience was like. Perhaps they are the first to begin documenting what being grasped by something similar to Tillich's Spiritual Presence was like, the first to begin articulating this relationship of the infinite within the finite, guiding towards true Essence.

The bigger task of this dissertation is to utilize existential analysis to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence. Various indicators of what human Essence consists seem to be illuminated by analysis that has taken place beginning with the forefathers, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. Indicators of what Tillich's Spiritual Presence would guide us to acknowledge and the manner in which it guides human beings to Essence, are perhaps indicated early on, within the roots of existential observation and its development with the forefathers.

Further, indicators of what this guidance is guiding the human being to embody, parallel to Tillich's concept of true Essence, is perhaps illuminated early on with the forefathers, and later developed in a richer tone of examination through Sartre and Rogers. As Vernon Bullock wrote in his critical examination of Tillich's Spiritual Presence: "If the power of being in God and man are continuous, then it would seem to follow that between the divine Spirit and the human spirit there is some point of identity, or perhaps even that the human spirit is the finite aspect of the divine Spirit in which it participates."²²¹

This point of identity takes an initial shape within existentialism's developmental roots by building a picture of human beings that are free, creative, and solely responsible for their creative freedom. Page one hundred and fourteen of this thesis will state Thomas Flynn's

²²¹ Ibid.

understanding of the main themes of existential writing. Those themes revolve around humans as free, creative and responsible, among others.

While the forefathers articulate such traits, under much more analysis and scrutiny, these writings get reaffirmed by Rogers and Sartre. One in a clinical setting, and the other, through an intense analysis of consciousness in relation to the world. By simply watching how existentialism unfolded from its roots, Tillich's aspect of an inner guidance seems to emerge in a visible way and is not such a hidden mystery that must left to the form of symbol.

In chapter four, the limitations of Tillich's work exist because he intended to be in dialogue with existentialism. Existentialism had become exceedingly popular, while Christian theology was not the main topic of social discussions. Existentialism's impact on Tillich is what shaped his theological positions within his *Systematic Theology*. Many of which, are the limitations to be addressed in this thesis. Therefore, this thesis, is a direct result of existentialism's influence on theology and society from prior times.

By addressing the limitations from Tillich's dialogue with existentialism, the ultimate goal of this thesis can be addressed: to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

A place of research to address the limitations of Tillich's theology and investigate a guiding Spiritual Presence within humanity is Carl Rogers. His person-centered therapy is founded upon reoccurring observations he made as a psychologist, over a period of decades. The concept of observing, rather than presuming behaviors with pre-established mental conditions, was based upon existential principles.

In observing, instead of diagnosing, the therapy sessions allowed him to see specific characteristics of human nature that were present in all of his clients. These characteristics allowed him a new perspective on human nature and well-being. His research revolutionized psychology.

Existentialism's impact on 20th century theology and psychology led to new, ground breaking theological claims, as well as psychological revelations that would deeply impact both fields of study. Existentialism's impact on both fields of study will be explained and will land on Tillich (the origin of this thesis) and Rogers (a portion of the answer to this thesis), in particular.

While the theological influence shaped Tillich's theology that this thesis seeks to address, its psychological influences provided an area of research to address it with. Rogers' observation of an inner guidance system will assist to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Chapter five is a dive into the theology of Paul Tillich, particularly his Doctrine of Spirit. The theology he developed is a direct result of existential influence. The specific ways his theology was cultivated to dialogue with existentialism and the specific ways he thought existentialism to function are discussed as possible causes of his theological limitations. Likewise, the logic in utilizing existentialism as a way to correct the limitations is expressed.

It is ultimately proposed that if a correction is made to Tillich's narrow definition of philosophy an immediate realignment would follow that remedies the remaining criticisms and exposes an observable comprehension of how Spiritual Presence operate in life towards New Being, to complete that which is incomplete.

An investigation of Sartre's existentialism is further proposed as the proper vehicle to progress into a new direction of thought: the development of existential *pneumatology*.

Existential *pneumatology* will explore and articulate the manner that Spiritual Presence operates within the human condition. It will construct a comprehension of how Spiritual Presence guides an individual in essentialization. This is in direct alignment with the central aim of this thesis: to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Chapter six contains Sartre's analysis of the nature of human consciousness by examining an individual's relation to the world. Ultimately, this analysis of the nature of consciousness will aid to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence. Within the verification process, it will aid to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what Tillich called true Essence.

This chapter will explore the existential analysis of Jean-Paul Sartre, through *Being and Nothingness*, in order to observe how and then what a human in the world is universally guided to know about their true nature, if anything at all.²²²

²²² Recall that Tillich utilized what he called the *method of correlation* throughout his *Systematic Theology*. Tillich also called his approach *apologetic* or an *answering theology*. The use of the word *correlation* is viewed misleading by some scholars because rather than correlate philosophy towards a theology, Tillich more so acted more accordingly as Christian apologist. Every philosophical question derived from the phenomenological analysis of the cultural or human situation is directed pointedly and predictably to Christian theology as the answer. Second to this is the assumption that everyone is necessarily religious and pressed for Tillich to show them how Christian theology can emerge to answer to the human condition presented by philosophy. Tillich was aware that the method of correlation and how he utilized it as an apologist was subject to its flaws and bias. Tillich stated that "the method of correlation is not safe from distortion; no theological method is. The answer can prejudice the question..." It is the potential prejudice of Tillich to Christianity which seeks to be remedied as a limitation in order to set free the remainder of his own theological suggestions concerning Spiritual Presence and its guidance of humanity towards New Being that require this prejudice to be released in order to be furthered and assessed. The prejudice being rooted in Tillich's narrow and incorrect definition of philosophy, viewing it as empiricism; therefore, avoiding its

Sartre has been selected for his “revolutionary approach that challenged assumptions about the individual’s relationship with the world.”²²³ This statement is due to the nature of phenomenology used by Sartre. It seeks to set aside bias and prior information about a subject or a thing, in order to allow for the observation of that thing to be seen with new eyes. The examination presented in *Being and Nothingness* is excellent, because of this approach, for researching Tillich’s claim of a guiding immanence.

This is an important analysis for the purpose of this thesis which is to implement a verification process for Tillich’s concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence. For Tillich, Spiritual Presence was enmeshed in the external world and also within the human being, in order to guide people towards knowledge of this true Essence.

With that said, if Sartre’s analysis of the human being in relation to the world guides him to conclude freedom as human nature, and if the power of being in God and man are continuous, as Tillich says it is, then it would seem to follow that between the divine Spirit and the human spirit there is some point of identity, or perhaps even that the human spirit is the finite aspect of the divine Spirit in which it participates.²²⁴ Perhaps Sartre’s analysis of human nature provides a clue, an observation, to this point of shared identity, between God and the human, a true Essence.

The human Essence as described by Sartre in *Being and Nothingness* will serve not only as a revelation of Spiritual guidance towards Tillich’s true Essence, but the answer it reveals will

participation in a theological discussion. For more, see: John Powell Clayton, *The Concept of Correlation: Paul Tillich and the Possibility of a Mediating Theology* (New York: W. De Gruyter, 1980), 182.

²²³ Publisher description. Introduction to *Being and Nothingness* (UT: American Book Publishing, 2015).

²²⁴ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 39.

be used to conceptualize, the concept of the image of God as the concept of Tillich's true Essence, later in chapter eight of this thesis.

In chapter seven, Carl Rogers' observations of human nature that includes a universal visceral response that guides individuals to expand into more of their nature is discussed and related to Sartre and then Tillich's claim of Spiritual Presence and true Essence.

As Sartre studied human consciousness in relation to its external environment, the environment itself enabled him to recognize the nature of human consciousness as fundamentally free. As Rogers observed human beings through therapy sessions, he became aware of qualities that appeared fundamental to human nature. These qualities revealed themselves as an internal visceral response that would occur each time an individual rejected autonomy, personal responsibility, and positive self-regard.

As an individual would accept the meaning and values told to them by their external world, instead of their own experience, an unpleasant internal distress would develop. The qualities revealed by the internal guidance system were observed as steering the human being into greater degrees of autonomy, positive self-regard, personal responsibility, and to do so by expressing and living out their own unique meaning and values, over those of the external world.

It is not only the external environment that allows for the human being to recognize its true essence, but the internal environment as well through its own internal responses. This internal response to a rejection of or expansion of true essence is a prime example of how humans are guided in life towards a true Essence. This internal guidance is a key observation to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the

verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

In chapter eight, Tillich's concept of true Essence, synonymous with the image of God, will be discussed. A depiction of Tillich's True Essence will be arrived at through the work of Sartre and Rogers, whom illumine a point of shared identity between God and man. This concept can be understood more concisely and clearly, in light of the observed *telos* of Tillich's Spiritual Presence.

The problem as it affects our assessment of Tillich's doctrine of the Spirit will appear in this way: If the power of being in God and man are continuous, then it would seem to follow that between the divine Spirit and the human spirit there is some point of identity, or perhaps even that the human spirit is the finite aspect of the divine Spirit in which it participates.²²⁵

This point of identity is possible according to the framework that Tillich has given for Spiritual Presence as a guide to all humanity in life towards true Essence. This arises, once again, out of Tillich's suggestion that because the structural elements of our finite life are grounded in being-itself we are thereby able to understand something about God through an examination of the structure of our own life and beings. As Bullock adds on, "This is really to say that there is a universal, ontological revelation of God which stems from man's participation in the life of God through the structures of being."²²⁶

Therefore, if we are able to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual

²²⁵ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 39.

²²⁶ *Ibid.*

Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence through Sartre and Rogers, we are likewise able to make a statement about God, as the shared point of identity, is this Essence that Spiritual Presence guides humanity towards.

The image of God as identified through Sartre and Rogers can be described as transcendent, undefined, tasked to create unique meaning and purpose in the world, tasked to not be absorbed by the external meaning outside of itself. It is ultimately a creative authority, and as such, is required by means of its own nature to make its own autonomous choices and express its own unique meaning through innate unbound freedom.

This is the power of the human being. In coming to grips with its own power, the individual can accept responsibility for itself as a creative authority. It can approach life by taking ownership of its power and author for itself that which is uniquely meaningful and purposeful, through its choices. This is the point of identity of God in humanity, its true Essence.

The beginning of the thesis outlined four limitations to Tillich's work. The preceding chapters sought solutions to those limitations by examining the work of Sartre and Rogers. Through this examination, in attending to these limitations, the overall purpose of this thesis was to be addressed: to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Chapter nine will revisit the initial limitations and assess if the work of Sartre and Rogers served to correct any of Tillich's limitations. This chapter will also assess if, the main purpose, to develop a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the

verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence, was met.

This chapter introduces the term *existential pneumatology* as short-hand for the existential observations of Sartre and Rogers towards Tillich's Spiritual Presence that articulate essentialization. Further studies and contributions with *existential pneumatology* beyond the scope of Tillich and Spiritual Presence are offered as well.

Two contributions that are presented from an *existential pneumatology* is the aim or purpose of life as observed from an *existential pneumatology* and also an understanding of the psychological concept of awe and its ability to develop well-being in people. In this manner, an *existential pneumatology* is able to contribute beyond theology and spirituality and into other avenues of research. An *existential pneumatology* has thought value that is available for further avenues of study and understanding the human being, be it philosophy, psychology, or spirituality.

Part 1

Making The Existential Case

Part one of this thesis consists of chapters two, three, and four. It intends to make the case for existentialism's use within this thesis. It will do so by building an understanding of how it is being used and also why it is being used, through considering its core qualities and its impact on other fields of study, as a means to investigate the genuineness of Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence through the framework of life.

It includes a literary review of existentialism's use today in various avenues of scholarly research. It will serve to show the way this thesis intends to use existentialism, compared to how it has been used by other researchers within the 21st century. The way it is intended to be used within this thesis, that is different from the way it has been used by others, is a means to discover the genuineness of Tillich's claim of a Spiritual Presence that guides humanity into its true Essence. It will do so by identifying an essentialization process, as it is found existentially, to be observed in human life.

Secondly, part one will include a review of existentialism from its root to Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*. Existentialism, when starting with its roots, lays claim to the observation of an inner guidance that lives life with the individual, and guides them to their authenticity.

The notion of inner guidance and authenticity expands, rather than detracts, being articulated and examined further, as existentialism forms into modern existentialism, marked by Sartre. Existentialism's analysis of living in relation to the world had much to do with being grasped by an inner guidance, and then articulating what that experience was like. Perhaps they are the first to begin documenting what being grasped by Tillich's Spiritual Presence was like,

the first to begin articulating this relationship of the infinite within the finite, guiding it towards true Essence.

Thirdly, part one makes the case for existentialism by explaining how 20th century theology and psychology was directly influenced by it. Tillich's Spiritual Presence is a direct result of existentialism's existence and impact in the 20th century. The same can be said for Carl Rogers and his person-centered therapy.

It is the observations made through this existential methodology, that took notice of a universal inner guidance system. This guidance system is a vital observation towards articulating Tillich's Spiritual Presence.

Overall, part one is used to make the case of existentialism as it will be used in part two of this thesis to verify the genuineness, through its observations, of Tillich's theory of Spiritual Presence and articulate what the process is that Spiritual Presence takes to guide humanity to Tillich's true essence.

Chapter Two

A Literary Review & Manifesto Of Existentialism Today

Towards the use of existentialism in Articulating Tillich's Spiritual Presence

2.1 Introduction

Existentialism has been used for variety of purposes in the 21st century. Some use the descriptives given by Sartre to understand our ever-increasing use of virtual reality, today. Others utilize it to expand into new insights within the medical field. The world of art and performance has utilized existential analysis to create a new method of artistic interpretation. In philosophy, it has acted as the building blocks for new concepts of anthropocentrism. Other philosophers have built their career on arguments against the statements made by Sartre in *Being and Nothingness*. The descriptions of a radically free nature of consciousness provided in his analysis are a mainstay of debate, investigation, and innovation in the 21st century. The contents of this chapter will provide a literary review of several 21st century scholars and the manner they have utilized existentialism towards their own research developments.

While Sartre's existentialism is used in a variety of capacities outside the field of philosophy and within it, its use within this thesis is towards ontological verification. The use of Sartre's analysis of consciousness is different, in that regard, to the manner it is used by other present-day scholars. It is used to verify through observation Tillich's theory of Spiritual Presence and observe what process Tillich's Spiritual Presence may take to guide humanity to true Essence. Existentialism is used as a point of verification, through observation of consciousness in relation to the world, in order to state what *is* and *how* it is. It does not seek to create a theory or develop an argument against Sartre.

Two overall agendas can be observed from the way that existentialism has been used in current scholarly research. It is taken as observational analysis, and used objectively, to build a better understanding of concepts in various fields. You'll see this, for example, with how existentialism conducts itself in the field of medicine with Kevin Aho.

Alternatively, existentialism is taken as something that needs to be tweaked, in some way, by others. Some scholars see existentialism as something with shortfalls that needs to be redeveloped. You'll see this, for example, with Webber when he argues that Sartre's analysis of radical freedom clashes with Beauvoir's theory of sedimentation. He favors sedimentation and wants to redevelop Sartre's existentialism in such a way that it makes more sense with sedimentation. Another example, is Collins, who thinks existentialism focuses too much on negative aspects of life. He redevelops it into something, that he believes, will be taken with more positively by the public eye.

2.2 Reviewing Existentialism Today

Overall, existentialism is used as a helpful objective analysis that offers insight in order to develop something new. Or, existentialism is taken as something to redevelop. Ultimately, as an observation, existentialism today is used for a new development or for re-development. The subheadings will be found below as a way to help categorize the two overall agendas, or observations, present in the current use of existentialism. Some subheadings will begin with "developments" and others "re-developments" in order to show the manner it is being used by current researchers.

2.2.1 Developments In the Medical Field

Kevin Aho

Kevin Aho is Professor of Philosophy and Chair of the Department of Communication and Philosophy at Florida Gulf Coast University. He has published widely in the areas of existentialism, phenomenology, hermeneutics, and the philosophy of health and illness.

Aho has utilized his studies on existentialism to broaden and deepen his understanding of health and illness and offer more sensitive and humane approaches to healthcare.²²⁷ Aho grounds his work in a decade long portion of Martin Heidegger's career that he spent giving seminars to physicians, psychiatrist, and medical students in Zollikon, Switzerland.

The seminars initially took place at the University of Zurich's psychiatric clinic but later moved to the home of Swiss psychiatrist Medard Boss. No philosophers were allowed at these seminars, they were only open to medical professionals. Boss reached out to Heidegger in 1947 after the war, distressed by an overly objectifying and mechanistic paradigm in scientific medicine.²²⁸

The seminars were titled the Zollikon Seminars and what made them compelling was they exposed uncritical assumptions in scientific medicine while at the same time acknowledging the importance of medical science.²²⁹ Boss took to Heidegger's perspectives on being, namely taking away that cancer, from the perspective of existence, cannot be reduced to abnormal cell growth in the body.

²²⁷ James Aho, *Existential Medicine Essays on Health and Illness* (London: Rowman & Littlefield International, 2018), xi.

²²⁸ *Ibid*, xi.

²²⁹ *Ibid*, 95.

Cancer is first and foremost a significant experience that the sufferer feels and lives through. Following Heidegger's lead, Boss recognized that how someone that is suffering with cancer is situated in the world. The resources given to interpret the condition and the meaning and value that one ultimately gives to it all, determines how a body ailment is experienced. Two people with the same diagnoses can have very different experiences based upon the "situation" of interpreting meaning and value of the condition.²³⁰ A sort of existential care would come of this, wherein medical professionals needed to be more than a technician. They needed to reflect on the individual having an experience and to situate the sufferer in his or her world in order to attend to his or her self-interpretations that are shaping their unique experience. Aho's 2018 book titled *Existential Medicine* is based upon this grounding while sharing the work of others at the intersection of existentialism and medicine.

A key book that truly highlights the thought of Aho and his contributions made through existentialism is his 2019 work titled *Contexts of Suffering: A Heideggerian Approach to Psychopathology*. *Contexts of Suffering* draws on Martin Heidegger's phenomenology and his analysis of human existence to challenge core assumptions in contemporary psychiatry by contextualizing mental illness and illuminating its existential and experiential qualities.²³¹ The book explores the limitations of today's biomedical model and examines mental illness from a first-person perspective to show how it can disrupt and modify the meaning-structures that constitute our subjectivity.

It goes on to offer a hermeneutic analysis of mental illness by shedding light on the extent to which our historical situation shapes the way we diagnose, classify, and experience our

²³⁰ Ibid, 103.

²³¹ Kevin Aho, *Contexts of Suffering: A Heideggerian Approach to Psychopathology* (London: Rowman & Littlefield Inc., 2019).

suffering and provides the expansive framework through which we can interpret and make sense of it. To this end, the book highlights the crucial need for clinicians to regard the sufferer not as a neurochemical entity but as a way of being that is uniquely situated, embodied, and self-interpreting.

Aho's *Introduction to Existentialism* also addresses this hermeneutic towards suffering that is overlooked, yet holds great influence on the allied health professions.²³² Kevin Aho argues, given existentialism's reach into nearly all aspects of current life and careers that existentialism cannot be easily dismissed as a moribund or outdated movement, but instead endures as one of the most important and vibrant areas of contemporary philosophy. He maintains existentialism remains so influential because it forcefully deals with what it means to be human and engages with fundamental questions such as "Who am I?" and "How should I live?"²³³

2.2.2 *Developments In Theology*

King-Ho Leung

Leung researches a broad intersection post Heideggerian philosophy and theology at the School of Divinity at St. Andrews. Some of his most recent work includes utilizing Sartre's existentialism on the nature of consciousness and pairing his work with modern theologians to explore the existence of God. In the article *Hart and Sartre on God and Consciousness*, Leung shows that there are many surprising parallels between the ontological outlooks of Hart and

²³² Kevin Aho, *Existentialism: An Introduction* (Cambridge, UK: Polity, 2020).

²³³ Ibid.

Sartre, namely their conceptions of God as the unity of being and consciousness and their accounts of human consciousness as a desire to ‘become God’.²³⁴ By examining the similarities and differences between Sartre’s and Hart’s philosophical and theological works, Leung highlights the phenomenological aspects of Hart’s theological outlook and considers how Hart’s appeal to the phenomenological analysis of intentional consciousness in his theological work can illuminate our understanding of the ongoing engagements between theology and phenomenology. Sartre’s *Being and Nothingness* is the main text in his analysis.²³⁵

Other works of Leung examine Sartre in light of metaphysics. *Transcendentalism and Nothingness in Sartre's Atheistic Ontology*. Through Sartre’s existentialism, Leung offers a reading of Sartre’s phenomenological ontology in light of the pre-modern understanding of ‘transcendentals’ as universal properties and predicates of all determinate beings.²³⁶ Drawing on Sartre’s transcendental account of nothingness in his early critique of Husserl as well as his discussion of ‘determination as negation’ in *Being and Nothingness*, this article argues that Sartre’s universal predicate of ‘the not’ (le non) could be understood in a similar light to the medieval scholastic conception of transcendentals.²³⁷

²³⁴ King-Ho Leung, “Hart and Sartre on God and Consciousness,” *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 82, no. 1 (January 2021): 34-50, <https://doi.org/10.1080/21692327.2021.1896374>.

²³⁵ Ibid

²³⁶ King-Ho Leung, “Transcendentalism and Nothingness in Sartre’s Atheistic Ontology,” *Philosophy* 95, no. 4 (2020): 471-495, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0031819120000248>.

²³⁷ Ibid.

2.2.3 Developments In New Philosophical Thought

Joseph Catalano

Philosopher Joseph Catalano's work titled *Thinking Matter: Consciousness from Aristotle to Putnam and Sartre* was first published in 2002. Catalano grounds his argument for anthropocentrism in Sartre's work on consciousness from *Being and Nothingness*. He concludes that the body is the bond between consciousness and matter.

As illuminated in *Being and Nothingness*, the body is an organismic mind of its own right. It captures information with its various organs and speaks in visceral experiences; consciousness requires the body in order to have something to interpret. The world we live in is the world we live in because the body is the bond. Accordingly, without the body, there is no "world" as we know it.

Catalano has three points forged from Sartre's conception of consciousness: 1) The fleshy unit of our body makes it meaningful; 2) Our body is the source of language as a collective and historically forged web of meanings; and 3) Our body is a source of possibilities. As a result, Catalano's argument is for an anthropocentrism as no human can help but to "connect everything with ourselves."²³⁸ As long as the body is the bond of consciousness and matter, there cannot be something else.

²³⁸ Joseph Catalano, *Thinking Matter Consciousness from Aristotle to Putnam and Sartre* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 170.

Daniel O'Shiel

Dr. Daniel O'Shiel is a postdoctoral researcher and teacher in philosophy, currently working at the Instituto de Filosofía, Universidad Diego Portales, Santiago, Chile. His current project, awarded by FONDECYT by ANID in Santiago, Chile, will explicate the natures of perception, phantasy and image-consciousness (*Bildbewusstsein*) as found in the works of Husserl, Fink and Sartre. O'Shiel will then challenge this theory through a dynamic notion of virtuality, and apply the findings to live concrete case studies in social media, online gaming and various virtual, augmented and mixed reality technologies.

Daniel O'Shiel's research in the world of virtuality finds foundation in Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*. Particularly, the manner Sartre found consciousness to act as a sort of power that relentlessly and infinitely creates through freedom, and that freedom implying an un-boundness to the meaning, values, expectations, of the world.

In *Sartre And Magic: Being, Emotion, And Philosophy*, O'Shiel argues that play and the imaginary are inextricably linked in Sartre's thought as they both stand in opposition to the ways that we commonly relate to the actual world, and also in opposition to what he calls the "spirit of seriousness."²³⁹ The attitude by which the human being renounces their innate freedom by fitting themselves into the facts and demands of the world.²⁴⁰

In Sartre's conception, the imagination allows an escape from the situation the world places upon humanity with its demands and responsibilities. It frees the individual to be anti-worldly by allowing the individual to transcend from its worldly constraints.²⁴¹ How Sartre

²³⁹ Daniel O'Shiel, *Sartre And Magic: Being, Emotion and Philosophy* (London: Bloomsbury, 2020), 188.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Ibid, 3.

understood imagination as it relates to things like present day virtuality, as with O'Shiel's continuing to research, is as an alternative to the world, rather than a negation from the world. Sartrean magic, as O'Shiel he calls it, is magic because the human being with its freedom is able to corrupt the normal causal chain of events with their innovative nature. The human being is a magical being, a magician.²⁴² It involves modes of consciousness where the mind comes to enliven otherwise inert things and phenomena.²⁴³

O'Shiel argues that Sartre's ontological concept of human magic within *Being and Nothingness* can contribute a novel account to the various issues that contemporary societies, not least philosophy, are trying to understand and deal with. Namely, the arts, advertising, racism and stupidity, and certain instances of psychopathology.²⁴⁴

Lastly, O'Shiel argues that any decent study on human nature must not only investigate the ego, emotion, the imaginary, as well as the nature of human value, possession, and language, but must accept these structures, when phenomenologically studied, as having Sartre's magical being at their very heart.²⁴⁵ This is the development of O'Shiel's complex philosophical anthropology through the use of existentialism.

²⁴² Ibid, 1.

²⁴³ Ibid, 3.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, 4.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

2.2.4 Developments In The Field of Neuroscience

Clay Routledge

Clay Routledge's book illuminates core existential concerns, including concerns about death, freedom, isolation, identity, and meaning in life. Routledge's volume states people possess sophisticated cognitive capacity for abstract thought, self-awareness, and personal control of their attitudes and behaviors, which, among many other things, force them to grapple with certain issues in ways that no other animal does. These ways uniquely characterize human existence. While the human being has the capacity to know of mortality, Routledge explores how the management of this knowledge results in various religions and spiritualities.

Religious and spiritual beliefs are a wide-spread phenomenon with important influences on social behavior, cultural practices, and even societal functioning. A rapid expansion in the scope of interest and number of researchers has led to several empirical, quantitative, and existential psychological focuses, including the scientific study of how religion and spirituality may or may not function to address the "ultimate concerns" of human existence.

Routledge uses existentialism to address the big questions about how and why religion and spirituality exists. As an emerging frontier, existentialism is found as a bridge to why religious belief and spirituality have been - and remain - such central features of human existence. This is done through scientific theory and research, as Routledge's volume illustrates how fundamental existential issues are the cause and consequence of religion and spirituality. His book spans multiple levels of analysis such as evolution, cognition and neuroscience,

emotion and motivation, personality and individual differences, social and cultural forces, physical and mental health, and many others.²⁴⁶

In the broader context, the book is a part of number of growing interests in empirical existential psychology, broadly, and more specific applications of existential psychology to religion and spirituality.

As such, Routledge remarks that the volume is of critical interests to researchers across a variety of relevant fields. He adds within his book that “given the discussion of existential topics has been so dominate in 2019 that dictionary.com dubbed “existential” the word of the year, it suspected to be of interest to a broader readership as well. This volume hopes to inspire scholars to continue building an improved understanding of the role of existential issues in religion and spirituality.”²⁴⁷

Routledge is a part of what is being called *neuroexistentialism*.²⁴⁸ Neuroexistentialism is the quest for significance as a result of “neurological machinery that has helped us survive and also rendered us distinctively ruminative.”²⁴⁹ This sort of philosophy seeks to make use of the knowledge and insights of the behavioral, cognitive, and neurosciences to satisfy existential concerns and achieve some level of flourishing and fulfillment.

²⁴⁶ Ibid, pxx.

²⁴⁷ Ibid, xxi.

²⁴⁸ Gregg Caruso and Owen Flanagan are the editors of a book titled *Neuroexistentialism: Meaning, Morals, and Purpose in the age if neuroscience*, which examines foundational anxiety that arises when the mind no longer stands apart from the world to serve as a foundation of meaning. Gregg D. Caruso and Owen J. Flanagan, *Neuroexistentialism: Meaning, Morals, and Purpose in the Age of Neuroscience* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2018).

²⁴⁹ Clay Routledge, “Suicides Have Increased. Is This an Existential Crisis?,” *The New York Times* (The New York Times, June 23, 2018), <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/23/opinion/sunday/suicide-rate-existential-crisis.html>.

2.2.5 Re-Developing Existentialism

David Mitchell

In David Mitchell's book, *Sartre, Nietzsche and Non-Humanist Existentialism* an exploration to the notion that existentialism has become a sort of historical place holder, a way of categorizing certain figures and themes for the benefit of textbooks and historians is given.²⁵⁰ Mitchell argues that this view is due to the common conflation of two related but distinct philosophical commitments.

The first is what he calls a "return to the human." This is the idea that philosophy has lost touch with an essential goal of allowing human beings to comprehend their own existence.²⁵¹ This, alongside a related conception of philosophy as something lived and a general theory of the human, is constitutive of a radical mode of existentialism. The second commitment is to a humanist idea of the subject. For Mitchell this involves the independent and present notion of subjectivity criticized by Heidegger in his *Letter on Humanism*.²⁵²

Two central points are made of this. Firstly, the root of existentialism's dismissal lies in the conflation of these commitments. It is seen as outmoded because a return to the human is held synonymous with a naïve humanist view of the subject. The second point challenges this association, arguing that it is possible to have a return to human existence which is none humanist.²⁵³

²⁵⁰ David Mitchell, *Sartre, Nietzsche and Non-Humanist Existentialism* (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020), 2.

²⁵¹ Ibid.

²⁵² Ibid, 3.

²⁵³ Ibid.

Mitchell's arguments are made through an exploration of the concept of perversity in Sartre and Nietzsche. Mitchell argues that understanding the human as a perversion of something other than itself allows us to have a philosophy of the human without the humanist subject.²⁵⁴ In short, through perversion, the human can be talked about as not merely having a relation to the world, but of being that relation. With a primary defense of Sartre against the charge of humanism, accompanied by a reinterpretation of Nietzsche, Mitchell creates an existentialism that is both radical to freedom and philosophically relevant with the release of humanism.²⁵⁵

Colin Wilson

“He was Britain's first, and so far, last, homegrown existentialist star.”²⁵⁶ He was known for his book *The Outsider* that was published in 1956. It contained elements of human highs and lows that would continue to be the focus of thought and evolve to form his own philosophy that he called the *new existentialism*.

His book titled *Introduction To The New Existentialism* was originally published in 1966, yet after thirty years, it has been published again in 2019. *Super Consciousness: The Quest for the Peak Experiences* was published in 2009 and is a further culmination of his philosophical findings, his new existentialism, over the last forty years. His philosophical concepts would take shape in several books, spanning a wide variety of genre. He wrote mystery novels, books on the occult, religion, and psychology leading up to his death in 2013.

²⁵⁴ Ibid.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

²⁵⁶ Vaughan Rapatahana, “Colin Wilson (1931-2013),” *Philosophy Now: a magazine of ideas* (Philosophy Now, 2014), https://philosophynow.org/issues/101/Colin_Wilson_1931-2013.

Concerned with the atmosphere of doom that surrounds existential texts, Colin Wilson has written several books that have developed into something he calls the New Existentialism.²⁵⁷ Wilson has taken repute to the concept of meaninglessness that is found in the existential writing of Sartre and Camus. He finds the theme of meaninglessness to be pessimistic and ultimately untrue. His new existentialism has sought to refute meaninglessness by weaving concepts of Husserl's intentionality, Abraham Maslow's peak experiences, and Friedrich Nietzsche concept of the *Übermensch*. He arrives at what he calls a positive existentialism, therefore new. It makes a science of happiness and fulfillment.

Wilson believes this new conceptualization of existentialism based on the positive a necessary task. Ultimately, existentialism is necessary in a post-religious world,²⁵⁸ but has been unable to develop on behalf of the way Sartre had left it. As he writes: "This new form of existentialism, avoids the *cul de sac*, it rejects Sartre's notions of man's contingency, its bias is distinctly optimistic. And its atmosphere is different from that of the "old existentialism."²⁵⁹

This atmosphere of the old existentialism, which he faults Soren Kierkegaard and Jean-Paul Sartre for its pessimistic form, cannot advance or retreat. It has inherent pessimism that stunts its growth. The stunt of growth appears in the form of what he calls life-failure. Because pessimism has been made inherent in the thought of society, namely by Kierkegaard and Sartre, it has become normal to be, in essence, miserable. Feeling bored and meaningless is an accepted normality of existence. This acceptance of boredom and meaningless is Wilson's concept of life-failure. It is caused by the inherent existential claim that the human being is contingent.²⁶⁰

²⁵⁷ Colin Wilson, *The New Existentialism* (London: Wildwood House, 1980), 11.

²⁵⁸ *Ibid*, 3.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 14.

²⁶⁰ Biago Tassone, "Existentialism and Ecstasy: Colin Wilson on the Phenomenology of Peak Experiences," *PhænEx* 13, no. 1 (2019): 46-85, 47.

Wilson claims that people will take deflated moods for granted and may start to accept them at face value, as indicative of a deeper and more basic truth about the human condition. In doing so, they are led to erroneously accept the inevitable moments of low vitality (characterized by boredom, outer directedness and loss of purpose) as representing the ‘truth’ about the human condition.²⁶¹ A consequence of the acceptance of the Kierkegaard-Sartre take on the human condition is to accept the loss of connection to deeper sources of value and meaning as normal. Eventually, nothing seems worth doing and people become, in Wilson’s words, “like grandfather clocks, powered by watch springs.”²⁶² Meaninglessness as fate, is the failure of existentialism.

Instead of following Sartre, Wilson’s thought placed a special emphasis on what Abraham Maslow called the peak experience. The term peak experience is a generalization for the best moments of the human being, for the happiest moments of life, for experiences of ecstasy, rapture, bliss, of the greatest joy.²⁶³ Peak experiences proved for Wilson to be a denial of contingency. If life is meaningless and human fate is contingent then what about those moments when one has a full sense of purpose and meaning? How can life be a baseline of uncertainty when one also experiences perfect certainty?

Peak experience is a denial of contingency. For Wilson, it is evidence that life is not an accident. It instead shows that the Kierkegaard-Sartre form of existentialism, the *old existentialism*, is an underestimation of human potential and capability.²⁶⁴ Further, according to Wilson, Husserl’s insight that consciousness and perception are intentional was neglected by earlier existentialists, and also frequently misunderstood by almost all modern thinkers and

²⁶¹ Ibid, 50.

²⁶² Colin Wilson, “The Problem of Life-Devaluation,” *Transition 17* (1964): 24-27, 26.

²⁶³ Abraham Maslow, *The Farther Reaches Of Human Nature* (New York: Viking Press, 1973), 105.

²⁶⁴ Biago Tassone, “Existentialism and Ecstasy: Colin Wilson on the Phenomenology of Peak Experiences,” *PhænEx 13, no. 1* (2019): 46-85, 47.

scientists. Basically, he concludes the human can intend to not have a mundane and unfulfilled life. In doing so it transcends life-failure and aims to reach fantastic goals.

Wilson's strategy integrates a psychological interpretation of Husserl's theory of intentionality within a broader, and philosophically coherent, phenomenological framework. He pieces it with Maslow's concept of peak experience, and then goes on to identify Friedrich Nietzsche (rather than Kierkegaard-Sartre) as the true founder of the New Existentialism. Nietzsche is placed as the exemplar founder for his concept of the *Übermensch*, a human who reaches towards new levels of greatness and does not settle at mediocrity.

The New Existentialism develops precisely as a philosophical framework for more fully exploring the overcoming of life-failure and attempting to clarify the objective truth about the human condition as revealed through our innate capacity for transcendence. In this way the New Existentialism challenges earlier philosophical assumptions about human nature and reality. The true founder of this new existentialism is Nietzsche. He announced the advent of a new optimism. Nietzsche is responsible for a vital thrusting optimistic counterpunch as said by Wilson. John Shand illuminates this when he states: "If Colin Wilson's philosophy might be said to start with Husserl, it should be noted that it culminates in Nietzsche, the only philosopher in Colin Wilson's view who managed to find a way of overcoming total nihilism and thus could affirmatively be 'yea saying' to life."²⁶⁵

Wilson also favors the romantics in his theory of a new existentialism. This favoring of romantics over Kierkegaard and Sartre's form of existentialism rests again in his denial of the human as contingent. It is more a statement of comparison for something more life-affirming to

²⁶⁵ Colin Wilson and Colin Stanley, *Collected Essays on Philosophers* (Newcastle: Cambridge scholars Publishing, 2016), xiv.

overcome life-failure. The favoring stands out in the publishers note of his 2019 book from Samantha Devin:

Romantics upheld the central importance of man in the cosmos; the existentialists saw man as contingent. Romantics made the infinite mystery that surrounds us the basis of their enquiries and everything they went on to create, and, compelled by its heroic spirit, they viewed this mystery not as an affront but as proof of the existence of the sacred and of God; existentialists renounced imagination and its creative power and sought refuge in the narrow limitations of daily life with all its many trifles, thereby losing sight of the majestic and with it the idea of God and transcendence. Romantics aspired to change the world and looked to the future; existentialists thought nothing was worth the effort, that the world was finished, empty of all meaning.²⁶⁶

According to Wilson, once we see that heightened levels of concentration can expand the narrowness of consciousness as we find it in mundane experience, we will be on the way to achieving more evolved levels of consciousness perhaps permanently manifesting peak experiences. In this way, Wilson has attempted to correct the life-failure that he theorizes exists and rests at the hands of the Kierkegaard-Sartre form of existentialism he labels as the old existentialism. By throwing a positive and empowering bend on existentialism, favoring a Nietzschean lens prompted and mixed with Husserl's intentionality and Maslow's peak experience, Wilson believes he has made a new ideology that explains how to live well and not defeated, the ultimate task of the philosopher and philosophy.²⁶⁷

²⁶⁶ Samantha Devin, "The New Existentialism by Colin Wilson," Aristeia Press, May 25, 2019, <https://www.aristeia-press.com/the-new-existentialism-colin-wilson-the-outsider/>.

²⁶⁷ Vaughan Rapatahana, "Colin Wilson (1931-2013)," *Philosophy Now: A Magazine of Ideas* (Philosophy Now, 2014), https://philosophynow.org/issues/101/Colin_Wilson_1931-2013.

Leah Kalmanson

Kalmanson wrote *Cross-Cultural Existentialism: On the Meaning of Life in Asian and Western Thought*. In this book published in 2020, Kalmanson notices that not until existentialism did philosophy return to its place as a practical and lived way of life and of seeing the world. However, in the west, there still existed no practical strategy for existential re-habitation.²⁶⁸

The author notes a problematic theoretical move that has begun creeping up in existentialism concerning the inner world and dualism and the meaning of life. She exercises her research into eastern Asia where the study of the subjective inner life is rich and also includes an abundance of practical strategies that may help provide a new understanding or insight to the problematic theories of dualism and the meaning of life.²⁶⁹ For example, meditation is a practical technique for mental cultivation, self-transformation, and existential realization.²⁷⁰

In these practices there is a microcosm-macrocosm model in the relations between the human and their environment.²⁷¹ It assumes that fundamental structures are isomorphic across a myriad of phenomena. It finds transformation at one level can reverberate throughout the entire connection. This sort of model reframes the distinction between the inner and outer world as known in western thought like empiricism and materialism. It also challenges the assumptions of a dividing line between the natural and super-natural.

This creates a line that challenges what western existentialism counts as reasonable or plausible to answer the question of the meaning of life. Basically, the practices available in

²⁶⁸ Leah Kalmanson, *Cross-Cultural Existentialism: on the Meaning of Life in Asian and Western Thought* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021).

²⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 2.

²⁷⁰ *Ibid*.

²⁷¹ *Ibid*, 2.

cross-cultural modes of existential philosophy that are from the east and not the west, offer a means of exploring the subjective interior life in its relation to the external and this exploration provides an experience that can push the boundaries of western speculation, on matters like dualism that some existentialist might suggest exists, where it has failed to push itself without a practice.²⁷²

Engaging in existential discourse beyond the European tradition, this book turns to Asian philosophies to reassess vital questions of life's purpose, death's imminence, and our capacity for living meaningfully in conditions of uncertainty. This cross-cultural study seeks concrete techniques for existential practice via the philosophies of East Asia.²⁷³

Ultimately, in *Cross-Cultural Existentialism* Kalmanson wants philosophy to be something that allows people to enact meaningful social change. Her book “is implicitly political, with numerous references to activist movements that have taken inspiration from East Asian philosophy.”²⁷⁴ She wants to ensure that existential philosophy can be extended to make the world at large a better place.²⁷⁵ She understands that existentialism was once used as a way to move the world, but now has concerns that it has become merely an intellectual activity for ivory tower academics. The philosopher is not out in the streets, but hidden from life itself in a classroom.

The blurring of lines between the personal and universal (through eastern philosophies and techniques) offers an alternative approach to much of western philosophy. What Kalmanson

²⁷² Ibid, 5.

²⁷³ She uses the term speculative existentialism as a way to describe using eastern philosophy and technique to ground existential terminology such as anxiety, etc. Ibid, 6.

²⁷⁴ Rita Kimijima-Dennemeyer, “Philosophy as a Guide through Uncertainty: A Review of Leah Kalmanson's *Cross-Cultural Existentialism*,” *Oxford Public Philosophy*, American Philosophical Association, January 7, 2022, <https://www.oxfordpublicphilosophy.com/blog/cross-cultural-existentialism>.

²⁷⁵ Ibid.

tells us is that if philosophy is, as its etymology suggests, a love of wisdom, then perhaps we ought to use that wisdom to enact meaningful change in the world. She calls for philosophy to be a public activity again and not something of the sort where philosophers are hidden in the ivory tower, as she believes them to be now.²⁷⁶

Rather than asking the reader to argue with her on the appropriateness of the connections she draws between western existentialist and Buddhist, Ruist, and Daoist concepts, or the accuracy of the definitions she provides, Kalmanson invites us to engage in philosophy as a source of inspiration for transforming the world.²⁷⁷ She replaces “authenticity and freedom with a qi-based philosophy that explains inner experience in terms of turbid and calm mental energies, which are not categorically differentiated from bodily forms and physical matter in general.”²⁷⁸

Jonathan Webber

Jonathan Webber's *Rethinking Existentialism* is a valuable contribution to scholarship on existentialism. Webber proposes to refine the notion of existentialism down to a substantive ethical theory, grounded in the imperative of authenticity. Webber argues that existentialism proper ought to be identified with the position defined by Sartre and De Beauvoir during the existentialist offensive of the mid-1940s. Canonical existentialism, for Webber, is not Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*, but is Sartre's reformed thinking that adheres to Simone de Beauvoir's thought of sedimentation over radical freedom.

²⁷⁶ Ibid.

²⁷⁷ Ibid.

²⁷⁸ Leah Kalmanson, *Cross-Cultural Existentialism: on the Meaning of Life in Asian and Western Thought* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021), 16.

Webber's version of existence precedes essence fits the looks of Beauvoir's *The Second Sex*, Fanon's *Black Skin*, and Sartre's *Saint Genet*.²⁷⁹ Webber makes an ethical theory of the structure of human existence that is two-fold. One dimension is the psychoanalytic theory that "some forms of distress can be traced to the mistaken idea that people have fixed personalities, an idea that can become sedimented as a part of the project of valuing oneself as having some particular fixed nature."²⁸⁰ Individual's must recognize that existence precedes essence and overcome false ideas of self as fixed.

The second dimension is a moral requirement that follows this structure of freedom to human existence. Humans are obliged, as phrased by De Beauvoir, to value the innate freedom of self and others, generally. If Webber's twofold ethical theory is correct then there is value in the ethic of authenticity as it has therapeutic value.²⁸¹ Authenticity is marked as a necessary virtue in Webber's rethinking of existentialism due to its role in well-being, atop its function as a moral requirement.

This two-fold forms Webber's canonical version of existentialism. For anything to be classified as existentialism it must meet the requirements of acknowledging existence precedes essence, followed by the virtue of authenticity. This renewed understanding of existentialism can contribute to the fields of moral philosophy, empirical psychology, psychotherapy, and literary criticism through analysis that would, reciprocally, test and develop this existentialism.²⁸²

For Webber, there is room to explore the fields of social conditioning in regard to De Beauvoir's sedimentation that speaks to social pressure to conform. Further, how social

²⁷⁹ Jonathan Webber, *Rethinking Existentialism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020), 188.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

²⁸¹ Ibid.

²⁸² Ibid, 189.

conditioning effects character development or transformation with regard to sedimentation. Empirical social psychology and psychoanalysis can then engage in explorations into the distress and anxiety that result of sedimented values verses the freedom that is innate in human existence.

Existentialism can evolve further through these questions by critical engagement with the empirical study of the mind. Stereotypes and implicit bias closely resemble the concept of sedimentation found in Webber's canonical claim of existentialism. It can offer an integrative perspective developed from its existing conceptualizations of the mind through revisions required for accommodating more recent robust empirical findings.²⁸³

2.2.6 Developments In Performance Arts

Steve Dixon

Steve Dixon is president of Lassalle college of the arts in Singapore, one of Asia's leading art institutions. He is co-founder and advisory editor of *The International Journal of Performance Arts and Digital Media*.

In 2019, Steve Dixon wrote *Cybernetic-Existentialism: Freedom, Systems, And Being-For-Others in Contemporary Arts and Performance*. It argues that fusing perspectives from existentialism with insights from the "universal science" of cybernetic provides a new analytical lens and deconstructive methodology to critique art.

Dixon reveals how a range of artistic works reveal the work of existentialist philosophers like Kierkegaard, Camus, De Beauvoir, and Sartre on freedom, being and nothingness, eternal

²⁸³ Ibid, 195.

recurrence, the absurd, and being-for-others. At the same time, these artworks explore a complexity of concepts proposed by cyberneticians such as Wiener, Shannon, Bateson on information theory and “noise,” feedback loops, circularity, adaptive ecosystems, autopoiesis, and emergence. Dixon argues that fusing knowledge and insight from these two fields can throw new light on pressing issues within contemporary arts and culture, including authenticity, angst and alienation, homeostasis, radical politics, and the human as a system.

2.3 Discussion

The above researchers provide an observation to the way existentialism is being used in current research. Overall, it is observed for use in two ways: as an analysis that helps to develop a new theory, or, as a topic that needs to be re-developed. The subheadings depicted which categorization the researcher fell into in their use of existentialism: new development or redevelopment.

While existentialism has been used by many 21st century thinkers for a variety of purposes, many revolve around an attempt to redevelop existentialism away from the conclusions in Sartre’s initial work in *Being and Nothingness*. Others attempt to make existentialism relevant again by redeveloping it, in a corrective light, from what they think holds the public back from embracing it present day. Others, rather than trying to redevelop it, have used its analysis to understand a how people operate inside a different field of study, such as spirituality and religion.

Some find the fundamental themes of existentialism are packed into art and performance, and use this observation to develop new ways of critiquing performance arts. Others use Sartre’s

ontology of *Being and Nothingness* to develop a new anthropology and understand more fully other areas, like virtual reality, in relation to human nature. Existentialism has been used to better the world of medicine and medical care by reminding practitioners that the meaning of an illness creates an experience for the patient.

While Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* concludes an analysis of the human as radically free, this analysis of the nature of consciousness does not deserve to be ixnayed because it doesn't make sense with De Beauvoir's concept of sedimentation, as with Webber. Sartre's analysis of the nature of human consciousness is a compilation of descriptives of consciousness as analyzed in relation to the world. De Beauvoir may argue against the findings of this analysis, but a theory of sedimentation is not a case for writing off Sartre's analysis of radical freedom. Webber may favor De Beauvoir's theory, but this is no cause to rearrange someone's work to mirror it. How radical freedom operates within a theory of sedimentation may not be well understood, but the inner freedom of consciousness is just what Sartre's analysis produced. It doesn't get to not exist because of De Beauvoir's concept of thought habits.

Closely associated with attempts to redefine existentialism to make it fit into other existing concepts, are those that seek to redefine existentialism in order to make it relevant to the masses. I think the aim to redefine something in order to make it appear valuable to the public is an empty endeavor. Existentialism is approached by these types as if it is a dead philosophy that needs to be brought back to life.

However, could it be that existentialism is so relevant, and that it has blended into so many different facets of work and everyday life, that existentialism itself is more common sense and common place than it ever has been or is given credit for? It can be that it is not something that needs to be brought back to life for the public to adore and swoon, because its concepts and

themes never went away. On the contrary, they seeped into and live among everything in ordinary life, and are now taken on as common sense and the general aim of majority of western life.

For the most part, around every corner, a person will have friends, family, social media, politics, children's movies, psychologist, podcasts, wellness coaches, novels, and biographies, that are filled with the ever pressing and loud message that you are free, you are a choice maker, and you are responsible to those choices that you make, so please be authentic for the sake of your own well-being. You are the way, and it is important to be authentically you.

There is not a Disney movie that you will play for a child present day that will not take you down a storyline only to emphasize the importance of living an authentic life, and the responsibility one owes to oneself, to live their own life. The storyline is never ending of the girl, or boy, or animal, that is different and this difference is frowned upon by their tribe, initially. But, when they choose themselves and their uniqueness, despite the negativity of their friends and family, they thrive, the tribe thrives, and everything around them thrives as well. Be it by watching Mulan, Frozen, or Encanto, at this day and age, choosing yourself is the ethic of the times that we believe will profit the community and the individual, towards well-being.

There is not a wellness coach or a psychologist that will not try to awaken the client to their inner freedom, and their power of choice, in order to live with authenticity towards this well-being. The tenants of existentialism aren't a creative, philosophical, theoretical epiphany of a few ancient academics anymore. It isn't something that Sartre once said in some café in Paris; it is the mainstay of everyday life, and more so, we have accepted as fact the fundamental existential realities from the 20th century. Present day, existentialism is in the fibers of everything, from the psychologist office to children's movies.

As a further observation, channelers and mediums are becoming ever more popular to the general public, relaying messages from the ether, spirit, or whatever you may like to label it. Majority of those messages simply echo the existential realities of freedom, choice, and responsibility to the creative power that freedom holds. Just to name a handful of channelers and mediums that are extraordinarily popular in America and have several books of channeled teachings on the market: Paul Selig, Courtney Amundson, Sara Landon, Suzanne Giesemann, Lee Harris, Erin Werley, and Esther Hicks.²⁸⁴

Authenticity, in a very existential way, is the ever-given cosmic message by these mystical public figures. Existentialism is imposed again and again through their messages found in their books and their speaking engagements given to the public. The existential elements found in children's movies and the psychologist office present themselves to the public. The same mainstays present themselves, in realizing you are free, realizing you have the power of choice, and you are responsible to those choices, and that the authentic you is something necessary for the well-being of self and others.

Existentialism has expanded and is continuing to seep out of the cracks of ordinary public life. It is possible that existentialism is of tiny concern in the world of academic philosophy, and that it has remained a black sheep inside that tiny slice of acadamia, or the disconnected ivory towers, as it is referred to. However, in the realm of personal and public life, it is a highest reality and something that needs to be shared and repeated at large, in every area of communication.

²⁸⁴ Paul Selig, *The Book of Freedom: A Channeled Text* (New York: TarcherPerigee Book, 2018); Suzanne Giesemann, *Still Right Here: a True Story of Healing and Hope* (United States: One Mind Books, 2017); Courtney Amundson, *Teachings from God: Greeting Your Soul and Revealing the Divine Within* (2015); Erin Werley, *One Truth, One Law: I Am, I Create* (Hammond, IN: MadLeo Publishing, 2020); Lee Harris, *Energy Speaks: Messages from Spirit on Living, Loving, and Awakening* (New World Library, 2019); Abraham, Esther Hicks, and Jerry Hicks, *The Astonishing Power of Emotions: Let Your Feelings Be Your Guide* (Carlsbad, CA: Hay House, Inc., 2020).

If anything has changed, between Sartre's time and now, it is that there is now no way to pretend you don't know you have a personal responsibility for your use of freedom and in supporting your own authenticity. We are zeroed in more than ever before on addressing and preventing "bad faith" in our 21st century lives. Existentialism did not lose its relevancy; its realities have just embedded themselves in everything. You don't hear it coming from Sartre anymore, rather, you hear it from everything and everyone...other than the 20th century philosopher. Existentialism doesn't come from the ivory tower anymore, Encanto will teach you instead.

In redeveloping existentialism, concerning the work of Colin Wilson, it is agreeable that it is best for one's well-being, in general, to focus on the more so empowering concepts and thoughts offered in existentialism. This best practice is concluded by my own research, within the work of Carl Rogers, that would provide observable evidence that a self-empowered person experiences a sense of well-being. However, Colin Wilson sought to redevelop existentialism based upon his interpretation of it as dark. In understanding existentialism, while it can explore the painful and often referenced as "dark" side of life, it does so only to always find an empowering reality, the light of the human being, on the other side of the darkness.

As far as the existential message can be observed through Sartre, it is a personally empowering philosophy, allowing even the darkness to expose the presence of the human light, so to speak. It is not as dark and dim as Wilson might have perceived it, and then attempted to correct it. Wilson believed that there was a science of sorts to happiness and fulfillment. He believed empowerment was the path to that happiness and fulfillment. Self-empowerment, as it sits under the umbrella of acknowledging self-worth, is the gateway, as made visible through Carl Rogers' clinical observations to the experience of a good life. Wilson is not wrong in his

observation of happiness, but there may have been a little misunderstanding of existentialism as a focus on darkness and lacking empowerment.

Rather than attempting to redevelop existentialism, the work of Catalano and what has occurred in the field of neuroexistentialism has taken Sartre's analysis of consciousness and built something new with it. The body as the bond between the external material world and individual consciousness, for Catalano was built on the conclusions of existential analysis on consciousness. Catalano doesn't seek to redevelop existentialism, but develop a new anthropology with it.

The same goes for the field of neuroexistentialism. It does not seek to redevelop existentialism but instead found existential themes to be the centerpiece and enabler of its own research into the study of understanding spirituality and religion. In turn, religion and spirituality are found as the centerpiece and enabler for existentialism. Rather than redevelop, existentialism is used to develop new understandings.

Kevin Aho, while influenced by Heidegger, promotes well Sartre's existential realities of the human being as one who is endlessly making meaning, about everything, with no off switch. It is the meaning he or she chooses about circumstances that create an experience that is pleasant or not so pleasant. The human's own thought creates the experience it has. Through his study of Heidegger, Aho has brought an awareness of this existential reality to the medical field. In merging existentialism with medical practice, he seeks to make aware to doctors the type of meaning that they offer to patient as they are diagnosed. A doctor can help shape the meaning of an illness or health event, and in turn, help shape the inner experience of the patient as they confront the event.

Outside the concept of meaning alongside diagnosis, Aho has given several lectures alongside doctors (many available on YouTube for immediate view) that argue against pharmaceutical companies and speak to a more holistic approach to depression and anxiety. Existentialism, for Aho when wrapped inside the medical field and discussion of illness developed into new insight about the necessity of a holistic approach to aid in the reduction of depression and anxiety.

I am particularly warm to the developments of O'Shiel's work, as it associates the goodness and freedom felt during play with the purposed disassociation to the facts and demands of the world. It highlights the observable and experiential phenomena of well-being that accompanies the individual when they stop choosing to focus on themselves as the intersection of roles and expectations. Play becomes an experience where well-being is felt as it allows the individual to embody their natural state of freedom, and let go of the definitions they confine themselves to.

It also infers that what is natural to the human, will also feel pleasant and cultivates a sense of well-being, because of it. It signals the sort of inner compass that Rogers observed that speaks to each individual, moment to moment. Though O'Shiel's work deals with virtual reality, the concepts do intersect with my own thinking in that the nature of consciousness is freedom, and a visceral experience (negative or positive) is connected to the rejection or acceptance of that freedom.

In the works of Dixon, he did not redevelop existentialism, but happened to come across its themes in the arena of art and performance. He creatively utilized existentialism alongside cybernetics to develop a new way of critiquing art. This sort of innovation towards a method of

critique is creative and merging it with cybernetics is a show of fluidity, modernity, and the ability of existentialism to work alongside numerous fields and towards a variety of goals.

Kalmanson takes notice that existentialism is about the interior life of the human being and pairs it to eastern practices. She challenges dualism by utilizing the human being's interior relationship to its exterior perceived world through eastern practices and philosophy. In doing so, she awakens people to existential concepts that exists beyond Europe, and illuminates concrete techniques via the philosophies of East Asia. With this, she redevelops existentialism her way to promote an ultimate cause of philosophy in the public life that aims towards doing something constructive with society. The way she engages with existential terms and adjusts existentialism with eastern philosophy is questionable,²⁸⁵ but she explicitly is looking to inspire people in a creative way by merging eastern and western philosophy.

This allows existential thinking to deepen through practicality in order to sort out various claims of duality that have emerged, once again, in western thought. I think it is creative, and it makes sense to be of use given existentialism's findings on the primacy of interiority in relation to the eternal world. It recreates existential ideas and concepts according to eastern concept of qi for her end of political change.²⁸⁶

Mitchell's work is another encounter of trying to redevelop how existentialism is understood in order for it to be packaged into something more acceptable to the public. My objection to this attempt is the same as with other attempts to redevelop existentialism: it is unnecessary because existentialism is thriving in public life, there is nothing to resuscitate.

²⁸⁵ Rita Kimijima-Dennemeyer, "Philosophy as a Guide through Uncertainty: A Review of Leah Kalmanson's Cross-Cultural Existentialism," Oxford Public Philosophy, American Philosophical Association, January 7, 2022, <https://www.oxfordpublicphilosophy.com/blog/cross-cultural-existentialism>.

²⁸⁶ Ibid.

Secondly, outside of academia, nobody knows what the term humanism is, so humanism isn't the intense barrier that hinders acceptance in the public sphere. Existentialism's voice has evolved beyond Sartre and is now communicated through new sources like a Disney movie, a motivational speaker, a visit to the psychologist, etc. Just because it isn't a philosopher talking, doesn't mean existentialism isn't being taught.

2.4 Existentialism's Use In this Dissertation

Generally, existentialism and its descriptives of the nature of consciousness, that originate within *Being and Nothingness*, have been utilized as a bridge to creating a new theory of some sort or as something that needs to be redeveloped. The role of existentialism, in this thesis, is not utilized to suggest a new theory, but to analyze Tillich's theory in order to verify if any evidence can be found to support his theory or not. Existentialism's observations are used to verify or null out, the reality of Tillich's theory.

By turning to Sartre's analysis of what consciousness, in a body, in this world and among other people that it can perceive, can universally know about itself, and how it gets to that knowing of self, a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence is made possible. Within the verification process of Sartre's analysis, the ability to illuminate the manner that Spiritual Presence guides humanity to true Essence, can be revealed.

Further, because the tone taken here is of analysis, rather than developing theories about what it might mean that the human being is innately free, I have instead observed through Rogers' clinical studies how innate freedom is best used. It is not that the human being is innately free and that it would be really cute if we used it to make choices that support a sense of

self-respect; rather, the observation is, when you use your freedom to support self-worth, a sense of well-being grows. It is not that I simply wish or theorize that subjectivity was a catalyst for recognizing self-worth; rather, it can be observed by Rogers that subjectivity plays the role of providing a vehicle by which people have something unique to take a stand for, to express innate worth over.

What occurs regarding the use of existentialism in this thesis is the analysis made by Sartre in *Being and Nothingness* concerning the nature of human consciousness becomes paired with the analysis and clinical observations of Rogers as to freedom's use. What is revealed is a fuller story of human freedom and worth. What becomes available through the observation of the human being is the necessity and function of the two towards universal revelation of their innateness in each human, as its true Essence. When this essence is embodied by the knowledge of one's freedom coupling with choices and decisions that reflect and promote the unique subjective worthiness of the individual, well-being within and without expands.

The implication of implementing a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, illuminating the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence, is the awareness of a bottom line. Regardless of belief in God, a lack thereof, or any point of thinking in-between, if a person wants to have a sense of well-being in their life (harmony, peace, joy, self-trust, etc.), and if the collective whole of humanity wants to experience a world more harmonious within its own diversity, each person must expand in the use of their freedom to support and reflect their own innate self-worth. The path to well-being is by the individual embodiment of more of what you're made of: freedom and worth through choices.

Because existentialism is used as analysis in this dissertation, and analysis is not used as the springboard for an extended creative thought, the conclusions are more than theory or imagination, they have become verifiable. It verifies itself through decades of clinical observations and the analytical descriptions to support it from the works of Rogers and Sartre. Analytical observation of Sartre pairs with the further observations of Rogers to make visible Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Existentialism, in this dissertation, isn't used as a springboard for imaginative *what if* thinking, it doesn't argue for or against certain elements of *Being and Nothingness*, nor does it seek to reconfigure or correct an element of existentialism to make it popular in the public eye. Instead, it is used to verify through observation Tillich's theory of Spiritual Presence and observe what the process is that Spiritual Presence takes to guide humanity to true essence.

Existentialism is used as a point of verification, through observation, in order to state what *is* and *how* it is, rather than utilizing it to create a theory or an argument. It intends to find the genuineness of Tillich's statements from within the framework he has given to Spiritual Presence. This sets it apart from the way that existentialism is being used in the works of today's contemporary thinkers within 21st century research involving existentialism.

Chapter Three

The Existential Roots of Inner Guidance

Towards Articulating Tillich's Spiritual Presence in Essentialization

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will shape the reader's understanding of what existentialism is and its evolution up to Jean-Paul Sartre. This is necessary for two reasons. First, the problems that this thesis seeks to resolve within Paul Tillich's work were created by existentialism's heavy influence in modern society. Second, the work used to resolve these problems rests inside Sartre's existentialism and the existentially principled psychology of Carl Rogers.²⁸⁷

To understand the limitations of Paul Tillich's theology as they are in response to the popular rise of existentialism, and to understand the value of Sartre and Rogers in solving those limitations, knowledge of existentialism's roots and the evolving observation of human nature from those roots is essential. A basic preliminary comprehension takes place in this chapter as a primer to the bigger task of this thesis: to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

The bigger task of this dissertation is to utilize existential analysis to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence. Various indicators of what human Essence consists seem to be illuminated by

²⁸⁷ George Boeree, "General Psychology," Individual, Existential, and Humanistic Psychology, Shippensburg University, 2003, <http://webpace.ship.edu/cgboer/genpsyhumanists.html>.

analysis that has taken place beginning with the forefathers, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche.

Indicators of what Tillich's Spiritual Presence would guide us to acknowledge and the manner in which it guides human beings to Essence, are perhaps indicated early on, within the roots of existentialism and its development.

Further, indicators of what this guidance is guiding the human being to embody, parallel to Tillich's concept of true Essence, is perhaps illuminated early on with the forefathers, and later developed in a richer tone of examination through Sartre and Rogers. As Vernon Bullock wrote in his critical examination of Tillich's Spiritual Presence: "If the power of being in God and man are continuous, then it would seem to follow that between the divine Spirit and the human spirit there is some point of identity, or perhaps even that the human spirit is the finite aspect of the divine Spirit in which it participates."²⁸⁸

This point of identity takes an initial shape within existentialism's developmental roots by building a picture of human beings that are free, creative, and solely responsible for their creative freedom. Page one-hundred and fourteen of this chapter will state Thomas Flynn's understanding of the main themes of existential writing. Those themes revolve around humans as free, creative and responsible, among others.

While the forefathers articulate such traits, under much more analysis and scrutiny, these writings get reaffirmed by Rogers and Sartre. One in a clinical setting, and the other, through an intense analysis of consciousness in relation to the world. By simply watching how

²⁸⁸ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971).

existentialism unfolded from its roots, Tillich's aspect of an inner guidance seems to emerge in visible way and is not such a hidden mystery that must left to the form of symbol.

3.2 What is Existentialism?

The term *existentialism* originated with the philosopher and playwright Gabriel Marcel in the early 1940s. Marcel developed the title to apply to the thought of his friends Jean-Paul Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir. Marcel had in mind the German philosopher Karl Jaspers' idea of *Existenzphilosophie* (meaning philosophy of existence in the English translation), as well as Martin Heidegger's idea that when it comes to the kinds of beings we are, our essence lies in our existence.²⁸⁹ Simone de Beauvoir wrote:

During a discussion organized during the summer [of 1945]...Sartre had refused to allow Gabriel Marcel to apply this adjective to him. 'My philosophy is a philosophy of existence; I don't even know what Existentialism is.' I shared his irritation. I had written my novel [The Blood of Others] before I had even encountered the term Existentialism; my inspiration came from my own experience, not from a system. But our protests were in vain. In the end, we took the epithet that everyone used for us and used it for our own purposes.²⁹⁰

Numerable twentieth-century philosophers have warned about the great difficulty, if not impossibility of an attempt to define existentialism. This difficulty is perhaps true, because as Simone de Beauvoir noted, existentialism is inspired of individual experience and is not a system. In effort to provide an informative answer, diverse approaches, strategies, and emphases have been used to construct a definition of what existentialism is. While there emerges no single perspective at which to define it, existentialism has shown itself to be a complex cultural,

²⁸⁹ David Cerbone, *Existentialism: All That Matters* (London: Teach Yourself, 2016), 2.

²⁹⁰ Simone de Beauvoir, *The Force of Circumstance*. (New York: Penguin Books, 1968), 4.

historical and philosophical phenomenon; a complex and dynamic network of distinct yet interrelated philosophical orientations, attitudes, methods, and themes.

The failure to define existentialism has led some to regard it as a movement within philosophy rather than an actual philosophy itself. Rooted in the experience of despair resultant of war, religion, and political tension, existentialism is primarily concerned with questions about the meaning of life triggered by social turmoil. It confronts questions that tend to come to the fore when society has become unglued from its normal day to day anchorage.²⁹¹ It is sometimes seen as a movement, because when social normalcy returns, the urgency to confront the bigger questions of life fades away. Philosopher James Collins speaks to existentialism's transitory nature in view of traditional philosophy when he writes:

They view this movement as a concealed way of salvation rather than as a serious effort at rational analysis. Its fashionableness is understood in the sense of a passing fancy, an esoteric cult, that will have its brief strut on the stage and then pass into oblivion. After the memory of wartime experiences dim, a flood of rational sanity will sweep away this pathological stress on insecurity, sudden death, individual destiny, and risk.²⁹²

The transitory status of existentialism limited its acceptability as a serious philosophy within the academic field. It is more a strand of philosophy that is the black sheep within philosophical family tree. It comes to benefit the individual in those moments when they are shattered and disturbed.

In times when traditional philosophy offers nothing to reshape a frustrated reality, existentialism emerges to step inside the complexity and attempt to restructure it. Analytical philosophy cannot do this, it does not offer what existentialism does from inside this same space.

²⁹¹ Gordon Marino, *The Existentialist's Survival Guide: How to Live Authentically in an Inauthentic Age* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2018), 4.

²⁹² James Collins, *The Existentialists: A Critical Study* (Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1952), 4.

Therefore, it holds a power to it that only need emerge according to certain societal or personal contexts. These contexts of life will come and go. They will be transitory, and that is not a weakness against existentialism, nor analytical philosophy. They both have a place, inside the proper context.

Aside from existentialism being viewed as transitory, existentialism's root in the emotional distress of ordinary life gives it a sense of uncertainty and suspicion as a proper philosophy among other genres. Generally, the philosopher values a rational mental posture in order to arrive at truth. The inclusion of emotions is seen as a distorting influence that the philosopher should desire to be distant from in order to arrive at a dispassionate understanding of things. Yet, existentialism includes emotions considering them a part of the path we walk to understand truth.

This is a vital point when it comes to discovering how Spiritual Presence guides humanity into true Essence, within existence. The totality of the human experience must be considered to examine all the avenues available that guidance might come from, towards Essence, within human existence. Tillich said it is so, so that is where attention must be paid, within the totality of the human experience, without neglect to the emotions.²⁹³ Tillich writes that when the Spirit of God grasps a man, it grasps him in the totality of his being. When it comes to reunion, or essentialization, whenever a person anticipates reunion or experiences it the emotions are involved.²⁹⁴

Existentialism may seem to operate almost inversely to traditional philosophy because it is invested in the totality of the human experience. Human emotions and the ordinary life are

²⁹³ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 144.

²⁹⁴ Ibid.

important inclusions and are not to be pushed away. This inverse method of arriving at truth can be mistaken as a type of revolt against traditional philosophy.²⁹⁵ Rather than being seen as a revolt, existentialism simply differs from the traditional perspective. Existentialism “does recognize that feeling has its place in the total texture of human existence . . . the total content of experience.”²⁹⁶

Feelings are regarded as the product of an individual’s relational engagement with the world it finds itself in. It is connected to existence itself; thus, feelings are a way to reach philosophical truth, existentially.²⁹⁷ They are not antithetical to reason, but a source of insights that can be disengaged and communicated through philosophical reflection.²⁹⁸

Emotions as a part of the totality of the human content is emphasized, because, to neglect any part of the human experience is to then create an abstraction from reality. Abstraction does not appeal to the existential writer who is looking to develop practicality inside present social context. The inclusion of feelings is imperative because feelings must be understood if they are to change the human experience itself. Towards this understanding, feelings, as it concerns existentialism, “ought not be ignored or down-graded just because they cannot be fitted into the logic of mathematics or of empirical science.”²⁹⁹

²⁹⁵ Walter Kaufman, *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre* (New York: World Publishing, 1972), 11.

²⁹⁶ John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 155.

²⁹⁷ Existentialism is invested in the “now” moment to which it writes from. Emotions must be connected, and seated, in existentialism as emotion is a part of the circumstance a population collectively experiences. Emotion rests along the path to some sort of truth from within the circumstance, therefore, it is valuable to the existentialist. It may not be of so much value to the traditional philosopher, who has not set out to find a solution to an ongoing and often tragic human affliction.

²⁹⁸ John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 3.

²⁹⁹ Paton H J, *The Modern Predicament: A Study in the Philosophy of Religion (Muirhead Library of Philosophy) (Volume 57)* (Oxford: Routledge, 2004), 120.

Moving on from the thought of existentialism as a movement or as transitory in character, existential theologian John Macquarrie offered a different perspective. His perspective is that existentialism be understood as a style of philosophizing, more so than a movement.³⁰⁰ Understanding existentialism as a style of philosophy, for Macquarrie, allows for the identification of shared themes that show themselves time and time again within various forms of existential writing.

For example, the shared theme of liberation that the existentialist writer seeks to impart upon the reader is a shared unique theme of the existential style of philosophizing. There is consistently a type of illusion spoken of that the existentialist writer has seen through. They call upon the reader to realize their innate freedom, and to reconfigure the context of their life through this freedom.

This makes existentialism a philosophy founded with a sense of practicality. There is something to do with the knowledge, it is not knowledge for the sake of knowledge. This mainstay of practicality is absent from other forms of philosophy, where the often rational atmosphere of the intellect and mere knowledge, is the endgame. Mary Warnock presents the theme of freedom and the foundation of practicality like so:

Readers of existentialist philosophy are being asked not merely to consider the nature of human freedom, but to experience freedom and to practice it; this is the missionary spirit of existentialism. They want the facts of human freedom to be absorbed and for one's whole view of life to be different. You ought to be in the grip of a mood which actually transforms your way of seeing the world and your place in it. To change its readers, to free them from illusions, to convert them to practical philosophy.³⁰¹

³⁰⁰ John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 16. Philosopher Steven Crowell stated something similar to Macquarrie; he believes that because existentialism is too difficult to define, it is better to understand it as an approach to philosophy. F. C. Copleston, "Existentialism," *Philosophy* 23, no. 84 (1948): 19-37, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0031819100065955>.

³⁰¹ Mary Warnock, *Existentialism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 2.

Philosopher Thomas Flynn expanded on Macquarrie's suggestion of existentialism as a style of philosophy. He went on to identify five themes that are often found within the existential style of writing. The themes are: existence precedes essence, time is of the essence, humanism, freedom, responsibility, and ethical considerations.³⁰² These themes do not provide a definition for existentialism, yet, they depict a family type resemblance among the existentially themed writers.³⁰³

The crisscrossed and overlapping themes allow for existentialists to hold what is often opposing beliefs from one another, and yet, stand under the same umbrella of the genre of existentialism. Flynn considers this umbrella of difference of beliefs within the unity of themes to be something like a family tree.

Below is a brief definition of existential themes offered by Flynn. The intent is to provide a sense of familiarity towards existential thought, and in the same breadth, hold a light understanding of existentialism as a style of philosophizing:

Existence precedes essence: "the subject is the existent in the whole range of his existing. It is the whole spectrum of existence, known directly and concretely in the very act of existing, that existentialism tries to express...In stressing existence, it is also implied that one cannot posit a 'nature' or an 'essence' of man, and then go on to make deductions about him."³⁰⁴ There is not an essence that has made you what you are today.

³⁰² Thomas Flynn, *Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford, 2006), 8.

³⁰³ Ibid.

³⁰⁴ John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 14.

Stated another way, you are the result of your choices and not the result of a preordained blueprint that is followed. Essence is not your destiny; you are what you have made yourself to be; there is no script to follow nor one being followed. With nothing pre-established for the individual, the individual is responsible for creating significance for themselves.³⁰⁵

Time is of the essence: Humans are fundamentally time bound beings. Unlike measurable clock time, lived time is qualitative. There is a not yet, an already, and a present tense to which different meaning and value can be held by the individual.

Humanism: Existentialism is person centered. It begins with the individual first and foremost. It is not anti-science nor anti-religion. Its focus is on the human individual's pursuit of identity and meaning amidst social and economic pressures of mass society for superficiality and conformism.³⁰⁶

Freedom and responsibility: A repercussion of existence precedes essence is that the individual comes to an awareness of his or her utter freedom and in turn utter responsibility to choose meaning for oneself. The human being can step back and reflect on what they have been doing, and has the freedom to choose to do differently at any moment. In the same breath, in comprehending one's ultimate freedom to choose, one further comprehends their ultimate responsibility to enact their freedom in life.

Ethical considerations are paramount: Though each existentialist understands the ethical as well as *freedom* in his or her own way, the underlying concern is to invite us to examine the authenticity of our personal lives and of our society. Though existentialism is known to be an

³⁰⁵ Charles Guignon and Derk Pereboom, *Existentialism: Basic Writings* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2001), 256.

³⁰⁶ Thomas Flynn, *Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford, 2006), 8.

individualistic philosophy, it is individualistic in the notion that modern society desires to pull the individual into conformity and away from individuality.

It is ethical to the individual to pay attention and examine if the individual is being authentic or if they have picked up a herd-like mentality, as Nietzsche would call it. This calls the reader to the dynamic, never static, task of attempting to become who one truly is. This comes with the risk of going against social norms as freedom and responsibility are exercised to stand in self-given meaning. The concept of ethics holds hands with the concept of authenticity throughout this dynamic. To be ethical is to be authentic.

To understand existentialism as a style is to present a unique difference from analytical philosophy. It is to take note of its particular attention paid to the totality of experience. While it is unique in style, approach, and themes when compared to traditional philosophy, it certainly does not oppose the aim of philosophy, as a whole. That aim is the study of the most general and abstract features of the world and categories with which we think: mind, matter, reason, proof, truth, etc.³⁰⁷ Most importantly, with existentialism's attention set to the totality of experience, it is suitable towards the aim of this thesis.

Existentialism is able to provide an analysis of the individual in relation to the world. An analysis of the nature of human consciousness as revealed by its relationship to the world, is the sort of examination that is beneficial in order to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence. Its attention to the totality of the person in relation to the world that would illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

³⁰⁷ Oxford Dictionary.

3.3 The Forefather's Existential Insight Towards Articulating Tillich's Spiritual Presence

The existential themes that have been listed in the section above by Flynn can be understood in greater detail, through the actual writing of the forefathers, that when examined, gives light to it. The themes themselves speak to qualities of the human being that revolve around freedom, choice, responsibility, and the power choice gives the human being to create its own life. To view existentialism's development within its history allows for an appreciation of the unfolding of existential insights, such as freedom and responsibility. Further, it is these themes brought about from existentialism's early writings that allude to a revelation of human nature from its relationship to the world.

It is also at this point that perhaps a sneak peek of the nature of God in man can begin to be pondered. These are of course according to the questions posed by this thesis that investigate such things from the standpoint of Tillich's work on Spiritual Presence. Within the context of Tillich's guiding Spiritual Presence in life itself, the themes of existentialism and the writings of early existentialist, can hold a preliminary articulation of Spiritual Presence towards true Essence, and likewise, a shared point of identity between God and humanity.

The remainder of this chapter will begin a brief survey of the birth of existentialism within the historical developments of society, and the qualities and characteristics of the human being as they emerge through the analysis of the writer and their relationship to the world that they live in. Again, it is these qualities of analysis from within the lived world that begin to shape a preliminary articulation of Tillich's Spiritual Presence towards true Essence, and likewise, a shared point of identity between God and humanity as Spirit and spirit are held in unity within existence.

The themes named by Flynn have become themes because the qualities of the human being are persistent in the analysis of majority of existential writers. Their findings, though unintentional, bare enough similarity and are repetitive enough to form their own category: existentialism.

3.3.1 *The Ethical Element*

In the 19th century, two figures considered the forefathers of existentialism arrive: Soren Kierkegaard and Fredrick Nietzsche.³⁰⁸ Kierkegaard was a philosopher and theologian whose writing dealt with a personal tension between himself and the Christian tradition. Kierkegaard had a disgust with church as an institution and his writings acted as a corrective mechanism to what he viewed as wrong with Christianity. He felt over-intellectualism had reduced Christianity to doctrine and made it “toothless twaddle.”³⁰⁹

In his effort to correct Christianity away from “toothless twaddle” his writing presented themes such as freedom, choice, responsibility, uncertainty, anxiety, death, authenticity, and possibility. These were the first fruits of existentially themed writings. They also contained the existential concept of transcending some type of societal norm, in order to become authentic to oneself, as an ethic.

³⁰⁸ Some would argue that Fyodor Dostoyevsky, born in Moscow in the Russian Empire, is a founder of existentialism. His best-known novels, "Crime and Punishment" and "The Brothers Karamazov," focus on human psychology and existentialism, told in novel format. His life time overlaps with Kierkegaard's, 11th Nov 1821 - 9th Feb 1881, making him an acceptable founding father alongside those listed in this chapter. The novel "Notes from Underground" influenced many later philosophers and is Dostoyevsky's most existential novel. Sartre in particular found inspiration from this novel which later helped to shape his philosophy. "Notes from Underground" is assigned a most prominent place among within Dostoyevsky's works by existentialist critics. Jean-Paul Sartre especially, has found in the Underground Man a forerunner and spokesperson for existential philosophy.

³⁰⁹ Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments, Volume II: (Kierkegaard's Writings, 12)* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), 324.

Kierkegaard advises readers to make decisions as if isolated on an island. This puts the responsibility of how to live with oneself,³¹⁰ and not the beliefs or desires of others. There is a turning away from Kant's perception of absolutes through reason, and also a turning away from the religious absolutes of the church, by conveying that truth is subjective and not objective. He viewed objectivity as an illusion.³¹¹

Kierkegaard engaged biblical narratives through an existential lens to reclaim the concept of faith and truth, subjectively. Specifically, Kierkegaard differentiated religion from faith through the narrative of Isaac and Abraham. Kierkegaard pointed to the immorality of murder, then claimed Abraham demonstrated faith because he acted against social and religious morality in favor of his own conscious with its uncertainty. Faith, for Kierkegaard, was to follow a passionate inwardness; this passionate inwardness is truth.³¹²

Friedrich Nietzsche did not have the same theological tensions to sort out as Kierkegaard, yet dealt with personal suffering. Nietzsche wrote with a vastly secular feel. He was unconcerned with God and faith. Like Kierkegaard, however, he wrote in reaction to the collapse of church and government in the 16th and 17th century and the continued empirical and philosophical drive for absolutes within the 18th centuries through reason.

The most disturbing thing to Nietzsche was rational individuals that agreed the church was no longer a valid source of truth, yet continued to enforce the values and morals of what was believed to be invalid. To Nietzsche, this was not just ridiculous, it was dangerous. The tendency

³¹⁰ Med Ostenfeld, *Soren Kierkegaard's Psychology* (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1981), 25.

³¹¹ Mary Warnock, *Existentialism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 7.

³¹² Søren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript to Philosophical Fragments, Volume II: (Kierkegaard's Writings, 12)* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1992), 182.

for people to follow directives of an institution blindly, is what he called *herd mentality*. He felt it would lead to great travesty if not corrected.

Nietzsche wrote to free people from the illusion of scientific and moral law. He wanted people to see there is no such thing as an absolute objective truth, in science or morality. He thought that distinguishing things into categories of good or bad had nothing to do with objective truth. It was merely an activity that forms parts of other activities. His point in this was that standards are a man-made thing. They are not something to arrive at or to be found outside the individual.

Values are nothing more than interpretations, and an individual is free to interpret as they wish.³¹³ If Nietzsche could show that values are man-made, he could free individuals from the dangerous herd mentality. In revealing that nobody is actually bound to a fixed morality or to fixed values set by reason, institutions, or revelation, the individual would be empowered to question and follow their own morals and values. Nietzsche strongly believed that an individual could change the world, for the better, through a re-examination of belief. In standing out from the herd, great change can be cultivated.

Nietzsche was aware of the disorientation that would occur in a society if the meaning, purpose, and value of life that had been readily accepted, from an outside source, were to collapse.³¹⁴ Prophetically speaking, Nietzsche feared that the discomfort that is found within a

³¹³ Mary Warnock, *Existentialism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 16.

³¹⁴ Nietzsche takes an interesting perspective, unique from Kierkegaard not on account of his secular position, but in his ability to look at history and see that disaster is born of the illusion that an outside source can possess truth. He did not just write to pull an individual into a meaningful existence, but to do so on account that pain and suffering will result if not so; not just for the individual, but for an entire society who choose to give their power away to another. On the flipside of these thoughts is the remark that Nietzsche was not in his right thinking, literally. It is known that Nietzsche suffered from some form of illness, and clear that it impacted his mental attributes. Some of this is prevalent in his writing; it can be said that his writing is not a prophetic reflection born of insightful discovery of human condition and tendency – but is pure nonsense that was coincidental at best. His writing is complicated

loss of meaning would lead Europe to cling to the next widely offered, externally sourced, set of values. He feared herd mentality would continue, instead of the people seeking and living out their own values. He felt that mentality, would lead to great social destruction.

Nietzsche wrote for society not to fear the disorientation that comes in the aftermath of collapsed value systems, but to recognize values as mere interpretations and feel empowered to create their own. Sadly, the rise of the state was taken up as an alternative to the discomfort of the collapse shortly after Nietzsche's death.

Nietzsche's infamous quote, "God is dead.... what water is there to clean ourselves"³¹⁵ is said by some scholars to be a haunting prediction to the destruction that would emerge through herd mentality as the people would follow anyone as remedy to the loss of old values.³¹⁶

Both Kierkegaard and Nietzsche sought to enlighten and free the individual from the shackles of illusion. They sought to make right some type of deceit held among the citizens they shared life with. Both wrote towards an awareness of "inwardness" to the end that each individual by themselves has the power to choose their life, and what to be, because the individual gets to choose what to value.

Philosopher Mary Warnock categorized this call to "inwardness" to reflect what she called the *ethical tradition* of existentialism shared by the two forefathers.³¹⁷ For Warnock, the

and as with all complex thoughts from now dead authors, renders many people to conflicting interpretations. And as told by Nietzsche, interpretation does not equal truth.

³¹⁵ Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* (New York: Vintage, 1974), 181-82. The discomfort and disorientation caused by a loss of meaning, the death of God in this case, would cause, as Nietzsche depicted it, for society to take up of new gods in its place. He warned of turning to socialism, liberalism, utopianism, humanism, nationalism, democracy, pseudo-scientific racism and the anti-Semitism of his former friend Richard Wagner. Troy Southgate, *The Radical Tradition: Philosophy, Metapolitics & the Conservative Revolution* (Manticore Press, 2013).

³¹⁶ Houston Stewart Chamberlain, *Foundations of the Nineteenth Century* (Erscheinungsort nicht ermittelbar: Verlag nicht ermittelbar, 1977).

³¹⁷ Ibid, 3.

ethical tradition does not represent the whole of existentialism, but is one part of two traditions that when placed together, form the elements of modern existentialism. The second tradition, emergent in the phenomenology of Edmond Husserl, was “completely different from, and in many ways diametrically opposed to the ethical tradition.”³¹⁸

3.3.2 The Phenomenological Element

Edmond Husserl (1859 – 1938) was a German philosopher that developed the field of phenomenology. What characterized Husserl’s German phenomenology was an attempt at scientific exactitude in the realm of individual perception. The attempt at intellectual exactitude is what Warnock observed to be seemingly opposed to the subjective inwardness of existentialism’s forefathers, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. However, without the influence of Husserl’s German phenomenology, existentialism would elementally not be what it presently is.

Husserl stated that science could only know the world in a certain way which it had already presupposed, but this was not the way the world is apprehended by individuals. The way an object appears in consciousness has no bearing on the way it is in the world.³¹⁹ It is perception of truth that constructs reality for the individual; the actual reality of an object is obsolete.³²⁰ In holding to scientific determinations about the reality of an object, the truth of the object may be out of reach.

³¹⁸ Ibid.

³¹⁹ Gordon Marino, *The Existentialist's Survival Guide: How to Live Authentically in an Inauthentic Age* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2018), 8.

³²⁰ Mary Warnock, *Existentialism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 28.

Husserl developed the term *bracketing* as his phenomenological method.³²¹ To bracket is to put aside all that is known or assumed about an object, in order to describe and later analyze it as pure phenomena. Husserl stated: “from the beginning and during all further steps, phenomenology does not contain in its scientific statements any assertion about real existence.”³²²

Rather than beginning the investigation with the object, the investigation begins with the experience of an individual subject to an object. Directed attention to the experience of the subject was titled *reflection*.³²³ This reduction to the experience of pure phenomena through bracketing became Husserl’s first phenomenological method.

The goal of reduction through bracketing is to show how the ordinary objective world was dependent upon the perceiving and thinking subject. In other words, the world that exists outside and independent of oneself, is actually constructed by the subjectivity of the individual’s experience of the outside world. Husserl’s phenomenology initiated a type of unravelling at the seams of the constitution of objects; the construction of the world could be dismembered by simply going “back to the things themselves.”³²⁴

Husserl wrote of a deceptive spell that vanished when an individual considered “how little of the appearing object as such is really to be found in the experience of the object.”³²⁵ An illusion of sorts is sorted out through phenomenology; the concepts handed to an individual that

³²¹ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (Eastford, CT: Martino Fine Books, 2017), 31.

³²² Edmund Husserl, *Tijdschrift Voor Philosophie* (Leuven: Hoger instituut voor wijsbegeerte, 1988), 116.

³²³ Edmund Husserl, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology* (Eastford, CT: Martino Fine Books, 2017), 38.

³²⁴ Robert Sokolowski, *Introduction to Phenomenology* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 104.

³²⁵ Edmund Husserl, *Logical Investigations, vol. 2*, (New York: Routledge, 2001), 538.

develop into a view of the world are exposed as just that, concepts. These concepts can be deconstructed, and the individual may experience their own reality of an object.

The preoccupation with much of Husserl's phenomenology was the inquiry into the constitution of objects in the world. Having greatest effect upon modern existentialism was the notion of the experience of the individual and the riddle of the individual placed among other people that emerged later.

There is a type of solipsism³²⁶ that emerged from Husserl's concepts when it is noted that an individual's outside world is dependent upon the individual's subjective experience. If the world is constructed subjectively, how can it be known that other people exist outside an individual's perception of them? This solipsism leads to the question of what then is the purpose of perceived others in the individual's experience of the world?

For Husserl, though his answers were incomplete to such complex questions, rendered that people in the world "exist for us and for others."³²⁷ The theme of Husserl's phenomenology morphed over time from ideas and impressions towards the highly complex question of what it means to be in the world.³²⁸

Husserl's phenomenological method of suspending presupposition, when pointed towards the theme of what it means to be in the world, exposed that presuppositions are perhaps socially determined, at the least, socially tied. An individual's being in the world is understood and

³²⁶ Solipsism is the philosophical idea that only one's own mind is sure to exist. As an epistemological position, solipsism holds that knowledge of anything outside one's own mind is unsure; the external world and other minds cannot be known and might not exist outside of the mind. As a metaphysical position, solipsism goes further to the conclusion that the world and other minds do not exist. View "Philosophical Dictionary: Solipsism" for more.

³²⁷ Wayne Andrew, "The Givenness of Self and Others in Husserl's Transcendental Phenomenology," *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 13, no. 1 (1982): 85-100.

³²⁸ Mary Warnock, *Existentialism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 43.

interpreted by the particular social group the individual exists within; an individual's developed culture in a particular time and place of co-existence builds what is conceptualized as the objective world.

Thus, when Husserl rendered that people in the world exist for us and for others, it is because the construction of an objective world is dependent upon not just one other person, but a group of persons towards which an individual is a member. The act of intersubjectivity establishes cultures, which may be perceived as objectivity to the individual within it. Through his phenomenological method's dismembering character, the illusion of objectivity exposed itself as subjectivity in the context of culture.

Further, Husserl's phenomenological method caught glimpse into the logical framework used by the mind to conceptualize what it means to be an individual in the world, among others. These themes that emerged at the latter end of Husserl's work would carry over to be matured by German philosopher, Martin Heidegger.³²⁹

Martin Heidegger was raised in southwest Germany where he was educated at the University of Freiburg and served as assistant to Edmund Husserl.³³⁰ Heidegger's first important publication was *Sein Und Zeit*, or, *Being and Time* in 1927. At this point in history, World War I had come and gone between the years of 1914 and 1918; World War II would take place a decade later in 1939.

Building upon Husserl's theme of what it means to be an individual in the world among others, Heidegger would engage the broadest and perhaps oldest philosophical questions: What is being? What is the meaning of being? This served as the principal burden in *Being and Time*.

³³⁰ Thomas Flynn, *Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford, 2006), 51.

Heidegger felt, though this question was not new (dating back to Greek antiquity), it no longer gripped humanity as it once did, mainly, as it should grip humanity. He felt the question was too large to gain traction. It lost its ability to perplex humanity with its inability to be engaged.

Heidegger found an entry point to the question of being when he stated that all individuals possessed an understanding of being; the individual themselves, in their own knowing, became the entry point to investigate the question.³³¹ The claim that all beings possessed an understanding of being gave into the commonality that human beings are capable of asking the question of being; likewise, human beings question their own being.

Because the human being can ask the question of being, and question their being, human beings are said to be beings whose own being “is an issue.”³³² The term *Dasein* is used by Heidegger to refer to the above characteristics that underlie the experience of being, particular to human beings.

These characteristics are so common to each human being, that Heidegger felt any individual could pay attention to his or her dealings with other human beings and “bring to completion....that understanding of Being which belongs to *Dasein* and which comes alive in any of its dealings with entities.”³³³

In other words, the characteristics of being are obvious enough that “the essence of *Dasein* lies in its existence.”³³⁴ Human beings simply have to confront personhood, mortality and the dilemma or paradox of living in relationship with other humans, while being ultimately alone

³³¹ David Cerbone, *Existentialism: All That Matters* (London: Teach Yourself, 2016), 48.

³³² Ibid.

³³³ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008), 96.

³³⁴ Ibid, 67.

with oneself. The answers of being are not hidden, humans just don't pay attention to existence.³³⁵

Heidegger would ask the individual to be sensitive to their total engagement in the world: in thought, perception, feeling and action. In doing so, what it meant to be a human being would shine through and shock “readers out of complacent and unthinking ways, out of their unawareness of being.”³³⁶ It is Heidegger's desire that in a gained awareness of being, individuals own up to the type of beings that they are. When individuals own up to their being, individuals can live authentically through self-discovery.³³⁷

Heidegger stated that *Dasein's* way of being involves what he called *being-in-the-world*. What is meant by *being-in-the-world* is to notice that an individual's most basic method to gain self-understanding involved being caught up in broad totalities of tasks, projects, roles, titles, etc.

The individual seeks to know themselves according to the way they relate to the totality of relations and things around them; individuals define themselves according to their position in the environment they find themselves in. Heidegger arrived at this comprehension of how a human being interacts within the world by his understanding of what an individual cognitively does when they turn a doorknob to open a door: “when I open the door, for instance, I use the latch.”³³⁸

This is a simple statement that may seem detached from philosophical epiphany, particularly the question of being. Heidegger explained that the position of a doorknob on a door, its nomenclature, the way the door relates to the wall, and the hinges which attach the wall to the

³³⁵ Jeff Collins, *Heidegger for Beginners* (Cambridge, Icon Books, 1998), 81-89.

³³⁶ Mary Warnock, *Existentialism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 70.

³³⁷ Ibid.

³³⁸ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008), 96.

door identify the purpose of the doorknob for others; the mind captures the *totality*³³⁹ of the doorknob in its environment to determine what a doorknob *is* – its function and purpose.

An individual knows to reach for the doorknob in order to open the door, only in accordance to how it is related and interacts to its environment. Likewise, if the same doorknob lay in the middle of a road, an individual would not expect it to open a door when turned; the totality of its environment dictates a different purpose. The human being comprehends what something *is* by grasping its totality. The human being grasps what it *is* in relation to other entities to which it is related in various ways.

A human being is a being that likewise builds personal definition, purpose, and self-understanding through its entanglement and intersection with the world and other entities. It is by being-in-the-world, immersed and absorbed, that the human being is inclined to make sense of itself. The inclination to seek self-understanding through being-in-the-world, however, can lead to the illusion that purpose is determined by others; an individual is merely the intersection of socially defined roles.

If an individual is consumed in the illusion of a sort of determinism through relatedness, a feeling of being trapped or suffocated by daily life may emerge. An inner desire or pressure to escape from the intersection of one's socially defined roles builds within the emotions.

Heidegger calls this experience *anxiety*. Anxiety is designed to pull the individual out of the

³³⁹ Totality is understood as the intersection of the world around the person, or in this analogy, the doorknob as it intersects with the environment around it; hinges, door frames, position on a door, etc. The environment of the doorknob, those things outside of the doorknob itself, make a claim about the doorknob and what its purpose it, what it is good for in life.

immersion of everyday life, out from the illusion that they are defined by social roles, and turn inward instead.³⁴⁰

This inward turn is for the purpose of a confrontation with one's self. The individual asks the question of who they really *are* juxtaposed to the intersection of the social roles which they are absorbed in and defined by.³⁴¹ And suddenly, Heidegger has used a doorknob to reveal a complex reality of being and simultaneously build upon Husserl's phenomenological concept of perceived others. Heidegger builds upon the concepts of the ethical tradition in a call to inwardness and authenticity alongside the shared emotional themes of anxiety and death as spoken of by the forefathers.

For Heidegger, the fact of finitude works as a tag team paired with the notion of anxiety. The notion of certain death, like anxiety, will create the platform for inner confrontation in which the individual will question who they really *are*, outside of what the world has defined them to be, outside of life's busyness. Death is "own-most, non-relational, and not to be outstripped."³⁴²

Death, like anxiety, has a way of jarring the individual out of a hypnotic state of social absorption, wherein the individual may spend their day "busy being busy."³⁴³ Philosopher James Luchte wrote "Heidegger contends that we can only know our own self when it has been resisted, broken or has encountered a limit-situation, via which each finds herself in her 'truth.'

³⁴⁰ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008), 231.

³⁴¹ *Ibid*, 230.

³⁴² *Ibid*, 255.

³⁴³ Lee Milton Hollander and Søren Kierkegaard, *Selections from the Writings of Kierkegaard* (Austin: University of Texas, 2013), 44.

Normality suspends ... with an eclipse of the sun, an earthquake, a flood, the death of another — a truth event.”³⁴⁴

When considering that death is a fundamental feature of existence and it cannot be pawned off for another to bare on the individual’s behalf, the urgency to take self-ownership of life and live *authentically* may result.

A unique, certain, and non-relational death repositions an individual to seek self-understanding, from a non-relational platform. Death and anxiety offer a re-orientation wherein the individual will take responsibility for their life and the direction they intend to move it. Heidegger called this proactive stance, *anticipatory resoluteness*.³⁴⁵

Anticipatory resoluteness derives from the acknowledgement of finitude and the awareness that human beings are inclined to search for self-understanding at the intersection of social roles in their environment. Authenticity is tied to anticipatory resoluteness; the ability to take charge of how an individual relates themselves to the world is hinged on the awareness of being. Heidegger called this self-awareness, *conscience*.³⁴⁶

As Warnock stated, “conscience will thus display to him the significance of his acts, as part of his unique and chosen path in life.”³⁴⁷ Conscience is as sort of guide to the individual that will direct him or her in a resolute manner, to make decisions that are truly theirs. Authentic decisions may break social roles and expectations because authenticity bares no concern with the

³⁴⁴ James Luchte, *Heidegger's Early Philosophy: The Phenomenology of Ecstatic Temporality (Continuum Studies in Continental Philosophy)* (London: Continuum, 2011), 49.

³⁴⁵ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008), 384.

³⁴⁶ Self-knowledge is referred to by Heidegger as *Gewissheit*, which is often translated ‘conscience’. It may have been specifically chosen by Heidegger for its moralistic suggestion. He is suggesting that if a human being is aware of himself as a being based on the facts of his past and also as projected towards the future which he chooses, then he will take full responsibility for his life, and recognize his choices are his own, not dictated any longer by what people in general do or expect.

³⁴⁷ Mary Warnock, *Existentialism* (London: Oxford University Press, 1970), 63.

ways of the general public; conscience has concern for its own direction rather than the demand of society.³⁴⁸

Heidegger's philosophy is the point where the existential writings of the forefathers collide with Husserl's phenomenology in order to produce what is considered characteristically, modern existentialism. It is because of this welding of the forefather's ethical positions and of Husserl's elements of phenomenology that Heidegger can be considered the first modern existentialist.

Heidegger developed Husserl's phenomenology into an existential channel through the concept of freedom. Husserl was primarily concerned with the analysis of a subject's relation to his perceptual and emotional world at a given time. The start point of Husserl's enquiry was the present moment, wherein, Heidegger was primarily concerned with the subject's relation to the future.

The emphasis is no longer on how a human being constructs the world, but instead, on the human being's ability to project themselves into the future. What is possible is more important than what is actual; a forward projection that is marked by practicality more than cognition. To this end, Heidegger introduced the idea of a free subject that can make changes in the world through the category of the possible.

³⁴⁸ It is argued that Heidegger did not truly set up a new wave of thought but only re-constructed the concepts of Kierkegaard's authenticity using *Dasein*. Philosopher Michael Quirk wrote in the *Sophia Project Philosophy Archives* that "The affinities to Kierkegaard are clear: Kierkegaard demanded that his readership see the worthiness of the three forms of conscientious life (the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious) as rationally un-settleable, to be resolved only through sheer, criterionless choice. It is entirely fair to see the doctrine of authenticity in *Being and Time* as a secularized version of Kierkegaard's dialectic in *Either/Or*. Heideggerian authenticity is Kierkegaard's religious stage without God—an entirely secular leap of 'faith'."

This gave phenomenology an existential spin. There is also the speech of a return back to that which really is; the call of *Dasein* back to its own-most being. This type of phrasing is familiar to Husserl who called for phenomenology to get “back to the things themselves.”³⁴⁹ The familiar speech of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche finds presence in Heidegger’s inward turn, prompted by anxiety and death.³⁵⁰

This is furthered by the call to authenticity through conscience that pulls the individual out of social trends and constructs, and risks themselves as they act according to an inward authenticity. Heidegger echoes the ethical call to action beyond cognition found in the writings of existentialism’s forefathers through the claim and call that a new future can be shaped by individual choices made; this infers responsibility to act in one’s freedom to initiate a new future.

3.4 The Birth Of Modern Existentialism

Jean-Paul Sartre was drafted into the French Army in 1939 where he served as a meteorologist in WWII. He was captured by the Germans in 1940 and spent nine months as a prisoner in a German war camp. While a prisoner, Sartre read Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. More amazingly, while in prison, Sartre wrote *Being and Nothingness*. His book would serve as a response to Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. It was written in the immediate tradition of Heidegger’s philosophical thought in regard to the concepts presented.

The choice of language and the concepts used serve to mature and redevelop Heidegger’s line of thinking. Because Heidegger wrote in the vein of Husserl’s phenomenology, Sartre’s

³⁴⁹ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper Perennial Modern Classics, 2008), 286.

³⁵⁰ Thomas Flynn, *Existentialism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford, 2006), 53.

Being and Nothingness further developed Husserl's thought as well. This can be noted at the beginning of his introduction to *Being and Nothingness* where he directly discussed Husserl. Namely, Sartre stated in the introduction that Husserl had succeeded in getting rid of a lot of troublesome dualisms that had haunted traditional philosophy for centuries. For instance, the dualism of: phenomenon vs. noumenon,³⁵¹ appearance vs. reality, etc. But he had not succeeded in getting rid of all such dualisms. All he has done was reduced them to a single dualism or dichotomy: the dichotomy between the finite and the infinite.³⁵²

Where essence and existence have typically been understood as separable, and essence in a way has been given precedence over existence, Sartre made what would become the fundamental existential treatise: existence precedes essence.³⁵³ Precedence, for Sartre, means explanatory precedence: the existence of a paper knife can be explained by the invocation of its essence.³⁵⁴ Said differently, existence is the fact of being, whereas essence is definition, function, purpose, or program.³⁵⁵

No Exit was written one year after *Being and Nothingness* and served as a fictional attempt to express his complex philosophy. As a result, many of the themes and symbolism in the play reflect Sartre's concepts in his larger and longer philosophical work, *Being and Nothingness*. In his play *No Exit*, Sartre expressed through the concept of a paper knife, that

³⁵¹ David Asher, "Schopenhauer and Darwinism," *Journal of Anthropology*, vol. 1, no. 3 (1871): 317.

The final result of Kant's philosophy, expressed in concise terms, was the proposition, so humiliating to human cognition, but, at the same time, so fertile in consequences, that we can know only *phenomena*", or the outward appearances of things, but not the "noumenon", or the thing in itself.

³⁵² Ibid.

³⁵³ Robert Wicks, *Modern French Philosophy: From Existentialism to Postmodernism* (London: Oneworld Publications, 2013), 212.

³⁵⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, *No Exit, and Three Other Plays* (New York: Vintage, 1989), 57-61.

³⁵⁵ Heidegger's *Letter on Humanism* refutes Sartre's claim of existence precedes essence. Heidegger stated that Sartre simply inverted what is firstly, metaphysical terms: essence and existence. As such, reversing metaphysical terms does not make the topic outside of metaphysics, but rather, makes it metaphysical regardless. The claim is plainly that Sartre cannot escape metaphysics but putting existence first.

humans, unlike a paper knife, do not have a pre-conceived purpose, plan, or program by which they have been design for.

The paper knife, in contrast, was created with a very specific purpose in mind. Before the paper knife, the need for the paper knife first existed: a sharp pointy object for the purpose of opening letters, because letters could not easily be opened. The paper knife was then designed in such a way, that it would meet the very specific need of letter opening. The paper knife is unable to function in another capacity effectively, as its very design is towards performing a very specific function.

To this comprehension, essence precedes the existence when speaking of a paper knife. Sartre will claim the opposite circumstance for the human being; there is no pre-conceived purpose or plan or program. This is because there's no God to conceive of it, for Sartre. A human being simply exists. It is after the human being comes into existence that the individual will define her or his own essence; a self-directed purpose, plan, or program. The individual, through freedom of choice and action is able to create their own purpose, function, and definition for themselves. Thus, "existence precedes essence."³⁵⁶ This statement made by Sartre made in *Being and Nothingness* became the central claim of existentialism itself. It is the heart-beat of the existential style of philosophizing.

To understand Sartre's central claim, it should be examined from within the historical context which Sartre lived. On September 1, 1939, Germany invaded Poland. Two days later, Britain and France declared war on Germany; World War II had begun. The Nazis occupied Paris the next year. Upon returning to France when released from the German war camp, Sartre

³⁵⁶ Robert Wicks, *Modern French Philosophy: From Existentialism to Postmodernism* (London: Oneworld Publications, 2013), 212.

wrote an anti-Nazi paper and was greatly invested in examination of hate as displayed by the Nazis.

In the December 1944 issue of *The Atlantic*, Sartre wrote: "Never were we freer than under the German occupation. We had lost all our rights, and first of all our right to speak. They insulted us to our faces.... They deported us *en masse*.... And because of all this we were free."³⁵⁷ The attempt of the Nazis to remove freedom from individuals exposed a reality to Sartre, that freedom cannot be removed from a human being. Instead, freedom is at the origin of the human being and not added to them. Sartre called this freedom at the origin of the individual "the secret of a man."³⁵⁸

This secret was particularly true in Paris during the occupation; this secret would fan the flame of courage to resist suffering. This statement of freedom was true beyond those who suffered at the hands of the Nazi's, freedom was also true for the Nazis themselves. A statement of responsibility towards the use of freedom would emerge. Freedom, for Sartre would infer a type of responsibility that is shared as each individual would make choices that would result in actions that would develop the social and cultural situation for all involved: "and that is why the Resistance was a true democracy; for the soldier, as for his superior, the same danger, the same loneliness, the same responsibility, the same absolute freedom within the discipline."³⁵⁹

The scene in Paris that encompassed Sartre was one where each neighbor held a different religious belief and political posture. Each posture was thought to be the cure for the occupation. The remedy that would bring order from disorder. Sartre sought to reconfigure this type of

³⁵⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre, "The Republic of Silence," *The Atlantic* 174, no. 6 (1944): 43.

³⁵⁸ A. J. Liebling, *The Republic of Silence* (NY: Simon Publications, 2003), 498.

³⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

thinking. He desired to bring an awareness that the individual already held the power to create social and cultural change through use of innate freedom, what he had termed *the secret of man*.

He believed that quarrelling over beliefs and politics was pointless; rather, individual choice making causes immediate shifts in the environment. People being responsible to make individual choices, because they are innately free, would create newness from calamity.³⁶⁰ The truth of choice and responsibility remained true for Sartre. Even a prisoner in solitude could not escape this truth of responsibility: “total responsibility in total solitude – is this not the very definition of our liberty?”³⁶¹

An encouragement toward action and responsibility under an oppressive regime that negated both, existentialism as articulated by Sartre would serve as a compelling response to the horrors of the war that wished to diminish concepts of free will and responsibility. Sartre’s particular context as soldier, prisoner, and Paris citizen under occupation enabled a perspective to examine and articulate existence from a unique first-hand experience.

Wherein Heidegger concerned his work with what it meant to *be* a human being confronted by the world, Sartre (due to a Nazi regime that attempted strip existence from each individual) concerned himself with what a human being *is made up of*.³⁶² In an awkward sense,

³⁶⁰ Many of Sartre’s critics, one of them being philosopher Merleau-Ponty, argue that responsibility and the ability to choose are less extensive than Sartre supposes and that his views on the limitlessness of freedom are so uncompromising as to be untenable. Ponty goes on to argue that people are not always free to choose their responses to their situation and therefore not always responsible for their actions. Ponty argues that there is a natural-self based upon the natural limitations of the body that renders certain evaluations inevitable and disposes a person towards certain choices. In failing to acknowledge that a person’s interactions with the world and other people are pre-structured by a natural-self, Sartre overlooks various behavioral and dispositional phenomena that signify limitations to choice and therefore, limited freedom. According to Sartre, the only limit to a person’s freedom is the individual is not free to stop being free.

³⁶¹ Ibid.

³⁶² More time could be spent on fleshing out the distinctions. Heidegger seemed to express the confrontations an individual faced as being a being in the world. Sartre seemed to go a step deeper and a bit more pinpointed into being. Not as concerned with what it means to be a human being in the world, he expresses what existence itself consists of, separate from understanding what happens to a being as it engages the world.

the Nazi's had done all the investigative work for Sartre to expose and learn what the fabric of existence is. Existence revealed itself as that which cannot be removed from an individual because it is something that sits at their origin. It is certain attributes all humans possess that are unable to be erased, under any circumstance.

It is in the midst of World War II that Jean-Paul Sartre's existentialism was cultivated, rising off the coat-tail of Heidegger. He spoke of responsibility and freedom in a time of despair that was born of horrific pain, suffering, and death. He asked that a society harness their innate power to determine meaning, purpose and value through choice. Sartre, like Nietzsche, wrote from inside social collapse. In doing so, attempting once more to stir forth an awareness and courage for the individual to trust themselves in order to transform society.

Sartre had an international impact through his existentialism. Four existential themes went viral on a global scale according to Alfred Betschart. The first is an absurd, contingent world that is worth rebelling against. This pessimist view takes an optimistic turn by stating that man can rebel against the situation he is thrown into.³⁶³ It is a rebellious optimism. The second message is that of freedom. The human is free. Existence precedes essence and so people have to choose their own values and meanings.³⁶⁴

The second end of that freedom is to live authentically. People must assume responsibility for their situation and the choices they make. The third message was saying no to the discrimination of women, Jews, blacks and homosexuals.³⁶⁵ Individual freedom presupposes equality, and particularly, nondiscrimination.

³⁶³ Alfred Betschart and Julian Werner, *Sartre and The International Impact of Existentialism* (Switzerland: Springer International Publishing, 2020), 18.

³⁶⁴ *Ibid*, 19.

³⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 23.

The fourth message was to engage yourself.³⁶⁶ This was the most widely spread message sent throughout the world. This is about making choices and stepping out into the world to change it through action.³⁶⁷ As Sartre wrote: “One must be *engaged*, one must take sides, abstention is a choice...Such is the person that we conceive: the total human being. Totally *engaged* and totally free.”³⁶⁸ The engaged person transforms society with action. They cannot just be a writer or an intellectual. They must be an intellectual or writer that writes to transform.

Sartre’s global impact shows that existentialism’s umbrella, as used in analogy by Flynn, holds much more than just diverse views of God under it. Existentialism holds many cultures, many sexes, many sexualities, many races, many political beliefs, many professions, and many social situations within it.

Sartre’s program contrasts other existentialists concerning their take on his descriptive of radical freedom. Radical freedom is the centerpiece in Sartre’s *Being and Nothingness*. Sartre’s contemporaries each developed varying opinions on radical freedom. It is not that other existentialist deny freedom, however, the repercussions of radical freedom seemed to lead to many philosophical discussions related to ethics, politics, and possible limitations of freedom.

Sartre’s contemporary, Simone De Beauvoir, for example, created an ontology that concluded that women’s facticity constrained the ability to engage as radically free beings. De Beauvoir’s view of women in society, led her to describe the different ways that freedom is

³⁶⁶ Ibid, 26.

³⁶⁷ Ibid.

³⁶⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre, “Présentation Des Temps Modernes,” *Les Temps Modernes 1* (October 1945): 8.

evaded or misused. Beauvoir distinguished ontological from ethical freedom. Her angle, different to Sartre's in *Being and Nothingness*, developed into an ethic based upon freedom.

For De Beauvoir, to meet the conditions of the ethical, freedom must be used properly. It must “embrace the ties that bind me to others and take up the appeal—an act whereby I call on others, in their freedom, to join me in bringing certain values, projects, and conditions into being.”³⁶⁹

Sartre varied from his contemporary Camus on the case of absurdity and politics. In light of radical freedom, Camus wondered what such freedom meant for political justice. He was different in his belief from Sartre. Sartre in his thought communism was the political answer, while Camus felt a constant balancing of justice with freedom was necessary.³⁷⁰

It should be noted that all of these deeper dives take place after Sartre writes *Being and Nothingness*. *Being and Nothingness* remains the main descriptive framework of what consciousness in relation to the world, is like. The work itself is purposed as a descriptive of consciousness in relation to the world. Given that understanding, the existentialist contemporaries are building their efforts, like De Beauvoir in distinguishing types of freedom toward an ethical use of freedom, and Camus in the link between justice and freedom. Because this thesis is not an examination or parsing out of radical freedom to be used in politics or justice systems, these philosophers and their work is not best suited to identify Tillich's indicators of universal guidance towards the embodiment of a True Essence. The descriptives themselves provided in *Being and Nothingness* are more suitable for this reason.

³⁶⁹ Paul Fairfield, *Relational Hermeneutics Essays in Comparative Philosophy* (NY: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018), 48.

³⁷⁰ Maciej Kałuza, *Brill's Companion to Camus: Camus Among the Philosophers* (MA: Brill, 2020), 24.

Sartre draws upon Heidegger conceptually through an agreement that man has no fixed essence.³⁷¹ “He is not a manufactured object,” as Sartre says in *Being and Nothingness*.³⁷² Sartre continued into Heidegger’s inquiries into the concept of nothing and its relationship to being.³⁷³ Sartre’s conclusions are different than Heidegger’s, never the less, his work is drawn from it. Heidegger’s nothingness creates nihilation that compels being to transcend into self-hood and freedom. For Sartre, nothingness is being, and nothingness is freedom.³⁷⁴ The inseparability of nothingness from the human being is seen to be drawn upon directly also, and is the enabler of a personalized meaningful experience.

Sartre’s existentialism is rooted in Kierkegaard’s insistence that existence cannot be reduced to logically manipulatable ideas,³⁷⁵ as well as Nietzsche’s thought of man as transcending towards *Übermensch*.³⁷⁶ All of these concepts invest in Sartre’s view that the human being, as an “existent”, is unfinished.

3.5 Conclusion

The roots of existentialism reveal the observations of Nietzsche and Kierkegaard. They wrote of the necessity to know yourself and choose yourself. They were two different people, with two different belief systems, and yet they arrive at the same conclusions of a sort of inner

³⁷¹ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (London: Blackwell, 1978), 215.

³⁷² 458 being nothingness

³⁷³ Meghan Vicks, *Narratives of Nothing in 20th-Century Literature* (NY: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), 38.

³⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁷⁵ Soren Kierkegaard, *Kierkegaard's Writings IV, Part II Either/Or, Part 2* (NJ: Princeton University Press, 2013), 128.

³⁷⁶ Gary Cox, *The Sartre Dictionary* (NY: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2008), 28.

guide that is available and has insight for them, from within, so they may know themselves and then choose themselves, while living in a world filled with others. This is a sort of natural observation, able to be experienced and observed, because nobody told them what they should see or find or experience. Yet, the need to know that individuals have freedom, and to use that freedom to live authentically, according to conscious, became the main themes of their works. Finding authenticity from inner guidance, and living the truth that is found, is the key to well-being.³⁷⁷

The existentialist prescribed to society that individual meaning and choice was a power possessed by each human being and it needed to be trusted in order to bounce back from devastating social situations. The power to choose was the key to opening up a new reality, making inference that the power to choose is a power of creative force, innate to people. This articulation was brought forth through individual analysis that began with the forefathers and led itself into the works of Sartre and Rogers.

This leads to the ever-present existential call given to the reader to experience and practice their human freedom. Existentialism desires practicality over mentality, for the sake of a life well lived. This is the sort of early observation that hints at how Tillich's *Spiritual Presence* potentially can guide people to embody their true Essence in this world, in a universal manner. It hints at an articulation of *Spiritual Presence* at its onset. Kierkegaard and Nietzsche illuminated from their own life, an inner guide that should be sought out, as the individual lives life in relation to the world.

³⁷⁷ Søren Kierkegaard, *Two Ages: The Age of Revolution and the Present Age*, A Literary Review, trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong, *Kierkegaard's Writings* 14 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1978), 84–93

There is an authenticity that need be retrieved and carried forward with, if the individual should have a good life, and one of well-being. Freedom from the external, the ability to tap into an inner guidance, and the ability to utilize freedom to choose oneself, becomes key. These elements grow as existentialism becomes mainstream in the work of Sartre. These elements of well-being will emerge again in psychological works of Carl Rogers, as a way to further understand and verify the existence of Tillich's Spiritual Presence taking place towards the embodiment of a true Essence.

The findings of existentialism's forefathers up to Sartre's *Being and Nothingness* present an analysis of what life lived in relation to the world has illuminated and meant for and about the human being. This again is helpful to verify and to illuminate the manner that Tillich's Spiritual Presence would guide humanity to know about its Essence and what it is to embody through this world and in this world.

The next chapter will discuss existentialism's influence on the fields of theology and psychology. This influence will provide two key figures that will serve as a means to verify, or make concrete, Tillich's notions of Spiritual Presence. These two figures are Paul Tillich and Carl Rogers. Tillich's theological concept of Spiritual Presence is the cause of this thesis, while Rogers' psychological observations help to articulate how Tillich's Spiritual Presence may guide humanity to their true essence.

While the forefathers have presented notice of an inner guidance in the life of the human being, Rogers will come to offer a richer depth of analysis to these primitive, early existential articulations, of an inner guidance in relation to an individual living with an external world. This will provide a clearer picture of what appears to be a guiding Spiritual Presence towards true Essence, as found in Tillich's writing. The interface of how existentialism impacted and

developed Tillich's theological writings that would culminate in the concept of Spiritual Presence are introduced with Rogers in the next chapter.

This examination beyond the roots of existentialism, once again, is of great importance because this thesis examines the human being in relation to the world in order to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Chapter Four

Articulating Tillich's Spiritual Presence Through the Development of Rogers' Clinical Observations

4.1 Introduction

The limitations of Tillich's work exist because he intended to be in dialogue with existentialism. Existentialism had become exceedingly popular, while Christian theology was not the main topic of social discussions. Existentialism's impact on Tillich is what shaped his theological positions within his *Systematic Theology*. Many of which, are the limitations to be addressed in this thesis. Therefore, this thesis, is a direct result of existentialism's influence on theology and society from prior times.³⁷⁸

By addressing the limitations from Tillich's dialogue with existentialism, the ultimate goal of this thesis can be addressed: to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

A place of research to address the limitations of Tillich's theology and investigate a guiding Spiritual Presence within humanity is Carl Rogers. His person-centered therapy is founded upon reoccurring observations he made as a psychologist, over a period of decades. The concept of observing, rather than presuming behaviors meant that a client had certain pre-established mental conditions, was based upon existential principles.

³⁷⁸ "It is Tillich that theologizes that 'God is dead' and 'we have killed him' and what it means to theologize about God through existential writings." Hue Woodson, *Existential Theology: An Introduction* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2020), 89. As Hue Woodson states in his book, Tillich is tied to existentialism, and his theology is to act as a counterweight to Sartre's existentialism.

In observing, instead of diagnosing, the therapy sessions allowed him to see specific characteristics of human nature that were present in all of his clients. These characteristics allowed him a new observation on human nature and well-being. His research revolutionized psychology.

Existentialism's impact on 20th century theology and psychology led to new, groundbreaking theological claims, as well as psychological revelations that would deeply impact both fields of study. Existentialism's impact on both fields of study will be explained and will land on Tillich (the origin of this thesis) and Rogers (a portion of the answer to this thesis), in particular.

While the theological influence shaped Tillich's theology that this thesis seeks to address, its psychological influences provided an area of research to address it with. Rogers' observation of an inner guidance system will assist to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

4.2 Existentialism's Understanding Of Human Nature And Tillich's Theological Response (towards the making of Tillich's Spiritual Presence and essentialization)

20th century theology is impacted by existentialism's forefathers: Kierkegaard and Nietzsche. It was Kierkegaard and Nietzsche who spoke into the collapse of the church, giving a response to the death of God.³⁷⁹ While Kierkegaard developed an existential theology to sort out, rebut, and fix what he found to be wrong within institutionalized Christianity, Nietzsche wrote to

³⁷⁹ The death of God is in reference to the infamous statement by Nietzsche that "God is dead." This phrase is not to be understood that God does not exist, rather, an expression of the knowledge that the Christian church was no longer a valid source to find reliable truth of purpose and meaning within.

engage a life beyond church and God. What is found at the root of both forefather's existential writing, is the topic of God. Professor Steven Earnshaw of Sheffield Hallam University wrote:

For Kierkegaard and Nietzsche, the role of God, or the absence of God, is crucial. Though characterized as atheistic, existentialism's origins are deeply rooted in the individual's relationship with God or how to live in a world where God does not exist. For later existentialist writers, the question may not arise at all. It is presupposed there is not a god and the matter is of little importance. But for those writing in the deeply religious 19th century, (Kierkegaard and Nietzsche) God was in all the underpinnings.³⁸⁰

Given its rooting on topic of God from the 19th century, it is only natural that “in recent decades existentialism has in fact been the type of philosophy most influential with theologians.”³⁸¹ The existentialism that emerged in the 20th century gave theology a contemporary language and an analysis of the human condition that in many respects paralleled themes of classical Christianity. Answers towards anguish and evil of the world were not the only similarity but also was the shared ongoing theme of transcending the self and the world in order to become a better version.

The influence of existential thought into theology, arguably started with its forefathers and the death of God. Philosopher Jean Wahl claimed that a form of theology known as *negative theology* was the product of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche's 19th century writings. Wahl noted that Kierkegaard was seen as advocating a state of choice (everything or nothing, or, of two the one). While for Nietzsche, the dominant idea was the will of overpassing, the idea of transcendence. In

³⁸⁰ Steven Earnshaw, *Existentialism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (publication place: Continuum, 2006), 3.

³⁸¹ John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 272.

negative theology, there is a quest for full reflective justification, while at the same moment, being justified anyways.³⁸²

Moving beyond the example expressed by Wahl, existentialism hit a peak in popularity as it was able to relate to the pain and despair of World War II. Existentialism afforded Christianity a vein in which to enter into the secular consciousness of the day. Theology was able to respond to the age of anxiety through its use of existential language. As John Macquarrie wrote: “stressing the irrational and the absurd, in speaking of human fallenness, depersonalization, anxiety, inauthenticity and demands of radical decision, existentialism sounded the modern temper. Using existentialism as an interpretive tool, Christian theology once again, gave evidence of its resilience and its ability to meet the challenge of modern secular culture.”³⁸³

Macquarrie goes one step further to describe a sort of love-hate relationship that springs from the relationship that theology has with philosophy. He finds existentialism is a sort of unavoidable route that theology must take in order to reach the challenge of modern secular culture. He writes that faith must be translated into modern terms and modern concerns. In a positive light, the existentialist will keep the theologian oriented to the present.³⁸⁴

Theologians like Karl Barth, Rudolph Bultmann, Paul Tillich, Fritz Buri, Ludwig Ott, Gerhard Ebelin, and Karl Rahner are some of the theologians of recent and contemporary times whose theology has been significantly influenced by existentialist philosophy.³⁸⁵ Existentialism’s influence has taken many forms. In Barth, it came from Kierkegaard; in Bultmann, from Heidegger; in Buri, from Jaspers. For Barth, it led to *kerygmatic* theology; for Bultmann, it led to

³⁸² David Law, *Kierkegaard as Negative Theologian* (New York: Clarendon Press, 1993), 24.

³⁸³ John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 272.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 273.

³⁸⁵ *Ibid.*

demythologizing; for Tillich, it led to ontology. The theological offshoots of existentialism are very diverse and creative. It is not an understatement to say “that much of the most creative theological thinking in this century has sprung from the encounter with existentialism.”³⁸⁶

Due to the specific orientation of this thesis towards Paul Tillich’s theology, and particularly, his symbol of Spiritual Presence, this chapter will not explore all of the theologians listed above. Instead, a focus will be given towards just one, Paul Tillich. This focus will highlight his unique use of existentialism in developing his own theologies within the 20th century. John Macquarrie viewed Tillich as an existentialist theologian that represented one of two modes of theology stemming from the influence of existential philosophy.

The first group of existential theology, according to Macquarrie, is represented by Bultmann. This category of theology tells us that “one can speak of God only in the moment of faith. He cannot become the object of thought but is known as the unconditioned demand that touches human life in certain concrete moments.”³⁸⁷ The second group, most typically represented by Tillich, is a category that will “go on to construct some type of ontology or metaphysic.”³⁸⁸ Kate Kirkpatrick connects the impact of Sartre specifically to Tillich’s theology, when she says “there is clear contextual and conceptual reasons to think that Tillich’s later theology intentionally answers Sartre.”³⁸⁹

Tillich was born in 1886. His father served as minister and diocesan superintendent in the Prussian Territorial Church.³⁹⁰ His father was strict, yet Tillich always loved the freedom that he

³⁸⁶ Ibid, 274.

³⁸⁷ John Macquarrie, “Existentialism,” *Union Seminary Quarterly Review* 23 (1967): 94.

³⁸⁸ Ibid.

³⁸⁹ Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre and Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 150.

³⁹⁰ Werner Schüßler, “Tillich’s Life and Works” in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, ed. Russell Re Manning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 3-17.

found in nature, around where he grew up. Tillich's love of freedom blended with his commitment to a rich and satisfying religious tradition.³⁹¹ He wanted to enjoy the freedom to explore life without sacrificing the essentials of a meaningful religious tradition. This can be seen as a major theme that remained in his theological work: the relation of heteronomy to autonomy and their possible synthesis in theonomy.³⁹²

Tillich was a German theologian who studied at universities in Berlin, Tübingen, and Halle. In 1910 he received his PhD from the University of Breslau. Tillich was ordained in the Lutheran Church in Berlin in 1912 and served as an army chaplain on the Western front during World War I.³⁹³

The war was a shattering experience for Tillich. This was not only because of its carnage and physical destruction, but as evidence, to him, of the bankruptcy of humanism and the questionableness of autonomy as sole guide.³⁹⁴ It is with this less than optimistic perspective of autonomy, in as much as autonomy is a positive in existentialism, that Tillich would shape his theology differently than Bultmann's. Existentialism would offer a different type of influence for Tillich, given the negative connotation Tillich held with autonomy and the destruction experienced during the war.³⁹⁵

³⁹¹ Ibid.

³⁹² Ibid.

³⁹³ "Paul Tillich," Theopedia, accessed November 24, 2018, <https://www.theopedia.com/paul-tillich>.

³⁹⁴ Arne Unhjem, "Paul Tillich," Britannica, accessed November 24, 2018, <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/595850/Paul-Tillich>.

³⁹⁵ I have asserted an assumption here. It is argued by some that Tillich held a negative bias against existentialism and philosophy. This bias is said to have created a negative perception that skewed the theology he built. This negative perception is reflected by his strong refusal for philosophy to play a role in informing his theological answers. This is merely a consideration in regard to where and why this bias may exist. A counter-argument to the root of this very assumption is that Tillich allowed existentialism and philosophy too much of an influence upon his theology. It is viewed by some that his theology is consumed by existentialism and has little left in regard to Christian influence. Adrian Thatcher, argues that Tillich's theology is abstract and difficult to comprehend because it is overtaken by philosophical knowledge and the philosophical tradition. Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978).

Thereafter, Tillich cultivated an extensive and varied teaching career. In 1933 Tillich's position was suspended by the Nazi government. Philosophy professor, Arne Unhjem stated that “Tillich’s passionate concern for freedom made him an early critic of Hitler and the Nazi movement, and in retaliation he was barred from German universities in 1933—the first non-Jewish academician ‘to be so honored,’ as he wryly put it.”³⁹⁶

Later in Tillich’s life, there was some chatter about his sex life. There may exist critics of Tillich’s sex life, with concern to his Christianity. Rollo May, Tillich’s former student noted that Tillich was Teutonically serious about sex; the erotic pretensions of classic pornography attracted him, but he abhorred dirty jokes.³⁹⁷ May argues that Tillich was a man whose "intensity of presence" reached out to all who met him, men or women.³⁹⁸ For women, it contained an almost irresistible element of sexual libido. May suggests that the theological groupies around Tillich seemed satisfied merely to share it vicariously or in brief encounters, knowing full well that others would catch his eye and attention, too.

In response to possible critics of Tillich, relating his Christianity, to his sex life, anyone is free to have their own opinion. Depending on the critic’s personal view of what Christianity is, there is a decent chance that Tillich, based on his theology alone, is not considered a Christian, but a heretic. For them, his sex life is just the sex life of a heretic. In response to any other critics, outside of Christianity, this thesis is not designed to defend Tillich’s blurry sex life against a variety of interpretations of Christianity. Critics will exist. They are free to judge his sex life as they so desire, just as they have been free to judge his theological works, as they so desire.

³⁹⁶ Ibid.

³⁹⁷ Time Inc. (n.d.). *Time Magazine -- U.S. edition -- October 8, 1973 Vol. 102 no. 15*. Time. Retrieved February 14, 2023, from <https://content.time.com/time/magazine/0,9263,7601731008,00.html>

³⁹⁸ Ibid.

Tillich held a view that religion and philosophy existed to address the same question, the question of meaning in "my life and life generally."³⁹⁹ Tillich's theology is famed for representing a Christian version of "something like Heidegger's philosophy of religion."⁴⁰⁰ This is because, like Bultmann, Tillich drew heavily from Heidegger's *Being and Time*, published in 1927.⁴⁰¹

Tillich used Heidegger's concept of "Being," but unlike Heidegger he argued that God is "Being-itself." Tillich's theological message was not about turning the individual's life over to the will of a divine power but rather that it is possible for humanity to overcome the apparent meaninglessness and emptiness in life. Tillich utilized existentialism to confront the questions pertinent to his day and allow theology to answer those questions brought to the surface by existentialism.⁴⁰² Existentialism was used by Tillich as an avenue to allow a rigorous examination of the Christian faith in light of his present-day realities.

Tillich's discussion of the human situation would prove profoundly impactful on populations that generally had no interest in matters of faith. His ability to grasp modern problems and attend to their answer through the examination and re-development of Christian faith pushed the discussion of faith beyond the sphere of the traditional Christian church. Alternatively, by allowing existentialism to direct an examination of Tillich's Christianity, the

³⁹⁹ Paul Tillich, "A Conversation with Dr. Paul Tillich and Mr. Werner Rode" (Lecture, Yale Broadcast and Media Center, New Haven, CT, 1956), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfszSdhXiAU>.

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ It is argued that Tillich was less influenced by the work of Heidegger and the true influence was Bultmann's work. Theologian Adrian Thatcher believed that it was Bultmann's argument that the Christian world view, as expressed in the Bible, was outdated and his solution to recast the story of Christ's redemptive work in modern, philosophical, psychological, and scientific language to enable today's men and women to ascertain the truth, that influenced Tillich. Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978).

⁴⁰² A goal of Tillich was to produce what he called an "answering theology." Answering theology encounters existentialism in order to provide an answer to the issues it brings to the surface of life. Tillich's ontology has a clear reference to the cultural situation.

influence existentialism had on Tillich's theology caused many traditional Christians to consider it heretical. The traditional Christian themes, such as the trinity, were redeveloped by Tillich into something unfamiliar to common doctrine. However, these redevelopments engaged Tillich's present-day context in ways that tradition did not.

Tillich's theology sought to relate the content of revelation to the human experience. If the Christian message of revelation was not relevant to the human situation, it was unintelligible and useless among people. The task of theology was not to describe revelation in an unintelligible manner, narrowing it down to doctrines that are inaccessible to human thought.

Rather, theology is to uncover the presence of what is revealed in human existence. Tillich described an in-escapable, and therefore, *unconditional* ontological revelation available within existence itself. The revelation is inescapable because there can be no escape from a message if it is available and speaking to all people from the conditions of human existence itself. Tillich wrote concerning the unconditional:

The term *unconditional*...points to that element in every religious experience which makes it religious...In every symbol of the divine an unconditional claim is expressed, most powerfully in the command: "Thou shalt love thy Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind....Unconditional is a quality which we experience in encountering reality."⁴⁰³

In viewing the unconditional as a truth that is behind the development of all religious experience, not only Christianity, Tillich is led to deny that religious experience is confined to the church alone.⁴⁰⁴ This angle of thinking is what allowed Tillich to re-interpret the traditional

⁴⁰³ Paul Tillich, *Protestant Era* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 32.

⁴⁰⁴ Tillich uses the term *Spiritual Community* to differentiate his thought from that of *the church* in Christianity. Because the unconditional is experienced beyond the confines of the church known in Christianity, *Spiritual Community* is the term used to express the community formed, both inside and outside the church, by the ambiguous presence of God in life and history.

doctrines of the Spirit and the church.⁴⁰⁵ Main aspects of Tillich's theology which are vastly different from the traditional Christian church of the west are his concepts of Jesus as the Christ, the Holy Spirit, and sin.

Tillich described Jesus the Christ as undisrupted essence under the conditions of estrangement.⁴⁰⁶ The desire to transcend, a prevalent theme in existential writing, is captured here by Tillich through the desire to overcome what he called estrangement by transcending into the Christ. Estrangement for Tillich was existence itself; someone is estranged if they are within the time and space existence of life. It is also the case for Tillich that estrangement is defined as sin. Sin is not identified as moral rights and wrongs as extracted from scripture; rather, everything that lives is sin.⁴⁰⁷ Sin and estrangement is synonymous to existence.

Estrangement was sin because of what Tillich conceptualized to occur for an individual within the time and space of existence: a limitation of essence.⁴⁰⁸ This limitation of essence is also regarded as disrupted essence. Limited or disrupted essence does not occur because essence has been cut off from humanity, as is a common theme in western Christianity. Rather, time and space existence create a distortion of essence; existence comes with ambiguity that misaligns human participants from clarity of the authentic self.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁵ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 149-223.

⁴⁰⁶ Essence is synonymous to Being according to Tillich's use of the term. Being is defined in *Systematic Theology I*, page 14, as "the whole of human reality, the structure, the meaning, and the aim of existence." Being is extended beyond an individual to include the whole of reality and ultimately God.

⁴⁰⁷ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology II* (New Haven: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 56.

⁴⁰⁸ Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre and Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 152, 208. Tillich's understanding of the word sin was directly shaped by Sartre's existentialism. The concept of nothingness, derived a new understanding and theology of sin for the theologian. Marking Sartre's gift to Christianity as "a rediscovery of the word sin."

⁴⁰⁹ The authentic self is congruent to the essence of God. Tillich will annotate human kind's authentic self as *essence* and God's self as *Essence* in his writing.

This misalignment results in the inability to act in a way that represents true essence. Tillich says that it is not actions of *agape* that lead to an alignment of true essence. Essentialization does not happen by doing loving deeds or of good conduct.⁴¹⁰ Rather, the first step to alignment with true essence is an internal disposition.⁴¹¹

It is the actualization of the poles of essence and existence that Tillich will call essentialization.⁴¹² The Holy Spirit is not conceptualized as the third party of the trinity for Tillich, but rather, is the symbolization of the moment when essence and existence overlap each other. Essentialization, or the meetings place where existence and true essence find congruency, is for Tillich the ultimate concern of an individual.

It is also this lack of congruency, caused by an ambiguity of essence, that is the cause of anxiety and anguish within existence. Note how Tillich has utilized ontology as the answer to existential questions. He brings in the existential discussion of anxiety and anguish and chooses to explain them through Christian symbols. This is Tillich's answering theology in action; Tillich answers the questions of existentialism with his ontology. This is different from Bultmann, whose existentialism was used as an interpretation to New Testament theology. Being more weary of existentialism, Tillich utilized Christianity to answer existentialism.

The Christ, as Tillich words it, represents the universal potential of all individuals within time and space to resolve the distortion and hence the limitation of essence within existence. For

⁴¹⁰ Essentialization is from the word *endzeit*; It is a term taken from philosopher Friedrich Schelling (1775 – 1854). The roots of essentialization when used in Tillich's theology stem from his German idealism. Idealism sees no split between essence and existence. Idealism derives objectivity from subjectivity. Because of this, reality is both intelligible and imposing as there is no break between essential subjects and existential subjects: the individual is engaged in one unified process of becoming – essentializing.

⁴¹¹ Paul Tillich, *Love, Power, and Justice: Ontological Analyses and Ethical Applications (Galaxy Books)* (London: Oxford University Press, 1960), 25.

⁴¹² Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology II* (New Haven: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 122.

Tillich, Jesus was not a supernatural human among humans, but instead, had to overcome, as all human beings do, the distortion of their essence. Through transcendence, Jesus transformed into the Christ and stood as a symbol of the potential that all humanity shares and can attain.⁴¹³

Jesus the Christ is referenced as a symbol in Tillich's theology and is not a savior of sorts to be worshipped as God. For Tillich, he is not acting as a bridge to connect individuals to God where a relational gap between the two exists; nor is the death of Christ a victory over an evil entity called Satan. Given the interpretive difference that Tillich places on Jesus the Christ, it is easy to understand how Tillich's theology may be resisted and seen as a distortion to the message of the Bible.⁴¹⁴

Not only is the unconditional expressed and available in all existence to all humanity, but as such, each individual holds the capacity to be self-critical. The individual is able to analyze the experience of life in relation to the ground of being.⁴¹⁵ The dialogue between the individual and the ground of being is viewed as unbroken, and therefore the ground of being is in constant dialogue with each individual. This type of self-critical capacity would result in diverse and opposing thoughts concerning theology from person to person.

⁴¹³ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), 125.

⁴¹⁴ The incarnation is no longer about the God-Man relationship but about an essence-existence relationship. An individual has to be willing to reject any and every vestige of supra-naturalism and maintain a relational, immanent theology, in which both transcendence and the manifestation of the transcendence in immanence are basic steps. The change of relationship and all that it entails may be too much for some to be able to take hold of or take seriously; even to suspend one's belief in order to hear Tillich out throughout his *Systematic Theology*.

⁴¹⁵ The *Ground of Being* is a term used by Tillich. The Ground of Being may be used synonymously with the term the unconditioned. The unconditioned and ground of being is not, however, synonymous with the term God. This is because, as Tillich puts it *Theology of Culture* on page 24: "The word God is filled with concrete symbols in which humankind has expressed its ultimate concern." In other words, to use the word God is to refer to finite symbols rather than the infinite. God is merely an object among other objects in this respect, wherein the ground of being is used to express what lay beyond the finite symbols and terms humanity creates. Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959), 37.

This leads Tillich to state that perpetual discussion, disagreement and even error, is a part of the salvation process. Disagreement with church doctrine is therefore but an obvious consequence of ground of being in dialogue with humanity. This inclination towards a self-critical principle suggests that his works within *Systematic Theology* not be taken as a finished and closed system, but viewed in light of dialect which the self-critical principle operates.

Tillich, among others, was highly influenced by existentialism.⁴¹⁶ While various theologians held different aims that rendered the use of existentialism optimal to shape their theologies, the use of existentialism veered those theologies far from common traditional Christian perspectives. In consequence, many traditionalists view the ideas of existential theologies as heretical and their theology to be avoided. Tillich is accused of allowing foreign philosophy to dilute the true message of the Bible. Regardless of the weary eye from traditional Christianity, the use of existentialism by Tillich served to produce a very profound and engaging theology of the 20th century.

His use of Christian symbol as an answer to existentialism, particularly that of Spiritual Presence, created more engaging questions for his readers to ponder. This thesis is a result of that engaging theology fueled in response to existentialism. It is of that engagement that existentialism returns to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

⁴¹⁶ Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre and Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 150.

4.3 Existential Concepts Used In The Development of Rogers' Person-Centered Therapy (towards the observance Tillich's Spiritual Presence)

Beyond theology, existentialism's influence has reached into other fields of study to produce robust new concepts as well. One area of study to be introduced at this time is that of 20th century psychology. Certain concepts that are manifested from existentialism's influence on psychology have led to observations about human nature that will be of use to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Of specific importance within the realm of psychology as influenced by existentialism is the psychological theory of Carl Rogers and his person-centered therapy. Carl Rogers was born January 8, 1902 in Oak Park, Illinois. His father was a successful civil engineer and his mother was a housewife and devout Christian. It is noted that Rogers had a strict upbringing with many chores. As a result of this combination, Rogers was isolated, independent, and self-disciplined as a child. His academic life started at the University of Wisconsin as an agriculture major.

Shortly therein he switched to major in religion in order to study Christian ministry. Upon graduation he attended Union Theological Seminary, but changed his route to clinical psychology at Columbia University. In 1931 Rogers received his PhD from this same University in clinical psychology. He had already begun his clinical work at the Rochester Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. He was offered a full professorship at Ohio State University in 1940.

On December 11, 1940, Rogers spoke to the Psi Chi chapter of the University of Minnesota. His speech was titled "Newer Concepts in Psychotherapy". This became the origin of existential-humanistic psychotherapies; what would later be titled by Rogers as client-centered therapy.⁴¹⁷ This same speech would serve as the foundations of Rogers' first book in 1942, *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, which eventually become a landmark in the history and development of existential-humanistic psychology.⁴¹⁸

In its plainest definition, existential-humanistic psychology plays an important role in the treatment of psychopathologies by looking at individuals as a whole person. Commonly identified and unique characteristics of humanistic psychology are:⁴¹⁹ a phenomenological approach; a tendency for a person to attain self-actualization; a holistic perspective and integrated view of a person; that each person has the ability to determine for them what is good and bad; and the therapist to respect the subjective experience of a person unconditionally. These five major characteristics of existential-humanistic psychology are interrelated and interdependent.⁴²⁰

Rogers made heavy use of the work of Husserl and Heidegger, giving this psychological method a deep focus on observing the unique conscious experience of the individual and their perception of reality.⁴²¹ The experience of the client's subjective or conscious experience was to be listened to without any judgment, bias, expectation, or comparison. Rogers believed that only

⁴¹⁷ David J. Cain, Kevin Keenan, and Shawn Rubin, eds., *Humanistic psychotherapies: Handbook of research and practice* (Washington: American Psychological Association, 2016), 3-54.

⁴¹⁸ Carl Rogers, "Some Thoughts Regarding the Current Philosophy of the Behavioral Sciences," *The Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 2 (1965): 182-94.

⁴¹⁹ Paul Wachtel and Stanley Messer, *Theories of psychotherapy: Origins and evolution* (Washington: American Psychological Association, 1997), 97-129.

⁴²⁰ John Shaffer, *Humanistic Psychology* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1978), 15.

⁴²¹ Howard Kendler, "Psychology and Phenomenology: A Clarification," *American Psychologist* 60, no. 4 (2005): 318-24.

through understanding the individual's consciously perceived experience that the therapist or counselor can truly assist a person in dealing with his or her own issues.

Rogers' style of therapy shares many commonalities with the existential style of philosophizing because they share the same principles, or themes, as mentioned previous in this chapter. The therapist, like the existentialist, seeks transcendence. They desire that the client transcend a current state of self to live in authenticity. The therapist believes the path to transcendence begins from the individual's fully integrated experience in the world. The therapist desires the client to be responsible for their own values and meaning in their life. And, the therapist desires the client to see that their individual choice and action has impact on the world around them.

Further, as with seemingly all of the existential writers who do not wish to be categorized or placed into a box, so follows the existential-humanistic therapist. The therapist is against categorizing or labeling the client in any way, therefore, the individual's experienced reality is unique and not something to be labeled with a diagnosis. The simple aim of the therapist is to guide the client into their authenticity, and it is the client that will ultimately pave the way beyond their self-illusion and into their actualized authenticity.

A method that acts to guide an individual towards authenticity, according to Rogers' style of therapy, is a requirement that the therapist be authentic within themselves, while engaging the client.⁴²² There is a type of inner and outer congruency that Rogers requires. In being genuine

⁴²² . Patricia M. Raskin, Barry A. Farber, and Debora Brink, *The Psychotherapy of Carl Rogers.: Cases and Commentary* (New York: Guilford Press, 1998), 84-94. This could be argued as simply impossible. This impossibility is suggested by Maria Bowen, a close friend and colleague of Rogers, in her book *The Myth of Non-Directiveness*. Rogers himself is not sure it is actually possible for any individual to live in a state of congruence. So, while the goal of the client is perfect congruence within oneself, and the therapist brings this congruence out by being congruent themselves, congruence may simply be an illusion itself. It is also possible for congruence to become another ideal that causes individual's stress as they fail to meet it. This would run counter-productive to the

with a client, the client is then free to risk his or herself by also being transparent or genuine.

Transparency (described also as authenticity or genuineness) with oneself is a freeing act between the client and the therapist. Rogers explains the role of genuineness as method in his counseling when he stated:

Genuineness in therapy means that the therapist is his actual self during his encounter with his client. Without facade, he openly has the feelings and attitudes that are flowing in him at the moment. This involves self-awareness; that is, the therapist's feelings are available to him to his awareness - and he is able to live them, to experience them in the relationship, and to communicate them if they persist. The therapist encounters his client directly, meeting him person to person. He is being himself, not denying himself.

It does mean, however, that the therapist denies to himself none of the feelings he is experiencing and that he is willing to experience transparently any persistent feelings that exist in the relationship and to let these be known to his client. It means avoiding the temptation to present a facade or hide behind a mask of professionalism, or to assume a confessional-professional attitude.

It is not simple to achieve such reality. Being real involves the difficult task of being acquainted with the flow of experiencing going on within oneself, a flow marked especially by complexity and continuous change.⁴²³

As the therapist is authentic around the client, so too the client will begin to be authentic.

The act of growing in authenticity involves removing the masks that are not true to the person.

The masks that people show to the outside world, when different from the inside, develop an incongruency that leads to discomfort in life. Authenticity of the therapist initiates authenticity within the client, and so begins a process that heals the individual, through congruency to themselves.

client and therapist if congruency is made into another ideal among many that a person should be, but isn't. The counter-argument to this view is that these critiques of Rogers' theory dismiss the fundamental assumptions of the approach (actualizing tendency, self-authority and self-directivity of the client) and proceed with criticism from other frames of reference. See Germain Lietaer, J. Rombauts, and van Balen, *Client-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy in the Nineties* (Leuven: University Press, 1990).

⁴²³ Silvano Arieti, *Adult Clinical Psychiatry* (New York: Basic Books, 1974), 183-200.

At point of intellectual agreement between Rogers and Tillich exist in the notion of acceptance of others and self. Acceptance is categorized by Tillich's term agape and paralleled in Rogers' term congruence or authenticity. Tillich and Rogers had a discussion together, that was filmed, and in this discussion, they teased out points of agreement between one another's work.⁴²⁴ They concluded together that acceptance is really what they both mean when they speak of agape and authenticity. Ultimately, between the two of them, what can be agreed upon that changes both individuals and humanity, is acceptance. Agape and authenticity, through their discussion, can be viewed as synonymous to the idea of acceptance.

The path of transcending into authenticity initiates at the seedbed of the client's emotion. It is the felt and acknowledged emotions that allow for an individual to be in an awareness of their authenticity or inauthenticity, as they are mindful of their present emotions. For Rogers, incongruency exists within an individual when the way the individual perceives themselves to be does not overlap with an ideal that society has inferred that the individual should meet.

This incongruency is signaled to the individual through the emotions of stress, anxiety, and anguish, among other unpleasant pleasant inner feelings. The further the distance between the individual's perception of self and the outer ideal, the more intense the unpleasant emotion is experienced. The more incongruence, the more suffering. Rogers utilized the word *neurosis* in his writings as a synonym for incongruency. It simply means being out of synch with your own true self.

⁴²⁴ Saybrook University, "A Dialogue with Carl Rogers and Paul Tillich Part 1," June 26, 2012, video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gHSKdX66tY&t=1187s>.

The gap between an ideal and the individual's self-perception that causes unpleasant feelings is rooted in the question of one's inherent worth. The question of self-worth is triggered through comparison. It becomes difficult for a person to actualize themselves into the person they naturally want to be when society often suggests different ideals that are to be wanted, attained, and valued.⁴²⁵

Dr. George Boeree, American psychologist and professor emeritus at Shippensburg University, explains the Rogerean struggle between the perceived self and the ideal self: "Our society also leads us astray with conditions of worth. As we grow up, our parents, teachers, peers, the media, and others, only give us what we need when we show we are 'worthy,' rather than just because we need it."⁴²⁶

Boeree explains through examples the passive conditioning that occurs in childhood that relates to self-worth. For example, he says: "we get a drink when we finish our class, we get something sweet when we finish our vegetables, and most importantly, we get love and affection if and only if we 'behave!'"⁴²⁷

This type of familial and societal conditioning is very powerful. The power of this conditioning is perhaps what brings Heidegger to encourage individuals to break away from viewing themselves as merely an intersection of social roles and titles. As illustrated in chapter

⁴²⁵ There is an internal force (the actualizing tendency) in each individual which is the motivational force for change; the desire to be themselves outwardly as they find themselves inwardly. This force is always constructive and directed towards developing the potentialities of the individual. This force is promoted by the therapist's congruence, and by the client's perception of the therapist's experience of unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding of the client's frame of reference.

⁴²⁶ George Boeree, "Carl Rogers," *Personality Theories*, accessed December 12, 2018, <http://webpace.ship.edu/cgboer/rogers.html>.

⁴²⁷ Ibid.

three, the human being is not a doorknob.⁴²⁸ Their life purpose is not going to be found at the intersection of their environment.⁴²⁹ While he was not a psychologist, Heidegger may have caught a glimpse into the destructive disfunction caused by a person when they do not live as they really want to live.

This perhaps leaves an individual lost within the intersection of roles, simply to meet the outside conditions of self-worth. Boeree explains further the power of conditioned value: “we bend ourselves into a shape determined, not by our organismic valuing or our actualizing tendency, but by a society that may or may not truly have our best interests at heart. A ‘good little boy or girl’ may not be a healthy or happy boy or girl!”⁴³⁰

Critiques against Rogers’ approach to psychology concern themselves with a frustration that may be felt among clients. Because the basis of this type of psychology is existential in nature, the requirement that the client find answers within themselves can be frustrating to some.⁴³¹ Rogers also noted that certain clients, such as those who entered therapy expecting practical advice, were likely to become disillusioned by nondirective therapy and drop out quickly.⁴³² Stephen Joseph, a professor of psychology at Nottingham University says that:

At the time, the main therapies were based on the idea that the therapist is like a doctor who is able to offer expert advice to the patient. In contrast, Rogers proposed that people need to rely less on the judgments of others—and instead turn inwards to themselves as the best expert on what to do. Rogers felt people were their own best experts.⁴³³

⁴²⁸ Rachel Nelson, “The Salutogenic Effects Of Awe Told Existentially.” *Think 21*, no. 60 (2022): 91–104. doi:10.1017/S1477175621000361.

⁴²⁹ Ibid.

⁴³⁰ George Boeree, “Carl Rogers,” *Personality Theories*, accessed December 12, 2018, <http://webspace.ship.edu/cgboer/rogers.html>.

⁴³¹ Benjamin DeMott, “Mr. Rogers Neighborhood,” *Psychology Today*, 1979, 90-95.

⁴³² Ibid.

⁴³³ Stephen Joseph, “What Is Non-Directive Therapy?,” *Psychology Today*, 2014, <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/what-doesnt-kill-us/201408/what-is-non-directive-therapy>.

The therapist is not going to provide the solutions to get well or to provide a diagnosis. Another aspect viewed as negative and inherited from existential philosophy is the opposition to deterministic laws, namely that of science as it plays a role in the field of psychology.

An existential psychological approach supports free will which expresses itself as an opposition of the classification and guidelines for treatment, aligning them to deterministic laws. Accordingly, determinism states that there is only a single course of events that is possible, which contradicts the nature of free will. This echoes the work of Nietzsche and his resistance to the existence of universals, including those given by science.⁴³⁴

Another critique to the fault of Rogers' style of therapy is from Leslie Margolin. A 2017 publication in *The Journal of Humanistic Psychology* argues that "nondirective" Rogerian psychotherapy operates as a trope for power. This is partly based on Edwin Kahn's observation that "nondirective therapists may be less mindful of their own fallibility than other therapists, less wary of their capacity to influence clients, and therefore, less prepared to interrogate the ways they might actually be influencing them."⁴³⁵

The effect is to say that "the notion of a client-therapist relationship without coercive effects is utopian."⁴³⁶ However, Margolin caveats that this does not imply the futility of this kind of relationship. It does not imply that people cannot perform effectively as psychotherapists or that Rogerean theory is not true. It simply concludes that in particular, Rogerian psychotherapy,

⁴³⁴ Non-directiveness is often a perplexing concept in psychotherapy and, at times, dismissed as impossible to attain.

⁴³⁵ Leslie Margolin, "Rogerian Psychotherapy and the Problem of Power: A Foucauldian Interpretation." *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 60, no. 1 (January 2020): 130–43. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022167816687640>.

⁴³⁶ Ibid.

should be practiced more realistically by the therapists recognizing that power will inevitably enter into therapy.⁴³⁷

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter outlined two theologians of the 20th century whose work was greatly influenced by existentialism: Rudolf Bultmann and Paul Tillich. Bultmann and Tillich were heavily influenced by Heidegger and went on to construct some of the most creative theology ever developed. Bultmann attempted to demythologize the New Testament by engaging existence itself; this allowed the timeless content of the New Testament to emerge and separate itself from that which is myth.

Tillich's theology developed into a type of ontology that gave answers to the questions that were posed by existentialism, through the use of Christian symbols.⁴³⁸ The answers he gave were about the concept of essentialization and Spiritual Presence as a catalyst to it. As a result of these answers, this thesis seeks to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Secondly, this chapter introduced the psychological method developed by Carl Rogers in the 20th century. Rogers' existential approach to therapy constructed a form of therapy that prompted the client to work out their own solutions towards transcending an incongruent self and actualizing the client's authentic self. Rogers kept a deep focus on the unique conscious

⁴³⁷ Ibid.

⁴³⁸ Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre and Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 150. Tillich responds with his work, most directly to Sartre's existentialism.

experience of the individual, their perception of reality, and understanding that the client's perception, is their reality.

Rogers expressed a type of consequential authenticity that resulted when a therapist was authentic towards their own client. As such, Rogers required his therapist to be authentic, or genuine, to the best of their ability. Authenticity breeds authenticity, through the environment of pure acceptance without judgement, that consequently followed it. Rogers felt that most anxiety, stress, and unpleasant feelings were the result of an external ideal trying to be met that is not true to the individual's inner reality or experience of self.

The issue of self-worth sits behind the pursuit of external rather than internal desires. The unpleasant feelings act as a signal that identifies to the person when they are being inauthentic. The unpleasant feelings seek to point the person back on the course of being themselves, much like a guide. This observation of Rogers, rooted in existential observation, is key to implementing a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

This has provided a limited review of the evolution of the influence of existentialism on the fields of theology and psychology. This review is limited in scope because it needs to circle near to Rogers and Tillich only for the purpose of this thesis. The influence existentialism had upon both fields led to the production of the work of Carl Rogers and Paul Tillich. Tillich's use of existentialism led to the development of theological system that possess several limitations to be addressed by this thesis in order to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Rogers' psychology, influenced by existentialism, led to the observation of an internal guidance system seemingly existent in all of his clients. This system seeks to guide the individual back to living authentically, rather than living to find external approval. This observation is key as this thesis seeks to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Chapter five will follow as the onset of part two of this thesis. It will begin with a discussion Tillich's doctrine of Spirit, as well as its limitations and then impart the philosophy of existentialism as a means to examine the structures of life that Tillich would claim to be made up of, or consist, of Spiritual Presence. Chapter five will continue on towards a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Part Two

Articulating Tillich's Spiritual Presence with Existentialism

Part two of this thesis consists of chapters five through nine. Its aim is to utilize existentialism provided by the works of Sartre and Rogers in order to observe, and therefore, articulate how Tillich's Spiritual Presence guides humanity from the structure of life. Further, to observe what the true Essence is that Spiritual Presence is essentializing humanity towards. Through an examination of life, Tillich's ontological and symbolic claims, move beyond merely words into articulation. Through articulation, identification of the true Essence that Spiritual Presence aims to provide a revelation of can be described.

This will begin in chapter five with a discussion Tillich's doctrine of Spirit, as well as its limitations. Chapter six will then impart the philosophy of existentialism as a means to examine the structures of life that Tillich would claim to be made up of, or consist, of Spiritual Presence. An understanding of the existentially infused psychology of Carl Rogers will be presented in chapter seven alongside the philosophy of Jean-Paul Sartre. The two of them combined deliver a thorough observation of what an individual may come to know about their true Essence by perceiving the world external to them, as well as what an individual may come to know through their emotions as it lives in relations to those external perceptions.

In chapter eight, the analytical mind can come to terms with its own freedom by an examination of life, likewise, the visceral experience provides an individual with information about itself beyond what its own cognition may be aware of. These are discussed as ways that structure of life itself, also known as Spiritual Presence, guides the human being into an awareness of its true Essence. Of this awareness provided by an examination of life itself, it can

be said that Spiritual Presence does provide a certain universal *telos* for human beings. That *telos*, as presented through Sartre and Rogers, is toward a true Essence that consists of innate freedom and worth. True Essence is to be embodied in the life of every individual and results in the experience of well-being.

This true Essence, as revealed through the structure of life itself, also known as Spiritual Presence, is the universal ontological revelation of God and humanity. It is the point of identity, that is identified from the human being's participation in the life of God through the structures of being.⁴³⁹

This is available through an examination of the human being in life. Because the structural elements of our finite life are grounded in being-itself, we are thereby able to understand something about God through an examination of the structure of our own life and beings.⁴⁴⁰ This is really to say that there is a universal, ontological revelation of God which stems from man's participation in the life of God through the structures of being.⁴⁴¹

The universal ontological revelation of God and humanity, provided by Spiritual Presence, as the structure of life, is thus free, creative, transcendent, ex-nihilo, choice-maker, and responsible nature. This is the point of shared identity that can be taken between God and human beings, from Sartre's analysis of an individual living in relation to the perceived world. This revelation is made possible by the structure of life, also known as, Spiritual Presence, whom reveals such a point of identity through life. This point of identity is the revelation given through

⁴³⁹ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham: Durham University, 1971), 29.

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ Ibid.

the observations of Sartre and Rogers. This develops Tillich's theology beyond symbology and into the realm of descriptions.

Chapter nine will review the limitations of Tillich's work and discuss if those limitations have found adequate remedy and if Spiritual Presence has been articulated. Lastly, given the examination of life that has taken place through the use of existentialism, in order to arrive at an articulation of Spiritual Presence as it universally guides humanity, the term existential *pneumatology* is used to capture, in short-hand, the methodology and articulation that has been arrived at in this thesis.

This articulation, through an existential examination for a *telos* of life, does serve to show that life has an aim to which is guides humanity in a universal manner. It can be observed and it therefore articulated. Its ends can also be stated. Tillich called it the structure of being, or life itself. This was synonymous with Spiritual Presence. Beyond Tillich, this *telos* remains true, be it by Spiritual Presence or not. When life is examined, this *telos* remains.

Chapter Five

Paul Tillich's Theology in Relation to the Doctrine of Spirit

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter connected the influence of existentialism with theology and psychology. The importance of that connection will shine in this chapter. This chapter is a dive into the theology of Paul Tillich, particularly his Doctrine of the Spirit. The theology he developed is a direct result of existential influence. The specific ways his theology was cultivated to dialogue with existentialism and the specific ways he thought existentialism to function are discussed as possible causes of his theological limitations. Likewise, the logic to utilizing existentialism as a way to correct the limitations will be given.

5.2 Limitations to Tillich's *Systematic Theology*

The following points of limitation are given in consideration and reflection to the research questions posed through a study of Tillich's *Systematic Theology*.⁴⁴²

The first limitation regards Tillich's key-notion of essentialization through Spiritual Presence. Essentialization through Spirit completes Tillich's entire work, yet, the writing available by Tillich is restricted to the last few years of his life. Due to such, extensive writing on the topic is unavailable; arguably, its concepts remain incomplete. Volume three of *Systematic*

⁴⁴² For a survey of the basic criticism levied against Tillich and Tillich's own response, see "reply to interpretation and criticism," Tillich engages many of the sensitive areas: his lack of consistency, molding truth until it fits his system, the ontologism in his epistemology, etc. Kegley, Charles Kegley and Robert Bretall, *The Theology of Paul Tillich* (New York: Macmillan, 1961), 329-349.

Theology did not correlate essentialization to the concepts in volume one or two in order to synthesis it as a total system.⁴⁴³

Further, because Tillich's concept of Spirit as essentializer emerged late, scholars that studied volume one and two did so without adequate view of what would become the center of his entire theological system; their work involved the essence-existence dynamic only. Thus, scholarship that involves the total process of essence- existence-essentialization understandably lacks, as a result. The lack of understanding given by Tillich to how Spiritual Presence operates, compounded with the weight Tillich gave to the Spirit as the catalyst of essentialization in volume three, has left *Systematic Theology* discernably incomplete.⁴⁴⁴ Andrew O'Neill, in *Tillich: A Guide for the Perplexed*, wrote that the significance of this point cannot be underestimated.⁴⁴⁵

The first limitation gives rise to a second limitation. The Spirit, or what Tillich referred to as Spiritual Presence, is said to continually guide humanity and history towards its *telos*: the reunification of disrupted essence (existence) with undisrupted essence – essentialized being or New Being. What Tillich has yet to explain in his theology of essentialization towards manifested New Being, is *how* Spiritual Presence guides human life to become undisrupted.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴³ See David Kelsey's *The Fabric of Paul Tillich's Theology*, p 82; Pan-Chui Lai's *Theology of Religions*, p 115; Wolfhart Pannenberg's 'Review of Systematic Theology Vol 3 by Paul Tillich', *Dialogue*, issue 14, summer 1965, p 229-32; Heywood Thomas' 'Introduction' in Paul Tillich's *On the Boundary*, p xv.

⁴⁴⁴ Andrew O'Neill, *Tillich: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 93. O'Neill remarked: "The significance of this point cannot be underestimated. Most of Tillich scholarship is focused on the first volume, while the bulk of systematic theology is focus on existence in terms of the Spirit, and, therefore, humanity within the process of essentialization. Placing the Spirit at the center of Tillich's system produces an entirely different perspective than if the doctrine of God as being itself, or Christ as New Being, are taken as central. The divine Spirit is Tillich's central definition of divinity."

⁴⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁴⁶ Alexander J. McKelway, *Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 112-113. Tillich's use of the term *disrupted* is directly associated to estrangement. Tillich uses the term *limited* essence as well to describe the same. Disruption is the split between humanity's essence, or its essential humanity; the experience of ambiguity towards his or her true essence inside time and space existence. Existence itself is the cause of ambiguity, the reason for the disruption; the reason why existence is the cause of ambiguity that lends to

Tillich's picture of essentialization and New Being is said by some scholars to be too formless, as it speaks ontologically.⁴⁴⁷ The formlessness of Tillich's New Being has created a questionableness about his theology. The vagueness and abstractness of his concepts develop concern as to if the New Being is even a possibility.⁴⁴⁸

Further, the ontological start point lacks a specificity that is required for Tillich to advance his theology into an understanding of how Spiritual Presence actively guides an individual intimately in their existence through essentialization, or, how to identify if an individual has manifested New Being. Tillich has associated a platonic description of essence as the ideal, the requirement then simultaneously emerges for a description of this ideal to be put into words and described.⁴⁴⁹ This essence, or ideal, is the image of God.

disrupted essence is not clarified-it simply is that way for Tillich. Tillich offers an interpretation of the fall that expresses a good essence and a disrupted existence. For Tillich, humans are free and responsible social-rational beings who are able to use their freedom that is available as a finite being to contradict what he or she essentially "ought" to be. The myth points to an awareness of dialectal incident, the awakening of humans to their existential estrangement from essential goodness. At the heart of it, Tillich is simply laying claim to a belief that humanity holds some type of image of God, and we do not embody that image because something or another within the realm of existence has clouded our knowing.

⁴⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁴⁸ Michael Palmer, "Correlation and Ontology: A Study in Tillich's Christology," *Downside Review* 93, no. 323 (1973): 122-23.

⁴⁴⁹ Tillich does not deliver a description of the *Imago Dei*, synonymous to true Essence, that is then shared and embedded in humanity and for humanity to express. He does however make some revealing statements that seemingly do not answer to the image of God, but point to a connection and a need for humanity to find their own spirit in order to know the Spirit of God. *ST III*, p 22, produces a contrast of Spirit to spirit. Tillich states that "without knowing what spirit is, one cannot know what Spirit is." Spirit is a dimension of life and involves two notes: power and meaning. It appears only in humanity as far as Tillich is concerned. Spirit also transcends all these categories. In *ST III*, p 111-114, Tillich states that "The Spirit is the presence of the Divine Life within creaturely life. The Spirit of God is not a separated being." Again, for Tillich, to understand Spirit you must understand your own spirit. However, Tillich uses this to dedicate many pages towards his immanence, the connection that exists between God and humanity. Rather, it would seem, he does not go where he stated one must go in order to understand Spirit. He remains in the realm of discussion Essence or Spirit, but does not try to understand Spirit by understanding spirit; an examination of the human condition would reveal Spirit, according to Tillich's own theological concept. His failure to investigate this concept fully hinders the argument for immanence. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 111-114, 22.

If the image of God cannot be stated by Tillich, then should New Being ever be manifested by anyone other than Jesus the Christ, all would be blind to its manifested reality.⁴⁵⁰ Secondly, by failing to state what the image of God (true Essence) consists, *how* Spiritual Presence guides humanity in essentialization will remain without conception. Tillich's platonic stance blended with his theological concepts of essentialization and New Being leave his theology a hypothesis that needs more attention.⁴⁵¹

A third problem to be identified is Tillich's definition of philosophy. There are significant problems with Tillich's definition of philosophy in the introduction of *Systematic Theology*. One problem is that Tillich offers an overly narrow⁴⁵² definition of philosophy.⁴⁵³ He frames the definition of philosophy with logical positivism. This overly empirical characterization of

⁴⁵⁰ David Hopper, "Towards An Understanding The Thought of Paul Tillich," *The Princeton seminary Bulletin*, vol 55, 1952, p 42; Kenan B. Osborne, *New Being a Study on the Relationship between Conditioned and Unconditioned Being According to Paul Tillich* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1969), 173. See for further discussion on Tillich's theology of Essential humanity as Logos; the image of God contained in the image of man. Hopper stated that "Tillich has a reoccurring idea that man is a microcosmos of God." This type of thought is valuable when considering why Tillich may not be able to define the image of God, perhaps because he has utilized ontology or essence at the start point. However, if humanity is a microcosmos of God, there is value in looking to the human image to discover a possible definition. Otherwise, Tillich seems to remain at a standstill, logically, for identifying a point where a human can know he has matched the essence or image of God without limit.

⁴⁵¹ Kenan B. Osborne, *New Being a Study on the Relationship between Conditioned and Unconditioned Being According to Paul Tillich* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1969), 173. Kenan Osborne offers criticism on Tillich. He concludes that Tillich's theology as a whole is worthless because it is unable to move beyond the point of hypothesis. He also argues that Tillich's entire theological system requires a serious suspension of belief because the reader must just take Tillich for his word in all of his theological formulas. He stated that "If one thinks different about essence-existence-essentialization, etc. Tillich's theology does not pass. And it has been one of the main themes of this present study to point out how questionable his basic concepts are and consequently how questionable his system as such is."

⁴⁵² Narrow is the word that critic Andrew O'Neill uses in his work *Tillich a guide for the perplexed*. I have chosen to use his word within this thesis in order to allude to the limitations that Tillich has imposed upon philosophy's interaction with developing his theology. If these limitations come to be imposed by Tillich from a bias, an ignorance, or on purpose to mold truth to fit his system, or a mix of all of the above is beyond a statement that I can make with certainty. However, the term narrow for the purpose of its use in this thesis assumes his imposed limits of philosophy in his work by way of any of those possibilities.

⁴⁵³ Tillich acknowledges that there are many different kinds of philosophy, however, his inventory within *Systematic Theology* falls within two categories only: natural idealism and logical positivism. The conflation of idealism and natural idealism is the result of Tillich's narrow definition of their common origination in an experience of mystical *a priori*. When philosophy is not naturalism or the epistemology and ethics identified with neo-Kantians' of the 19th century, it is logical positivism. "These caricatures are never explained by Tillich...and fall short of an adequate definition of philosophy." Andrew O'Neill's *Tillich: A Guide for the Perplexed and Systematic Theology*, vol I, 9.

philosophy seems to confuse the precision of philosophical investigation with that in scientific testing.⁴⁵⁴

Philosophy is characterized as detached objectivity, with a passion only for truth, not for the personal.⁴⁵⁵ This is evident when Tillich stated: “although driven by the philosophical *erōs*, the philosopher tries to maintain a detached objectivity toward being and its structures. He tries to exclude the social, personal, and historical conditions which might distort an objective vision of reality.”⁴⁵⁶

Another problem that is visible within his system, and probably resultant of his narrow definition of philosophy, is the concept of *logos* that “can and does mean many different things.”⁴⁵⁷ While Tillich makes a distinction between a universal *logos* and a concrete *logos* he identified them as non-contradictory objects of philosophy and theology. If philosophy and theology are in discussion of the same *logos* from their respective positions, Tillich’s concept of ultimate concern that suggests theology has something more to offer than philosophy does not hold. There is no reason, aside from Tillich’s definition of philosophy as positivism or empiricism, that should place philosophy in the role of handmaid to theology.⁴⁵⁸

⁴⁵⁴ Bernard Martin, *The Existentialist Theology of Paul Tillich*, 33. Lewis Ford, “Tillich’s Implicit Natural Theology,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 24, vol 3, (1971): 257-261.

⁴⁵⁵ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 22.

⁴⁵⁶ Ibid. Also recall the characteristic of existential philosophy from previous chapters of this dissertation. Existential philosophy adheres to the totality of the human experience; existentialism is not characterized by any of the negatives that Tillich has placed upon philosophy as a whole, but seems to include and uphold those matters that Tillich states as requirements for a correct vision of reality.

⁴⁵⁷ Andrew O’Neill, *Tillich: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 45.

⁴⁵⁸ This exemplifies Tillich’s position of ontology as superior to philosophy; ontology has authority and not philosophy. Tillich holds the view that philosophers are either concerned with matters of preliminary importance or are simply hidden theologians. This view does not allow for philosophy to ever be corrective towards Tillich’s theology; it does have authority, as Tillich sees it, to inform. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology I* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973) 25.

This narrow definition of philosophy extends into an issue with Tillich's method of correlation in his system. He is slightly misleading with his use in terminology. Correlating theology and philosophy implies "a formal equation of two sets of data, rather than expanding the legitimating terms of what counts as experience and how to relate it."⁴⁵⁹ Tillich's tendency to reduce philosophy to positivism or empiricism has stopped even the possible contribution of philosophy in developing and informing Tillich's theology.

Under this criticism, the method of correlation never quite took place, leaving Tillich's system of theology imbalanced. This imbalance has caught the attention of some scholars who view Tillich's method of correlation as "the elevation of inherently religious ideas of estrangement (sin) and reconciliation (salvation) into the framework of Christian theology."⁴⁶⁰ McKelway has expressed a similar concern as he noted "instead of including the man-side of the dialect, the God-side of the relationship is the point of view of Tillich in *Systematic Theology*."⁴⁶¹

A fourth limitation is the frequent use of "a willful suspension of disbelief"⁴⁶² that must be applied to Tillich's entire theology by the reader. The reader must accept an endorsement of specific elements within classical German idealism. Not to accept the specific elements that he presupposes will jeopardize Tillich's entire explanation of the incarnation, redemption, and

⁴⁵⁹ Andrew O'Neill, *Tillich: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 46.

⁴⁶⁰ Guy Hammond, "An Examination of Tillich's Method of Correlation," *Journal of Bible and Religion* 32, no. 3 (1964): 251.

⁴⁶¹ Alexander McKelway, *Systematic Theology of Paul Tillich: A Review* (Louisville, KY: John Knox Press, 1964), 48.

⁴⁶² Kenan Osbourne argues this point strongly in *New Being*. For Osbourne, Tillich's entire system is made up of straws because the entire thing requires a willful suspension of belief without any validation towards his initial concepts that he builds upon. Kenan B. Osbourne, *New Being a Study on the Relationship between Conditioned and Unconditioned Being According to Paul Tillich* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1969).

ultimate sanctification; all of it rests upon a relational and immanent approach only. For that, critics like Keith Hamilton say that Tillich's theology is never able to "get off the ground."⁴⁶³

His interpretation of the God to human relationship will be questionable for those readers whom hold belief in traditional westernized Christian thought. Without evidence of plausibility built into his theological concepts rooted in elements of German idealism, his readers must apply a willful suspension of disbelief. Kenan Osborn commented with strong concern over Tillich's presupposed acceptance of immanence and relationality by his reading audience.

He argues that Tillich's presuppositions do not validate his theological concepts as a working hypothesis. Rather, the fact that Osbourne has to willfully suspend his disbelief of immanence and relationality to hear Tillich out, start to finish, is evidence of a non-working hypothesis: "if he were accurate there would be no need for the continual accepting of Tillich's thoughts as a working hypothesis."⁴⁶⁴ It is very possible that Tillich's complex theology was not taken as serious as it could have, and maybe should have, simply because he did not offer some sort of plausibility towards immanence and relationality. This point of view relates back to Tillich's pushing away from philosophy as empiricism or positivism during his time. His failure to apply validity or scope to his claims left it dangling without warrant. John Randall Jr wrote:

It is Tillich's epistemology which seems the least adequate part of his thought, and raises the most questions. The one strand of the philosophical tradition which he does not take very seriously, and consequently fails to illuminate, is the empiricism stemming from Locke. This he is inclined to dismiss as the mere reflection of a transitory bourgeois culture.⁴⁶⁵

⁴⁶³ Kenneth Hamilton, *The System and the Gospel; a Critique of Paul Tillich* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1967); Kenneth Hamilton, "Paul Tillich and The Idealistic Appraisal of Christianity," in *The Scottish Journal of Theology*, vol 13, 1960, 33-44;" Kenneth Hamilton, "Schleiermacher and Relational Theology," in *The Journal of Religion*, vol 44, 1964, 29-39.

⁴⁶⁴ Kenan Osborn, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 187.

⁴⁶⁵ John Randall Jr, "The Ontology of Paul Tillich," in Charles W. Kegley and Robert W. Bretall (eds.), *The Theology of Paul Tillich* (New York, Pilgrim Press, 1982), 133-4.

Another facet of Tillich's writing that requires a willful suspension of disbelief is his predominant view of essence as positive and existence as negative. Tillich's concept of existence is abridged and devalued. There is not an authentic version of existence for Tillich, there is only estranged existence. In suspected bias, Eugene Peters has accused Tillich of "bootlegging" the positive attributes that belong to existence and claiming them to be attributes of essence.⁴⁶⁶ On what basis does Tillich get to claim this predominance of essence? Why Should his definition of existence be accepted?⁴⁶⁷

Further, one must accept the situation of modern humanity that is stated by Tillich as the true situation modern humanity sits within. Tillich writes to answer the questions of existentialism through Christian symbol because, for Tillich, the modern human is in a state of despair as he or she mourns the loss of God through the church, where meaning had always been found prior to the death of God movement.

Tillich's modern situation is questioned by Harvey Cox, Paul van Buren, and Gabriel Vahanian that argue modern humanity is secularized, urbanized, and of a scientific western world. Modern humanity is beyond the death of God and does not find itself in need for a rebirth of religion.⁴⁶⁸ These scholars argue that Tillich did not ask the right question concerning the

⁴⁶⁶ Eugene Peters, "Tillich's Doctrine of Essence, Existence, and the Christ," *Journal of Religion* 43 (1963): 295–302.

⁴⁶⁷ Bernhard Welte opposes Tillich's view of estrangement as existence as a negative. Welte thinks, rather, that essence is estrangement also, and therefore a positive. Welte has also written substantially on Chalcedon's homoousios hemin in other essays and journals. His fine-tuning of Neo-Scholastic philosophy and theology by means of an emphasis on an ontology of participation is an attempt to make Christology more responsive to historicity. Anthony Godzieba, *Bernhard Welte's Fundamental Theological Approach to Christology* (New York: P. Lang, 1994), 51-80.

⁴⁶⁸ Harvey Gallagher Cox, *The Secular City* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968); Van Buren Paul M., *The Secular Meaning of the Gospel: Based on an Analysis of Its Language* (New York-London, 1966); Gabriel Vahanian, *The Death of God: The Culture of Our Post-Christian Era* (Muriwai Books, 2018).

modern predicament at all, making his theology empty for modern readers. Why should the reader just accept Tillich's interpretation of the modern situation as being true?

The cumulative effect of the above limitations causes Tillich's system to be incomplete and in need of remedy at various weak points. Within Tillich's own system, his theology does hold up, however, once any of his basic concepts are questioned, it does not.⁴⁶⁹ Until grounds exist that develop a plausibility for his basic theological concepts, Tillich's *Systematic Theology* remains incomplete.⁴⁷⁰

5.3 Key Themes to *Systematic Theology*

Tillich does not use the term unconditioned synonymously with God because the term God is a concrete symbol made by culture to express its ultimate concern: the unconditioned that is beyond expression.⁴⁷¹ The God who reveals is not an object as expressed by humanity and culture or being, but is beyond all of this as the ground of, or power of being itself. Humanity's ontological grounding in the unconditioned, is a grounding in the power of being itself. Symbols, for Tillich, are the "adequate and necessary vehicle for communicating and experience of revelation,"⁴⁷² yet do not encapsulate revelation itself. Because of this, symbols are viewed as a medium of self-transcendence.

⁴⁶⁹ Kenan Osborne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012). See Kenan Osborne's *New Being* for a critique on how severely questionable Tillich's basic concepts are that are used to build his entire theological platform of *Systematic Theology*.

⁴⁷⁰ Kenan Osborne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 187.

⁴⁷¹ Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture* (Cary, NC: Oxford University Press, 1959), 24.

⁴⁷² Daniel Calloway, "An Analysis of the Doctrine of Revelation with Emphasis On the Perspectives of Karl Barth and Paul Tillich," *Brethren Life and Thought* 37 (1992): 241.

For instance, the Spirit's presence is mediated by ordinary words, but the Spirit is not bound by particular words.⁴⁷³ This implies that all literature, not only the Bible, can communicate the Word of God.⁴⁷⁴ An awareness of the unconditional is present in the human cognition, because it is always already present. This concept puts the power back with each individual to dialect with the unconditional directly, though symbols mediate an awareness, symbols remain not the power of being itself. Grounded being, as humanity, is within the ground of being, making Spiritual Presence consistently and unavoidably in communion with it. This allows human cognition to be grasped by the ground of its cognition.⁴⁷⁵

The symbol of the Christ is associated with the *kairos*. Jesus as the Christ is *kairos* for Tillich, as Christ was the central event of history in which the power of being itself was revealed. This gave meaning to various other *kairoi* in history. The symbol of the Christ is a paradox, it is the revelation of the unconditioned within the conditions of time and space existence. The symbol of the cross in the Christian faith also becomes absolute paradox.⁴⁷⁶ This is paradox according to Tillich because the unconditioned reality has become united with conditioned existence.

⁴⁷³ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 127.

⁴⁷⁴ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 125; Pan-Chiu Lai, *Towards a Trinitarian Theology of Religions: A Study of Paul Tillich's Thought* (Kampen, the Netherlands: Kok Pharos Pub. House, 1994), 123.

⁴⁷⁵ The passive awareness corresponds to Frederick Schleiermacher's *The Christian Faith*. Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith* (London: Bloomsbury T & T Clark, 2016), 131-141, 492-495. Passive and active senses of awareness of correspond, for Schleiermacher, to the redeeming act of the historical Christ and the subsequent conversion, or continuous justification, of the faithful individual. This bears some resemblance to Tillich's concept of the Christ as the final revelation, and all other subsequent experiences within the faith community, dependent upon it. Also See Tillich's *Systematic Theology Volume I*. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 126-128.

⁴⁷⁶ Mary Ann Stenger, "Paul Tillich's Theory of Theological Norms and the Problems of Relativism and Subjectivism," *The Journal of Religion* 42, no. 4 (1982): 359-75.

This doesn't seem like anything superb until Tillich's concept of estrangement is understood. Estrangement in Tillich's theology is basically the problem that Tillich has assigned to the human condition that has caused the experience of meaninglessness, anxiety, despair, and the entire list of existential themes that became the modern predicament of Tillich's 20th century era. To understand estrangement is to understand how the paradoxical event of Jesus the Christ is being formulated as the solution to the problem of estrangement, outlined by Tillich.

The paradoxical Christ is to serve as the potential that each individual is able to also embody, in order to overcome the problem of estrangement and polarity of being and non-being. Christ is used synonymously with the term *New Being*. New Being is an individual in which the unconditioned is united under the conditions of existence.

Tillich's symbols of the Christian faith (the paradox of Christ and the cross), he has simultaneously provided a remedy to the experience of meaninglessness, despair, anxiety, etc. Tillich has used theology to answer the questions asked by existential philosophy. His use of theology to answer the questions posed by existentialism is what Tillich labeled as answering theology. It has also been called *apologetic* in the sense that it attempts to evidence the Christian faith, through its symbols, as the answer to existential questions.

The problem to be solved within Tillich's theology is his notion of estrangement. For Tillich, estrangement is existence itself. To exist in time and space is to be estranged from an individual's authentic human nature, or essence, that was un-disrupted prior to finite existence. Tillich uses the word non-being to describe finite existence. This cooperates with the term *conditioned* that he commonly uses in contrast to *unconditioned* in volume one of *Systematic Theology*.

An individual's authentic human nature is his or her essence. This essence is conceptually called the image of God: a human being's authentic nature made in the image and likeness of God's nature. God's essence is mankind's essence – the unconditioned. In authentic human nature, the image of God is undisrupted. The issue Tillich claims exists with finite existence is that the individual enters into a sort of disruption between being and non-being. It is no longer balanced and congruent, because a polarity springs up between them. This is not a gap between God and humanity, as would be commonly understood by traditional Christianity of the west as a sort of discontinuity that will require mending.

Tillich utilized German idealism within his theological framework which included the element of immanence and held to the concept of continuity rather than discontinuity between the ground of being and being that is grounded; no disconnect existed. This framework attest for the manner in which Tillich imagined Jesus' purpose in a much different way than John Calvin imagined Jesus within his. The problem that existed to be solved is quite different. One has to create a way for continuity to exist through Jesus on a cross, and the other has to decide what Jesus is doing when continuity already exists. To this extent, they both position Jesus as revelation, but revelation towards differently perceived problems.

Sin, for Tillich, is not a broken holy rule determined by scripture. Sin is simply estrangement, the limited or disrupted essence of God in humanity. To exist is to be estranged from authentic human nature, and to be estranged, is sin. All humanity is in sin because humanity is in time and space existence. Tillich calls the concept of existence being reunited with essence the process of *essentialization*. The triad of essence, existence, and essentialization correspond to the traditional Christian doctrines of a pre-fall creation, fallen humanity, and the Kingdom of God.

Each stage of the triad is related to a person of the Trinity or manifestation of the power of being itself. God creates perfect human essence, the image of God. Christ redeems fallen humanity and Kingdom by the embodiment of undisrupted essence inside existence, thus showing the potential and revealing the unconditioned for humanity. An ever-present Spiritual Presence guides humanity in essentialization, or reconciliation of human existence with its essence.

Because the central problem is estrangement, the solution to estrangement becomes the centerpiece of Tillich's work: essentialization. Because essentialization is the solution to the problem of estrangement, the centerpiece of Tillich's theology shifts to the Spiritual Presence that is responsible for the essentialization process.

While Jesus the Christ was a mediator of the unconditioned in finite existence for humanity, Spiritual Presence is the guide which essentialized Jesus into the Christ, that is also responsible for leading humanity into the same potential. Essentialization unites Being to non-being, the unconditioned to the conditioned, leading to undisrupted essence of God in humankind's existence, making the image of God congruent again and salvation⁴⁷⁷ existent for humanity, as it is reconciled to its authentic nature.

In *Systematic Theology I* and *II*, it appeared as though there was a deadlocked and conflicted being and non-being inside human existence that required the Christ symbol to set forward essentialization. In *Systematic Theology III*, Tillich has reimagined the process of

⁴⁷⁷ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), 109. Salvation is not heaven in the traditional understanding but salvation from the ambiguity, anxiety, meaninglessness, despair, etc. that comes from disrupted essence in an individual's existence. The concept of heaven is existent in the concept of the kingdom of God in Tillich's theology. The Kingdom of God is the concept of each individual experiencing salvation and living in undisrupted essence within existence. A collective of individuals who have manifested into the New Being create the Kingdom of God.

essentialization and assigned Spiritual Presence as the cause. Under the Spiritual Presence, nothing then was ever deadlocked or conflicted to begin with.⁴⁷⁸

The Spiritual Presence has consistently held dialect with being and non-being inside human existence. It is Spiritual Presence, not Christ, that has “elevated the human spirit into the transcendent union of unambiguous life and gives the immediate certainty of re-union with God.”⁴⁷⁹

Again, the center theme of *Systematic Theology* is essentialization. It is the conditioned being’s quest for the unconditioned that takes place through the guidance of Spiritual Presence towards New Being, symbolized by Jesus the Christ. The concept of essentialization rounds off and completes Tillich’s entire work. He writes that essentialization will manifest the New Being in each individual, universally. Sadly, Tillich did not write extensively on this topic, nor did he actually correlate it to the beginning and middle of his system, although it expresses the final *telos* of his entire theological work.

Many authors who have analyzed Tillich’s work have been limited, their analysis covers the essence-existence process, and not the total process: from essence, to existence, to essentialization.⁴⁸⁰ This is because volume three was introduced late in Tillich’s life, giving much time for scholars to become familiar and analyze the concepts in the first two volumes of work; the conditioned quest for the unconditioned and the polarity between being and non-being.

Volume three arrived and threw a wrench in scholarly analysis through a mysterious Spiritual Presence over Jesus as the concluded catalyst of New Being. Further, Tillich does not

⁴⁷⁸ Andrew O’Neill, *Tillich: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: T & T Clark, 2008), 86.

⁴⁷⁹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 128.

⁴⁸⁰ Kenan Osborne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 7.

divulge how Spiritual Presence essentializes humanity into New Being. He just confirms with his words, that it is so. Due to a lack of insight into the catalytic tendencies of Spiritual Presence towards manifestation of New Being, even with volume three available, scholars have little to work with beyond the statement that Spiritual Presence will manifest New Being.

5.4 Three Fundamental Approaches to Tillich's Quest

Tillich provides three fundamental approaches towards developing an understanding of what he calls *quest*. Tillich speaks of conditioned being as grounded being and unconditioned being as the Ground of all being. The dialectal relationship between these two is called a *quest*. It is from this position that this chapter will move forward to explore the depths of Tillich's complex theology.

The first approach applied by Tillich is his self-proclaimed answering theology. This is generated by a general notion of the unity of theology and culture. This is reflected in the form of answering or apologetic theology in which Tillich "answers the questions implied in the 'situation' in the power of the eternal message and with the means provided by the situation whose questions it answers."⁴⁸¹ This situation is for Tillich our modern culture, within which Christianity finds itself; basically, a western modern culture.⁴⁸²

Apologetic theology, for Tillich, claims its place in the cultural world and Christianity. Christianity is something that is in the world and not something alongside the world for Tillich.

⁴⁸¹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 6.

⁴⁸² It was after a trip to Japan that Tillich broadened the base of his answering theology and included the oriental religions and cultures as well. Mircea Eliade, "Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions," *Criterion* 5, (1966): 10-15. This was a memorial issue for Tillich's *Christianity and the Encounter of the World Religions*.

This is contrast to what Tillich called *kerygmatic theology* or the *theology of the Word* as is reflected by Karl Barth's school of thought. Barth's view opposed Tillich's by way of the gospel being represented as a transcendent element in the world that is without common ground in the situation of the world.

The gospel is much like a foreign object that is being thrown at the world. The Christian message is irrelevant because it has no union to the world to make it useful for those within the world – it is narrow and superstitious. Tillich wrote: “since the split between faith unacceptable to culture and culture unacceptable to faith was not possible for me, the only alternative was to attempt to interpret the symbols of faith through expression of our own culture.”⁴⁸³

Tillich avoided *supranaturalism*⁴⁸⁴ and developed a relational theology towards his explanation of the God to human-being relationship, represented by the unconditioned as the ground of the conditioned, in dialect. The perspective of the unity between culture and theology, immanence, and the refusal to accept supernaturalism was the cause of a break between Barth and Tillich. For Tillich there is a relation within God and nature, God and Spirit, God and history. In Barthian interpretation, Tillich claims that Christ has no affinity with humanity.

Christ is a total otherness that leaves humanity, nature, and history a mere negative element.⁴⁸⁵ Tillich's basic presupposition concerning Barth's theology is that creation stood under the judgement of God, under God's unconditioned sovereignty. Christ, however, is from

⁴⁸³ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 3 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 4.

⁴⁸⁴ Ibid, 172. Tillich argues that simply to make God an object of conceptual thought is thereby to locate him within the universe as one among another of his creatures; another idol. He writes, 'In the cognitive realm, everything towards which the cognitive act is directed and considered an object, be it God or a stone. The danger of logical objectification is that it never is merely logical...If God is brought into the subject-object structure of being, he ceases to be the ground of being, and becomes one being among others...He ceases to be the God who is really God.'

⁴⁸⁵ Paul Tillich, “Kritisches und positives Paradox: Eine Auseinandersetzung mit Karl Barth und Friedrich Gogarten,” *Theologische Blätter*, 2 (1923): 263–269.

some other world; he is the absolute Word of God. This makes Christ completely separate from humanity, which does not consist of the absolute Word of God. Christ has nothing to do with humanity and all dialect is removed on the account of Christ's supernaturalism.⁴⁸⁶ Barth's claim of a dialectal theology is fundamentally not dialectal to Tillich; Barth's theology is supranatural and that is its weakness.⁴⁸⁷

Presumed by Tillich of Barthian theology, the supranatural element means the whole world is under judgement and against grace. The whole world is a negative while the supranatural is the only positive. This leads to a dangerous point perceived within Barth's teaching. There is postulated an indifferent and neutral creatureliness that does not have an affinity to or repulsion of the divine or demonic. From Barth's theology also comes his denial of natural theology, his refusal of philosophy, a denial of mysticism as opposed to faith, and a totally non-applicable concept of eschatology.⁴⁸⁸

Tillich refuses to go along with Barth's theology precisely because of his perspective of the God to human relationship: "For Tillich, Barth's theology has become absolute in a supranaturalistic way, which negates man's nature, the world, history...no continuity between old being and New being."⁴⁸⁹ For Tillich, the only possible God to human relationship is

⁴⁸⁶ Ibid, 223.

⁴⁸⁷ Paul Tillich, *What Is Wrong with the "Dialectic" Theology?* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1935), 17.

⁴⁸⁸ A text revised by Tillich himself. Paul Tillich, "Die Politische Bedeutung der Utopie im Leben der Volker," four addresses delivered at the *Deutsche HO'chschule für Politik*, Berlin, Summer, 1951. Paul Tillich, *Schriftenreihe der Deutschen Hochschule für Politik*, (Berlin: Weill, 1953).

⁴⁸⁹ Kenan Osborne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 13.

dialectal. It cannot be a supranaturalistic heteronomy of the Word.⁴⁹⁰ There can only be theonomy, the immanence of the transcendent.⁴⁹¹

Theonomy opposes any type of church versus the world mentality. For Tillich, the church is in the world and the church is secularized. Likewise, the church goer is secularized and not set apart from others in the world. The inverse of this conception is also true. The pagan is not exactly pagan, but experiences immanence and may act just as Christian as any devout Christian because of this.

As Bishop John Robinson, in his “Honest to God Debate” wrote: “indeed many who are Christians find themselves on the same side of those who are not. And among one’s intelligent non-Christian friends one discovers many who are far nearer the Kingdom of heaven than they themselves can credit.”⁴⁹² There is a blurring of previous lines that is being reflected in Bishop Robinson’s words: the church versus the secular.

This blurring of the lines is due to the collapse of the previous heteronomy once maintained by the catholic church. The collapse of the church brought on by the scientific

⁴⁹⁰ Paul Tillich, *Christianity and the Encounter of World Religions* (SC: Columbia University Press, 1961), 66; Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 64. According to Tillich there are two basic approaches to theology which are insufficient because they reduce the content of revelation to absurdity. In early writing within *Systematic Theology* Tillich calls them supranaturalism and naturalism; in later volumes of *Systematic Theology* the terms heteronomy and autonomy are used. Autonomy champions reason and rejects the very concept of divinity, reducing the import of Jesus the Christ to ethical norms and general wisdom. According to Tillich, this approach to Theology becomes moralistic without the mystical elements of the divine. Supranaturalism tends to preclude the potential diversity of revelatory experience in the world by making Christ the exclusive ground of revelation and frequently responds to the secular by imposing a derived set of norms on it. The danger is that religious experience becomes exclusively identified with the context of revelation and not the content; idolatrous, or what Tillich calls *demonized* in his *Christianity and the Encounter of World Religions*.

⁴⁹¹ Fritz Buri, “Zur Grundlegung einer Theologie der Existenz bei Paul Tillich,” *Schweizerische Theologie Umschau*, 23, (1953): 49. Fritz Buri has criticized Tillich for confusing concepts of existence. In one instance Tillich affirms existence through dialect and immanence; however, on the point of essentialization, existence is opposed to salvation. It is through the negation of existence that salvation can occur. Existence is no longer seen in a positive light and in this case, as Buri points out, Tillich reflects more so the theology of the Word as he is unable to escape the concept of a positive (essence) poised against a negative (human existence itself). Though there is immanence, in the fine print, existence opposes New Being.

⁴⁹² John Robinson, *Honest to God* (KY: John Knox Press 2018), 31.

revolution, dethroned a suppressive and superstitious version of holiness and power. It gave holiness back to the common person's daily life and work. In the collapse of heteronomy that led to secularization of the holy, Bishop Robinson goes on to articulate a shared search for meaning that was taking shape in his era.

He expressed that the deep things for which religion stood for, were now excluded in its secularization and because of this "the feeling for the inexhaustible mystery of life, the grip of an ultimate meaning of existence, and the invincible power of an unconditional devotion"⁴⁹³ would lead to an emergence of demonic images its absence.⁴⁹⁴ This is the contemporary secularized situation that Tillich believed he stood in, that Bishop Robinson reflected in his writing. The idea that modern humanity was in a search for ultimate meaning at the collapse of a previous heteronomy.⁴⁹⁵

Tillich envisioned a modern people who were lost now that the church, which had meaning built into it for them, was no longer the source of meaning for their existence. He envisioned people seeking the ultimate and attempting to find answers to life's existential questions through the symbols of the church.⁴⁹⁶ This is where Tillich's use of symbols to impart

⁴⁹³ John Robinson, *Honest to God* (KY: John Knox Press, 1963), 54.

⁴⁹⁴ The closing of the gap between the religious and the secular is done by the removing of them both. This removal is completed through the Spiritual Presence. The Spiritual Presence, existent in time and space through Tillich's concept of immanence, moves individuals beyond church and society, towards its *telos* of New Being. Within the closing of the gap through Spiritual Presence, Tillich and Bishop Robinson warned against what they termed *the demonic*. The demonic, for Tillich, is an instance where the conditioned or finite is claimed to be the unconditioned or ultimate. While the conditioned exists because of the ground of its existence, the unconditioned, when claimed as the ultimate, is an idolatrous claim. To claim anything finite as the exclusive ultimate truth is to have the emergence of a demonic image. The Spiritual Presence excludes exclusivity for Tillich. The temptation at the collapse of the church is to claim another finite particular as the ultimate, as had previously been done through the Catholic church. For more on the demonic and closing of the gap by Spiritual Presence. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 3* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973).

⁴⁹⁵ Paul Tillich, *The Shaking of the Foundations* (NY: Scribner Book Company, 1940), 180.

⁴⁹⁶ Harvey Gallagher Cox, *The Secular City* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1968). Theologian Harvey Cox does not concur with Tillich's analysis that modern humanity is basically concerned with the ultimate, and therefore asks religious questions. Cox suggests that Tillich has the wrong perception of the over-all concerns of modern humanity during his era; most did not ask religious questions, and not every question asked existentially was a religious

meaning towards the ultimate comes alive with purpose in his theology. This is also where Tillich's use of immanence collides to formulate his understanding of a Spiritual Presence that is beyond heteronomy and autonomy, collapsing them both and pointing beyond the finite. This is where for Tillich, the option of theonomy stands as the only logical option, all things considered.

The second approach is Tillich's two formal criteria and his material norm for all systematic theology. Tillich stated that the first formal criteria of his systematic theology is what concerns humanity ultimately. Only those propositions are theological which deal with their object in so far as it can become a matter of ultimate concern for humanity.⁴⁹⁷ Secondly, ultimate concern is that which determines our being or not-being. Only those statements are theological which deal with their object, in so far as it can become a matter of being or not-being, for humanity.⁴⁹⁸

question being posed in a non-traditional way. Cox suggest that these types of questions are not inherent in the very structure of human existence and do not occur to everyone; not in the least the majority of modern humanity. He concludes that Tillich has observed modern humanity's situation incorrectly. Modern humanity is an urbanized-secular humanity that did not wake up to find their theistic faith has been built on conjecture; that Hegel's synthesis had no foundation; that Christian civilization has disappeared; that God is dead, and now live in some type of shock, despair, and meaninglessness as a result. Cox's urban-secular humanity is not shaken and lost, as Tillich presupposes it to be, by a discovery that the meaning taken to be designed by God has turned out to be a human product. Cox discusses in his book *The Secular City* that this is because questions are not asked "from the structures of existence at all but from the erosion of inherited world-views and cultural meaning." Urban-secular humanity is a step beyond the God is dead era, and has been informed by present world-views and cultural which was beyond such a time. Cox's urban-secular humanity did not grow up in a world with meaning built into it that was taken away; therefore, urban -secular humanity cannot understand Tillich's concern over meaninglessness. When Tillich writes that the "God above God" appears when they theistic God disappeared in the anxiety of doubt of the collapse of traditional Christianity, Cox argues that urban-secular humanity cannot relate. The "God above God" never appeared because the traditional God of Christianity never appeared to start with. Cox explains further that the "urban-secular man came to town after the funeral for the religious world-view was already over. He feels no sense of deprivation and has no interest in mourning. Both philosophical existentialism and Paul Tillich's theology are expressions of the mourning period which began with the death of the God of metaphysical theism and western Christian civilization, but the wake is now over." Cox suggests that Tillich has not asked the right question and his whole answering theology is incorrect as a result.

⁴⁹⁷ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 3* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 4. Tillich deliberately avoid words such as "the ultimate," "the unconditioned," "the infinite." Even the Hegelian term "Absolute" is not acceptable. Tillich speaks instead of ultimate, unconditional, total concern. Gustave Weigel, "Book Review: Fifty Years of Protestant Theology," *Theological Studies* 12, no. 3 (1951): 431-433, <https://doi.org/10.1177/004056395101200324>, 575.

⁴⁹⁸ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 14.

The first criteria established, is that Tillich's theology would not leave the area of ultimate concern in order to develop into a preliminary concern: matters of history, science, and even philosophy. Preliminary concerns are not directly under the object of theology, but when elevated to a position of ultimacy, become a form of idolatry. Examples of preliminary concerns that have been elevated to a position of ultimacy are worship of the state, of the emperor, of race, even Bible worship in fundamentalism.⁴⁹⁹

Tillich's thought of ultimate concern and preliminary concern sets up a standard of absolute adherence to the first commandment: God alone is ultimate. For Tillich, idolatry is the elevation of something preliminary to ultimacy. This is also how Tillich will safeguard his concept of the sacred through his *Systematic Theology*.

This sort of safeguard developed into what Tillich would title "The Protestant Principle." Tillich stated "it is Protestant, because it protests against the tragic-demonic self-elevation of religion and liberates religion from itself for the other functions of the human spirit, at the same time liberating these functions from the self-seclusion against the manifestation of the ultimate."⁵⁰⁰

The second criteria attempted to clarify the first criteria by answering the question more precisely of what ultimate concern is for humanity. Tillich states that humanity's ultimate concern is that which affects being or non-being. An individual encounters ultimacy at the border of their finite being. Beyond the border of finite existence, only two alternatives present themselves: non-being or the Ground of all being.⁵⁰¹

⁴⁹⁹ Kenan Osborne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 26.

⁵⁰⁰ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 14.

⁵⁰¹ James Adams, *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science, and Religion* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982), 36.

Tillich argues towards a Ground of being precisely because of this *boundary situation*. Humanity is able to stand at the edge of their finite existence and question non-being or the Ground of being, only because humanity does have an essence that it has been divided from within existence. Because Ground of being is, humanity asks the question of the ultimate. For Tillich, the boundary situation itself is the evidence of the Ground of being. To ask what is beyond the finite is to evidence a divide of essence and existence. To evidence a divide is to infer essence – the Ground of being beyond the finite being.⁵⁰²

Tillich's boundary situation also infers a dialectal reality through the concept of *creatio ex-nihilo*. *Creatio ex-nihilo* cannot be understood apart of *creatio ex-deo*. For Tillich, the *ex-nihilo* must necessarily stand in dialectal relationship to *ex-deo*. Finite being, even though estranged from the Ground of being in existence, cannot disassociate itself from the Ground of all being. Tillich's second norm demands an immanent theology. So, a relational theology must exist. The acceptance of the norm is questionable; however, the reader must execute a willful suspension of disbelief in order to hear out Tillich's theology in full.

Tillich presents a material norm constructed through answering theology and the two criteria that he calls norms for doing theology. This presents an intersection where Tillich's use of symbols, immanence, being and non-being, essentialized being, and the *telos* of all

⁵⁰² Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 25. Tillich's use of the term *being* is not in reference to different modes or ways of existing, but rather, one single way of being. Tillich's use of the word being is essentialistic and should be considered synonymous with essence rather than existence. There is only being or non-being; non-being is non-existence while being is potential through essentialization. Because essentialized being is potential, it is therefore non-existent at the same time. When in reference to the theological problem of the God-human relationship, being is always at the level of essence and not existence for Tillich; this keeps within the parameters of the second norm/criteria for his theology. This also establishes his dialectal relationship and that of immanence.

preliminary concerns (history, church, etc.) collide to offer new meaning to older traditional thought: the New Being in Jesus as the Christ.⁵⁰³

The New Being as Jesus the Christ is the concrete embodiment, the material norm, of human potential; essence balanced in the time and space of existence – salvation from estrangement.⁵⁰⁴ Tillich’s Jesus the Christ can be seen as maintaining a sense of tradition because he has utilized the symbols of traditional Christianity, yet, it is completely new because he has developed new meaning for traditional symbols to answer the questions of modern humanity.

He positioned himself in a place where he can claim to share a theological norm with traditional Christianity, a foundation centered on the unique event of Jesus the Christ, and yet have nothing to do with traditional Christianity and everything to do with providing the solution for existential questions.⁵⁰⁵

Because Tillich’s material norm must derive itself from his formal criteria, Tillich’s perspective of Jesus the Christ is drastically different from traditional theologians. Tillich does not accept the position of Schleiermacher who ties theology to historical fact. Further, he does not concur with a “historical Jesus” approach.⁵⁰⁶ This is because according to Tillich’s criteria, a historical fact cannot contain ultimacy. They fall into the category of preliminary concern.

Secondly, Tillich does not turn to the Bible as a material norm to inform the material norm of Jesus the Christ. Tillich does not take the Bible as authority, because as a book, it is a

⁵⁰³ The term *New Being* is based on Paul of the Bible’s “New Creation” and refers to the power of overcoming demonic cleavages of the “old reality” in soul, society, and universe.

⁵⁰⁴ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 49.

⁵⁰⁵ Paul Tillich and Carl E. Braaten, *Perspectives on 19th and 20th Century Protestant Theology* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967), 95.

⁵⁰⁶ Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Der Christliche Glaube* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 1960), 64.

finite object and cannot claim ultimate concern more than a historical fact can.⁵⁰⁷ This is illuminated by Tillich as he stated: “The Bible has never been a norm of systematic theology. The norm has been a principle derived from the Bible in an encounter between the Bible and the Church.”⁵⁰⁸

The Bible is not the ultimate, but can point to the ultimate, beyond itself. For Tillich to use Jesus the Christ, he must come to understand Jesus the Christ within the conditions of his criteria, through ultimacy. Ultimacy is a principle of power, the unconditioned dynamism breaking through the conditioned, and within those parameters, as a revelation.⁵⁰⁹

Tillich’s third fundamental approach to theology is existentialism. Tillich understood existentialism as a tool to analyze what it is to exist, but of itself a tool incapable of providing answers to the questions that are implied in existence. For this reason, it is not entirely proper to label Tillich an existential theologian. In Tillich’s own words, “I would not call myself an existentialist.”⁵¹⁰

Tillich sets out to answer the questions posed by existentialism in terms of his religious tradition, which does not have roots in existential analysis.⁵¹¹ Tillich would argue that theology has always provided the answer to existential questions. And with its roots in ontology, ontology is the proper answer to existential analysis. Tillich remarked “Pascal answered questions on the

⁵⁰⁷ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 50; Paul Tillich, *Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964), 4.

⁵⁰⁸ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 50.

⁵⁰⁹ Tillich also must avoid turning his theology of Jesus into another heteronomy. He does not present Jesus as someone authority figure that has arrived to tell us what to believe and what to do. Tillich’s perspective of Jesus does not act as an extrinsic authority that has come to address humanity unto himself.

⁵¹⁰ Paul Tillich, “Existentialism and Psychotherapy,” *Review of Existential Psychology and Psychiatry* (1961): 8.

⁵¹¹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 25; Paul Tillich, “Existentialist Thought and Contemporary Philosophy in the West,” *Journal of Philosophy* 53 (1956): 747.

basis of his Augustinian traditions; Kierkegaard from his Lutheran background, Marcel from the Thomastic tradition, Dostoyevsky from Greek-Orthodox.”⁵¹²

In the case of those great thinkers that had no religious background such as Marx, Sartre, Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Jaspers, they answered from humanism, and humanism “comes from hidden religious sources.”⁵¹³ To this end, Tillich positions atheistic and theistic distinctions to fail in favor of theology over existentialism. Even those that answer to life’s existential questions non-religiously are secretly answering with religion. As far as Tillich understood it, “the answers to the questions implied in man’s predicament are religious, whether open or hidden.”⁵¹⁴

Tillich viewed existentialism as the major expression of the twentieth century’s situation and its questions. As such, he endorsed its validity. However, it did not exceed the value of being any more than a major expression of his day and age. He viewed existentialism as a movement, and as such, dealt with it as a historical event. “It is my intention to deal with existentialism as a historical event, comparable to the appearance of the Enlightenment or Romanticism or Naturalism in the last centuries. It characterizes a large part of the 20th century as those movements characterized large parts of the 18th and 19th centuries.”⁵¹⁵

Existentialism tends to be something that is to be dealt with rather than something utilized to help deal with life’s questions. Tillich explains the role of existentialism further by stating that “it is my conviction that as essentialism without the existentialist questions can never

⁵¹² Ibid.

⁵¹³ Ibid.

⁵¹⁴ Ibid.

⁵¹⁵ Paul Tillich, “The Nature and the Significance of Existentialist Thought,” *Journal of Philosophy* 31 (1956): 739-48.

reach life, so existentialist, without an essentialist context can never answer the question of life. Both are needed for thought and life.”⁵¹⁶

Tillich believed that an essential and existential mixture is necessary for any sound philosophy or theology. However, each has an outlined role to play and there is an ontological bias when it comes to which will have the answer to life’s questions. Tillich holds superiority of the ontological over the philosophical; philosophy has become theologies’ handmaiden. This noted bias influenced theologian Gustave Weigel to state that Tillich “uses ontology as the dynamism of his theological thinking....it is ontology without apology or shame.”⁵¹⁷

Tillich has been labeled an existential essentialist due to his manner of essentializing existence, or exercising a bias of ontology over philosophy.⁵¹⁸ Thomas McCullough has criticized Tillich stating that “essential being is manifest in existence. But this is possible only for Tillich at the expense of existence...existence is swallowed up by the Ground of being itself.”⁵¹⁹ There is a sensed reality that Tillich has devaluated existence to the extent that he will not allow it to inform his theology. Because of this sensed reality, Tillich is fundamentally an essentialist.⁵²⁰

Existentialism is important to Tillich only because of his theological approach to answer the questions of modern humanity; it supports Tillich’s approach of an answering theology. This

⁵¹⁶ Paul Tillich, “Dimensions, Levels, and the Unity of Life,” *Kenyon Alumni Bulletin* 17 (1959): 17.

⁵¹⁷ Gustave Weigel, “Recent Protestant Theology,” *Theological Studies* 14 (1953): 575.

⁵¹⁸ A term taken from Schelling

⁵¹⁹ Thomas McCollough, “The Ontology of Tillich and Biblical Personalism,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 15, no. 3 (1962): 275.

⁵²⁰ In support of Tillich’s opinion of the superiority of ontology and devaluation of existentialism is Tillich’s criticism of Heidegger’s philosophy. Tillich has stated that “all the existential philosophers and their predecessors have developed ontology in psychological terms.” Tillich’s criticism of Heidegger has been around the question of how the psychological meaning of his concepts can be distinguished from their ontological meaning. Tillich claims that Heidegger himself has admitted that he is unable and emphasized more and more that the start point of his existential ontology is human nature itself; essentialist ontology. Paul Tillich, *Estrangement and Reconciliation in Modern Thought* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), 58-59.

happened to be existentialism in the 20th century. Existentialism is also an acceptable avenue for Tillich to engage because it suits his first and second formal criteria concerning ultimate concern and the question of being or non-being.

From here, Tillich's position of essentialization skillfully weaves multiple inferences that construct the conclusion that ontology is primary and essentialization is the human reality. For Tillich, to ask the question of being infers the answer be theological. This is constructed in Tillich's thought because the question in itself is brought on by the recognition, or sense, of a divided being;⁵²¹ the divide infers some type of essence by which humanity is divided from - estrangement.⁵²² Therefore, for Tillich, humanity's question of being is more than existential; it is always essential. This inference that arrives at the essential allows Tillich to make his claim that consistent dialogue must exist through immanence.

The superiority of the essence over existence becomes an expression of Tillich's theology through the perception of essence as positive and existence as negative. For example, existence is estranging while essence is unifying; existence is disruption and essence is the power of being; existence is sin and essence is salvation. Tillich's three approaches to develop his theology seem to wrap around one another, in support of one another, or rather, in a clever support of essentialism and immanence.

⁵²¹ Tillich's version of what is traditionally known as the fall is the concept of a divided essence and existence. Only in God do essence and existence coincide in a balanced way. Humanity as finite is inescapably divided and unbalanced; their essence having been confused from them. Humanity, being both rational and free, recognizes the separation of essence within existence and with personal decision accepts the estrangement. The acceptance of estrangement through freewill is, for Tillich, *the fall*. It is not an act of disobedience to God, as is with traditional Christian view, but the position of estrangement that is existence.

⁵²² Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 13.

5.5 Idealistic Elements In Tillich's Theology

The dominant thought structure that rooted Tillich in essentialism and immanence was classical German idealism. German idealism is the unspoken approach to his theology that rests beyond his stated approaches. Because Tillich's interpretation of the God to human relationship is both dialectic and immanent, one must use idealism as an approach to understand Tillich's thought that is coated in idealistic overtones. Tillich admitted to his roots as an idealist, as he stated, "I am an idealist if idealism means the assertion of the identity of thinking and being as the principle of truth."⁵²³

In Tillich's own mind, he had found the value of idealism and preserved it in his own thought, and that he has overcome the weaknesses of idealism and surpassed them.⁵²⁴ There existed an idealistic principle of identity: "that point where subject and object are at one and the same place."⁵²⁵ This developed a sense of unity to all being, subjective or objective. The logos-structure of the object is reflected in the logos-structure of thought and vice versa.

This type of association of subject to object unity was shared by all idealists, such as Fichte and Schleiermacher. Idealism sees no split between essence and existence, subjectivity and objectivity.⁵²⁶ Further to derive objectivity from subjectivity means basically an empty subjectivity towards oneness.⁵²⁷

⁵²³ Paul Tillich, *On the Boundary: An Autobiographical Sketch* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Pub, 2012), 60.

⁵²⁴ Charles Kegley, *The Theology of Paul Tillich* (New York: Macmillan, 1961), 10.

⁵²⁵ Paul Tillich, *Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), 17.

⁵²⁶ Paul Tillich, "The Two Types of Philosophies of Religion," *Union Seminary Quarterly 1* (1946): 3-13.

⁵²⁷ Paul Tillich and Gert Hummel, *Gesammelte Werke* (Stuttgart: Evang. Verl.-Werk, 1998), 5. When Tillich describes the New Being, or Jesus as the Christ, as an individual whom has negated himself, or in other words, allowed essence to be unhindered within his existence, he is reflecting the idealistic thought of objectivity found through subjectivity, that is basically an empty subjectivity. Jesus constituting the subjective and the Christ being essence, or objectivity. This element of idealistic thinking also causes a brush with pantheistic thinking; divinization

Tillich is indebted to several idealistic thinkers, interpreting their works and adding various facets of their thought towards his *Systematic Theology*. His various interpretations of Kant, Fichte, Schleiermacher, Hegel, and Schelling allowed the crafting of a highly complex and systematic structure of theology. He pulled Kantian ideas of finitude, the dynamic interplay of *das Ich and das Nicht-Ich*⁵²⁸ of Fichte, Schleiermacher's *Das schlechthinnige Abhängigkeitsgefühl*.⁵²⁹ Schelling's irrational category, and Hegel's dialect to interpret the God to human relationship with a *telos* toward God.

Of the accepted idealistic elements of the idealistic thinkers that came before him, Tillich constructed his essence-existence-essentialization axis that ruled his entire *Systematic Theology*, and was fixated on immanence.⁵³⁰

5.6 Comprehending Old and New Being In Tillich's *Systematic Theology*

This portion of the chapter will describe Tillich's Old and New Being in flow with his primary axis of essence-existence-essentialization, in brief. Christ as New Being is viewed by Tillich as redemption applied to humanity. Redemption must be understood in terms of essentialization as essentialization is the over-dominating theme of all his work. That which is to be redeemed, for Tillich, is humanity from its state of estrangement in existence.

of everything as objectivity is within subjectivity and subjectivity is ultimately objectivity. Tillich's theology has been criticized as being pantheistic due to this idealistic element.

⁵²⁸ *The I* verse *The not I*.

⁵²⁹ God as a feeling of dependence. This is not dependence in a sense of a helpless human at the hands of a mighty God; rather, a feeling that we are of something, coming from something, connected and a feeling emerges that speaks to this sense.

⁵³⁰ Kenan Osborne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 50.

Redemption revolves around the same axis of essence, existence, essentialization.

Tillich's use of the word redemption speaks to the divine guidance of Spiritual Presence that leads humanity to its *telos*: the reunion of what is estranged. Reunion becomes synonymous to redemption or salvation.⁵³¹ The Spiritual Presence is continually in the effort of sanctification, intimately, with each individual, towards redemption.

Tillich wrote, "the process of sanctification runs toward a state in which the search for identity reaches its goal, which is the identity of the essential self, shining through the contingencies of the existing self."⁵³² The God to human relationship is presupposed in Tillich's understanding as written above. Dialect occurs and is necessary between the human essence and the God Essence, that clarity of authentic identity, being the image of God, may be made known and no longer limited. The state of pure true Essence for humanity is kept within the dimension of pure potentiality, though none the less real at the same time.

This is because in the state of existence and essence, the relationship to the power of being is ambiguous. It is distorted by the existential situation with unconquered negativity. Tillich displaced the doctrine of regeneration from that of a God to human relationship to the essence-existence situation. He linked sanctification to the identification of an individual's essential self.⁵³³

In the framework of sanctification and regeneration, Christ's role is merely manifestation.

Tillich wrote, "the cross is not the cause but the effective manifestation of God's taking the

⁵³¹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 179 & Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 3* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 223.

⁵³² Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 3* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 235.

⁵³³ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 177, 179 & Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theolog, Vol. 3* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 221, 223-228.

consequences of human guilt upon himself.”⁵³⁴ Manifestation for Jesus as the Christ came as atonement *in* the cross, as opposed to an act *on* the cross. Manifestation in the cross, meant more than becoming known or becoming possible. It meant, for Tillich, that Christ’s manifestation in the cross is effective.

Christ in the cross became the criterion for all other manifestations of God’s participation in the suffering of the world. Christ in the cross acted as a unique mediator to unite that which is estranged. It was a visible essence within existence, where an individual sees their own essential humanhood, but unhindered.⁵³⁵ Christ in the cross is an effective means that mediates God through him. It is a display of reconciliation. Humanity is able to participate in reconciliation through Christ, through the power of New Being that is potential actualized.

For Tillich, New Being as Jesus as the Christ has two parts: the cross itself symbolizes total subjection to existential estrangement; the resurrection symbolizes full conquering over the existential estrangement.⁵³⁶ Christ is viewed as redemption applied to humanity as he created a

⁵³⁴ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 176.

⁵³⁵ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 136. Jesus as the Christ mediates the power of being by negating himself to match what Tillich has described in his *Systematic Theology* as the ground of being that is the ground of all that exists in our finite world, but is not anything that exists in our finite world; God is the infinite and to make Christ into God is to delve into the heteronomy that he opposes. Christ is a visible embodiment of Tillich’s theology. Jesus in the cross serves as a summary of his theological concepts from volume I displayed through Christian symbol.

⁵³⁶ Eugene Peters, “Tillich’s Doctrine of Essence, Existence, and the Christ,” *The Journal of Religion*, 43 (1963): 300. Peters feels that Tillich does not make sense. “That Jesus was either tempted (and under the conditions of existence that is estranged) or in unbroken unity with God- but not both.” For Peters it is impossible to be beyond the split of essential and existential. This argument makes sense because if Jesus was New Being yet “felt anxiety about having to die; he suffered; and his death was violent,” as Tillich stated on page 125 of ST II, did he reach the point of essence if riddled by anxiety, still? The existential theme of anxiety Tillich seeks to provide answer is to be answered through New Being, or an essentialized human, yet if Christ was New Being and was still riddled by anxiety as New Being, New Being is not the appropriate answer that is capable of overcoming existence. Or, New Being is, but Jesus did not actually become New Being after all. Further, could this mean that someone that is actualized as essence in time and space still be riddled with anxiety, meaninglessness, despair? Perhaps then these themes of felt experience are not actually the issue to be overcome then, they are not the object of remedy. Essentialization has either become pointless because it does not solve what Tillich says it will, Tillich has Jesus wrong and he is not essentialized, or he is trying to answer to themes that do not need to be answered in existence-meaninglessness, despair, ambiguity, anxiety, etc. are not the enemy inside existence that requires a remedy.

new state of being, in time and space. Jesus as the Christ became New Being, that we participate in, alongside him.⁵³⁷ The participation spoken of is essentialization, in which existential negativity is conquered.⁵³⁸

Christ as New Being is mere manifestation. Christ signifies redemption through essentialization. Redemption for Tillich is not about re-uniting God to humanity in the sense of a relationship. His presupposed immanence does not allow this to be the issue. Redemption through New Being is about conquering a negative existence so that positive essence is not estranged. The old being through immanence seeks New Being, and immanence imposes consistent participation through essentialization until redemption. That redemption being New Being actualized for each individual.

5.7 Proposed Solution to Tillich's Limitations

In order to advance Tillich's understanding of the God to human relationship, it is necessary to develop a fuller understanding of the process of Tillich's essentialization: the component that lacks. In order to complete Tillich's incomplete theology of essentialization

⁵³⁷ This is contradictory to Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence in *volume III*. In *volume I & II*, it appears as though Jesus as the Christ opened the gates for essentialization to begin; prior to, a deadlock existed that needed to be broken. However, volume III explains that Christ became Christ through essentialization guided by Spiritual Presence; therefore, there was never a deadlock that Christ released – essentialization was always taking place. Christ as New Being served as a mediator of essence in existence which assists in the essentialization process. In understanding this, Christ does act as redemption as a part of an ongoing essentialization process, through which Spiritual Presence is the redeemer.

⁵³⁸ Gustave Weigel, "Book Review: Fifty Years of Protestant Theology," *Theological Studies* 12, no. 3 (1951): 431-433, <https://doi.org/10.1177/004056395101200324>. Gustave Weigel criticizes Tillich's explanation of New Being as overcoming existence. He states that "Being means existence." This is an example of how many scholars misinterpret Tillich's work because they apply their own meaning to terminology that was not held by Tillich within his use of them. Being is opposed to existence for Tillich. Being is fundamentally essence. Existence is negative; estrangement.

towards manifesting New Being, the limitations listed at the start of this chapter need be remedied.

This is concluded after an examination of the potential causes behind each in the development of *Systematic Theology*. It is proposed that if a correction is made to Tillich's narrow definition of philosophy an immediate realignment would follow that remedies the remaining criticisms and exposes a *pneumatology* of Spiritual Presence towards New Being, to complete that which is incomplete.

Tillich's incorrect definition of philosophy has potentially thwarted his ability to advance the concept of Spiritual Presence towards New Being. His narrow definition has perhaps withheld an examination of the human condition. This is the very location he stated Spiritual Presence is intimately at work, embedded within and guiding always.

Without examining the human condition, Tillich is unable to develop his concept of Spiritual Presence, essentialization, and ultimately manifestation of New Being. A negative view of existence that stemmed from a narrow view of philosophy did not allow Tillich to utilize the findings of existential philosophers, such as Jean-Paul Sartre particularly, that zeroed in on an analysis of the human condition.

Such an analysis by Sartre can offer much needed insight for Tillich's conceptual advancement and to resolve "the knotty problems which have plagued the history of theology."⁵³⁹ Kenan Osbourne stated that Tillich failed to have full and thorough theological

⁵³⁹ Joshua R. Farris and S. Mark Hamilton, *Idealism and Christian Theology* (New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2017). Joshua Farris attempts to use idealism to sort out the knots formed by Christian belief.

answers, yet, he also felt he had probed into the right areas of discussion: “the areas into which he probed are precisely the areas which need to be probed anew.”⁵⁴⁰

The proposal made here is to conduct an investigation of Jean-Paul Sartre’s philosophy and the clinical observations of Carl Rogers, that will progress a new direction of thought. If Tillich’s *pneumatology* is explored existentially, an articulation of the manner that Spiritual Presence operates within the human condition may arise. Through an existential *pneumatology*, a comprehension of how Tillich’s Spiritual Presence guides an individual in essentialization, can be constructed through observation of life and its structures.

5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the limitations to Tillich’s theology and marked existentialism as the tool capable of testing claims made within Tillich’s work for validity, particularly to Spiritual Presence and its role in essentialization. This chapter illuminated Tillich’s narrow definition of philosophy and discussed Tillich’s association of it with empiricism. In understanding what existentialism is from chapter one verses what it meant to Tillich and his resultant avoidance of it, a conclusion can be drawn that his misunderstanding of existentialism has stifled the progress of his theology. The progress of his theology being the ability to deliver verification of his concepts and also an articulation of his concepts as they are to be found taking place in the human condition.

The following chapter, chapter six, will take close examination to the existentialism of Sartre to illuminate realities of the human condition. This is the first step in locating some genuineness to Tillich’s theological claims of Spiritual Presence and its catalyzation to true

⁵⁴⁰ Kenan Osborne, *New Being* (Netherlands: Springer Netherlands, 2012), 206.

Essence. It generates universal observations of the human condition, to compare what Tillich asserts is taking place universally through his concept of Spiritual Presence. It will illuminate how Spiritual Presence is interacting as guidance to humanity, if it is at all, through such a close examination of the human condition.

Chapter Six

A Sickness for Spiritual Presence

Using Sartre's Nausea and the Quest for Meaning and Justification

6.1 Introduction

Sartre's analysis of the nature of human consciousness by examining an individual's relation to the world, will assist in a remedy to the limitations of Paul Tillich's work. Ultimately, this analysis of the nature of consciousness will aid to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence. Within the verification process, it will aid to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what Tillich called true Essence.

This chapter will explore the existential analysis of Jean-Paul Sartre, through *Being and Nothingness*, in order to locate how and then what a human in the world is universally guided to know about their true nature, if anything at all.⁵⁴¹

Sartre has been selected for his "revolutionary approach that challenged assumptions about the individual's relationship with the world."⁵⁴² This statement is due to the nature of

⁵⁴¹ Recall that Tillich utilized what he called the *method of correlation* throughout his *Systematic Theology*. Tillich also called his approach *apologetic* or an *answering theology*. The use of the word *correlation* is viewed misleading by some scholars because rather than correlate philosophy towards a theology, Tillich more so acted more accordingly as Christian apologist. Every philosophical question derived from the phenomenological analysis of the cultural or human situation is directed pointedly and predictably to Christian theology as the answer. Second to this is the assumption that everyone is necessarily religious and pressed for Tillich to show them how Christian theology can emerge to answer to the human condition presented by philosophy. Tillich was aware that the method of correlation and how he utilized it as an apologist was subject to its flaws and bias. Tillich stated that "the method of correlation is not safe from distortion; no theological method is. The answer can prejudice the question..." It is the potential prejudice of Tillich to Christianity which seeks to be remedied as a limitation in order to set free the remainder of his own theological suggestions concerning Spiritual Presence and its guidance of humanity towards New Being that require this prejudice to be released in order to be furthered and assessed. The prejudice being rooted in Tillich's narrow and incorrect definition of philosophy, viewing it as empiricism; therefore, avoiding its participation in a theological discussion. For more, see: John Powell. Clayton, *The Concept of Correlation: Paul Tillich and the Possibility of a Mediating Theology* (New York: W. De Gruyter, 1980), 182. Also, return to chapter four of this dissertation if needed to revisit the limitations of Tillich's theology.

⁵⁴² Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness* (American Book Publishing, 2021), xi.

phenomenology used by Sartre. It seeks to set aside bias and prior information about a subject or a thing, in order to allow for the observation of that thing to be seen with new eyes. The examination presented in *Being and Nothingness* is excellent, due to this approach, for researching Tillich's claim of a guiding immanence.

This is an important analysis for the purpose of this thesis which is to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence. For Tillich, Spiritual Presence was enmeshed in the external world and also within the human being, in order to guide people towards knowledge of the concept of true Essence.

With that said, if Sartre's analysis of the human being in relation to the world guides him to conclude freedom as human nature, and if the power of being in God and man are continuous, as Tillich says it is, then it would seem to follow that between the divine Spirit and the human spirit there is some point of identity, or perhaps even that the human spirit is the finite aspect of the divine Spirit in which it participates.⁵⁴³ Perhaps Sartre's analysis of human nature provides clue to this point of identity, or what can be said to be the image of God, Essence.

The human Essence as described by Sartre in *Being and Nothingness* will serve not only as a revelation of Spiritual guidance towards Tillich's true Essence, but the answer it reveals will be used to conceptualize, the concept of the image of God as Tillich's true Essence, later in chapter eight of this thesis.

⁵⁴³Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 39.

6.2 About Sartre's Work

Sartre's work is a phenomenological ontology, which is, generally speaking, a descriptive study of being itself as distinguished from those disciplines that examine, in a restricted sense, only certain beings.⁵⁴⁴ While metaphysics is also concerned with the study of being itself, mainly the *why* of being, Sartre's phenomenological ontology is only concerned with the fundamental descriptions of being. He has no interest in speculations about who or what is the initial cause of being.⁵⁴⁵

While Sartre has proclaimed himself an atheist, his writings do not engage an argument for or against a God. Because Sartre does not base his work on any speculation of being, the descriptions of being within his work are true, regardless if the reader holds a belief in God, or not.⁵⁴⁶ Sartre is a proclaimed atheist, after the fact of his observations on human freedom.⁵⁴⁷ His analysis led him to observe that existence preceded essence.⁵⁴⁸ Based on this, he rejected the idea of a God that denied freedom. A freedom denying God cannot exist, because humans by nature are free.

There is potential limitation to Sartre's conceptualization of God. Rather than existence precedes essence, therefore, there is no God; it is more like, if human beings are at their origin

⁵⁴⁴ Joseph Catalano, *A Commentary On Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 15.

⁵⁴⁵ Arran Gare, *The Philosophical Foundations of Ecological Civilization: A Manifesto for the Future* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2018), 40.

⁵⁴⁶ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism Is a Humanism* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 46.

⁵⁴⁷ Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre on Sin: Between Being and Nothingness* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 10. Kirkpatrick argues that Sartre's conception of nothingness in *Being and Nothingness* can be fruitfully understood as an iteration of the Christian doctrine of original sin, "nothingness" being synonymous with sin and evil in the Augustinian tradition. Hence, Sartre presents us with "a phenomenology of sin from a graceless position."

⁵⁴⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay On Phenomenological Ontology* (New York City, NY: Philosophical Library, 1956), 302. & David Law, *Briefly: Sartre's Existentialism and Humanism* (London, UK: SCM Press, 2007), 33. Put in a different manner: because humans are freedom, there cannot be a God; God interjects a type of determinism that would reject freedom. Because humans are free at their origin there is then no God, in Sartre's understanding.

free, a version of a God that makes humans unfree, cannot exist. This is said in light of Sartre's 1943 essay, *A New Mystic*. He wrote, "we should not understand by that, that He does not exist, nor even that he now no longer exists. He is dead: he used to speak to us and he has fallen silent, we now touch only his corpse."⁵⁴⁹ Sartre denies the version of a God that creates fixed beings with predestined rules to follow and scripted life to live. He denies the existence of a God that has made a plug and play life for people to fit into. That type of God is the God that no longer speaks.

Kate Kirkpatrick wrote about Sartre's back and forth views of God in her book *Sartre and Theology*. God was always in question for Sartre. Further, for Sartre, unlike what some may think of him, he had extensive knowledge in theology.⁵⁵⁰ Kirkpatrick argues that this is what makes his atheism so fascinating for theologians.⁵⁵¹ She continues that when Sartre uses the word atheism "it is not wise to assume his intended meaning was synonymous to that of the evidential atheism that is debated in the analytic philosophy of religion today."⁵⁵² She follows up by saying that he is not in the same classification as Bertrand Russell.

6.3 Tillich, Sartre, and Understanding Emotions

Tillich and Sartre connect and disconnect on the point of emotions and shared hardship; precisely, the circumstance of the Nazi occupation.⁵⁵³ Both thinkers underwent the emotion of

⁵⁴⁹ Jean-Paul Sartre, Ronald Aronson, and Van den Hoven Adrian, *We Have Only This Life to Live: Selected Essays of Jean-Paul Sartre, 1939-1975* (New York Review Books, 2013), 55.

⁵⁵⁰ Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre and Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 166.

⁵⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵⁵² Ibid, 207.

⁵⁵³ There is more to both of these thinkers than simply the Nazi occupation. However, the occupation served as a serious junction for both and fueled their works. Mark Lewis, "The Theology of Paul Tillich," Mark Lewis Taylor, accessed March 7, 2022, <http://marklewistaylor.net/courses/the-theology-of-paul-tillich/>.

despair through first-hand experience of the Nazi regime. In turn, it acted as a catalyst that cultivated their different epiphanies in their respective work. Both thinkers write towards a means of human transformation triggered deeply by their own experiences of the Nazi regime.

In the case of Sartre, despairing emotions are the catalyst towards truth; they are the necessary tool that guides humanity to glimpse truth. The emotions lead the individual on a path of revelation of sorts; there is functionality to emotions.⁵⁵⁴ For Tillich, emotions are not necessarily a tool but something encountered in life that must be faced; the Christian symbol can help transform the individual to find courage in the face of unavoidable subjective emotions in life. Sartre, thus, comes to address specific things that Tillich does not, at the point of emotions.

Sartre seeks to go into the emotions, believing emotions help identify truth, because they are a part of the totality of existential experience and are caused by relating to the external world. Tillich viewed emotions different. He sought to engage them through Christian theology and symbol. Christian symbol would create a way to answer the experience of emotions like despair and anxiety with courage.⁵⁵⁵ He did not seek to find truth with his emotions, stating that it would distort truth in *Dynamics of Faith*.⁵⁵⁶

Perhaps it is best said that he seeks to provide a way through negative emotions with courage forged by a new interpretation of faith in the Ultimate.⁵⁵⁷ The medium leads to the

⁵⁵⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre and Philip Mairet, *Sketch for a Theory of the Emotions* (London: Routledge, 2014), 71.

⁵⁵⁵ Tillich is careful to discuss an “emotionalistic distortion of faith.” He wrote in *Dynamics of Faith* that emotions can distort truth. Truth, in Tillich’s meaning of it, is the ultimate or God. He warned specifically about subjective feelings, in a negative sense. He stated that they provide “no content to be known and a demand to be obeyed.” For Tillich, subjective feeling dilutes the potency of religion to the point that “no claims to truth can be made about it.” Paul Tillich, *Dynamics of Faith* (New York: Harper One, 2001), 44-45. However, if God is the ultimate, then even in the case of an over-emphasis on subjective feeling or thinking, the Ultimate would shine through. There would be no means by which truth could be distorted, if everything is the ground of being, including subjective feeling.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid, 45.

⁵⁵⁷ Ibid, 19.

experience of positive emotions that seem to act as an indicator of the path towards Essence, as Tillich writes about such emotions as indicators. The drive towards reunion belongs rather to the “essential structure of life and, consequently, is experienced as pleasure, joy, or blessedness, according to the different dimensions.”⁵⁵⁸ The emotional element then does not come first, it is rather that the experience of reunion, as far as man is concerned, expresses itself in emotional ways.

Wherein Tillich turns to Christian theology to navigate through negative existential emotion and, as a result of the Ultimate unified in mankind, will experience positive ones, Sartre follows negative emotion towards a truth that it is able reveal about being in relation to the world. Emotions do not determine actions, but rather, emotions are a way that consciousness chooses to live its relationship to the world.⁵⁵⁹

We aim at things to be and do because we want to feel the positive emotion that might lurk behind it.⁵⁶⁰ So while Sartre has no claim as to what emotion should point to, it is evident that we can make decisions not because emotion has taken us over, but because we desire a certain emotional experience from becoming certain things. Emotion is indicative of our personal relationship to the world and what we think about the world we live in. Our anguish reveals our nature of freedom through our failed attempts to become anything less than free or to view others as less than free. As Sartre’s big theme in *Nausea*, and detailed further in *Being and Nothingness*, “nausea is the taste of facticity.”⁵⁶¹ Emotions indicate something about us to ourselves, our

⁵⁵⁸ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 144.

⁵⁵⁹ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 269.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid, XIV.

⁵⁶¹ Ibid, XVII & Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New York City, NY: New Directions, 2013), 25.

freedom, and as the main character of *Nausea* acts on his freedom to create his own meaning, the nausea leaves him.

Tillich's concept of the totality of the human experience being the medium that Spiritual Presence operates towards revelation of Essence and thus to the embodiment of that Essence, includes emotion. What can be noticed in Sartre's work is the manner that he finds emotion to function within consciousness. It functions, for him, to reveal the nature of consciousness as freedom and nothingness.

As consciousness lives in relation to the world around it, emotion results as a personal experience of that relationship. It reveals an innate freedom to redesign oneself and to let go of the *in-itself* that weighs one down with nausea.⁵⁶² These are generous observations from the work of Sartre that are helpful when reflecting upon how Tillich's Spiritual Presence towards true Essence can be articulated or even observed to be genuine and not simply Tillich's best wishes for humanity.

6.4 Philosophical Elements That Influence Being and Nothingness

Sartre's thought was influenced by many philosophers. The first to be described is the influence of Rene Descartes. Descartes' name and reflections on his work, specifically in light of freedom, is peppered continually in *Being and Nothingness*. Kate Kirkpatrick writes that "*Being and Nothingness* clearly has among its interlocutors Descartes."⁵⁶³ Sartre claims that Descartes

⁵⁶² Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 440-441.

⁵⁶³ Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre and Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 91.

recognized that freedom is the condition for nihilation, and named the possibility, as freedom, in his writings.⁵⁶⁴

Because Sartre was French, Sartre would almost be required of him to pay close attention to the legendary French philosopher. Descartes approached his philosophic thinking by trying to doubt everything in order to discover what could not be doubted. He concluded that the one thing that was not able to be doubted was his thinking.

Descartes stated the now famous quote “I think therefore I am”⁵⁶⁵ to express the certitude of existence as the necessary subject of his thoughts. Descartes attempted to systematically rebuild all that he had previously doubted seeking an absolute and exact philosophy. He had doubted the existence of his body, including his senses, and the rest of the external world. Everything was an object of his consciousness up for examination to determine if any of them correspond to realities outside his consciousness.

Descartes’ doubt for the existence of an external world, and the certain existence of a thinking self, formed the concept of dualism between mind and matter; this dualism is often called the cartesian split.⁵⁶⁶ This dualism lays the context for much of Sartre’s thinking. In his novel *Nausea* Sartre wrote: “I feel responsible and have complicity in it...this sort of painful rumination...My thought is *me*: that’s why I can’t stop. I exist because I think...and I can’t stop myself from thinking.”⁵⁶⁷

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid, 94 & Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 60.

⁵⁶⁵ Rene Descartes, *Meditations On First Philosophy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge Press, 1996), 68.

⁵⁶⁶ For an in-depth explanation of the mind and body split, and also, an intriguing argument that claims the split was proven to have never existed once Isaac Newton discovered and then understood gravities interaction upon matter, see Noam Chomsky’s lecture. Noam Chomsky, (2011), <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5in5EdjhD0>.

⁵⁶⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New York City, NY: New Direction Publishing Corporation, 2013), 135.

Sartre differs in thought from Descartes by awakening to his existence, not from thinking, but from the relational involvement with the external world that results in emotions that he can feel. In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre explains with more depth that emotions not only awaken an individual to their existence, but emotions are the certitude needed to prove the existence of the outside world beyond the mind. Sartre felt that emotions reveal the external because they are always directed at things. If the external world did not exist, there would be no emotions felt in return. Consciousness in relation to an external world creates a *visceral cogito* as stated by philosopher Joseph Catalano.⁵⁶⁸

Sartre's view of knowledge and consciousness was deeply influenced by Edmund Husserl. Husserl, in developing the phenomenological method, took a descriptive approach rather than a deductive approach to philosophy. Descriptive over deductive ran contrary to Descartes. Rather than trying to deduce if objects truly existed or not, Husserl sought to examine each object of consciousness by way of description. He redefined objectivity as the accurate description of the way something subjectively appears to an individual's consciousness. Objectivity, however, does not mean that an object's absolute reality has been revealed. An object's absolute reality may never be known.

Under Husserl's definition, even science, is another way to subjectively describe the way things appear in the isolation of consciousness.⁵⁶⁹ Science communicates perceived appearances by interpreting them through the use of mathematics and conceptualized models. Science is no

⁵⁶⁸ Joseph Catalano, *A Commentary On Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 3.

more objective than ordinary perception. Both describe the object as it would essentially appear to any observer engaged in the same activity of consciousness.

Thus, phenomenology is able to provide the essential structure as it is experienced universally for everyone. From Husserl, Sartre took the understanding of phenomenology as descriptive and the notion of consciousness as always consciousness of something. His analysis of being also fits the billet of findings what is experienced universally, for everyone.

The introduction to *Being and Nothingness*, while not indicating that it speaks in the immediate dialectal context of philosopher George Hegel's work, is evident upon reading that Sartre's terminology and the content of certain sections are in relation to Hegel's work.⁵⁷⁰ Hegel and Sartre both agree that the mind exists as a relationship to the world. They also agree that it is nothing in and of itself; the mind always negates itself.

Sartre explicitly endorses Hegel's claim that "the mind is the negative" within *Being and Nothingness*. Sartre's fundamental disagreement with Hegel is on the concept of being and non-being. This forms the dialect and terminology Sartre used in *Being and Nothingness*. This disagreement also developed Sartre's own position regarding being and non-being that is directly opposed to Hegel's.

Sartre rejected Husserl's phenomenological reduction⁵⁷¹ as well as intuition of essence and the transcendental ego.⁵⁷² Husserl felt phenomena presented itself as aspects of a more

⁵⁷⁰ Two books that detail the relation of Sartre to Hegel: Klaus Hartmann and Klaus Hartmann, *Sartre's Ontology; A Study of Being and Nothingness in Light of Hegel's Logic* (Evanston Ill. Northwestern University Press, 1966) & Richard J. Bernstein, *Praxis and Action: Contemporary Philosophies of Human Activity* (Philadelphia, PA: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1999).

⁵⁷¹ Sartre rejected Husserl's reduction, known as suspension or bracketing, because he believed that it robbed the world of richness; he felt it robbed the world of existence itself. He claimed Husserl could accidentally bracket existence as he considered existence as such that it would not add anything to true phenomenon.

⁵⁷² Arindam Chakrabarti and Ralph Weber, *Comparative Philosophy without Borders* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, an imprint of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2017).

unified object. This led to the concept of intuition of essence. Husserl uses the case of an apple to understand intuition of essence.

Depending on what angle you look at an apple, it will appear different each time. There are infinite ways an apple can be presented when looked upon; various aspects of an apple manifest itself depending on the angle. These aspects, however, unify. They somehow unite themselves in the consciousness. This requires a unifying structure within consciousness itself in order to take all of these presented aspects and unify them into what then becomes called “apple.”

Husserl titled the structure of the consciousness that is able to unify different aspects of an object as “transcendental ego.” It is transcendental because it is able to cut across each individual act, yet able to capture each individual act still. He uses the term *ego* to refer to the wholeness of consciousness. The unifying structure within consciousness is not separate, but is consciousness itself. Sartre rejects intuition of essence and transcendental ego. He believed that existence and not essence is given to consciousness. Further, the ego is not transcendental but transcendent.

The immediate grasp of existence and not essence, as well as the ego as transcendent (ex-nihilo) and not transcendental, is the modification of Husserl’s thought found in *Being and Nothingness*.⁵⁷³ This foundation to Sartre’s thought is also disclosed in his novel *Nausea*. Sartre

⁵⁷³ The transcendental ego, as discussed by Husserl is that which unifies our actions, is regarded by Sartre as a “what” or a “thing;” a produced ego. Sartre is aware that his understanding of transcendental ego as a produced ego is not the same as Husserl’s intended concept of transcendental ego; yet holds to this re-understanding of Husserl’s transcendental ego. For Sartre, consciousness cannot be a thing, and it becomes a thing if it holds a purpose to unify according to Sartre’s concept of consciousness as having “no-thing.”

writes, “existence has suddenly unveiled itself. It has lost the harmless look of an abstract category: it was the very paste of things; this root was kneaded into existence.”⁵⁷⁴

Sartre’s work was heavily influenced by Martin Heidegger’s *Being and Time*. *Being and Nothingness* is in large a response to *Being and Time*.⁵⁷⁵ For Heidegger, time was the most important aspect of human reality because time composed history, and history forged reality. The influence of history on human consciousness was the concern of Heidegger. However, Sartre argued that humanity has the power to freely interpret its history and its environment. For Sartre, this put freedom before history. Freedom, that is consciousness, was his concern, and not time.

Sartre believed that consciousness was not shaped by history or environment. Consciousness’ freedom to determine meaning of history and environment cannot be overcome by either. For consciousness to equate to freedom it has to be without content, or essence, that would otherwise force it to be determined. It must exist as nothingness. It is the nothingness of content that enables freedom. The importance of nothingness as it is born in response to Heidegger’s importance on time, in regards to human consciousness, heavily influenced the content of thought found in *Being and Nothingness*.

Lastly, there are elements of Soren Kierkegaard’s philosophy within Sartre’s thought, as they agree on the causation of the theme of despair. As philosopher Hubert Dreyfus stated in comparing Sartre to Kierkegaard: “In many ways, Sartre is Kierkegaardian. If you can’t get the self together, can’t get both, necessity and freedom, temporal and eternal, you’d be in despair,

⁵⁷⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New York City, NY: New Direction Publishing Corporation, 2013), 171. Sartre opposes the concept of a transcendental ego because it provides the ego with an essence, or purpose, preceding an individual’s action.

⁵⁷⁵ Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre and Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 94.

Kierkegaard says. Sartre says yes that's right, the self needs to have an identity, needs to have its own nature and being, but it can't."⁵⁷⁶

Sartre's point of view is the inability to find a fixed identity drives despair as the human being recognizes it has no identity. The human being is without any content, and must constantly redefine itself. In recognition of consciousness as absolute freedom, it also recognizes it has no commitment that is necessary or eternal. The human being is a kind of nullity attempting to quench its nullity. Dreyfus goes on to say "it is a sort of secularized Kierkegaard...it is Kierkegaard without the possibility of unconditional commitment, which gives you eternity."⁵⁷⁷

The elements of influence within Sartre's work, whose big points can be summarized with Catalano's mention of the *visceral cogito* that occurs as a person lives, creating thoughts, in relation to the external world, are the roots that aid to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

6.5 Sartre's Nausea: Revealing Tillich's Spiritual Presence through Emotions and Relation to the World

Nausea was an initial statement of an emergent doctrine which found systematic expression in *Being and Nothingness*. It represents both a massive attempt to construct an existentialist theory of being and a study of the human being as the central object of

⁵⁷⁶ Hubert Dreyfus, "Being and Nothingness: Jean-Paul Sartre," YouTube, April 11, 2018, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cge_Cp6yalk.

⁵⁷⁷ Ibid.

philosophical inquiry.⁵⁷⁸ It is also Sartre's first novel. *Nausea* acts as a short and interesting introduction to Sartre's ontology found within the much larger and complex read of *Being and Nothingness*.⁵⁷⁹

Nausea tells the story of protagonist Antoine Roquentin, who after traveling abroad finds himself in the French town of Bouville. Bouville is where he intends to complete his historical research on the Marquis de Rollebon. There, he experiences what he calls "nausea."⁵⁸⁰ Antoine finds that the nausea does not leave him and he recognizes that the nausea *is* him and it is not going to depart him. Antoine's many years of travel, research, and general immersion into the world had obscured his own awareness of his true self: freedom.⁵⁸¹ The experience of nausea, however, had revealed to him the truth of his freedom and the responsibility that accompanies that freedom. The nausea revealed itself as a mechanism that signals obscured awareness of a true self.⁵⁸²

The bodily sense of nausea revealed to Antoine that human consciousness is the true source of meaning in the world. Consciousness is revealed as the actual origin of a meaningful reality.⁵⁸³ Antoine viewed each individual as a unique center of freedom that is responsible for creating their own meaning and adding that unique meaning into the world.⁵⁸⁴ The overall point

⁵⁷⁸ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New York City, NY: New Directions, 2013), 114.

⁵⁷⁹ Jean-Paul Sartre and Stephen Priest, *Jean-Paul Sartre: Basic Writings* (London: Routledge, 2005), 12, 54, 258.

⁵⁸⁰ Nietzsche speaks of "sea-sickness" in his book *Thus Spake Zarathustra*. It is symbolic of the un-easy inner feeling one experiences when they enter uncharted and unfamiliar territory into new truths; an unpleasant feeling as a human being enters into the creation and discovery of a new order of values. This is similar to the experience of nausea that Antoine experiences as he suddenly has an encounter that his true character is freedom and he is responsible for that freedom – to create meaning for himself. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), XVII & Victor Brombert, *Nausea (Sartre)* (Deland: Everett/Edwards, 1973), 338, 452.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid* & Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 25.

⁵⁸² *Ibid*.

⁵⁸³ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New York City, NY: New Directions, 2013), 338, 130.

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid*, 131.

is that an individual cannot look to the world to find meaning and justification for his or her life. Rather, he or she must be the one to bring their own meaning and justification into the world.⁵⁸⁵

As Antoine grows in awareness of his authenticity, he simultaneously progresses through some sort of inner cleansing process. As he becomes more and more aware of his ultimate freedom, the areas of his life that he engaged in with a sort of self-deceit of his ultimate freedom, surface.⁵⁸⁶ He slowly begins to re-create his life based upon his freedom, at the forefront of his decision making.⁵⁸⁷ Antoine's new found knowledge of his freedom provides him the epiphany that he had lied to himself for ten years while traveling. He looks back to see he had not had a single real adventure.

He had been in search of certainty, living with "precision" as he put it, without completely realizing it.⁵⁸⁸ Every event he encountered was an attempt to hold onto it forever, and find his meaning from inside it. Antoine, with clarity about personal freedom, now sees this as an error. He now wants to re-live his past without clinging to it or allowing it to define him. He sees life is to be lived "from end to end."⁵⁸⁹ He no longer fears that once an event passes, that his meaning passes with it.

He comes to recognize his ambition as a historian and the desire to research and write on the Marquis de Rollebon, a 18th century French political figure, was merely an attempt to justify his own existence. He had been seeking his own meaning, in the past of another. He decides to

⁵⁸⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New York City, NY: New Directions, 2013), 338, 246-253.

⁵⁸⁶ Bettina Liebowitz Knapp, *Music, Archetype and the Writer: A Jungian View* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988), 132.

⁵⁸⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New York City, NY: New Directions, 2013), 131.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 37.

⁵⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 38.

end his life as a historical researcher, own his freedom to make his own meaning, and move to Paris and where he will write a novel instead.⁵⁹⁰

The nausea (Catalano's *visceral cogito*) illumines Antoine to see that humans fill roles and hold labels up to themselves, in attempt to hide from their freedom. They fix themselves within the confines of definitions and then pretend they cannot choose or make changes. He begins to sense that judgements others make of him, are simply to the ignorance of their inner freedom. They are ignorant that he is, by nature, free. He is not a fixed definition, and so they judge him according to a definition that becomes an expectation.

The sense of judgement and fault finding, is some sort of imposed attempt to confine others through the same mechanism they confine themselves with. It is a reflection of their inward attempt to avoid the reality that every human is free. This illumination can be briefly touched on through mention of a couple library scenes. Antoine's friend, the Self-Taught-Man, after revealing himself to be a humanist, attempts to make Antoine fit into the same label by insisting Antoine actually believes the same thing as himself; the predetermined purpose of humanity is to love man and so he must.⁵⁹¹

Antoine does not accept the label, but comes to recognize some sort of psychology that occurs through the need to label oneself and others. Through labeling individuals, humans are able to make opponents for themselves. With a clarity to this, as Antoine refuses the label of humanist, he also skillfully navigates away an attempt by the Self-Taught-Man to then label Antoine as anti-humanist. As he stated, the Self-Taught-Man "lives off his opponents."⁵⁹²

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid, 171.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid, 118. This also is an example of imposed essence or purpose of life. Antoine refuses the label.

⁵⁹² Ibid.

Hiding behind labels and roles, the Self-Taught-Man seeks to be known as a humanist and seeks to make definition out of Antoine also. He sizes him up to place him under a proper label.⁵⁹³ This reflects Sartre's phenomenological method that seeks to only describe and not define. A definition seeks to classify and in the same breath objectify what is perceived by distinguishing one from another.⁵⁹⁴

Antoine's encounter with Jean-Pacome stands as another example of how the jarring experience of nausea illumined Antoine to see beyond labels, and therefore, beyond criticizing others for fitting into defined roles. As Antoine examines Jean-Pacome, he is only able to see feet, hands, shoulders, and unable to develop an overall essence out of the body parts. He can only see his existence. Antoine states that he can't find fault with the man, because he only sees his undefined existence and freedom.

However, he feels a gaze upon him from Jean-Pacome whom is judging Antoine. He realizes that Jean-Pacome has taken it upon himself to embody the label of "leader" and is imposing obedience to it. Jean-Pacome "assumed the form of rights to be instantly obeyed" as a leader and his demand seems to question Antoine's right to even exist.⁵⁹⁵

It is the nuance of the assumed right and the demand it imposes that is illumined to Antoine as he sees to the root of Jean-Pacome's judgement.⁵⁹⁶ Likewise, it is not nausea but

⁵⁹³ Antoine makes a wonderful reference to a priest who stares out into the ocean and smiles at the green color that appears to him, as if the beautiful sea affirms God. Antoine marvels at how the true sea is black and the priest has no idea of this. The surface appearance of a pretty green is equivalent to the mask that humanity wears in the form of roles and labels. Truly, like the sea, our reality is the dark nothingness, beneath it., and not the green roles and labels born of it.

⁵⁹⁴ Joseph Catalano, *A Commentary On Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 44.

⁵⁹⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (NY: New Directions, 2013), 84.

⁵⁹⁶ *Ibid*, 85.

another experience of subception (that of a sword passing through him) that awakens Antoine to being defined in the presence and gaze of Jean-Pacome.

The nausea not only illumines Antione to the reality of his existence, but imposes a wisdom from his interactions with others to the degree that he becomes aware of the undercurrent at play.⁵⁹⁷ The nuance of labels and imposed demands, the desire to create opposition, as it is contrasted to the truth of his existence: nothingness and freedom. It is this expression to the nature of being that while first expressed in *Nausea* goes on to be developed with greater depth through the descriptive ontology of *Being and Nothingness*.

6.6 Key Themes of Being and Nothingness As Pointers towards Tillich's True Essence

Sartre's main task in *Being and Nothingness* is to reveal, "through the use of the phenomenological method, that consciousness is in immediate contact with the existence of things."⁵⁹⁸ Because human beings are immediately aware of an object and not of consciousness itself, Sartre interprets this to mean human beings are directly aware of existence itself.⁵⁹⁹ This is Sartre's thesis.

There are two movements that his work serves to examine:⁶⁰⁰ that consciousness is in the immediate grasp of the existence of things, the being of things; secondly, that this being is not reducible to an awareness of things as meaning. Put more plainly, because an individual is aware

⁵⁹⁷ Bettina Liebowitz Knapp, *Music, Archetype and the Writer: A Jungian View* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988), 132.

⁵⁹⁸ Joseph S. Catalano, *A Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre's "Being and Nothingness"* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago, 1985), 19.

⁵⁹⁹ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 11.

⁶⁰⁰ Joseph S. Catalano, *A Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre's "Being and Nothingness"* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1985), 20.

of something outside itself, that awareness is proof of its reality.⁶⁰¹ Secondly, because things have an infinite series of appearances to consciousness, consciousness cannot accurately know a thing's absolute meaning, purpose, or essence.⁶⁰² It can simply know that it exists. From this, Sartre will state that consciousness reveals reality, or its existence. And of this statement, existence precedes its essence. On the flipside to this, existence simultaneously reveals the nature of consciousness as freedom, through the infinite ways it can perceive anything.⁶⁰³

In order for consciousness to become aware of something outside of itself, consciousness must be a non-substantial absolute. Consciousness cannot be relative to anything that it is able to become aware of. Consciousness, while fundamentally directed away from itself and towards the world, is not able to fully identify itself with anything in the world. It posits and grasps its object as something other than itself. The content-less-ness and definition-less-ness, that is revealed as the nature of human consciousness, leaves Sartre to claim that existence also precedes essence.⁶⁰⁴

⁶⁰¹ This is the elimination of what Sartre called an embarrassing dualism from philosophy that claimed two kinds of being existed. The Cartesian view held that the mind was a spiritual substance and matter was pure extension in space. The difficult and unsolvable problem then existed of how two fundamentally independent substances affect each other, particularly, in the case of the human being, whom has both mind and body. How two unrelated existences relate in the case of the human being is engaged and believed to be solve by Sartre. The resolution is consciousness and things serve one another, in a relation to each-other.

⁶⁰² Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 229.

⁶⁰³ Ibid.

⁶⁰⁴ Ibid, 319.

6.7 Reviewing Sartre's Concept of Being-For-Itself, Being-For-Others, Being-In-Itself That Illuminate Tillich's True Essence

Consciousness as an awareness of something other than the being-of-consciousness is examined and fleshed out in Sartre's dialect of *being-for-itself*, *being-for-others*, and *being-in-itself*.⁶⁰⁵ The two-fold transphenomenality of being aware that things exist because an individual perceives them outside themselves (Sartre's ontological proof of reality) and encountering the simultaneous awareness that the individual is not the thing that it is able to perceive (what Sartre will term negation) may be examined first with Sartre's concept of *being-in-itself*.

The overarching investigation of the book is the way being-in-itself relates to being-for-itself; thus, to understand Sartre's being-in-itself is to begin to comprehend all else. Sartre will describe the characteristics of being-in-itself, rather than define it, as he stays true to his phenomenological investigation. His descriptions are attempts to make the object of his perception more known.

Sartre gives three general descriptions of being-in-itself: being is in itself, being is what it is, being is.⁶⁰⁶ The first phrase, *being is in itself*, refers to a type of unity that things seem have within themselves. *Things*, as in objects, such as a stone or a tree.⁶⁰⁷ The unity that Sartre speaks to is a lack of potentiality. The object that is perceived is unable to become something other than

⁶⁰⁵ The terms "being-in-itself" and "being-for-itself" refer to stages in the Hegelian dialect. In Hegel's logic, being-in-itself, as the positive aspect of quality, is the deterministic state of being precisely as it is identified with its positive aspect. For Hegel, being-in-itself is not concrete existence like it is for Sartre. Being-for-itself. For Hegel is the true infinite. For Sartre, however, they represent irreducible but related givens. The terms "in-itself" and "for-itself" are used to stress the intimate relation of consciousness to matter while keeping evident two different modes of being. Ibid, 12.

⁶⁰⁶ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay On Phenomenological Ontology* (New York City, NY: Philosophical Library, 1956), 148.

⁶⁰⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay On Phenomenological Ontology* (New York City, NY: Philosophical Library, 1956), 67.

what it is. A rock will remain a rock, a tree will remain a tree, because it lacks the possibility and potential that would enable it to choose to become something other than what it is. There is unity as Sartre says, unity in the sense that it is complete, and unchanging.

The second generalization Sartre gave to describe being-in-itself, *that which is what it is*, stresses that things are not *selves*. For Sartre, a *self*, is a consciousness of its own self-hood; a self is unable to fully identify with itself in its own being. It has an awareness that it is not what it is, and this awareness does not allow it to find unity. A rock, however, lacks this type of awareness, it does not experience a sense of not being what it is through consciousness. Instead, it is at one with itself, without conflict. The *in* within the term being-*in*-itself is used to eliminate the notion of any self-hood when paired by the word *itself*.⁶⁰⁸

The third generalization of being-in-itself, that which *is*, is to emphasize that things exist without justification or necessity. Sartre believed you could not deduce a necessary reality for the foundation of being. Necessity or a necessary reality involves meanings and not existents; the act of reason attempts to by-pass what simply exists and create reasons for the existence of a thing.⁶⁰⁹

It is to project a future upon it, to create possibility, however, possibility or potential is enabled by consciousness.⁶¹⁰ It is consciousness that a being-in-itself lacks. Consciousness is the aspect of the human being that enables meaning to be created.⁶¹¹ However, meaning does not exist for being-in-itself and so it simply exists. It has no justification or necessity, it just *is*.

⁶⁰⁸ Ibid, IXV.

⁶⁰⁹ Ibid, 527.

⁶¹⁰ Ibid, 74, 240.

⁶¹¹ Ibid, 441.

Being-for-itself contrast much of the generalization outlined for Sartre's being-in-itself. This contrast of description allows one to recognize the occurrence of a consciousness that is always revealing itself to itself through what it is not.⁶¹²

Contrasted to being-in-itself's first generalization of a lack of potentiality and unity in itself, *being-for-itself* has potential and finds no unity in itself. It can create beyond its current self. Whereas the rock will always remain a rock, the human being can be a chef and then decide it will be an artist. The human being is a baby, and then grown into an old man. The possibility is infinite for the human being, its potential is infinite.

Consider what may happen if a rock and a human being were placed in the middle of a desert by a person. The person leaves and both, the human and the rock in the same place, and goes away for five years. When the person returns to that spot, the rock will most likely remain right where it was placed the entire five years, unless blown by wind or moved by creature. A human being, however, will be somewhere else, and may never be found again.

The human being may have decided to navigate his or her way back to society following the stars and may now be living a life as a mother or father, teacher or writer, happily. The human being may also be found several miles from where last placed, having decided for itself to cultivate some type of sustainable living condition out of its harsh environment to survive, such as in the film *Cast Away*, featuring Tom Hanks.

They may have decided to make a best friend out of a cactus, they themselves may be painted in abstract design with mud from head to toe, or have teamed up with a pack of wolves living as one of them. It is also possible the human being may be found in the exact same place,

⁶¹² Ibid, 164.

no longer living, but dead from a lack of food and water. Where a rock will remain in place because of its lack of potential, the human being's potential provides endless possibility for it to embark on.

A human being is always becoming something it isn't. A girl can become a mom, a doctor can become a chef, a believer in God can become an atheist, a meat-eater can become a vegan. The human being's potential keeps it in a constant state of transformation. It is never in a fixed state because it always chooses something for itself.⁶¹³ The human being, therefore, can never *be* what it appears to be.

The second generalization of being-in-itself, *that which is what it is*, meaning that being-in-itself does not have a self that is conscious of its own self-hood.⁶¹⁴ This is contrasted with being-for-itself, that does. For Sartre, a *self*, is a consciousness of its own self-hood. A self is unable to fully identify with itself in its own being; it knows it, and it feels it. The human being has a self that makes it aware that it is not what it is, and this awareness does not allow it to find unity with anything. Being-for-itself participates in life with a body, but it does not fully identify itself as the body.⁶¹⁵

Likewise, when the label or roles of a person change, they do not fear eradication of their very self, because there also exists the deep-seated awareness that their core is not the role or the label. In this sense, the self that the human being possesses does not find actual unity with anything that it is, in terms of the roles that it may participate in. Roles, labels, are things that a person can

⁶¹³ Ibid, 448, 550.

⁶¹⁴ Ibid, XXII.

⁶¹⁵ Ibid, XXII, 523.

participate in, for itself. In this way, the human being, possessing a self beyond any *thing*, is a being-*for-itself*.⁶¹⁶

6.7.1 Negation As an Indicator of Tillich's True Essence

It is out of the human being's awareness that it is not what it is, nor does it fully identify with anything that it can observe, that Sartre's concept of negation arises.⁶¹⁷ This concept of negation gives way to a conclusion that being, in the case of the human being's nature, is nothingness when it comes to its existence.

The concept of nothingness is merely the ever-present experience of negation. Negation being the experience of never being fully the role or label that it participates as.⁶¹⁸ Being-*for-itself transcends* all roles and titles it participates as. It is unable to be defined or fixed as anything.⁶¹⁹ Being-*for-itself* could only be capable of transcending all things and paradoxically have the potential to participate as anything only if, at its origin, it is without any content.⁶²⁰ The human being is nothingness.

It is here, from an understanding of nothingness, that a proper connection is built to Sartre's famous statement that modern existentialism is founded upon: existence precedes essence. Because the human being is without content, this infers there can be no essence or

⁶¹⁶ Ibid.

⁶¹⁷ Ibid, 166.

⁶¹⁸ Ibid, XXII, 273.

⁶¹⁹ Transcends as in it fails to be one with any role or title. A student becomes a lawyer. A baby becomes an adult. The healthy becomes the sick. A married human becomes a single human. Rather than finding fixed definition with anything, the human being is unable to find its definition because it always transcends itself.

⁶²⁰ Ibid, 162, 22.

purpose that is predetermined prior to its existence. The human experience of consciousness is a witness unto itself of its own nothingness.⁶²¹

Thus, in having no content that it is fixed into, it is free to create its own purpose; its existence precedes its essence. A human being is then, ultimately, responsible for his or her own life. This ultimate responsibility is what leads Sartre to say that the human being is condemned to be free.⁶²²

This is phrased in a negative way through the use of the word “condemned,” but it is to emphasize that freedom is the one thing that exists at the origin of the human being.⁶²³ Freedom is the one thing the human being did not create for itself. Freedom is an aspect of the human that it cannot rid itself of. It is its nature.⁶²⁴ Because of this, a person bears the heavy weight of being solely responsible for its own choices. It is by nature always in negation, so it is always able to choose something new for itself. Human beings are free to do so, because human beings are *nothing*.

6.7.2 Temporality As an Indicator of Tillich’s True Essence

The concept of temporality, or time, comes from the human being’s ever transcendent or negated state of existence. As being-for-itself experiences negation, it experiences a perpetual flight from one thing to another.⁶²⁵ The for itself flees towards being. It flees being in the present towards a being in the future.

⁶²¹ Ibid, 18, 11, 166.

⁶²² Ibid, 415, 529.

⁶²³ Ibid, 415 482. Sartre stated: “this freedom is a freedom which I am”

⁶²⁴ Ibid.

⁶²⁵ Ibid, 118.

It is unable to coincide with itself in the present, or the now, because if it did that would mean being-for-itself has fully identified with itself.⁶²⁶ Being-for-itself would then become a being-in-itself, having found definition and the embodiment a fixed state without infinite potentials. The future is referred to as a *future-past* and the past is referred to as a *past-future*.⁶²⁷ The present is considered by Sartre as the immediate presence of the for-itself to being, rather than being considered as *now*.

This stirs the sense that being-for-itself cannot grasp anything, ever. Temporality is another quality of human existence consequential to its absolute nothingness.⁶²⁸ It is always transcending, unable to grasp a past or future. It presents only as a presence that is already and not yet. The indeterminate nature of the human being allows it to be what it is not and also be in flight towards a future that it also is not. This is the paradox of being that surfaces as temporality and creates the appearance of time.

6.7.3 *Being-For-Others As an Indicator of Tillich's True Essence*

In order to fully realize all the structures of being, the human being requires the existence of others. There is an aspect of being that cannot be experienced by the individual's sense of incompatibility with the external world. They must be realized from the point of view of the other.⁶²⁹ Emotions like shame, embarrassment, and pride, are other-related experiences of consciousness. They generally come to be experienced when an individual realizes that the *other*

⁶²⁶ Ibid, 123, 132.

⁶²⁷ Ibid, 179.

⁶²⁸ Ibid, 516.

⁶²⁹ Gary Cox, *The Sartre Dictionary* (NY: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2008), 28.

is freely interpreting and evaluating his or her actions, as they see fit. The individual realizes they have no control over how the other will interpret and evaluate them.

Another's evaluation of the individual is called *transcendent subjectivity*. The possibilities for interpretation and evaluation of their very being belong to the transcendent subjectivity of the other. It is when the other reduces a person to that of an object, a definition, a label, an *in-itself* that the for-itself experiences unpleasant or negative emotions.

It is not a mere loss of control over another's interpretation of them that triggers negative emotion; rather, when another has an awareness that they have been interpreted or judged to be an object. It is the sense⁶³⁰ that another has reduced their existence that is absolutely free and undefinable, a no-thing, to something less than free and undefinable. They have been viewed as a thing, defined and constricted. In this manner, an individual is objectified.

This concept is expressed in *Being and Nothingness* as *the look*. The look is the experience of being looked at and seen by another person. This other person is called the *other*.⁶³¹ The moment one person looks at another, a felt judgement occurs.⁶³² In most cases, human beings modify their behavior towards gaining acceptance by some external standard prescribed by the other.

⁶³⁰ It is not always the case that the individual is viewed as an object to another always. It is always the case that the individual is constantly providing the opportunity for another to see them as an object. Note: this is not Sartre's thoughts on the matter but my own.

⁶³¹ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay On Phenomenological Ontology* (New York City, NY: Philosophical Library, 1956), 476, 380.

⁶³² *Ibid*, 494, 369.

The concept of the look is a solid litmus test⁶³³ to reveal how well an individual has come to know themselves as undefined (because what does an individual really care what someone evaluates them as, if they truly hold the impression that they are without definition and free).

They would have embodied the deeper recognition of their nature as irreducible freedom. The individual does not bend to an imposed social definition and meaning that will assign them some sort of value. They are able to comprehend who they are, inherently. Their organic wants and choices are then not prey to being altered for acceptance.

Further, the experience of sensed reduction and objectivity in the examination of the other, when not embodying the deeper recognition of self as irreducible freedom, enters into a type of power struggle. The power struggle is in response to being objectified by definition and involved the transcended subject attempting to reduce the other until he or she becomes the one objectified.

Sartre says this type of interpersonal relationship is a ceaseless, unresolved power struggle. This is the sort of conflict that causes Sartre to develop the phrase “hell is other people” in his 1944 play, *No Exit*.⁶³⁴ It isn’t that hell is literally other people, rather, hell is other people *when* they make another into an object and in turn, the transcended subject retaliates by doing the

⁶³³ This is my personal opinion here. Sartre does not call it a litmus test, however, I have found it is a great measure that will reveal quickly how confined by the opinion of others and objectified by the presence of another we are. Beyond my nose picking, a little mindfulness applied throughout the day will convey how many actions you want to take but modify on behalf of the other, and the view they might have of you for doing so.

⁶³⁴ This play also is known by the name *In Camera*. Three strangers with nothing in common find themselves trapped in a room forever. They died and the room becomes Sartre’s vision of hell. There are no devils to torture the three strangers; the strangers torture themselves with negative self-judgement and attempted self-justification out of self-judgement to the life they had lived. They torture one another with criticism, and judgement made out of the knowledge of the other’s faults that they come to know. Each individual suffers as they attempt to control the other’s ability to form an interpretation and hold an opinion of them. Garcin, one of the three characters states in *No Exit*: “So this is hell....There is no need for red hot pokers. Hell is other people.” Sartre explores the phenomenon of hate through the experience of conflict that exists in human relations as being-for-others.

same back to reclaim a sense of control. The ceaseless power struggle, brought on by reducing another and feeling reduced, defines hell for Sartre.

6.7.4 An Analysis of Sartre's Freedom: Tillich's True Essence Revealed to the Human in Relation to Life in the World

For Sartre, human freedom is not optional. Sartre emphasized, "I am condemned to be free."⁶³⁵ An individual cannot rid themselves of the nature found at their origin, so much so, that attempting to not make choices is impossible.⁶³⁶ It is not optional because "freedom is the freedom of choosing but not the freedom of not choosing. Not to choose is, in fact, to choose not to choose."⁶³⁷ An individual cannot not choose, it is impossible to not be free. The human being is condemned by an obligation to a freedom that is irrevocable.

This imposes the characteristic of responsibility upon the human being.⁶³⁸ An individual is obligated to choose their response to every situation. The individual is responsible to decide the meaning of every experienced situation. The responsibility is unrelenting because freedom is unrelenting.

Because the human being's nature is nothingness, because it is *no-thing*, it is always bringing something to be, through choice. It is the continual bringing forth, the continual creative act of choice, that is the cause of temporality and the appearance of time. Because an individual

⁶³⁵ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay On Phenomenological Ontology* (New York City, NY: Philosophical Library, 1956), 462.

⁶³⁶ Joseph Catalano stated "freedom and nothingness are the very nature of our consciousness." Joseph Catalano, *A Commentary on Jean-Paul Sartre's "Being and Nothingness"* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Pr, 1985).

⁶³⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay On Phenomenological Ontology* (New York City, NY: Philosophical Library, 1956), 503.

⁶³⁸ *Ibid*, 541, 711.

continually brings things forth, the human being will transcend all of its past and future; it will find it cannot grasp anything.⁶³⁹ As temporality or time appears as the result of continual choice ceaselessly bringing something new to be, the concept of time acts as an affirmation to the human being's nature. The power of nothingness to bring something to be and the powerlessness the human being is as it is unable to not...not create. Thus, the human being fashions its life *ex-nihilo*.⁶⁴⁰

Because nothingness brings things to be, a human being cannot fully identify as anything it creates, and beyond this, to anything it perceives outside itself. The human being outside of transcending its own creations will also experience life as a complete negation of itself. The nothingness at the origin of the human being makes it doomed to a life of paradox: the human being, will be what it is not, and will not be what it is.

Five over-arching attributes of the human condition can be claimed from an analysis of Sartre's understanding of freedom: freedom is the organic un-alterable nature of the human being;⁶⁴¹ the human being transcends everything – it is what it is not, and is not what it is; the human being is *ex-nihilo* – it creates its life out of nothingness;⁶⁴² the human being is solely responsible to its freedom through its choices; emotions emerge as nothingness attempts to identify in the world as somethingness - it is the *catalyst*⁶⁴³ in awareness of *self* as pure nothingness: freedom.

⁶³⁹ Joseph Catalano, *A Commentary On Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 202.

⁶⁴⁰ Steven Earnshaw, *Existentialism: A Guide for the Perplexed* (NY: Continuum, 2007), 75.

⁶⁴¹ Freedom is the unalterable nature of the human being in as much as nothingness is the unalterable state of the human being as consciousness.

⁶⁴² *Ibid*, 191, 212.

⁶⁴³ This word is italicized and footnoted to draw a comparison with Tillich's use of the word *catalyst* in his *Systematic Theology*; Spiritual Presence within each individual is Tillich's stated catalyst, or guide, ultimately responsible for the transformation of all individuals into New Being. Tillich could not put a name to the Spiritual

The consciousness of the human being as essentially free may cause an individual such despair that they attempt to distract themselves from what unrelenting freedom requires of them: to transcend, be responsible, and ceaselessly bring forth something out of their nothing.⁶⁴⁴ The individual who finds despair in the face of these requirements will attempt to exercise its own freedom against itself.

The individual denies freedom by choosing to act as being-in-itself. He or she imposes limitations so it cannot make choices, and cannot take responsibility in its response to life. Sartre calls the individual who distracts themselves by exercising their freedom to deny their freedom as *bad faith*. It is *bad faith* because the individual has placed their *faith* in an illusion. Meanwhile, this illusion must be sustained moment to moment by using the freedom that they attempt to deny.⁶⁴⁵

Bad faith, rather than self-deception, is understood more like ignorance.⁶⁴⁶ A person in bad faith chooses to ignore the responsibility and reality that they bring forth all things by their freedom to choose. Philosopher Gary Cox says of an individual in bad faith: “She strives in vain to enter into an idealized alternative reality where she is a fixed entity that is no longer obligated

Presence nor articulate how this catalyst actually transformed the individual. Tillich’s remarks remained, simply, that such a catalyst existed and it is intimately active with its guidance in the very existence of each individual towards New Being. This is a heavy and premature foot-stomp as the connection of emotions with Spiritual Presence is made now; however, allow the concept to brew in the mind as it will be brought up with greater analysis later.

⁶⁴⁴ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay On Phenomenological Ontology* (New York City, NY: Philosophical Library, 1956), 77.

⁶⁴⁵ Gary Cox, *The Sartre Dictionary* (New York City, NY: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2008), 55.

⁶⁴⁶ Bad faith is translated as self-deception in Kaufmann’s translation of the term. See Walter Kaufmann, *Existentialism from Dostoevsky to Sartre*, p 222. Gary Cox clarifies in *The Existentialist Guide* p 56. this is not the best translation because it is impossible to deceive yourself. You cannot have information of yourself and at the same time not have the information of yourself in order to hide the information, and properly *deceive* yourself, with the information.

to make choices, to act, to take responsibility for her present situation. An idealized alternative reality where the lifelong burden of freedom and responsibility can be relinquished.”⁶⁴⁷

To exercise bad faith can look like an attempt to perfectly identify the self with *facticity*;⁶⁴⁸ to identify with the body, the past, the environment. All of which the individual knows he or she cannot identify with because all of which are objects of the individual’s perception that he or she can contemplate and examine as objects.⁶⁴⁹

Sartre believed that a human being should in some way be a synthesis of facticity and transcendence. He believed bad faith attempts to keep them apart.⁶⁵⁰ Sartre delivers several examples of bad faith that attempt to separate facticity and transcendence. One example is that of the homosexual.⁶⁵¹ In *Being and Nothingness* he discusses a homosexual that denies he is a homosexual. The individual does not deny his desire of romantic and physical relationships with the same sex. However, he denies that the meaning of his romantic and physical relationships with the same sex are that he is a homosexual.

Rather than taking responsibility for his past actions, he chalks it up as being a heterosexual with curiosity, rather than acknowledging a true tendency that he acts upon. The homosexual individual in Sartre’s writing attempts to deny his facticity and live as pure transcendence only. This is impossible because what allows a human being’s transcendence to

⁶⁴⁷ Gary Cox, *The Sartre Dictionary* (NY: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2008), 57.

⁶⁴⁸ Facticity is a concrete situation that the individual finds him or herself in that the individual must choose his or her response to. Facticity can be a past action that cannot be altered, or it can be something of the body such as height and skin color. Example: I cannot change that I am small, I can choose what being small is supposed to mean for me.

⁶⁴⁹ Joseph Catalano, *A Commentary On Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 82.

⁶⁵⁰ Ibid, 83 & Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay On Phenomenological Ontology* (New York City, NY: Philosophical Library, 1956), 79.

⁶⁵¹ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay On Phenomenological Ontology* (New York City, NY: Philosophical Library, 1956), 86-88.

carry on is continually having had transcended something. Thus, the reasoning behind Sartre's claim that a human being is a sort of synthesis of both facticity and transcendence can be seen. The homosexual is in bad faith while he attempts to separate a fact of his past from his transcendence.

Sartre's example goes with the introduction of the friend of the homosexual whom is called, the champion of sincerity.⁶⁵² He attempts to make the homosexual admit he is a homosexual. Wherein the homosexual is attempting to only claim pure transcendence, the champion of sincerity attempts to have him only claim facticity. This is likewise, bad faith through a separation of the synthesis.⁶⁵³

The champion of sincerity aims to stereotype his friend as "just a homosexual." He desires his friend to apply the label "homosexual" to himself to feed his motive of stereotyping or objectifying him. The champion of sincerity, in objectifying through a label, makes his friend into a thing called "a homosexual." In doing so he denies his friend of his freedom.

The homosexual then becomes seen as a fixed entity that doesn't transcend. If the homosexual were to proclaim at the demand of his friend, "I am what I am," he would have exchanged one form of bad faith for another.⁶⁵⁴ Rather than reject his facticity, the homosexual would reject his transcendence instead, in considering himself a facticity. The only way to stay clear of bad faith is to not evade the truth that a human being is an indeterminate being who must continually create itself through choice and action.⁶⁵⁵

⁶⁵² Ibid, 107-108.

⁶⁵³ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁴ Gary Cox, *The Existentialist's Guide* (New York City, NY: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2017), 61.

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid.

Bad faith, in a nutshell, attempts to reject one's freedom by distraction. It is the antagonist of its own self. It is a willful ignorance that seeks to be irresponsible to its freedom. Authenticity is the opposite of bad faith.⁶⁵⁶ Sartre's concept of authenticity is the embrace of the human being as an indeterminate being. Someone living in authenticity does not ignore their freedom but accepts responsibility as the creator of their life through continual choice and action.⁶⁵⁷

The authentic person holds facticity and transcendence in synthesis, not rejecting either. The authentic being is not swept along by circumstances. They acknowledge their situation and assume their freedom by taking up responsibility as a choice maker. They are the creator of their life through their choices. Authenticity is accepting the inescapable existential truths of the human condition. It is accepting the requirements that come with possession of a nature that is totally free.

6.8 The Ethics of *Being and Nothingness* Towards Tillich's True Essence

At the end of *Being and Nothingness* Sartre wrote that he would consider the ethical implications of his theory of being-for-itself in a later work. He never developed an existential ethics, but he did leave behind 600 pages of notes towards an ethics between 1945 and 1948. These notes were published after his death under the title *Notebook for an Ethics*. The notebook is fragmented and unpolished and does not conclude an opinion from Sartre.⁶⁵⁸ As Sartre wrote of his unfinished ethics: "published after my death, these texts will remain unfinished and

⁶⁵⁶ Ibid, xxxix.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁵⁸ Gary Cox, *The Sartre Dictionary* (NY: Continuum International Publishing Group, 2008), 151.

obscure, since they formulate ideas which are not completely developed. It will be up to the reader to decide where they might have led.”⁶⁵⁹

Rather than discuss the contents of *Notebook for an Ethics*, in sticking to the content of *Being and Nothingness* for the purpose of this dissertation, an implied ethic does prevail with consideration of Sartre’s statement *hell is other people* from the play *No Exit*. To briefly review the concept, *hell is other people*, refers to the sensed loss of control over another’s freedom to interpret and examine the individual.⁶⁶⁰

The sense that the individual cannot control the infinite possibilities that he or she may be perceived by others creates a power struggle. In order to relieve the felt loss of control, the individual attempts to reduce the other’s freedom.⁶⁶¹ They do so by making the other into a being-in-itself, or more simply, by objectifying the other. The individual makes an object out of the other, out of the fear they may be made into an object by the other.

Sartre concludes that this exchange of objectification is a ceaseless power struggle between human beings. The attempt to objectify others to regain a sense of control over another’s freedom of perception, is for Sartre, the definition of hell. It can be considered that hell is not necessarily other people; rather, hell is other people *when....*people objectify others in response to sensing loss of control in the way they themselves are interpreted. Inversely, it is then inferred, that heaven is other people *when....*1) people do not objectify another in response

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid, 152.

⁶⁶⁰ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 352, 531.

⁶⁶¹ Ibid, 494, 321.

to sensing loss of control - the removal of an eye for eye conceptually; 2) people have lost a desire to control another's freedom, therefore, a loss of control is not a stimulus.⁶⁶²

To pair the phrase *hell* with people is to insist on such a behavior as a negative method of relation among society. This is a negative ethic in its expression. The negative, however, simultaneously expresses the positive. Conversely, Sartre has said things along the tone of hate is actually an affirmation of freedom. So, in a twisted way, it could be argued that hate is ethical, because it is a response to the fact of another's freedom.

Considering Sartre's comments on *hell is other people* and hate being perceived as an affirmation of freedom, a more well-knit thought towards an ethic, is that existence is always revealing human freedom to the individual as their ultimate truth – even through hate. Next, recognition and acceptance of this ever-revealing truth, as the truth of oneself and of others, creates the circumstance wherein people do not ever consider another to be an object because they know themselves as free. Second, a loss of control cannot be experienced, as they know themselves as freedom, which could never be reduced.

This hints to the viability that negative emotions do drive individuals towards the recognition of their innate nature of freedom. Hate is universally thought to be classified as a negative sensation. Something that most people seek relief from. However, Sartre is pointing out that this negative emotion is a result of experiencing the truth of another's innate freedom. Not only experiencing their freedom through their judgments, but the hate that may ensue is actually a recognition from that experience of their freedom. The frustration (or hell) occurs when trying to oppose such innate freedom without having the capability to do so.

⁶⁶² Ibid, 366.

Kate Kirkpatrick writes about Sartre's description of hell as other people in relation to Tillich's estrangement in *Answering Sartre. Paul Tillich and the 'Socrates of Nothingness.'* She writes:

On both levels of human existence, therefore – individual and relational – Sartre portrays the human subject as divided. On the first level we are divided from ourselves by time and the freedom of consciousness. On the second, we glimpse identity, but it is the identity of the syncategorematic self – a self with no meaning in isolation, and which, given meaning by others, may be a demeaning imprisonment. A harmonious self – and harmonious relations with others – are mirages.⁶⁶³

For Tillich, the remedy is God, the vertical, as he writes in *Systematic Theology III*.⁶⁶⁴ Sartre's great divide that is expressed above in Kirkpatrick's writing, for Tillich is simply his concept of estrangement.⁶⁶⁵ And for Tillich, estrangement requires Spiritual Presence for unification out of estrangement.

But, as we will see in future chapters dealing with the clinical observations of Carl Rogers within this thesis, "a harmonious self—and harmonious relations with others"⁶⁶⁶ are not mirages. Instead, they come from not only accepting the fact of freedom that reveals itself in Sartre's work, through negative emotions and all, but accepting the fact of self-worth that also reveals itself through negative emotions.

Negative emotions, which may feel like an imprisonment, do not necessarily reveal the need for escape, through a God. Rather, the markers of harmony with self and

⁶⁶³ Kate Kirkpatrick, "Answering Sartre. Paul Tillich and the 'Socrates of Nothingness,'" in *Returning to Tillich: Theology and Legacy in Transition*, eds. Samuel Shean and Russell Re Manning (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2018), 73-86, 82.

⁶⁶⁴ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 278.

⁶⁶⁵ Kate Kirkpatrick, "Answering Sartre. Paul Tillich and the 'Socrates of Nothingness,'" in *Returning to Tillich: Theology and Legacy in Transition*, eds. Samuel Shean and Russell Re Manning (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2018), 73-86, 82.

⁶⁶⁶ Ibid.

others, being the epitome of Tillich's concept of New Being and Kingdom of God, might be achieved through the experience of negative emotions themselves, acting as Spiritual Presence.

Likewise, with Sartre, others can be hell because we recognize their innate freedom. Their freedom to judge and objectify our actions and choices will continue to be hell until we recognize our freedom. The recognition of self-worth will come through negative emotions as well, when it comes to Carl Rogers and what he has observed in his clinical setting.

6.9 Summary and Conclusion

Firstly, this chapter discussed the background of philosophical thought that underpins Sartre's concepts within *Being and Nothingness*. Secondly, a brief review of the themes within the novel *Nausea* was conducted. Further, the key themes found in *Being and Nothingness* were discussed, and out of that discussion, five overarching attributes of the human condition were presented.

The overarching attributes emergent from Sartre's examination of the human condition were: freedom is the organic un-alterable nature of the human being; the human being transcends everything – it is what it is not, and is not what it is; the human being is *ex-nihilo* – it creates its life out of nothingness; the human being is solely responsible to its freedom through its choices; emotions emerge as nothingness attempts to identify in the world as somethingness - it is the *catalyst* in awareness of *self* as pure nothingness: freedom.

These attributes were shown to be resultant of a consciousness that bares no content or definition: nothingness. Sartre concludes that because consciousness is nothingness, this nothingness enables complete freedom to be the nature of the human being. Because an individual is unfixed and undefined, the individual is without cease, continually bringing forth a new potential by exercising choice. The individual, uncontrollably by way of its nothingness can't stop bringing forth something to participate as.

Sartre's analysis of the nature of consciousness in relation to the world describes the human as free. This freedom makes the human a creator through its choices. Choices are not just actions, but the meaning an individual gives to everything that has happened in its life. The way an individual chooses to define themselves and the stories they tell about themselves.

The human being, is ultimately free to radically choose any belief and give any meaning to anything in its life, and then, choose actions that reflect the meaning. This freedom, Sartre has found, to be at the origin of the human being. It is the one thing that is irreducible. It is the one thing that cannot, not be.

Because Sartre concluded this by an analysis of the human being in relation to the world it lives in, it can serve as a genuine reference that humanity is guided towards a revelation of its true Essence, within its existence, as Tillich states. A human living in relationship to the world is guided to know its nature as free. The human being experiences a visceral response within itself through its relationship to the external world, towards an awareness of self.

This is an important analysis for the purpose of this thesis which is to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called

true Essence. For Tillich, Spiritual Presence was enmeshed in the external world and also within the human being, in order to guide people towards knowledge of this true Essence.

In the next chapter, the clinical observations of Carl Rogers reveal a universal internal guidance system. This inner guidance system responds within an individual's gut, when they reject their own unique meaning and values in life. When people do not act as the creator of their own life, as described as the image of God in this chapter, clinical evidence suggests that internal distress is experienced. This internal distress can lead to destruction of the person and the community.

The clinical observation of Carl Rogers, in regard to this internal guidance system, will be used to further implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Chapter Seven

Carl Rogers' Inner Guidance

In Articulating Tillich's Spiritual Presence towards True Essence

7.1 Introduction

This chapter will discuss Carl Rogers' observations of human nature. The clinical observation of Carl Rogers, in regard to an internal guidance system, will be used to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Sartre analyzed the nature of human consciousness in relationship to the world. This analysis revealed descriptions understood to be universal to the nature of humans. Rogers, a clinical therapist, observed the inner life of humans as they live in relation to the world. These observations led him to discover what is understood as an internal guidance system, existent, in all human beings.

This guidance system serves to steer the human being to live out the description from Sartre's analysis of the nature of human consciousness, as free. Likewise, this system lends the human being to embody, through guidance, the concept of Tillich's true Essence.

It is through the observations of Carl Rogers that a verification process for, and an understanding of how, Tillich's Spiritual Presence guides the human to embody a true Essence, can be found.

7.2 About Rogers

Carl Rogers developed an approach to psychotherapy known as person-centered counseling. As a psychologist in New York, he became disenchanted with mainstream psychology's emphasis on testing and treatment. Rogers felt clients were treated as objects rather than individuals that deserved understanding and respect.⁶⁶⁷

He began to develop his own ways of working with clients known as *non-directive counseling*. Non-directive counseling became known to the public as *client-centered therapy*, after his 1951 book publication of *Client-Centered Therapy: Its Current Practice, Implications, and Theory*. The term *person-centered approach* was taken up later when it was shown that Rogers' theory and philosophy could be taken outside the counseling office and into settings like education.⁶⁶⁸

In the 1940's and 50's Rogers revolutionized the study of counseling and psychotherapy by making sound recordings of counseling interviews in order to identify the significant factors contributing to successful outcomes.⁶⁶⁹ From these observations, he developed a theory of counseling and personal change that could be tested through further research and clinical experience.⁶⁷⁰ Many others contributed to the formation and evolution of his approach to therapy, such as Julius Seeman's work on personality integration, that provided much empirical research support for the central concepts of Rogers person-centered therapy.⁶⁷¹

⁶⁶⁷ Tony Merry, *Learning and Being in Person-Centered Counselling* (Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books, 2014), 2.

⁶⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁶⁹ Carl Rogers, *Counseling and Psychotherapy: Newer Concepts In Practice* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1957).

⁶⁷⁰ Tony Merry, *Learning and Being in Person-Centered Counselling* (Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books, 2014), 3.

⁶⁷¹ Julius Seeman, *Personality Integration: Studies and Reflections* (New York: Human Sciences Press, 1983), 11.

The term *person-centered approach* refers to a particular set of attitudes, values, and a philosophy that can be applied to any setting where people's personal growth and development is of concern.⁶⁷² The concept of *approach or attitude* runs in the same vein of existential philosophy in that it is an approach or an attitude you face life with. It is a way of being in the world.⁶⁷³ While Rogers did not intentionally set out to deliver existentialist attitudes in the realm of counseling and psychotherapy, the empirically discovered attitudes and values that developed into lasting personal change, happened to mirror those of existentialism, on several accounts.

Person-centered counseling is not a manual or set of instructions on how to do counseling. It is also not a set of skills or a reflection of feelings. It is a democratic, non-authoritarian, non-directive approach to people that emphasizes constructive human relationships as the key to the change process. The counselor attends to the whole person of the client: their feelings, thought, experience, ideas, fantasies and other sensations. The counselor has no goals for the client, only for himself. That goal is to become familiar with the client's frame of reference. He or she is an alert companion sharing in another's existential moment without judgement or critique.⁶⁷⁴

The connection Person Centered Therapy has to existentialism shows itself in its founding principles:⁶⁷⁵

- A phenomenological approach to the person. Behavior is a response to a personally experienced reality. Behavior is in response to sense and meaning derived from a

⁶⁷² Tony Merry, *Learning and Being in Person-Centered Counselling* (Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books, 2014), 4.

⁶⁷³ Ibid, 13.

⁶⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁵ Ibid, 18. & Carl Rogers, "A Note On 'Nature of Man'," *Journal of Counselling Psychology* 4, no. 3 (1956), 201.

- unique mixture of needs, history, and expectations. Each person lives in their own subjective world that cannot be fully understood by anyone else.
- Human nature is understood by appreciating people's personal worlds from within their own frame of reference, that is, their own subjective point of view. The counselor is interested to discover how the person has arrived at their conclusions of themselves and others and how it feels to be them. Subjectivity has dignity.
 - Life and the process of life is viewed existentially. It emphasizes the potential for individual freedom and the individual's ability to take responsibility for their experience. It stresses the importance of free-will and the individual's ability to overcome obstacles with it. It rejects that humans are under the control of external forces or unconscious instincts. The individual is responsible for whatever it has become, because people choose *how to be*.
 - A person is never static or fixed; they are always becoming something. There is an organic tendency towards continued growth, development, and enhancement. Humans are inherently constructive, creative, and forward moving. They move toward self-actualization within social and environmental circumstances.

7.3 Rogers' Main Concepts Around Internal Guidance, Suggestive of Tillich's Spiritual Presence

Rogers believed the human organism holds self-contained wisdom. With this self-contained wisdom, the organism seeks self-actualization. *Self-actualization*⁶⁷⁶ is a directional term when spoken by Rogers. The aim of the human being, at its core, wills to transcend in an expansive way towards greater independence and self-responsibility.⁶⁷⁷

The organism itself guides the human being in the direction that allows the actualization of “increasing self-government, self-regulation, autonomy and away from heteronymous control, or control by external forces.”⁶⁷⁸ Rogers explains “this is true whether we are speaking of entirely unconscious organic processes, such as the regulation of body heat, or such uniquely human and intellectual functions as the choice of life goals.”⁶⁷⁹

This basic direction of the organism, what is called the human being's organic tendency, is not designed to preserve life but to transcend any momentary status quo. The force within the human being contains needed wisdom that enables it to continually expand itself “and impose its autonomous determination upon an ever-increasing realm of events.”⁶⁸⁰

This internal driving *force*⁶⁸¹ towards autonomous determination in relation to the dynamic event of the organism and its environment is described by psychotherapist Karen

⁶⁷⁶ The term self-actualization is being increasingly advanced and accepted by psychologist and others. Self-actualization is described by Goldstein as this one basic striving within the human being towards itself. Further Sullivan points to the directional nature of the organism stating that the basic direction of the organism is forward. Kurt Goldstein, *The Organism: A Holistic Approach to Biology Derived from Pathological Data in Man* (New York: Zone, 2000).

⁶⁷⁷ Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 488.

⁶⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁸⁰ Ibid, 489.

⁶⁸¹ *Force* as a descriptive Rogers uses to define the tendency inside the human being, held inside the organism of being itself according to Rogers, to move the individual in the direction of greater independence or self-

Horney as an individual's "unrelenting will to come to grips with himself, a wish to grow and to leave nothing untouched that prevents growth."⁶⁸² *Coming to grips with oneself* as related to the dynamic event of the organism and its environment involves the acknowledgement of what the individual actually feels, thinks and wants verses the influence pressed upon the individual as to what other people feel, think, and want that share the same environment.⁶⁸³

The individual has the capacity to lose a sort of honesty with itself, opting to deny what it wants, thinks and feels in exchange for what others judge as good, bad, right, wrong, proper, etc. It also has the capacity to distort what it experiences when it is not in line with a certain image of itself that would make it appear as having worth in the external world of other's opinions.⁶⁸⁴

The mode in which an individual decides value judgements, either internally or externally, is termed by Rogers as the *locus of evaluation*.⁶⁸⁵ When an individual "is living largely by values⁶⁸⁶ he has introjected from others, from his personal cultural environment" the locus of evaluation resides externally.

An external locus of evaluation is often tied to a sort of worth that one maintains by living up to the introjected values. In other words, the individual's worth is based externally

responsibility and towards increased self-government, self-regulation, and autonomy. It has been italicized here to emphasize and build comparison with and to the descriptive word *power* that is utilized to regard the image of God that is the human being's nature of freedom and underpins innate/relentless creative authority of the human being.

⁶⁸² Karen Horney, *Self-analysis* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1946), 175.

⁶⁸³ *Ibid*, 15.

⁶⁸⁴ An example would be when a mother who considers herself loving but experiences internal distress because she finds herself greatly irritated by her child. She distorts this incongruence of how she views herself as a loving mother verses her reality of being consistently irritated with her child to mean that the child is "bad" and this is why she feels what she feels. She must distort her reality in order to keep maintenance of a self-image as a loving mother to keep her worth as a human being.

⁶⁸⁵ Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 149.

⁶⁸⁶ Rogers defines this term as the show of preference in an individual's action for one kind of object or objective over another. It is indicated behaviorally when an individual accepts one object and rejects the other. This is an operative value. Secondly, there are conceived values. A conceived value is an individual's perceived preference for a symbolized object. There is usually anticipation acting as foresight at the outcome of a behavior. An example would be "honesty is the best policy." Thirdly, there are objective values. These are preferences that may or may not be based on facts. Carl Rogers, *The Carl Rogers Reader* (New York: Mariner Books, 1989), 171.

rather than residing within oneself. Examples of external value judgements are “I have homosexual impulses, which is very bad (according to my church),”⁶⁸⁷ and, “I should always be a loving mother (because any other attitude is unacceptable in my middle-class group).”⁶⁸⁸

When the individual’s personal experiences and feelings contradict the external value, a visceral distress occurs within the individual. This visceral response enables the individual to sense a sort of discrepancy that is severely dissatisfying.⁶⁸⁹ Dissatisfying to what? The organism’s operating tendency towards autonomy which requires it to make value judgements according to its own experience and feelings.

What is repressed and what is denied within the individual will create visceral distress in response to a blocked pathway towards autonomy and self-responsibility. This is the *force* that Rogers continually refers to an association with an organismic tendency to continually actualize into more autonomy. The driving tendency of the human being is to progress towards autonomy and self-responsibility and it does so by moving away from introjected values and meaning in preference of deciding its own, and actualizing that which it decides for itself.

The organism itself reacts in a visceral way when it is not gripping itself, but attempting to grip others instead. When this occurs, the individual is *incongruent* to itself, or in-authentic. This mis-match creates a visceral distress which is a signal meant to draw awareness to the in-authenticity taking place, for further exploration by the individual.

It can be figuratively explained by the experience of trying to explore a city with a map that has been handed from a passerby. However, as the individual begins to navigate with the

⁶⁸⁷ Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 149.

⁶⁸⁸ *Ibid*, 148.

⁶⁸⁹ *Ibid*, 151.

map, he or she finds it does not match the actual surroundings. The individual may for a time ignore their own experience and pretend the map is in fact proving correct or perhaps distort what it does see in order to make right the map, while making its own experience wrong.

The visceral response to incongruence will present itself offering a protest to the human being, even amidst being cognitively unconscious of inauthenticity.⁶⁹⁰ It does so in order to re-orient the individual back to autonomy and self-responsibility through trusting its primary experience and navigating life with a trust in itself. As Rogers illuminates more properly using the analogy of a map in *Client-Centered Therapy*:

Putting some of these thoughts into semantic terminology, we may say that the client has been living by a map. In therapy he discovers first of all that the map is not the territory – that the experiential territory is very different, and far more complex. He has discovered that even as a map, his map has contained serious errors...he has the opportunity to come down from the high-level abstraction of his map and explore the territory of primary experience.⁶⁹¹

The distressed visceral response of an incongruence prompts the individual to reach the “dawning realization that the evidence upon which he can base a value judgement is supplied by his own senses and experience.”⁶⁹² Further, Rogers states that “short-term and long-term satisfaction can be recognized, not by what others say, but by examining one’s own experience. The value system is not something imposed from without, but is something experienced.”⁶⁹³

In other words, satisfaction and positive visceral feelings of harmony occur when the individual recognizes they have, within themselves, the capacity to decide for themselves what

⁶⁹⁰ Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 148.

⁶⁹¹ Ibid.

⁶⁹² Ibid, 150.

⁶⁹³ Ibid.

will enhance their own self. It is satisfying to accept that the locus of evaluation resides inside themselves.⁶⁹⁴ Values and meaning from society and culture, as well as those held by family, friends, etc. are no longer seen as threatening should they not match the actual experience of the individual. Because self-worth is no longer tied to external values, the defense mechanism of self-denial and distortion disappears. Values are not seen as fixed but alterable for the individual, according to their subjective experience.⁶⁹⁵ Values and standards no longer depend upon the judgements and expectations of others, but upon reliance of their own experience.⁶⁹⁶

The counselor, in Rogerian therapy, through a practice of non-judgement but understanding of the individual's perception, allows a space to develop wherein the defense mechanisms are useless. The standards and judgements of worth are simply not being applied by the counselor, thus, the individual is free to be real with their thoughts and feelings as they experience them. Over time, the individual comes to see the "elaborate facades which deny its existence."⁶⁹⁷ This type of relationship between the counselor and the person creates the environment that is basic to constructive personality change.

This is more than theory towards change. Rogers stated "here I can depart from speculation and bring in the steadily increasing body of solid research knowledge which is accumulating."⁶⁹⁸ What is amazing concerning the clinical observations of Rogers is that, even if the individual has limited exposure to a space where non-judgment exists, it creates substantial change, still.

⁶⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁹⁵ Ibid, 151.

⁶⁹⁶ Nathaniel Raskin, "An objective study of the locus-of-evaluation factor in psychotherapy," In *Personality Monographs, Vol. 3. Success in psychotherapy*, eds. Werner Wolff and Joseph Precker (Grune & Stratton: New York, 1952), 159.

⁶⁹⁷ Carl Rogers, *Becoming a Person: Two Lectures* (Austin: Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, 1970), 4.

⁶⁹⁸ Ibid.

Rogers goes on to say “we know now that individuals who live in such a relationship even for a relatively limited number of hours show profound and significant change in personality, attitudes, and behavior, changes that do not occur in controlled groups.”⁶⁹⁹ Neurotic or psychotic characteristics decrease and the individual values himself or herself more highly. The individual becomes more self-confident and self-directing.

They become more open to experience and deny less of their experience. Interestingly, there seems to appear a sort of ethical implication as well. Rogers has stated the individual “becomes more accepting in his attitudes towards others, seeing others as more similar to himself”⁷⁰⁰ as he or she becomes more integrated with his or her authentic self.

⁶⁹⁹ Ibid, 5.

⁷⁰⁰ Ibid

7.4 Rogers' observations of human nature, Towards Sartre's analysis and Tillich's True Essence

When the individual is free from defensiveness, Rogers observed human beings to function creatively and constructively.⁷⁰¹ He called these characteristics “inherent in his species”⁷⁰² and “the basic nature of the human being.”⁷⁰³

The basic nature that is creative and constructive and inherent to the human being, is a person who trusts in their own being to inform them of their own values, meaning, etc. The individual who recognizes themselves as organically free to do so, removes the masks – facades of conformity to others – to become a separate, unique and distinct person.⁷⁰⁴ The individual does not think, feel, or behave the way others believe they should think, feel, and behave. Unburdened by a conflict between the internal reality and the external standards of worth, the

⁷⁰¹ Rogers has been criticized for taking too much an optimistic stance on the question of human nature, and has been described as being overly idealistic or naïve. This criticism rests mainly on a statement that humans are basically good. Some may take this as ignoring the destruction that the human being is capable of. Rogers did not see the capacity for human destruction to mean that the nature of the human being is then an inherently evil or destructive nature. He found through clinical observation that the nature of the human being was inherently free and contained the drive to move towards actualization of that potential rather than a constricted and destructive one. It is the inherent forward tendency of the human being that progresses it towards its inherent freedom, and seeks the actualization of that freedom. The human being does not tend to naturally press or seek into more constriction, more control, and more confinement. This suffocates the human being and drives it mad. This sort of movement into constriction, control, and confinement moves against the human being's nature as Rogers has found through observation. Ultimately, also through observation, it is the root of many psychopathic behaviors. Cutting to the point, because human nature is in fact free and characteristically constructive and creative in an inherent way, when its inherency is denied, distress occurs within the individual in order to prompt it to forge a pathway around this constraint, where it is then able to continue to towards greater degrees of freedom and display more creativity. In a paradoxical way, what is called as evil, is therefore a causation of the inherent freedom and worth of mankind being regressed. As inherent freedom and worth are regressed for control and constriction, individual and social destruction develops. Human nature is not evil because of destructive action, but is a result of the inherent good of mankind.

⁷⁰² Nathaniel Raskin, “An objective study of the locus-of-evaluation factor in psychotherapy,” In *Personality Monographs, Vol. 3. Success in psychotherapy*, eds. Werner Wolff and Joseph Precker (Grune & Stratton: New York, 1952), 199-203.

⁷⁰³ Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 183.

⁷⁰⁴ *Ibid*, 11.

individual feels harmonious and satisfied. The individual, aligned towards their true nature is deemed as authentic by Rogers.⁷⁰⁵

7.5 Becoming Authentic by Dropping the Mask

The question arises as to how the individual can become aware of facades of conformity, when they are often worn unconsciously? Rogers would state this is arrived at from a visceral sense of despair, anxiety, etc. Because human nature is organically free, a statement that aligns with Sartre's analysis, Rogers then says the human has an inherent character that is creative, constructive, self-regulated, self-responsible, etc. The organism itself, because of its basic nature, protests when not continually expanding into more of these inherent qualities.

This concept of a visceral protest, or inner distress, is captured in a lecture given by Rogers which stated the human being will experience despair "when they do not choose, or are not willing to choose, to be oneself."⁷⁰⁶ A visceral distress occurs when an individual chooses "other than himself."⁷⁰⁷ The negative visceral sense signifies "one central search"⁷⁰⁸ that is taking place behind it.

Negative visceral feelings are but questions the individual asks about themselves: "Who am I, *really*? How can I get in touch with my real self, underlying all my surface behavior? How can I become myself?"⁷⁰⁹ The protest takes the form of a negative visceral response - despair or

⁷⁰⁵ Concerning congruency, Rogers does not intend to create the idea that someone must be in complete congruence, but rather is always in a process towards more and more congruence. Rogers assumed the impossibility of maintaining congruence at all times and in all areas of life. Paul Wilkins, *Person-Centered Therapy In Focus* (California: Sage Publications, 2003), 72.

⁷⁰⁶ Carl Rogers, *Becoming a Person: Two Lectures* (Austin: Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, 1970), 11.

⁷⁰⁷ *Ibid*, 11.

⁷⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 10.

⁷⁰⁹ *Ibid*.

anxiety – to alerts the individual of in-authenticity, also called incongruence, in Rogerian terms, is taking place.⁷¹⁰

Conscious or not of self-betrayal, the organism itself signals to the individual through an inner gut sense that is found to be dissatisfying. This dissatisfying experience signals, according to Rogers, that a pathway is blocked towards its goal of more autonomy, self-regulation, self-responsibility, creativity, constructiveness, etc. This dissatisfaction arises to facilitate a new behavior that will help the individual move beyond the blocked pathway.

As the individual becomes increasingly dissatisfied through the visceral experience of anxiety and despair. It seeks to find a remedy to that experience that will result in a positive visceral experience of harmony and satisfaction, instead. Conscious or unconscious of the false or conditioned self that is blocking growth, the individual's growth tendency (the force that is innate in the organism of the human being itself, as Rogers states) responds with the unpleasantities that are required to spark a new behavior that is in favor of the individual's subjective experience of reality. Feeling an internal distress makes the individual take on a new actions or behaviors, as the internal pressure rises. This is the actualizing tendency within each person. It desires for them to move past the block, and into more of their inherent qualities.

Mearns and Thorn refer to the *force* as “the pressure of the actualizing tendency.”⁷¹¹ Maddi explains this pressure further as a biological pressure to fulfill a genetic blueprint.”⁷¹² The visceral dissatisfaction is an inner pressure that is a guiding force back to the path of actualizing yourself over a façade. However, the choice always remains to continue a life of

⁷¹⁰ Tony Merry, *Learning and Being in Person-Centered Counselling* (Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books, 2014), 26.

⁷¹¹ Dave Mearns, *Person-Centered Therapy Today* (California: Sage Publications, 2000), 183.

⁷¹² Salvatore Maddi, *Personality Theories: A Comparative Analysis* (Illinois: Waveland Press, 2001), 106.

dissatisfaction, if the individual desires it. The force, or pressure, can only make you dissatisfied. It cannot force you to act differently. It serves to bring into an individual's awareness their own denied experiences.⁷¹³ Something worthy of mention is that the greater the *self-betrayal, self-deception or façade*,⁷¹⁴ the greater the dissatisfaction that is viscerally experienced.⁷¹⁵

Liken the experience of visceral pressure that makes an individual have a change of action or new behavior to that of the daily experience of hunger. The individual is not conscious of the calorie count that exists within their own body. The only means of knowing they need food is when the experience of hunger occurs in their own stomach. The unpleasant experience of hunger will cause the individual to eventually stop what they are doing and take on a new behavior in order to resolve the hunger.

The hunger will grow and become proportionately discomforting, while also not taking over the individual's own free will in such a way that it forces them to eat. The action of eating, or the decision to eat, is still up to the individual itself. The discomfort that is triggered to make the individual notice their own hunger or need to eat, is not optional. The organism's growth tendency responds to individual requirements. Even while the individual may not be conscious of what it needs, the discomfort is an invitation to an awareness. The intent is growth into more of oneself.

The growth tendency or *force* within the organism will provide a visceral signal that is dissatisfied by blocks in the pathway towards further growth.⁷¹⁶ This signal is the wisdom of the organism being made available to every human being. The wisdom through the visceral is

⁷¹³ Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 148.

⁷¹⁴ All words are used synonymously by Rogers in his book *Client-Centered Counseling*.

⁷¹⁵ Another reference by Rogers is *inner strain*. Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 98.

⁷¹⁶ Carl Rogers, *The Carl Rogers Reader* (New York: Mariner Books, 1989), 171.

notification that a) in-authenticity is taking place – even if the individual is not cognitively conscious of it, and, b) that a different behavior is required to continue on the path of expanding into more self-regulation, responsibility, freedom, etc. and c) whatever is being denied within the self must be seen for the unique worth that it holds and not rejected. An individual's visceral harmony will be experienced as self-worth and authentic living is actualized to greater and greater degrees.

Because the blueprint of human nature is to expand into more and more of *itself*, that being inner freedom, autonomy, independence, self-regulation, self-responsibility, creativity, and constructiveness, a protest occurs if the individual has deserted their worth and is trying to behave in terms of values set by another.⁷¹⁷ In this understanding, visceral experiences of anxiety and despair (a non-exhaustive list of dissatisfied inner feelings), “is really the discovery of unknown elements of self.”⁷¹⁸

It is an invitation into an awareness and inclusion of parts the individual has denied and distorted within itself, and thus, the masks the individual wears as a result. It is the beginning of recognizing their self-worth and also the awareness of their innate inner freedom that is available for them to choose what is meaningful to them, rather than others. It is a part of “a process whereby man becomes his organism – with-out self-deception, without distortion.”⁷¹⁹

⁷¹⁷ Ibid, 173.

⁷¹⁸ Carl Rogers, *Becoming a Person: Two Lectures* (Austin: Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, 1970), 12.

⁷¹⁹ Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2003), 103.

7.6 The Potential Purpose of Subjectivity by way of Carl Rogers, towards Tillich's True Essence

Subjectivity appears to be a well-structured requirement of the human experience. It is a way to receive a lesson in self-love, through recognition of the innate worthiness of their own subjective meaning and value. It enables the individual to experience their own self-worth, by putting them in a situation, through its own organism, that requires it choose itself or continue life with a negative inner pressure.

Only by having something unique inside each human and finding themselves placed in an environment where everyone holds an often-contrary definition of good, valuable, meaningful, etc. to that of their own, does the individual enter into the question of self-worth. It is only inside the question of self-worth that the organism itself will offer protest on the individual's behalf.

The individual will find that its worth is within its own uniqueness, outside of all the other values and meanings available. The individual will find it is so worthy that it must choose itself if it intends to move onward in harmony and growth.⁷²⁰ Subjectivity, in this scope, serves the experience self-worth for each human being. The organism, housing self-contained wisdom, not only guides the individual towards authenticity amidst unconscious in-authenticity, but simultaneously provides a wisdom of self-worth as it necessitates that the individual regard itself positively; the authentic individual is its own (and only) way forward.

⁷²⁰ The human being is like a flower and it is meant to bloom. However, humans are meant to develop in different ways according to personality and circumstance. For this reason, there is never a single prescription that is universal aside from the individual learning to trust in their own prescriptions for growth. The only way forward into bloom is in the individual's authenticity. Carl Rogers, *A Way of Being* (Florida: Houghton Mifflin, 1980), 119.

7.7 Rogers' View of Basic Human Nature Explained

The concept that grew out of Rogers' clinical experience was a growing recognition that the innermost core of human nature, the deepest layers of his personality, the base of his "animal nature," was positive in nature – was basically socialized, forward-moving, rational, and trustworthy.⁷²¹ Not only is human nature positive but it has an inherent growth tendency to move towards that positive core.

The positive by which the inherent growth tendency presses the individual towards is a nature of freedom, responsibility, and choice.⁷²² While humans can have a tendency towards violent acts and aggressive behavior, violent acts such as war and murder are not the core of humanity. Rather, they are a reaction to society and other individuals. Violence and aggression as a reaction to society and others comes from a poor self-concept or external constraints that override the individual's valuing processes.⁷²³

To further illuminate the notion, destructive psychological disturbance is shown to occur in people whom are sensitive to the judgements of others and tend to prioritize them over their own, developing an external locus of evaluation in the process.⁷²⁴

For Rogers, what is commonly called evil, is more like restrained or *rejected* freedom, creativity, choice, and self-responsibility. The source of restraint or rejection is the individual's own ambiguity of self-worth. This plays out as the individual rejects their own unique traits and

⁷²¹ Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2003), 91.

⁷²² *Ibid*, 391.

⁷²³ Carl Rogers, *A Way of Being* (Florida: Houghton Mifflin, 1980), 118.

⁷²⁴ Tony Merry, *Learning and Being in Person-Centered Counselling* (UK: PCCS Books, 2014), 68.

experiences that create meaning and value for them, in order to meet standards of worth impressed upon them in relation to others.

It is an ambiguity of their self-worth in tow with an ambiguity of innate inner freedom that initiates the rejection of their freedom, creativity, choice, and self-responsibility. The two concepts of self-worth and inner freedom seem to play into one another. They enable each-other. If the individual has high self-worth, they easily exercise inner freedom to choose what is meaningful for themselves. Yet, if an individual knows themselves as free, there is an inferred platform of self-worth created that evaluates its own experience of value and meaning as equal to standards found in the external environment. If you recognize self-worth, you act in freedom; if you recognize freedom, you act in self-worth.

Rather than a nature that is destructive and violent, Rogers observed a general direction, a pattern of movement organic to his clients, that guided them towards *being*. The movement generated is inward, towards a knowing and accepting what he or she actually *is*. As Rogers states: “He moves away from what he is not, from being a façade...not trying to be more than he is, with the attendant feelings of insecurity or bombastic defensiveness...not trying to be less than he is, with the attendant feeling of guilt or self-depreciation...he is increasingly listening to the deepest recesses of his physiological and emotional being.”⁷²⁵

The innate uniting movement, the organic tendency of each of his clients, were to remove facades and enter into growth of freedom, self-regulation (choice), self-responsibility, independence, and constructive creativity inside society. As Rogers created a space that allowed

⁷²⁵ Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2003), 167.

for the client to recognize their inner freedom and experience non-judgment, the client naturally re-oriented itself towards the positive.

Because Rogers style of therapy was not about fixing the client or even offering any input to the client, Rogers' lack of influence exposed a natural inclination among clients. The organic inclination was for the client to orient itself to a common core, the human being, that Rogers described as positive.⁷²⁶ Rogers expressed *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of*

Psychotherapy:

In my deepest contacts with individuals in therapy, even those whose troubles are most disturbing, whose behavior has been most anti-social, whose feelings seem most abnormal, I find this to be true. When I can sensitively understand the feelings which they are expressing, when I am able to accept them as separate persons in their own right, then I find that they tend to move in certain directions. And what are these directions in which they tend to move? The words which I believe are most truly descriptive are words such as positive, constructive, moving toward self-actualization, growing toward maturity, growing toward socialization. I have come to feel that the more fully the individual is understood and accepted, the more he tends to drop the false fronts with which he has been meeting life, and the more he tends to move in a direction which is forward....I would not want to be misunderstood on this. I do not have a Pollyanna view of human nature. I am quite aware that out of defensiveness and inner fear individuals can and do behave in ways which are incredibly cruel, horribly destructive, immature, regressive, antisocial, hurtful. Yet one of the most refreshing and invigorating parts of my experience is to work with such individuals and to discover the strongly positive directional tendencies which exist in them, as in all of us, at the deepest levels.⁷²⁷

⁷²⁶ "This point of view is so foreign to our present culture that I do not expect it to be accepted, and it is indeed so revolutionary in its implications that it should not be accepted without thorough-going inquiry. But even if it should stand these tests, it will be difficult to accept. Religion, especially the Protestant Christian tradition, has permeated our culture with the concept that man is basically sinful, and only something approaching a miracle can his sinful nature be negated. In psychology, Freud and his followers have presented convincing arguments that the id, man's basic and unconscious nature, is primarily made up of instincts which would, if permitted expression, result in incest, murder, and other crimes. The whole problem of therapy, as seen by this group, is not to hold these untamed forces in check in a wholesome and constructive manner, rather than in the costly fashion of the neurotic. But the fact that heart man is irrational, unsocialized, destructive of others and self - this is a concept accepted almost without question. To be sure, there are occasional voices of protest. Maslow (1) puts up a vigorous case for man's animal nature, pointing out that the anti-social emotions - hostility, jealousy, etc. - result from frustration of more basic impulses for love and security and belonging, which are in themselves desirable. And Montagu (2) like wise develops the thesis that cooperation rather than struggle, is the basic law of human life. But these solitary voices are little heard. On the whole the viewpoint of the professional worker as well as the layman is, in his basic nature, had best be kept under control or under cover, or both." Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2003), 91.

⁷²⁷ Ibid, 26.

In a round-about-way, there exists a paradox to Rogers' thought process. This paradox is: *evil* exists because human nature is not evil. Evil, in a certain light, is the validation of the innate good essence, organic to being. Should human nature be free, responsible, forward-moving, and filled with creative and constructive drives, it would seem logical that when this organic baseline is blocked, the polarity to human nature would exhibit itself.

Rogers' observation of a visceral protest that occurs when essence is hindered - by its own self-denial or by another - acts to validate Rogers' this seeming paradox of destructive behavior proofing a constructive nature. When given the freedom to choose, in an environment free of judgement,⁷²⁸ the unified trend of individuals is to drop facades and become themselves.⁷²⁹

As one becomes "all of themselves,"⁷³⁰ behavior commonly viewed as *evil* decreased as the individual steers organically towards harmony, friendliness, creativity, responsibility, choice making, etc. It is the observation of an apparent unified trend that Rogers concludes negative visceral responses speak to an innate actualizing tendency pushing us forward to embody more of ourselves: the *good*.⁷³¹

⁷²⁸ "With freedom from threat, and freedom of choice, exemplify in their lives a commonality of direction and goal. They move away from self-concealment, away from expectations of others, and into a friendly openness to what is going on with him, . . . he accepts others increasingly in the same understanding way." Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2003), 193.

⁷²⁹ Ibid.

⁷³⁰ Ibid.

⁷³¹ Ibid.

7.8 Rogers' Observations towards Tillich's Spiritual Presence and the goal of Essentialization

Rogers' merit, within the context of this dissertation, is rather the observation and description of an existent process that each human being is constantly in the experience of.

This process is internal and directional. In other words, the human being is actively guided towards fulfillment of its own potential, to greater and greater degrees of living its true Essence. Tillich felt New Being was this innate potential of the human being, expressed in existence. Tillich also felt Spiritual Presence was the catalyst at work behind it all.

Spiritual Presence was intimately at work within the individual, and existence itself, to produce this sort of directional guidance towards embodiment of one's potential. For Tillich, this potential is True Essence. For Rogers, this potential that the internal guidance drives a person to, is the core or essence of a person.

Tillich defined a misalignment to true Essence as a distortion, a self-deception, and the overall experience of ambiguity to what the individual truly *is* as its Essence. He stated this misalignment to be the cause of destruction in people and in society. Rogers clinical observations, point to the same effect. The internal guidance directs the individual to embody its essence, and its essence is the same as Tillich true Essence. When alignment with true Essence occurs, to any degree, self-destruction and social destruction lessen. Taking Rogers' terms with Tillich's, to be congruent to true Essence, is to be essentialized. To be congruent is to be, New Being.

Rogers has up on the manner Spiritual Presence guides the individual to true Essence. He speaks to *how* the individual discovers the “unknown elements of itself” in order to gain clarity to its very essence, “without self-deception, without distortion.”⁷³²

Each person has an organismic guiding force that intends to grow them towards self-responsibility, choice, constructive creativity through inner freedom is visceral in its operation. The observed visceral guidance is a sort of intimately assigned notification system. This notification system responds to in-authenticity by issuing a discomforting, sixth sense styled pressure, felt in the gut, at the denial of an inner reality due to distortion or self-deception of *is-ness*.⁷³³

In-authenticity runs counter to inner-freedom, responsibility, choice, and creativity. In-authentic values and meaning that are introjected and not in alignment to the individual’s subjective experience of what is valuable and meaningful to them blocks expansion and growth into more responsibility, choice, constructive creativity and freedom – in essence, its essence. In-authenticity, as a blocked pathway to expansion of essence, causes visceral protests from within the organism (the human body- the gut- sixth sense) itself.

The visceral discomfort intends to bring clarity to self-deception and distortion, in order to correct the behavior exhibited, as a result of self-ambiguity.⁷³⁴ It intends to remove the block

⁷³² Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2003), 157.

⁷³³ That the individual at its core is totally free, responsible, self-regulating, creative, self-worthy in its uniqueness. That they have power to shape and be any way they want to be. To use Rogers words, to be aware of: “The power of naked choice.” Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2003), 192.

⁷³⁴ Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2003), 79 & 104. Rogers wrote: “Cognitively confused yet emotionally clear...the experiencing of the potential self”

on the pathway to more growth of what its core nature consists. To this regard, the organism contains self-wisdom that the individual lacks.

It contains clarity of essence where the individual holds self-deception and internally instructs without infringing on free-will by visceral discomfort that signals incongruence to essence: in-authenticity. The discomfort sends the individual into a sort of learning where it embarks to correct the disharmony into harmony. However, harmony will only be found when the individual begins to choose what is meaningful and of value to them, instead of what others say is meaningful and valuable. This is necessary if the individual is to expand into more and more of its nature of freedom holding the qualities of self-responsibility, self-regulation, and creative authority in doing so.

7.9 Summary

Carl Rogers observed a unified trend through his 25 years as a therapist. The unified trend observed was an innate growth tendency present in each client that guided the individual towards their authenticity and away from facades that would issue them a sense of self-worth by external means. The innate growth tendency utilized an inner visceral sense of dissatisfaction as a sort of alarm in response to inauthenticity. This alarm is also spoken of by Rogers in terms of a gut sense or sixth sense that is disharmonious.

This visceral dissatisfaction in protest to inauthenticity goes on with or without the individual being cognitive of their own inauthenticity in a situation. To this end, Rogers stated that the human being, the organism itself, contains self-wisdom of what is being denied or

rejected within. This disharmony is also the root of the existentially themed experiences of anxiety and despair, among many other dissatisfying emotions.

Rogers stated the reason that inauthenticity or incongruence occurs is that the human being often adopts conditions of worth from their parents and social environment. Conditions of worth lead to masks or facades that the individual wears in order to be seen by their external world as a person of value. This comes at the exchange of the individual's self-worth. What others say is valuable and meaningful is picked over what the individual actually finds valuable and meaningful to themselves. When their inner reality of value and meaning is not the same as the introjected values and meaning adopted by parents, religion, society, etc. incongruence or inauthenticity is at play.

Rogers observed that the core of human nature was good. This runs counter to protestant religion and Freudian thought. What human nature consisted of, for Rogers, was an innate inner-freedom that held self-responsibility, self-regulation, choices, and creativity that was constructive. To live in this manner is to live authentically and congruent to one's true nature.

Inauthenticity is nothing but a block in the pathway of human nature that insists on its growth into more and more of itself. Visceral responses act to bring awareness of self-worth that the individual may recognize and choose what is valuable and meaningful for themselves in order to expand into more of oneself: self-regulation, self-responsibility, etc.

It is from Rogers' observed visceral protest of inauthenticity, and an observed unified directional and actualizing tendency, that movement towards a fuller understanding of Tillich's process of essentialization, through Spiritual Presence, takes form.

7.10 Conclusion

This chapter discussed Rogers' observations of human nature from his clinical setting and included the internal guidance he noticed from that setting that appeared to be given to each individual and purposed to guide them to embody their authentic self. This internal guidance came in the form of a visceral response, innate in all people, to navigate them around blocked pathways towards expansion into what was described as the core of human nature.

Rogers' clinical observations of human nature, combined with Sartre's analysis of the nature of human consciousness in relation to the world, allows for the observation the verification (or genuineness) of Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

From Sartre and Rogers, an articulation of how Spiritual Presence reveals to Essence, and likewise, guides humanity to embody that true Essence, can be addressed. From the framework given by Tillich about Spiritual Presence and the process of essentialization it is responsible for, a functional and fitting theory, within Tillich's framework of Spiritual Presence exist.

In the next chapter, the image of God, through the work of Sartre and Rogers will be viewed as the point of shared identity between God and man. This constitutes Tillich's concept of true Essence, that humanity is being guided to embody. Because Spiritual Presence is the infinite within the finite, guiding the finite to true Essence that is the infinite, the image of God is revealed in the articulation of Spiritual Presence towards Essence. This can be understood most clearly through Bullock's words as he expressed in his own critical examination of Tillich's doctrine of Spirit that:

The problem as it affects our assessment of Tillich's doctrine of the Spirit will appear in this way: If the power of being in God and man are continuous, then it would seem to follow that between the divine Spirit and the human spirit there is some point of identity, or perhaps even that the human spirit is the finite aspect of the divine Spirit in which it participates.⁷³⁵

This point of identity is possible according to the framework that Tillich has given for Spiritual Presence as a guide to all humanity in life towards true Essence. This arises, once again, out of Tillich's suggestion that because the structural elements of our finite life are grounded in being-itself we are thereby able to understand something about God through an examination of the structure of our own life and beings.⁷³⁶ As Bullock adds on, "This is really to say that there is a universal, ontological revelation of God which stems from man's participation in the life of God through the structures of being."⁷³⁷

Therefore, if we are able to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence through Sartre and Rogers, we are likewise able to make a statement about God, as the true Essence found is the shared point of identity.

⁷³⁵ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 39.

⁷³⁶ Ibid.

⁷³⁷ Ibid.

Chapter Eight

Spiritual Presence, Existence, And Revelation of God

Using Sartre and Rogers Towards Tillich's Universal Revelation Of True Essence

8.1 Introduction

Tillich says in his introduction to *Systematic Theology II*, that the only statement that we can make about God that is not symbolic is “the statement that everything we say about God is symbolic.”⁷³⁸ This statement about God still does not tell or reveal anything about God. Tillich does make a statement about God, that according to his above remark, must also be symbolic: God is being-itself.⁷³⁹ This symbol is left up for interpretation and almost needs to be interpreted, or described with more content, for those symbols to have any meaning for humanity.

Recall in chapter one that Tillich's critics seem to gather unanimously around the issue of his use of non-descriptive symbol as his means to discuss God. Each account of criticism was related to the fact that his symbols held no true statements or content within them.⁷⁴⁰ Tillich lost relevancy to the reader and made his work seem as though it really said nothing altogether. He seemed to run the reader in circles using symbols as answers rather than offering descriptions and articulations to his theory. His theory, ultimately revolved around Spiritual Presence, that as a symbol, was responsible for “the process in which potential being becomes actual being.”

This process is what he called life, and life is simply essentialization through Spirit.⁷⁴¹ Actual being cannot be completely separated from the power which it expresses. The finite, in

⁷³⁸ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology II* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), 9.

⁷³⁹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 191.

⁷⁴⁰ See Chapter 1 of this thesis. Page 34-52.

⁷⁴¹ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 421.

this regard, expresses the infinite, and it cannot, not be so. Spiritual Presence is the catalyst of this continual embodiment of the infinite in human existence.⁷⁴²

There must be a continuous movement between the potential and the actual, the actual and the potential, so that both separation and reunion are essential to every life process.⁷⁴³ This theory is founded in Tillich belief in immanence as spoken of earlier in chapter five.⁷⁴⁴

Immanence was an element of German idealism adopted by Tillich. Immanence allowed Tillich the concept that God is the ground of the individual's being. Without disconnect from this ground of being the individual encounters its source of existence through its very existence.⁷⁴⁵ Immanence allowed Tillich to state that God must be encountered by us in concreteness.⁷⁴⁶ Immanence between God and people made life itself the ground of revelation. Tillich described it as the "ground of being manifest in existence."⁷⁴⁷

Immanence developed a synthesis between something shared of an individual and its source of existing; this synthesis, or likeness/image, is knowable, it is findable, and sitting on the surface of the human experience rather than being hidden, discrete, and speculative.⁷⁴⁸ Tillich is clear that an individual can know God because "everything participates in being itself."⁷⁴⁹ Each individual is participating in God.

Tillich is also clear that because humanity participates in its ground of being, existence is a consistent revelation of the ultimate - or God - to the individual, through the individual, by way

⁷⁴² Ibid, 157.

⁷⁴³ Ibid, 235.

⁷⁴⁴ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 145.

⁷⁴⁵ Ibid, 255.

⁷⁴⁶ Ibid, 214.

⁷⁴⁷ Ibid, 155.

⁷⁴⁸ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 107-108.

⁷⁴⁹ Ibid, 239.

of its interaction with concrete existence. The mutual immanence of the divine Spirit and human spirit is a bearing of the image of God as it relates with concrete existence.⁷⁵⁰

Tillich's immanence draws the conclusion that the image of God is designed to emerge in the image of mankind, because it can't not. Without fail, the mutual Spirit exists in synthesis to holding revelation through life itself. It seems as though what is implied, is that, to know the image of God, you must know the image of yourself. The image of mankind, is revelation of God, when understood through Tillich's perspective of immanence.

This thought and logic echoes the same thought and logic that Bullock in his *Critical Examination of Tillich's Divine Spirit* made, when he concluded, "if the power of being in God and man are continuous, then it would seem to follow that between the divine Spirit and the human spirit there is some point of identity, or perhaps even that the human spirit is the finite aspect of the divine Spirit in which it participates."⁷⁵¹

He continues in further agreement with the assessment that one can know God by examining the structure of their own life.⁷⁵² Revelation is constant because it is life itself. As Bullock stated, "that because the structural elements of our finite life are grounded in being-itself we are thereby able to understand something about God through an examination of the structure of our own life and beings. This is really to say that there is a universal, ontological revelation of God which stems from man's participation in the life of God through the structures of being."⁷⁵³

⁷⁵⁰ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 292, 450, 451.

⁷⁵¹ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 29.

⁷⁵² Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 100.

⁷⁵³ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 39.

With consideration to the way Tillich speaks of the spirit of man as a symbol of the Spirit of God, and given the way Tillich speaks of Spiritual Presence as the continual essentializer, guiding what is God in man to be expressed in life, it would seem that, once an articulation of Spiritual Presence has taken place, so too has a revelation of the image of God.

Moving from away God as a symbol, to God as a description, is effective to developing the discussion of Tillich's Spiritual Presence, and possible, because, as already stated above, "if the power of being in God and man are continuous, then it would seem to follow that between the divine Spirit and the human spirit there is some point of identity, or perhaps even that the human spirit is the finite aspect of the divine Spirit in which it participates."⁷⁵⁴ And again, that this point of shared identity, revelation, is through life itself, because:

the structural elements of our finite life are grounded in being-itself we are thereby able to understand something about God through an examination of the structure of our own life and beings. This is really to say that there is a universal, ontological revelation of God which stems from man's participation in the life of God through the structures of being.⁷⁵⁵

This confirms that ultimately, for Tillich, it is this universal, ontological revelation that is all important.⁷⁵⁶ It is Tillich's Spiritual Presence that guides the human to revelation, through life itself, of God.⁷⁵⁷ Tillich says that because we have this revelation deeply embedded in our own being that we can understand and receive significant revelations of God, through ourselves.⁷⁵⁸

The fact that humans have this inner revelation also prepares us to see that as far as Tillich is concerned, it is only through an examination of human life itself that we can come to

⁷⁵⁴ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 39.

⁷⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁵⁶ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 256.

⁷⁵⁷ Ibid, 140.

⁷⁵⁸ Ibid.

understand the meaning of the Divine Spirit. As Bullock writes, “the key to understanding lies within us.”⁷⁵⁹ Therefore, with all things considered, a description of Tillich’s Essence, rendered through an examination of life, proposed through the work of Sartre and Rogers, will offer a universal ontological revelation of God.

The structure of life itself, that presents itself as an internal world known to the individual and external world that an individual perceives, is made up of the ground of being. The ground of being in existence is Spiritual Presence.⁷⁶⁰ The structure of life, then, is that which is called Tillich’s Spiritual Presence. As the structure of life affords the individual revelation of God through self, so too can it be said, that this is synonymous to Spiritual Presence guiding humanity in life, to its true Essence.

8.2 Sartre And The Revelation of God through Spiritual Presence

The fundamental inescapable realities of the human condition that present themselves in human existence as described in *Being and Nothingness* are: nothingness that imposes freedom, responsibility, choice, change, lack, indeterminacy, transcendence, mortality, being-for-others.⁷⁶¹ Such existential realities are real in the experience of every human being and are viewed as never not occurring. They are shared among all human beings and not a category or certain group of human beings.

⁷⁵⁹ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 14, 40. Oliver Tomkins, *The Wholeness of the Church* (London: SCM Press, 1949), 71.

⁷⁶⁰ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 239.

⁷⁶¹ Gary Cox refers to these observations that seem to be universal or shared among all human beings and not a category or certain group of human beings as *existential truths*. Existentialism is very much anti-universal truth, therefore, to claim any type of universal truth – even existentially - is a contradiction to its own fundamental statement that subjectivity makes impossible any universality of truth. Gary Cox, *How to Be an Existentialist* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020), vii, 10, 14, 82, 93-94, 117.

Consciousness, in order to know itself, must lack identity with the world around it. If consciousness existed in a world where it shared the same identity with everything around it, it would have no means to become aware of its very nature and resultant attributes. If it is homogeneously one with all, it cannot learn of itself, through self-awareness. As Gary Cox puts it, “freedom requires an experience of autonomy in order to know itself.”⁷⁶²

As Gary Cox described, “in popular expression we refer to standing too close to something to be able to judge it correctly.”⁷⁶³ The world we live in seems to be structured in such a way that the human is able to become aware of its own attributes, through its diversity. Wisdom of Self comes by the experience of distance from its own Self.

Through the structure of existence, Sartre was able to analyze the nature of human consciousness: the human being’s freedom is organic and un-alterable; the human being transcends everything – it is what it is not, and is not what it is; the human being is *ex-nihilo* – it creates its life out of nothingness; the human being is solely responsible to its freedom through its choices; negative emotions emerge as nothingness attempts to identify in the world as somethingness⁷⁶⁴ - it is the *catalyst* in awareness of *Self* as pure nothingness and comprehending its free nature.

From Sartre’s analysis, it can be said that the revelation available to humanity through the structure of life itself, the revelation of God and thus humanities’ true Essence, is the ultimate,

⁷⁶² Gary Cox, *Sartre: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: Continuum, 2007), 80.

⁷⁶³ Ibid.

⁷⁶⁴ Sartre insists that negative emotions are a pre-reflective awareness of our nothingness and they need not be explained away as being merely psychological. Negative emotions seem to be more in regards to a question we ask about ourselves, about our identity as a Self within the world that it cannot identify with or as. Joseph Catalano, *A Commentary On Jean-Paul Sartre's Being and Nothingness* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980), 52.

fundamental, nature of freedom. What can be said about God and humanity from a shared point of identity, is that God and humanity, because of a free Essence are also creative.

Because it creates all sorts of things constantly, it is then also transcendent. Because it is transcended, creating, and therefore, moving from one experience of being to the next by its own creative action, it also shows itself to be ex-nihilo. Because the human creates new experience for itself, it is a choice maker. Because it is a choice maker, the human being is also responsible for the choices it makes.

The universal ontological revelation of God and humanity, provided by Spiritual Presence, as the structure of life, is thus free, creative, transcendent, ex-nihilo, choice-maker, and responsible nature. This is the point of shared identity that can be taken between God and human beings, from Sartre's analysis of an individual living in relation to the perceived world. This revelation is made possible by the structure of life, also known as, Spiritual Presence, whom reveals such a point of identity through life.⁷⁶⁵

8.3 Rogers And The Revelation of God Through Spiritual Presence

The second perspective of the revelation of God, afforded by the structure of life, is afforded by the clinical observations of Rogers. After decades of clinical observations, Rogers noted that basic human nature was observed to be creative and constructive.⁷⁶⁶ Human beings while being innately free, also innately possess qualities that are subsequent to that freedom. These qualities are autonomy, self-regulation, self-responsibility, creativity, and

⁷⁶⁵ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 140.

⁷⁶⁶ Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 183.

constructiveness.⁷⁶⁷ Each human being has a blueprint within them towards more autonomy, self-regulation, self-responsibility, creativity, and constructiveness, and must utilize their innate freedom to expand into it by living an authentic life.⁷⁶⁸

When an individual does not accept what they have experienced for themselves to be meaningful and valuable, and instead, deny their lived experience to live a life based upon the meaning and values of those external to them, a pressure within develops.⁷⁶⁹ This is termed by the phrase *visceral* response in the writings of Rogers.⁷⁷⁰ A negative visceral response accompanies the act of rejecting one's own true meaning and values. In other words, when the individual lives inauthentically, their own being will respond to that inauthenticity, through inner discomfort.⁷⁷¹

In this way, the body is said to have a certain wisdom available for the human being, in order to guide it.⁷⁷² As Rogers stated, "we are wiser than our intellects, our organisms as a whole have a wisdom and purposiveness which goes well beyond our conscious thought."⁷⁷³ The visceral response acts accordingly to the human blueprint of expanding into more autonomy, self-regulation, self-responsibility, creativity, and constructiveness. Wherein the mind might not know it is wearing mask, a key term for being inauthentic in order to appear a certain way to others and gain acceptance, the body will guide the mind into an awareness through the discomfort.⁷⁷⁴

⁷⁶⁷ Carl Rogers, *A Way of Being* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), 44.

⁷⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 119, 131.

⁷⁶⁹ *Ibid*, 79- 355.

⁷⁷⁰ *Ibid*, 6, 157-159.

⁷⁷¹ *Ibid*, 107.

⁷⁷² *Ibid*.

⁷⁷³ *Ibid*.

⁷⁷⁴ *Ibid*, 108.

The visceral response to inauthenticity does not control the choices or actions of the individual, that is up to the individual to decide what to do or to seek to discover the cause of discomfort. The visceral response, however, is seemingly not optional for the human being. The individual's own subjective meaning and value is the catalyst for expanding in autonomy, self-regulation, self-responsibility, creativity, and constructiveness. The body will respond accordingly in order to remove any block that is hindering the path towards its own growth.

Because of Rogers clinical findings, over the span of decades, he has come to conclude the basic nature of the human being to be good. He has found the human being to have a blueprint towards greater autonomy, self-regulation, self-responsibility, creativity, and constructiveness. These things, when expanded upon, led to a life marked by the experience of harmony with one's self and within the greater community. This expression of the human being's basic nature is what Rogers called "the good life." It is not a static position to arrive at, but, a constant trust in one's self as a guide to live authentically.

Pertaining to the second perspective of the revelation of God, afforded by the structure of life, exfoliated from the clinical observations of the human being in relation with others, the basic nature of the human being was defined as, good. Rogers characterized human nature as naturally creative and constructive. By its own nature, or blueprint, the human seeks autonomy, self-regulation, and self-responsibility, and in fact necessitates this of itself, in order to expand.

This expansion takes place by the use of what he found to be inner freedom, to choose what the individual finds truly meaningful to them, that is different from the external world. If the individual rejects their own meaningfulness, a bit of suffering occurs. This provides us with an understanding of the basics of human nature: innate freedom and worth.

8.4 Conclusion

Sartre's analysis of the human being living in relation to the world reveals the human being's innate freedom as well as the qualities that arise as a direct result of that freedom. The human being does not arrive to Earth bound to the meaning and value of other people, but is responsible for making and choosing values and meanings to call its own.

Rogers' observations of the human living in relation with others reveals that not only does the human possess this inner freedom found by Sartre, but the human being is innately worthy, in and of itself. This innate worth is observed when the human being rejects its own meaningful experiences, as if its own truths are worthless compared to others.

Viewing its own subjective truths as worthless and not living them authentically, triggers a protest from within one's own body. The protest is disruptive and uncomfortable until those individual truths have finally been accepted as worthy enough to live out, despite what others are doing with their lives and despite their opinions. The human being has been posited with subjectivity, and along with subjectivity, an inner visceral alarm, that guides it to acknowledge its innate self-worth, as it rejects or accepts its own unique values.

Returning to Tillich's thought, given that "the structural elements of our finite life are grounded in being-itself we are thereby able to understand something about God through an examination of the structure of our own life and beings"⁷⁷⁵ And agreeing with Bullock's logic of this, that then, "this is really to say that there is a universal, ontological revelation of God which stems from man's participation in the life of God through the structures of being,"⁷⁷⁶ it can be

⁷⁷⁵ Vernon Bullock, *A Critical Examination of Paul Tillich's Doctrine of the Holy Spirit* (Durham, Durham University, 1971), 39.

⁷⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

said that the revelation through an examination of the structure of our own life and beings, is freedom and worth.

With that said, “if the power of being in God and man are continuous, and it seems to follow that between the divine Spirit and the human spirit there is some point of identity, or perhaps even that the human spirit is the finite aspect of the divine Spirit in which it participates,”⁷⁷⁷ the revelation given through the structure of life, that is said to then logically represent the point of identity or finite aspect of the divine spirit, is also this revelation of innate freedom and worth.

Freedom and worth, as the point of shared identity, gives description to Tillich’s concept of true Essence, beyond symbology. Freedom and worth, is the infinite within the finite. It is the Spirit within the spirit, which went undefined in Tillich’s own work. Tillich did depict that it was a misunderstanding of one’s true Essence that was the cause of estrangement, and therefore, chaos and destruction, in existence. It is in alignment with freedom and worth that Rogers observed chaos to ease and destruction to resolve, in existence.

When it is considered that the task of Spiritual Presence is to essentialize each person to a true Essence, the work of Sartre and Rogers seems to have pointed out, observably, that there does exist a *telos* to the structure of life. And further, this *telos* leads the human being to a certain Essence or reunion with its true Essence. Lastly, this reunion *does* develop the person into something that fits the concept of Tillich’s New Being, accordingly. This New Being, living its true Essence in existence, lives in harmony within community, and in peace with self.

⁷⁷⁷ Ibid, 392, 433.

While Tillich spoke in symbol, these symbols *can* be articulated by an examination of the life of the human being, through Tillich and Rogers. A description of true Essence, beyond symbol, *is* available through an examination of the structures of life. With that said, Spiritual Presence as the structure of life itself, does guide the human being into Tillich's New Being.

Chapter Nine

Revisiting Tillich's Limitations

And Arriving At An Articulation of Tillich's Spiritual Presence

9.1 Introduction

The beginning of the thesis outlined four limitations to Tillich's work. The preceding chapters sought solutions to those limitations by examining the work of Sartre and Rogers. Through this examination, in attending to these limitations, the overall purpose of this thesis was to be addressed: to implement a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

This chapter will revisit the initial limitations and assess if the work of Sartre and Rogers served to correct any of Tillich's limitations. This chapter will also assess if, the main purpose, to develop a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, to illuminate the manner Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence, was met.

9.2 Revisiting the limitation of Tillich's work

We saw in chapter five of this thesis that the first limitation to Tillich's work is its incompleteness. Considering the weight applied to Spiritual Presence in volume three of *Systematic Theology*, it remained Tillich's least examined concept, yet most necessary to the

validity of his theology as a whole.⁷⁷⁸ Spiritual Presence is marked as the universal catalyst of his symbolic New Being. Yet, an articulation or understanding of how Spiritual Presence universally catalyzed went unexplored.⁷⁷⁹ His life's work, *Systematic Theology*, lacks synthesis because Spiritual Presence remained a symbol when it needed to be expanded and explained.⁷⁸⁰ Tillich himself, fully aware of this limitation, spent the last years of his life seeking to deliver a more expansive and universal articulation of Spiritual Presence in order to redeem his life's work.⁷⁸¹

The second limitation to Tillich's work is he offered no articulation of Spiritual Presence. Tillich's symbol of Spiritual Presence, is just that, a symbol. Spiritual Presence was not an observed reality, and as such, lacks descriptive content. His theology lacked descriptions or statements about Spirit that can be tested and observed. Tillich's work has been criticized, because of this, as formless, vague, and questionable for not expanding beyond symbology, into observed reality. Critics have asked if *any* non-symbolic statement can even be made from his work, and what would it even be?⁷⁸²

The third limitation is a lack of verification. Because Tillich's theology is built on the pre-supposition of Platonic concepts of Essence and the immanence of German Idealism, disbelief in

⁷⁷⁸ Russell Re Manning, *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 74; Frederick Parrella, *Tillich's Theology of The Concrete Spirit* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 74; Wolfgang Vondey in *Paul Tillich and Pentecostal Theology*, ed. by Amos Yong and Nimi Wariboko (Indiana University Press, 2015), 36; David Kelsey, *The Fabric of Paul Tillich's Theology* (Yale University Press, 1967), 82; Pan-Chui Lai, *Towards A Trinitarian Theology of Religions* (Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1994), 115; Paul Tillich, "Review of Systematic Theology Volume III," *Dialogue 14* (1965): 229-232. Andre O'Neill, *Tillich: A Guide For The Perplexed* (T & T Clark, 2008), 93.

⁷⁷⁹ David Kelsey, *The Fabric of Paul Tillich's Theology* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 82; Pan-Chiu Lai, *Towards a Trinitarian Theology of Religions: A Study of Paul Tillich's Thought* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994), 115; Paul Tillich, "Review of Systematic Theology Volume III," *Dialogue 14* (1965): 229-232; Heywood Thomas, 'Introduction' in Paul Tillich's *On the Boundary*, xv. Because Spiritual Presence was not developed well, and became the centerpiece of everything, it left his entire *Systematic Theology* underdeveloped and lacking synthesis in its totality.

⁷⁸⁰ Langdon Gilkey, *Gilkey On Tillich* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 164.

⁷⁸¹ Wilhelm Pauck and Marion Pauck, *Paul Tillich, His Life and Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 244; Paul Tillich, *The Future of Religions* (Harper Row, 1966), 86.

⁷⁸² Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 177.

either of these must be suspended in order to read Tillich's work. But why should the reader just have accepted Tillich's interpretation? A mode of verification for his claims of Platonic Essence and German Idealism that build the entirety of his theology would have been ideal, in order to move his work from something of an imaginative piece, to being something plausible and genuine.

The fourth limitation is Tillich's narrow definition of philosophy and existentialism. For Tillich, ontology fell in the speculative realm of things, making his work, in his mind, classical philosophy. Any form of philosophy that was not speculative but asked for an analysis, a definition of, or verification for something speculative, was viewed as positivism or empiricism to Tillich.⁷⁸³ As critic Andrew O'Neill states, "these caricatures of positivism are never explained by Tillich...Tillich's overly empirical characterization of philosophy seems to confuse the desired precision of philosophical investigation with precision sought in scientific testing."⁷⁸⁴ Experience was not to be defined, and therefore, these philosophies were avoided.

Secondary to his unexplained caricatures given to philosophy, is the conception that existential philosophy is concerned with asking questions about the meaning of being, rather than the endless variety of experiential investigations it takes on within existence. Existentialism, for Tillich, is then put in a place to ask questions about being, but not participate in answering those questions.

⁷⁸³ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology I* (University of Chicago Press, 1951), 19-23, 40, 63, 86; Andre O'Neill, *Tillich: A Guide For The Perplexed* (T & T Clark, 2008), 44. Bernard Martin, *The Existentialist Theology of Paul Tillich* (New Haven College & University Press, 1971), 33; Lewis Ford, "Tillich's Implicit Natural Theology", *Scottish Journal of Theology* 24, no 3, (1971): 257-261; James Heywood Thomas, *Paul Tillich: An Appraisal* (SCM Press, 1963), 37-38. Gilkey, *Gilkey On Tillich* (Wipf & Stock, 1967), 69; Donald Musser, *Tillich* (Abingdon Press, 2010), 13: "He identifies the ontological with classical reason, and the technical with British analytic philosophy."

⁷⁸⁴ Andre O'Neill, *Tillich: A Guide For The Perplexed* (T & T Clark, 2008), 93.

A third potential is that Tillich viewed an aspect of existentialism as fundamentally opposed to his own held beliefs. An inadequacy Tillich took to existentialism concerned its feature of autonomy.⁷⁸⁵ He believed the core of the human being was bound to act destructively.

With autonomy, destructiveness had an open door to prevail in greater and greater degrees. This is a very Freudian outlook on humanity, and it isn't coincidental. Tillich agreed with Freud's take on the destructive nature of humanity after his own time spent at war. He speaks about this in an interview with Carl Rogers.⁷⁸⁶ Rogers asks Tillich if his belief in the demonic informed his negative view of the human or of existence.⁷⁸⁷ This negative perception of human autonomy is reflected throughout his work. Existence is portrayed as something negative compared to Essence.

If Tillich's narrow definition of philosophy was caused by a misunderstanding, ignorance, or knowing better but intentionally choosing to write off philosophy to suite his own bias, that is beyond the scope of figuring out within this thesis.⁷⁸⁸ What is clear today, and imperative to this thesis, is that existential analysis is able to provide ontological insight, because it is in principle, knowable. Something knowable is what critics of Tillich's theology longed for, and also what the philosophers of his day challenged him to provide.

⁷⁸⁵ Paul Tillich, *Christianity And The Encounter With World Religions* (Columbia University Press, 1963), 94.

⁷⁸⁶ *Saybrook University*, "A Dialogue with Carl Rogers and Paul Tillich Part 1," June 26, 2012, video, 10:53, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gHSKdX66tY&t=1187s>. Tillich claims to side with Sigmund Freud's concept of human nature as ultimately destructive after reflecting on WWI, Freud's work, and the work of Karl Marx.. It has informed and mapped out his concept of estrangement, autonomy as negative, and existence as a negative in his own theology.

⁷⁸⁷ In psychology, Freud and his followers have presented convincing arguments that the id, man's basic and unconscious nature, is primarily made up of instincts which would, if permitted expression, result in incest, murder, and other crimes. Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2003), 91.

⁷⁸⁸ For Tillich's own response to this criticism, see "Reply To Interpretation And Criticism," in Charles Kegley's *The Theology of Paul Tillich* (Macmillan, 1961), 329-349. Tillich engages many of the sensitive areas: his lack of consistency, molding truth until it fits his system, the ontologism in his epistemology, etc.

If these four limitations could be put as a statement, it would be that Tillich's work is incomplete because Spiritual Presence is a symbol that escapes explanation, and presumes immanence and Platonic theory, also without any explanation or plausibility for why they are presumed. Tillich needs a way to evidence or at a minimum show plausibility of immanence and Platonic theory and then to articulate Spiritual Presence essentializing, as he observes it in reality. Articulation of his assumed immanence, Platonic theory, and Spiritual Presence in observed reality would add a completeness to his life's work and then validate his claims beyond being a vague symbol that is difficult to relate to.

9.3 Addressing The Limitations

To address the four limitations, existentialism was chosen as the mode of verification. This was for a few reasons. First, Tillich's work is committed to existentialism. It was made to dialogue with and respond to existential concerns. Secondly, Tillich short changed the role of existentialism⁷⁸⁹ by limiting its function to asking questions about existence. It seems existential analysis would have provided the testing and verification asked of him by his critics to solidify and synthesize his life's work. Tillich's short-changing of existentialism seemed to be the root of his limitations, and is in theory, the solvent.

As such, a backwards order is given in examining if Tillich's limitations have been addressed in this thesis, thus far. The fourth limitation, Tillich's narrow definition of philosophy, will be examined first. If these limitations were a ball of yarn tangled and knotted, this is

⁷⁸⁹ Again, be it by his personal negative bias to existence, from Heidegger's existentialism, or from his caricatures of philosophy as empiricism, or simply to make his truth fit his system, the issue is that existentialism was limited and it seems to be the way forward in addressing and relieving the criticism his work accumulated.

presumably the main knot, that if released will simultaneously cause release of the remaining entanglements. As such, the examination of this limitation will be followed by the third, then the second, and finally the first limitation.

Limitation #4

Was Tillich's fourth limitation, a narrow⁷⁹⁰ definition of philosophy, addressed? The term *narrow* in reference to Tillich's view of philosophy stands for a variety of ignorance and bias that potentially caused his limited use of philosophy in the development of his theology.

One example is his perspective of philosophy as empiricism or positivism. In *Systematic Theology I*, Tillich makes subordination of philosophy to theology: "Theology formulates the questions implied in human existence, and theology formulates the answers implied in divine self-manifestation under the guidance of the questions implied in human existence."⁷⁹¹ Theology is responsible for the questions and answers, while philosophy is characterized as an empirical science. Tillich went on stating the philosopher tries to maintain "a detached objectivity towards being and structures," with a passion, "only for truth, not for the personal."⁷⁹² In contrast, the theologian is "involved with his object," not the "structure of existence only."⁷⁹³ Tillich's empirical characterization is an improper distinction of philosophy and he uses this characterization as reason for it to play second fiddle to theology.

⁷⁹⁰ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology I* (University of Chicago Press, 1951), 6, 61.

⁷⁹¹ Ibid.

⁷⁹² Ibid, 21-22.

⁷⁹³ Ibid

However, Tillich recognized many types of philosophy existed, such as existentialism, which is a personal and not logical philosophy. Tillich dismissed existentialism perhaps on account of a bias against its feature of autonomy. His bias developed out from his belief in Sigmund Freud's perspective of an inherent evil in human nature.⁷⁹⁴ Autonomy cannot be a good thing if a belief pre-exists that the human being has an inherent evil that requires a God beyond itself to rescue it.

Further, Tillich has also remarked that philosophy and existentialism's task was to ask what the meaning of being is.⁷⁹⁵ This can be traced to the heavy influence Heidegger had upon Tillich's thinking.⁷⁹⁶ Philosophy, for Tillich, via Heidegger's influence, was understood as "the attitude of explicit enquiry."⁷⁹⁷ The understanding of man as the being who asks the question of being is expressly borrowed from Heidegger's doctrine of man as *Dasein*.⁷⁹⁸

Tillich also seemed to develop an inventory of philosophy that fell between two categories: ontology or logical positivism/empiricism.⁷⁹⁹ He labeled himself a traditional philosopher, in the sense that his work was speculative and involved elements of Platonic Essence and German Idealism. Speculative philosophical thought does not involve investigation, analysis, definitions, or proof, and so seemed desirable for Tillich. He also seemed to think this speculative type of philosophy held a common origin in the experience of "mystical *a priori*."⁸⁰⁰

⁷⁹⁴ Saybrook University, "A Dialogue with Carl Rogers and Paul Tillich Part 1," June 26, 2012, video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8gHSKdX66tY&t=1187s>.

⁷⁹⁵ Paul Tillich, *Biblical Religion and the Search For Ultimate Reality* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1955), 8.

⁷⁹⁶ Paul Tillich, *On the Boundary: An Autobiographical Sketch* (New York City, NY: Scribner, 1966), 48; Reinhold Niebuhr, *A Prophetic Voice In Our Time* (Whitefish, MT: Literary Licensing, 2011), 45.

⁷⁹⁷ Jaroslav Pelikan, *Twentieth Century Theology in the Making* (Louisville, KY: Harper & Row, 1971), 248.

⁷⁹⁸ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (University of Chicago Press, 1951), 187.

⁷⁹⁹ Andre O'Neill, *Tillich: A Guide For The Perplexed* (T & T Clark, 2008), 64.

⁸⁰⁰ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology I* (University of Chicago Press, 1951), 9.

This origin in the mystical, therefore the undefinable, perhaps allowed Tillich to protect his own belief from needing to be evidenced.⁸⁰¹ However, it created a two-category system wherein, if philosophy was not speculative, then it was empiricism.⁸⁰²

For these various reasons, as the term narrow⁸⁰³ is used, it is in reference to the multiple potential biases, ignorance, or intentionally wrong descriptions of philosophy and existentialism that serve as reason for Tillich not allowing philosophy or existentialism to develop his work. Tillich's eclectic tendencies make his origins of thought difficult to trace. It also makes finding Tillich's perspective hard to detect because what he means or thinks is often contradictory and changes.⁸⁰⁴

We saw in chapters six and seven, Tillich's narrowness was addressed by utilizing Sartre and Rogers to investigate the features of Tillich's Spiritual Presence said to be operative within existence. From existential analysis, I observed, and then developed, an articulation of Spiritual Presence with a *telos* towards true Essence.

Sartre's existentialism was introduced as the method of analysis for Tillich's assumption of immanence, Platonic Essence, and his symbol of Spiritual Presence born out of the two. This was conducted through examination of Sartre and Rogers works.

Sartre's existential analysis of being is fitted to Tillich's standard of experiential analysis over experimental analysis when it comes to a proper method of verification of claims that are

⁸⁰¹ Ibid, 23, 256.

⁸⁰² Ibid, 9. Andre O'Neill, *Tillich: A Guide For The Perplexed* (T & T Clark, 2008), 44.

⁸⁰³ This term was introduced by Andrew O'Neill in his description of Tillich's limited use of existentialism and philosophy in his book. Andre O'Neill, *Tillich: A Guide For The Perplexed* (T & T Clark, 2008), 45.

⁸⁰⁴ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford University Press, 1978), 13.

beyond the senses. Sartre's work in *Being and Nothingness* provided a descriptive analysis of the whole person's experience of being in relation to the perceived world the individual is in.

Rogers' psychotherapy, rooted in Sartre's existential method of analysis, allowed for pinpointed observations and trends of the inner life of individuals as they lived in relation to their world. This provided a thoroughness of existential analysis when comparing and contrasting the features of Tillich's Spiritual Presence with observed reality.

The developed articulation of how Tillich's Spiritual Presence is found operative in the world in relation to human beings was solely informed in this thesis by existential analysis. Therefore, Tillich's limitation of a narrow definition of philosophy has been adjusted. Verification of Tillich's ontological claims and articulation of how those features operate are informed by existential observations.

Limitation #3

Was Tillich's third limitation, a required suspension of disbelief, addressed? Yes. Platonic concepts of Essence and German Idealism's immanence form the basis of Tillich's theology. Hegelian dialect fused both together to create the essence – existence – essentialization axis. To be on board with Tillich's theology, the reader had to believe immanence is real and also Plato's concept of Essence. But why would the reader simply believe them to be true? Some sort of verification is necessary to solidify Tillich's presumptions of immanence and Platonic Essence. Otherwise, Tillich's readers have no reason to believe his work is beyond something imaginative.

Tillich's Spiritual Presence was given the quality of immanence when he claimed⁸⁰⁵ Spiritual Presence as intricately infused in everything that exists. This includes both the external world of the human being and within the human being itself. In seeking verification for such claims, in order to no longer need to suspend disbelief in Platonic Essence or immanence, I examined the work of Sartre and Rogers.

This examination was to locate, if it existed, features of Tillich's Spiritual Presence in the external world, and also Spiritual Presence within the human being itself, acting as Tillich stated it to act. This examination was not to force proof of Essence or immanence in support of his claims, rather, to see if what Tillich claimed could actually be found existing in the places and in the way he claimed it to. This examination resolved the disbelief by investigating the reality or lack of reality to Tillich's claims head on in chapters four and six.

Limitation #2

Was Tillich's second limitation, an articulation of Spiritual Presence, addressed? Yes. Tillich placed great weight on his claim that Spiritual Presence is catalyst for New Being. As a result, the responsibility to articulate a dynamic of Spirit in order to make sense of *Systematic Theology* as a whole, was a necessary task that followed him to his death.

Tillich sought to develop a dynamic of Spirit that was universal, beyond Christianity, and synthesized his life's work. The existential analysis provided by Sartre and Rogers in chapters four and six illuminated a dynamic of Spirit that was both universal and beyond the confines of

⁸⁰⁵ Ibid, 133, 174, 413, 421; Paul Tillich, *The Future Of Religions* (Greenwood Press, 1976), 107, 111-114; Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (University of Chicago Press, 1963), 283, 408-409, 420-421; Paul Tillich, *The New Being* (University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 106.

just Christianity. An articulation of Spiritual Presence that essentializes humanity was found to be observable, operating within the grounds of existence itself. The grounds of existence itself is defined as an external and internal environment. The external environment is all things perceivable, outside the individual. The internal environment is that which is felt inside the individual through their subjective thinking and visceral experience.

Analyzed from the grounds of existence itself, life can be seen as a dynamic of Spirit, structured by this inner environment and outer environment, that guides an individual to an awareness of their own innate nature.

Sartre, illuminated an external environment, wherein consciousness perceives the world outside of itself, and in that perception, is made aware of its own existence and its freedom in that existence.⁸⁰⁶ Rogers, illuminated an internal environment, wherein individual subjectivity is among opposing opinions from others, directs the individual into awareness of innate worth through its own visceral responses.

The way in which the internal and external structures of existence present themselves as a guide, that does not override free-will, but provides revelation of self that may better inform what one does with free-will, becomes the manner that Tillich's Spiritual Presence is articulated as operating in existence itself. The external and internal environment establish an experiential revelation that allows the individual to bridge the gap between ambiguity of itself and clarity of itself by exposing innate freedom and worth.

The structures of existence itself guide the human being towards a revelation of innate freedom and worth. Innate freedom and worth, constitute for the attributes and qualities of the

⁸⁰⁶ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 199, 484.

image of God that was developed earlier in chapter eight. As the individual embodies their true Essence, consisting of freedom and worth, the image of God is embodied in this time and space existence.

As the individual reflects greater and greater degrees of freedom and worth, the image of God is also expanded into greater and greater degrees in existence. This is the reversal of Tillich's experience of a limited Essence, for humanity, in existence. Estrangement is reversed, by existence, through Spiritual Presence working as the catalyst for essentialization. Existence, as a place where consciousness exists in relation to the world, and in relation to others, leads the way to unlimited Essence, by revelation of itself as the image of God: freedom and worth. And, through it learning to embody that image, in order to thrive, or live the good life, as Rogers would say, in its existence. For Tillich, he would use the phrase New Being to describe the human being that lives in freedom and worth, the true Essence, in existence.

The internal and external structures of existence, provided through the work of Sartre and Rogers, has provided an observable and experiential understanding of a dynamic of Spirit, embedded in existence. Tillich's Spiritual Presence has been articulated by these means, remedying the lack of articulation within Tillich's symbolic work.

Limitation # 1

Was Tillich's first limitation, incompleteness, addressed? Yes. Because no articulation of Tillich's Spiritual Presence was available, it created the sense that his entire theology was incomplete. It felt incomplete because Spiritual Presence was made responsible for essentialization, leaving his earlier symbols of Father and the Son, without synthesis to it.

A further examination of Spiritual Presence was most necessary in order to make sense of his prior volumes of work and support the concept of essentialization. If Tillich's Spiritual Presence could be examined and made sense of, in light of essentialization, it would likewise remedy the incompleteness of his *Systematic Theology*.

The articulation of Tillich's Spiritual Presence given through Sartre's analysis of the nature of consciousness in relation to the world and Rogers' observations of an inner guidance system in relation to others, provided a view of essentialization that sought to guide individuals universally towards the concept of true Essence. The image of God is also known through the terminology of true nature, or Essence, with reference to Tillich, as discussed in chapter eight of this thesis.

In observing what revelation of God might be presented in existence and in stating what that consists, we can come to understand how Tillich's Spiritual Presence conducts its purpose of essentialization, within existence, beyond abstract concept. Through our relationship with the world as seen in Sartre's analysis of consciousness in relation to the world, the world points us in the direction by which we come to acknowledge and live out our innate freedom. Through our relationship within ourselves, in relation to others, Rogers' clinical observations points us in the direction by which we come to acknowledge and live out our innate worth.

As we take responsibility and make choices in our lives that reflect this innate worthiness through our freedom of thought and action, we embody the image of God, or true Essence, within existence. Likewise, this constitutes for human thriving, or as Rogers would word it, "the good life." As Sartre would put it, this is living authentically. To be authentic is to embody the image of God, it is to live the good life, and it is to live essentialized, as Tillich's New Being. New Being, being, the embodiment of true Essence, in existence.

This understanding provides a completeness to Tillich's work in regard to Spiritual Presence and essentialization. It is also the main purpose of this thesis, overall. It is the implementation of a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, the illumination of the manner that Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

9.4 Overall Thoughts On Sartre and Rogers as a Locator for Tillich's Spiritual Presence

The inclusion of Sartre's existential analysis allowed for the expansion of Tillich's work to be done in a manner that is fitting towards the characteristics he gave to Spiritual Presence, such as its universality and experiential over experimental, guidance in the life of the human being.

This meant the inclusion of non-tangible human realities like emotions and subjectivity as a way to come to know something, beyond what the five senses are able to assess objectively. This is because Tillich believed when it came to gathering knowledge, that knowledge came to the individual from non-tangible sources, as well as the tangible. The act of knowing something came from the whole person, rather than a part of the person, to the exclusion of subjectivity or the bodily senses.

This also placed Spiritual Presence on the level of a universal experience, beyond the scope of what might be, exclusively, a Christian experience. Because existentialism seeks to describe reality, overall, not just the experience of a particular religion or race, it seeks out the universal experience, naturally. These descriptions, born out of an analysis from Sartre and the observation of Rogers, led to the implementation of a verification process for Tillich's concept of

Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, the illumination of the manner that Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence.

Chapter two contained a literary review and manifesto of the various ways that existentialism is being used in modern 21st century research. This established a juxtaposition to the way existentialism is utilized in this thesis. It has been used as a method of verifying and then providing a genuine account of how Spiritual Presence universally guides individuals to true Essence in their life.

Chapter three engaged a review of the roots of existential insights starting with existentialism's forefathers and ending at the writing of Sartre's *Being and Nothingness*. Kierkegaard and Nietzsche wrote of an inner guidance that exists within the being of every person. This inner guidance, particularly connected to following one's subjectivity, is spoken of as being beyond the person, and yet apart of the person.

It engages with them to follow their own authentic path in life by knowing they are free to do so. Sartre writes of the same innate freedom, and a sense of nausea that develops when innate freedom is not used to forge their own life of personal meaning. Freedom and its qualities revealed through life, and found at the root of existentialism, can be seen in light of Tillich's Spiritual Presence, to actively guide humanity into an awareness and embodiment of their true Essence.

Chapter four discussed the direct effect that existential analysis had on the development of Tillich's theology and Rogers' psychology. Both were developed from the claims of human nature made by Sartre's existentialism. Without existentialism, the question of Tillich's Spiritual Presence within this thesis would not exist.

Without existentialism, Rogers would not have built the same framework for his person-centered therapy that would result in observations of an inner guidance. Sartre's existential analysis, Rogers' observations of the visceral human experience, and Tillich's work in response to existential claims are interconnected. Existentialism is both the creator of the issue of Tillich's Spiritual Presence, and the answer.

Chapter five discussed Tillich's doctrine of Spirit, particularly the limitations it possessed. The chief limitation is that Tillich did not articulate how his concept of a universal Spiritual Presence guides humanity to true Essence in life. It is claimed, but claimed without any reference or reasoning to make it more than an assumption. His use of symbols alone did not assist creating a sense of plausibility to his concept.

Chapter six contained a deeper dive into Sartre's thoughts in *Being and Nothingness*. Human nature, as it is revealed by an individual consciousness living in relation to the world, can be described as nothingness, freedom, responsibility, choice, change, lack, indeterminacy, transcendence, being-for-others.⁸⁰⁷ Such existential realities are real in the experience of every human being, and are viewed as never not occurring. In other words, the origin of human nature. They emphasize the freedom and creative nature of people as well as a sense of inner nausea when that freedom and creativity is not utilized to shape one's own life. From Sartre, we saw life lived in relation to the world, as a means of how Spiritual Presence can guide people universally to know and embody their true Essence.

⁸⁰⁷ Gary Cox refers to these observations that seem to be universal or shared among all human beings and not a category or certain group of human beings as *existential truths*. Gary Cox, *How to Be an Existentialist* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020).

Chapter seven contained a deeper dive into human nature through Rogers' clinical observations. He observed a visceral response that occurred in all of his clients dependent upon the degrees they rejected or accepted a sense of innate freedom and self-worth in the lives they lived. Rogers' work highlights an internal guide that suggests the manner Tillich's Spiritual Presence can operate in existence to guide people to embody true Essence.

Chapter eight showed how Sartre and Rogers provide reference to Tillich's true Essence, or, a revelation of God, through an examination of the structure of life and beings. The ultimate *telos* of life, when examined through Sartre and Rogers, revealed a shared point of identity between God and humanity that can be summarized as Tillich's concept of true nature and consisted of the qualities freedom and self-worth.

This is foundational to Tillich's Spiritual Presence because it is life itself, as Spiritual Presence, that is supposed to deliver a universal, ontological revelation of God which stems from man's participation in the life of God through the structures of being. This revelation is the true Essence that Spiritual Presence is said to guide humanity to embody.

9.5 Reflexive Thinking

In thinking reflexively about any objections to Tillich's universalized experience of Spiritual Presence towards true Essence, the problem of universalizing an existential conclusion emerges. Existentialism is said to object to universals, preferring subjectivity to naming a standard for all. Yet, subjectivity becomes the universal because freedom is arrived at as the origin of humans. This creates a paradox, and this paradox is not new. Tillich himself spoke

about what would seem to be a slip up on Sartre's part, in reaction to Sartre's claim that humans don't have a nature, while claiming freedom as human nature.

It cannot be said that man has no universal nature when Sartre goes on to claim that man's nature is this radical freedom that results in the existential theme of subjectivity. And it is this subjectivity that defies universality, that is once again, paradoxically, universal. It is subjectivity as a universal quality of the human being that constitutes the umbrella of other existential realities that we experience. Subjectivity brings about the other qualities of being that are likewise universal, such as responsibility and choice. If I do not have responsibility and I do not have choice, it is because I am not actually free, and therefore, subjectivity doesn't exist for me.

However, can we say that Sartre's subjectivity as a universal, is truly tested universally? Even as he set out to decipher the nature of human consciousness across all races, sexes, incomes, and circumstances, he clearly could not fully survey the entire Earth to conclude this. He did not spend several years in other countries significantly different from his own in order to observe subjectivity, and as it follows, responsibility and choice-making in those places and with those people.

Yet, overall, it would seem any person would have a hard time objecting to subjectivity as a foundational part of a universal human nature. It would be difficult to truly believe that some people on the Earth, in a different country, do not possess the inner freedom that results in subjectivity. That a pool of people are not thinking different thoughts, at different times, for different reasons, with a colorful array of unique and different perspectives. To make a claim that there exist others that instead live more like robots inside themselves, lacking any sense of creativity to conclude something different from another, thus having no subjectivity, no degree

of choice making, and therefore negating all responsibility for their own life, seems truly impossible and honestly unbelievable.

It may suggest that on some level, we all simply know this is what a human is, at its core. It is our origin, as Sartre did write. It would seem offensive if we claimed something to this degree of someone else or of other people in another land. It would be to say that such a person or a people are simply, not really human. And because it is truly unbelievable to ever believe such a claim, is that not a sign in itself that the ontological revelation of Tillich's Spiritual Presence, has truly conducted its job of revealing freedom, as true Essence to us all, in life.

Could it be that we are so deeply aware of our freedom, that it is passive knowledge to us all? It perhaps is just as Tillich described it to be: hidden and obvious. I know it so well within myself that I cannot truly deny that another has the same, and actually mean it. Yet, I still debate its reality when confined to mere logic and analysis. But would I, or anyone else, actually deny that all humans have unique inner choices, and truly mean it? My own experience knows better. It is obvious and hidden, all at the same time.

9.6 Landing on an Existential *Pneumatology*

After an examination of the world, and its people that we live in relation to, it is evident that a universal *telos* can be detected. This *telos* is one in which the human being is guided towards a knowledge and embodiment (think of acceptance as a synonym to this) of certain innate qualities of itself. Because these qualities appear to sit at the origin of its being, as the foundation, fabric, or core principle of its very existence, these outstanding qualities can be said to be that of its own true nature. Life is able to unfold through the principle of innate inner

freedom, and the visceral experience of that life is paired with the ability to exhibit innate self-worth alongside it.

Individual choices allow a life to bud and blossom. It gives life a movement and motion, in order to evolve from one thing to the next. This is marked by Sartre's term of transcendence, a resultant of unstoppable human choices, that come from freedom. These choices are interwoven with one's view of themselves. The experience of life will begin to blossom no matter what, because choices and decisions can't not be made, continually. There is no off switch to decision making. However, the choices that are made out of a sense of self-rejection will provide a very different visceral experience than those choices that have been made out of a sense of self-worth. This is observed through the clinical settings of Carl Rogers. High self-regard is a necessary accompaniment to an individual's inner freedom.

The more a choice has self-worth present within it, the more satisfying the experience of life is. The more a choice rejects a sense of self-worth, the more unsatisfying the experience of life is. When inner freedom and self-worth are taken in tandem, the experience of life is shaped to be authentic to the individual. This pairing of innate freedom and worth, expressing itself in life, is likewise termed "the good life" by Rogers.

The ground of being, as the structure that we call life itself, and life itself as the interplay of consciousness in relationship with people and things that it can perceive, is Spiritual Presence. The *telos* of this Spiritual Presence is the revelation of one's true Essence and the perfection of living as your true Essence, in an expression of innate freedom and worth.

The structure that Spiritual Presence presents through life itself, is an existentially observable structure. It is through this existential module and through an existential examination,

that one can see the experience that all humans undergo is one that delivers a knowledge of self Essence, as well as a request to embody that Essence. The lack of separation between the existential and the Spiritual Presence, as well as the *telos* presented by this lack of separation, can be considered an *existential pneumatology*. It is a comprehension of the universal *telos* of life and the manner that this *telos* performs its guidance through existential examination. This comprehension of spiritual guidance through existential observation can be refined, in shorthand, by a term that is original to me, the author, called *existential pneumatology*.

9.7 Building An Existential *Pneumatology* From The Research

9.7.1 What Is An Existential Pnuematology

Quintessentially, an articulation of Spiritual Presence towards essentialization presents the shared point of identity between God and man, that is revealed through an examination of the structures of life, to be innate freedom and worth. Secondly, this freedom and worth comes to be embodied through an authentic life. As portrayed by Rogers, individuals need to use their freedom and worth to live out what is truly meaningful and valuable to them.⁸⁰⁸ Life is quite directional and universal in this regard, as Rogers reveals that to neglect freedom and worth, and therefore, neglect unique meaning and value, is the cause of self-destructive behavior, as well as communally destructive behaviors.⁸⁰⁹ We drive ourselves mad until we are ourselves. And we cannot be ourselves, until we embody our freedom and worth.⁸¹⁰

⁸⁰⁸ Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable, 2004), 27, 109, 171, 187, 193, 391.

⁸⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 65, 192, 221, 222, 318.

⁸¹⁰ *Ibid*, 109.

While there is no new information to introduce for examination, the idea of an *existential pneumatology*, however, will include the introduction of two new words to help conceptualize or build the idea gathered from the research of this thesis: (a)uthenticity and (A)uthenticity. They are used to establish reference to the overall interplay between subjective meaning and value, and universal freedom and worth, (noted from Sartre and Rogers and acting as the elements of Tillich's true Essence) as co-existing elements that together create a drive towards well-being (this drive to well-being is Tillich's guiding Spiritual Presence) through their expression.

The elements existentially⁸¹¹ investigated within this thesis from researching Sartre and Rogers point toward comprehending Tillich's essentialization through Spiritual Presence. Sartre and Rogers expose, in order to expand, under-defined or un-explained concepts and symbols that are essential to validating Tillich beyond mere theory.⁸¹² Further, major unified themes emerge from the grounds of existence that capture purpose (and by purpose, I mean what existence seemingly leads all humans to grasp a revelation of).

Tillich's intersection of vertical and horizontal is not simply a negative situation to be overcome as critically portrayed by him.⁸¹³ The situation of existence, when observed through an *existential pneumatology*, appeared instead to be a fantastic structure that enables every human

⁸¹¹ Existentialist ontology is in principle knowable because one knows the truth of ontological descriptions by recognizing their features in one's own existence, illuminating and interpreting it. One participates in the structures to which existentialist analysis draws attention to. This ontological insight is "the most precious knowledge that we have" according to Maquarrie. Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 172. & John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 190, 199.

⁸¹² Michael Palmer, "Correlation and Ontology: A Study in Tillich's Christology," *Downside Review* 93, no. 323 (1973): 122-23.

⁸¹³ Tillich's prominent view of existence in his theology is portrayed as negative. The question of why anyone should take on Tillich's view of existence was discussed in chapter five of this thesis. Eugene Peters, "Tillich's Doctrine of Essence, Existence, and the Christ," *Journal of Religion*, 43 (1963), 295-302. Anthony Godzieba, *Bernhard Welte's Fundamental Theological Approach to Christology* (New York: P. Lang, 1994), 51-80.

being to gain a sort of self-knowledge.⁸¹⁴ Because this knowledge comes in the form of a lived experience, it can be said to be a gaining of self-wisdom. It is more than just head knowledge; it is an entire experience.⁸¹⁵ We exist with innate self-worth and freedom, and we get to experience this truth in life.⁸¹⁶ To this extent, when it is denied or repressed, discomfort occurs and our very being protests.⁸¹⁷

We are able to deny and reject or acknowledge and express freedom and worth as our innate self, through co-existing subjectivity. Subjectivity is a creative force that provides the uniqueness of individual experiences.⁸¹⁸ Each person has unique things that are meaningful and valuable that arise from within a world of others who do not share the same perspectives. However, our uniqueness provides a vehicle for each person to then express and know their innate freedom and worth, by acting upon what is truly meaningful in their world.

As small analogy that alludes to the picture of an existential *pneumatology*, formed by from Sartre and Rogers used to articulate Spiritual Presence, can go something like this: If

⁸¹⁴ Chapter five discussed Tillich's Essence or Spirit working through all things in life to provide cognitive and beyond cognitive revelation of Essence to people. The God beyond the Bible, that reveals the infinite, through all things finite. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 127. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology, Vol. 2* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 125; Pan-Chiu Lai, *Towards a Trinitarian Theology of Religions: A Study of Paul Tillich's Thought* (Kampen, the Netherlands: Kok Pharos Pub. House, 1994), 123.

⁸¹⁵ See chapter six for reflection on emotions and choices as an experience of life that points to people recognizing freedom as the origin of the human. Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), xvii; Jean-Paul Sartre and Robert Baldick, *Nausea* (London: Penguin Books, 2021), 338 and 452.

⁸¹⁶ Ibid. See discussion in chapter six. "Our anguish reveals our nature of freedom through our failed attempts to become anything less than free or to view others as less than free. As Sartre's big theme in *Nausea*, and detailed further in *Being and Nothingness*, 'nausea is the taste of facticity.' Emotions indicate something about us to ourselves, freedom, and as the main character of *Nausea* acts on his freedom to create his own meaning, the nausea leaves him.

⁸¹⁷ See chapter seven where a discussion on how the visceral response to incongruence will present itself by offering a protest to the human being even amidst being unconscious of inauthenticity. Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 148.

⁸¹⁸ This is not a thought experiment. This formula is from Carl Rogers' decades of clinical observation that became so standard he was able to formulate person-centered therapy as a response. This was explained in chapter seven of this thesis and summarized in chapter nine. Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 148-153. Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable, 2004), 65.

creating piano music is a meaningful experience, and there usually exists some sort of desire to act out that meaningfulness in the world that goes along with it (playing music, open mic nights, time spent writing music, supporting others that write music, getting music lessons, etc.) then by using my freedom to choose, I choose an action that brings that desire into reality, I not only express my Essence of freedom, but of my worth.⁸¹⁹ In a world of people that may not experience the meaningfulness of a piano, or music, the way I do, I have chosen the validity of my experience anyways.⁸²⁰

Subjectivity is a requirement in order to have the ability to express my worth and freedom. Likewise, it is a requirement to learn about my freedom and worth. When I reject the worthiness of what is meaningful, and when I make choices to not support what is meaningful to me, but go against my experience instead, the incongruence grows.⁸²¹ And with it, the discomfort. Discomfort will find relief when meaningful experiences are finally acknowledged as worth doing and in turn using freedom to do them.⁸²²

⁸¹⁹ Carl R. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable, 2004), 353. As described in previous chapters, these findings are from decades of Carl Rogers' clinical observations, which point to this.

⁸²⁰ Could subjectivity therefore express a *lack* of worth and freedom – and how do you adjudicate true from false subjectivities? This question was taken up within chapter seven of this thesis by Carl Rogers himself. Please review the elements on facades and the visceral experience of wearing facades as well the innate driving force within the human being that responds negatively to facades, formed by devaluing oneself. Again, innate freedom will let you choose anything, however, only one way will serve you in a manner that develops more harmony and well-being within you. When an individual acts towards a lack of self-worth, decades of clinical observation reveal the same dysfunctions as a result. Again, this is the basics of Carl Rogers clinical observations, please review chapter seven.

⁸²¹ Nathaniel Raskin, "An objective study of the locus-of-evaluation factor in psychotherapy," In *Personality Monographs, Vol. 3. Success in psychotherapy*, ed. Werner Wolff and Joseph Precker (Grune & Stratton: New York, 1952), 159. Carl Rogers, *Becoming a Person: Two Lectures* (Austin: Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, 1970), 4.

⁸²² See chapter six for discussion. The experience of nausea, however, had revealed to him the truth of his freedom and the responsibility that accompanies that freedom. The nausea revealed itself as a mechanism that signals obscured awareness of a true self. Jean-Paul Sartre and Robert Baldick, *Nausea* (London: Penguin Books, 2021), 338, 452; Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 25.

It requires the expression of innate freedom and self-worth to bring forth each unique meaning and value held within, into an outer existence. It can be said then that (a)uthenticity requires (A)uthenticity. To live out what is meaningful and valuable to you requires you live out freedom and worth. Tillich utilized (s)pirit and (S)pirit to differentiate the human spirit within the God (S)pirit.⁸²³ Yet this did not state any descriptive of what exactly the human spirit was, and it did not give reference to what the God Spirit consists, so what it meant to essentialize, turned into nothing understandable. Considering what we have found with Sartre, Rogers, and Tillich, a more concrete way of comprehending essentialization prevails. An articulation of the process of essentialization,⁸²⁴ is referenced through understanding the interplay of (a)uthenticity and (A)uthenticity.

(A)uthenticity is reference to the universal true Essence true to all human beings. It is stated as innate freedom and self-worth. Subjectivity, also innate to all people, that leads to a unique experience of meaning and value (and likewise unique wants and desires) is designated as (a)uthenticity. Here we have a more detailed comprehension of Tillich's (s)pirit and (S)pirit, as it pertains to essentialization.⁸²⁵

They both exist inside the human, as the human. They require each-other, working in tandem, to catalyze knowledge of true Essence as freedom and worth. The expression of true Essence, or (A)uthenticity, has to be expressed through the availability of unique meaning and value. To grow (A)uthentically, is to grow (a)uthentically.

⁸²³From chapter one of this thesis, "In understanding the character and manifestation of Tillich's Spiritual Presence, the nature of "spirit" with a small "s" opens up for us something of the nature of "Spirit" with a capital "S," and in this way the human spirit and the divine Spirit are correlated, and the human spirit becomes an effective symbol of the divine Spirit." Also see Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 3* (UK, Welwyn, 1964), 111.

⁸²⁴ Paul Wilkins, *Person-Centered Therapy In Focus* (California: Sage Publications, 2003), 72. Review discussion in chapter seven on congruence as always in *a process* towards more and more congruence.

⁸²⁵ Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 183.

To essentialize, is to have something unique, that you will need to act upon with freedom, and that will require your own knowledge of its worth to even dare to do so.⁸²⁶ The embodiment, of true Essence, requires the co-existence of subjectivity. The knowledge of freedom and worth, requires the negative visceral response created by denying freedom and worth, through denying your own experience of meaning and value.⁸²⁷

Rather than life being such an ambiguously negative experience,⁸²⁸ as described by Tillich, it is instead an enlightening experience towards accepting and embodying your freedom and worth.⁸²⁹ The human being is guided into a beautiful recognition of their true Essence.⁸³⁰ They are being beckoned to live in expression of their freedom and worth. They are beckoned to their own (A)uthenticity, through their (a)uthenticity.⁸³¹

Visceral experience is guiding us, as the external world is teaching us, and our relationship to one another is teaching us through our interactions. There is an observable intent that is beyond ambiguous, but clarifying. Life, then is not a negative or even ambiguous experience in its intent, but a clarifying one, with an observable direction: to express one's true

⁸²⁶ Rogers stated the human being will experience despair “when they do not choose, or are not willing to choose, to be oneself.” Carl Rogers, *Becoming a Person: Two Lectures* (Austin: Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, 1970), 11.

⁸²⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre and Robert Baldick, *Nausea* (London: Penguin Books, 2021), 246-53.

⁸²⁷ Bettina Liebowitz Knapp, *Music, Archetype and the Writer: A Jungian View* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1988), 132.

⁸²⁸ Eugene Peters, “Tillich’s Doctrine of Essence, Existence, and the Christ,” *Journal of Religion*, 43 (1963), 295–302. Anthony Godzieba, *Bernhard Welte’s Fundamental Theological Approach to Christology* (New York: P. Lang, 1994), 51-80.

⁸²⁹ Rachel Nelson, “The Salutogenic Effects of Awe Told Existentially,” *Think 21*, no. 60 (2021): 91-104, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1477175621000361>, 100.

⁸³⁰ Tony Merry, *Learning and Being in Person-Centered Counselling* (Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books, 2014), 26.

⁸³¹ Carl Rogers, *Becoming a Person: Two Lectures* (Austin: Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, 1970), 11. Also see chapter seven for a reflection on this. This concept of a visceral protest, or inner distress, is captured in a lecture given by Rogers which stated the human being will experience despair “when they do not choose, or are not willing to choose, to be oneself.” A visceral distress occurs when an individual chooses “other than himself.” The negative visceral sense signifies “one central search” that is taking place behind it.

universal Essence through the smaller task of expressing individual subjective meaning and value.

9.7.2 Defining Authenticity For Existential Pneumatology

Philosopher Jacob Golomb says that “Sartre struggles to find a precise definition of authenticity.”⁸³² In *Being and Nothingness*, Sartre described authenticity as the opposite of bad faith, but goes on to say that the description of authenticity “has no place here.”⁸³³ In *Notebooks for an Ethic*, what was the start of his attempt to understand authenticity further, the authentic person was described as “one who by pure reflection has a true and lucid awareness of herself as she is: unsubstantial, unnecessary, unjustified, and free. Not only does the authentic person know this, she accepts and wills it, and takes responsibility for her existence.”⁸³⁴ The concept of authenticity, for Sartre, links freedom with choice and creation. He says, “authenticity will unveil that we are condemned to create.”⁸³⁵ He moves from the idea that we are condemned to be free, to we are condemned to create, which is the same gist of things as said in *Being and Nothingness*. In neither work does he give a clear definition of authenticity.

Though authenticity doesn’t find definition, it seems to be an understanding of human nature, and a process of realizing that human nature through the complexity of life. Human nature is free, as analyzed through the complexities of life. Jonathan Webber states that while Sartre doesn’t define authenticity, he “explores the ways in which people fail to be authentic and

⁸³² Jacob Golomb, *In Search of authenticity* (London: Tylor and Francis, 2012), 104.

⁸³³ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 70 & 94. & Jonathan Webber, “Authenticity,” In *Jean-Paul Sartre: Key Concepts*. Steven. Churchill & Jack Reynolds (Acumen Publishing: London, 2013), 131-142.

⁸³⁴ Jean-Pal Sartre, *Notebooks for an Ethic* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 448.

⁸³⁵ *Ibid*, 515.

the damage this causes to their own lives and to the lives of those they affect.”⁸³⁶ Existence itself allows for awareness and understanding of an authentic self, inside a process of knowing and embodying. Which is why it may seem difficult to define authenticity, even for Sartre, because a revelation of human nature is intertwined in describing the process of revelation also.

The same trouble in defining authenticity exists in psychology. What being authentic is, though foundational to counseling theories, is defined differently across research studies. The psychological field “lacks a single operationalized definition of authenticity.” Being authentic is seen as “multiple interrelated processes that have important implications for psychological functioning and well-being.”⁸³⁷ Just like Sartre, the revelation of human nature is very connected to the process of revelation. And like Sartre, this is perhaps why authenticity is not a defined thing, but more of a complex process, that contains revelation of a true nature.

Rogers defined authenticity as congruence. Congruence in itself resembles the multifaceted process that is observable and revealed innate worth as the human core. Congruence for Rogers is being able to match “what is experienced at the gut level, what is present in awareness, and what is expressed to the client.”⁸³⁸ The less personal facades are present, the greater the benefit for the client. This in itself, doesn’t exactly answer the definition of authenticity, but innate worth and freedom required to have congruence take place.

What is identified in both Sartre and Rogers is a true essence of freedom and worth. What is also identified is that life acts as a process of not only revealing that, but validating it through

⁸³⁶ Jonathan Webber, “Authenticity,” In *Jean-Paul Sartre: Key Concepts*. Steven. Churchill & Jack Reynolds (Acumen Publishing: London, 2013), 131-142.

⁸³⁷ Brian Goldman & Mathew Kernis, “A Multicomponent Conceptualization of Authenticity: Theory and Research,” In *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, Vol. 38. Mark Zanna (Academic Press: New York, 2006), 283-357.

⁸³⁸ Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable, 2004), 116.

experiential avenues. Life flourishes to the degree that freedom and worth are expressed. Life is the multifaceted processes of awareness, and behavior, and relational orientation to that authentic or true self. The word authenticity is unfitting, when it seems like Sartre and Rogers, among the rest of the philosophers and psychologist, are wanting to describe a process rather than a conclusion.

For existential pneumatology, life is authenticating. Authentication is the process of showing something to be true, or verifying an identity. What is authenticated through life, is a True Essence of freedom and worth. The authentication process, is the interplay of (A)uthenticity and (a)uthenticity. This interplay is a self-perpetuating cycle of revelation and embodiment. Authenticity, for existential pneumatology, is both the process of authentication, *and* what is authenticated.

9.7.3 Finalizing Statement on Existential Pneumatology

To bring some sort of finalizing statement about an *Existential Pneumatology*, the concept can be said with a short explanation. A person's organic wants and desires are the vehicle to embody the image of God or true Essence, as it requires the expression of freedom and worth to do so. To put it all really short: (A)uthenticity comes through (a)uthenticity. Or, to be (A)uthentic, you have to be (a)uthentic. Or, (A)uthenticity requires (a)uthenticity, etc.

A person's subjective values cannot be expressed outwardly without the use of the freedom they possess and the acknowledgement of the worthiness of those values to be expressed. Freedom and worth, alongside individual wants and desires, co-exist in support of one another.

It is here that (A)uthenticity and (a)uthenticity show their catalytic interplay towards the embodiment of true Essence. People have desires and wants that are unique to them, and those desires and wants will never be experienced through their actions, without the use of their freedom to choose them, and the belief that they are worthy of being experienced. They need to be experienced, otherwise we have a subpar visceral experience from within ourselves, if we live in rejection or denial of them.

Freedom and worth support individual wants and desires, and so does the reverse. You cannot express your wants and desires without expressing your freedom and worth to do so. You cannot express your freedom and worth without having unique wants and desires that urge you on, for their outward expression. The pairing of these two, work in tandem with each other, supporting one another, towards the embodiment of (A)uthenticity. The more of my unique wants and desires I am outwardly expressing and taking action to experience, the more freedom and worth I am also expressing, in order to do so.

The idea of *existential pneumatology* as it is refined in this chapter, is that (A)uthenticity looks like (a)uthenticity. This interplay prompts an expansion of true Essence in life itself, through life itself. If you'd like to associate true Essence with God as Tillich does, or if you'd like to take a more spiritual tone and call it the Higher Self, or if you'd like to vacate all spiritual jargon and just associate it with the best version of yourself; that best you, or God alive in humanity, looks a lot like doing the things you actually want to do and love to do. Those moments you express them are an embodiment of freedom and worth, the expression of God if you will, as the woman playing piano, as the bartender bartending, as the gardener planting, as the man taking the time to drink his favorite cup of coffee.

9.8 Contributions Of Existential *Pneumatology*

Existential pneumatology has taken Tillich's symbols of Spiritual Presence, and the idea of essentialization, to a position of articulation that is being referenced through the terms (A)uthenticity and (a)uthenticity. (A)uthenticity and (a)uthenticity co-exist and interact to draw out an embodiment of freedom and worth, with a greater sense of well-being that follows. This interplay of (A)uthenticity and (a)uthenticity with its correlation to well-being, gives a directional aim or purpose to existence, alongside a perspective on well-being. Because of this, all spiritual talk aside, an *existential pneumatology* offers insight that can contribute into fields of enquiry, beyond Tillich's theology and his concept of Spiritual Presence.

This moves us beyond Tillich's Spiritual Presence and into a place where an *existential pneumatology* has engagement with broader philosophy and psychology. It provides an observational platform to present answers for the rather big and lofty philosophical question of "what is the purpose of life?" The purpose of life is not found in the love of Jesus, or a concept of a good God that means well for us, or a dangerous and random galaxy marked by colliding meteors and exploding stars out which we emerge with the same chaotic lawlessness. What is observable, from the perspective of an *existential pneumatology*, is human life wants well-being. It seeks out well-being, but it can only get it by embodying its freedom and worth.

Anyone can feel free to hypothesize or believe anything else, however, for sure, regardless of a perspective of God or no God, there is an observable directional aim of life that is achieved through embodying freedom and worth. To this degree an *existential pneumatology* is able to contribute and engage beyond speculation, with a bit of observational traction, the ancient philosophical questions of the purpose of life. What's the purpose of life? To embody our (A)uthenticity through our (a)uthenticity.

Another notable contribution an *existential pneumatology* is able to deliver is in comprehending the experience of well-being through the framework of existentialism.⁸³⁹ This framework driven by Sartre and Rogers can assist in comprehending various ideas that are known to aid well-being, such as with the psychological experience of awe. Contributions towards understanding how awe develops a sense of well-being in people is new and still trying to be understood by researchers. Awe is not a tangible material thing, so it is a bit hard for researchers to pin down how it is creating a sense of well-being in people. Researchers just know that it does. Awe, however, can be understood through the perspective of an *existential pneumatology*.

Beyond the topic of Tillich or Spiritual Presence, an *existential pneumatology* has contributed to the discussion of the phenomenon of awe as a cause for well-being. This contribution has been made with the publication *The Salutogenic Effects of Awe Told Existentially*.⁸⁴⁰ The observations of the human being and how well-being grows, within the structure or framework of existence, suggest that:

Rather than the experience of awe shifting focus away from the self, existential observation would propose that the medicine awe provides is its power to shut out an individual from the world.

To cut off the endless supply of opinions that define and influence an individual; to take time out from a society that pushes its impressions on you. Awe does not allow for the individual to construct itself at the intersection of roles, titles, and duties.

As the individual attempts to focus outside itself to calculate who it is and its purpose from the environment, it comes up empty handed. Awe redirects the individual's focus back to the self, insisting it find meaning and purpose within.

The experience of awe is the experience of total freedom from external opinions of worth. Such absence of opinion leads to a place of clearing within the mental

⁸³⁹ Rachel Nelson, "The Salutogenic Effects of Awe Told Existentially," *Think* 21, no. 60 (2021): pp. 91-104, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s1477175621000361>, 100.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid.

landscape. Within this landscape, organic preferences begin to rise, uninterrupted or modified, by external conditions of worth influencing a change.

The individual can sense their own desires apart from the voices of the external world. With this orientation towards self, not away from self, an individual then exhibits the qualities of well-being correlated to awe.⁸⁴¹

The idea of an *existential pneumatology*, formed out of the research of Sartre and Rogers towards the articulation Tillich's Spiritual Presence in existence, provides insights that offer contributions to other conversations, beyond Tillich and his Spiritual Presence. These two examples are a promising start to the ways that the findings of this thesis may contribute with its insights and perspectives.

9.9 Summary And Conclusion

Seeking to repair Tillich's work through the remedies suggested by Sartre and Rogers helped to address some of the common criticisms levelled at Tillich. Alongside the remedy of the limitations, the overall goal of this thesis has also been reached.

Tillich's theology of Spiritual Presence and essentialization has been developed beyond a state of incompleteness, where it last lay in *Systematic Theology III*. An implementation of a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, the illumination of the manner that Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence can be summarized, short-hand, as *existential-pneumatology*.

⁸⁴¹ Ibid, 102-103.

By utilizing an existentially principled basis to observe Tillich's Spiritual Presence, Tillich's work found plausibility and expression beyond his mere assertions and use of symbols. Towards the philosophically eye-roll inducing question of "what is the purpose of life," one understanding appears to be, we exist as a means to get a grip on our freedom and worth, and live this knowing out.

When freedom is exercised to express self-worth, life is pleasing. It seems to have such a beneficial response for an individual because it appears to be proper to who you truly are as shown with Sartre and Rogers. Freedom and worth is the authentic you, synonymous to Tillich's concept of true Essence, and Spiritual Presence guides us in life to embody it.

We each have authentic things we are drawn to do, that hold very unique meanings for very diverse reasons. The only way you get to express those unique individual things is if you dare express your ultimate (A)uthenticity: freedom and worth. The creative and diversified unique (a)uthentic expressions of life that an individual brings forth, comes by way of expressing their universal (A)uthenticity first. The universal aspect of us allows for the particular aspect of us to express. The (A)uthentic you, is what allows for the (a)uthentic you to show itself to the outward world.

The pairing of freedom and worth utilized to express individual unique wants, is what Sartre put as living authentically with your freedom and not in bad faith that creates nausea.⁸⁴² It is also what Rogers terms "the good life,"⁸⁴³ which is also, like Sartre, having an authentic life that you have authored and leads to positive internal responses.⁸⁴⁴ The masterful structure of life

⁸⁴² Jean-Paul Sartre and Robert Baldick, *Nausea* (London: Penguin Books, 2021), 338, 452; Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 25.

⁸⁴³ Carl R. Rogers, *A Way of Being* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), 108.

⁸⁴⁴ Carl Rogers, *Becoming a Person: Two Lectures* (Austin: Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, 1970), 11.

that would place a being that consist of freedom and worth, cloak them with individual and unique wants, then requires their freedom and worth to be embodied for those wants to be carried out, and then have this be the means that the person will feel positive inner resonance, is the structure of life, as Spiritual Presence, that is universally essentializing.

In this thesis, Tillich's process of essentialization through Spiritual Presence, was articulated by showing the necessary pairing of (A)uthenticity with (a)uthenticity, when observed from the framework of an *existential pneumatology*. *Existential pneumatology* is the framework that observed and describes how an individual consciousness living in relation to the world, is guided by Spiritual Presence to embody what Tillich conceptualized as humanity's true Essence. This true Essence consists of freedom and worth, and is catalyzed by individual unique meanings and values that wish to be expressed from within each human being.

;Jean-Paul Sartre and Robert Baldick, *Nausea* (London: Penguin Books, 2021), 338, 452; Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 25.

Chapter Ten

Summary and Conclusion

10.1 Summary

Considering the weight applied to Spiritual Presence in volume three of *Systematic Theology*,⁸⁴⁵ it remained Tillich's least examined concept, yet most necessary to the validity of his theology as a whole.⁸⁴⁶ Spiritual Presence is marked as the universal catalyst of his symbolic New Being. Yet, an articulation or understanding of how Spiritual Presence universally catalyzed went unexplored.⁸⁴⁷ His life's work, *Systematic Theology*, lacks synthesis because Spiritual Presence remained a symbol when it needed to be expanded and explained.⁸⁴⁸ Tillich himself, fully aware of this limitation, spent the last years of his life seeking to deliver a more expansive and universal articulation of Spiritual Presence in order to redeem his life's work.⁸⁴⁹

It was the aim of this thesis to offer a method to test the genuineness of Tillich's thought, and also provide an articulation of how his concepts of Spiritual Presence and essentialization take place in life. Four limitations to Tillich's work were explored that were thought to have

⁸⁴⁵ Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology III* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951-1963), 283.

⁸⁴⁶ Russell Manning, *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 74; Frederick Parrella, *Tillich's Theology of The Concrete Spirit* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 74; Wolfgang Vondey in *Paul Tillich and Pentecostal Theology*, eds. by Amos Yong and Nimi Wariboko (Indiana University Press, 2015), 36; David Kelsey, *The Fabric of Paul Tillich's Theology* (Yale University Press, 1967), 82; Pan-Chui Lai, *Towards A Trinitarian Theology of Religions* (Kok Pharos Publishing House, 1994), 115; Paul Tillich, "Review of Systematic Theology Volume III," *Dialogue 14* (1965): 229-232. Andre O'Neill, *Tillich: A Guide For The Perplexed* (T & T Clark, 2008), 93.

⁸⁴⁷ David Kelsey, *The Fabric of Paul Tillich's Theology* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2011), 82; Pan-Chiu Lai, *Towards a Trinitarian Theology of Religions: A Study of Paul Tillich's Thought* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1994), 115; Paul Tillich, "Review of Systematic Theology Volume III," *Dialogue 14* (1965): 229-232; Heywood Thomas, 'Introduction' in Paul Tillich's *On the Boundary*, xv. Because Spiritual Presence was not developed well, and became the centerpiece of everything, it left his entire *Systematic Theology* underdeveloped and lacking synthesis in its totality.

⁸⁴⁸ Langdon Gilkey, *Gilkey On Tillich* (New York: Crossroad, 1990), 164.

⁸⁴⁹ Wilhelm Pauck and Marion Pauck, *Paul Tillich, His Life and Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1976), 244; Paul Tillich, *The Future of Religions* (Harper Row, 1966), 86.

stifled the delivery of this more expansive articulation of Spiritual Presence that he sought at the end of his life.

The primary aim of this thesis, addressed the first limitation of Tillich's work, its incompleteness. It did so by articulating Spiritual Presence and the essentialization process in chapter nine. Through the articulation developed in chapter nine, the second limitation, which was an underdeveloped comprehension of the symbol of Spiritual Presence as a universal catalyst of essentialization, was addressed. Tillich mainly expressed his theology in symbol, therefore it lacked details, explanations or descriptions behind the things he said. His critics asked if *any* non-symbolic statement could even be made from his work, and what would it even be?⁸⁵⁰

The third limitation was his assumption that his theories were true, while they remained untested and without any sort of verification given within his writings. His concept of Spiritual Presence and essentialization hung on the platonic understanding of Essence and German Idealism's immanence as a reality. It's a tough sell to say that a Spiritual Presence is enmeshed in the structure of existence and that there is a true Essence we all share with God that it is also guiding us to embody, without offering any evidence to make that statement genuine. His contemporaries asked early on for verification to his theories.⁸⁵¹ His version of addressing them can be found in a short, five-page passage, in *Systematic Theology I* titled Truth and Verification.⁸⁵² It did not quench the philosophical demand for verification at the time.⁸⁵³

⁸⁵⁰ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 177.

⁸⁵¹ See chapter 1, section 1.4 of this thesis. Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 112-117. Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 169-171.

⁸⁵² Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 112-117.

⁸⁵³ Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 169.

The fourth limitation is Tillich's perspective of existentialism.⁸⁵⁴ Existentialism is a fantastic method to put ontological claims to the test.⁸⁵⁵ Its strength is in observation itself, in order to see what is taking place in the world, and describe it, over what is assumed to be taking place.⁸⁵⁶ It would have been a great tool for Tillich to utilize in order to test the genuineness of his ideas, and to provide evidence, perhaps through observation, to support the assumption of Spiritual Presence essentializing humanity.⁸⁵⁷

This thesis used existentialism as a conduit for its observational abilities and descriptives of life lived in relation to the world (see chapters 2, 3, & 4), in order to seek evidence and then articulate through that evidence how Tillich's Spiritual Presence essentializes humanity into true Essence in chapter nine. Sartre's project in *Being and Nothingness* was to try to describe the real nature of human existence in a material world,⁸⁵⁸ and Rogers clinical observations revealed a certain human nature by describing the subjective experience of hundreds of people.⁸⁵⁹ The observations from the existential analysis of Sartre (see chapter 6) and the existentially primed

⁸⁵⁴ Andre O'Neill, *Tillich: A Guide For The Perplexed* (T & T Clark, 2008), 93; A translation appears as 'The concept and nature of philosophy', in *Twentieth Century Theology in the Making*. See: Jaroslav Pelikan, *Twentieth Century Theology in the Making* (Louisville, KY: Harper & Row, 1971), 248; Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 169; Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology Vol. 1* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1973), 112-117.

⁸⁵⁵ John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 190.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁵⁷ John Macquarrie, *Existentialism: An Introduction, Guide and Assessment* (Philadelphia: Penguin Books, 1973), 155, 199; Adrian Thatcher, *The Ontology of Paul Tillich* (Oxford England: Oxford University Press, 1978), 172. Existentialist ontology is in principle knowable because one knows the truth of ontological descriptions by recognizing their features in one's own existence, illuminating and interpreting it. One participates in the structures to which existentialist analysis draws attention to. This ontological insight is "the most precious knowledge that we have" according to Maquarrie.

⁸⁵⁸ Kate Kirkpatrick, *Sartre and Theology* (Bloomsbury, 2017), 145; Benedict O'Donohoe, "Why Sartre Matters," *Philosophy Now*, 2005, https://philosophynow.org/issues/53/Why_Sartre_Matters.

⁸⁵⁹ Howard Kirschenbaum, "The Current Status of Carl Rogers and the Person-Centered Approach." *Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, 42(1), (2005): 37-51.

clinical observations of Rogers (see chapter 7) provided insight into the genuineness of Tillich's ideas (limitation 4).

Those observations were used to test and then verify Tillich's assumed theories (limitation 3) that underpin his concepts of Spiritual Presence and an essentialization process (see chapter 5). Those observations (chapter 6 & 7) served as a witness to *how* essentialization takes place in humanity. They offered up an articulation (limitation 2) of Spiritual Presence and the manner that it universally guided humanity into its true Essence (see chapter 8 for a descriptive of true Essence).

With an articulation made, Tillich's concepts are no longer underdeveloped. What is left is the more expansive and universal articulation of Spiritual Presence that Tillich desired (see chapter 9) in order to redeem his life's work of its sensed incompleteness outlined in the first chapter (limitation 1).

The articulation of Spiritual Presence guiding humanity into true Essence begins with Sartre and his analysis of conciseness in relation to the world. Innate freedom makes people transcendent, a resultant of the unstoppable act of decision making that takes place in life, and that decision making being required of people because human nature is at its origin free.⁸⁶⁰ The caveat is that while human nature is free, the person might pretend to not be free, and choose to live their life as if it was fixed and they are unable to make changes that would shape life the way they want it. This is termed by Sartre as bad faith, and what accompanies bad faith, is a sense of nausea.⁸⁶¹

⁸⁶⁰ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), xvii

⁸⁶¹ Jean-Paul Sartre and Robert Baldick, *Nausea* (London: Penguin Books, 2021), 338, 452; Ibid, 25.

Nausea is a more abstract way of defining an inner visceral unsettling experience that accompanies people when they reject their own sense of authenticity. The remedy for nausea is to ditch the bad faith, embody the fact that you are free to choose, and live for yourself, using your freedom to shape a life that is truly yours.⁸⁶² Sartre presents a picture of guidance taking place in all people through an internal response that is activated at the denial of personal freedom. It is the intention of this internal response, through its uneasiness, to reorient the person to live authentically through the use of their freedom.

Rogers' clinical observations of people living in relation to each-other provided the same insight, plus a little more. Rogers observed that the use of personal freedom is important, but alongside a sense of high self-regard, or self-worth.⁸⁶³ The choices that a person makes out of a sense of self-rejection will provide a very different visceral experience than those choices that have been made with a sense of self-worth behind them. High self-regard is a necessary accompaniment to freedom.⁸⁶⁴

In other words, if I value everyone else's opinion of what I need to do with my life, over my own sense of what I need to do with my life, and I shape it according to their view of me, the same sense of nausea will occur.⁸⁶⁵ When a person wears a mask for the world, hiding their true face, so to speak, the incongruence triggers a visceral response. The visceral response, just as with Sartre's nausea, serves to reorient the person back to their own true wants and desires, ditch the mask, and ultimately, be authentic.⁸⁶⁶

⁸⁶² Ibid.

⁸⁶³ Carl Rogers, *On Becoming a Person: A Therapist's View of Psychotherapy* (London: Constable and Robinson, 2003), 91.

⁸⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁵ Carl Rogers, *Client-Centered Therapy* (London: Robinson, 1951), 150.

⁸⁶⁶ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 440-441.

In order to be authentic, not only does the individual need to realize they are free to think and do differently from others, but they have to realize their self-worth in order to accept and act on their own perspective of their life, and rather than reject it, thinking that another's perspective is more valuable over their own. As with Sartre's work, a sense of well-being will accompany a person that is living an authentic life.⁸⁶⁷

The more a choice has self-worth present within it, the more satisfying the experience of life is. The more a choice rejects a sense of self-worth, the more unsatisfying the experience of life is. When inner freedom and self-worth are taken together, and choices are made that support what is truly meaningful and valuable to an individual, the experience of life can be called *authentic*.

This pairing of innate freedom and worth, that allows for the expression and experience of a person's true wants and desires, is termed "the good life" by Rogers.⁸⁶⁸ It isn't a utopia, but it is a satisfying life, because it is an authentic life. It is a life marked by a sense of well-being over the gnawing sense of nausea. Life, through internal guidance, assists people to know and become themselves, through a pre-existing disposition of innate freedom and worth.

The ground of being (moving back to Tillich's terminology), as the structure that we call life, and life itself as the interplay of consciousness in relationship with people and things that it can perceive, is known by Tillich as Spiritual Presence. The *telos* of this Spiritual Presence, as illuminated by Rogers and Sartre, is the revelation of innate freedom and worth, as true Essence.

⁸⁶⁷ Jean-Paul Sartre, *Nausea* (New York City, NY: New Directions, 2013), 83 & Jean-Paul Sartre, *Being and Nothingness: An Essay in Phenomenological Ontology* (New York: Citadel Press, 1964), 79.

⁸⁶⁸ Carl R. Rogers, *A Way of Being* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), 108.

This is catalyzed by individual subjectivity living in relationship to the world. To this end, our subjectivity has a very big role to play in our lives as a vehicle of spiritual development. It has an internal barometer attached to it, and insists we listen. When innate freedom and worth is rejected, life is internally uncomfortable.⁸⁶⁹ Freedom and worth is rejected when what a person truly wants to do and be, is rejected, for an externally imposed way of doing and being instead.

To this end, as existentialism has been used to articulate universal Spiritual Presence towards essentialization, it has been summed up through the short-hand phrase, *existential pneumatology*. The terms (a)uthenticity and (A)uthenticity, within an *existential pneumatology*, embody the interplay of the universal and the subjective that drive essentialization, in time and space existence. The term (a)uthenticity represents the short-hand for the things we find individually, and thus, subjectively meaningful and valuable in our own experience. The term (A)uthenticity represents the short-hand for a universal true Essence consisting of freedom and worth. *Existential pneumatology* describes the interplay to essentialization in one small phrase: (a)uthenticity requires (A)uthenticity.

10.2 Conclusion

Within this thesis, an implementation of a verification process for Tillich's concept of Spiritual Presence and within the verification process, the articulation of the manner that Spiritual Presence guides humanity to embody what he called true Essence was summarized. This summary is conceptualized as *existential pneumatology* and its findings were represented as the interplay of (a)uthenticity and (A)uthenticity.

⁸⁶⁹ Carl Rogers, *Becoming a Person: Two Lectures* (Austin: Hogg Foundation for Mental Health, 1970), 11.

Because an *existential pneumatology* contains insights into the topics like the *telos* of life and what develops a sense of inner well-being, it has potential to contribute to lead to discussions beyond the scope of Tillich and his theology. For example, in the publication *The Salutogenic Effects of Awe Told Existentially*,⁸⁷⁰ The interplay of (a)uthenticity and (A)uthenticity from this thesis was used to understand how the experience of awe develops a sense of well-being in people. The experience of awe and its ability to drive well-being is minimally understood by psychologists, but in comprehending how well-being is driven through the interplay of (a)uthenticity and (A)uthenticity, good sense can be made as to why and how.

Secondly, people often interpret the world they live in as cruel, because so many people have so many opposing ideas, that it can feel like the world is against them and doesn't want them to be themselves. Uniqueness, subjectivity, and individuality can feel like a curse, rather than something positive or helpful.

The research from this thesis offers a different perspective. The observed interplay of (A)uthenticity requiring (a)uthenticity, suggests the world and its people are not pitting against anyone from being themselves. Diverse perspectives are necessary to the architecture, the structure, the design of life, in order to drive a knowledge of self. The self is both unique and universal, and life exists to ultimately help the human express them both, to the fullest. This is different than an antagonist view of subjectivity, the world, and ultimately the self in relation to the world.

Overall, the ideas presented within this thesis are beneficial to conversations about the life we all live and how to live it well, as any good philosophy should do. It joins with

⁸⁷⁰ Rachel Nelson, "The Salutogenic Effects of Awe Told Existentially," *Think* 21, no. 60 (2021): 91-104.

conversations concerning well-being in the world of psychology. It also joins with spiritual conversations concerning what it is to be made in the image of a God. It offers a strikingly positive view to the tension of life, that may be helpful for those that feel like the world is an antagonist. It is also a wake-up call to those that have buried themselves under everyone else's wants and desires, and currently suffer inside themselves, from expressing a life that isn't really theirs.

Existentialism is one tool available, out of potentially countless tools to investigate abstract spiritual concepts and ideas, like Tillich's Spiritual Presence. I do not have reservations about utilizing existentialism in this fashion, though others might, as they should. And, they should go on to investigate these concepts however they see fit for themselves. My method is one, and when taken with many others, may allow a much larger insight to surface that provides a clearer picture or a new way of understanding how abstract spiritual concepts play out in life, if at all. Existentialism is not the savior of all things, but it is a valuable method (among others) for the purpose of this thesis.

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