Paul Tillich And Franz Rosenzweig:
Picturing Revelation

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A Dissertation presented to the Graduate Faculty
of the University of Virginia in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

University of Virginia
Submitted: May 2020

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation brings together Paul Tillich and Franz Rosenzweig around questions regarding pictures and pictoriality in modern theology and speculative religious thought. It argues that Tillich and Rosenzweig, dissimilar thinkers in many ways, similarly frame the act of revelation in terms of visual perception and pictorial imagination. They do so in the face of Enlightenment skepticism regarding both revelation and the epistemic validity of sensory figures of knowledge, such as myths, symbols, and images. Against this rationalist current of modern thought, Tillich and Rosenzweig dare to picture revelation.

I situate these pictorial renderings of revelation in Rosenzweig's and Tillich's shared intellectual context. I argue that their religious epistemologies are animated from within by the aesthetic energies of romantic idealism, with its emphasis on form (*Gestalt*) and visualizing intuition (*Anschauung*); and I argue that neo-Kantian influences lead them to conceive religious knowing as a matter of pictorial recognition. However, the aim of this dissertation is to understand the visual-pictorial dimensions of Tillich's and Rosenzweig's thought not on the basis of these philosophical precedents alone, but also through the lens of some modern and contemporary ideas regarding pictures and pictorial perception, drawn from philosophy, art history, and image theory.

From this vantage point, the dissertation creates a number of cross-views: between religion and art, philosophy and theology, and Judaism and Christianity, as these pairings take shape in early twentieth-century modern thought. It offers in-depth readings of Tillich's early German thought and Rosenzweig's magnum opus, *The Star of Redemption.* It brings these two monumental figures of twentieth-century religious thought into conversation for the first time.

The question pressed throughout the dissertation is whether the presentational quality of pictorial perception, when made to mediate revelation and religious knowing, renders religious truth an illusory self-projection, or whether the pictures engendered by religious life and consciousness may vouchsafe the objectivity of a God beyond the "I"/eye. I conclude that, for Tillich and Rosenzweig, the objectivity of revelation's truth cannot be confirmed relative to any point outside the picture in which it is given. Rather the picture's credibility – whether Tillich's "picture of Christ" or Rosenzweig's "Star of Redemption" – is made to rest on its reciprocal appropriation in the socio-ethical forms of Jewish or Christian life, the same forms of life by which the picture is projected.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The two names that stand as the title of this dissertation appear constantly in the pages that follow. The names of those who made this work possible appear much less frequently, if at all. Yet, they are perhaps more present to these pages than are the great names of Rosenzweig and Tillich. They name the teachers, companions, and confidants without whom the author could not have begun this little pilgrimage of thought, never mind completing it.

Above all, I must thank Asher Biemann and Paul Jones, this dissertation's co-directors. They have been my teachers in the truest sense, pointing and showing me a way when I could not find my own. I owe nearly as great a debt to Larry Bouchard, who first kindled my interest in Tillich's early thought, and Margaret Olin, whose seminar, Theories of Perception, taught at Yale University in the fall of 2011, first opened my eyes to the world of visual studies. I must sincerely thank James Loeffler, my latest teacher, for his contributions to this work in its late stages. I have been inexplicably lucky in the area of teachers. I am deeply indebted to my many teachers at the University of Virginia, especially Jennifer Geddes, James Childress, Kevin Hart, and Nichole Flores. Special thanks is also due to Andre Willis, who taught me to think freely about religion, Mara Benjamin, who brought Rosenzweig, Buber, and Maimonides into the cornfields of my Midwestern Lutheran education, and Gregory Walter, who taught me what theology can be.

I am also indebted to the fellow students and scholars who have supported me during my time as a graduate student. I am especially grateful to Luke Beck Kreider, William Boyce, Charles Gillespie, Matt Farley, Rachel Teubner, Peter Miller, Oscar

Tovar-Argueta, Christopher Choi, Brandy Daniels, Shelly Tilton, Abigail Emerson, and Scott Meyers for their friendship and scholarly camaraderie. I am also thankful for the intellectual company of Brett DeFries, my partner in an ongoing conversation about art and religion that began many years ago at St. Olaf College.

I have benefited greatly from the critiques and encouragements offered by scholars laboring in the same fields tilled by this dissertation. I thank Zachary Braiterman for his comments on a portion of Chapter Three of this dissertation. I thank the wider community of Rosenzweig scholars, especially Benjamin Pollock, Elias Sachs, and Stephanie Brenzel. Among Tillich scholars, I thank Russell Re Manning for his comments on an early conference paper concerning Tillich's theology of art.

Much more than acknowledgement is due to my spouse, Kate, my son, John, and my parents, Mark and Nancy. To these people I owe the time, the strength, and the person it took to write this dissertation. To Kate, in particular, I owe this work.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

BEGINNING WITH PICTURES

"We speak in pictures. But the pictures are not arbitrary."
– Franz Rosenzweig, *The Star of Redemption*.[1]

"We speak of intuition [*Anschauung*] and picture. There is no step beyond this intuition."
– Paul Tillich, *Margburg Dogmatics*.[2]

"Man makes to himself an image of God…his want would not be satisfied if he did not regard this image as an objective reality…And it is in fact no devised, no arbitrary image; for it expresses the necessity of the imagination [*Phantasie*], the necessity of affirming the imagination as a divine power."
– Ludwig Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*.[3]

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[1] "Wir sprechen in Bildern. Aber die Bilder sind nicht willkürlich. Es gibt notwendige und zufällige Bilder. Die Unverkehrbarkeit der Wahrheit lässt sich nur in dem Bilde eines Lebendigen aussprechen." Franz Rosenzweig, *Der Stern der Erlösung*, *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 2, ed. Reinhold Mayer (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1976), 469 [henceforth *Stern*]. My translations follow *The Star of Redemption*, trans. Barbara Galli (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1999), 445 [henceforth *Star*].

[2] "(W)ir von Anschauung und Bild reden. Über diese Anschauung gibt es keinen Schritt hinaus." Tillich, *Dogmatik: Marburg Vorlesung von 1925*, ed. Werner Schüßler (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1986), 312. Translation mine unless otherwise stated.

[3] "Der Mensch macht sich ein Bild von Gott, d.h. er verwandelt das *abstrakte Vernunftwesen,* das *Wesen der* Denkkraft, in ein Phantasiewesen. Er setzt aber diese Bild in Gott selbst, weil es natürlich nicht seinem Bedürfnis entsprechen würde, wenn er dieses Bild nicht als objektive Realität wüsste, wenn diese Bild für ihn nu rein subjektives, von Gott *unterschiednes*, von ihm *gemachtes* wäre. In der Tat ist es auch kein gemachtes, kein willkürliches; denn es drückt die Notwendigkeit der Phantasie aus, die Notwendigkeit, die Phantasie als göttliche Macht zu bejahen." Ludwig Feuerbach, *Gesammelte Werke* vol. 5, ed. Werner Schuffenhauer and Wolfgang Harich (Berlin: Akademie Verlag). Translation: *The Essence of Christianity*, trans. Marian Evans (London: John Chapman, 1854), 74.

CHAPTER ONE CONTENTS

1.1 A Diptych in Miniature

Paul Tillich began to look closely at visual art as a chaplain in the First World War. He studied poor reproductions of western masterpieces purchased at military bookstores. At first a means of distraction, these pictures became for him an anchor of the spirit. In letters home to his father he refers to them simply, affectionately as "my pictures."[4] These pictures became for Tillich what music had been to his father, a means of self-knowledge and self-transcendence.

Pictures later became for Tillich a way of thinking. By his own report, the "fundamental categories" of his philosophy of religion and culture – namely, form and content – were derived from his encounter with the pictures of visual art. In his *Systematic Theology*, Tillich writes that the New Testament "intended to give the picture of the one who is the Christ and who, for this reason, has universal significance."[5] The *Christusbild*, the picture of Christ, becomes the center of gravity of Tillich's theological imagination. "It was just this concreteness and incomparable uniqueness of the 'real' picture," Tillich continues, "which gave Christianity its superiority over mystery cults and Gnostic visions."[6] We also find the *Christusbild* at the center of Tillich's early theological work, the *Marburg Dogmatics* (1925). When speaking of Jesus as the Christ,

[4] Letter to Johannes Tillich, cited in *Marion Pauck and Wilhelm Pauck, Paul Tillich: His Life and Thought* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1989), 53 and 298, n. 23.
[5] Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 151.
[6] Ibid.

Tillich writes, "we speak of intuition [*Anschauung*] and picture [*Bild*]. There is no step beyond this intuition."[7] The New Testament witness assumes theological meaning for Tillich not as a story, a word, or a moral principle, but as a *picture*. Why? What is the power of a picture for Tillich?

The young Franz Rosenzweig also loved visual art. As a student, he studied art history and practiced drawing from life. In Italy he feasted on the sights of Renaissance painting. However, Rosenzweig came to distrust the world made visible in the pictures of art. In 1916, he writes "What does it mean that art teaches me to understand *me*?" He suspects that art remains locked within in the circle of the self-isolated subject. "How does art relate to B = B?" Rosenzweig queries, employing a mathematical symbol to represent the ego as an individual in itself, absent its relations to others. Rosenzweig's religious philosophy would strive to overcome this view of the ego and to make relationship the principle of existence. "On the one hand, art is really an image of the world of relationship," Rosenzweig writes. "(I)t is even the pure image of this world. But this image flows into (and comes out of) B = B, my ego. What is this? Is it not an imitation [of the world of relationship]?"[8] Art appears to Rosenzweig as a mimetic projection of the mere ego. Its pictures and projections are but illusions of the self-enclosed self. Whatever world it represents is not, in fact, a world at all, because it lacks the "real, vital to and fro connection of speech."[9] The celebrated dialogical encounter of revelation at the center of Rosenzweig's magnum opus, *The Star of Redemption*, appears

[7] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 312.
[8] "Was bedeutet es, dass die Kunst mich mich verstehen lehrt? Wie verhält sich (also) die Kunst zu B=B? Die Kunst ist ja einerseits recht ein Bild der Welt der Beziehung, es ist sogar das reine Bild dieser Welt. Aber dieses Bild mündet in (und entspringt aus) B=B, dem meinen Ich. Was ist das? Ist sie nicht eine Imitation? nämlich der Aktivität von B=B auf A=B." Franz Rosenzweig, *Zweistromland: Kleinere Schriften zu Glauben und Denken*, ed. Reinhold Mayer and Annemarie Mayer (Martinus Nijhoff, 1984), 94.
[9] *Star*, 90; *Stern*, 88.

as a verbal triumph over the self-enclosed ego, a victory of relational ontology over the egomaniacal metaphysics of modernity – and a triumph of the word over the image.

And yet, despite the aspersions cast against art and its pictorial projections, Rosenzweig's returns to the picture. In *The Star of Redemption* Rosenzweig visualizes the cosmos with the figure of the *Magen David*. This figure comes to represent God's "eternal truth," the presence of the eternal to time. Toward the book's conclusion, this eternal figure is discovered within living soul of the Jewish people, where it abides as "the still and silent image of our existence" (*das ruhige, stumme Bild unseres Daseins*). [10] Jewish life, for Rosenzweig, ultimately assumes a strongly aesthetic, strongly visual quality. The image returns as a prism for apprehending the absolute and eternal, apparently despite everything Rosenzweig has said in favor of dialogue and against the mute visuality of art. Why? What is the power of a picture for Rosenzweig?

These glimpses into Rosenzweig's and Tillich's thought – this little diptych – reveals an ambivalence about the image as a figure of religious knowledge and understanding. On the one hand, Tillich and Rosenzweig both level iconoclastic critiques of the visual world. Tillich condemns Gnostic visions, the iconography of pagan cults, every false circumscription of the unconditioned to a form. Rosenzweig assails the world of classical art, condemning its inability to escape the self's self-image. And yet, for both, these false pictures of strange worship are conquered by another picture – the *true* picture of revealed religion, whether the *Christusbild* communicated by the New Testament or the *Daseinsbild* of Jewish life. Where a picture held us captive, to borrow a phrase, a picture also triumphs in the end.

[10] *Star*, 354; *Stern*, 372.

Why? Why should these two thinkers – so proximate in time and place, so dissimilar in other ways – come to rely on the picture as the medium of religious thought, the vehicle of revelation? That is the precipitating question of this dissertation.

1.2 A "Pictorial Turn" in Modern Religious Thought?

A notion drawn from contemporary critical theory can provide some orientation to the central concerns of this study. W. J. T. Mitchell has proposed that a "modern pictorial turn" has and is still taking place in the human sciences. In short, the idea signals that "pictures form a point of peculiar friction and discomfort across a broad range of intellectual inquiry."[11] This intellectual discomfort, according to Mitchell, is the symptom of theoretical neglect. While it is commonplace and even cliché to observe that we live in an image-saturated age, it is also true that "we do not have a powerful account of visual representation…we still do not know exactly what pictures are, what their relation to language is, how they operate on observers and on the world, how their history is to be understood, and what is to be done with or about them."[12] Thus, Mitchell's pictorial turn contains an agenda for the contemporary theoretical humanities. Namely, it calls for a "postlinguistic, postsemiotic rediscovery of the picture."[13] For much of the twentieth century the humanities have been preoccupied with language – language games, linguistics, grammatology, discourse analysis. Mitchells declares that it is time to give the picture its due, as an object worthy of its own field of inquiry, a "science of the image."

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[11] W.J.T. Mitchell, "The Pictorial Turn" in *Artforum* (March 1992). Reprinted in *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995) 13.
[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid., 16.

A number of recent developments in the humanities have shown a renewed in interested in the image. In the German-speaking world there has emerged the interdisciplinary field of image-science (*Bildwissenschaft*) which parallels the emergence of "visual studies" in the Anglophone academy. Philosophers, anthropologists, art historians, literary critics, and cultural theorists have all begun to take a second look at the picture, generating theories of images, histories of the images, concepts of pictoriality and visuality, and critical ways of speaking about pictorial perception. Art history, in particular, has been transformed by the recent rediscovery the image. For instance, the art historians Gottfried Boehm, Hans Belting, and David Freedberg have all broadened their focus beyond art and its history to consider the history and the power of images in a wide range of cultural settings.[14]

This study aims bring something of this pictorial agenda to the study of theology and speculative religious thought. Over the course of the twentieth century, theologians and scholars of religion have lingered over language a great deal. Narrative, grammar, metaphor, speech-acts, poetics – these have become well-trod paths. By comparison, the visual has been neglected. This is beginning to change. Spurred by the reawakening of the image in the humanities, a number of theologians and religious thinkers have begun to employ critical concepts of the image (and plenty of actual images, too) in their own work. These include Ellen Armour,[15] Natalie Carnes,[16] Melissa Raphael,[17] and Claudia Weltz.[18]

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[14] David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), Hans Belting, *Likeness and Presence*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), Gottfried Boehm, *Wie Bilder Sinn erzeugen: Die Macht des Zeigens* (Berlin: Berlin University Press 2008).
[15] Ellen Armour, *Signs and Wonders: Theology After Modernity* (Columbia University Press, 2016).
[16] Natalie Carnes, *Image and Presence: A Christological Reflection on Iconoclasm and Iconophilia* (Stanford University Press, 2017).

This renewed interest in the role of pictures in religious life and thought may be enriched by a return to some of the most formative religious thinkers of the twentieth century. Tillich's and Rosenzweig's thinking was shaped by modern philosophical traditions deeply concerned with the relationship between concepts and pictures, between intuition and the productive imagination. Moreover, Tillich and Rosenzweig were deeply engaged with visual art. The aesthetic experience of looking at and thinking about the pictures of art played a decisive role in how they came to view revealed religion. These philosophical and aesthetic dimensions of their thought are fused to some of the theological questions at the heart of their projects: the possibility of revelation in the modern age, the relationship between religious truth and lived religious existence, the role of traditional religious symbols and myths in modern religious life and thought.

In short, there is renewed interest in points of convergence between religious thought and critical reflection on images. We need not start from scratch. Not only do there exist resources in image theory, visual studies, art history, anthropology, but the history of modern theology itself contains rich seems of thought on the question of pictures. Thus, I take Mitchell's "pictorial turn" as a call to turn *back* to the sources of modern theology, to see where and how speculative religious thought in the twentieth century has *already* been turning toward the question of pictures, even if somewhat unwittingly and a with a good of that "friction" and "discomfort" that Mitchell diagnoses in his late-modern contemporaries.

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[17] Melissa Raphael, *Judaism and the Visual Image: A Jewish Theology of Art* (New York: Continuum, 2009).
[18] Claudia Welz, *Humanity in God's Image: An Interdisciplinary Exploration* (Oxford University Press, 2016).

This look backward points to another, historical aspect of the "pictorial turn." More than advancing an agenda for the contemporary humanities, Mitchell's "pictorial turn" tells a story about the intellectual history of twentieth-century modern thought. At some point in the not too distant past, Mitchell suggests, the picture began to slowly emerge "as a central topic of discussion in the same in the way that language did: that is, as a kind of model or figure for other things (including figuration itself), and as an unsolved problem."[19] In gesturing to language, Mitchell is here deliberately invoking Richard Rorty's notion of a "linguistic turn" and the intellectual history presumed by *that* idea. Rorty proposed that while ancient philosophy had been concerned primarily with "things" and modern philosophy with "ideas," contemporary philosophy, since Wittgenstein, has been concerned mainly with words.

As far as Rorty is concerned, this is exactly how it should be. Wittgenstein taught us that the aim of philosophy is to get clear about our language. For Rorty, the major obstacle to this goal are the visual and pictorial figures that philosophy has become accustomed to using when thinking and talking about objects and ideas. This is what Rorty takes from Wittgenstein's oracle: "A *picture* held us captive. And we could not get outside it, for it lay in our language and our language seemed to repeat it to us inexorably."[20] Especially detrimental, for Rorty, is the habit of thinking of an idea as a mental image or representation whose truth depends on its correspondence to some natural reality independent of mind and culture. Thus Rorty determines "to get the visual, and in particular the mirroring, metaphor out of our speech altogether."[21] The task of

[19] Mitchell, "Pictorial Turn," 13.
[20] Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (Oxford: Blackwell, 1997), 48e.
[21] Richard Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirror of Nature* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981), 371.

philosophy after Wittgenstein, Rorty insists, must no longer be to polish the mirror of the mind, but to clarify our relationship to language and the linguistically meaningful world. Historically, philosophy in the twentieth century seems to have taken Wittgenstein's cue. Whether analytical philosophy's ordinary-language analysis or Heidegger's ontological theory of poetry, whether Saussure's or Peirce's semiotics of language, or Derrida's deconstruction of the signifying text – the story of twentieth-century philosophy is a story about language.

Mitchell has a different interpretation of Wittgenstein and, on its heels, a different story to tell about late modern thought. "Above all, I would locate the philosophical enactment of the pictorial turn in the thought of Ludwig Wittgenstein, particularly in the apparent paradox of a philosophical career that began with a 'picture theory' of meaning and ended with the appearance of a kind of iconoclasm."[22] The "picture theory" of meaning that Wittgenstein lays out in the *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* is precisely the view that Rorty (and the majority of Wittgenstein scholars) take Wittgenstein to be disavowing in the later *Philosophical Investigations* (where we find "a picture held us captive…"). Mitchell, by contrast, joins the minority, finding consistency between Wittgenstein's early and later views. On Mitchell's reading, Wittgenstein's late protests against pictorial language are attempts to prevent misunderstandings of what he *really* meant by the pictorial nature of meaningfulness in the first place. Rorty is correct that Wittgenstein wants to rid us of the idea of the idea as a mental image. However, for Mitchell, this critique is precisely what his picture theory intends to convey. By "picture," Wittgenstein consistently meant not a private mental image, but the projection of a public "state of affairs." The sense of our language depends upon a presumed state of affairs,

[22] Mitchell, "Pictorial Turn," 12.

pictorially projected by our verbal expressions.[23] It is true that Wittgenstein loses faith in the idiom of the picture in communicating this point about the pictorial nature of meaning (although without abandoning his "picture this" style of argument), however, for Mitchell, this only indicates Wittgenstein's extreme vexation about the question of pictures, an indication of the picture's anxiety-provoking repression.

Of course, what is represented is never absent. As Mitchell observes, the picture has surfaced again and again in the linguistic paradigms of late-modern theory, e.g., Derrida's "grammatology" shifts emphasis from a "phonocentric" model of language to a graphic one grounded in the visible traces of writing; Foucault's discourse analysis turns upon a distinction between the discursive and the visible; Peirce's semiotics subordinates the icon to the verbal sign, but does not presume that language is paradigmatic for meaning.[24] In short, the intellectual history of the twentieth century can be narrated as the story of the picture's repression and return.

How might this re-picturing of western intellectual history alter our view of religious thought in the twentieth century? With regard to the present study, might we speak of a "pictorial turn" occurring in modern religious thought? Even more specifically, a "pictorial turn" in German religious thought in 1920s and 30s? This may be a surprising way to characterize a period that is often remembered for its emphasis on the word and spoken language, not images. It may seem that there is more evidence for a "linguistic turn" in theology and religious in this periods: Karl Barth's iconoclastic concentration on the Word of God, Martin Buber's dialogical philosophy, and Rosenzweig's own "speech-thinking," Yet, within and alongside this turn to the word, we

[23] W. J. T. Mitchell, "Wittgenstein's Imagery and What It Tells Us," *New Literary History* 19, no. 2 (1988): 361–70.
[24] Mitchell, "Pictorial Turn," 12.

may also perceive a turn to the picture. The two are not mutually exclusive, but may coinhere, each in the other.

The examples already drawn from Rosenzweig's and Tillich's texts indicate the prominence of pictures in their ways of thinking. This is not the extent of the evidence. "(T)oday we are well on the way to an understanding of one thing of which the nineteenth century had not even a presentiment – that the symbol, the myth and the image are of the very substance of the spiritual life."[25] These are the words of Mircea Eliade, written in 1952. Behind them stand the neo-Kantian philosophies that, in the 1910s and 20s, refigured spirit in symbolic form. "Symbolic thinking…comes before language and discursive reason," Eliade continues, expressing a basically neo-Kantian view.[26] Under the aegis of the symbol, picture-thinking, ever penultimate in Hegel's idealism, assumed a new kind of ultimacy. "Beside and above the world of perception," writes Ernst Cassirer in his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, "all the spheres [of cultural activity] produce freely their own image-world [*Bildwelt*] which is the true vehicle of their immanent development – a world whose inner quality is still wholly sensory, but which already discloses a formed sensibility, that is to say, a sensibility governed by the spirit."[27] As I will argue, Tillich and Rosenzweig both bend with this symbolic turn in the idealist tradition. The picture-talk we find in their work has deep roots in this neo-Kantian soil, which has even deeper roots in German idealist notions of intuition and the productive imagination. As these philosophical currents cross into modern theological

[25] Mircea Eliade, *Images and Symbols: Studies in Religious Symbolism* (New York: Search, 1961), 11.
[26] Ibid., 12
[27] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, *Vol. 1: Language*, trans. R. Manheim (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 87. Original: Ernst Cassirer, *Philosophie Der Symbolischen Formen, Erster Teil: Der Sprache* (Berlin: Bruno Cassirer, 1923), 19-20.

discourse, might it be warranted to speak of a "modern pictorial turn" in religious thought?

The language of a "turn" should not be made to bear too much weight. It may suggest that the history of ideas moves like a cruise ship over water, making monumental changes in direction, this way and that. Mitchell is aware of this danger. He has qualified that the pictorial "turn" he detects in late modern thought is better understood as a "trope" or a "figure of knowledge."[28] In this sense, a "pictorial turn" describes the phenomenon of the mind turning to the image as a figure for its own activity in structuring knowledge and awareness. Such turns may be detected in a variety of historical and intellectual circumstances. Mitchell even suggests that the biblical Israelites "turning away" (Exodus 32:8) toward the golden calf is evidence an ancient pictorial turn.[29] The concern about idolatry behind the Exodus account is taken as evidence of the "image anxiety" that accompanies every pictorial turn.

Once one starts looking for pictorial turns, it is hard not to find them. Is Neo-Platonism's re-turn to Platonic images and archetypes an instance of another ancient pictorial turn? Perhaps Constantine's turn to "the sign" of the Cross is an expression of image anxiety over the power of pagan imagery? Could not the development of German idealism from Kant to Schelling be narrated as a turning back and forth from the pictures of the mind? Perhaps the neo-Kantians' rejection of "copy" (*Abbild*) theories of knowledge is another expression of image anxiety, one which prefigures Rorty's nervousness regarding picture-talk in modern philosophy?

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[28] Mitchell, "Pictorial versus Iconic Turn: Two Letters" in *The Pictorial Turn*, ed. Neal Curtis (New York: Routledge, 2013), 19.
[29] Mitchell, "Four Fundamental Concepts of Image Science" in *Image Science: Iconology, Visual Culture, and Media Aesthetics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 14.

As far as this study is concerned, Mitchell's "pictorial turn" is most useful as a kind of focal lens. It alerts us to the dialectic of image and word always at work in the making of meaning and knowledge. It challenges the language-bias of much modern philosophy. It makes room for pictures in the stories we tell about modern thought. The aim of this study is to bring this lens to bear on a few issues in modern theology and speculative religious thought.

1.3 State of the Question: Art, Aesthetics, and Epistemology in Tillich and Rosenzweig Scholarship

I am interested in the role of visual-pictorial language and figures of thought in Rosenzweig's and Tillich's work. What philosophical and theological purposes do they serve? In the scholarship on both thinkers, these issues of pictures and visuality have often been approach by way of art and aesthetics. Rosenzweig and Tillich both took art seriously. Both had plenty to say about aesthetic, artistic creation, and the relationship between the realm of art and the realm of religion. In the following chapters I look closely at Tillich's and Rosenzweig's personal and intellectual encounters with art and how these encounters resonate in their philosophies and theologies.

However, I am not primarily concerned with what Tillich and Rosenzweig have to say *about* art. Rather, what primarily interests me is what what they say about art says about *them* – about their patterns of thinking, about their views of religious truth and knowledge. That is, I am interested in their aesthetics as *aesthesis*, as modes of perception, and thus, as inseparable dimensions of their epistemologies and views of cognition. *Aesthesis* and *episteme*, perception and understanding, powerfully converge in these programs of modern religious thought. To look at a picture and to recognize its

content is a form of knowing – taking place in a region somewhere between sensory experience and supersensory idea.

It may be helpful here to give a brief account of how this study came to focus on the unlikely pair of Rosenzweig and Tillich in the first place. It arose from an interest in the aesthetics of early twentieth-century religious thought in the German-speaking world. I was especially interested in points of convergence of between modern religious thought and early modernist art. The theo-philosophical vanguard of that period did not hesitate to draw on the energies of early artistic modernism, especially when assuming a posture of rebellion against the ethos of the nineteenth century and its suddenly obsolescent schools of thought, whether "historicism," "liberal theology," "rationalism," etc. It is not difficult to perceive the spirit of German Expressionism and related artistic movements in the work of Martin Buber, Ernst Bloch, and Karl Barth and others,[30] in addition to Rosenzweig and Tillich.

In this cultural-intellectual stew there is bound to be some degree of osmosis between the aesthetic forms of modern art and the *Denkenformen* of modern religious thought. Zachary Braiterman explores this osmosis in his 2007 book *The Shape of Revelation: Aesthetics and Modern Jewish Thought*.[31] Reading Rosenzweig and Buber alongside the theoretical writings of the artists Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, and Franz Marc, Braiterman reveals "subtle transpositions" between the art and thought of the

[30] Hans Urs von Balthasar famously characterized the second edition of Barth's *Römerbrief* as an instance of "theological expressionism" in *Karl Barth: Darstellung und Deutung seiner Theologie* (Einsiedeln: Johannes Verlag, 1976), 90. For more recent assessments of Expressionism's influence on Barth's early theology see Stephen H. Webb, *Refiguring Theology: The Rhetoric of Karl Barth* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991) and Ian Boyd, *Dogmatics Among the Ruins: Expressionism and the Enlightenment as Contexts for Barth's Theological Development* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004).

[31] Zachary Braiterman, *The Shape of Revelation, Aesthetics and Modern Jewish Thought* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

period. He organizes these transposition along the axes of "form-creation, sheer presence, lyric pathos, rhythmic repetition, open spatial dynamism, and erotic pulse." [32]

This study owes a great debt to Braiterman's work. Initially, I conceived the project as an extension of Braiterman's search for points of transposition between modern art and modern religious thought, an extension that intersected another axis of comparison: between modern Jewish and Christian thought. In some ways, the project has retained this purpose. Rosenzweig's figural imagination captured my own imagination at first sight. Among Christian thinkers of the same era, Tillich was the obvious choice for this kind of comparative project. Unlike many of his contemporaries in Christian thought, Tillich was open to the spirits of modern art. While Barth was busy smashing the idols of cultural Protestantism with the Word of God (to a score by Mozart) and while Rudolph Bultmann saw in art "the temptation of a false transfiguration of the world which distracts the gaze from 'beyond,'"[33] Tillich was drifting through the galleries of Dresden and Berlin, staring in wonder at the pictures made on this side of the beyond. While Barth spared no time for modern artists (upon meeting Hermann Hesse, he was "amazed" only "by the pietistic narrowness with which these artists are apparently mostly concerned with the problem of their private existence"[34]), Tillich was fully, perhaps naïvely, enamored with the persona of the modern artist, the magic aura that the artist carried. During his "bohemian years" in Berlin Tillich frequented galleries and

[32] Braiterman, *The Shape of Revelation,* xvii.
[33] Bultmann's, *Glauben und Verstehen: Gesammelte Aufsätze*, vol. 2 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1975), 137. Cited and translated in Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics,* vol. 4, trans. Brian McNeil, Andrew Louth, John Seward, Rowan Williams, and Oliver Davies (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1989), 27 n. 11. Also cited in David Bentley Hart, *The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2003), 23.
[34] In a letter to Eduard Thurneysen, *Karl Barth – Eduard Thurneysen Briefwechsel: Band 1, 1913-1921,* ed. Eduard Thurneysen (Zürich: Theologischer Verlag, 1973), 29. 497. Cited and translated in Ian Boyd, *Dogmatics Among the Ruins: Expressionism and the Enlightenment as Contexts for Barth's Theological Development* (Bern: Peter Lang, 2004), 148.

soirees, rubbing shoulders with artists and curators. He was known to house starving artists in his apartment. Hannah Werner, Tillich's second spouse, was intimately involved in the world of modernist painting, drawing him further in. Ida Bienert, one of Tillich's students at Dresden, personally introduced him to many of the artists of the period, including Paul Klee (Tillich later recalled the painter's huge eyes).[35]

Rosenzweig, the ever-studious, may not have approved of Tillich's bohemianism. Further, as we shall see, Rosenzweig tended to prefer the classical works of the Renaissance over the new art in the galleries. Nonetheless, Rosenzweig and Tillich shared an immersive interest in the world of art, a lived familiarity with visual art that seeped into their thinking. How do their intellectual imaginations differently manifest the energies of artistic modernism? What do their Christianity and Judaism have to do it?

However, a certain philosophical reservation has kept me from following Braiterman's tack exactly. Braiterman's work is distinguished by its determination to recognize the specifically aesthetic nature of Buber's and Rosenzweig's thought, without subordinating the aesthetic to other concerns. He is no doubt correct that modern religious thought – Christian, Jewish, and otherwise – has suffered from an "exclusive preoccupation with epistemology and ethics" and that these preoccupations have obscured the role of sensation, perception, pictures, and visuality in religious life and reflection.[36] Braiterman's analysis thus veers away from the domain of epistemology and into the open waters of the aesthetic, which undulates with form, feeling, and movement.

However, it is precisely the confluence of aesthetics and epistemology that interests me most about Tillich's and Rosenzweig's thought. Both share in that western

[35] Pauck, *Tillich,* 106-107.
[36] Braiterman, *Shape of Revelation*, xvii.

tradition of ocularcentrism, which elevates sight over the other senses as privileged metaphor for knowledge, and which has come under attack from multiple angles in the late twentieth century.[37] However, for Tillich and Rosenzweig, visual perception seems to be more than a metaphor for some other, more basic process of knowing. Rather, perception itself seems to be knowing, because the truth, for them, must always appear with a figural and perceptible form. As Braiterman acknowledges of Rosenzweig's philosophy: "Truth does not stand over against aesthetics, does not stand like a referent over against the sign that represents it since truth *is* always already an aesthetic figure."[38] Much the same could be said of Tillich's view of truth. Tillich's and Rosenzweig's religious epistemologies deeply resonate with Hans Georg Gadamer's observation that "to perceive something is not to collect together utterly separate sensory impressions, but is rather, as the marvelous German word (*wahrnehmen*) itself says, 'to take something as true.'"[39] Seeing is knowing to be true. This basic equation, so fundamental to the western tradition, undergoes fascinating permutations in Tillich's and Rosenzweig's work.

In Book V of the Republic, Plato defines *episteme* in contrast to *doxa*, i.e., belief or received opinion. A "sight-lover" is one who "believes in beautiful things" (holds *doxa*) but is not capable of grasping the beautiful (or the good or the true) in itself, apart from sensuous forms. By contrast, a "philosopher" "believes in the beautiful itself, can see

[37] See Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994). On the postmodern discourse of the "gaze," see Margaret Olin, "Gaze," in *Critical Terms for Art History,* eds. Robert Nelson and Richard Shiff (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 208-219. For an application of poststructuralist feminist critiques of ocularcentrism and scopophilia to Tillich's thought see Sigridur Gudmarsdottir, *Tillich and the Abyss* (Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2016), 122-128.
[38] Braiterman, *The Shape of Revelation*, 53.
[39] Hans Georg Gadamer, *The Relevance of the Beautiful and Other Essays*, trans. Nicholas Walker (Cambridge University Press, 1986), 29.

both it and the things that participate in it."[40] In Plato's idealism, the mind's eye must transcend all sensory figures, take leave of the world of perception for the heaven of intellectual vision. For Rosenzweig and Tillich, however, the truth bears a sensory shape, a perceptible form. The sight-lover and the philosopher are one. Thus, for them, seeing is more than a convenient metaphor for knowing. Rather, seeing is synonymous with understanding and cognition. That is, the experience and activity of seeing – particularly, the experience and activity of seeing a picture – is essentially congruent with what it means to know the religious truth of the world. Revelation comes to be figured as an event of pictorial perception.

This juncture between knowing and seeing is what principally interests me in this study. Tillich's and Rosenzweig's thinking about art is a point of access to this issue. In addition to Braiterman's work, there exists a great deal of literature devoted to Tillich's and Rosenzweig's thought on art, aesthetics, and images. While providing valuable perspectives of their own, none of these studies thematize the question of aesthetics in Tillich's or Rosenzweig's work quite as I do here: as a question of visual-pictorial perception in relation to matters of religious epistemology.

As has been mentioned, Tillich's interest in art makes him something of an outlier among twentieth-century Protestant thinkers. Tillich regarded himself not only an enthusiast, but a theorist of art, producing numerous essays and speeches on the religious meaning of art throughout his career. Most of these analyses are couched in his "theology of culture," which will be discussed in detail in Chapter Three, and which has the purpose of determining the "religious substance" of various areas of cultural creativity, including

[40] Plato, *Plato: Complete Works*, ed. John M. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997), 476c.

art (alongside politics, morality, science, etc.). Applying this framework to art, Tillich generates numerous typologies of "religious styles."[41] He determines that art can be more or less religious, more or less revelatory of culture's religious depth-content, and decides that all truly religious art is "expressionistic" in essence. Thus, one aspect of Tillich's aesthetics is a method of normative theo-cultural analysis by which Tillich may pass theological judgment on actually-existing artworks and movements in the world of art. Tillich's normative idea of religious art as expressionistic is clearly shaped by the artistic milieu of interwar German culture.

Corollary to these normative views of religious art is the aesthetic quality of Tillich own thinking. It is often noted that Tillich's concepts are themselves figured "expressionistically," e.g. revelation is a "breakthrough," "the demonic" is a "form of anti-form." This expressiveness is rooted in that dialectic of religion and culture, according to which religion pulses deep within culture, awaiting moments of bursting forth. Tillich regards science (*Wissenschaft*), including his own projects in "the cultural science of religion," themselves as expressions of culture. In especially revelatory

[41] Tillich provides multiple, not entirely consistent typologies of "religious styles" over the course of his career. Robert Scharlemann identifies four different typologies in "The Religious Interpretation of Art" in *The Thought of Paul Tillich*, ed. James Luther Adams, Wilhelm Pauck and Roger Lincoln Shinn. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985), 173. re Manning's treatment of Tillich's aesthetics includes a reconstruction of these typologies, which he proposes are roughly consistent with one basic typology:

Type	Religious style	Aesthetic exemplars
Form-dominated, subjective	impressionism	Nineteenth-century Impressionism (Monet, Degas)
Form-dominated, objective	realism	Dutch and German late Gothic/early Renaissance Realism; nineteenth-century Naturalism
Balanced, subjective	idealism	Renaissance Humanism (Raphael, Rubens)
Balanced, objective	classicism	Classicism
Gehalt-dominated, subjective	romanticism	Nineteenth-century Romanticism; twentieth-century Expressionism (?)
Gehalt-dominated, objective	expressionism	Twentieth-century Expressionism (?); twentieth-century Neo-Realism ('die neue Sachlichkeit') (?)

From "Tillich's Theology of Art" in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, Russell Re Manning, ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 160.

moments, the deep religious substance of culture is manifest, paradoxically, through the contradiction of its expressive cultural forms. The depths are brought to the surface through the ruptured form of "breakthrough." Thus, with a kind of performative redundancy, Tillich strives to construct his own concepts and thought-forms as expressive, revelatory vehicles of breakthrough.

All of this has provided Tillich's readers plenty to comment on. A number of studies have provided analyses of Tillich's philosophy or theology of art. The most recent of these is Russell re Manning's *Theology at the End of Culture: Paul Tillich's Theology of Culture and Art* (2005). Prior to re Manning's efforts there appeared Michael Palmer's *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Art* (1984),[42] and Victor Nuovo's important essay "Tillich's Theory of Art and the Possibility of a Theology of Culture" (1986).[43] These studies contain invaluable insights. However, they are all oriented to some manner of recovering Tillich's theology (or philosophy) of art as an applied area of his theology (or philosophy) of culture. Their analyses, thus, tend toward the normative application of Tillich's theory to the world of art, retooling his typologies of art, weighing the strength of his categories against contemporary art, etc. They often discuss the centrality of vision and intuition in Tillich's epistemology, but mostly in passing, as a circumstance of his aesthetics and his religious view of art, not the heart of the matter.

I intend to dwell longer with the category of visual intuition, probing its connection to the perceptual framework through which Tillich views the spiritual forms of culture, and, ultimately, the picture at the center of his early theology: "the picture of

[42] Michael Palmer, *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Art* (Berlin: DeGruyter, 1984).
[43] Victor Nuovo, "Tillich's Theory of Art and the Possibility of a Theology of Culture," in *Religion et Culture: Actes Du Colloque International Du Centenaire Paul Tillich, Universite Laval, Québec 18–22 Aoút 1986*, ed. Michael Despland, Jean-Claude Petit, and Jean Richard (Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval/Éditions du Cerf, 1987).

Christ." I am most interested in the way visual art – Tillich's encounter with art and thinking about art – shapes the method and categories of his early philosophy and theology.

Rosenzweig's aesthetics have received a good deal of scholarly attention in recent years. The renaissance in Rosenzweig studies that took place in the 1990s and early 2000s, discussed in Chapter Two, addressed questions of art, images, and visual representation in Rosenzweig's thought. Braiterman puts Rosenzweig in conversation with early German artistic modernism. Leora Batnitsky addresses the philosophical and theological significance of Rosenzweig's approach to images and visual representation in her *Idolatry and Representation: The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig Reconsidered* (2000). Batnitsky argues that Rosenzweig overturns the aniconic concept of Judaism presumed by the Haskalah tradition of ethical monotheism.[44] In speaking about the existence of the Jewish people as the image of the eternal God, Rosenzweig predicates the philosophical and ethical significance of Judaism on a notion of visual representation, but not the kind of representation that leads to a concept (*Vorstellung*), rather the representation exercised by one who speaks for or takes the place of another (*vertreten*).

This is exactly the type of question that concerns me in this study: what is Rosenzweig's notion of visual representation? How does Rosenzweig conceive the lived religious existence of the Jewish people itself as a form of visual representation, which both witnesses to the eternal in time and, in witnessing, creates a perspective from which the eternal and absolute may be perceived and apprehended? Batnitsky frames these questions philosophically, theologically, and in terms of the image, but does not deeply

[44] Leora Batnitzky, *Idolatry and Representation: The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig Reconsidered* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000). See also idem, "Rosenzweig's Aesthetic Theory and Jewish Unheimlichkeit," *New German Critique* 77 (1999) 87–112.

engage Rosenzweig's own aesthetic experience with the images of art or his formative intellectual encounters with art history and art theory. Braiterman, by contrast, rigorously interrogates the many transpositions between aesthetics and Rosenzweig's modern Jewish thought, but with an aesthetic principle of method that draws his attention away from points of convergence between aesthetics and knowledge. My approach takes something of a middle way, drawing the aesthetic and the epistemic together under the category of the visual-pictorial.

Thus, as with Tillich, my focus falls on questions of perception, vision, and optics in Rosenzweig's work. The issue of vision in Rosenzweig's thinking has been the subject of some perceptive analysis. Elliot Wolfson's *Giving Beyond the Gift: Apophasis and Overcoming Theomania* (2014) includes a long chapter on Rosenzweig's "apophatic vision," in which Wolfson offers a reading of the *Star*'s optical terminology in relation to Rosenzweig's philosophy of truth and knowledge.[45] The work of this dissertation's co-director, Asher Biemann, must also be mentioned. Biemann's *Inventing New Beginnings: On the Idea of Renaissance in Modern Judaism* (2009) calls attention to the visual quality of Rosenzweig's philosophy of history, which, against the grain of Rosenzweig's *prima facie* anti-historicist polemic, seems to repeat historicism's reliance on visual metaphors for historical knowledge.[46] Finally Benjamin Pollock explores Rosenzweig's notion of intuitive seeing, in *Franz Rosenzweig and The Systematic Task of Philosophy*, with

[45] Randi Rashkover, *Revelation and Theopolitics: Barth, Rosenzweig, and the Politics of Praise* (London: T&T Clark, 2005). See also, Wolfson, "Light Does Not Talk But Shines: Apophasis and Vision in Rosenzweig's Theopoetic Temporality" in *New Directions in Jewish Philosophy*, ed. Aaron W. Hughes and Elliot R. Wolfson, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 87-148.
[46] Asher Biemann, *Inventing New Beginnings: On the Idea of Renaissance in Modern Judaism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), esp. 189-192; Biemann, "The 'And' of History: Thinking Side by Side in Rosenzweig's Imagination of Eternity," *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 27, no. 1 (2019): 60–85.

special attention to the function of intuition in the *Star* and its precedents in German idealism.[47]

1.4 Method and Claims

While the chapters at the heart of this study each follow their own paths (described below in the "Roadmap" section of this chapter), the method I employ in both cases is essentially hermeneutic and philosophical. I focus on moments in which the language of vision and picture become decisive in Tillich's and Rosenzweig's programs of thought. I examine their use of terms of such as intuition (*Anschauung*), picture (*Bild*), copy or likeness (*Abbild*), shape (*Gestalt)*, seeing (*Sehen*), and looking (*Schauen*). I aim to bring conceptual clarity to these terms by situating them within Tillich's and Rosenzweig's larger theo-philosophical projects and in relation to relevant ideas in their worlds of thought. I seek to uncover the theological and philosophical purposes served by these visual-pictorial terminologies.

My argument is that, for Tillich and Rosenzweig, revelation takes shape in a distinctively visual-pictorial domain. Further, the knowledge and objectivity of *what* is revealed – the absolute, the eternal, the infinite God – consists in *how* it is revealed, in the medium of revelation, which is, for both, a picture. To put it provocatively, my claim is that both Tillich and Rosenzweig grant Feuerbach his point: religion *is* a phantasmal projection of the human spirit. Religion does, in fact, generate image worlds above the material and empirical world, invested with their own special objectivity. However, Feuerbach was also wrong. It is the wonder (the miracle!) of religion's projected image-

[47] Benjamin Pollock, *Franz Rosenzweig and the Systematic Task of Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) 258-311.

worlds to reveal these contradictions as the paradox at the heart of existence: that the finite may contain the infinite (*finitum capax infiniti*), that the eternal may abide within temporal forms of life. These sublime contradictions are accommodated by the miraculous ability of the picture to make contradictory intuitions possible under its own, singular order of showing.

Rosenzweig's and Tillich's common faith in pictures derives from the magic of the picture to make the irreal and logically impossible real and possible for the eye. For Lambert Wiesing, the image is a "technique for producing a special kind of objectivity; it is not about appearance, but rather about the production of being; with pictures things are fabricated that are – in contrast to normal things – imaginary things, because they are not subject to the laws of physics: for with images, and in fact only with images, a human being can see things and processes that are physically impossible."[48] The image is objective, has a "kind of objectivity," but an objectivity that can neither be explained from its empirical contents alone nor apart from the experience of its perception.

Modernist painting self-consciously exploits this irreal plane of the purely visual image. On this imaginary but objective plane, those visionaries of "the spiritual in art" – Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Kasmir Malevich, Hilma af Klimt – endeavored to depict the invisible in purely visual forms. They appealed to the same pictorial space once unsealed by the Byzantines, who used it similarly: to paint icons of the invisible God. "This new kind of modernist picture, like the Byzantine gold and glass mosaic, comes forward to fill the space between itself and the spectator with its radiance…it uses the

[48] Lambert Wiesing, *The Visibility of the Image: History and Perspectives of Formal Aesthetics*, trans. Nancy Ann Roth (London: Bloomsbury, 2016), xvii.

most self-evidently corporeal means to deny its own corporeality."[49] My claim is that Rosenzweig's and Tillich's revelatory pictures – the "real picture of Christ," the "still and silent image" of the eternal – occupy the same radiant space, the plane between the corporeal and incorporeal, where the picture holds itself out into its own region of objectivity.

More than this convergence between the pictorial domain of revelation and the picture plane of the modernist painting, I am interested in the philosophical and epistemological issues involved in predicating the knowledge of revelation – indeed, entire revealed "worlds" or "dimensions" of reality – on acts of visual-pictorial perception. In contemporary image theory and visual studies, "visuality" and "pictoriality" are terms of art (the pun is appropriate, but not intended). However, what these terms name is no recent invention. They are ways of speaking about the imaginary and symbolic processes of cognition that have long preoccupied the modern mind. Following Ernst Cassirer – Hermann Cohen's heir to Marburg neo-Kantianism, Rosenzweig's rival, and one of this dissertation's regular interlocutors – Whitney Davis defines visuality as "the symbolic form of visual experience."[50] For Cassirer, a "symbolic form'" means "that energy of spirit through which a spiritual meaning-import is linked to a concrete sensual sign and inwardly dedicated to this sign."[51] Visuality, then, denotes the power of mind and spirit by which visual experience is formed into meaning. It is an act of perception that engenders a meaning, a meaning that carries with it the sensory

[49] Clement Greenberg, "Byzantine Parallels" in *Art and Culture* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1961), 169.
[50] Whitney Davis, "Visuality and Pictoriality" in *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics*, no. 46 (2004), 9.
[51] "Unter einer 'symbolischen Form' soll jede Energie des Geistes verstanden werden, durch welche ein geistiger Bedeutungsgehalt an ein konkretes sinnliches Zeichen geknüpft und diesem Zeichen innerlich zugeeignet wird." Cassirer, "Der Begriff der Symbolischen Form im Aufbau der Geisteswissenschaften" in *Wesen und Kirkung des Symbolbegriffes* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1956), 175.

quality of perceptual experience. Davis further defines visuality as "simply another word for 'the imaging habit of thought' described in Erwin Panofsky iconology."[52] Of course, Panofsky is not the first to suggest that the mind creates pictures to think with. For Aristotle "the soul cannot think without an image,"[53] a principle that becomes fundamental to German idealist epistemology, as detailed in the next chapter.

In this broadly neo-Kantian tradition, we see in pictures. The pictures of the world generated by perception become the matrix through which the world is perceived. Our awareness of the world is always already mediated by the pictures we make of it. "In visuality," therefore, Davis continues, "seeing becomes 'viewing.'"[54] "In visuality, one does not see the world, one sees an image of the world."[55] The meaningful world only becomes recognizable through such images of itself. Rather than a means of cognition, then, it would be better to say that visuality is a means of re-cognition. There could be no "higher" cognition of the meaningful world – i.e., through logic or concepts – without this rendering process of pictorial imagination inherent in every act of intuition. The world must be pictorially redoubled to be recognized. Or, as Rosenzweig says in the *Star*, "only in this re-cognition [*Wiedererkenntnis*] is its cognition [*Erkenntnis*] perfected."[56] Pictorial art is one way of redoubling the perceived world. Dreaming is another. Religion yet another.

The benefit of the discourse of "visuality" and "pictoriality" is its conceptual range. It opens the question of the image – its ontological and cognitive status – to philosophy's adjacent discourses, especially art history. Art historians have a great deal to

[52] Davis, "Visuality," 9.
[53] Aristotle, *De Anima*, III, 7, 431a, 14-17.
[54] Davis, "Visuality," 9.
[55] Ibid.
[56] *Star*, 441; *Stern*, 465.

say about the role of pictures in forming our perception, knowledge, and understanding of the world. It makes sense to look for points where philosophy and art theory converge on the visual and pictorial. Further, so far as theology and speculative religious thought predicates its view of religious truth and knowledge on that picturing habit of mind (with which the philosophers have so often associated religion), it also makes sense to seek points of convergence between theology and art theory. That is my aim in putting modern art theory in conversation with Tillich's and Rosenzweig's modern religious thought.

In approaching this confluence of seeing and knowing in Tillich's and Rosenzweig's thought, I find a valuable interlocutor in their mutual contemporary, the Swiss art historian, Heinrich Wölfflin. Wölfflin will be introduced briefly in Chapter Three and in detail in Chapter Four. He bears a biographical connection to Rosenzweig, only an intellectual affinity with Tillich. Wölfflin's relevance to this study lies in his neo-Kantian theory of aesthetics as a mode of perception, and thus a mode of knowing. For Wölfflin, a picture contains its maker's form of seeing (*Sehenform*) or mode of perceiving the world. A "form of seeing," for Wölfflin, is a manner of making the world visible to the eye, a mode of actively configuring the world in vision. Seeing is thus inseparable from sensory perception. However, a "form of seeing" also contains a kind of relational logic – an episteme – through which the eye actively organizes the visible world in perception. In making the world visible, then, the eye simultaneously renders the world intelligible, meaningful. I argue that comparable, neo-Kantian ideas surface in Tillich's and Rosenzweig's use of visual-pictorial language.

My claim is that, for Rosenzweig and Tillich, revelation is a visual-pictorial act. This means that the eye must create for itself the images in which it beholds the content and truth of revelation. "In what we call the objective reality of things we are confronted with a world of self-created signs and pictures," writes Cassirer.[57] So too in what Tillich and Rosenzweig call the revealed reality of things. In visuality, there is no stable external world outside the world that is pictured. However, this does not necessarily mean there is no way to an objective "beyond" from within it. It will be argued that Tillich and Rosenzweig conceive the objectivity of revelation within this cycling movement of visual-pictorial intuition.

The great paradox of revelation – its mystery and miracle – is that among the self-created pictures in which Rosenzweig and Tillich see there is One picture that holds the power to picture the world with absolute objectivity, i.e. with an objectivity that originates beyond the self's finite and relative vantage point. Such are Tillich's "real picture of Christ" and Rosenzweig's Star of Redemption. Such pictures must yet be fabricated by the eye, i.e., creatively constructed in vision. They must be visualized by a finite someone occupying a particular place in the world. However, by some miracle, the picture endows this someone with a way of seeing that originates in an absolute beyond the self. In visualizing and beholding such a picture, the recipient of revelation is given to see with this absolute kind of vision, with an Eye beyond the "I."

[57] "Eine Welt selbstgeschaffener Zeichen und Bilder tritt dem, was wir die objektive Wirklichkeit der Dinge nennen, gegenüber und behauptet sich gegen sie in selbständiger Fülle und ursprünglicher Kraft." Cassirer, "Der Begriff der Symbolischen Form," 176.

1.5 Dissertation Roadmap

In the next chapter, Chapter Two, I provide a comparative introduction to Tillich and Rosenzweig as thinkers. This comparative treatment is important for two reasons. First, I hope it is valuable in itself. Nowhere have Tillich and Rosenzweig been discussed side by side, as far as I know. Rosenzweig has been put in conversation with Levinas, Heidegger, Weber, Benjamin, Barth,[58] but never Tillich. Tillich has been put in conversation with Barth, Rahner, the Frankfurt School, and many others, but never Rosenzweig. The pairing may provide fresh perspectives on these well-studied figures and their shared moment in intellectual history.

Second, in this dissertation I wish to show that Tillich and Rosenzweig hold many views in common regarding intuition, pictures, and religious knowledge. These commonalities are due, in large part, to their belonging to some shared traditions of thought. It will be helpful bring these points of overlap and divergence to light. I do so by positioning Tillich and Rosenzweig vis-à-vis some of the major intellectual movements of their day, namely, the "crisis of historicism," the rival of idealism, and neo-Kantianism.

In Chapter Three, I turn to Paul Tillich's early philosophy of religion and dogmatic theology. I focus on his notion of revelation as developed across his "cultural science of religion," which includes both a philosophy of religion and an agenda for Christian theology. I argue that Tillich's idea of revelation as "breakthrough" is itself an *image*, a pictorial form derived, in large part, from his encounter with modern art. I

[58] Among this literature, Randi Rashkover's *Revelation and Theopolitics: Barth, Rosenzweig, and the Politics of Praise* (London: T&T Clark, 2005) may be the closest analogue to this study in terms of comparative framing. Further, as we shall see in Chapter Five, Rashkover's concerns converge with mine with regard to themes of witnessing and testimony.

pursue this argument through close analysis of the theo-philosophical method developed in Tillich's German period work. I pay special attention to the category of perception in Tillich's thinking about meaning. For Tillich, I demonstrate, all knowledge of meaningful reality is established on an act of perceptual intention, carried out by the knowing subject. Perception is a world-constituting act. Tillich repeatedly draws an analogy to the notion of artistic style in expounding this view of perception. Thus, I conclude that the category of style is decisive in *both* Tillich's view of art and his general epistemology.

I suggest that an important precedent for Tillich's understanding of style can be found in Wölfflin's idea of style as a form of presentation (*Darstellungsform*). Revelation, for Tillich, is more than an event in which reality's "deep" significance bursts forth. This event of disclosure presumes a holistic paradigm of world perception. That is, revelation is a paradoxical "style" of intending and intuiting reality as a meaningful whole (paradoxical because the intention comes from beyond the intending self; the revealed world is "ecstatically" intended). Lastly, I bring this analysis to bear on Tillich early dogmatics and the figure at its center, the "*Christusbild."*

In conclusion to this chapter, I relate Tillich's epistemology to Susanne Langer's notion of a presentational symbol. I consider some concerns that result from the presentational nature of Tillich's religious epistemology. Specifically, I consider the objection that, if the truth-content of revelation can only be grasped and affirmed within its own presentational form, i.e., the perceptual whole by which it appears, then it cannot be affirmed in any other way and may, therefore, affirm nothing at all. I return to this problem of affirmation again in conclusion to Chapter Four.

Chapter Four turns to Rosenzweig. I approach the visual-pictorial dimensions of the *Star* somewhat obliquely, by consideration of the intellectual confluence between Rosenzweig and Wölfflin, Rosenzweig's former teacher in art history. This comparative treatment is divided into three major categories: history, aesthetics, and optics. I show that Rosenzweig's derives his early view of history in part from Wölfflin's approach to the history of style. I show how Rosenzweig transposes Wölfflin's dialectic of classical and baroque style into the aesthetics of the *Star.* My analysis of the *Star*'s optical terminology focuses on the role of intuition (*Anschauung*) in Part Three of the *Star*, as a means of configuring and perceiving "the All."

Noting resonances with idealist notions of intellectual intuition, I argue that Rosenzweig's use of intuition must also be understood in light of Wölfflin's seeing-forms (*Sehenform*), or what Wölfflin also calls "forms of intuition" (*Anschauungsformen*). For Wölfflin, an artist's form of intuition is manifest in an artwork's style of depiction. It is derivatively related to the collective world-view (*Weltanschauung*) of the artist's national people. I argue that Rosenzweig conceives Judaism and Christianity as Wölfflinian "forms of seeing." That is, for Rosenzweig, Judaism and Christianity are collective forms of life with differing modes of spiritual perception, and thus different manners of visualizing and intuiting the eternal. Noting the neo-Kantian undercurrents of Wölfflin's and Rosenzweig's convergent understandings of intuition, I explore a some further points of convergence between Rosenzweig's philosophy of Judaism and Ernst Cassirer's philosophy of religion.

In conclusion to this chapter, I consider some concerns related to those treated in conclusion to Chapter Three. Has Rosenzweig's visual-pictorial presentation of

revelation resulted in the "hermeneuticization" or "metaphorization" of the divine object that revelation is said to disclose? Does it result in the same inability to affirm the objectivity, reality, or being of the revealed God? Further, does the phantasmic fusion of objectivity and semblance in Rosenzweig's highest vision of the truth effectively place him back in the grips of Feuerbach's critique, that the objectivity of God is but a projection of the human? I leave these questions on the table, while arguing that, whatever the reply, the hermeneuticization of revelation that takes place in the *Star* is of a *pictorial* sort, not a linguistic one. Revelation, for Rosenzweig, must ultimately be understood on the logical order of the picture, rather than the metaphor or the poem.

Chapter Five recapitulates the arguments of Chapters Three and Four. It re-views the diptych given in miniature in this Introduction. It explores points of commonality, contrast, and displacement between Tillich's and Rosenzweig's theo-philosophical accounts of revealed religion. I return to problems of affirmation and objectivity, raised in the conclusions to previous two chapters, now entertaining the problem in terms of the picture's "presence." Do pictures in general, and these pictures of revelation in particular, mediate the real presence of what they depict or do they only reflect projections of the viewing self? I argue that little can be decided on this basis of this choice between presence or projection.

Turning attention away from presence, away from the *what* of these pictures and back to the *how*, I suggest that their interest and objectivity rests entirely in the act of looking by which they are visualized and beheld. A way of looking at revelation serves as its verifying act, I argue, but if and only if the looking involves the whole body of the beholder. The whole eye must be made to correspond to the wholeness of the picture it

beholds, and the wholeness of vision involves the body. Eyes do not see. Whole bodies do. On this principle, I suggest that the truth in these pictures of revelation can only be verified, if at all, by the wholly embodied, ethical and social witness of the religious forms of life that project them in the first place (Tillich's Christian community in culture, Rosenzweig's eternal Jewish people).

In these explorations, my aim is simply to see these two thinkers seeing, to picture them picturing, and to show – if only in words – how they see in pictures

CHAPTER TWO

TILLICH AND ROSENZWEIG: A COMPARATIVE VIEW

"For some years certain imaginative worlds constituted true reality for me…At the end of that period the romantic imagination was ultimately transmuted into the philosophical imagination, which ever since has stayed by me, for good and ill."
– Paul Tillich, "On the Boundary

"I felt a horror of myself…I remember how sinister [was] my insatiable hunger for "forms" [*Gestalten*] – a hunger without goal or meaning, driven on solely by its own momentum."
– Franz Rosenzweig, Letter to Friedrich Meinecke[59]

Chapter Two Contents

Before turning to the analysis of Tillich's and Rosenzweig's texts, it will be helpful to provide a brief introduction to their lives and thought. In what follows, I show that Tillich and Rosenzweig respond to many of the same challenges posed to speculative religious thought by modern notions of reason, history, and science. In doing so, they both position themselves as members of a theological vanguard determined to reinvent religious thought for a new epoch. In crafting these avant-garde programs of thought, they both draw heavily on romantic-idealist epistemologies that privilege intuition and aesthetic experience, while appropriating these elements of idealism through a neo-

[59] Dated August 30, 1920. Translated in Glatzer's *Franz Rosenzweig: His Life and Thought* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998), 95.

Kantian lens. These comparative observations provide a general introduction to Tillich's and Rosenzweig's thought, while continuing to establish the perspective of this study.

2.1 Two Lives: Biographical Sketches [60]

Paul Tillich was born in 1886 in Starzeddel, in present day Poland. His father, Johannes – the music-lover – was a Lutheran minister. Tillich was raised under the credo of the Lutheran church and the ideology of the Prussian middle class. He studied philosophy and theology in preparation for ministry, at Tübingen, then Berlin, then Halle, where he studied with Martin Kähler and Fritz Medicus. He received doctorates in theology and philosophy with a pair of dissertations on Schelling. He was ordained in the Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Prussian Union. Upon the outbreak of the war in 1914, he enthusiastically volunteered as an army chaplain and served on the western front until 1918. His experience of the war caused him repeated nervous breakdowns, bringing an abrupt end to the bourgeois tranquility of his young adulthood. After the war Tillich was appointed *Privatdozent* at the University of Berlin. He embraced the Babylon of Berlin in the 1920s, its whirlwind of art, culture, and sexual freedom. He wrote prolifically, publishing fifteen books and dozens of articles between 1918 and 1933, the date of his emigration to the United States.[61] The majority of his published work during this time addressed the place of theology within the modern sciences as well as a variety of social and political problems. Tillich lectured in philosophy and theology at Berlin, Marburg (where his colleagues included Heidegger and Bultmann), Dresden, Leipzig and Frankfurt (where Max Horkheimer was his colleague and Theodore Adorno his student).

[60] These sketches are informed by the Paucks' biography of Tillich and Glatzer's *Franz Rosenzweig*.
[61] James Luther Adams provides a complete bibliography of this period in *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science, and Religion* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 280-293.

In his personal and public politics, Tillich espoused religious socialism. He detested Hitler and National Socialism. However, he was no exception to the rule, in that, like most German intellectuals of the period, he regarded Nazism as grotesque comedy and no real threat to German democracy. He was reluctant to speak out consistently against the Nazis. Finally, pressed by Adorno, Tillich published *The Socialist Decision*, denouncing German nationalism and propounding a socialist vision oriented to a principle of "prophetic expectation." The book was published in late 1932, just months before Hitler took power. The book was promptly banned. It had come too late to have any meaningful effect. Tillich himself was blacklisted and removed from his university post (by that time at Frankfurt) and began looking for a path out of Germany. In 1933, at the behest of Reinhold Niebuhr, Union Theological Seminary in New York offered Tillich a lectureship, which soon turned into a chair in philosophical theology. Tillich made the United States home for the remainder of his life, teaching at Union, Harvard, and the University of Chicago. Between 1951 and 1964, he completed one of the twentieth century's landmark theological works, his three-volume *Systematic Theology.* He also published a number of popular books on religion and faith in modern life. By 1959, his public image was fit for the cover of Time Magazine, where he was depicted in existential contemplation of a human skull.

Tillich understood his own life and thought to exist "on the boundary" between a variety of categories – between theology and philosophy, church and society, religion and culture, home and alien land, reality and imagination. The figure of the boundary can be extended further: Tillich was both a daring explorer in speculative thought, open to the strange new spirits of modern culture, and a rather traditional German intellectual,

playing the role of the Herr Professor with gusto, never straying too far from his father's Prussian sense of decorum, and maintaining a lifelong veneration of Luther, Goethe, and the romantic poets. By temperament, he was both warm and aloof. He was generous and patient with his students, but jealously prideful of his ideas and controlling of his image.

Tillich's intellectual legacy also rests on a boundary: between prominence and obscurity. With his *Systematic Theology*, Tillich established himself as the twentieth century's most prominent voice in liberal protestant theology. He cultivated a wide circle of disciples in the United States. His thought has had profound effects on theology, religious studies, and philosophy of religion in the English-speaking world. However, it never generated a school comparable to Barthianism and his "Christian existentialism" quickly became outmoded. As one contemporary theologian has put it, Tillich is now often perceived as "a rather embarrassing old classmate" preoccupied with "questions of meaning."[62] In recent decades there has been little new work on Tillich in English, however his thought is currently enjoying a small revival.[63]

Franz Rosenzweig was born in Kassel, also in 1886, to a minimally observant Jewish family. His early upbringing and education was largely secular. Like Tillich, he cultivated taste in German art, poetry, and music; he was confident in the German institutions of *Bildung* and the Enlightenment agenda of progress. Like many Jewish students of the time, he began his university education in medicine. However, while Tillich threw himself into student life and fraternities, Rosenzweig kept his distance,

[62] Katherine Sonderegger, *Systematic Theology, Volume 2: The Doctrine of the Holy Trinity: Processions and Persons* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2020), 153.
[63] Notable recent studies of Tillich's thought include Russell Re Manning, *Theology at the End of Culture: Paul Tillich's Theology of Culture and Art* (Leuven: Peeters, 2005), Sigridur Gudmarsdottir, *Tillich and the Abyss* (Basingstoke: Palgrave-Macmillan, 2016), and Wagoner, Bryan L., *Prophetic Interruptions: Critical Theory, Emancipation, and Religion in Paul Tillich, Theodor Adorno, and Max Horkheimer (1929-1944)* (Macon, Ga.: Mercer Press, 2017).

reflecting that "I suppose I really am a doddering old man of eighteen, blasé to what gives the 'student' pleasure."[64] Losing interest in medicine as an occupation, Rosenzweig turned to the study of philosophy and history, moving from Munich to Freiburg, a center of the burgeoning southwest school of neo-Kantianism. There he studied philosophy with Heinrich Rickert and Jonas Cohn and history with Friedrich Meinecke. In 1912 he received his doctorate with a thesis on Hegel's theory of the state.

Perhaps more influential than these teachers, however, was the close circle of friends with whom Rosenzweig shared intimate conversation while a student, the so-called Patmos Group. This circle included his cousins Hans and Rudolph Ehrenberg and Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy. With them Rosenzweig discussed questions of God, spirit, and personality. They yearned for a sweeping revival of spirit that would heal the contradictions of modern life, i.e., contradictions between passion and reason, the personal and the scientific, the creative and the objective. The Ehrenbergs and Rosenstock, all of Jewish ancestry, found this vision embodied in a this-worldly vision of Christianity (not unlikely Tillich's) and converted. As a result of these conversations, Rosenzweig, too, decided to convert. But he resolved to do so only by way of an initial recommitment to Judaism. However, after the experience of a Yom Kippur service in Berlin in 1913 he famously vowed "to remain a Jew." He threw himself into Jewish education, enrolling at the Berlin Hochschule für die Wissenschaft des Judentems, where he took courses with Hermann Cohen, the founder of Marburg neo-Kantianism, now in the twilight of his career and in the process of articulating his philosophy of Judaism (to be published in 1919 as *The Religion of Reason, Out of The Sources of Judaism*). In Cohen, Rosenzweig recognized, for the first time, a philosopher who was also a living

[64] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig*, 3.

human being. “The thing that, disenchanted with the present, I had long searched for only in the writings of the great dead – the strict scholarly spirit hovering over the deep of an inchoate, chaotically teeming reality – I now saw face to face in the living flesh.”[65] In other words, Rosenzweig perceived in Cohen a living correlation between the spirit of philosophy and the person of the philosopher (and the unifying figure of “correlation” was to be Rosenzweig’s major appropriation from Cohen’s idealism).

Having returned to Judaism and discovered his philosophical master in Cohen, Rosenzweig made his own way to the war. Like Tillich, he enthusiastically volunteered and was stationed in the Balkans. In this post he found a remarkable amount of time for writing and reading, requesting more and more books in letters home to his mother. Encountering eastern European Jewry, Rosenzweig discovered a form of devotion unknown to him in the west. In August of 1918, he began to compose what would become his masterpiece, *The Star of Redemption*, on postcards home to his mother. He completed the book only a few months later. The book was well received, although due to its difficulty, rarely read in full by Rosenzweig’s contemporaries. On the merits of the *Star*, Rosenzweig’s former history professor Friedrich Meinecke offered him a chair in philosophy, an opportunity that was at the time still rarely extended to unbaptized Jews. Rosenzweig declined the offer. His own philosophy was built on a repudiation of the western philosophical tradition, almost in total (“from Ionia to Jena”). In his letters, Rosenzweig ridicules the professional persona (the same persona that Tillich so lustily embraced). He could not play the professor himself. Further, he had come to prioritize the task of Jewish education over all, including the university and his own philosophical work.

[65] Glatzer, *Franz Rosenzweig*, 29.

Rosenzweig devoted his teaching career to the *freies jüdisches Lehrhaus* in Frankfurt. He never published another philosophical work. In the last years of his short life, Rosenzweig devoted his scholarly efforts to projects of translation. He translated the poems of the twelfth-century Spanish Jewish poet and philosopher Judah Halevi. He took on the monumental task of a modern Bible translation in collaboration with Martin Buber. Their aim in this translation was to capture in German the spirit of scriptural Hebrew, against the grain of Luther's German. In 1922 Rosenzweig was diagnosed with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis. In the following years, he was to rely heavily on his wife and caretakers to keep up with his rigorous schedule of scholarly activity. He died in 1929 at the age of 42.

Rosenzweig's personality was as brilliant, complex, and at times unwelcoming as the prose of his book. The mood of Rosenzweig's thought has been described as "dark-bright and arrogant."[66] His fiery confidence is accompanied by a beatific aura that has glowed around his image almost from the moment of his death. Early studies tended toward hagiography. The 1990s and 2000s saw a revival in Rosenzweig scholarship that produced a truly kaleidoscopic reappraisal of his thought.[67]

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[66] Braiterman, *Shape of Revelation*, 47.

[67] For instance, Robert Gibbs reads Rosenzweig as a forerunner of postmodernist thought, see *Correlations in Rosenzweig and Levinas* (Princeton University Press, 1994), Leora Batnitzky aligns Rosenzweig with post-liberal theology, see *Idolatry and Representation: The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig Reconsidered* (Princeton University Press, 2000), Peter Eli Gordon illuminates the many points of correspondence between Rosenzweig and Heidegger's philosophy in *Rosenzweig and Heidegger: Between Judaism and German Philosophy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), while Benjamin Pollock reads Rosenzweig as a philosopher in the tradition of German idealism in *Franz Rosenzweig and the Systematic Task of Philosophy* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), and Mara Benjamin argues that the key to Rosenzweig's thought is not his philosophy at all, but his approach to translation in *Rosenzweig's Bible* (Cambridge University Press, 2009). Pollock has recently questioned many of the presumptions that have characterized Rosenzweig reception in *Franz Rosenzweig's Conversions* (Bloomington: University of Indiana Press, 2014). Pollock demonstrates that Rosenzweig's early recommitment to Judaism and the body of work that followed was driven by a desire for a this-worldly, historical idea of redemption, rather than an insistence on the truth of revelation over and against modern attitudes regarding reason and history.

Tillich and Rosenzweig never met. There is no evidence that they read each other's work. Only one or two degrees of separation are necessary to discover numerous points of biographical interrelation. The purpose of this study is not to demonstrate directly causal, empirically attested connections between Rosenzweig's and Tillich's ideas. Its purpose is to place them in a shared intellectual context and demonstrate between them certain confluent patterns of thought regarding pictures, perception, and revealed religion.

2.2 Two Visions for Modern Religious Thought

Both Tillich and Rosenzweig believed that their late moment in modernity demanded radical reinventions of religious thought. The civilizational shellshock of the war created a mood of apocalyptic enthusiasm, a sense that the world was being unmade and could be remade anew. The world of art and ideas was characterized by a zeal for beginning again. In this spirit, Tillich and Rosenzweig both determined to re-found religious thought on methods they considered to be genuinely new.

Rosenzweig pioneered what he called the "new thinking," which amounts to a set of philosophical commitments privileging temporality over timelessness, relation over substance, and speech over mathematical logic. He developed these principles collaboratively with the Ehrenbergs and Rosenstock. The *Star* is Rosenzweig's attempt to work out these principles in a system of philosophy. The aim of Rosenzweig's new thinking is to overcome the "old," which, for Rosenzweig, spanned the pre-Socratics to Hegel and the Romantics. Much like Heidegger, Rosenzweig rejects nearly the entire western philosophical tradition on the grounds that it has, from the beginning, presumed a mistaken idea of being. Amongst the ruins of this tradition, Rosenzweig then attempts

(again much like Heidegger) to work out a new philosophy founded the lived experience of finite human existence.[68] At the heart of this philosophy, as systematized in the *Star*, is the event of revelation, in which God addresses the human being in love, as a "thou," awakening the self as soul and imparting consciousness of an "I."

Tillich, too, begins by philosophizing with a hammer, although a much lighter one – a machinist's ballpeen to Rosenzweig's ten pound sledge. Tillich laments the "intolerable gap" that he perceives to have opened between church and society, religion and culture, theology and *Wissenschaft*, over the course of the nineteenth century. As far as Tillich is concerned, Barth's dialectical theology is only shouting into this void, positioning the sovereign God further outside and against modern culture. By contrast, in the tradition of mediating theology, Tillich seeks out a new *rapprochement* between Christian faith and modern culture. His "theology of culture" is one attempt to give this conciliation a basis in thought. "Religion is the substance of culture, culture the form of religion" is its basic idea. Theology is thus positioned to serve as the depth-science of the *Kulturwissenschaften* at large. It is the means of discerning the deep spirits that come to expression in every realm of cultural creativity, including science itself. With this agenda in hand, Tillich publishes the call for a new breed of theologian, at once a seer of cultural spirits and a steward of religious symbols. Tillich dubs this agenda "the theology of culture" in a well-known 1919 address. In other places he gives his vision a more systematic and scientific shape as the "cultural science of religion," which he outlines as a field of the human sciences encompassing philosophy of religion, cultural history of religion, and theology as "the normative science of religion." As Tillich would say, "I am

[68] On the many congruities and affinities between Rosenzweig's and Heidegger's philosophies of time and existence see Gordon, *Rosenzweig and Heidegger.*

a triboro bridge: systematics, philosophy, history."[69]At the center of Tillich's vision for the science of theology is also a notion of revelation: as the act of "breakthrough," in which the substance of being ruptures the surface of things.

Beyond this visionary enthusiasm, Tillich and Rosenzweig take divergent paths in reconceiving theo-philosophical method. In the first place, they take contrasting positions on the disciplinary dispute between theology and philosophy. Tillich's boundary-science of *Kulturtheologie* seeks a more or less irenic mediation between the theology and philosophy. It requires that the modern religious thinker be at once a theologian, engaged with the traditional doctrines and symbols of the church, and "a philosopher of culture," standing in the free-flowing waters of cultural life and discerning the spirits that swim through it. Tillich seeks a both/and between theology and philosophy, eventually taking up the mantel of "philosophical theologian." Rosenzweig, on the other hand, repudiates both theology and philosophy. The first part of the *Star* bears the motto *in philosophos!*, "down with philosophy!," and the second, *in theologos!,* "down with theology!" Rosenzweig thus insists upon a neither/nor. To truly overcome the old thinking, the new thinker must be anti-philosopher and anti-theologian at once. Of course, the third movement of Rosenzweig's dialectic inevitably results in a new synthesis of philosophical an theological thinking, evident in the third and final part of the *Star*.

These divergent approaches to the relationship between theology and philosophy result in divergent attitudes concerning the university and its mission. Tillich aims to establish the theology of culture as *the* anchor discipline of the emerging *Kulturwissenschaften*, and so to save it from relegation to the seminaries. "The normative science of religion cannot be concerned with one object alongside others; it is concerned

[69] As told to Pauck. See Pauck, *Tillich*, 176.

with an intention that is possible within all the areas of meaning. The normative science of religion is the theonomous human science."[70] For its subject matter, then, the theology of culture requires the determinations of the other human sciences – the sciences of art, history, law, ethics, etc. Thus, Tillich puts theology in a codependent relation to the other human sciences. He holds on to the idealist dream of unified system of the sciences housed in the university, while attempting to render theology indispensible to that system.

Rosenzweig, by contrast, conceives the new thinking as a life-encompassing mode of reflection whose method is not the *Wissenschaft* of the modern university but the distinctively Jewish *Lernen* of the *Lehrhaus*. The new thinking thus finds its center of gravity in Rosenzweig's ideas of Jewish life and education. Rosenzweig conceives Judaism as a scientifically unassimilable phenomenon, possessing inward springs of intuitive knowing and intrinsic structures of conceptuality. Rosenzweig's new thinking, then, asserts its independence from the university and its system of sciences.

Yet, despite these important points of contrast, Rosenzweig and Tillich have this in common: both seek to transcend the age-old polemic between Athens and Jerusalem, one by irenic mediation, the other by redoubled polemic. There exists between them a common conviction that neither philosophy nor theology, as these disciplines had come to be structured over the course of modernity, were adequate to the task of thinking religious truth and existence in their shared moment. For Tillich and Rosenzweig, religious existence demands to be thought *religiously* (or, in Rosenzweig's case, it may be better to say that Jewish religious existence demands to be thought *Jewishly*; the *Star*, Rosenzweig famously insisted, was a system of philosophy and not "a Jewish book,"

[70] Paul Tillich, *The System of the Sciences According to Objects and Methods*, trans. Paul Wiebe (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1981), 156.

however, it was a system that had to be "written with Jewish words"[71] – and, I would add, Jewish pictures.) Both seek to re-discipline the speculative religious mind and both in relation a notion of religious existence that exceeds solely theological or philosophical determination. In this light, Tillich and Rosenzweig are thinkers well suited to the nomenclature of the degree program that this dissertation fulfills: modern and contemporary *religious thought*.

A major presumption of this study is that both Tillich's and Rosenzweig's intellectual projects are characterized by a resistance to Enlightenment skepticism regarding revelation. Revelation is the nerve center and lynchpin of each of their systems. Both a philosophical and a theological category, revelation is neither. It is both both/and and neither/nor. Neither content or concept, revelation is a pure act or event – of knowing, thinking, being – that makes all others possible. Rosenzweig and Tillich agree (along with Barth and the theologians of crisis) that this act is not the act of the self-positing ego, but an act that "seizes" or "comes over" the subject from without. That such an act is possible is Rosenzweig's and Tillich's common, counter-Enlightenment conviction. The elaboration of its conditions of possibility and its consequences for life and knowledge is the common task of their programs of religious thought.

2.3 Two Eternities: Responses to the "Crisis Of Historicism"

These efforts to recover revelation face challenges posed by modern science and historical method. Modernity is a crisis for revealed religion.[72] However, it is equally true

[71] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," in *Franz Rosenzweig's "The New Thinking,"* ed. and trans. Alan Udoff and Barbara Galli (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999), 92.
[72] For a broad perspective on modernity as a crisis for Jewish thought see Leo Strauss, *Jewish Philosophy and the Crisis of Modernity: Essays and Lectures in Modern Jewish Thought*, ed. Kenneth Hart Green

that modernity itself has been shaped by its own internal crises. "The modern" has always been a house divided against itself, as much as set against what came before. Tillich and Rosenzweig lived in a moment when the methods of modern science and historical research were themselves called radically into question by the spirits of a new century.

Forefront among these crises of the modern, in Rosenzweig's and Tillich's minds, is the so-called "crisis of historicism."[73] Allen Megill describes the crisis of historicism as "the concern, expressed by many German intellectuals around 1900, with the allegedly damaging effects of an excessive preoccupation with the methods and object of historical research," the most damaging effect being "a relativism destructive of absolute (or at least prevailing) values."[74] The lived crisis of the First World War intensified this attitude. Neither Tillich nor Rosenzweig are one-sided "anti-historicists." However, both lament the loss of absolute truths and values with the advent of historical consciousness. Both are convinced that history alone cannot generate these absolutes for itself, at least not as the nineteenth-century historicist is aware of history.

Like a number of Weimar-era religious thinkers, Tillich and Rosenzweig thus posture themselves against history. They turn toward the eternal as a figure for the

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(Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997). On "crisis theology" in the Weimar period see Peter Gordon Eli, "Weimar theology" in *Weimar Thought: A Contested Legacy*, eds. Peter Eli Gordon and John P. McCormick (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 157-161.

[73] On Rosenzweig and the "Crisis of Historicism" see Paul Mendes-Flohr, "Franz Rosenzweig and the Crisis of Historicism," in *The Philosophy of Franz Rosenzweig*, ed. Paul Mendes-Flohr (Hanover: University Press of New England, 1988), 138–61; Leora Batnitzky, "On the Truth of History or the History of Truth: Rethinking Rosenzweig via Strauss," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 7, no. 3 (2000): 223–51; and Biemann, "The 'And' of History: Thinking Side by Side in Rosenzweig's Imagination of Eternity," *The Journal of Jewish Thought and Philosophy* 27, no. 1 (2019): 60–85. On Tillich and the Crisis of Historicism see Christian Danz, "Tillich's Philosophy" in Russell Re Manning, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich* (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 174-177. For a broader perspective on the connection between the crisis of historicism and the crisis thinking of Troeltsch, Barth, Tillich, and Heidegger see Judith Wolfe, "The Eschatological Turn in German Philosophy," *Modern Theology* 35, no. 1 (2019): 55–70. For a broader perspectives on historicism as a crisis for modern Jewish thought see David Myers, *Resisting History: Historicism & Its Discontents in German-Jewish Thought* (Princeton University Press, 2010).

[74] Allen Megill, "'Why Was There a Crisis of Historicism?,'" *History and Theory* 36, no. 3 (1997): 416.

temporal absolute.[75] For neither does the eternal denote simple timelessness. Rather, for both the eternal is the "fullness of time," an abundance of time that paradoxically exceeds and fulfills time's intrinsic finitude. Rosenzweig and Tillich construe this "fullness of time" in different ways. Tillich conceives it as kairos, "a moment rich in content and significance" and "a moment in which the eternal breaks into the temporal, shaking and transforming it."[76] Tillich thus locates the eternal in the radical presentness of the moment (*Augenblick*).[77] Rosenzweig too appeals to the eternal fullness of the moment, [78] but ultimately predicates his view of eternity on an eschatological look to the future. In other words, Tillich gathers the eternal into the now, while Rosenzweig refers the eternal to the end of time.[79] Rosenzweig holds that this futural eternal may yet be proleptically grasped, so far as the future can be made present in the now (which, for Rosenzweig, is a

[75] As Peter Eli Gordon notes, somewhat too simplistically: "A commonplace of theological discourse is that history serves merely as a theater for the irruption of a non-historical truth. And it turns out that it was precisely this paradox – the relation of the eternal to time – that became one of the key preoccupation of Weimar theology," in "Weimar Theology," 150. Of course, the eternal is not one-sidedly "non-historical," for Tillich and Rosenzweig, but filled with the same time that flows in history. This is true also of the later Barth, in his notion of God's own *Geschichte*. On Barth's later view of history see Paul Dafydd Jones, *The Humanity of Christ: Christology in Karl Barth's Church Dogmatics* (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 188-202.
[76] Tillich, "Kairos" (1922), reprinted in *The Protestant Era*, ed. and trans. James Luther Adams (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 33, 45.
[77] See Tillich's later book, *The Eternal Now* (1963). The prominence of the "eternal moment" in Tillich's thinking can be traced to the influence of Kierkegaard's and Nietzsche's philosophy of time. On Kierkegaard and Nietzsche's concepts of eternity see David J. Kangas, *Kierkegaard's Instant: On Beginnings* (Indiana University Press, 2007) and Karl Löwith, *Nietzsche's Philosophy of the Eternal Recurrence of the Same*, trans. J. Harvey Lomax (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997).
[78] As Wolfson notes regarding the "eternal moment," Rosenzweig's thinking also bears a "conceptual affinity" with Kierkegaard's and Nietzsche's philosophy of time. Wolfson, *Giving Beyond the Gift*, 320, n. 174. Wolfson cites Löwith's early observation of this affinity in "M. Heidegger and F. Rosenzweig or Temporality and Eternity," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research* 3, no. 1 (September 1942): 76-77, and idem, *Nature, History, and Existentialism,: And Other Essays in the Philosophy of History* (Northwestern University Press, 1966), 77-78. Paul Ricoeur also notes the congruity between Rosenzweig's *Augenblick* and Kierkegaard's instant in *Figuring the Sacred: Religion, Narrative and Imagination*, trans. David Pellauer (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 103.
[79] The difference between Tillich's and Rosenzweig's view of the eternal, then, happens to mirror the choice posed by the pithy title of Ted Peter's, "Eschatology: Eternal Now or Cosmic Future," in which he contrasts Tillich's presentist eschatology with Wolfhart Pannenberg's "end-oriented eschatology." Ted Peters, "Eschatology: Eternal Now or Cosmic Future?," *Zygon* 36, no. 2 (2001): 349–56.

function of liturgical worship). For both, revelation means the presence of the eternal to forms of temporal consciousness that somehow exceed the historical.

Rosenzweig presumes this contrast between the historical and the eternal in the 1914 essay "Atheistic Theology." In the nineteenth century, he observes, "there came to us as well [in Jewish theology], just as to Christian theology, an era of flight to detailed historical research."[80] The result of this preoccupation with historical method was that the "idea of nation" was emptied into "idea of the ideal community of mankind," a reduction that paralleled the reduction of Christ "to the notion of the ideal human being" in Christian liberal theology.[81] The problem with such historical reductions is that history cannot provide its own value or validity. The "curse of historicity," for Rosenzweig, is that historical consciousness is perpetually suspended in the ebb and flow of historical change without any absolute orientation. [82] "There is no sense in speaking about rising and falling unless an absolute measure of height stands fast, outside of that which rises and falls."[83] This disorientation manifests in a false relation to the divine. "We see this now in our midst. Instead of trying – in the eternity of the philosophical thought or in the temporality of the historical process – to show the human under the might of the divine, one tries, on the contrary, to understand as a self-projection of the human into the heaven of myth."[84] Redemption from historicity and the atheistic theology it supports demands recognition of "the God to whom the historicity of history is subjugated by His historical

[80] Rosenzweig, "Atheistic Theology" in *Philosophical and Theological Writings*, trans. Paul Franks and Michael Morgan (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2000), 23.
[81] Ibid., 15-16.
[82] Ibid., 24.
[83] Ibid., 23.
[84] Ibid., 17.

deed."[85] In other words, redemption demands revelation, a historical deed with suprahistorical origins.

Rosenzweig's new thinking, at this stage, is formed in recognition of revelation's absolute priority vis-à-vis the temporal process of history. In the *Star,* Rosenzweig will come to imbue revelation and redemption with their own distinctive forms of temporality. Indeed, for the author of the *Star*, the supratemporality of the eternal *needs* the temporal reality of the human world.[86] The eternal God "needs time," Rosenzweig writes in the *Star*, "and not because he needs it, but because human being and the world need it."[87] The time God needs, specifically, is the liturgical time of Jewish and Christian religious existence. Religious time undoes the curse of historicity, not by a simple escape from temporal existence, but by cyclical re-formation of temporal existence – away from the chronological linearity presumed by the historicist. (An irony this study wishes to underscore is that, for Rosenzweig, as these forms of religious liturgical existence succeed in temporalizing the eternal, they produce an awareness of the divine that inevitably replicates that "self-projection of the human into the heaven of myth." The *Star* famously concludes with a vision of a divine/human face emblazoned on the heavenly firmament.)

Tillich's view of the eternal's presence in history stands in marked contrast to Rosenzweig's. Rosenzweig seeks to bring the eternal into history through the cyclical temporal alchemy of the liturgy. By contrast, Tillich premises his interpretation of history on the image of "the line forging ahead and making for a point" and explicitly "against

[85] Ibid., 24.
[86] Rosenzweig's "anti-historicism" may be largely undone with this view of the eternal's temporal fullness. So Biemann argues in "The 'And' of History."
[87] *Star*, 290; *Stern*, 303.

the classical circle that is closed in itself."[88] Rosenzweig's understanding of Judaism's eternal time-consciousness can be seen to retrieve a classical form of cyclical closure (as we will see in considering the classical "style" of redemption in Chapter Four). Tillich finds such classical views of time "alien." He instead places faith in the purely present, punctiliar moment. This is the site of the kairos*,* the fullness of time that dialectically erupts into the *chronos* of history.[89] As we shall see, in the *Star,* Rosenzweig attributes to Christianity something very similar to this kairotic view of history, for which the eternal continually erupts into the temporal line of history in the purely present moment, as history unfolds toward its yet-to-be-fulfilled end.

Tillich's philosophy of history consists in a dialectic of *kairos* and *chronos*, a struggle of eternal point and historical line.[90] By contrast, Rosenzweig aims to bend the line of history into a different shape altogether. Thus, Tillich's critique of historicism is never as strident as Rosenzweig's. However, within this dialectic, Tillich nonetheless posits an absolute contrast between the eternal and the historical. Tillich thus exhibits an obliging, but ultimately critical attitude toward historicism at large.

Tillich's critical ambivalence toward historicism can be glimpsed in his relationship to Ernst Troeltsch. Tillich acknowledges his debt to Troeltsch early on. He dedicates his 1923 book *The System of the Sciences* to Troeltsch, whom he credits with having the provided the book's "spiritual foundations." So closely did Tillich follow Troeltsch on matters of history and science that Meinecke once dubbed him "ein verjüngter

[88] Tillich, "On the Boundary," 5.
[89] Tillich, "Kairos," 33.
[90] To be precise, the dialectic is doubled, operating both horizontally and vertically. In Tillich's formulation: "There is, in the doctrine of the kairos, not only the horizontal dialectic of the historical process but also the vertical dialectic operating between the unconditional and the conditioned." "Kairos," 48.

Troeltsch."[91] On Re Manning's view, Tillich shares with Troeltsch the aim of producing religious norms through historical analyses, a commitment to the possibility of continuous revelation in history, and an attitude toward the history of culture characterized by a sense of "crisis, but not condemnation."[92] Both Tillich and Troeltsch, then, while regarding historicism a problem, remain committed to the historicity of revelation and to critical methods of historical-cultural reconstruction for determining the truth and substance of revelation in the present.

Yet, Tillich desires to push Troeltsch's sense of crisis further. Troeltsch himself staked historical revelation on a moment of crisis. He also figured this crisis much as Tillich would, in terms of "breakthrough."[93] For instance, Troeltsch sought to comprehend the history of Christianity "in such a way as to show that critical historical research proves the person of Jesus to be the bearer of, and point of breakthrough for, the absolute religion."[94] The figure of breakthrough at the heart of Tillich's idea of revelation thus owes a debt to Troeltsch's usage. However, on Tillich's final assessment, Troeltsch failed to give the absolute its critical due. David Myers observes that in anti-historicist circles Troeltsch had come to personify "the historicist debasement of religious faith."[95] Tillich gives voice to this polemical view: "(m)any of us were not satisfied with the way in which Troeltsch tried to overcome historicism. We thought that he himself was still

[91] Reported by Clayton in "Tillich, Troeltsch and the Dialectical Theology" in *Modern Theology* (1988), 232. Cited by Re Manning in *Theology at the End of Culture*, 14.
[92] Re Manning, *Theology at the End of Culture*, 14-18.
[93] Uwe Carsten Scharf notes this commonality in Tillich's and Troeltsch's terminology of breakthrough in *The Paradoxical Breakthrough of Revelation: Interpreting the Divine-Human Interplay in Paul Tillich's Work 1913-1964* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999), 174-175.
[94] Ernst Troeltsch, *The Absoluteness of Christianity and the History of Religions*, trans. David Reid (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1971), 50.
[95] David Myers, *Resisting History*, 98.

under its power."[96] And, most condemningly, Tillich concludes that Troeltsch had "sacrificed the unconditioned to the conditioned."[97] Tillich reflects, in softer tones, the image of Troeltsch as historicizing heretic. Tillich's "cultural science of religion" can be seen as his attempt to succeed where he perceived Troeltsch to have failed: to offer an account of revelation's historicity that does not sacrifice the unconditioned to the conditioned, the eternal to the merely historical.

Thus, Tillich remains committed the historicity and temporality of revelation. Much as Rosenzweig insists that the eternal "needs time," Tillich – following Schelling – is convinced that "the supratemporal act must be realized in the temporal."[98] This means that the eternal cannot become manifest in simple opposition to the temporal world.[99] Rather, for Tillich, the eternal is manifest as the principle or *arche* of history – history's inner, transcendent origin, its "power of beginning." The eternal is "the real possibility, the *dynamic*, the power of a historical reality."[100] The kairos is the moment in which this eternal, inner principle of history becomes visible. However, it is also the struggle of the eternal with, and potentially against, the historical reality through which it is manifest.

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[96] Tillich, *Gesammelte Werke*, bd. 9, (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1967), 527; cited and translated in Re Manning, *Theology at the End of Culture*, 31.
[97] Tillich, "Ernst Troeltsch. Versuch einer geistesgeschichtlichen Würdigung" in *Gesammelte Werke,* Bd. 12, *Begegnungen,* ed. Renate Albrecht (Stuttgart and Frankfurt: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1971) 169; cited in Re Manning, *Theology at the End of Culture*, 32.
[98] Paul Tillich, *The Construction of the History of Religion in Schelling's Positive Philosophy: Its Presuppositions and Principles*, trans. Victor Nuovo (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1974), 145.
[99] Tillich rejects the diastatic opposition between history and the eternal God in Barth's early dialectical theology. Barth's God seems to leave only craters in time where the eternal has been. For Tillich, the eternal is not only God's No to history, but also the underlying Yes on which all finite historical realities rest. See Barth's and Tillich's 1923 exchange on theological dialectics in *Theologische Blätter*, translation found in *The Beginnings of Dialectic Theology*, James M. Robinson ed. (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1968), 133-158. A fair interpretation of Barth's mature dialectics would have to acknowledge the co-presence of God's Yes and God's No, which would entail a positive relation of history to God's eternal being (see Note 18 above). However, at this early stage, Barth was uncompromising in his emphasis on the negativity of God's No and the anti-historical thrust of the eternal.
[100] Tillich, *The Socialist Decision*, trans. Franklin Sherman (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), 9.

Both Rosenzweig and Tillich wed their views of revelation to these projects to recover the eternal. What I would like to underscore in this dissertation is that this sense for the eternal in time is a *visual* sense. "Today a kairos, an epochal moment of history, is *visible*," writes Tillich.[101] The visibility of the kairos, for Tillich, is not figurative. It is a moment of truth that must be *beheld.* "To look at a time thus, means to look at it in its truth. Its truth is its attitude toward the unconditioned, by which it is supported and directed."[102] A kairos appears through the perceptible form of breakthrough, which, as we shall see, is correlated to a certain mode of intuitive knowing. Rosenzweig, too, *sees* the eternal. For him, "the coming redemption is anticipated in eternal forms," i.e. those "gleaming pictures" projected onto heaven by the eyes of the liturgies. For both, the eternal is given to the eye and recognized by its *look*.

2.4 Two Romantic Revivals of Absolute Idealism

In their parallel quests for the absolute, Tillich and Rosenzweig make nonparallel returns to German idealist sources. Fitting with their anti-historicist posture, Rosenzweig and Tillich often echo the anti-modernism of Max Weber, even Oswald Spengler, in lamenting the shadow side of modern thought and culture: relativism, alienation, the instrumentalization of reason.[103] They worry that the positivism and mechanistic materialism of modern science had created a spiritual vacuum that threatened to swallow up the subject receptive to God, spirit, and revelation. In this pessimistic mood, they both

[101] Tillich, "Kairos," 48. My emphasis
[102] Tillich, "Kairos and Logos" in *The Interpretation of History*, 173.
[103] On Tillich's critique of modern reason and culture and his efforts to "redeem modernity" see Wagoner, Bryan L., *Prophetic Interruptions: Critical Theory, Emancipation, and Religion in Paul Tillich, Theodor Adorno, and Max Horkheimer (1929-1944)*, esp. 6-7, 47ff. Regarding Spengler's influence on Rosenzweig, see Ephraim Meir's remarks in "The Unpublished Correspondence between Franz Rosenzweig and Gritli Rosenstock-Huessy on *The Star of Redemption*," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 9 (2002) 31-32.

look backward, toward Jena, for a reinjection of spirit, and long for a cultural and intellectual revival of idealism.

Further, both Rosenzweig and Tillich experienced the modernity in terms of acute contradictions: between history and eternity, between standpoint and normativity, between the radical subjectivity of the individual and the ultimate objectivity of truth. In the face of these contradictions, they seek to recover something of that the great synthesizing power of the classical systems of German idealism. Of course, neither Rosenzweig nor Tillich appropriate any system of classical German idealism uncritically. They cut these idealisms with the iconoclastic views of the late nineteenth century – Nietzsche's perspectivalism and doctrine of creativity, Kierkegaard's radical subjectivism. Yet, ultimately, neither Tillich nor Rosenzweig abandon the late idealist vision of a unified whole in which the subjective and objective are reconciled in the absolute.[104]

The aim of Tillich's "theology of culture" – the reconciliation between religion and culture – rests on such an idealist vision of unifying synthesis. Tillich quite explicitly states that the task of his theology is "to project a normative system of religion from the perspective of a concrete standpoint" and that this goal is "oriented toward Nietzsche's conception of the 'creative' on the soil of Hegel's 'objective-historical spirit.'"[105] Spirit must think from its position in concrete existence, which means, from a perspectival standpoint, and from this concrete standpoint, spirit must creatively produce a normative view of the truth. This is the case for the cultural sciences, whose object is the cultural-

[104] Pollock demonstrates the persistence of this idealist framework in Rosenzweig's system in *Franz Rosenzweig and The Systematic Task of Philosophy*.
[105] Tillich and Nuovo, *Visionary Science: A Translation of Tillich's On The Idea of a Theology of Culture with an Interpretive Essay*, trans. Victor Nuovo (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 21.

spiritual life of meaning. For these cultural sciences, "the standpoint of the systematic thinker belongs to the thing itself."[106] That is, thought itself "is a moment in the history of the development of culture…not only cognizant of culture but also creative of it."[107] The task of Tillich's theology is to correlate the subjective standpoint of the thinker to the objective history of spirit in which the thinker creatively participates. The spirit of Hegel's idealism echoes loudly.

Rosenzweig's relationship to idealism is more fraught. By and large, as Benjamin Pollock has argued, Rosenzweig's project to revitalize modern philosophy is predicated on a return to the beginnings of German idealism. Thus, as Pollock has also shown, the *Star* has the same aim as the great systems of German idealism, namely: "grasping, articulating, and indeed *realizing* truth as the identity and difference of 'All' that is."[108] However, in characteristic fashion, Rosenzweig only assumes for himself this ultimate task of the idealist system through a critical reversal. The *Star* begins from an outright *rejection* of idealism – as the quintessence of the "old thinking" that the "new thinking" strives to overcome – but, only to re-appropriate elements of idealism on Rosenzweig's own terms. Rosenzweig shatter the unified "All" of the idealist system, but only to reconfigure it for himself.

Rosenzweig's critique of idealism begins early in his intellectual development. As a student, Rosenzweig flirted with a philosophical and cultural movement (of the sort that Tillich embraces) to revive Hegelian spirit. In 1910, together with the Ehrenburgs and Rosenstock, he partook in a conference at Baden-Baden whose aim was to found a neo-Hegelian intellectual society. "Contemporary culture would be made the subject of

[106] Tillich, "On the Idea," 19.
[107] Ibid.
[108] Pollock, *Franz Rosenzweig and the Systematic Task of Philosophy*, 5.

contemplation," as Rosenzweig put it.[109] As Paul Mendes-Flohr summarizes, "from the historical perspective and objectivity obtained thereby, the proposed society hoped to forge a new subjectivity, not a mere consciousness of one's own subjectivity (as the nineteenth century sought), but rather a consciousness of the self *qua* subject of the *Zeitgeist*."[110] The society did not come to fruition. Rosenzweig continued work on his dissertation concerning Hegel's philosophy of the state. However, he became increasingly dissatisfied with what he termed Hegel's religious "intellectualism." This disaffection with Hegel eventually led to Rosenzweig's *prima facie* rejection of history's ontological status and the view, represented in the 1914 essay discussed above, that "we see God in every ethical event, but not in one complete whole, not in history."[111] Rosenzweig's willingness in the *Star* to make time a vessel for the eternal may contravene his anti-historicism, but his antipathy for Hegel and his disaffection with the neo-Hegelian *Zeitgeist* of his youth are everywhere present in his own system.

Yet, Rosenzweig's debt to idealism remains. In re-welding his own figure of the All, Rosenzweig thinks much in the patterns of Hegel, while insisting that his own synthesizing dialectics make a radical break from Hegel's dialectics. Despite Rosenzweig's vocal objections to Hegel's tendencies to totalize and abstract from life, the *Star* concludes with its own abstract figure of the whole, floating in a no-where "between life and death."

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[109] From a memorandum entitled "Badener Gesellschaft," cited and translated by Paul Mendes-Flohr, *Divided Passions: Jewish Intellectuals and the Experience of Modernity* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1991), 314.
[110] Ibid.
[111] In a letter to Franz Frank. Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, ed. Edith Rosenzweig (Berlin: Schocken, 1935), 50-52. Cited and translated in Mendes-Flohr, *Divided Passions*, 315.

In short, Rosenzweig's and Tillich's programs of thought everywhere bear the marks of German idealism. However, Schelling's mark is strongest. As legend has it, Tillich purchased the collected works of Schelling at the outset of his university education in a bookstore on Berlin's *Friedrichstrasse.*[112] He kept himself busy with Schelling's philosophy for the remainder of his student days, writing both of his dissertations on Schelling ("The Conception of the History of Religion in Schelling's Positive Philosophy: Its Presuppositions and Principles," 1910, and "Mysticism and Guilt-Consciousness in Schelling's Philosophical Development," 1912). The influence of Schelling on Tillich's thought, both early and late, has been treated in many places.[113] Tillich's understanding of "the unconditioned" (*das Unbedingte*) is drawn straight from Schelling. The conceptual infrastructure of Tillich's early philosophy of religion is a mélange of Schellingian ideas, drawn from all periods of Schelling's career. Thus, while Tillich's Hegelianism is strong, it is mixed with Schelling's critical perspective on Hegel's system, especially Schelling critique of Hegel's rationalism and Schelling's consequent emphasis on the irrationality of existence.

Rosenzweig, too, was profoundly shaped by Schelling's philosophy. Writing to his mother, Rosenzweig declares that "before everything else" he regards Schelling as "his patron saint."[114] Rosenzweig's deep familiarity with Schelling is evident from his first contribution to philosophical scholarship. In 1914 Rosenzweig determined that a fragment attributed to Hegel and containing "the oldest system-program of German

[112] Pauck, *Paul Tillich: His Life and Thought*, 16.
[113] For instance, see Robert P. Scharlemann, "Tillich on Schelling and the Principle of Identity," *The Journal of Religion* 56, no. 1 (1976): 105–12; and Jerome A. Stone, "Tillich and Schelling's Later Philosophy" in *Kairos and Logos: Studies in the Roots and Implications of Tillich's Theology,* ed. John Jesse Carey (Mercer University Press, 1984), 11-44.
[114] Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, 299.

idealism" and "the first systematic attempt of the idealistic movement" was, in fact, written by Schelling, not Hegel. Contemporary scholars remain undecided regarding the fragment's authorship. The larger significance of this episode is that, in Rosenzweig's mind, Schelling came to supplant Hegel as the authentic founder of post-Kantian speculative idealism. If Rosenzweig patterns the *Star* on a system of idealism (as he undoubtedly does), he is likely to have Schelling's system(s) at the front of his mind. Indeed, the *Star* contains multiple Schellingian resonances: Schelling's irrational principle, the eternalism of the *Weltalter*, Schelling's continual struggle with the problem of the system itself.

Three elements of Schelling's absolute idealism are especially significant for my analysis of Rosenzweig's and Tillich's thought. The first is the "objective" view of the absolute that Schelling shares with Hegel (as well as the German romantic poets, Novalis and Hölderlin), and which becomes fundamental to Rosenzweig's and Tillich's philosophical understandings of revelation. As Frederick Beiser has demonstrated, the story of late German idealism can be told as a struggle to overcome subjectivism.[115] All German idealisms presume that knowledge and consciousness rest on a prior unity between the subject and object. For the subjectivism of Kant and Fichte, this subject-object unity resides within the self-consciousness of the transcendental ego. Absolute idealism breaks with this tradition. For Hegel and Schelling, the subject-object unity presumed by reflective consciousness is located beyond the subject, in the "objective" absolute. The absolute is what precedes the dichotomy of subject and object in the subject's experience of consciousness. It is in this sense that Hegel and Schelling turn from a subjective to an "objective" model of idealism. Of course, given its radical

[115] This is the argument of Beiser's *German Idealism* (Harvard University Press, 2009).

antecedence to the subject-object split, the absolute cannot be known "objectively" any more than it can be known "subjectively." Rather the absolute can only be known in and through a complete correspondence to itself in reflective consciousness, in which "the absolute as subject is equal to the absolute as object" (as formulated by Schelling's principle of identity.)

Romantic philosophy thus enacts a displacement of the self-illuminating subject presumed by Kant and Fichte. It thereby also paves the way toward the knowledge of an objective absolute beyond the self. Cia van Woezik has shown how modern theologians received this objective turn in late idealism as philosophical grounds to retrieve a sense of what she calls "God – beyond me."[116] The subject of absolute idealism is thrown back on a ground that radically precedes itself, yet remains immanent to itself as the presupposition of its conscious existence. This means that the subject is inwardly open to the absolute, without presuming itself as its own ground. Van Woezik focuses on the thought Karl Rahner and Dieter Henrich. However, Tillich's and Rosenzweig's views of revelation are shaped by the same forces. For Tillich, the absolute (*das Unbedingte*) is simply the philosophical corollary to God. What religious language names "God" intends, philosophically speaking, the unconditioned. The matter is somewhat more complicated with Rosenzweig. However, the *Star* no doubt presumes a notion of the absolute derived from Schelling and Hegel.[117] What revelation reveals is the absolute

[116] Cia Van Woezik, *God - Beyond Me: From the I's Absolute Ground in Hölderlin and Schelling to a Contemporary Model of a Personal God* (Leiden: Brill, 2010).

[117] On the relation between Rosenzweig's system and absolute idealism see Pollock, *Systematic Task*, 39-42, 66-67. Rosenzweig explicitly disavows the Hegelian presupposition of an ideal unity between reflective subject and the objectively real, i.e., between thought and being. He insists, rather, to think "being before thinking," as that which "does not require thinking in order to be." *Star*, 27; *Stern*, 22. This is part of Rosenzweig's project to comprehend the unity of the All without preemptively collapsing the ontic particularity of things into a merely ideal unity (the mistake of every idealism from Ionia to Jena). Ultimately, what Rosenzweig disavows is the presupposition of any merely *ideal* absolute, i.e. the

immanent to self and world, but immanent only as the ultimate presupposition on which all things depend, rather than the inherent presupposition of an self-sufficient ego.

This objective conception of the absolute leads to the second relevant element of Schelling's idealism. How is the absolute to be known? What is the medium of absolute knowing? At first, it would seem that the absolute could not become an object of consciousness at all. As the ever-prior presupposition of the world we are conscious of, the absolute cannot appear as an object in that world. Thus, as Novalis poetically laments, "Everywhere we seek the *Unbedingte*, but we find only *Dinge*."[118] However, while the romantics wonder at the hiddenness of the absolute, it is not true that, for them, the absolute cannot be known at all. "Hölderlin, Novalis and Schlegel were critical of the powers of a *discursive* reason," writes Beiser, "but, true to the Platonic tradition, they clung all the more firmly to the power of an *intuitive* reason. Hence they all developed – in one form or another a doctrine of intellectual intuition, which they identified with aesthetic feeling or perception."[119] Discursive reason is blind to the absolute. For Kant, discursive reason forms knowledge of objects by bringing together intuitions and concepts. By this operation, the judgment of reason subsumes the particular under the universal to form concepts. However, as Hölderlin quips, playing on the supposed etymology of *Urteil* (judgment), the judgment of discursive reason must always presume and be limited by that act of original separation (*Ur-teilung*), i.e., the division of subject

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presupposition of an absolute unity that has not been *really* engendered through a dialectics of temporal existence. Hegel's Spirit, while historically particular, always presumes the oneness of the Idea at its origin. For Rosenzwieg, in order for the absolute to be and to be known, it must be more than an Idea that has been "realized" in real particularities. It must have its *origin* in these real particularities.

[118] Friedrich von Hardenberg, *Werke, Tagebücher und Briefe,* vol. 2., eds. Hans-Joachim Mahl and Richard Samuel (Munich: Carl Hanser, 1978), 227.

[119] Beiser, *German Idealism*, 355.

and object that conditions all conscious experience.[120] Discursive reason, then, is incapable of forming a concept of the absolute, as that which precedes this primordial separation at the origin of consciousness.

In intellectual intuition, however, consciousness corresponds to the unity of subject and object in the absolute. Kant placed intellectual intuition beyond the reach of the human, attributing it to the mind of God alone. Post-Kantian idealism attributes intellectual intuition to the human spirit. Indeed, for Schelling and Hegel, the philosophical mind could not do without it. For the romantic poets, as Beiser suggests, intellectual intuition remains primarily an aesthetic faculty, a sense for the beautiful. Hegel and Schelling make intellectual intuition a comprehensive faculty of cognition, a means of perceiving the unity of the good the beautiful and the true. Schelling calls intellectual intuition "the capacity to see the universal in the particular, the infinite in the finite, and indeed to unite both in a living unity."[121] Intellectual intuition supersedes discursive reason as the organon of reflexive thought, subsuming parts into wholes, particulars into universals with immediacy. As such, it is absolutely essential to the task of philosophy. "Without intellectual intuition, no philosophy," Schelling declares.[122] Reason and knowledge rests on this "wonderful and secret faculty."[123]

Analogously, for Rosenzweig and Tillich, revelation rests on a form of unifying mystical intuition possessed by the subject, by which the absolute is made graspable. "Intuition. This means seeing into," Tillich writes in a later text. "It is an intimate seeing,

[120] See Beiser, *German Idealism*, 390.
[121] Schelling, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 4, (Stuttgart: Cotta 1859), 362. Cited and translated in van Woezik, *God – Beyond Me*, 284. My emphasis.
[122] Schelling, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 5, (Stuttgart: Cotta 1859), 255. Cited and translated in van Woezik, *God – Beyond Me*, 263.
[123] Schelling, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 4, 362. Cited and translated in van Woezik, *God – Beyond Me*, 361.

a grasping and being grasped."[124] In similar fashion, in the *Star*, Rosenzweig appeals to a form of intimate or familiar intuition (*vertraute Anschauung*), by which the whole of the truth is perceived. The prominence of intuition in these epistemologies of revelation leads to their heavy reliance on visual idioms. Intuition anchors their optical lexicons.

While Hegel and Schelling conceive this form of immediate intuition as a *speculative* faculty, belonging to the philosopher, and the romantic poets as an *aesthetic* faculty, belonging to the artist and the aesthete,[125] Rosenzweig and Tillich conceive it as a power of religious intentionality, a faculty of faith, if you will. In some places, Tillich seems to conceive immediate intuitive knowing as Schelling does, as speculative contemplation.[126] In others, he bends toward the supremacy of aesthetic intuition, intuiting the infinite most immediately in art. However, as I will show in Chapter Three, Tillich's faith in intuition ultimately leads to the intuition of faith: the "the intuition of the disciples of all time" who gaze upon "the picture of Christ" and in it see the unconditioned. Rosenzweig's quite clearly locates this mystical intuition in the religious-liturgical life of Judaism and Christianity. At the height of his aesthetic mysticism, Schelling swooned that art opened to the philosopher "the holy of holies, where burns in eternal and original unity, as if in a single flame, that which in nature and history is rent

[124] Tillich, *The New Being* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2005), 129.
[125] For a moment, in his 1800 *System of Transcendental Idealism*, Schelling subordinates the speculative intuition of the philosopher to the aesthetic intuition of the artist. However, he quickly reverses himself. Philosophy remains superior to art, because the philosopher understands the forces behind art and aesthetic experience better than the artist or aesthete. See Beiser, *German Idealism*, 584-585. On Schelling's philosophical aesthetics/aesthetic philosophy see also Kai Hammermeister, *The German Aesthetic Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 62-86.
[126] For instance: "the procedure of knowledge in metaphysics is the intuition of the unconditioned import within the conditioned forms." *The System of the Sciences*, 187. On the speculative connotations of Tillich's ocular terminology see Gudmarsdottir, *Tillich and the Abyss*, 112-113.

asunder."[127] Rosenzweig locates the intuition of the absolute nearer the Biblical holy of holies, in the inner life of the Jewish people.

The special role of intuition in these romantic-idealist epistemologies point to the prominence of vision in Tillich's and Rosenzweig's thinking about revelation. A third element of Schelling's romantic idealism points another: the prominence of pictures. There is a paradox inherent in Schelling's definition of intellectual intuition as "seeing the infinite within the finite." Immediate intuition of the infinite and unconditioned must yet be *mediated* by something finite and conditioned. For Schelling and Hegel, the myths and pictures generated by the productive imagination may play this mediating role. Of course, the productive imagination plays an important role in all systems of German idealism. For Kant, it forms "figurative syntheses" of intuition and concept [128] However, In absolute idealism, the imagination assumes a higher cognitive standing. Indeed, for Hegel, "Spirit *is* the representational power of imagination [*vorstellende Einbildungskraft*] as such."[129] Thus Hegel thinks within the pictorial representations (*Vorstellungen*) generated by the history of spirit – even and especially the pictures of religion. However, ultimately, Hegel thinks *through* these pictures, toward their rational-conceptual content. Hegel's "speculative Good Friday," for instance, interprets God's crucifixion in Christ as a pictorial representation of the agonic dialectics of Spirit. For Hegel, the pictoriality of this representation is finally overcome as Spirit comprehends

[127] Schelling, *System of Transcendental Idealism* (1800), trans. Peter Heath (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1978), 229, 231.
[128] Immanuel Kant, *The Critique of Pure Reason,* trans. Norman Kemp Smith (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965), B 151, p. 164.
[129] Hegel and Leo Rauch, *Hegel and the Human Spirit: A translation of the Jena Lectures on the Philosophy of Spirit (1805-6) with commentary* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1983), 86. My emphasis.

itself in the terms of logic. Intellectual intuition is fulfilled, ultimately, in the frictionless perception of mathematical truth.

In critiquing this rationalist strain of Hegel's system, Schelling insists upon the persistent necessity of pictures and myths in the intellectual life of spirit. Thus, the late Schelling makes his own turn to a philosophy of revelation, in which he defends the ontological certainty of faith and makes absolute knowledge depend on the symbols and myths of traditional religion.[130] The myths and pictures of the mind are just as necessary for Tillich and Rosenzweig. "Like science, art, and language, myth is a necessary element of spiritual life," Tillich writes.[131] For his part, Rosenzweig stakes Judaism's special capacity to apprehended the infinite and eternal on Jewish myth. "The Jew alone," he writes, "possesses the mythic unity that was lost and had to be lost to the peoples of the world through Christianity...The Jew's myth leads him by leading him into his people, and at the same time under the countenance of his God who is the God also of the nations."[132] Myth is the path that leads the Jewish soul into the collective awareness of the people and finally before the face of God, in which the eternal truth appears.

The necessity of pictures in Schelling's epistemology also has something to do with the irrationalism of his positive philosophy. If positive existence ever and always evades dialectical cognition, then there must remain at the core of being something

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[130] Regarding Schelling's critique of Hegel's rationalism and the development of his religious philosophy in opposition to Hegel's system see John Laughland's *Schelling Versus Hegel: From German Idealism to Christian Metaphysics* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2008), esp. 111-119.

[131] Tillich, "Mythos und Mythologie" in *Gesammelte Werke*, bd. 5., *Die Frage Nach dem Unbedigten*, ed. Renate Albrecht (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1978), 188. Tillich is here directly commenting on Schelling's view of myth. "Schelling has put forward the most meaningful metaphysical theory of myth. In his last period in particular, his entire thinking revolved around myth. He sees in it the expression of a real theogenic process." Ibid.

[132] *Star,* 349; 365. On the renewed interest in Schelling's philosophy of myth in early twentieth-century German-Jewish thought see Steven Wassermann, "A Rustling in the Woods: The Turn to Myth in Weimar Jewish Thought" in *The Seductiveness of Jewish Myth: Challenge or Response?*, ed. S. Daniel Breslauer (New York: SUNY, 1997), 97-122.

rationally incomprehensible. The mind cannot exhaustively convert being into understating by way of rational concepts. Symbols, myths, and images remain necessary mediums of cognition. There can be no end to *Vorstellungen*. The absolute must continually appear and re-appear in and through concrete, sensuous forms. As far as this study is concerned, this cognitive sensualism is the core of Tillich's and Rosenzweig's shared "romanticism." To the romantic movement in philosophy Tillich attributes his "ability to perceive things abstract concretely."[133] Similarly romantic is Rosenzweig's conviction that revelation "is not impassive to shape and form," as Braiterman has put it.[134] In many ways, the precipitating curiosity of this study – that, for Rosenzweig and Tillich, the aesthetic *is* the epistemic – is a romantic idea.[135]

Also romantic is Tillich's and Rosenzweig's striving to perceive a *whole* amongst these many forms, and to see in this whole a synthesis in which the many divisions of modern life are overcome. As we shall see, the perception of the whole becomes, for Tillich and Rosenzweig, a criterion of truth and validity. As Schelling writes, "Only for reason is there one universe and to conceive something according to reason means: to conceive it as an organic member of an absolute whole, in a necessary connection with the whole, and by this means as a reflection of absolute unity."[136] Tillich's and Rosenzweig's willingness to combine this commitment to truth's single, holistic unity

[133] Tillich, "On the Boundary," 13.
[134] Braiterman, *The Shape of Revelation*, 7.
[135] Romantic" tendencies are attributed to Tillich in innumerable places. For instance, with regard to the romantic-idealist features of Tillich's philosophy of art, re Manning, "Tillich's Theology of Art" in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, 168-169. Rosenzweig, on the other hand, has been allied both with and against romanticism. For instance Braiterman captures the sentiment of many of Rosenzweig's own remarks about the romantic movement, stating the Rosenzweig bristled at the romantic subject who is "immersed in the dream of the faraway…one who shape the world into a vast hieroglyphic system with himself at the center." *The Shape of Revelation*, 8. However, Ernest Rubinstein reads Rosenzweig as a romantic thinker in *An Episode of Jewish Romanticism: Franz Rosenzweig's The Star of Redemption* (NY: SUNY Press, 2012).
[136] Schelling, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 4, 390. Cited and translated in Beiser, *German Idealism*, 581.

with a simultaneous commitment to forms of "irrationalism" (à la Kierkegaard and Schelling's late philosophy)[137] is also romantic.[138] Finally, the "objective" view of the absolute described above, on grounds of which a number of modern theologians (including these two) have attempted philosophical recoveries of revelation, can also be seen as a feature of romantic thinking.[139]

2.5 Two Types of Neo-Kantian, Eager and Reluctant

Tillich and Rosenzweig largely predicate their philosophies of revelation on elements of German idealism. However, they appropriate this tradition through an

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[137] Rosenzweig, like the late Schelling, begins philosophizing from irrational existence not thought, insisting that the elements of his cosmos – God, world, and human being – are "irrational objects." On Rosenzweig's irrational starting place see Pollock, *Franz Rosenzweig and the Systematic Task*, 144-147. Tillich follows Schelling in perceiving an irrational principle in existence corresponding to an irrational act in God. In one of his Schelling dissertations Tillich glosses the master: "Because the free, personal God is the God who reveals himself, therefore revelation is will and act, and is opposed to reason. For reason lives in the necessary…it can only be said of a God who act that he reveals himself. Only a will can be revealed." Tillich, *The Construction of the History of Religion in Schelling's Positive Philosophy: Its Presuppositions and Principles*, 65.

[138] Beiser cites striving for the whole and this self-divided view of reason as distinctive features of *Frühromantik* in *The Romantic Imperative*, 3.

[139] This is a somewhat controversial claim. The postmodernist interpretation of early romanticism given by Jean-Luc Nancy and Philip Lacoue-Labarthe in their 1978 *The Literary Absolute: The Theory of Literature in German Romanticism*, trans. Philip Banard and Cheryl Lester (Albany: SUNY, 1988) presents a subjectivist view of the romantic tradition. Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe suggest that the philosophical foundations of romanticism lie in Fichte's absolutization of the transcendental ego. For them, romantic philosophy is therefore the *consummation* of the subjectivist tradition. On this view, the romantic subject is the *last* kind of subject these theologians of revelation would want to espouse, the last subject who would be open to the incursion of an absolute from beyond the "I." Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe's interpretation is reproduced in countless studies in literary studies and German studies, including one monograph whose concerns directly intersect those of this study: Brad Prager's *Aesthetic Vision and German Romanticism: Writing Images* (Rochester: Camden House, 2007). Braiterman acknowledges that his view of romantic subjectivity, and therefore his view of Rosenzweig's anti-romanticism – see Note 76 above – "relies heavily upon" Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe's interpretation. *Shape of Revelation,* 270, n. 2.

In this study, I lean not on Nancy and Lacoue-Labarthe for my understanding of romanticism, but Beiser. As Beiser has shown, the subjectivist interpretation of romantic idealism is philosophically erroneous. See Beiser, *The Romantic Imperative* (Harvard University Press, 2006), x, 2-5. In fact, Schelling, Novalis, and Hölderlin erect the romantic imagination in explicit *opposition* to Fichtean subjectivism. The figures of romantic imagination, then, are not to be understood as self-reflections of an absolute subject. Rather, they are mediums for apprehending the "objective" absolute that radically precedes the self-awareness of the ego. There is no necessary philosophical contradiction, then, between Rosenzweig's and Tillich's romanticism and their views of revelation as an act of self-transcending intuition originating from beyond the ego.

idiosyncratic blending with other movements in modern thought, including the neo-Kantianism that pervaded the intellectual climate of their day. The neo-Kantians, broadly speaking, shared Tillich's and Rosenzweig's critical concern about the predominance of instrumental logic and empirical analysis in the modern sciences. They, too, valued intuitive knowledge and introspective experience and were open to the domain of spirit. Neo-Kantian ideas, then, were natural allies in Tillich's and Rosenzweig's efforts to resist the prevailing winds and recover a sense for revelation.

Tillich's encounter with neo-Kantianism began during his residency at Halle from 1905-1907. There Tillich absorbed Fichte's idealism through the neo-Kantian lens of his mentor, Fritz Medicus.[140] As detailed in the next chapter, Tillich did not appropriate neo-Kantian ideas into his own thinking until after the war, on the eve of his seminal 1919 *Kulturvortrag*, in which he lays out his program for the "theology of culture." In a word, the value of neo-Kantianism for Tillich was *value* itself. The Southwest school of neo-Kantianism sought to delineate a realm of value opposed to fact, i.e. independent of psychological and physical reality. In doing so, the neo-Kantians drew heavily on Hegel and Schelling's philosophies of spirit. In the neo-Kantianism of Heinrich Rickert and those in his circle, the domain of spirit is reconceived in terms of meaning (*Sinn*) and sense (*Bedeutung*). "Spirit" comes to denote the entire realm of reflexive human consciousness through which meaning is intended and structured, i.e. culture. From these general trends of thought, Tillich learns to equate spirit with culture and to define spirit as "life in meaning or incessant creative meaningfulness."[141] Tillich thus joins a diverse

[140] See Friedrich Graf and Alf Christophersen, "Neukantianismus, Fichte- Und Schellingrenaissance Paul Tillich Und Sein Philosophischer Lehrer Fritz Medicus," *Zeitschrift Für Neuere Theologiegeschichte* 11, no. 1 (2004), 52-78.
[141] Tillich, *Gesammelte Werke*, bd. 1, 125. Quoted in Danz, "Tillich's Philosophy," 178.

school of early twentieth-century thinkers who take questions of meaning and culture as the predominant concerns of modern philosophy.[142]

Once again, where Tillich warms to the *Zeitgeist*, Rosenzweig casts a cold eye. Rosenzweig was well familiar with neo-Kantian systems, largely through Hans Ehrenberg, who had been Windelband's student. With acerbic wit, Rosenzweig scorns the same neo-Kantian philosophy of value that Tillich so enthusiastically espouses. "He who still busies himself today with refutations (e.g., Rickert with Nietzsche, for what is the philosophy of value other than a struggle against transvaluation?), proves in so doing that he is not a philosopher."[143] Rosenzweig believes that neo-Kantians such as Rickert had not paid the price exacted by Nietzsche's hammer: that transvalued values could not be transvalued again, once every absolute had been de-absolutized. To Rosenzweig, neo-Kantianism appears as mere stopgap solutions to the crisis of relativism.

There remains the matter of Hermann Cohen's influence on Rosenzweig, however. Rosenzweig regarded Cohen, the founder of Marburg neo-Kantianism, as his master in philosophy. Pollock is well justified in questioning whether any of Cohen's neo-Kantianism remains in Rosenzweig's mature thought. From the first, what Rosenzweig admired in Cohen's seems to be anything but his neo-Kantianism. In "Atheistic Theology" (1914), Rosenzweig does not extol Cohen for his early interpretations of Kant or his own magisterial system of critical idealism, but for his interpretation of "the concept of revelation," which, according Rosenzweig, marked the "'reawakening of philosophy' in our midst" and had the effect of making "the recipient of revelation in

[142] As noted by James Luther Adams in *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science, and Religion*, 118.
[143] Rosenzweig, *Der Mensch Und Sein Werk. Gesammelte Schriften*, I: *Briefe Und Tagebücher*, Bd. 2 (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1979), 804.

Judaism once again the focal object of systematic consideration: the Chosen People."[144] In Rosenzweig's introduction to Cohen's *Jüdische Schriften* he asserts that Cohen's posthumously published *Religion of Reason* represents a radical break with his neo-Kantian system. This distinct, late phase of Cohen's thought, Rosenzweig claims, is distinguished by an interest in Jewish existence (*Dasein*) and the "correlation" between God and the human.[145] Rosenzweig's picture of Cohen dramatically conflicts with the one painted by Cassirer, Cohen's heir at Marburg.

Despite Rosenzweig's anti-neo-Kantian invective, his own thinking bears noticeable traces of neo-Kantian influence. For instance, Pollock detects the indisputable congruities between the *Star* and Rickert's *System of Philosophy*, also published in 1921. Rickert employs the figure of "the And as bond" making possible "the synthetic unity of multiplicity" in a manner distinct from Hegelian dialectic; this mirrors Rosenzweig's role played by Rosenzweig's "And' ("the rootword of all experience"[146]) as the grammatical lynchpin of Rosenzweig own counter-Hegelian dialectic. Rickert also acknowledges the need to differentiate between *Weltanschauung* and *Lebensanschauung*, a distinction Rosenzweig makes in turning to a "metaethical" view of the self.[147] Perhaps most significantly, Rickert calls for a systematic account of "the All" as that which "redeems us from the nothingness of relativism."[148] Thus, Rosenzweig shares with Rickert a

[144] Rosenzweig, "Atheistic Theology," 15.
[145] Alexander Altman has debunked Rosenzweig's claim that Cohen's thought takes a sharp late turn with the concept of the "correlation" between God and human. Altman finds the concept of correlation in Cohen's neo-Kantian system. See Altmann, "Hermann Cohens Begriff der Korrelation, in *In zwei Welten. Siegfried Moses zum 75. Geburtstag*, ed. H. Tramer (Tel Aviv: Verlag Bitaon, 1962), 377-99. On Cohen's critical idealism see also Andrea Poma, *The Critical Philosophy of Hermann Cohen* (NY: SUNY Press, 1997) and idem, *Yearning for Form and Other Essays on Hermann Cohen's Thought* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2006), esp., regarding "correlation," 61-86.
[146] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 98.
[147] *Star*, 17.
[148] Pollock, *Systematic Task*, 64.

number of common concerns, including the urgent concern to mitigate relativism through a return to a comprehensive system of the All. Rosenzweig proclaims the neo-Kantian systems total failures in solving this problem of relativism. However, he thinks alongside his neo-Kantian adversaries in framing the problem for himself. And he relies on congruent patterns of logic and an overlapping storehouse of concepts.

Further, the *Star* contains substantial congruities with neo-Kantian theories of knowledge. Tillich, too, the eager neo-Kantian, absorbs many features of neo-Kantian epistemology. The neo-Kantians reject Kant's thing-in-itself and thus the Kantian supposition of a noumenal world beyond the world that appears.[149] Thus, the objective world can only be the world as it is for us, as it appears. Our representations of the world cannot be verified on the basis of their correspondence to an "external" world beyond the given. This is not a crude relativism. While there is no unchanging objective world beyond the one we see, the laws by which we represent the world to ourselves may be more or less rational, and therefore more or less objective. The rationality of our representations rest upon the laws or norms inherent in them. Ultimately, this standard of objectivity is underwritten by the unity of reason, which, for Cassirer, must be realized in science knowledge, as science strives after the ideal of a complete system.

On the basis of this epistemology, Cassirer puts forward a kind of picture theory of his own – as we suggested in the Introduction, with reference to Cassirer's talk of "image-worlds" generated "beside and above the world of perception." For Cassirer, the objective world is a pictorial rendering of the given. In fact, there is no "given" apart

[149] Whether or not Kant actually advanced such a two-world theory is a matter of debate. For one-world (i.e., two-aspects) interpretations of Kant see Henry Allison, *Kant's Transcendental Idealism: An Interpretation and Defense* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004) and Rae Langton, *Kantian Humility: Our Ignorance of Things in Themselves* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

from these paradigms of symbolic presentation. Science itself must be considered one such frame for picturing the world according to a symbolic logic. Of course, for Cassirer, compared to myth, science is the more rationally stable mode of representing the world to ourselves. However, is not that science is qualitatively true and myth qualitatively false. As Michael Inwood puts it, "(s)cience is superior to mythology because it gives a more coherent and orderly picture. But the picture is not a picture of anything outside the picture."[150] Neither are mythic pictures of the world pictures of anything outside of the picture.

Rosenzweig would agree with Cassirer on many of these points. He would agree that we actively bring the world of objects to appearance on the basis of variable paradigms of perception, each containing degrees of validity. The three "worlds" of the *Star* (the proto-cosmos, the revealed cosmos, and the redeemed cosmos) may be considered such paradigms. Rosenzweig would further agree that there is no criterion of validity outside of these multiple paradigms of perception, through which the truth becomes knowledge *for us* (a major claim of the present argument). This is the epistemic upshot of Rosenzweig's correlationalism, his "And." As Rosenzweig states in "The New Thinking": "In the truth itself, in the final truth, which can be only one, there must be an And," which means that "this truth…must be truth for someone."[151] Truth has no truth, no validity or objectivity, apart from its being truth *for someone*. "It thereby becomes a necessity that our truth becomes manifold and that 'the' truth transforms itself into our truth. Thus truth ceases to be what 'is' true and becomes that which has to be verified as

[150] Michael Inwood, "Hegel, Cassirer, Heidegger," in *Hegel's Thought in Europe*, ed. Lisa Herzog (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 110.
[151] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 98.

true."[152] How relativized are Rosenzweig's attacks on "relativism" in light of these statements!

Further, Rosenzweig would agree the world is rendered objective for knowledge by the pictures we make for ourselves. For Rosenzweig, through the "eternal clock-dials" of Jewish and Christian liturgical existence, "the flow of events projects gleaming pictures [*Bilder*] onto heaven, above the temporal world, and they remain."[153] These pictures, Rosenzweig specifies, "are not archetypes [*Urbilder*]," not ideal forms. Rather they are pictorial copies [*Abbilder*], likenesses or icons. The "invisible mysteries themselves become pictorial [*bildhaft*] in these pictures."[154] It is only through such pictures – and ultimately through the projection of *one* such picture, the Star of Redemption – that Rosenzweig may see that "the countenance of truth" as it "finally became clear *for us* as configuration."[155]

Further, like Cassirer, Rosenzweig is willing to employ the language of the sign and symbol to describe the process by which these pictures become filled with objectively meaningful truth-content. At the center of the *Star* is Rosenzweig's account of revelation as *miracle*. As we shall see, Rowsenzweig conceives the miracle on the order of the "sign." The sign conjoins prediction and fulfillment, end and beginning. It forms a circular whole through which the mythic history of the Jewish people is taken up into intuitive knowing. I will return to the sign of the miracle – and its "eyewitnesses" – in Chapters Three and Four.

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[152] Ibid.
[153] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," in *Franz Rosenzweig's "The New Thinking,"* ed. and trans. Alan Udoff and Barbara Galli (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1999), 93; original: "Das neue Denken" in *Zweistromland*, *Gesammelte Schriften* vol. 3, ed. Reinhold and Annemarie Mayer (Dordrecht: Nijhoff, 1984) 155.
[154] "Das neue Denken" in *Zweistromland*, *Gesammelte Schriften* 3, ed. Reinhold and Annemarie Mayer (Dordrecht: Nijhoff, 1984) 155.
[155] *Star,* 441; *Stern*, 465. My emphasis.

On myth's inferiority to science, however, Rosenzweig would emphatically diverge. For Rosenzweig, myth, in fact, *does* give the more stable view of the truth. Specifically, *Jewish* myth gives the absolutely stable perspective on the absolute. The embodiment of Jewish myth in Jewish life creates a firmness of vision, a resolutely faithful perspicacity, which allows for a uniquely clear, immediately verified glimpse of the truth. [156]

Tillich's neo-Kantianism does not fit into this pattern exactly, largely because he takes it not from Marburg, but from the Southwest school, which does not mirror Cassirer's theory of knowledge exactly. However, Tillich's symbol theory bears an important parallel, stemming again from the neo-Kantian disavowal of Kant's thing-in-itself. For Tillich, the unconditioned is only made known through symbols. What is made known through symbols must be understood within the symbol's own holistic frame of reference. This means that the symbol must be perceived at once and as a whole. As Chapter Three will explore, the ability of a symbol to give this whole immediately along with its content is the distinctive quality of what Susanne Langer calls a "presentational symbol" (in contrast to the "discursive symbol") and associates with the symbolic function of art (in contrast to language).[157] This means that the inherit logic of the presentational symbol decides its own criterion of validity. These are neo-Kantian thoughts. Not far behind them stands, again, Cassirer, among Langer's greatest influences in philosophy.

Tillich's philosophy of meaning and symbols fit within this neo-Kantian view of the

[156] It is also possible to parse the mystical dialectics of Rosenzweig's theory of truth through a Heideggerian lens of veiling and unveiling as Wolfson shows in *Giving Beyond the Gift*, 34-89.
[157] See Langer, *Philosophy in a New Key*, Chapter Four, "Discursive and Presentational Forms," 79-102. Jeremy Begbie links Tillich's notion of religious symbol to Langer's "presentational" symbol in *Voicing Creation's Praise: Towards a Theology of the Arts* (London: T&T Clark, 1991), 224.

presentational symbol. “The picture of Christ” comes to function for Tillich as the perceptual whole in which every other religious symbol – i.e., every symbol that expresses the unconditioned – has its own perceptual whole.

2.6 Transitional Conclusions

These neo-Kantian resonances tell us a few things about Tillich’s and Rosenzweig’s common view of revelation. For both, revelation must be mediated by a process of symbolic representation. In this process, mythic-religious consciousness actively projects holistic contexts of symbolic meaning, i.e., pictures of the world as a meaningful whole. For Tillich and Rosenzweig, in order to have any objective knowledge of the world at all, the human knower must picture the world to herself, from her relative and conditioned placed in the world and on the basis of some inner law of symbolic representation. Paradoxically, in revelation, this inner law of representation, by which the knower self-creates an objective world, is received from beyond the self. It is transmitted through some master picture of religious consciousness (the Star of Redemption, the picture of Christ), to which the knower has been intimately bonded; a picture in which she has learned to see.

These pictures and the relational logic they contain are professed to be absolute, and thus, in faith, capable of rendering the absolute immediately visible and graspable. This perception *is* the content of revelation. The content cannot be translated out of the perceptual whole. It cannot be verified or falsified in relation to some fixed quantity outside the picture, some stationary reality that the picture re-presents. The picture makes objective the reality it shows, rather than reproduces a reality that was already there. The

validity of the perception thus rest on the inherent coherence of the picture that makes the perception possible. In other words, the absolute that the picture reveals is the absolute that is in the picture.

Resolute rationalists – Cassirer, Feuerbach, Hegel – might object that Rosenzweig's and Tillich's religious pictures of the absolute are predictably incoherent, containing irreconcilable contradictions. To these objections, the theologians might reply that the philosophers have simply not recognized the truth in their pictures. Perhaps the philosophers' laws of non-contradiction have blinded them to the absolute as paradox, the paradox as absolute. Further, the theologians may insist, the revelatory pictures they point to must be appropriated to be projected, lived to be perceived, placed and cherished in body and soul to be recognized as icons of the truth. My purpose in the next chapters is to see how these pictures are made and beheld.

CHAPTER THREE

THE IMAGE AND PICTURE OF REVELATION IN PAUL TILLICH'S "CULTURAL SCIENCE OF RELIGION," 1919-1933

"From seeing, all science starts, to seeing it must always return."
Tillich, *The New Being*[158]

"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."
– 2 Corinthians 3:18 (King James Version)

Chapter Contents

3.1 PREFACE

3.1.a At the picture gallery

I begin this chapter as I began the Introduction, with a diptych. While the Introduction juxtaposed portraits of Rosenzweig and Tillich, here I juxtapose two pictures

[158] Tillich, *The New Being*, 128.

of Tillich. To add another pictorial layer: each is a picture of Tillich looking at a picture. I will present these pictures at first only to view. The remainder of this chapter may be considered an interpretation of their significance and relationship to one another.

First, is the well-known picture of Paul Tillich standing before Botticelli's *Madonna with Child and Singing Angels* in Berlin's Gemäldegallerie in 1917 [Figure One in the Chapter Appendix]. Tillich was on furlough from his duties as a chaplain in the First World War. The picture struck him "like a revelation."[159] Tillich declared this encounter with Botticelli his "first experience" of art. Tillich had seen plenty of pictures by that time. However, the Botticelli made a new impression. The picture gave rise to thought.[160] "Upon experience followed reflection and philosophic and theological interpretation, which led me to the fundamental categories of my philosophy of religion and culture, namely, form and content."[161] This dialectic of form and content (*Gehalt*) becomes the semantic frame of Tillich's philosophical theology as a whole, expressing the essential relation between the conditioned and unconditioned, the finite and the infinite, the existential and the essential.

The second picture occurs internal to Tillich's dogmatic theology. In Tillich's Marburg *Dogmatik* (given as lectures in 1925, compiled for publication in 1930, but never published), Tillich narrates the struggle between "divine" and "demonic" principles of meaning-fulfillment in the cultural history of religion. This dialectical drama culminates in a moment at the center of history, the kairos that appears in Jesus Christ and is witnessed and communicated by the New Testament. In Jesus Christ, Tillich

[159] Tillich, "On the Boundary" in *The Interpretation of History*, trans. H. Richard Niebuhr (New York: Scribner, 1936), 15.
[160] The phrase is borrowed from Paul Ricoeur, "The symbol gives rise to thought." See Ricoeur, *The Symbolism of Evil* (New York: Beacon Press, 1967), 347-357.
[161] Tillich, "On the Boundary," 15-16.

announces, "we have the intuition [*Anschauung*] of a creatureliness that remains bound in its self-will to the unconditioned-mighty."[162] In this intuition, the unconditioned is made fully and divinely visible, without demonic distortion. We must picture the Protestant Tillich expounding his dogmatics with the New Testament in hand. It is "the biblical picture of Christ [that] allows us to speak of a real picture." It is only in that picture that "reality has found expression, namely the reality of the essential relation between the unconditioned and the conditioned."[163] In this picture, Christians grasp the unconditioned in its essential relation to existence. But only because they are first grasped by the picture. The picture acts as "the medium for being grasped by unconditioned being."[164] This grasping and being grasped, for Tillich, is the concrete realization of revelation in religious consciousness, by which the Christian is "shaken" and "turned."[165]

These two glimpses – Tillich viewing Botticelli's *Madonna*, Tillich gazing into his New Testament – mark two intersecting lines of the analysis that follows. The first line travels the path of Tillich's early metaphysics and philosophy of religion. It focuses on Tillich's philosophical "idea" of revelation. He captures this idea in the terms of a "form-shattering breakthrough." He conceives this form of "breakthrough" in direct relationship to the "pictorial form" of Expressionist art. The second line travels the path of Tillich's theological dogmatics, in which the idea of revelation as breakthrough is espoused to the real, symbolic of forms of religious consciousness. Ultimately, it consummates in one such symbol: the "real picture of Christ."

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[162] "In Jesus Christus haben wir die Anschauung eines Kreatürlichen, das in seiner Selbstmächtigkeit gebunden bleibt an das Unbedingt-Mächtige." *Dogmatik: Marburg Vorlesung von 1925*, ed. Werner Schüßler (Düsseldorf: Patmos Verlag, 1986), 312.
[163] "In diesem Bild aber hat sich Realität Ausdruck geschaffen, nämlich die Realität des wesenhaften Verhältnisses von Unbedingtem und Bedingtem." *Dogmatik*, 312.
[164] "das Medium…für dieses Ergriffensein vom Unbedingt-Seienden." *Dogmatik*, 307.
[165] *Dogmatik*, 41.

This chapter will demonstrate the circularity of this logic. Tillich's concept of "breakthrough" – i.e. the paradoxical form of *Gehalt* bursting through form –establishes the norm of revelation, by which all cultural acts may be judged more or less religious, more or less revelatory. It is thus the norm by which the "real picture of Christ" is determined to be revelation's perfection, i.e., "the consummate revelation (*vollkommenen Offenbarung*)." "Breakthrough" captures the essential, meaning-fulfilling relationship between the conditioned and the unconditioned dimensions being, the form of their perfectly creative correlation. In the symbol "Jesus Christ" this form becomes real for the religious consciousness of the Christian. However, Tillich also holds that it is only *in* this consummate revelation – the real picture of Christ crucified, held in religious consciousness – that the essential relationship between the unconditioned and conditioned is *itself* determined, i.e., made perfectly clear, free from all ambiguity, for the first time. Thus, the norming form of revelation ("form-shattering breakthrough") must, it turns out, always already presume its real consummation in the picture of Christ. Tillich's universal, philosophical "idea" of revelation is always already an icon of the Cross.

This correlation – between Tillich's idea of revelation as "breakthrough" and his real intuition of revelation in the Cross – is comparable to the relationship between Platonic archetype and type: the ideal form and the reality into which that form is impressed. However, in Platonism, the archetype is essentially independent of its type. In Tillich's philosophy, by contrast, the consummate type of revelation ("the real picture of Christ") fulfills and thus reciprocally determines the essence of the archetype.

The correlation may also be likened, I propose, to the relationship W. J. T. Mitchell draws between image and picture. The image, for Mitchell, names a picture's

transempirical self-identity, the picture "as it can be transferred from one medium to another."[166] The picture, by contrast, names "the image as it appears in a material support or a specific place."[167] The picture is something you can hang on wall, while the image subsists apart from and over its material substrate. "Breakthrough" is Tillich's image of revelation, "Jesus Christ" his picture of revelation. However, as we shall see, to absolutize this distinction between image and picture – between the ideal and real – Tillich says is "the character of all unreal images and intuitions."[168] The ideal does not subsist *behind* the real, but in dynamic, transformative correlation with the real. Tillich's realist, dialectical mind will not let the abstract form subsist apart from its concrete realization. The image may causes the picture to appear, in a formal sense, but the picture itself determines the form of the image, in a real sense. Revelation is beheld as though reflected in a mirror, from glory to glory – from image to picture and back again.

The analogy to Mitchell's image/picture distinction is even more apt, I suggest, because Tillich couches this circular determinacy between real and ideal within a general metaphysics of meaning that predicates all meaningful reality on acts of *perception*. Further, Tillich's notion of perception, as we shall see, is developed in close connection with a notion of artistic *style*. Like Wölfflin, I argue, Tillich understands style as mode of actively perceiving and ordering the meaningful world in perception. Revelation, for Tillich, is such a mode of presentation, a way of actively intending and intuiting the real. Tillich's image and picture of revelation – its formal idea ("breakthrough") and its real

[166] W. J. T. Mitchell, *Image Science: Iconology, Visual Culture, and Media Aesthetics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 16.
[167] Ibid.
[168] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 312.

perfection ("Jesus Christ") – are encircled by a field of perception, a "theonomous" style of making the meaningful world visible..

Toward the conclusion of this chapter, I view Tillich's "picture of Christ" through Susanne Langer's notion the "presentational symbol" and Richard Wollheim's understanding of pictorial perception as a form of "seeing-in." I show that Tillich's view of revelation attributes to religious knowledge what could be called, following Wölfflin and Langer, a form of "presentational validity," i.e. an objectivity inherent to the pictorial whole in which the act of revelation takes place. Despite critiques that Tillich's philosophical theology therefore demands some form of discursive supplementation in order to be publically intelligible and convincing, I argue that the pictorial-presentational quality of Tillich's epistemology is necessitated by the basic concepts of meaningfulness and unconditionality at the very foundation of his thought. To add discursive supplement to Tillich's picture of revelation would be to alter its image, changing it into something else altogether. Tillich is a modern Thomas, for whom seeing is believing and believing must be seeing, as the eye reaches out to touch the picture that gives it sight.

3.1.b Preliminary correlations: Tillich's early method and system

I am treating Tillich's philosophy and theology as two sides of one coin. This twofold approach is not unusual in Tillich scholarship. However, it is necessary to distinguish between Tillich's early and later methods of correlating philosophy and theology. The pictorial logic described in this chapter persists into Tillich's later method of "philosophical theological," but it is rooted in his early approach to theology and philosophy of religion as equal branches of a "cultural science of religion."

It would be anachronistic to speak of Tillich's early "philosophical theology." Upon promotion to Professor of Philosophical Theology at Union Theological Seminary in 1940, Tillich is puzzled by "the unusual name" of his chair. He wonders if "the term 'philosophical theology' more than a personal meaning? Has it an objective meaning? Is it a justified combination of words?"[169] By the publication of his *Systematic Theology* (1951-1963), Tillich had worked out something of an objective meaning for philosophical theology. This is his famed "method of correlation." The act of correlation in this method refers to the alignment of questions and answers about matters of "ultimate concern." Philosophy provides "existential" analyses of the human condition, which then assist theology as it "formulates the questions implied in human existence."[170] In response to these questions, theology formulates answers out of the material of Christian symbols and doctrines. The object of correlation is to bring the inner significance of the Christian message to expression in a way that speaks to the spirit of the age.

Tillich's early writings also posit a kind of correlation between philosophy and theology, but of a rather different sort. To grasp the difference, one must first distinguish between Tillich's earlier and later views of philosophy itself. Before his emigration, Tillich had not yet equated philosophy with "existentialism." He was familiar with the ideas of Heidegger, his colleague at Marburg. However, at this time, neither he nor Heidegger would have spoken of "existentialism" as a movement or method of philosophy. Certainly Tillich's early philosophical outlook was shaped by Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Dostoevsky. From them he learned to take the irrational, the absurd, and the paradox as starting points for thought. His later rhetoric regarding "existential

[169] Paul Tillich, *The Protestant Era*, ed. and trans. James Luther Adams (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), 83.
[170] Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), 61.

questions" implicit in the "human condition" is not inconsistent with his early concerns regarding meaning and meaninglessness. However, those early concerns are not developed not in self-conscious alignment with an "existentialist" mode of philosophy.

Rather, Tillich's early philosophy was primarily a philosophy of meaning, in the vein of Dilthey and Rickert. In 1925, Tillich defines philosophy as "the theory of the structure of meaning-reality."[171] In Tillich's later "method of correlation," philosophy serves to give voice to the ambiguities of human existence, to which theology must give answer. Philosophy discovers and formulates the problem of meaning. His earlier method sets a higher task for philosophy: to make meaning of the process of meaning-making itself. Philosophy must bring form and reason to the idea of meaning, not only formulate questions of meaning. Tillich's early attempts at a fundamental philosophy of meaning are developed in conversation with Husserlian phenomenology, American pragmatism, and, above all, neo-Kantianism. Tillich would later speak about these philosophies as wrong turns on the way to his existentialist epiphany. However, in his early work, he presents his own philosophical method as a critical synthesis of phenomenological, pragmatist, and neo-Kantian elements.[172] They each capture something of what he calls his "critical intuitive" or "metalogical" method of philosophy of religion, to which I will return.

Meaning, then, is the central category of Tillich philosophy, and it is a *metaphysical* category. Tillich comes to regard meaning as the medium of the self-interpreting life of spirit. The process of meaning-fulfillment is more basic to spirit than being or thought, and is thus the medium of their ideal synthesis. Tillich installs this

[171] Tillich, "The Philosophy of Religion," in *What is Religion?,* ed. and trans. James Luther Adams (New York: Harper and Row, 1969), 57.
[172] Ibid., 42-50.

metaphysics of meaning at the foundation of his "system of the sciences." This includes a vision for the "cultural science of religion," which Tillich subdivides into the three sub-branches of philosophy of religion, history of religion, and theology. This approach presumes that theology is not "the science of God," but the science of religion. The object of theology is religion. More specifically, it is the religious consciousness of the individual Christian, who stands in the church, which exists in society.[173] In this approach, Tillich follows Schleiermacher. Within Tillich's own context, this agenda is clearly motivated by a desire to established theology among the modern sciences, or "to win for theology a legitimate place within the totality of knowledge," as he later puts it.[174] Tillich worried that modern methods of dogmatics as "the science of God," such as Karl Barth's early dialectical method, would would only deepen the "intolerable gap" Tillich perceived to have opened between religion and culture over the course of modernity. Tillich's cultural science of religion – and, within that vision, his theology of culture – are attempts to close this gap through a systematic account of the unity of knowledge.

Tillich thus regards religion as a fact of culture, but its substance is anything but "factual." In a seminal 1919 lecture given to the Kant Society of Berlin, "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture," Tillich famously defines religion as a "basic experience" or "directedness toward" the unconditioned.[175] The unconditioned is a term drawn from

[173] See Jean Richard, "Religious Consciousness Versus Word of God" in *Being Versus Word in Paul Tillich's Theology*, ed. Gert Hummel (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999), 306-318.
[174] Tillich, "On the Boundary," 38.
[175] Tillich, *Visionary Science: A Translation of Tillich's On The Idea of a Theology of Culture with an Interpretive Essay*, trans. Victor Nuovo (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1987), 24 [Hereafter "On the Idea"]. The discrepancy between "experience" and "directedness toward" in Tillich's definition of religion is due to a variation between the two German editions of the address. The 1919 version has "der Erfahrung des Unbegingten" while the 1921 version has "der Richtung auf das Unbedingte." Michael Palmer calls attention to this in the editorial notes to the version reprinted in Tillich, *Main Works* -

Schelling's absolute idealism, which in Tillich's usage, as James Luther Adams explains, becomes "a composite concept" meant to indicate "the ultimate that is presupposed by all meaning, being, and value (conditioning and supporting them)."[176] Within Tillich's metaphysics, the unconditioned designates the infinite and inexhaustible origin of all meaningful reality, at once ground and abyss, which fills the forms of the meaningful world with their living import. Most basically, "religion" names the directedness of consciousness to this unconditioned presupposition of every meaningful thing. Thus, "religion is immanent in all the functions of meaning."[177] While Tillich's "cultural science of religion" supposedly rests upon the foundation of his metaphysics of meaning, that metaphysics itself already presumes an idea of religion. Thus, metaphysics is "necessarily and at all times a religious attitude."[178] Tillich is not bothered by this circularity, but takes it as a necessary peculiarity of any science devoted to "grasping the unconditioned."[179]

The correlation between philosophy and theology unfolds on the basis of this program for the cultural science of religion. The correlation is not one of question and answer, but idea and fulfillment. Theology begins with a philosophically engendered idea of religion and a material history of religion. It then provides this idea "concrete elaboration and fulfillment" (*Durchführung und Erfüllung*).[180] This correlation is on display in Tillich's 1925 *Philosophy of Religion*. In that text, Tillich takes on the first two

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Hauptwerke, vol. 2, *Writings in the Philosophy of Culture* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), 70. See also Re Manning, *Theology at the End of Culture*, 108, n. 3.

[176] James Luther Adams, *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science, and Religion (*New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 37.

[177] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 69.

[178] Ibid., 35.

[179] Tillich*, System of the Sciences*, 188.

[180] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 121; original: *Gesammelte Werke*, bd. 1*: Frühe Hauptwerke,* ed. Renate Albrecht (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1959), 364.

branches of his "cultural science of religion," philosophy and cultural history. He thus provides an idea of the essence religion on the basis of his metaphysics of meaning ("directedness toward the unconditioned meaning"; the same as his 1919 definition).[181] He then sketches an outline of the cultural-spiritual realization of that idea, resulting in proto-theological concepts of "the divine," "the demonic," and "the religion of paradox."

It is the task of theology to provide concrete symbols that may be "adopted" by these concepts. Tillich's method thus begins from a universal idea of religion, reconstructs the realization of this idea in cultural history, from which this idea draws its material norms, then presents the symbols and doctrines of Christian faith in accordance with this normative, historical concept of religion. Therefore, it is not that theology "answers" what philosophy "asks." Rather, theology fulfills what philosophy predicts. Theology fulfills "the normative concept of religion" developed by the philosophy of religion through "the acknowledgement of a concrete symbol."[182] It elaborates in real and concrete symbols what philosophy outlines in ideal and abstract concepts. My goal in this chapter is to demonstrate that the correlation Tillich draws between philosophy and theology, between the idea of religion and its concrete fulfillment, turns upon a logic of pictorial representation immanent to Tillich's metaphysics.

This correlation may also be treated as a correlation between two aspects or moments of Tillich's understanding of revelation. As noted above, Tillich's metaphysics of meaning is itself intrinsically religious. It is shaped by irreducibly religious categories, including and especially revelation. At this metaphysical level, then, Tillich is able to treat revelation as a philosophical "idea" apart from theological content. At this level,

[181] Ibid., 70-71.
[182] Ibid., 97.

revelation names a moment possible within the universal life of spirit. It is what Tillich repeatedly discusses as "breakthrough," a term ubiquitous in Tillich's early writings.[183] Breakthrough names the bursting forth of the unconditioned meaning that abides deep within the conditioned. It is possible at any time in any place, taking whatever vehicle makes itself receptive. "Break through the walls of our form!: That's the call for revelation."[184] The breakthrough of revelation is an "idea" in the sense that it cannot be reduced to a conceptual object. "Revelation is a word and as word a concept and as concept an object of conceptual working-through; but the content of the concept is an idea, no object."[185] Without object, revelation yet retains a *form*. Tillich repeatedly assigns to the "form-shattering breakthrough" a paradoxical form: "By letting itself in its naturalness be shattered by import, [form] becomes form in a paradoxical sense."[186] So far as Tillich's rhetoric of breakthrough amounts to an idea, that idea must consist in this very form: the paradoxical form of form-shattering breakthrough.

As an idea, revelation is a philosophical category. As a reality, it is theological one. Of course, the ideal and real must be correlated. When writing in a theological mode, Tillich refers to the event of revelatory breakthrough as "fundamental revelation" (*Grundoffenbarung*) and distinguishes it from "saving revelation" (*Heilsoffenbarung*).[187] Ultimately, for Tillich, these two categories are both linked and distinguished by their real effects in religious consciousness: "Fundamental revelation is the liberation from the

[183] See Uwe Carsten Scharf, *The Paradoxical Breakthrough of Revelation* (Berlin: DeGruyter, 1999).
[184] Tillich, "On the Idea of Revelation" (1927) in *Gesammelte Werke,* bd. 8*: Offenbarung und Glaube* (Stuttgart: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1970) [Hereafter *GW* VIII], 37.
[185] "Offenbarung ist ein Word und als Wort ein Begriff und als Begriff Gegenstand begrifflicher Bearbeitung; der Inhalt des Begriffs aber ist eine Idee, kein Gegenstand." *GW* VIII, 31.
[186] Tillich, "On the Idea," 27.
[187] See Hans-Christoph Askani's discussion of this terminological pair in "Tillichs Offenbarungsverständnis als Stein des Anstoßes und Prüfstein seiner Theologie: Eine Auseinandersetzung mit Oswald Bayers Tillich-Kritik" in *Being Versus Word*, 73-75.

despair of doubt and meaninglessness," Tillich writes in 1929. "In this respect it is the beginning of saving revelation. And saving revelation is liberation from the despair of contradiction and distance from God."[188] These two types of revelation are best understood as two moments of one dynamic process. "Both stand in one life process, one as the beginning the other as the goal, but united in one act in every real revelation."[189]

Fundamental revelation is ambiguous. That is, it is capable of demonic and divine expressions. The form of "form-shattering breakthrough" may break in a meaningful-creative direction or a meaningless-destructive direction. Revelation only receives it determinate, unambiguous form in its real completion: the revelation in Jesus Christ, which is "the overcoming of the demonic and the fulfillment of the ambiguous fundamental revelation." This revelation "took place where God showed himself as spirit and love" and may take place again, in any moment.[190] *Heilsoffenbarung*, then, which is inseparably bound to *Grundoffenbarung* as end and fulfillment, is nothing other than the *Christusoffenbarung* received in the New Testament.

Tillich's archetypal image/idea of revelation as breakthrough, then, is only visible and determinate from the perspective of its concrete "realization" in Jesus Christ. As Askani rightly observes, "If Tillich speaks much more of the 'mighty sound of fundamental revelation in all religions and cultures of mankind,' he makes this statement from the 'standpoint' of saving revelation, from the 'standpoint' of Christianity, that is

[188] "Die Grundoffenbarung ist die Befreiung aus der Verzweiflung des Zweifels und der Sinnleere. Insofern ist sie der Anfang der Heilsoffenbarung. Und die Heilsoffenbarung ist Befreiung aus der Verzweiflung des Widerspruchs und der Gottferne." *GW* VIII, 97.
[189] "Es ist in der eine Lebensprozeß, in dem beide stehen, die eine Anfang und die andere als Ziel, in jeder wirklichen Offenbarung aber zusammengeschlossen in einem Akt." Ibid., 97-98.
[190] "Die Überwindung aber des Dämonischen, die Vollendung der zweideutigen Grundoffenbarung zur eindeutigen göttlichen Heilsoffenbarung, ist da erfolgt, wo Gott sich als Geist und Liebe zeigte, unbeschadet seiner Majestät und Verborgenheit." Ibid., 98.

from the saving revelation that looks back to the fundamental revelation."[191] The idea of *Grundoffenbarung*, then, only becomes visible when looking back from the standpoint of *Heilsoffenbarung* in Christ.

3.2 The Image of Revelation in Tillich's Philosophy of Religion

3.2.a Section roadmap

The task of this section is to elucidate Tillich's image/idea of revelation on the basis of his metaphysics. Because that metaphysics presumes an identity between being and meaning, it will be helpful to begin with a standard account of Tillich's turn to a philosophy of meaning (3.2.b). This turn to meaning leads Tillich to adopt the semantic triad of *Form*, *Inhalt*, and *Gehalt* as basic terms of his philosophical idiom. The image/idea of revelation as breakthrough is shaped using these terms: it is the *Gestalt* formed of *Gehalt'*s bursting through *Form* (*Inhalt*, as we shall see, gets eclipsed in the motion).

Tillich explicitly connects this *Gestalt* of breakthrough to the "ecstatic pictorial form [*Bildform*]" of Expressionist painting. However, Tillich's interpreters have been hesitant to confirm a causal connection between Tillich's experience of art and the categories of his thought. In subsection 3.2.c, I argue that such a connection exists. We must take Tillich's adventures with art seriously, as a force that shapes his categories of thought. In 3.2.d, I explicate Tillich's metaphysics of meaning, demonstrating its essential dependence on a correlation between speculative intuition and spiritual

[191] "Wenn Tillich vielmehr von "gewaltige[n] Klang der Grundoffenbarung in allen Religionen und Kulturen der Menschheit" spricht, so macht er diese Aussage vom "Standpunkt" der Heilsoffenbarung, vom "Standpunkt" des Christentums aus, das eben von der Heilsoffenbarung auf die Grundoffenbarung hinblickt." "Tillichs Offenbarungsverständnis," 93-94.

morphology. Given the significance of art to the genesis of Tillich's metaphysics of meaning, and given its essential reliance on the perception of holistic forms of spirit (*Gestalt*), I argue that the normative, categorical form of revelation in Tillich's philosophy is best understood on the order of an image. I then dwell on the category of "style." I argue that its significance extends beyond its decisive role in Tillich's philosophy of art, but rather can be seen to frame the entire discourse of perception at the heart of his metaphysics.

3.2.b Tillich's turn to a philosophy of meaning

Tillich's earliest philosophy of religion does not begin with meaning but with spirit. The previous chapter noted that Tillich's philosophy draws momentum from the early twentieth-century revival of German idealism, especially the philosophies of Schelling and Hegel. Thus, his view of the historical dialectics of spirit are heavily determined by Schelling's principle of identity ("the absolute as subject is equal to the absolute as object").[192] Tillich's dialectical idealism at this stage also bears a strong Fichtean inflection.[193] For Fichte, too, the dynamic structure of consciousness begins with a law of reflexive identity, that "everything is identical with itself."[194]

Thus, Tillich's earliest idea of revelation is oriented to a principle of spirit's self-

[192] See Robert P. Scharlemann, "Tillich on Schelling and the Principle of Identity," *The Journal of Religion* 56, no. 1 (1976): 105–12.

[193] Tillich imbibed Fichte through Fritz Medicus, his mentor at Halle. See Friedrich Wilhelm Graf and Alf Christophersen, "Neukantianismus, Fichte- Und Schellingrenaissance Paul Tillich Und Sein Philosophischer Lehrer Fritz Medicus," *Zeitschrift Für Neuere Theologiegeschichte* 11, no. 1 (2004): 52–78; Graf and Christophersen, "Die Korrespondenz Zwischen Fritz Medicus Und Paul Tillich," *Zeitschrift Für Neuere Theologiegeschichte* 11, no. 1 (2004): 126–147; and Danz, "Tillich's Philosophy" in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich*, ed. Russell Re Manning (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 174-175.

[194] See Christian Klotz, "Fichte's Explanation of the Dynamic Structure of Consciousness in the 1794-95 *Wissenschaftslehre*" in *The Cambridge Companion to Fichte*, eds. David James and Günter Zöller (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 65-92, esp. 69.

conscious identity with itself. The core of Tillich's early philosophy of history, as Christian Danz explains, is "a concept of truth, according to which the concrete determinations of [spirit's] self-relatedness are the means of representing the identity of self-relatedness."[195] That is, truth is mediated by the concrete historical expressions of spirit, which are representations of the self-relation that constitutes spirit's inner self-identity or in-difference with itself. "The concretely real posited by spirit is true," Danz continues, "when it is assimilated into the synthesis of self-relatedness and thereby becomes the means for representing self-relatedness."[196] This representation of self-relatedness names an event in which spirit becomes transparent to itself. This self-transparency is the epistemic condition of all true knowledge.

These speculative formulations bear historical and theological consequences, beginning with Tillich's determination that spirit's self-relatedness can be captured neither in purely ideal-universal representations of its truth (as in pure rationalism) nor purely concrete-individual representations of its truth (as in reductive historicism), but must be represented by both aspects simultaneously (through a tertium quid). This is a basic contradiction, Tillich believes. However, it is a contradiction that must be embraced as the necessary condition of true knowledge. On these grounds, Tillich understands Christ as the representation in which spirit grasps its self-relatedness in this contradictory self-relation. Christ is the historical event of spirit becoming transparent to itself – by paradoxically embracing the contradiction of its existence and so allowing the self-identity of its essence to prevail.[197]

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[195] Danz, "Tillich's Philosophy," 176.
[196] Danz, "Tillich's Philosophy," 176.
[197] For this view, see Tillich's 1911 Kassel Theses, "Die christliche Gewissheit und der historische Jesus," in *Ergänzungs- und Nachlassbände zu den Gesammelten Werken von Paul Tillich,* bd. 6, *Briefwechsel und*

Tillich's very early thinking about religion, then, presumes a basically Fichtean and Schellingian philosophical foundation. Between 1917 and 1918, he revises this philosophical foundation on the basis of some neo-Kantian ideas. Danz attributes this transformation in Tillich's thinking to a critique made by Emanuel Hirsch.[198] Hirsch claimed that Tillich had not grasped the divine as the "stranger," as "becoming aware of the 'other.'"[199] Tillich receives this critique as an indication of a deficiency in what he calls, in retrospect, his "scientific concept of God," i.e., his notion of God as the event of spirit becoming self-evident to itself. What he has overlooked, Tillich concludes, is the *paradox* implicit in existence. "God as stranger," he writes to Hirsch, "is nothing other than the expression of the original paradox of the existence of spirit."[200] By paradox Tillich no longer means that basic contradiction of the ideal-universal and concrete-particular at the foundation of to his earlier idealism. Rather, Tillich expresses this "original paradox" it in terms of *value*. In short, he concludes that there exists a polarity of infinity and finite value in the life of spirit. "God" names the consciousness of this polarity, which is really a kind of a double-consciousness: consciousness of spirit's indeterminate infinity (the abyssal depths in which all value originates) and, simultaneously, its determinate, normative value (the forms in which values become real and effective).[201] The existence of spirit rests upon this paradoxically polar unity of infinity and value, which spirit reflexively "grasps" as God.

Streitschriften. Theologische, philosophische und politische Stellungnahmen und Gespräche, ed. Renate Albrecht and René Tautmann (Frankfurt: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1983) [Hereafter *ENGW* VI], 31-50.
[198] Danz, "Tillich's Philosophy," 177-178.
[199] Quoted in Ibid., 177. See "Emanuel Hirsch, Die große religionsphilosophische Debatte" in *ENGW* VI, 95-136.
[200] Quoted in Danz, 178; *ENGW* VI, 122.
[201] Quoted in Danz, 177; *ENGW* VI, 105ff., 117, 119.

The language of value indicates the influence modern philosophies of meaning on Tillich at this significant turning point in his philosophical development. Tillich reports to Hirsch that in rethinking his philosophy he had "energetically made an assault on modern philosophy."[202] On Tillich's reading list were Husserl, Heinrich Rickert, Hermann Lotze, Christoph von Sigwart, Wilhelm Windelband, Emil Lask, Eduard von Hartmann, and Hans Lipps. In this cluster of philosophies, Tillich found a new perspective on his philosophy of spirit and a new idiom of philosophical expression. Most significantly, he comes to define "spiritual life" as "life in meaning or incessant creative meaningfulness."[203] The philosophy of spirit and its dialectics of self-relatedness that had defined Tillich's early thinking are transposed into a framework of meaning. Meaning and value become Tillich's ground-level (and abyss-level) idiom for speaking about the unconditioned in relation to reality, both in metaphysical and epistemological terms.

Tillich deploys his new philosophical outlook in the seminal 1919 address "On the Idea of a Theology of Culture." In the address, Tillich makes clear that his philosophy of religion cannot be reduced to metaphysical or epistemological grounds alone. Tillich states that the unconditioned to which religion directs consciousness is "what is beyond being, what is simultaneously and absolutely nothing and something."[204] Lest "nothingness" and "somethingness" cause his auditors to fall back on categories of being, Tillich clarifies: "even the predicate 'is' conceals what is at issue here, because it is not a question of some actual being that concerns us, but of an actuality of meaning, indeed, the ultimate and most profound actuality of meaning that convulses everything and builds

[202] Quoted in Danz, 177; *ENGW* VI, 98ff.
[203] Quoted in Danz, 178; *ENGW* VI, 125.
[204] Tillich, "On the Idea," 25.

everything anew."[205] All of the pronouncements regarding the essence and knowledge of religion that follow rest on the presumption that religion abides in the realm of "meaning-reality" (*Sinnwirklichkeit*). Rickert's transposition of spirit into the register of meaning lies just behind these reformulations.[206]

This turn to meaning lays the groundwork for Tillich's fundamental metaphysics as the "the science of the functions of meaning and their categories," which forms the foundation of his philosophy of culture in general, and thus also the foundation of his agenda for the cultural sciences, including the cultural science of religion. Thus, Tillich's turn to meaning bears consequences for his ideas of truth and revelation. In his very early thinking, Tillich had predicated truth and revelation on an event in which spirit becomes self-transparent to its inner indifference with itself, its essence as self-identity. This criterion of self-transparency remains in Tillich's new way of thinking. However, it is transformed by his new way of thinking about that "original paradox" that accompanies all meaningful life: the polar unity between infinity and value, between the formless depths in which the real has its origin and the circumscribed, finite forms in which it is concretely determined. These finite, concrete forms become, in Danz's words, the "medium for the representation of [spirit's] self-relatedness."[207] Tillich now defines the event of spirit's self-transparency as the real appearance of that "original paradox" within this medium of representation. Revelation manifests the co-presence of infinity and value – the infinitude of spirit and the finitude of its historical determinants – within the forms of meaning generated by culture.

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[205] Tillich, "On the Idea," 25.
[206] See Chapter Two, Section 2.5.
[207] Danz, "Tillich's Philosophy," 180; *Ergänzungs- und Nachlassbände zu den Gesammelten Werken von Paul Tillich,* bd. 12, *Berliner Vorlesungen I*, ed. Ermann Sturm (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2001), 402.

In the figure of "breakthrough," Tillich's notion of revelation as the manifestation of reality's "original paradox" takes on a categorical and normative definition.[208] In the programmatic, metaphysical section of the 1919 address, Tillich gives a concise formulation of revelatory process of "breakthrough": "The revelation of an overwhelming substance occurs in this way: form becomes more and more inadequate for the reality that is supposed to be contained by it, so that this reality in overwhelming abundance shatters it. And yet this overwhelming and this shattering are themselves still form."[209] The definition presumes that every meaningful act has its inexhaustible ground in the unconditioned import of meaning-reality. However, for Tillich, every meaningful act, by its nature, also opposes this ground by a tendency to assert its material nature as the self-sufficient ground of its own meaning, to oppose its *Inhalt* to its *Gehalt*. In the event of breakthrough, this resistance of matter is itself forcefully opposed by the assertion of import as absolute. First, "form loses its necessary relation to content [*Inhalt*], because content disappears before the overwhelming fullness of import [*Gehalt*]. Hence form assumes a kind of detachment, as if it were free floating."[210] Standing thereby "in an immediate relation to import," form "allows itself" to be shattered by import." That is the force of breakthrough.

However, this violent contradiction of form does not result in a formless act of meaning, something beyond the grasp of consciousness. If that were the case, it could not be a figure of Tillich's philosophy of meaning at all. Rather, it is itself a configuration of cultural forms, the medium of spirit's representation of its self-relatedness. Thus, "this

[208] For an exhaustive treatment of Tillich's notion of revelation as paradoxical breakthrough see Uwe Carsten Scharf, *The Paradoxical Breakthrough of Revelation: Interpreting the Divine-Human Interplay in Paul Tillich's Work 1913-1964* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1999).
[209] Tillich, "On the Idea," 27.
[210] Ibid.

overwhelming and this shattering are themselves still form….by letting itself in its naturalness be shattered by substance [*Gehalt*], [form] becomes form in a paradoxical sense."[211] Indeed, paradoxically, it is only as form is shattered "in its naturalness" that form may be filled with import, and so complete the act of meaning-fulfillment. Thus, "breakthrough," as a figure of thought, comes to circumscribe Tillich's philosophical idea of (fundamental) revelation. Metaphysically speaking, Tillich's idea of revelation is contained with this process of form-shattering breakthrough.

3.2.c Art as the background of Tillich's philosophy of meaning

In the breakthrough-process of revelation spirit beholds an ecstatic representation of its relation to the unconditioned. By Tillich's own testimony, visual art played a key in role in leading him to his understanding of revelation as breakthrough. Not only does he claim to have derived his "fundamental categories" of form and import from his experience of art, he also explicitly states that the figure of breakthrough derives from the pictorial figures of modernist art. "It was above all Expressionism, which broke out in the first decade of the twentieth century in German painting…that opened to me the form-shattering power of import and the ecstatic pictorial form [*Bildform*] that necessarily follows. The category of 'breakthrough' that was decisive for my doctrine of revelation was won in connection with this."[212] By Tillich's own account, his idea of revelation as breakthrough in some sense originated with his experience of art.

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[211] Ibid., 26, 27.

[212] "Es war vor allem der Expressionismus, der in der deutschen Malerei im ersten Jahrzehnt des 20. Jahrhunderts aufgebrochen war und sich nach dem Krieg öffentliche Geltung, zum Teil unter schweren Kämpfen mit kleinbürgerlichem Unverständnis, verschafft hatte, an dem mir die formzersprengende Kraft des Gehalts und die ekstatische Bildform, die daraus notwendig folgt, aufging. Die für meine Offenbarungslehre maßgebende Kategorie des ‚Durchbruchs' wurde im Zusammenhang damit gewonnen."

And yet, on this issue, few of Tillich's interpreters take him at his word. Some feel the need to qualify the direct connection that Tillich draws between aesthetic experience and his categories of thought. For instance, John Powell Clayton concludes that art played only "a heuristic role" in "Tillich's initial formulation of his dialectic of form and substance (*Gehalt*)."[213] James Luther Adams appears to go further, acknowledging that Tillich's "concepts of form and import as applied to painting and to culture in general seem to have been *derived*" from his "interpretation of art," especially expressionism.[214] However, Adams does not notice, and so does not treat, the circularity implicit in this statement: that Tillich's fundamental categories of form and import should at once *derive from* and *be applied to* a singular area of culture: art, and painting in particular. Thus, Adams goes on to treat art as an area of application, as do all of Tillich's interpreters on this subject. They are well justified in doing so, for this is how Tillich himself treats art in all his systematic texts that deal with the subject. For instance, in the 1919 *Kulturvortrag* he speaks of expressionist painting as "a particularly impressive example" of his general argument.[215] And in multiple texts, including "On the Idea," *The Religious Situation,* and *The System of the Sciences*, Tillich's thoughts concerning art fall after the programmatic development of his metaphysics or theology of culture and their shared semantic structure, precisely as an area of application.

However, Michael Palmer is right to suspect that expressionist painting is more than an example of Tillich's argument, but is rather "*the theology of culture at work*."[216]

Ergänzungs- und Nachlassbände zu den Gesammelten Werken von Paul Tillich, bd. 5, eds. Renate Albrecht and Margot Hahl (Stuttgart and Frankfurt: Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1980) [Hereafter *ENGW* V], 177.
[213] John Powell Clayton, *The Concept of Correlation: Paul Tillich and the Possibility of a Mediating Theology* (Berlin: DeGruyter, 1980), 223.
[214] Adams, *Tillich's Philosophy*, 93.
[215] Tillich, "On the Idea," 30.
[216] Michael Palmer, *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Art* (Berlin: DeGruyter, 1984), 36. Emphasis original.

Indeed, expressionist art is so powerful an example of Tillich's category of revelatory breakthrough that one may wonder if his idea of revelation is *fit to the purpose* of intuiting the absolute in visual art. As has been noted, there is something curiously cyclical about a method of discerning the religious substance of art (and every other realm of cultural-spiritual life) whose basic categories of analysis are themselves derived from art. Might not Tillich's metaphysics of meaning, then, really be a metaphysics of the meaning *of art*? His theology of culture's religious substance, in fact, a theology of *art's* religious substance? His philosophy of religion, a romantic religion of art?

These possibilities touch on an underlying concern held by Tillich's interpreters: that Tillich's philosophical theology may reduce to the kind of romantic "aesthetic theology" as would become the target of Hans urs von Balthasar's attack in his own system of "theological aesthetics."[217] Tillich himself is careful to avoid such a reduction of religion to aesthetics. He insists that revelation is *not* essentially aesthetic. "Revelation is initially a religious concept," he states. "Wherever it is used, for example in the sense of artistic revelation, it has been derived and has either become a phrase or been used in the opinion that this is a fundamentally religious matter, as in romantic art theory."[218] To circumscribe revelation to the realm of art would betray the nature of the religious relation to the unconditioned. This relation itself is unconditioned and thus cannot be subsumed by any discrete function of consciousness, whether conceptual (Hegel), moral (Kant), or aesthetic (Schelling with regard to art, Schleiermacher with regard to feeling).

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[217] Hans urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord: A Theological Aesthetics*, vol. 1, trans. Erasmo Leiva Merikakis (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1982), 38, 79ff.

[218] "Offenbarung ist jedenfalls zunächst ein religiöser Begriff. Wo er sonst gebraucht wird, etwa in Sinne von künstlerischer Offenbarung, da ist er abgeleitet und entweder zur Phrase geworden oder in Meinung gebraucht, dass es sich hier um eine Grunde religiöse Sache handelt, wie in romantischen Kunstlehre." *Ergänzungs- und Nachlassbände zu den Gesammelten Werken von Paul Tillich,* bd. 11, ed. Erdmann Sturm (Berlin and New York: De Gruyter and Evangelisches Verlagswerk, 1999), 44.

Tillich's rejection of these transcendental concepts of religion precludes any categorization of his philosophical theology (early or late) as "merely" aesthetic mysticism.

However, it is notable that, for Tillich, revelation stands in such close proximity to the realm of art and the aesthetic that he must resolutely insist upon their essential distinction. In some places in Tillich's early writings, this distinction between the religious and the aesthetic is nearly elided. As Donald Weisbaker observes Tillich's early "reflections upon art often melded with, influenced, and were influenced by his reflections upon theology," such that "at times the two modes of reflection are difficult to separate."[219]

Difficult, if not impossible. For instance, in the 1921 essay, "Religious Style and Religious Material in the Plastic Arts," the category of artistic *style* – so decisive in Tillich's analysis of art's religious import – seems to become decisive also in Tillich's view of cultural meaning in general. "All art is religious," Tillich writes, "not because everything of beauty stems from God…but because all art expresses a depth-content, a position toward the unconditioned."[220] This "position toward the unconditioned," or what Tillich also calls an artwork's "definite basic orientation to reality in general," is manifest

[219] Donald Weisbaker, "Aesthetic Elements in Tillich's Theory of Symbol" in *Kairos and Logos: Studies in the Roots and Implications of Tillich's Theology,* ed. John Jesse Carey (Atlanta: Mercer University Press, 1984), 267.

[220] Tillich, "Religious Style and Religious Material in the Fine Arts" in Ronald J. Sider, *Karlstadt's Battle with Luther: Documents in a Liberal-Radical Debate* (Wipf and Stock, 2001). Tillich's indifference to the aesthetic beauty of art further attests his indebtedness to formalism in art history. It also puts him at odds with the tradition of "theological aesthetics" stemming from von Balthasar, which assumes a neo-Platonic model of ascent to the infinite through the perception of beautiful proportions. For a representation of "theological aesthetics" in this tradition see David Bentley Hart, *The Beauty of the Infinite: The Aesthetics of Christian Truth* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004). For a polemical take on the "sublime" aesthetics of early dialectical theology from the perspective of this tradition John R. Betz, "Beyond the Sublime: The Aesthetics of the Analogy of Being (Part One)," *Modern Theology* 21, no. 3 (2005): 367–411, and idem, "Beyond the Sublime: The Aesthetics of the Analogy of Being (Part Two)," *Modern Theology* 22, no. 1 (2006): 1–50.

in its style. "The fact of style decides for the religious quality of all art and culture."[221] Notably, Tillich states that style decides for the religious quality of all art *and* culture, suggesting that he views style as a category intrinsic to the religious morphology of culture as such, not art alone. In the sentence that immediately follows, he writes "these thoughts…I first expressed in my address 'On the Idea of a Theology of Culture.'" In that address, Tillich indeed discusses art, heralding the "strong religious passion…striving after expression" in the art of early German modernism.[222] However, nowhere does he mention style. In the 1921 essay, Tillich intends to say that his religious analyses of particular works of art rests upon a foundation of ideas developed in the 1919 address. However, he comes close to saying that the concept of style that is so decisive to his applied analysis of art belongs to that general foundation of analysis itself.

At the very least, this apparent slippage indicates that Tillich continued to work out the basic categories of his religious metaphysics within the domain of visual art. Another mention of style reveals more. In *The Philosophy of Religion*, Tillich remarks that "in every act of apprehending the conditioned forms the ultimate attitude or relation to the unconditioned is a decisive element, whether it involve aesthetic style or scientific method."[223] Tillich against makes style the decisive element in the apprehension of the unconditioned within the condition, here merging aesthetic style with scientific method. I will return to the category of style below. At this point, I only wish to underline its place on the boundary between argument and example, between the idea and its application, in Tillich's religious philosophy of culture.

[221] Tillich, "Religious Style," 52.
[222] Tillich, "On the Idea," 30.
[223] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 36.

The entwinement between visual art and the major categories of Tillich's metaphysics may even warrant a reconsideration of the account of Tillich's 1918 turn to a philosophy of meaning given above. As construed by Danz, Tillich's 1918 turn to a philosophy of meaning is occasioned primarily by Hirsch's theological critique of Tillich's idealism and the subsequent influence of neo-Kantian philosophies of value. No doubt these factors played major roles. However, might it not also be the case that Tillich's revelatory experience of art and the "reflection and philosophic and theological interpretation" that followed motivated his turn to a semantic framework for the interpretation of being as meaning? Form, content, and import are semantic categories generally applicable across every meaningful domain, including those of narrative, poetry, drama, and visual art of various media. However, with regard to Tillich's religious metaphysics, they apply most readily to the visual-pictorial domain. This fact is reason enough to reconsider the extent of art's formative role in Tillich's philosophical development.

Tillich's postwar encounter with visual art was not limited to the epiphanic revelation of Botticellli's "Madonna and Child with Singing Angels" in Berlin. During his time teaching in Berlin and Dresden, Tillich immersed himself in the avant-garde artistic scenes of those cities. He made regular trips to Dresden galleries, where he was likely to have viewed work by members of the *Brücke* group, the seminal group of German Expressionism founded by Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and Karl Schmidt-Rotluff. Tillich established social relationships with artists and discussed the new ideas surrounding modern art.[224] He seems to have read the passionate manifestos of Wassily

[224] *ENGW* V, 177.

Kandinsky and Franz Marc.[225] Further, he made a concerted study of modern art, largely under the tutelage of his childhood friend, the art historian Eckart von Sydow (whose own work is deeply influenced the formalism of Wölfflin and Wilhelm Worringer). He studied the writings of the art historian G. F. Hartlaub (Wölfflin's student at Berlin). Harlaub's and von Sydow's theories of religious art are the subject of the 1921 essay on the religious styles of art mentioned above.

These biographical facts cannot confirm or contradict a causal connection between Tillich's philosophy of religion and his encounter with art. However, they do underscore the weight of the "pictorial form" that "necessarily" follows from "the form-shattering power of breakthrough." Tillich's interpreters have focused on the *expressiveness* of this ecstatic, paradoxical form of shattered form.[226] This had led them to explore confluences between Tillich's concept of revelation and theories of art associated with German Expressionism and related movements such as Neue Sachlichkeit.[227] However, Tillich scholars have not given sufficient consideration to the fact that the figure of breakthrough – the core of Tillich's idea of revelation –carries with it, by necessity, a "pictorial form" in the first place, and what this implies about the close, nearly co-constitutive relationship between Tillich's philosophy of religion and the modern art theory in which he was immersed.

It is notable that Tillich uses the phrase "pictorial form" at all. Such terminology occurs rarely in pre-twentieth-century art history, but is found often in the seminal texts of formalist art criticism (most notably Wölfflin's *Principles of Art History*, and

[225] These writings are presumably among "the numerous statements" said to substantiate "the strong religious striving [in modern art] after expression" in "On the Idea," 30.
[226] Palmer, *Tillich's Philosophy of Art*, 24; Re Manning, *Theology at the End*, 132.
[227] See Palmer, *Tillich's Philosophy of Art*, 1-36; Re Manning, *Theology at the End*, 129ff.; Jeremy Begbie, *Voicing Creation's Praise: Towards a Theology of the Arts* (London: T&T Clark, 1991), 14-20.

thereafter in many of the landmark texts of modern art theory and art history, from Worringer to Erwin Panofsky). These texts are predominately concerned with the form of the artwork as a visual structure, rather than its iconography as a visual text or its material history as a cultural artifact. This formalist concern signals a epochal shift away from cultural-historical methods of art history and toward visual-morphological methods of art criticism. I am not claiming that Tillich read these art historical texts, or that he self-consciously appropriated their formalist frameworks. However, by the time of Tillich's discovery and study of modern art, formalist idiom had become common currency among avant-garde practitioners and theorists of modern art. Tillich was not only well familiar with many of these theorists, but, in publishing his own theory of art, counted himself among their ranks.[228]

In those theorists concerned with "the spiritual in art" (Kandinsky, Marc, Paul Klee), the idiom of formalist art analysis was infused with the kind of deep spiritual import that pulses in Tillich's own religious theory of art.[229] An emphasis on the

[228] Tillich was interested in shaping the world of art, not only interpreting it. This contravenes a principle he himself lays out in the 1919 address on the theology of culture. He holds that the theorist and theologian of culture cannot be "directly culturally creative," lest the theorist compromise the autonomy of the cultural process. Rather, the theologian may "reproach" the culture at hand for lacking in religious substance and may "point generally in the direction" of culture's religious fulfillment. In his American period, Tillich was given a more prominent platform for his reproaches and indications. Indeed, by his own earlier standard, he probably crossed the line into the "direct" formation of culture with his curatorial role in the 1959 Museum of Modern Art (MOMA) Exhibition Masterpieces of Religious Art. Even more formative were his roles in setting the agenda for the MOMA under the administration of its founding director the art critic Alfred Barr (an active Presbyterian) and establishing, in 1961, the Society for the Arts, Religion, and Contemporary Culture, which Tillich cofounded with Barr and Marvin Halverson, fellow theologian and executive member of the National Council of Churches. In these ways, Tillich exerted significant influence in shaping the vaguely cubo-expressionistic aesthetic of American liberal Protestant culture in the midcentury and, perhaps even more broadly, as Sally Promey has argued, a perceived equivalence between "authentic" art and "authentic" religion. See Promey, "Visible Liberalism: Liberal Protestant Taste Evangelism" in *American Religious Liberalism*, eds. Leigh Schmidt and Sally Promey (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2012), 88-89; Karla Cavarra Britton also discusses Tillich's active curatorial role in "Toward a Theology of the Art Museum" in *Religion in Museums*, eds. Gretchen Buggeln, Crispin Paine, and S. Brent Plate (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 21-28.

[229] It is not as thought Wölfflin's and Riegl's formalisms were devoid of expressiveness or "the spiritual." For instance, Wölfflin views the history of artistic style as an expression of "the broader history of spirit",

spiritually expressive power of art followed. However, this emphasis on expressiveness would not be possible without the prior concentration of the artwork's significance into its formal style. This formalist concentration to style stands behind Tillich's oft-noted indifference to the content *(Inhalt*) of religious art (its iconography or subject matter), and his insistence that the religious quality of art depends entirely on its formal dynamics. The inessentiality of the artwork's content, of course, corresponds to the inessentiality of *Inhalt* within the breakthrough-process of revelation. At the apex of the revelatory event of breakthrough, form lifts away from empirical content, so that it may be absolutely relativized to its inner import and so become the vehicle of import's immediate expression. Tillich's revelatory expressivism echoes that of Kandinsky, who declares "the absolute is not to be found in form. Form is always transient, i.e., relative, since it is nothing more than the necessary medium through which today's revelation can be heard."[230] However, for art to attain this *absolute* power of expression, the category of artistic form must first be elevated to the highest degree of significance within the necessarily *relative* realm of critical judgment. It must assume a high, free-floating status as *the* relevant feature within the artistic process of meaning-creation.

These comparisons intend to demonstrate a strong congruity between the semantic apparatus of modern formalist art theory, broadly conceived, and the semantic apparatus

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and Riegl's famed Kunstwollen ("will to art") prefigures the pathos-laden yearning of Expressionism. On the pathos at the heart of Wölfflin's formalism see Chapter Four, Section 4.2.b. Indeed, these earlier programs of formalist art theory may *better* accord with Tillich's own religious philosophy of art than do the views of the German Expressionists. As many of Tillich's interpreters have noted, the subjectivism of Kandinsky's and Marc's expressionism conflicts with Tillich's emphasis on the (absolute) objectivity of art's deep religious import. The philosophies of the canonical expressionists lean too far in a subjectivizing direction. Tillich sometimes elevates artworks of the *Neue Sachlichkeit* as examples of "belief-ful realism." However, he also suggests that *Neue Sachlichkeit* overcorrects for the Expressionists' mystical subjectivism by advancing a merely *factual*, not an absolute form of objectivity. By contrast, Wölfflin and Riegl predicated their philosophies of art on something closer to Hegel's objective history of spirit, which, in the final analysis, lies closer to Tillich's own view of the spiritual process immanent to creative expression.

[230] Wassily Kandinsky, "The Problem of Form" in *Voices of German Expressionism*, ed. Victor H. Miesel (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1970).

of Tillich's theory of meaning and revelation. However, my primary aim in this section is not to suggest that Tillich's philosophy of religion must be interpreted within the external context of modern art theory, and therefore it bears a visual-pictorial quality. Rather, my aim is to demonstrate that pictorial categories are *internally* dominant within Tillich's philosophy of meaning and revelation. Whether or not Tillich's 1918 turn to a philosophy of meaning is in part occasioned by his encounter with visual art, my claim is that a notion of pictorial form best captures the context of meaning immanent to Tillich's early philosophy of religion – its inner "meta-context" of meaningfulness – in which his early idea of revelation takes shape.

3.2.d Intuition and Gestalt: Tillich's "metalogical"-morphological method

The pictorial context of meaning presumed by Tillich's metaphysics and philosophy of religion can be glimpsed in the visual and morphological qualities of his early method. The aim of Tillich's metaphysics of meaning is to see the unconditioned import within the conditioned form of things. What matters (ultimately) in this perception of spiritual life is the dynamic relation of form and import, a relation that Tillich figures more than conceives. That is, spirit appears to Tillich according to its *Gestalt* more than its "idea." This is an aspect of Tillich's romanticism, what he calls his romantic "ability to perceive things abstract concretely."[231] Corresponding to this morphology of spirit is a mode of intuitive perception, by which the theologian-philosopher may apprehend the figures of culture, and, in them, their religious dimension. Tillich's method of metaphysics, then, rests on a morphological ontology of spirit and a corresponding epistemology of spiritual intuition.

[231] Tillich, "On the Boundary," 13.

As Hannelore Jahr has stressed, the category of *Gestalt* is the key to Tillich's early metaphysics.[232] The morphological features of Tillich's philosophy of spirit are plain to see. "The unconditioned import of meaning is the *prius* of all forms of meaning," Tillich writes, adding "the development of shape [*Gestalt*] is the prius of all shape-creation [*Gestaltung*]."[233] All existent forms of meaning-reality are realizations of the unconditioned's potency of form-creation. Thus, "we call a completely formed, self-contained existent a *Gestalt*."[234] *Gestalt* joins the semantic categories of form and import. It expresses the "individually creative synthesis" of form and import.[235] These two are necessarily joined in every realization of meaning. As Tillich explains, "The relation of substance [*Gehalt*] and form must be thought of as a line, one end of which represents pure form, the other, pure substance [*Gehalt*]. On the line itself, however, they are united."[236] Within the process of spiritual realization, this line is always in the process of becoming. Form and import exist along this line in a dynamic, "tension-filled polarity." *Gestalt* is the tension-filled, creative synthesis of form and import described by this line.

This synthesis of form and import as *Gestalt* also facilitates the synthesis of epistemology and ontology in Tillich's theory of metaphysics as meaning. Tillich often associates form with reason and import with being. In *Gestalt,* as Jahr writes, "the ontological and logical elements form/*Gehalt* or thought/being prove to be a *elements of*

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[232] Hannelore Jahr, "Der Begriff der 'Gestalt' als Schlüssel zur Metaphysik im Frühwerk Paul Tillichs" in *God and Being / Gott und Sein: The Problem of Ontology in the Philosophical Theology of Paul Tillich / Das Problem der Ontologie in der philosophischen Theologie Paul Tillichs*, ed. Gert Hummel (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989), 108-128, and Jahr, *Theologie als Gestaltmetaphysik: Die Vermittlung von God und Welt im Frühwerk Paul Tillichs* (Berlin: de Gruyter, 1989).
[233] Tillich, *Basic Principles of Religious Socialism* (1923), excerpted and translated in *Paul Tillich: Theologian of the Boundaries,* ed. Mark Kline Taylor (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 57.
[234] Tillich, *System of the Sciences*, 45.
[235] Tillich, *Basic Principles*, 58.
[236] Tillich, "On the Idea," 26.

meaning."[237] In short, Tillich's *Gestalt* thinking allows him to subsume problems of knowledge and problems of being under the problem of meaning in general. Rational form and irrational existence are conjoined in the living dynamic of *Gestalt*, in which both reason and being have their sense and existence.

Genealogically, the centrality of *Gestalt* to Tillich's method indicates a confluence of romantic metaphysics with those early twentieth-century philosophies of meaning so proximate to Tillich's own. Morphology, as a German intellectual tradition, has its origins in Goethe's romantic poetics and his poetical approach to the science of the organism in the *Metamorphosis of Plants*. Philosophically, Goethe's morphology presumes a mode of intuitive understanding that need not proceed from parts to the whole, i.e. discursively, as per Kant, but may grasp the whole immediately in a figure of the All in One.[238] Thus, morphological thinking plays an important role in romantic idealism, which, as explained in the introductory chapter of this study, also aims at a non-discursive mode of intuitive understanding against the grain of Kantian reason. Tillich's method of metaphysics must be located within this broadly romantic tradition.

However, Tillich's method of metaphysics is also inflected by the return of morphological thinking in early twentieth-century intellectual movements, many of which, like Tillich's "cultural science of religion," bore romantic roots in the nineteenth century while also striving for a modern, twentieth-century degree of scientific rigor. Thus Gilbert Merlio may detect traces of Goethe's *Anschauungslehre* in modern

[237] "Die Entsprechung zwischen Ontologie und Erkenntnistheorie und die Beschreibung der geisttragenden oder besser: geistverwirklichenden Gestalt als Telos beider weist auf einen inneren Zusammenhang hin, der über eine bloße Parallelität hinausgeht." "Der Begriff der 'Gestalt,'" 110.
[238] For historical and philosophical discussion of Goethe's "graphic thinking" see *Morphologie und Moderne: Goethes >anschauliches Denken< in den Geistes- und Kulturwissenschaften seit 1800,* ed. Jonas Maatsch (Berlin: de Gruyter, 2014).

programs of thought as diverse as Wilhelm Dilthey's and Georg Simmel's philosophies of life, Edmund Husserl's and Ernst Cassirer's symbolic idealism, Wilhelm Wundt's *Volk*-psychology, Karl Lamprecht's and Oswald Spengler's philosophies of history, and Wölfflin's and Worringer's formalist art history.[239] These genealogical threads form only a lattice into which Tillich's metaphysics and theology of culture could also be woven. Their real value for my analysis lies in the intellectual-historical connection they attest between methods of morphology and intuitive epistemologies.

The shapeliness of spiritual being correlates to the perceptual perspicacity of spiritual knowing. Jahr perceives this connection: "Understanding the meaning of being…means to see [*zu schauen*] the 'inner dynamic in the construction [*Aufbau*] of meaning-reality,' the interplay of form and *Gehalt* in the living *Gestalt* directed to the realization of the spirit."[240] According to Tillich's view of metaphysics as the science of meaning, knowledge of spirit is equivalent to understanding. And because the sense of spirit consists in its shape, understanding must come through a form of perception. "The cognitive attitude in metaphysics is the unity between the comprehension of form and the comprehension of import, between scientific and aesthetic intuition, between the *perception of being* and the *understanding of meaning."*[241] Tillich repeatedly talks about this perceptual understanding in the language of vision (*Schau*) and visual intuition (*Anschauung*). As Tillich writes in his later work, "seeing creates some union." The "seeing that really unites" we call "intuition." "Intuition. This means seeing into. It is an

[239] Glibert Merlio, "Goethe redivivus? Was heißt und zu welchem Ende betreibt man Kulturmorphologie im 20. Jahrhundert?" in *Morphologie und Moderne*, 273-278.
[240] "Den Sinn des Seins verstehen, heißt daher: die 'innere Dynamik im Aufbau der Sinnwirklichkeit,' das Zusammenspiel von Form und Gehalt zur lebendigen, auf die Verwirklichung von Geist gerichteten Gestalt zu schauen." "Der Begriff der 'Gestalt,'" 111.
[241] Tillich, *System of the Sciences*, 187.

intimate seeing, a grasping and being grasped."[242] In sum, intuition is epistemically basic to the tasks of metaphysics and the "cultural science of religion," because the objects of those sciences are only cognizable through their perceptible shapes.

Throughout the period under consideration, Tillich repeatedly returns to the problem of an intuitive method in metaphysics, philosophy of religion, and theology. In the 1919 *Kulturvortrag*, he calls for a "new intuitive method" of metaphysics. Tillich declares that the philosophical predominance of neo-Kantianism has resulted in a turn toward a narrow, formalistic kind of rationalism in the human sciences. "Current thinking wants to get beyond this," Tillich observes, as evident in the "new trend towards intuition."[243] This "new trend" desires to apprehend the deep, living import within the real. However, Tillich cautions, thought must not abandon the achievements of modern autonomous science. Metaphysics must not dive off into a scientifically incommunicable kind of religious intuitionism. Rather, it must develop a rigorous, but *theonomous* scientific method of metaphysics. It must be "theonomous" in its orientation not to the horizontal forms of cultural-spiritual life (all that autonomous science can comprehend) but also, and most fundamentally, to the vertical, depth dimension of meaning-reality.

In the *System of the Sciences*, Tillich responds to his own call for a new intuitive method of metaphysics. He calls this method "metalogical" – "logical because of the forms of thought, metalogical because of the import of being."[244] Tillich's "metalogic" intends to steer the course between mere "logism," which "does not do justice to the import of being," and mere "alogism," which "does not do justice to the forms of

[242] Paul Tillich, *The New Being* (University of Nebraska Press, 2005), 129.
[243] Tillich, "On the Idea," 31.
[244] Tillich, *System of the Sciences*, 39.

thought."[245] While rational in principle, this metalogical method remains fundamentally intuitional. Its goal is "the intuition of the unconditioned import within conditioned forms,"[246] a formulation in which resonates Schelling's notion of intellectual intuition as "the capacity to see the universal in the particular, the infinite in the finite, and indeed to unite both in a living unity."[247] Metalogic seeks "forms that express (without impairing their logical correctness) the fulfillment with existential import that is grasped by all these functions [of approaching being, i.e., aesthetic, ethical, social, and religious, as well as logical]."[248] The rationality of Tillich's intuitive method, then, lies in the formal coherence or propriety of its perceptions, rather than, say, the ability to demonstrate the causal connections between them.

Tillich's early efforts in theology also develop a method of intuition. In *Religiöse Verwirklichung* (1930) Tillich recommends that systematic theology adopt a method of "theological intuition of essences" (*Wesenschau*) or "religious-theoretical intuition [*Schau*]," in which "we turn neither to [religious] authorities nor to religious consciousness, but immediately to the whole of reality, and endeavor to uncover that level of reality which is intended in by the religious act."[249] These forms of theological insight resist the formless ether of mystical vision by tethering intuition to the symbolic forms of religious life and doctrine. If one can speak of an overarching method of Tillich's early theo-philosophical thought, it is, as Adams describes it, using the language

[245] Ibid.
[246] Ibid., 187.
[247] Schelling, *Werke* IV, 362.
[248] Tillich, *System of the Sciences*, 39-40.
[249] Tillich, *Religiöse Verwirklichung* (Berlin: Furche, 1930), 129. Cited and translated in Adams, *Tillich's Philosophy*, 13.

of philosophical idealism, "devised to intuit the Absolute in its relation to the relation to the relative," and also contains a drive "to see the One in the Many."[250]

This mode of intuition also bears a strong resonance with pictorial intuition, as Tillich believes that pictures are uniquely capable of presenting to awareness the unity of the conditioned and unconditioned, together and at once. In *The System of the Sciences*, Tillich recognizes a number of historical precedents to his intuitive method, suggesting that in Renaissance philosophy "this method was called the 'contemplation of the *coincidentia oppositorum*.' It may further be designated the "method of coincidence."[251] With nods to Schelling and Kierkegaard, Tillich remarks that it has also been named "intellectual intuition," "pure intuition," and comprehension of "the absolute identity" and of "the paradox."[252] The coincidence that metalogical intuition intends "to contemplate" is the coincidence of meaning's infinite depths and its determinate forms, that "original paradox of existence."

For Tillich, the *coincidentia oppositorum* at the heart of the real is most immediately graspable in the form of a picture. As he professes, "(i)t is indeed possible to see in a still life of Cézanne, an animal painting of Marc, a landscape of Schmidt-Rottluff, or an erotic painting of Nolde the immediate revelation of an absolute reality in the relative things; the depth-content of the world, experienced in the artist's religious ecstasy, shines through the things."[253] In these paintings, the absolute is *there* – as if with immediate presence. And yet, its *thereness*, so to speak, only appears within or alongside the relative form of its circumscribed figures. Conceiving such revelatory perceptions in

[250] Adams, *Tillich's Philosophy*, 191.
[251] Tillich, *System of the Sciences*, 187.
[252] Ibid.
[253] Tillich, "Religious Style," 54.

terms of a *cooincidentia oppositorum* raise prepositional quandaries (in the event of revelation, for Tillich, does import appear *within* form? *alongside*? *underneath*?), which recall the purposeful ambiguity of Lutheran sacramental theology ("Christ's body and blood are received in, with, and under the bread and wine.") Art, for Tillich, is the site (*sight!*) in which this paradoxical coincidence of infinity and form may become immediately, physically perceptible. Thus, while science may be "of greater importance in the rise of a spiritual situation… art is more important for its apprehension."[254] This is because art provides a form of pictorial-perceptual awareness of the unconditioned in the conditioned. The ruptured pictorial form of expressionist painting in particular, Tillich believes, presents the coincidence of the unconditioned and conditioned in their essential, meaning-fulfilling relation.

Thus, James Luther Adams is correct to say that *if* the function of art in Tillich's philosophy were understanding, "its aim would be that of *Theoria*, the pure apprehension of the essence of things."[255] "For us, *theory* does not of course mean knowledge," Tillich writes, "it means the meaning-fulfilling absorption of reality; it means *θεωρία*, in the sense of the pure intuition [*reiner Anschauung*] of objects. But in this sense science and art belong together."[256] The spectacle of art belongs with the *specere* of speculation. However, art's function is *not* purely theoretical, for Tillich, but also practical, and thus fundamentally oriented toward the expression of spirit, rather than its self-understanding. Art's "immediate task is not that of apprehending essence but that of expressing

[254] Paul Tillich, *The Religious Situation*, trans. H. Richard Niebuhr (New York: Henry Holt, 1932), 54.
[255] Adams, *Tillich's Philosophy*, 67.
[256] Tillich, *System of the Sciences*, 179.

meaning."[257] Once again, Tillich's religious metaphysics is not a romantic hymn to art, as the realm in which the absolute may be cognized absolutely.

However, art *is* uniquely disposed to manifest the unconditioned within the conditioned. Correspondingly, *theoria* is uniquely disposed to apprehend the unconditioned through a picture: not a concrete picture of art, but the *Gestalt* of "breakthrough," as it comes to function for Tillich as something like a categorical form of cognition. At this point, we may distinguish between Tillich's material account of meaning-fulfillment as it unfolds in cultural-spiritual life, and his theoretical account of meaning-fulfillment, as he, the metaphysician, seeks to reflexively "grasp" this process and it bring to conceptual form. At both levels, the form of breakthrough is the decisive element.

On the first level, it is plain to see that Tillich establishes "breakthrough" as the paradoxical form in and through which every actual, particular act of meaning must be fulfilled. Paradoxically, it is only as cultural forms of meaning are inwardly shattered that they attain an inward fullness of meaning. This is what makes them "revelatory." On the second, theoretical level, the philosopher's *idea* of this process must also bear the paradoxical form-shattered form of "breakthrough." The form of breakthrough must become the form in which the philosopher forms the representations of thought.

Metaphysical cognition, for Tillich, cannot grasp the unconditioned immediately, although that is its aim and purpose, namely, "to see the revelation of the unconditioned meaning in an interpretation of the meaning of the historical process." This is "the profound paradox inherent in metaphysics," i.e., that metaphysics "can grasp the

[257] Tillich, *The Religious Situation*, 53.

unconditioned only in the forms of the conditioned."[258] This means that the concepts of metaphysics must be created and cognized as symbols, as expressive vehicles for apprehending the unconditioned. Ultimately, Tillich's metaphysics, then, aims at "the ultimate, highest symbol of the unconditioned, the ideal unity of the elements of meaning, a unity that is both the goal and the ground all being and becoming."[259] In this ultimate symbol it aims to think the "*the absolute idea*."[260] This idea fulfills the task of metaphysics "to represent the structure of all existents and their unity as an expression of pure meaning."[261]

At this level of absolute synthesis, the crucible of thought leads again to the figure of breakthrough. On this point, it is worth quoting *The Philosophy of Religion* at length, as it narrates Tillich's struggle to appropriate "the unconditioned form" as the thought-form of his metaphysics.

> The import of meaning has for the form of meaning on the one hand the significance [*Bedeutung*] of meaningfulness; on the other hand it functions over against the form as the demand for an unconditioned fulfillment in meaning, a demand with which only the complete or perfect connection of all meaning could comply – the unconditioned form. However, the unconditioned form of meaning is an idea contradictory to the relation of form and import. The meaningfulness of all meaning is the ground, but it is also the abyss of every meaning, even of an unconditioned form of meaning. The idea that in an unconditioned form of meaning all ground of meaning exhausts itself would abolish the inner infinity of meaning; it would not be able to give of the possibility that meaning might sink into meaninglessness. The unconditioned meaningfulness of all meaning depends upon the awareness of inexhaustibility or meaning in the ground of meaning. A complete unity, however, would be an exhausting of the inner infinity of meaning. Nevertheless, the demand for this unity is present in every act of meaning; for only through the perfected unity of all meaning can meaning come to unconditioned realization, i.e., to form.[262]

[258] Tillich, *System of the Sciences*, 184.
[259] Ibid., 186.
[260] Ibid.
[261] Ibid.
[262] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 58-59.

Tillich's point is that any formal definition of meaning must presume some "unconditioned form" of meaningfulness as such, however, to unconditionally ascribe form to meaning is contradictory, because meaning overwhelms every conditioned form, and that is precisely how meaning fulfills itself. We have here premonitions of hermeneutic circles and surpluses of meaning inscribed into the theoretical foundation of Tillich's metaphysics.

As form strives with import in the domain of thought, Tillich's determinations regarding absolute insight take on the rhetoric of breakthrough: "Knowledge grasps being most completely when being is least subject to the forms of thought, when it most strongly resists them…The most profound grasp of being is the self-conscious renunciation of the attempt to grasp pure being; this is not a simple, naïve renunciation, but a conscious renunciation born from the supreme struggle for form, a renunciation that breaks through the form – indeed, the form of the renunciation is precisely this breakthrough."[263] Tillich's metaphysical *theoria*, his insight into being, is paradoxically predicated on the renunciation of the attempt to apprehend being as a possession of knowledge. The categorical form for apprehending the unconditioned is the form that allows its own form to be shattered.

The form of this renunciation makes it possible for consciousness to correspond to the unconditioned-absolute, and so to "grasp" it. Thus, "breakthrough" comes to represent not only the practical and expressive function of spirit (import bursting through the conditioned forms of being) but also the theoretical configuration of reflective spirit as it comes to grasp its own unconditioned ground (form reflexively folding back to grasp import).

[263] Tillich, *System of the Sciences*, 116.

3.2.e Style as Tillich's "third element" of meaning/perception

The previous section circled the figure of breakthrough. Breakthrough describes both the process by which the unconditioned import of meaningful reality comes to expression in actual forms of cultural-spiritual life and the ideal form of knowledge in which this process is understood. It remains to be shown why, exactly, a *pictorial* framework of interpretation is needed to make sense of Tillich's metaphysics of revelation.

Pictures continually encroach on Tillich's philosophical thinking. However, he does not often employ the language of picture in his philosophy of religion. He uses the language of *symbol* far more often. Indeed, Tillich's is a depth-charged philosophy of symbolic meaning, conceived in close conversation with neo-Kantian philosophies of symbolic meaning. It would seem, then, that one does not need the language of pictures *per se* to understand Tillich's idea of revelation. It would seem that the symbol is more fundamental to his conceptual framework.

The element of Tillich's philosophy of meaning that we have yet to consider closely, and the element that ties his metaphysics to an essentially pictorial framework of meaning, is the element of perception. In a 1940 essay, Tillich defines the symbol by its "its perceptibility," which "implies that something which is intrinsically invisible, ideal, or transcendent is made perceptible in the symbol and is in this way given objectivity."[264] The perceptibility of the ideal, he continues, "need not be sensuous," but may be "something imaginatively conceived." Speaking directly to the task of philosophy and

[264] Tillich, "The Religious Symbol," trans. by James Luther Adams and reprinted in *Daedalus* 87, no. 3 (1958): 3.

metaphysics, he adds that "(e)ven abstract concepts can become symbols if their use involves a perceptible element."[265] Such is the abstract concept-symbol of breakthrough at the center of Tillich's idea of revelation. But what is meant by its "perceptible element"?

I turn to the theory of religious epistemology given in Tillich's 1926 essay, "Kairos and Logos: A Study in the Metaphysics of Knowledge."[266] In a characteristic, now familiar habit of exposition, Tillich's presents this theory of religious knowledge as a triad of elements. The first of these elements is rational form. Using the rhetoric of decision common to the so-called *Krisis* theology of the period, Tillich states that "truth is realized in a decision regarding the unconditioned."[267] This decision presumes a moment of grace or a kairos. With regard to Tillich's epistemology, kairos denotes the "sphere of decision" in which the act of knowledge may become a *true* act. To know the truth, the self must stand before the unconditioned in a moment of absolute immediacy, i.e., without the mediation of universals, and therefore not primarily as the subject of universal reason, but as "personality." Thus, Tillich stakes true knowledge on an "irrational" moment in Kierkegaard's sense of the word. However, as this first element of meaning indicates, Tillich is concerned to balance this Kierkegaardian irrationalism with

[265] It is notable that developing his metaphysical definition of the symbol, Tillich once again veers toward the domain of pictorial art, supporting his claim that "words and signs originally had a symbolic character" by pointing not to dance, or song, or poetry but to the "the pictorial symbols of religious art," which were "originally charged with a magical power." "The Religious Symbol," 4. Weisbaker has argued that Tillich's theory of the symbol has its roots in the experience of art. See "Aesthetic Elements in Tillich's Theory of Symbol."

[266] There are numerous discrepancies between the translated version of the essay that appears in *The Interpretation of History* (1936) and the version that appears in *GW* IV, published under Tillich's close supervision in 1960. The discrepancies are likely the result of Tillich's own revisionary interventions. For the purposes of this study, I rely primarily on the earlier English translation made by Elsa Talmey. German equivalences are drawn from the 1960 version. On the scholarly difficulties presented by the existing editions of Tillich's collected works see Scharf's discussion of the sources in *Paradoxical Breakthrough*, 10-24.

[267] Tillich, "Kairos and Logos," *The Interpretation of History*, 141.

the need for rational order. He shares the neo-Kantians desire for a standard of objective validity, a universal logos. And he learns from the neo-Kantians to ground this logical order not in the unity of transcendental reason, but in the unity of culture. So far as culture, the self-interpretive life of spirit, presents the self with "logical necessity and alternatives," the ego "rests within the security of the logos."[268] In short, the irrationality of the kairos-moment must not obliterate the structures of universal logic, which yet "constitute the ego and it make it capable of deciding."[269] This is the first element of religious knowledge: the universal, rational order of logical necessity, presumed by the act of knowledge.

The second element of religious knowledge is the empirical world in which the act of knowledge is carried out. This is the concrete givenness of things. "In order that the personality can live in [this empirical world] as the material of its decision, it must stand opposite the Ego as reality, foreign to it and yet capable of interpretation by it."[270] This element encompasses all natural and historical reality. The ego must interpret the given world, making "slow progress" toward "the ideal of evidence." This process of slow interpretive labor – the "construction" or "shaping" of historical and scientific understandings of the world – is a necessary condition of the kairotic act of decision, in which the self grasps the unconditioned. There is, then, no possibility of a purely rational apprehension of the truth. The truth cannot be known so far as the logos "remains in itself," wrapped up in the universal structures of logical necessity.

These two elements present rational and empirical dimensions of Tillich's religious epistemology. However, "an epistemology whose problems lie between formal

[268] Ibid.
[269] Ibid.
[270] Ibid., 142.

evidence and material probability, that is, an epistemology which lies between rationalism and empiricism, must miss the element of decision in all knowledge."[271] These first two elements mirror the elements of form and content (*Inhalt*) in the triad of elements fundamental to Tillich's metaphysics. Taken by themselves, therefore, they miss the third element, import (*Gehalt*), and thus fall short of understanding the unconditioned meaning of reality. An epistemology that is only rational-empirical "overlooks a third element of knowledge which is neither formal nor material, and through which alone knowledge becomes a spiritual matter."[272] This third element is the "the meaningful interpretation of reality."[273] In other words, the third provides the necessary conditions for any and all meaningfulness in general.

It is this "third element" that concerns me. It designates, for Tillich, a basic view of reality that precedes and enables the task of its interpretation. "We are not speaking of a religious-metaphysical interpretation of our world as a special task, but of an understanding of reality, such as is inherent in all scientific work."[274] This third element is not a particular interpretation of given reality, but a "fundamental interpretation" of reality as a whole. These fundamental interpretations of reality are "rooted neither in formal evidence [rationalism] nor in material probability [empiricism], but in original views [*gründenete Anschauungen*], in basic decisions."[275] Such original views or basic intuitions are fundamental to both the form and material content of knowledge. For Tillich, the goal of all knowledge is to produce normative judgments about the meaningfulness of the world – e.g., whether a particular act of meaning is more or less

[271] Ibid., 142-143.
[272] Ibid.
[273] Ibid.
[274] Ibid.
[275] Ibid.

meaning-full. However, "formal evidence…reaches only as far as the constitution of the field of meaning itself, not further, and no norm at all can be taken from the material."[276] Only this "third element" of knowledge can supply the field of meaning itself and thereby provide its normative coordinates. Without it, Tillich states, knowledge lacks the shape it needs to correspond to the human capacity for understanding. "The formative power [*Gestaltungskraft*] of knowledge, its actual life as distinguished from its technical tools, is achieved in this third element."[277]

The very perceptibility of spirit, then, depends upon the "original intuition" with which it is perceived, so far as that intuition sustains the field in which cultural-spiritual life has its meaning. Perception is the most apt word to describe this frame of understanding, and, indeed, Tillich uses the phrase "third element of perception" interchangeably with "third element of meaning." This "third element," for Tillich, is an epistemic limit concept. "It is important to ascertain whether this [third element] is not something which could become the object of perception in the act of knowing," Tillich queries, concluding that "the third element" cannot itself be perceived, for "(i)f that were attempted, the third element itself, which is beyond the plane of form and material, would become a formed material. This, however, would rob it of its special character,"[278] i.e., its special character as the ever-prior basis of the field of perception in which meaningful knowledge of the world must take shape.

Tillich is clear that this "third element" is the decisive hinge upon which all knowledge of the meaningful world turns. "In this third element of knowledge its decisive character, its genuine historic quality, its position in fate and in the Kairos is

[276] Ibid.
[277] Ibid., 144.
[278] Ibid.

rooted."[279] But, could Tillich be more gnomic at this critical juncture? What in the meaningful world does Tillich *mean* by this "third element" of meaning? Logic and empirical material – the first and second elements in Tillich's triad – are comparatively self-evident terms. They at least do not require repeated use of the cryptic jargon, "first element" and "second element" of knowledge. With regard to the "third element," Tillich does not give a categorical definition.

He identifies the "third element" as "a question of 'judgment,'" but even here places "judgment" in scare quotes. It is, indeed, a question of judgment, in the Kantian sense, so far as this "third element of knowledge" is responsible for bringing the given material of the world under some kind of form by which it may be meaningfully cognized. In Tillich's view of knowledge, there resonates the Hölderlinian proviso, discussed in the previous chapter, that all finite judgment (*Ur-teil*) presumes an act of original separation (*Ur-teilung*) as its *prius*, and thus, the subject is incapable of perceiving the absolute basis of its own relative judgments (absent some form of intuitive vision that transcends the capacity of discursive reason). In this romantic tradition, Tillich asserts that "the third element is that which can never become an object in the act of knowledge itself and which therefore naturally had to remain hidden from the formalistic and empirical epistemology."[280] The opacity of Tillich's description of the "third element of perception," then, is a consequence of its essentially hidden character.

And yet, Tillich states that the "third element" *may* become an object for "the metaphysics of knowledge,"[281] that is, for his own metaphysics as the intuitive science of meaning and its functions. How? At this critical point of exposition, Tillich swerves in a

[279] Ibid., 146.
[280] Tillich, "Kairos and Logos," 146.
[281] Ibid.

telling direction. In a section titled "method and attitude in knowledge" in an nearly book-length essay devoted to "the metaphysics of knowledge," which nowhere else discusses any other sphere of cultural activity, Tillich explains the pivotal "third element" of his religious epistemology with reference to artistic style:

> The third element…can become an object only for the metaphysics of knowledge. In the same way, style never lies in the intention of the creative artist, not even when he consciously follows a previous style. He can never consciously give himself *his* style. The style (the third element in artistic creation) is apparent only to the historian or observer [*geistesgeschichtlichen Bretrachter*] of art (who under certain circumstances can be the same person as the artist). In the act of knowledge, as well as in the act of artistic production, the duality of form and material is realized.[282]

Here again one detects an elision between the categories of Tillich's theory of art and the categories of his general theory of metaphysics as meaning. In this essay, Tillich is primarily concerned with the act of knowledge that corresponds to true knowledge of the unconditioned, i.e., revelation. That act of knowledge, it seems, can only be described in analogy with the act of artistic creation, at least so far its constitutive "third element" is concerned. In this analogy, "style" is the category through which the unobjectifiable field of perception that enables all knowledge itself becomes an object of knowledge for the metaphysician, just as the artist's own style, inscrutable to himself, may become visible to the disciplined observer of artistic style, the art historian.

One must be attentive to the historical and conceptual background of Tillich's terminology. Tillich conceives artistic style as an invisible structure of perception through which the artwork visibly realizes a unity of form and material. This notion of style does not drop from the sky, but originates, once again, in formalist aesthetics. And, once again, Wölfflin stands as a prominent point of origin. Wölfflin places style at the center of his

[282] Ibid., 146-147.

method. Like Tillich, Wölfflin is decidedly *not* concerned with questions of artistic beauty; he shuns the connoisseur's preoccupation with the "subjective" aesthetics of the beautiful in favor of a more rigorous, objective concern with the formal analysis of stylistic development. He conceives style in terms of "general forms of depiction" (*allgemeinsten Darstellungsformen*).[283] Thus, Wölfflin's method does not "analyze the beauty of Leonardo or Dürer, but it does analyze the element in which this beauty has taken shape."[284] That formative element is what Wölfflin most fundamentally means by style. Wölfflin's discriminates between artistic styles on basis of a series of morphological polarities (linear vs. painterly, plane vs. recession, closed vs. open form, multiplicity vs. unity, absolute vs. relative clarity) as they are realized by various forms of depiction. These forms of representation determine how the objects of the picture appear, but cannot appear themselves. Style "rises to the surface of the representation," Eva Schürmann comments on Wölfflin's understanding of pictorial representation, "but cannot itself become an object of representation."[285]

Tillich's conception of "style," as developed in his philosophy of art, mirrors Wöllflin's. First, in its eschewal of the aesthetics of the beautiful and its exclusive concentration on the morphological dynamics of form. However, more significantly, it reproduces the perceptual dimension of Wölfflin's notion of style. For Wölfflin, every art historical style is rooted in a form of visual intuition (*Anschauungsform*), by which the artist arranges the world in visual perception. "All artistic intuition [*Anschauung*] is bound to a certain decorative scheme, or – to repeat the expression – visuality crystallizes

[283] Wölfflin, *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe: Das Problem der Stilentwicklung in der neueren Kunst* (Basel: Benno Schwabe, 1948), 24.
[284] Ibid.
[285] Eva Schürmann, *Seeing as Practice: Philosophical Investigations into the Relation Between Sight and Insight* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019), 91.

for the eye under certain forms. In every new form of crystallization, however, a new side of the world's content [*Weltinhalt*] is revealed."[286] Styles, then, are discriminable according to the formal properties manifest in the visible composition of the artwork. However, their origins lay not in form, but in the artist's mode of visual-perceptual intuition, what Wölfflin regularly discusses as the artist's "way of seeing" (*Sehenform*) or "form of visual intuition." These categories support Wölfflin's formalist optics, according to which formal laws of visual perception determine how the world crystallizes before the artist's eye. These historical *Anschauungsformen*, for Wölfflin, are all-encompassing rules of world-perception: "worldviews" (*Weltanschauungen*),[287] "fundamentally different ways of seeing,"[288] or "different orientation[s] toward the world."[289]

Tillich's "third element" of knowledge is very aptly understood in analogy to this notion of style as a paradigm of visual perception. For Tillich, the "third element" is mode of "fundamental interpretation" encompassing the whole of the meaningful world. Further mirroring Wölfflin's theory of style, Tillich believes this overall awareness of the whole to be rooted in an "original intuition" (*gründenete Anschauungen*), which he also discusses in terms of "attitude" and "orientation." This original intuition corresponds to an awareness of whole, and this correspondence circumscribes the field of perception in which knowledge of the meaningful world takes shape. The structure is consonant to Wölfflin's theory of artistic style, wherein a fundamental intuition corresponds to a

[286] Wölfflin, *Grundbegriffe*, 266.
[287] For translation of Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* I rely on *Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Early Modern Art: One Hundredth Anniversary Edition*, trans. Jonathan Blower (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2015), 100.
[288] Wölfflin, *Principles*, 100.
[289] Wölfflin, *Principles*, 97.

world-encompassing law of optical perception, and this correspondence circumscribes the field in which the visible world is "crystallized." The act of religious knowledge, for Tillich, is likewise a *perceptual act*, by which the world of spirit crystallizes into certain forms.

We can go one step further. For both Tillich and Wölfflin, forms of fundamental intuition not only circumscribe a field of perception, but in some sense *produce* that field of perception. Wölfflin does not hesitate to equate "form of intuition" (*Anschauungsform*) with "form of productive imagination" (*Form der Vorstellungsbildung*).[290] The artist's way of seeing *makes* the world visible. So too, for Tillich, "fundamental intuitions" or "basic attitudes" towards the whole of reality play a creative role in producing the world as an interrelated, meaningful totality.

This creatively co-constitutive relation between the objects of perception and the act of perceiving is evident in the theory of meaning given in *The Philosophy of Religion*, which is also divided into a triad. The first element is an awareness of the "interconnection of meaning in which every meaning stands," which Tillich speaks of as a background "awareness of the totality" and simply as "the 'world.'"[291] The second is an awareness of the meaningfulness of the whole, for "(e)ven the totality of meaning need not be meaningful, but rather could disappear, like every particular meaning, in the abyss [*Abgrund*] of meaninglessness, if the presupposition of an unconditioned meaningfulness were not alive in every act of meaning."[292] The third, finally, is the demand placed on every particular act of meaning to fulfill, through its own mode of meaning-fulfillment,

[290] Wölfflin first employs the formulation, "Form der Vorstellungsbildung," in the sixth edition of *Grundbegriffe*. See Wölfflin, *Grundbegriffe* (Munich: Bruckman, 1923), ix.
[291] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 57.
[292] Ibid.

the unconditioned meaningfulness of the whole. "The demand for this unity is present in every act of meaning; for only through the perfected unity of all meaning can meaning come to unconditioned realization."[293] While the first element states that every particular act of meaning depends upon the meaningful whole, the third states that the meaningfulness of the whole – its ultimate meaningfulness – depends upon the particular creative act of meaning-fulfillment. Specifically, it depends upon how this act orients itself to the import of the meaningful whole, "the meaningfulness that gives to every particular meaning its reality, significance, and essentiality."[294] Thus, a reciprocal dependence exists between part and whole in the process of meaning-fulfillment.

A number of scholars have underscored the decisiveness of style within Tillich's religious theory of art.[295] Here I am suggesting that the category of style is just as decisive to Tillich's generally theory of meaning upon which that theory of art rests, so far as Tillich needs the language of style to describe the imaginatively-generated, holistic paradigm of perception in which his theory of meaning rests. The confluences between Tillich and Wölfflin noted above intend only to illuminate this feature of Tillich's philosophy of meaning.[296]

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[293] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 58.
[294] Ibid.
[295] For instance, Re Manning, "Tillich's Theology of Art" in *The Cambridge Companion to Paul Tillich,* 157; and Nuovo's "Tillich's Theory of Art and the Possibility of a Theology of Culture" in *Religion et culture: actes du colloque international du centenaire Paul Tillich, Universite Laval, Québec 18–22 aoút 1986*, ed. Michel Despland, Jean-Claude Petit and Jean Richard (Quebec: Presses de l'Université Laval/Éditions du Cerf, 1987). As Nuovo explains: "The principle of this disclosure [of an artwork's 'depth'] is the style of an artwork. It is by virtue of its style, and not of its form or content, that an artwork is religious," 394.
[296] Philosophically, the confluences between Wölfflin and Tillich can be largely attributed to their mutual debt to the neo-Kantians, many of whom conceive intuition as an active, productive faculty of cognition (as opposed to Kant's passive theory of intuition) and many of whom predicate validity on a holistic concept of reason, i.e. a perception of an interconnected whole composed of particular representations, rooted in culture. Both Tillich and Wölfflin also owe a debt to popular Diltheyian theories of *Weltanschauung*. For instance, Tillich writes, "Through the eager devouring of popular books on *Weltanschauung*, it was clear that theoretical and not practical mastery of existence would be my task and destiny." "On the Boundary,"

"Style" leads again to "picture." Style names the field of meaning in which form and import are shaped into meaningful figures of culture. In turn, every *Gestalt* of culture presumes a holistic horizon of meaning, a total *Weltbild*, which itself is correlated and in some sense posited or projected by a fundamental mode of envisioning the world, *Weltanschauung*. Every *Gestalt* or symbol of culture is the crystallization of such a perceptual paradigm of meaning. But, this is precisely what Wölfflin means by a picture: the crystallization of entire way of seeing and making visible the world. Every picture therefore contains "a full picture of the visible" (*ein vollkommenes Bild des Sichtbaren*).[297]

3.2.f The idea as image

We may now return to the central object of this section: the idea of revelation. My suggestion is that Tillich's conceives revelation, *qua* idea, as the ideal style or "form of presentation" that gives shape to the paradoxical *Gestalt* of breakthrough.

Revelation is a form of imaginatively configuring the meaningful world in correlation with a certain way of seeing, a certain mode of world-embracing intuition. Hypothetically, within the realm of spiritual-cultural life, there exist innumerable such paradigms, just as, for Wölfflin there theoretically exist innumerable kinds of historical styles. However, as Cassirer remarks of Wölfflin's theory of style, "(t)hese possibilities are not unlimited; as a matter of fact they may be reduced to a small number."[298] Cassirer

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17. My claim is only that, in Tillich, these features surface in distinctively visual-perceptual categories of thought.

[297] "Die linear Stil und die malerische Stil] sind zwei Weltanschauungen, anders gerichtet in ihrem Geschmack und ihrem Interesse an der Welt und jede doch imstande, ein vollkommenes Bild des Sichtbaren zu geben." *Grundbegriffe*, 31. Translation: Wölfflin, *Principles*, 100.

[298] Ernst Cassirer, *Essay on Man* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1944), 94.

refers to Wölfflin's binary dialectic of the linear and the painterly, the classic and baroque, into which, for Wölfflin, all historical styles may be classified. In Tillich's case, the possibilities may be reduced to his equally binary dialectic of theonomy and autonomy.

Theonomy and autonomy name basic religious attitudes toward the whole of reality. Theonomy denotes "a turning toward the unconditioned for the sake of the conditioned," while autonomy names "a spiritual attitude...directed toward the conditioned, and toward the unconditioned only to support the conditioned."[299] These two attitudes stand in a dialectical relation, such that Tillich conceives "theonomy" not as the negation of autonomy, but its synthetizing sublation. Theonomy overcomes the simple opposition between autonomy and heteronomy, through which autonomous awareness first emerges. It deepens autonomy into an awareness of the unconditioned basis of all creaturely freedom. In any given act of meaning, these two basic attitudes determine how form and import are synthetically conjoined, whether in a form-dominant manner or a *Gehalt*-dominant manner. Tillich sets the criterion: "The more form the more autonomy; the more *Gehalt* the more theonomy."[300] Theonomous acts give priority to import, and autonomous acts give priority to form. However, before these attitudes come to bear on particular meanings, they decide for the whole field of perception of the meaningful world, at the level of the universal unconditioned meaning.[301] Thus, the holistic paradigm of meaning presumed by any act of meaning must also be more or less theonomous or autonomous.

[299] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 203.
[300] Tillich, "On the Idea," 26.
[301] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 58.

Tillich's idea of revelation amounts to this formal matrix of world-perception, which is to say: revelation is a style or a theonomous manner of presentation or depiction (*Darstellung*). It is a particular manner of positing and configuring the conditioned, meaningful world. Revelatory forms of culture, then, are predicated on theonomous acts of creative perception, acts that form a meaningful world on the basis of what cannot be captured or conditioned by any conditioned form of meaning. Such theonomous acts of perception can be carried out in every region of cultural activity: art, relation, even speculative reflection itself.

Tillich's own science of religion is an attempt to enact this theonomous style of breakthrough as a style of speculative cognition. His philosophy of religion must generate an idea of revelation in the style of revelation. However, given this reflexivity, its idea of revelation can be nothing but that style of cognition itself. The idea cannot be a "concept" or any other constructed possession of knowledge. This is because, it is precisely the style of revelation to break through the formal confines of the concept. "If the concept of revelation grasps a reality, a reality that also concerns us, perhaps as the only reality that unconditionally concerns us, then it cannot be the reality of an object that belongs to it, but only the reality of an idea."[302] He continues: "An object can be grasped at anytime by concepts or by actions. An idea is not so available."[303]

As we have said, concepts can serve as symbols to express the unconditioned. The science of metaphysics fundamentally relies on such concept-symbols. The idea of revelation, however, is not a conceptual figure expressive of the unconditioned, but the

[302] "Wenn der Begriff der Offenbarung eine Realität fasst, eine Realität, die auch uns angeht, vielleicht als einzige Realität uns unbedingt angeht, so kann es nicht die Realität eines Gegenstandes sein, die ihr zukommt, sondern nur die Realität einer Idee." "Die Idee der Offenbarung," *GW* VIII, 31.
[303] Tillich, "Die Idee der Offenbarung," 31.

very form through which the unconditioned is figured and expressed in thought. Tillich's figure of "breakthrough" may be his concept of revelation, then, but his idea of revelation is "not so available." Thus, although we have referring to Tillich's "idea" of revelation as breakthrough, that is not quite right. "Breakthrough" is Tillich's symbol-concept of revelation, *through which* he intends to grasp and express the purely unconditioned form of revelation, which escapes all conceptualization. The "idea," strictly speaking, would be that categorical unconditioned form itself, what gives shape to the symbol-concept. It would be the unconditioned "form of presentation" through which the abstract concept "breakthrough" becomes an object for cognition.

This does not mean that the idea lacks perceptible form, only that it is a completely ideal perceptible form. The idea, for Tillich, is not a shapeless mental entity. It is an *eidos,* in the original Greek sense of a shape or figure. Much like Husserl's phenomenological intuition, Tillich's metalogical intuition strives after a perception of the transempirical *eidos* that abides as the form-giving essence of the spiritually perceptible world. It does only by making this *eidos* the ever-prior unconditioned form in which it thinks, not by capturing it as a conceptual possession.

This unconditioned form of meaning-fulfillment, the idea expressed by "breakthrough," cannot subsist apart from the act of its perception. This is because the perceptual act by which it is known *belongs* to the medium in which that form is realized. Thus, Tillich stipulates that "(a)n idea is always correlative to a vision of ideas [*Ideenschau*]. That is why it cannot be proved: only the place can be exhibited where it must be looked for, which one must look to if one wants to see it. Whether one sees it is

not decided with this exhibition, but depends on the inner direction."[304] The idea is only visible to the one who perceives it from a corresponding point of view, i.e., to the one who sees with a theonomous "inner direction" or "fundamental intuition." The place of vision is there "objectively," but the eye must *take its place* there, "subjectively."

The analogy to Mitchell's image-picture distinction is now apparent. Like the image, the idea of revelation appears "across media." It is an archetypal form of spiritual seeing and speculative knowing. In turn, the symbolic forms of culture and the symbol-concepts of thought are "the image as it appears in a material support or a specific place."[305] The concept of revelation as "breakthrough" appears in the as-yet abstract medium of thought. It becomes the abstract, conceptual norm for judging all concrete instances of revelation – whether in art or religion or other regions of culture.

The analogy is not flawless. For Mitchell, "a picture is a material object, a thing you can burn or break or tear," while the image is beyond breaking and tearing. For Tillich, by contrast, the image of revelation is an image of complete breakage. The ideal form of revelation *is* the pure, unconditioned form of breaking – but it is a breaking unto wholeness, a tearing unto restoration, a disfiguration unto figurative fulfillment. While Tillich develops this ideal image of revelation at the abstract level of a metaphysical concept, one would be right to perceive in the violent self-effacement of its ideal form the trace of one revelatory picture in particular: namely, the New Testament picture of Christ crucified.

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[304] "Eine Idee ist immer korrelativ auf eine Ideenschau. Darum lässt sie sich nicht beweisen: Es lässt sich nur der Ort aufweisen, wo sie gesucht werden muss, auf den man hinschauen muss, will man sie sehen. Ob man sie aber sieht, das ist mit diesem Aufweis nicht entschieden, das hängt von der inneren Richtung ab." "Die Idee der Offenbarung," 31.
[305] Mitchell, *Image Science*, 16.

3.3 The Picture of Revelation in the *Marburg Dogmatics*

3.3.a Picture-talk in Tillich's Christology

The second tier of my analysis moves from philosophy to theology, from idea to fulfillment, from Tillich's idea of revelation as *Grundoffenbarung* to his concrete intuition of *Heilsoffenbarung* in the New Testament. At this point, Tillich's rhetoric makes an explicit turn to pictorial language. Tillich begins to speak of the "picture of Christ" in the 1925 Marburg *Dogmatik*. It also appears in Tillich's substantial revisions to the translated portions of *Religiöse Verwirklichung* (1930) that appear in *The Interpretation of History* (1933), wherein he names the 1930 text as his "chief theological work."[306] In this section, it is my aim to situate Tillich's theological "picture of Christ" within his theoretical metaphysics described in the previous section, demonstrating its dependence on the framework of visual perception implicit in his general philosophy of meaning. Tillich's theological picture of *Heilsoffenbarung* is an outworking of Tillich's philosophical image of *Grundoffenbarung*. However, I will also suggest that the general categories of Tillich's metaphysics, including its ultimate category – the unconditioned form, absolute idea – is reciprocally determined by his intuition of Christ as its concrete fulfillment. The picture, in this sense, precedes the image. This relationship of reciprocal determination between image and picture, between Tillich's philosophical idea of revelation and its theological elaboration, underscores that both rest within a holistic paradigm of perception – one as the center, the other as circumference.

Before turning to its occurrence in Tillich's early theological writings, it must be noted that the expression "picture of Christ" is not original to Tillich's theological lexicon. It occurs throughout nineteenth-century theology and is related to the turn

[306] Tillich, "On the Boundary," 27.

toward methods of historical interpretation. As Alister McGrath explains, "(t)he term is used frequently to refer to the 'understanding of Christ' associated with a given thinker or school of thought, especially where extensive historical reconstruction of the personality of Jesus is involved, as with liberal Protestantism."[307] Indeed, Schleiermacher – that paragon of "liberal Protestantism" – puts forward a *Christusbild* that, like Tillich's, is correlated to a form of intuitive religious understanding. As we shall see, Schleiermacher's *Christusbild* is the decisive model for Tillich's own. Neither is the terminology of *Christusbild* rare in twentieth-century Christian thought. Indeed, Tillich's contemporary, Werner Elert, employs the term much as Tillich does, contrasting *Christusbild* to *Christusbegriff* to express the supra-conceptual quality of revelation.[308] For both Tillich and Elert, this emphasis on the irreducibility of the perception of Christ to a concept is a means of resisting Hegel's speculative metabolization of religious *Vorstellungen*. Thus, Tillich use of the term is not unusual.

However, it is more than a reflex of his "liberal Protestantism." The pictorial representation of Christ in Tillich's theology is founded on the visual-pictorial edifice of his metaphysics, from which the terms of his theology emerge. Dealing with Tillich's later *Systematic Theology*, Anne Marie Reijnen is right to link Tillich's Christological use of "picture-talk" to his early thinking about art, specifically to the "three-pronged approach to art" developed in the 1919 address, i.e., Tillich's method of analyzing art

[307] Alister McGrath, *The Making of Modern German Christology, 1750-1990* (Eugene: Wipf and Stock, 2005), 227.
[308] Elert, *Der Ausgang der alt-kirchlichen Christologie* (Berlin: Lutherisches Verlagshaus, 1957) 13, 72ff. John Zizoulous cites Elert in developing his own view of dogmas as soteriological declarations. For Zizoulous, the aim of dogma is not conceptual comprehension, but rather "their object is to free the original εικών of Christ…to maintain the correct vision of the Christ-truth." Zizoulous, *Being as Communion: Studies in Personhood and the Church* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Press, 1997), 116-117.

according to form, content, and import.[309] This she believes "to be implicit in his thoughts about the power and the picture in Christology."[310] Specifically, she perceives a continuity between "expressionist pictures" and Tillich's *Christusbild*: both express in the form-shattering power of *Gehalt*. She links this form-shattering power to what Tillich calls the critical or prophetic principle, which is "at work within the heart of that most sublime of religious symbols, Jesus (as the) Christ."[311] As William Alston notes of Tillich's Christology, "(b)y dying on the cross, Jesus Christ, who is the basic symbol of being-itself in Christianity, underlined the fact that symbols have their significance not in themselves but as manifesting the Ultimate."[312] Reijnen captures the paradox of figuration and disfiguration implicit in this theory of symbols, "(w)ithin this symbol two opposing forces are continually at work: representation and self-effacement."[313] Reijnen links the self-effacing form of Christ's revelatory character to the kenotic self-identification of Jesus in John 3:30, "He must increase, but I must decrease."

Reijnen's analysis is insightful, especially in identifying the dialectic of representation and self-effacement at work across Tillich's theory of art, theory of symbol, and Christology. What I have attempted to show in the previous section is that the revelatory self-effacement of breakthrough takes on ultimate significant in his metaphysics. It becomes, for Tillich, *the* form of realization and representation through which all meaning is fulfilled as a whole (not only artistic meanings in particular) and through which being itself may be brought to thought. This account of how the

[309] Anne Marie Reijnen, "Tillich's Christology" in *The Cambridge Companion*, 66.
[310] Reijnen, "Tillich's Christology," 66.
[311] Reijnen, "Tillich's Christology," 67.
[312] William P. Alston, 'Tillich' in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, vol. 1, ed. Paul Edwards (New York: Macmillan, 1972), 125.
[313] Reijnen, "Tillich's Christology," 66-67.

meaningful world is realized and reflexively understood presumes that all meaning has its being and its sense within a paradigm of perception, which, I argued, Tillich conceives in close connection with modern notions of pictorial style.[314] Tillich's visual-pictorial language, then, indicates more than a link between art, symbol, and Christology. It describes a top-to-bottom semantic framework of his philosophy of meaning, which serves as the groundwork of his dogmatics. The remainder of this section concerns Tillich's concrete perception of the picture of the Christ as it emerges in his early dogmatics.

My analysis will call into question a presumption made by Reijnen, namely, that the picture of Christ is, for Tillich, "a mental image" that appears "outside of myself, so that I can contemplate it."[315] Tillich's notion of *Christusbild* indeed presumes a contemplative dialectic of interiority and exteriority. However, it cannot be characterized as a "mental image," so far as that term implies an intramental representation akin to a Cartesian "idea." Rather, for Tillich, the picture of Christ is a perception held collectively by the Christian community. It is less a mental image, then, and more a form of life.

[314] Reijnen comes close to linking Tillich's perception of Christ to a notion of style. "Between the painter, the sitter, the picture and the viewer there must be some common language, but it cannot be the language of 'plain' figurative art." "Tillich's Christology," 67. That is, between the viewer and the picture of Christ what matters (ultimately) cannot be the perception of some pictorial content (Inhalt), the plain-to-see subject matter of the symbol. To this point, Reijnen underscores Tillich's later assertions that Christians ought not dwell on Jesus as "an object of biographical and psychological essays" nor portrayals of Jesus "as a fanatic or pious sufferer, or as a social benefactor, or as a religious teacher, or as a mass leader." Rather, every perception of Jesus must be conditioned by the self-effacing form of his revelatory character as the Christ. Reijnen locates the perception of this form in a tertiary realm between Christology done "from below" and Christology done "from above." This tertiary realm, then, is neither historical-empirical nor formal-rational. Rather, it is the domain of what Tillich identifies as that "third element of perception," which he likens to and nearly equates with "style."

[315] Reijnen, "Tillich's Christology," 68.

3.3.b Approaching the picture: Its cultural-religious history

To understand the role of the "real picture of Christ" in Tillich's dogmatics, it is first necessary to briefly consider its anticipation in Tillich's philosophy of religion, which, as systematically presented in the 1925 text *Philosophy of Religion*, can be regarded as a transitional discipline, mediating between his metaphysics of meaning and his theological dogmatics. In the previous section, I elucidated the major components of Tillich's metaphysics of meaning, including: first, the process by which form and import are synthetically conjoined as meaningful *Gestalt* objects; and second, the threefold constitution of the context of meaning or field of perception in which these figures of meaning appear. Tillich's philosophy of religion specifies these operations of meaning-fulfillment within the realm of "the Holy," culminating in a dialectic of the divine and the demonic.

For Tillich, the cultural history of religion is internally animated by a struggle between demonic and divine powers of meaning-fulfillment. The demonic is characterized by a "peculiar relation of form and import."[316] He explains: "the inexhaustibility of the import of meaning signifies on the one hand the meaningfulness of every form of meaning, and on the other it presupposes the endless resistance of matter to form…In the sphere of the spiritual fulfillment through meaning the resistance of the material becomes a positive hostility to meaning."[317] This hostility of material to meaning results in the distortion of the meaningful object's form; however, this hostility can never completely obliterate that form without thereby ceasing have any degree of meaning-reality at all. While destructive, Tillich attributes "the quality of the holy" to the

[316] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 85.
[317] Ibid.

demonic's "meaning-resistant thrust of matter" against form. This is because "it is an expression of the abyss of meaning."[318] It therefore bears a kind of ecstatic character, although a negative kind. Tillich names this hostility of matter to meaning, "sin."[319]

By contrast, the divine is the positively ecstatic expression of the holy, won through defeat of the demonic's material resistance to "unconditioned form." At the level of *Grundoffenbarung*, Tillich regards both the demonic and the divine as revelatory expressions of meaning-reality's inner import. This is what makes them both "holy." Thus, both appear with the revelatory form of breakthrough. However, the demonic is "a breakthrough in the direction of the destructive," while the divine is "the breakthrough in direction of grace."[320] The difference between the divine breakthrough of grace and the demonic breakthrough of destruction is that "grace breaks through the form while both acknowledging the form and affirming the unconditioned form, whereas the demonic does not submit to the unconditioned form…the holy negativity of the abyss becomes demonic negativity through loss of the unconditioned form."[321] The demonic, then, is a miscarriage of breakthrough.[322]

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[318] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 86.
[319] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 85.
[320] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 86.
[321] Ibid.
[322] Some degree of equivocality, then, must apply to Tillich's designation of the demonic as an expression of "breakthrough." If the demonic had truly broken *through*, it would no longer be shaped by its resistance to unconditioned meaning. The demonic breaks *toward* the unconditioned, but, because it cannot submit to the paradox of unconditioned form, its breaking of form is fruitless. It results in a destructive bending or warping of form, rather than form's meaningful fulfillment. Grace, by contrast, breaks through its finite, natural form toward the unconditioned, with trust in the paradox that the "unconditioned form" will sustain and fulfill the integrity of its finite meaning and shape. One is reminded of the comedian's rule of thumb, voiced by the character of Lester in Woody Allen's *Crimes and Misdemeanors*: "If it bends, its funny. If it breaks, it's not funny." If it bends, it's demonic. If it breaks, it is divine. Indeed, the works of art that Tillich associates with a demonic kind of negativity (e.g. Georg Grosz's *Grossstadt*, 1917) arch toward a kind of grotesque humor, while those he associates with a principle of positive critique (e.g., Otto Dix's *Der Krieg* triptych, 1929) are far more sober. See Tillich's discussion of Grosz and Dix as artists on the boundary between "vindictive" and "belief-ful realism" in *The Religious Situation*, 58-59, and Tillich's later thoughts on the specific works of Grosz and Dix in "Art and Ultimate Reality" (1961) in *On Art and Architecture,* 148.

The cultural history and "normative concept" of religion developed in *The Philosophy of Religion* roots the polarity of the divine and demonic in a struggle between basic attitudes toward the holy. These Tillich calls the "sacramental" and the "theocratic" tendencies. The former considers things bearers of the unconditioned, while the latter protests the deification of sacramental realties. This dialectic is consistent with what Tillich later calls the dialectic of "Catholic substance" and "Protestant principle." It is fundamentally a modulation of the dialectic of autonomy and theonomy within the realm of the holy. Each of these basic tendencies differently realize the synthetic unity of form and import. In a purely ideal sense (thus not in a chronological sense), the historical, dialectical encounter of these tendencies moves toward the absolute elimination of the demonic principle.

> In every form of religion the unity of form and import must be found. This unity is not only the ideal goal but also the essential presupposition of religious development. The difference [between goal and presupposition], however, is this, that the unity of form and import as a point of departure is indifferent to the division of the Holy into the divine and the demonic, while the unity of form and import as the end-point has eliminated the demonic, or rather has integrated it into the divine.[323]

The developmental history of religion thus begins with ambiguous figurations of the holy. Through a dialectical struggle of the divine against the demonic principle, it culminates in a determinately divine *Gestalt* of grace.

Tillich's "construction" of the cultural history of religion is the product of the second branch of his cultural science of religion. According to Tillich's general theory of metaphysics, the second branch of a cultural science supplies "an interpretation of the meaning of the historical process," in which can be seen "the revelation of the

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[323] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 88.

unconditioned meaning." This interpretation is directed toward a "presentation" (*Darstellung*) of "the structure of all existents and their unity as an expression of pure meaning."[324] With regard to the philosophy of religion specifically, this representation is supplied by "the religion of grace," which stands as Tillich's "normative concept of religion." The religion of grace is a form of religion generated by a synthesis of the theocratic and sacramental tendencies.

Historically, the religion of grace emerges as religion passes through "pure monotheism" (the height of the theocratic tendency) while taking "from sacramental polytheism [the height of the sacramental tendency] a symbol that brings to full expression the religious paradox: the symbol of the divine mediator."[325] This symbol of the divine mediator is the full religious expression of that metaphysical paradox at the heart of the real: that conditioned reality bears the unconditioned, that the infinite and the finite coincide and co-inhere. The symbol becomes perceptible in "the vision [*Anschauung*] of the figure of the incarnate, lowly and dying God."[326] The symbol of the incarnate divine mediator "is placed at the center of the mystery religions and in Christianity is raised to a status decisive for the history of religion."[327] That is, in Christianity this particular religious intuition becomes decisive for comprehending an interpretation of the history of religion as a symbolic whole, within which the unconditioned may become perceptible as the deep import of all conditioned reality. "The

[324] Tillich, *System of the Sciences*, 186.
[325] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 96.
[326] Ibid.; *GW* I, 345.
[327] Ibid.

elucidation [*Darstellung*] of this symbol in concrete form," Tillich concludes, "is the central task of the normative theory of religion, or theology."[328]

The *Gestalt* of grace, most fully realized in the Christian symbol of the crucified God, supplies the symbol through which the whole of religious history may be properly perceived as an expression of the unconditioned. Before Tillich crosses the threshold of theology, his philosophy of religion is able to declare Christ the fulfillment of things laid before the foundation of world. It seems clear, then, that Tillich's early concept of "religion" and the religious metaphysics upon which it rests are (unsurprisingly) custom fit to a certain form of German Lutheran Protestant Christianity. What primarily concerns me in this chapter, however, is not that Tillich's philosophy of religion culminates in a specifically Christian intuition of the unconditioned, but rather that this culminating intuition is visual-pictorial in nature.

3.3.c The image made picture: The Christology of the *Marburg Dogmatics*

The ground has been laid for the theological fulfillment of this ultimate symbol of meaning-fulfillment in its concrete form. We may now turn directly to Tillich's discussion of "the picture of Christ" in the *Marburg Dogmatics*. Anything like a comprehensive treatment of this text is beyond the scope of this study. What concerns me are the moments of Tillich's dogmatics in which the "picture of Christ" becomes decisive. A brief introduction to Tillich's dogmatics is necessary to bring these moments into focus.

Tillich approaches the task of dogmatics in the tradition of Schleiermacher. He approves of Schleiermacher's definition of dogmatics as "the presentation of what is

[328] Ibid.; *GW* I, 346.

valid in a church community."[329] Effectively, for Tillich, this means that dogmatics must begin from the religious consciousness of the Christian community. However, Tillich expands the scope of religious consciousness beyond Schleiermacher's definition, stating that "dogmatics is the creation of symbols in which a society recognizes [*wiedererkennt*] its relation to the unconditioned."[330] Dogmatics is interested not only in the religious consciousness of the church, but also the religious directionality of the society in which the church abides. Tillich also includes the formulation of Johannes von Hoffman: "I, the Christian, am the subject-matter of dogmatics for me as a theologian."[331] For Tillich, then, dogmatics concerns itself with the symbolic religious consciousness of a whole society as that religious consciousness is concentrated in the church and appropriated by the individual.[332]

By religion, of course, Tillich means what he has meant by religion since 1919: not a realm or state or consciousness, but a total directedness of conscious being to the unconditioned. Dogmatics must take place as an act *of* this religious consciousness. Tillich diverges from the tradition of *Erfahrungstheologie* that stems from Schleiermacher in specifying that religious consciousness is not the object, but the medium of dogmatics.[333] It is "the medium through which the fulfilled revelation is seen [*die vollkommene Offenbarung geshen wird*], whether it comes to us in Scripture or tradition" and it is "the place of [revelation's] realization."[334] As Richard emphasizes, this methodological determination must be situated within Tillich's correlationalist

[329] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 75.
[330] "Dogmatik die Schaffung von Symbolen ist, in denen eine Gesellschaft ihr Verhältnis zum Unbedingten wiedererkennt." *Dogmatik*, 88.
[331] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 88.
[332] See Richard, "Religious Consciousness."
[333] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 88.
[334] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 89.

epistemology, according to which true knowledge of revelation depends upon the subject's capacity for its reception. Religious consciousness is this capacity for reception. Specifically, it is a capacity to be "gripped" (*ergreift*) "shaken" (*erschüttert*), and "turned" (*umwendet*).[335] So far as religious intentionality assumes this quality of being gripped-shaken-turned it become the "concrete realization of revelation."

It is worth underscoring that Tillich conceives religious consciousness as a medium of perception, a context in which the perfect revelation may be *seen*. It is fair to say that the domain of religious consciousness is congruent with that "third element of perception," presumed and posited by the act of meaning-fulfillment in Tillich's metaphysics. However, while metaphysics grasps revelation only as it conforms thought to revelation's "unconditioned form," and so apprehends revelation as an idea/image, dogmatics conforms its perceptual medium, religious consciousness, to the concrete reality/picture of revelation in the Christ.

With regard to the *Christusbild* as the realization of revelation in religious consciousness, the key portion of the *Marburg Dogmatics* begins with §53. That paragraph bears the sentence: "The judgment about the character of Jesus as the Christ can neither be taken from the historical reality of Jesus nor from the mythical consciousness of the community, but from what has been created by the interaction of the two factors."[336] The sentence locates Tillich's Christology in a realm of "judgment" (*Urteil*) that falls between mythic and historical consciousness. As we saw above, in "Kairos and Logos," Tillich makes judgment a matter of his "third element of

[335] Tillich, *Dogmatik,* 41, 62; in "Die Idee der Offenbarung," in a parallel manner, Tillich speaks of *Beunruhigung*, *Durchbruch*, and *Zurückwendung* as the threefold event of revelation, e.g., p. 39.
[336] "Satz: *Das Urteil über den Charakter Jesu als des Christus kann weder der historischen Wirklichkeit Jesu noch dem mythischen Bewusstsein der Gemeinde entnommen werden, sondern dem, was durch die Wechselwirkung beider Faktoren geschaffen ist*." *Dogmatik*, 306.

perception." Here, the judgment of Jesus's symbolic reality as the Christ is also located in this tertiary realm of perception.

The relationship of mythic and historical consciousness is a central problematic of Tillich's early dogmatics. "The whole deep problem of our present situation," Tillich declares, "is the splitting of myth and history."[337] On the one hand, without myth "the drama between God and the world and the underworld loses its frame."[338] That is, without a mythic sense of the world, the struggle between the divine and the demonic loses its intelligibility. On the other hand, "the strictly lawful [historical] version of the processes of events that banishes everything miraculous from the world" must become blind to the "the essence and power of the divine."[339] Tillich is not opposed to the process of historicizing demythologization. Indeed, he declares that, so far as historicization is "a process of comprehensive demythologization" it is "a Christianization of world-view [*Weltauffassung*]." This is because demythologization overcomes the pagan tendency to fix the divine in an "intermediate world" of the supernatural. Demythologizing may serve the "unconditioned transcendence" of the divine. However, in a modern age devoid of myth, "the historical became almost naked."[340] The impotence of a merely historical method is revealed in the quests for the historical Jesus, which were motivated, on Tillich's view, first by hatred then by indifference to the mythical. Tillich echoes Albert Schweitzer's critique of the quest of the historical Jesus in concluding that such methods can only result in "a reproduction of our piety and our ethic and could not be the basis of dogmatics," because dogmatics must

[337] Ibid.
[338] Ibid.
[339] Ibid.
[340] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 307.

have the ability "to stand against any time."[341] One-sidedly historical methods of apprehending Christ's reality result only in mirrored portraits of the researchers themselves. Tillich is after another kind of portrait, abiding on a different plane of perception.

Given the inadequacy of purely mythical or purely historical thinking, dogmatics must turn (yet again!) to a "third." The mythical cannot be the basis of dogmatics, Tillich decides, because, although "we know it in a sense…we cannot relive it in our present."[342] The age of myth has past. We can no longer inhabit mythic consciousness with immediacy. However, the dogmatician is even worse off with history, because we "hardly know the historical" at all. However, "we do know the third, because in this third we stand; it is our past, our present; that which has shaped us."[343] Implicitly invoking his semantic triad of form, content, and import*,* Tillich specifies that this "third" "stands between mythical form and empirical facts," between form and content.[344] This third dimension of dogmatics corresponds, then, to the unitive dimension of meaning: *Gestalt*, the shaping power of the real. Once again, it also clearly aligns with that "third element of perception" that Tillich so closely associates with "style."

However, while Tillich's "metaphysics of knowledge" struggled to define the "third element of perception," unable to capture the ideal beyond all possession, his dogmatics has no such trouble. Tillich is quite clear. "What is this third? In general, it would be said: It is the biblical picture of Christ. It is the picture of the original proclamation of the full revelation from the place that the bearer of the full revelation

[341] Ibid.
[342] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 306.
[343] Ibid.
[344] Ibid.

gave."[345] This formulation indicates that the picture of Christ is not only a thing to be perceived, but also a context of perception. The picture bestows *the place* from which it must be viewed along with its perception. It is not only an object to be seen and discriminated, but also its own field for perception and judgment. What matters is that the picture of Christ becomes the perceptual medium of revelation, not its object.

In the thirdness of the *Christusbild*, the giving and receiving aspects of the correlational process of revelation converge. On this point, it is worth quoting §53 at length:

> This picture contains in itself historical, legendary, apologetic, cultural, mythical elements. Are we facing all these equally? The answer is yes. Because if we wanted to split it up, we would only ever keep two sides in hand, never the third. That is, the third is not fixable. It is the element of revelation [*Offbarungselement*] that is grasped from both sides, but that, as it should be, is not in a fixed form. Otherwise it would not be revelation. It is that which seizes, not the feeling, but us; that which makes this picture of Christ the medium for this being-grasped by the unconditioned-being. It is that which shakes [*erschüttert*] and breaks through [*durchbricht*] and turns [*umwendet*]. If this were to be fixed, then it would lose its quality as a turning point, so it would one day have to be shaken and turned over.[346]

Tillich here is no longer speaking of the *Christusbild* only as the mediating point between myth and history, but also as the medium through which religious consciousness may become a concrete realization of revelation. The picture "contains" this "third element of revelation" that makes revelation real *pro me*: as a seizing, breaking, and turning. The picture of Christ is a particular, revelatory direction or attitude of religious consciousness. Thus, its revelatory character *is* its salvific character, and vice-a-versa.

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[345] "Was ist nun dieses Dritte? Ganz allgemein wäre zu sagen: Es ist das biblische Christusbild. Es ist das Bild der ursprünglichen Verkündigung der vollkommenen Offenbarung von dem Ort, [den/der] Träger der vollkommenen Offenbarung gegeben hat." *Dogmatik*, 308.
[346] Ibid.

The remainder of the paragraph is crucial for what remains of the dogmatic task. The element of revelation that grasps the subject in and through the picture of Christ cannot be a fixed form. It remains beyond conceptual objectification. "And yet we want to talk about it," Tillich admits, "and all talking is more formal fixation."[347] It is therefore crucial to specify exactly what theological talk fixes and what it does not. "What we want to fix are not facts, but concepts in which the interpretation of that third element from this present can take place. We do not do Christology to say mythical or historical things about Jesus of Nazareth, but we do Christology to give symbolic meaning to the character of the fulfilled revelation we seek there from out of our situation."[348] All theological concepts, then, are put in service of the symbolic interpretation of the biblical *Christusbild*, so far as that picture realizes the breakthrough of revelation in religious consciousness, i.e., the religious consciousness of the individual, in the church, in society.

Tillich's Christology has found its guiding purpose: to frame symbolically the biblical picture of Christ in such a way that its revelatory character (as the perfect breakthrough of the unconditioned within the conditioned) becomes the quality of the Christian's own religious consciousness. Christian devotion to Jesus as the Christ, therefore, must be oriented not to his earthly "vocation" nor to his "numinous character," but to the "intuition of his reality."[349] Dogmatics, too, must take on this orientation. The theologian may include "the mythical-legendary statements associated with the original proclamation of Jesus Christ," but only "provided that they clarify the intuition of his reality," i.e., his symbolic reality as the Christ. For instance, the biblical portrayal of

[347] Ibid.
[348] Ibid.
[349] Ibid.

Jesus' resurrection should not be treated historically.[350] The portrayal of his divine Sonship should not be treated supernaturally or mythically. Rather, both must be treated symbolically, for they both "give us symbols for the intuition [*Anschauung*] of unconditioned-realities."[351] The former, "God looked at as Son," indicates that the unconditioned must be intuited in a singular, concrete, and personal reality. The latter indicates the "nature and character of salvation" as resurrection, i.e. as a life-giving *Umwendung* of the spirit.[352] These are statements about religious consciousness and religious life, so far as it has been shaken and converted by the revelation in Christ.

By making the picture of Christ the medium of revelation and not its object, Tillich believes to have navigated the Scylla of supernaturalism and the Charibdis of historicism. "The religious life is freed from a tremendous burden, which the longer it carried, the less it could manage. The burden of making statements about a historically unknowable personality that cannot be empirically realized, and whose mythical character is alien and inconceivable to us."[353] Dogmatics, too, is liberated from these impossible expectations. "We do not make any statements of this [mythic or empirical-historical] kind at all. For we are dealing with the third, incomprehensible, which stands between empiricism and myth."[354]

In §55, Tillich underscores the extent to which this third element of revelation conditions all religious speech and knowledge.

> Since we are talking here of the third element between myth and empiricism, we say neither Jesus nor the Christ, but for the first time Jesus Christ, because in the combination of these two words lies what matters: The Third: - To this third for

[350] Ibid.
[351] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 311.
[352] Ibid.
[353] Ibid.
[354] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 312.

> the sake of which we formulate the sentence in such a way that we speak of intuition [*Anschauung*] and picture [*Bild*]. There is no step beyond this intuition. If we want to get to the origin of the picture, we will find ourselves on the wall of the historical inadequacy that would remain even if we were to witness against it.[355]

The picture of Christ is the insurmountable medium of revelation and dogmatics. It consists not in any objective content, but in a basic correlation between intuition and picture, within which the content of faith must take shape.

In Tillich's philosophy of religion, revelation is predicated on a similar correlation: a correlation between a theonomous "basic intuition" and the "unconditioned form" under which the whole of reality is made to appear in its revelatory, broken-through shape. This is something like a correlation between *Welt-anschauung* and *Welt-bild*. However, this revelatory form of depicting the meaningful world, Tillich insisted, was only an *idea* – only the ideal image or archetype of the unconditioned's mode of revelation in conditioned reality.

It is otherwise with the picture of Christ. This is the decisive moment for the overall argument of this chapter. "In this picture," Tillich writes, "reality has found expression, namely the reality of the essential relation between the unconditioned and the conditioned. This reality is not an idea, it is a reality that has become existent and has the effect of an existing reality."[356] The unreality of an idea, Tillich implies, consists in the presumption that it may subsist apart from the real: "If [the picture of Christ] were an idea, it would carry elements that indicated the opposition between idea and reality."[357] But the truly real consists not in the opposition between idea and reality, but in their living dynamic synthesis. This synthesis, Tillich continues, cannot be achieved in the

[355] Ibid.
[356] Ibid.
[357] Ibid.

abstract realm of the ideal, so far as it remains opposed to reality. Rather, it must occur as the reality transformatively united to the idea. "The creators of the idea would remain unchanged in their existence. But here [in the picture of Christ] we have the intuition [*Anschauung*] of something that has existed, in which there is no debasement or annulment [*Aufhebung*] of existence, and, on the contrary, the idea by no means has an abstract character."[358] The dialectic of the real and ideal is synthetically fulfilled in this perception. No more is reality divided between "abstract ideas on the one hand" and "undeveloped existence on the other."[359] This opposition is "the character of all unreal images and intuitions, as they particularly show the history of philosophy, but also the history of religion."[360]

Tillich's *own* "idea" or image of revelation – the archetypal form of breakthrough – would be such a false image if it were not always already synthetically united to its real consummation in the picture of religious consciousness. The realization of the image in this medium is the basis of the image in all others – including the medium of speculative cognition. For Tillich, the highest idolatry, philosophically speaking, is the kind of supernatural idealism that seeks the image *behind* the real, that seeks "a mystical spiritual substance standing behind history" rather than see the unconditioned *within* the historical process, as he puts it in the *System of the Sciences*.[361] One could not think the archetypal idea of revelation without having seen it consummated in religious consciousness, within the figure of a particular religious symbol. Just as one could not perceive the archetypal

[358] Ibid.
[359] Ibid.
[360] Ibid.
[361] Tillich, *System of the Sciences*, 186.

form of baroque style (or any style) without having seen that style realized in paint within the figural boundaries of a particular picture.

In contrast to this metaphysical idolatry, "the real picture" of the Christ "expresses a real transformation of existence."[362] "Only these pictures have creative power. All the pathos that lies in the reality of the picture of Christ is, if it understands itself, pathos for the reality it expresses, for the concrete transformation of existence."[363] Only the *tertium quid* of "the real picture" bears this transformative power. Only when perceived as a picture does the symbol of Christ assume this salvific reality in consciousness. Thus, "(p)icture and reality are by no means in contradiction, if the picture is an expression of a reality. But that is the picture of Jesus Christ."[364] The reality of Christ as the symbol for the transformative power of the unconditioned, then, is Christ's reality grasped *qua* picture.

3.3.d The content and place of the picture

But what exactly does this picture of revelation realized in Jesus Christ contain? What does it show? Or is it *only* a medium of perfectly fulfilled God-consciousness? It is *ultimately* this. However, the breaking, turning, and healing power of this medium is itself mediated, through its *content*, i.e., the symbolic content of "the religion of grace." Tillich's representation of religious history as a struggle between divine and the demonic forces of meaning-fulfillment culminates in the symbol of the suffering divine mediator. This is the *what* of the picture of Christ, its *Inhalt*. In this symbolic representation of the

[362] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 312.
[363] Ibid.
[364] "Bild und Realität stehen also keineswegs in Widerspruch, wenn anders das Bild Ausdruck einer Realität ist. Das aber ist das Bild Jesu Christi." Ibid.

divine mediator, "there are no traces of a demonization of the unconditioned being, and therefore no features of a self-love that expresses itself in desire or exaltation [*Überhebung*]."[365] Rather, "(i)n Jesus Christ we have the intuition of a creatureliness that remains bound in its self-will to the unconditioned-mighty…without destroying the human-historical truth [of its creatureliness]."[366]

This picture of divine humility is perfected in the cross. "The complete overcoming of religiously based exaltation is the yes to the cross [*Vorklängen*]."[367] The power of the cross consists not in "what is factual in it" (the empirical fact of Jesus's death), but "what is personal in it: the connection of complete [*völliger*] affirmation of meaning and salvation, complete [*völlige*] unity with the unconditioned being, with the acceptance of the judgment [*Gerichtes*] of the world also for itself."[368] This personal dimension points to a particular quality of Christ's "yes" to the cross, namely, the complete abolition of the demonic self-exaltation that asserts the finite-empirical (*Inhalt*) as the basis of its own reality. This is what is meant, for Tillich, by Christ's "sinlesssness."

Ultimately, the revelatory-salvific power of the picture of Christ is contained in the symbol of Christ's sinlessness. Sin is nothing but the demonic resistance to meaning, de facto present in every real act of meaning-fulfillment. The wages of sin are death, Tillich affirms. But again, what is at stake is not the empirical death of the creature, but the *pain* of death. This Tillich understands as the pain of abyssal meaninglessness, felt in

[365] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 312.
[366] "Satz: *In Jesus Christus haben wir die Anschauung eines Kreatürlichen, das in seiner Selbstmächtigkeit gebunden bleibt an das Unbedingt-Mächtige. Es finden sich in seinem Bilde keine Spuren einer Dämonisierung des Unbedingt-Seienden und darum keine Züge einer sich in Begierde oder Überhebung darstellenden Selbstliebe, ohne dass das menschlich-historische Wahre zerstört wird.*" Ibid. Emphasis original.
[367] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 315.
[368] Ibid.

the inherent ambiguity of finite creaturely existence.[369] This meaninglessness asserts itself as "judgment," i.e., the purely negative experience of the unconditioned as abyss. "The bearer of the transcendent being enters into ambiguity and experiences its effect up to the last consequences of judgment."[370] This means that Christ bears the pain of the world's ambiguity in full, undergoing judgment as "splitting unto the loss of meaning."[371] However, paradoxically, Christ does not experience this splitting "as judgment."

Rather, because Christ suffers the judgment of the cross in complete unity with the unconditioned, he suffers the loss of meaning as "an object" that acts "on him," rather than an effect that occurs "in him," as a subject. The demonic essence-contradiction of sin, the ambiguity of the world in full, is "presupposed in every word and action" of Christ, however, "it does not penetrate into the center, not into the bond of God. Even the fatal abandonment of God does not abrogate the bond of God."[372] The unconditional form of Christ's God-directedness, his intentionality toward the unconditioned *as a subject*, remains consistent and unwavering.

Christ's perfect bond with God bears salvific fruit. It defeats "the empirical meaninglessness attached to the pain of death detached from creative passion" and thus "reunifies death and life," liberating all creatures from "the death of judgment," i.e. the abyssal pain of meaninglessness.[373] The pain of death, as perceived "in the reality of the picture of Christ," is creatively transformed. The pain of death now appears as the creative pathos of Christ's suffering: the "pathos for the concrete transformation of

[369] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 317.
[370] Ibid.
[371] Ibid.
[372] Ibid.
[373] Ibid.

existence."[374] This is the salvific power of the symbol of resurrection. "The picture of Christ can now gain meaning in which the power of the resurrection, the overcoming of meaningless suffering and dying, is looked upon."[375] This picture appears most vividly, Tillich believes, in the gospel of Mark's spare realism, which must always be held as a check against the tendency to make John the basis of mythic, supernatural, abstract, or "high" Christologies.

Tillich's debt to Schleiermacher's Christology is evident in his predication of Christ's salvific power on his perfect directedness toward the infinite-unconditioned. Further in Schleiermacherian fashion, Tillich captures this perfect form of God consciousness in the symbol of Christ's sinlessness. And even further in the mold of the master, Tillich speaks of this symbol of perfect sinlessness as a picture held within the consciousness of the Christian community. "In the corporate life founded by Christ is a communication of His sinless perfection," writes Schleiermacher in the *Glaubenslehre*. "Where and of what sort are we to suppose this communication to be?"[376] He responds, "the individual even today receives from the picture of Christ, which exists in the community as at once a corporate act and a corporate possession, the impression of the sinless perfection of Jesus, which becomes for him [the individual] at the same time the perfect consciousness of sin and the removal of misery."[377] By virtue of this corporately held picture, "in the Christian fellowship, outwardly so constituted, there is still that communication of the absolutely potent God-consciousness in Christ as a thing which is

[374] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 312.
[375] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 318.
[376] Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith*, eds. H.R. Mackintosh and J.S. Stewart (Berkeley, CA: Apocryphile Press, 2011), 364.
[377] Ibid.

inward, and yet, since faith can rest upon nothing except an impression received, capable of being experienced."[378]

The "where and what sort" of Tillich's picture of Christ is much the same. "The saving power of Jesus is the communication of his being to those connected with him in history" asserts the *Leitsatz* of §55.[379] The picture dwells among those who receive it in history. Tillich goes farther than Schleiermacher in correlating the very reality of the picture to the act of its corporate reception. "This real picture gains reality in us. The being that is in him, in this real picture that we call Jesus Christ, communicates to us. Indeed, we can go one step further: by communicating itself to us, it also takes shape itself [*gewinnt es auch selbst Gestalt*]. The intuition [*Anschauung*] of the disciples of all time is involved in the being that will now be their being again."[380] The saving picture of Christ has its reality in its healing, turning, transformative power, preserved and concentrated in the religious consciousness of the Christian community.

It is not that any one historical Christian community stands as the origin of this picture. This cannot be so, because the healing power of the picture, that which makes it real, is the power of a single personality, and, for Tillich, "no community is powerful, free, and spirit in the sense of the personality itself."[381] Thus, Christianity's greatest temptation toward idolatry is the temptation of the community to regard itself as the origin of the healing picture that abides in it. "The pictorial thinking [*bildhafte Denken*], according to which communities imagine themselves to be acting people, has caused a lot of errors here. In truth, this picture is false. The community has a sub-personal instinct as

[378] Ibid.
[379] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 312.
[380] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 326.
[381] Tillich, *Dogmatik*, 298.

well as individual personalities, but it does not have personal unity."[382] Thus, the community itself cannot generate the saving picture of Christian faith. However, "the moment the church proclaims the fulfilled revelation in the form of a picture of Christ, not in the picture of a perfect church, it is again a personal life in which it seeks salvation."[383] The picture is the person, and the person the communicating agent of grace.

What is the nature of this beholding? It is a kind of intro-spection, so far as the picture is held and beheld inwardly. However, it cannot be the contemplation of a "mental image," so far as such a mental image resides in the mind of the individual subject. The contemplation of the picture of Christ is a communal act, which Tillich does not describe in full or detail (as Rosenzweig will, with reference to the liturgy), but ties firmly to the New Testament, especially the Markan gospel, and to a representation of a developmental cultural history of religion, constructed by the theologian for the sake of the church. Thus, vis-à-vis the individual, the picture resides externally, in the community. Further, Tillich insists that the community's contemplation of the picture must point beyond the community, toward a single personality that stands categorically beyond the limits of the community.

3.3.e Seeing the picture and "seeing-in" the picture

Tillich's idea of revelation establishes the normative paradigm by which Jesus Christ is perceived as revelation's fulfillment. The image makes the picture visible. In turn, the picture of Christ, creatively intuited by the Christian community, makes that norm real and determinate, a determinacy without which the image would lack normative

[382] Ibid.
[383] Ibid.

form. Thus, the picture gives itself the image and norm that is the presupposition of its own appearance. What kind of knowing is held in this cyclical hermeneutic of revelation?

Drawing on the aesthetic theory of Susanne Langer, Jeremy Begbie I think rightly concludes that Tillich's symbol of the Christ may be considered "a presentational symbol." The key to its validity lays in presentational quality. "A presentational symbol does not symbolize by means of fixed units of meaning as in the case of language or discursive symbolism," Begbie explains.[384] Rather, "(t)he elements of a presentational symbol are understood only through the meaning of the whole symbol as its elements interrelate with each other."[385] Significantly, Langer conceives the presentational symbol within the realm of the aesthetic. Non-discursive artworks have their meaning as presentational symbols. "A work of art is a single symbol, not a system of significant elements which may be variously compounded. Its elements have no symbolic values in isolation. They take their expressive character from their functions in the perceptual whole."[386] The "logic" of the presentational symbol or artwork resides in its inherent relational structure.

Andrew Bowie has argued that something very much like this presentational quality of the non-discursive symbol is a feature of romantic thinking. Bowie appeals to Novalis's conviction that "a picture can, for example, enable one to see something in new ways, which would not be possible if it merely re-presented, in the sense of 'presented again what is already there,' what it depicts."[387] Bowie attributes this view to the

[384] Begbie, *Voicing Creation's Praise,* 224.
[385] Ibid.
[386] Susanne K. Langer and Susanne Katherina Knauth Langer, *Mind: An Essay on Human Feeling* (Johns Hopkins Press, 1967), 84.
[387] "Romantic Philosophy and Religion" in *The Cambridge Companion to German Romanticism*, ed. Nicholas Saul (Cambridge University Press, 2009), 176.

romantic questioning of "whether a definitive philosophical account can be given of the relationship between what is subjective and what is objective."[388] Interestingly, Bowie links this aspect of romantic philosophy to Rorty's anti-representationalism. Bowie is saying that, for the romantics, there is no stable distinction to be made between the subjective and objective. Thus, the subject cannot stake the validity of its knowledge on the correspondence of its representations to some fixed objective point. (That is precisely Rorty's point. Bowie and Novalis, however, make this point by appealing to the phenomenon of pictorial perception, while Rorty thinks all picture-talk in philosophy reduces to representationalism). Rather, for the romantics, objectivity rest on the manner in which the subjective and objective are synthetically configured into synthetic wholes. The perfect image of this process, for Novalis, is the image itself.

Tillich presumes something like this pictorial, presentationalist understanding of validity. The validity of religious symbols – i.e., the degree to which they express the unconditioned – depends entirely on their mode of uniting form and *Gehalt* into synthetic wholes. What, then, norms this synthesis? What gives the law by which religious symbols may be judge more or less revelatory? Another symbol, of course: the symbol of Jesus Christ and the perceptual whole that *that* symbol presumes. The picture of Christ makes visible the *Gestalt* by which all other *Gestalts* are judged, namely the paradoxical *Gestalt* of breakthrough. We witnessed this circle at work at the highest and deepest levels of Tillich's thought: in the looping, co-determinative whole between picture and image, type and archetype, real and ideal. These synthetic wholes must take shape under the particular perceptual style of the breakthrough really intuited in the symbol Jesus Christ.

[388] Ibid.

The objectivity of symbolically-mediated knowledge is ever relative to the whole it presumes, whose inherent relational logic must be perceived at once and in full in order for the symbol to have any expressive power at all. For Begbie, Tillich's presentationalism is a problem. It results in an "inability to say in non-symbolic terms just what it is that is affirmed and negated in a religious symbol."[389] Begbie joins a number of Tillich's interpreters concerned that Tillich's philosophical theology of culture reduces to a kind of *mere* intuitionism that demands "discursive supplement."[390] He echoes Peter Berger's observations that, in the "new liberalism" of the twentieth-century, "religious 'realities' are increasingly 'translated' from a frame of reference of factiticities external to the individual consciousness to a frame of reference that locates them *within* consciousness" and that, with the aid of neo-Kantian "conceptual machineries," "the traditional religious affirmation can now be regarded as 'symbols'—what they supposedly 'symbolize' usually turns out to be some realities presumed to resist within the 'depths' of human consciousness."[391] Berger's gloss subordinates symbolic knowing to the higher certainty of factual affirmation. Begbie echoes Berger's skepticism: what's the value of a symbol whose truth-content cannot be expressed in a discursive affirmation? Tillich may repond, what would be *the point* of any symbol whose truth-content could be?

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[389] Begbie, *Voicing Creation's Praise,* 71.

[390] These concerns are voiced mainly with reference to the political aspect of Tillich's theology of culture. See, Dennis McCann, "Tillich's Religious Socialism: 'Creative Synthesis' or Personal Statement?" in *The Thought of Paul Tillich*, eds. James Luther Adams, William Pauck, and Roger Shinn (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984), 81–101; Gary M. Simpson, *Critical Social Theory: Prophetic Reason, Civil Society, and Christian Imagination* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2002), 33–52; and Gregory Walter, "Critique and Promise in Paul Tillich's Political Theology: Engaging Giorgio Agamben on Sovereignty and Possibility," *The Journal of Religion* 90, no. 4 (2010): 453–74. McCann and Simpson aim to provide discursive supplement to Tillich's method on Habermasian grounds. Walter aims to bolster Tillich's intuitional method with the discourse of "promise," which he develops as a form of gift exchange on the model of Marcel Mauss.

[391] Peter Berger, *The Sacred Canopy: Elements of a Sociological Theory of Religion* (New York: Anchor, 1969), 167.

These critiques miss the point and the force of Tillich's religious philosophy: the nature of the religious demands that one take a position vis-à-vis the unconditioned, resulting in a truth that cannot be translated discursively – cannot be put in the predicative language of a verbal explanation – but either becomes visible, or does not. "Representations show whatever they show in an idiosyncratic, characteristic style," Schürmann writes of artistic style.[392] So too with Tillich's style of revealed religion.

At this juncture, Richard Wollheim's notion of "seeing-in" may help illuminate this perceptual dimension of Tillich's theory of symbolic meaning. Contra a commonplace presumption of perceptual psychology (memorably espoused by Ernst Gombrich in *Art and Illusion*), Wollheim argues that it is possible for a spectator to simultaneously perceive the concrete medium of a pictorial representation (e.g., paint, canvas) and what it represents (e.g., Henry VIII) simultaneously.[393] On the Wittgensteinian model of "seeing-as," according to both Wollheim and Gombrich, this cannot be done. One *either* sees the paint on the canvas or the object it depicts. Visual attention may oscillate from to the other, but both cannot be held in perception at once. Wollheim takes the opposite position. I look at a stain on the surface of a wall and see in it a figure, say a face or horse. For Wollheim, I am seeing both the stain and the figure at once. In a picture we perceive both iconic subject and iconic medium, at once. This is what Schürmann glosses as "pictorial representation's reflexive, doubled way of occurring."[394]

[392] Schürmann, *Seeing as Practice*, 91.
[393] The following discussion refers to Wollheim's thoughts in "Seeing as, seeing-in, and pictorial representation" in *Art and its Objects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980), 205-226.
[394] Schürmann, *Seeing as Practice*, 91.

Indeed, for Wollheim, not only *can* medium and represented object be perceived at once, they *must* be, if the picture is to be truly seen. "If I look at Holbein's portrait, the standard of correctness requires me to see Henry VIII there; but additionally I must – not only may but must – be visually aware of an unrestricted range of features of Holbein's panel if my perception of the representation is to be appropriate."[395] Wollheim presumes that the picture carries with it an intention set by the picture-maker, the artist. This intention sets a standard of correct viewing, a way in which the picture must be seen. To perceive the correct representation, one must perceive the object simultaneously with the picture's material medium, the panel and its paint taken as an "unrestricted" whole. Why? Because, the intention of a pictorial representation abides no longer in the artist, but in the way the artist has used his or her medium, in a expansive way, to alter and modify the appearance of natural objects.

> In Titian, in Vermeer, in Manet we are led to marvel endlessly at the way in which line or brushstroke or expanse of color is exploited to render effects or establish analogies that can only be identified representationally, and the argument is that this virtue could not have received recognition if, in looking at pictures, we had to alternate visual attention between the material features and the object of the representation.[396]

Wollheim does not speak of the modification of line and color as *style* per se, but what else could one take him to mean? "The modification I have in mind is characteristically brought about by the application of line and colour; the person who brings it about is…the artist; and we have arrived at a pictorial representation."[397] The style begins with the artist, then inheres in the medium, and *thereby* the medium represents what it represents.

[395] Wollheim, "Seeing as, seeing-in," 142.
[396] Wollheim, "Seeing as, seeing-in," 144.
[397] Wollheim, "Seeing as, seeing-in," 146.

The picture of Christ, for Tillich, is beheld with something like this "seeing-in" kind of perception. This analogy requires a slight realignment of terms. By medium Wollheim means the concrete, material stuff that makes the picture appear (paint, oil, canvas). Tillich is speaking on a different order. For Tillich, the medium of the picture of Christ is religious consciousness itself. It is the dynamism of spirit in its incessant creative meaningfulness, as it conjoins import and form, essence and existence, and configures them into meaningful wholes. The symbol, then, is the stuff of spirit's self-interpretation and self-understanding. With regard to the picture of Christ and the Christian community's perception of that picture, this symbolic stuff gives rise to the symbolic content, "crucified divine mediator."

However, in and with this symbolic stuff is seen something more, namely, the subject "Jesus Christ." This is not only the "subject matter" of the picture, not only its symbolic content. Rather, it is akin to what Wollheim discusses as the *intention* of the picture's creator, which sets the standard for its "correct viewing." Again, the decisive category is style. On Wollheim's view, style points to the manner in which the artist uses the medium to make the subject matter appear. Wollheim comes close to Carl Friedrich von Rumohr's definition style as the idiosyncratic manner in which an artist "successfully resigns himself to the inner demands of the material [*Stoff*], by which the sculptor really shapes his form, the painter makes [his forms] appear."[398] Wollheim thus suggests that in a Titian, Vermeer, or Manet we glimpse something of the artist's unique personality in the way the medium is manipulated.

[398] Cited and translated in Kathleen Curran, *The Romanesque Revival: Religion, Politics, and Transnational Exchange* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2003) 13.

The style of the real picture of Christ shows something more than the symbolic figure "crucified divine mediator." It shows the dynamic relation by which spirit is configured into this symbol, the idiosyncratic manner in which the stuff of meaning-reality is manipulated and re-configured by the power and pathos of the person Jesus Christ. That is the means by which the picture's "subject matter" – the crucified divine mediator free of demonic distortion – is made to appear. (In this sense, it is a self-portrait). The point is that the reality of the picture appears as its symbolic stuff (religious consciousness) and its subject matter ("crucified divine mediator") are beheld together and at once *by means of* the picture's "style," as that style manifests the subject, personality, or intentionality of the picture's maker, "Jesus Christ." The style of the picture is the revelatory style of breakthrough. The figure of Jesus Christ is fully and perfectly shaped by the form-bursting power of import. This dynamic mode of relating the elements of meaning-reality, for Tillich, also happens to be *the* reality in which all reality finds its expression and fulfillment.

In the collective act of perception, the style of the picture becomes the style of the picture's reception. Religious consciousness is gripped and molded by the same convulsing and converting power of being's form-bursting import. The stuff, subject matter, and subject of the picture are beheld simultaneously and at once – by means of the perceptual intentionality dictated and communicated by the picture's (paradoxically) unifying "style." This intentionally demands, and in some sense creates, a reciprocal intentionality in the viewer (the intentionality of faith), by which the picture is made *really* to appear.

Luther viewed the inward pictures of the soul as vehicles of works-righteousness. The one who "does not keep in mind God's Word, but his own good works…is lost; for as long as this picture is in the mind faith cannot be there."[399] When it came to the pictures painted outside the mind, Luther was no iconoclast.[400] However, he was uncompromising when it came to the images within. "There is no help as long as this [picture] is before his eyes. If he were wise and pictured nothing else in heart and continued to cling to the Word of God alone, he would live, for that is a living Word."[401] Thus Luther exhorts the faithful to "put aside reason and all our own ideas and feelings and simply cling to the Word, considering the one truth."[402] Faith is clinging to the Word.

For Tillich, by contrast, faith consists in clinging to the Picture. In this clinging, the eyes of faith actively bring the picture to sight. However, for Tillich, the picture itself remains the condition of the disciples' gaze. The person in the picture is the source of the eye's power to cling, to see the picture as a whole. As Tillich later writes,

> And when He sacrificed Himself, they looked away in despair like those whose image and idol is destroyed. But He was too strong; he drew their eyes back to Him, but now to Him crucified. They could stand it, for they saw with Him and through Him God who is really God. He who has seen Him has seen the Father: this is true only of the Crucified. But of Him it *is* true.[403]

The disciples of all time stand together here in contemplation of the picture. They occupy one standpoint in time: the kairos, the eternal moment that may ever again become the present. They see in revelation's *Augenblick* (blink-of-an-eye), in which the eternal

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[399] Martin Luther, *The Complete Sermons of Martin Luther*, vol. 5 (Ada: Baker, 2000), Twenty First Sunday after Trinity, Paragraph 13.
[400] See Luther's censure of Andreas Karlstadt, who, in Luther's absence, led the iconoclastic campaign in Wittenberg. Ronald J. Sider, *Karlstadt's Battle with Luther: Documents in a Liberal-Radical Debate* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2001), 25-26, 28-29, 98-101.
[401] Luther, *Complete Sermons*, Twenty First Sunday, 13.
[402] *Luther's Works: The Christian in Society III,* vol. 46, eds. Helmut T. Lehmann and Robert C. Schultz, (Saint Louis, Mo.: Fortress Press, 1967), 57.
[403] Tillich, *The New Being*, 133.

breaks into time – into culture, into art, and even (against the odds) into the church. Their gaze clings to the Cross, which shakes them with its pathos and turns them with its strength. They see with the "seeing that really unites," and so they see the image and picture as one. With one voice, in one moment, they all say one "Lord."

Chapter Three Appendix

Figure One: Sandro Botticelli, *Madonna with Child and Singing Angels*, 147.

CHAPTER FOUR

LEARNING TO SEE ETERNALLY: THE OPTICS OF THE *STAR OF REDEMPTION*

Sehen lernen ist Alles.
"Learning to see is everything."
Heinrich Wölfflin, *Das Erklären von Kunstwerken.*[404]

Der Mensch ist zum Menschsein auf der Welt –
l'chaj l'roj*, zum Leben, zum Schauen*.
"The business of the human being in the world is to be human – *lachay roi* (Gen 16:14)*,* to live, to look."
Franz Rosenzweig, journal entry, Sep 6, 1906.[405]

Chapter Contents

4.1 Preface: An Illuminating Confluence

In 1924 Franz Rosenzweig finally got around to reading Heinrich Wölfflin's major work, *Principles of Art History* (*Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*).[406] The book

[404] Heinrich Wölfflin, *Das Erklären von Kunstwerken* (Leipzig: E. A. Seemann, 1921) 3. A maxim claimed by many in Wölfflin's circle, including Adolf von Hildebrand, Hans von Marées and Konrad Fielder. See Gottfried Boehm, "'Sehen lernen ist alles': Conrad Fielder und Hans von Marées," in *Hans von Marées*, ed. Christian Lenz (Munich: Prestel, 1987).
[405] Franz Rosenzweig, *Der Mensch und Sein Werk. Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1: *Briefe und Tagebücher* [Hereafter *GS* I) (The Hague*:* Nijhoff, 1979) 56.
[406] Heinrich Wölfflin, *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe* (6th ed., Munich: 1923); *Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Early Modern Art: One Hundredth Anniversary Edition*, trans. Jonathan Blower (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2015).

was first published in 1915 and was in its sixth edition by 1924. It is surprising that Rosenzweig had not read the book earlier, for Wölfflin had been a guiding light of Rosenzweig's early intellectual development. From 1906 to 1908, Rosenzweig attended Wölfflin's lectures in art history at the University of Berlin, where Wölfflin was something of a sensation. Another of his students, the art historian Ernst Gombrich, recalls "the tall Swiss with beautiful blue eyes and a firm and self-assured manner of delivery that held the *auditorium maximum* spellbound." Gombrich adds, "The spell did not work on me for very long."[407] How long did Wölfflin's spell work on Rosenzweig?

As a student, Rosenzweig lauds Wölfflin's lecturing style in letters to his friends and parents ("Good exits make every good lecturer").[408] He weighs books of art history against Wölfflin's doctrines ("there are perfectly *wölfflinsch* thoughts in it").[409] Retrospectively, he credits Wölfflin with his early view of history ("my real teachers were in philosophy Hans Ehrenberg, in history Wölfflin")[410] and his approach to philosophy ("my interest in philosophy had hitherto [prior to 1913] been purely historical, *lamprechtsch* or *spenglersch*, actually *wölfflinsch*").[411] Although Wölfflin's *Grundbegriffe* bored him (he told Ehrenberg, "I could not get through the introduction,"), he found the 1905 *Kunst Albrecht Dürers* "really beautiful" (*wirklich schön*). The Dürer book kept him "from smashing that god of my youth, whom Wölfflin certainly was."[412] Even in 1924, Wölfflin remained intact among Rosenzweig's idols.

[407] Ernst Hans Gombrich, *Norm and Form* (New York: Phaidon, 1978) 92.
[408] *GS* I, 340.
[409] *GS* I, 102.
[410] *GS* I, 808.
[411] *GS* I, 1196.
[412] *GS* I, 940-941.

This chapter approaches the question of vision and pictures in Rosenzweig's thought through an account of the intellectual confluence between Rosenzweig and Wölfflin. This affinity between Rosenzweig and his former teacher has been noted at least once before,[413] but it has not been treated in depth. I frame the relationship as a confluence rather an influence, because I am not primarily interested in demonstrating that Wölfflin's ideas had a causal effect on Rosenzweig's thinking. I wish to avoid the trap of thinking about conceptual correspondences in these terms of influence. And yet, the parallels that emerge between Rosenzweig's and Wölfflin's thinking are more than a coincidence. Wölfflin was Rosenzweig's teacher and interlocutor. His voice and ideas seem to have resonated in Rosenzweig's head long after the student had left the classroom, perhaps even when Rosenzweig was not fully conscious of his teacher's presence to thought. Rosenzweig was given to such intimate espousals of intellectual personality, as evident in his relationship to Cohen and others. What interest me, then, is the intellectual confluence – the flowing together of minds – that exist between student and teacher, so far as this confluence may illuminate Rosenzweig's own perspective on pictures, vision, and the knowledge of revelation.

Such convergences of modern German-Jewish thought and the world of modern German art have been suggested elsewhere. As noted in the Introduction, Braiterman's *Shape of Revelation* points to such a confluence between Rosenzweig's and Buber's avant-garde theological imaginations and the theoretical writings of the German Expressionists. More proximate to connection I draw here between Rosenzweig and Wölfflin is the relationship Margaret Olin posits between Buber and Alois Riegl, the Viennese art historian who, together with Wölfflin, led the turn to formalism in modern

[413] In Braiterman, *The Shape of Revelation*, 45-46.

art history. Olin notes congruities between Riegl's and Buber's views of intersubjectivity and empathic relationships.[414] As we shall see, empathy, pathos and feeling, are also major elements of Wölfflin's formalist aesthetics.[415] The many transpositions Braiterman detects between modern Jewish thought and the art of German Expressionism are exhilarating discoveries. However, I tend toward the view, implicit in Olin's analysis, that the confluence between the modernity of modern Jewish thought and the modernism of modern art may run deepest with regard to these early architects of modern formalism, Riegl and Wölfflin.[416]

Thus, my aim is not to show that Wölfflin "influenced" Rosenzweig. He did, of course. However, what makes Rosenzweig extraordinary, as Wölfflin wrote of Dürer, is that "his genius cannot be explained by an addition of influences," but instead "breaks through to a new attitude and a new perception."[417] And it is perception that matters most to my analysis. Subtending the visual-intuitional aspects of the *Star* rests a notion of spiritual perception that mirrors Wölfflin's notion of aesthetic perception. This congruity is essentially parallel to the congruity suggested in the previous chapter – between Tillich's theory of meaning and Wölfflin's notion of style. However, with regard to Tillich, the comparison between theology and Wölfflin's art theory was only apt, a

[414] Margaret Olin, *Forms of Representation in Alois Riegl's Theory of Art* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1992), 167, 184.
[415] Also noted by Olin, Ibid., 184.
[416] In addition to Olin's *Forms of Representation*, some recent studies of these monumental figures in modern art history include: Margaret Iversen, *Alois Riegl. Art History and Theory,* (Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1993); Michael Gubser, *Time's Visible Surface. Alois Riegl and the Discourse on History and Temporality in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 2006); Joan Hart, *Heinrich Wölfflin: An Intellectual Biography,* PhD Dissertation, (University of California, Berkley, 1981); Andreas Eckl, *Kategorien der Anschauung: zur transzendentalphilosophischen Bedeutung von Heinrich Wölfflins "Kunstgeschichtlichen Grundbegriffe"* (Munich: Fink, 1996); Vlad Ionescu, "The Rigorous and the Vague: Aesthetics and Art History in Riegl, Wölfflin and Worringer," *Journal of Art Historiography* 9 (2013): 1–24; and Wiesing, *The Visibility of the Image: History and Perspectives of Formal Aesthetics*.
[417] Wölfflin, *The Art of Albrecht Dürer*, trans. Alastair Grieve and Heide Grieve (New York: Phaidon, 1971) 41.

confluence that formed in a wide stream of neo-Kantian ideas. By contrast, the link between Rosenzweig and Wölfflin is direct, and it forms, I argue, an almost necessary context for understanding the visual-pictorial qualities of the *Star*.

Yet, the comparison flows in the same direction as before. Like Tillich, Rosenzweig predicates the knowledge of revelation on a "presentational" theory of objectivity, which supports and is supported by the pictorial figures of religious consciousness. Thus, similar to the trajectory of the previous chapter, this chapter begins by putting theology in conversation with modern art theory and concludes with a turn to a philosophy, exploring points of resonance between Rosenzweig's philosophy of Judaism and Cassirer's philosophy of religion.

My argument suggests a few perceptual adjustments of its own. My account of Tillich's theology challenged the predominate perception of Protestant thought in the 1920s as a theology of the Word against images and idols. Likewise this chapter's account of Rosenzweig's *Star* shifts emphasis from word to image in how we perceive the modern Jewish thought of this period. My aim is really only to re-emphasize this point, as Braiterman, Batnitsky, Biemann, Wolfson, and Pollock all call attention to the visuality of the *Star* in some way.[418] However, it is worth underscoring the extent to which the verbal and dialogical quality of Rosenzweig's thinking is outshone by the image. Even the celebrated dialogical encounter of revelation at the heart of the *Star* is subsumed into the book's visual scheme.[419] By the *Star*'s spectacular conclusion,

[418] See the review of this literature in the third section of the Introduction.
[419] As suggested by the title of Wolfson's essay, "Light Does Not Talk But Shines" in *New Directions in Jewish Philosophy*, ed. Aaron W. Hughes and Elliot R. Wolfson, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2010), 87-148.

revelation's *Augenblick* (blink of the eye) is revealed to be the pupil of an eye that gazes silently on the eternal truth as countenance.

The predominance of vision and visuality in the *Star* is something that Wolfson, in particular, has stressed. He too has interpreted the book's visuality as an aspect of Rosenzweig's philosophy of truth and knowledge. He too has called attention to the provocatively illusory "intermingling of truth and untruth, being and semblance" involved in Rosenzweig's transfiguration of the truth into an image to behold.[420] However, while Wolfson views Rosenzweig's imagistic rendering of revealed truth in a Heideggerian framework – in relation to Heidegger's notion of un-truth as concealment (*Verborgenheit*) and truth as disclosedness (*Entborgenheit*)[421] – I wish to shift the framework in a neo-Kantian direction, toward Cassirer's philosophy of truth and knowledge and the presentational quality of validity therein.

This is the second major perceptual shift of this chapter. Rosenzweig, who wishes to smash every philosophy that precedes him and start from scratch, is in practice a rather conservative thinker. Despite the many phenomenological-existentialist resonances of Rosenzweig's "new thinking," the *Star* never fully escapes the "old" ways of thinking: the German idealism of the nineteenth century and the neo-Kantianism that continued that tradition into the twentieth. It is not clear that Rosenzweig really *intends* to break with these traditions or if he only wants to *get them right*.[422] Thus, as we shall see, not only does Rosenzweig's aesthetics never stray far from the classical ideal it sets out to

[420] Wolfson, *Giving Beyond the Gift*, 48.
[421] Ibid.
[422] I take this to be one of the major claims of Pollock's *Franz Rosenzweig and the Systematic Task of Philosophy*, with regard to the "task" of the title.

overcome, neither does his philosophy stray far from the systems (whether German idealist or neo-Kantian) to which he takes his hammer.

These two axes – the aesthetic and the philosophical – are conjoined, once again, in the category of perception. The "worlds" of the *Star* are perceptual worlds, generated by inner laws of perception. The "eternal supraworld" (*ewige Überwelt*), in which the ultimate truth is made known, is a projection of the perceived "flow of events" onto the heavens. It is a symbolically-rendered redoubling of the lived, perceptually experienced world. Such are Cassirer's "image-worlds" generated by the symbolic forms of culture, in and through which the world must become objective *for me*, the perceiver. As with Tillich, the truth of revelation, for Rosenzweig, resides within this presentational correlation of the subjective and objective within an immediately-perceived pictorial whole.

4.2 The *Star* in Light of Wölfflin's Formalist Aesthetics: History, Style, and Optics

4.2.a "My real teacher" in history

The *Star* ends in contemplation of the heavens, but it begins in the "naked folds" of earth, with the solitary human being crawling "like a worm…before the whizzing projectiles of blind, pitiless death."[423] It is impossible not to hear in these lines the echo of Rosenzweig's own historical moment, to see in the "folds of naked earth" the trenches of war. One must sense the author himself clambering for a higher vantage point on history's sudden ruins, not unlike Benjamin's angel of history. It is appropriate, then, to begin an inquiry into Rosenzweig's image of the eternal with attention to his view of history. Indeed, for Rosenzweig, as for Tillich, there is no other route than time to the

[423] *Star*, 9; *Stern*, 3.

eternal. However, as noted in Chapter Two, on Rosenzweig's early view of history, he finds no eternal pattern in history, no indication of the absolute, only a figureless and senseless redundancy.

For Rosenzweig's early view of history, there may be no better place to turn than Wölfflin. In a 1922 letter to Ernst Simon, Rosenzweig declares Wölfflin his "real teacher" in history. "[Hermann] Cohen was the first and only living professor of philosophy whom I took seriously. The greatest historian of all seemed to me to be [Karl Gotthard] Lamprecht….My real teachers were in philosophy, Hans Ehrenberg, in history, Wölfflin."[424] Rosenzweig ranks Wölfflin among his personal pantheon, not far behind Cohen and directly alongside Ehrenberg.

In what sense did Rosenzweig learn history from Wölfflin? Another of Rosenzweig's teachers, Eugen Rosenstock, once wrote to him, "Man, how you treat history! How you see everything as isolated as individuals, where I see only branches of a mighty tree!"[425] At this time, Rosenzweig viewed history as *Tat des Täters*, an act of acts lacking holistic unity. As Rosenzweig remarks to Franz Frank, "we see God in every ethical event, but not in one complete whole, not in history."[426] These views express Rosenzweig's early "anti-historicism," his conviction that history cannot engender its own absolute, but only an endless series of one relative thing after another. The

[424] "Cohen war der erste und einzige lebende Philosophieprofessor, den ich ernstnahm. Historiker von großem Maße schien mir allenfalls Lamprecht. Gelernt habe ich aber bei den Mittleren, wo ich nun eben grade im Lernalter war. Meine eigentlichen Lehrer aber waren in Philosophie Hans Ehrenberg, in Geschichte Wölfflin." *GS* I*,* 808.
[425] Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy, *Judaism Despite Christianity: The Letters on Christianity and Judaism Between Eugen Rosenstock-Huessy and Franz Rosenzweig* (New York: Schocken, 1971) 127; cited in Biemann "The 'And'," 61, and in *David Myers, Resisting History: Historicism and Its Discontents in German-Jewish Thought* (Princeton University Press, 2010) 86.
[426] In a letter to Franz Frank. Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, ed. Edith Rosenzweig (Berlin: Schocken, 1935), 50-52. Cited in Mendes-Flohr, *Divided Passions*, 315.

historicist, by contrast, sees the whole within history, and sees the whole as image and *Gestalt*.[427]

Rosenzweig's remark to Simon suggests that he learned to view history as *Tat der Täter* from his education in *art* history, from Wölfflin. Indeed, Wölfflin's theory of artistic style includes a view of history as a series of standalone events belonging to no larger whole. Wölfflin, too, begins in opposition to historicism. Wölfflin's and Riegl's formalism intends to supplant the historicism prevalent in the nineteenth-century art history. They conceive their method as the "science art" (*Kunstwissenschaft*) in contrast to "art history" (*Kunstgeschichte*).[428] Set against the biographical and contextual preoccupations of their predecessors, Wölfflin and Riegl concerned themselves solely with the formal features of style.

In shaping this agenda, Wölfflin balks at many of the Hegelian presuppositions of nineteenth-century art history, including the presumption of a linear, progressive development of style. For Wölfflin, the history of artistic style is basically cyclical. Its principal metaphor is that of the seed: "The image of the blooming and fading of a flower presents itself as the guiding perspective of this theory."[429] Artistic styles germinate, burgeon, flower, fruit, then go to seed, whence the cycle begins again. This does not

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[427] See Biemann, "The 'And' of History." On the role of images in German historicism see also Kathrin Maurer, *Visualizing the Past: The Power of the Image in German Historicism* (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2013).
[428] See Evonne Levy, "Wölfflin's Principles of Art History (1915-2015): A Prolegomenon for Its Second Century" in *Principles of Art History: The Problem of the Development of Style in Early Modern Art: One Hundredth Anniversary Edition*, eds. Evonne Levy and Tristan Weddigen, trans. Jonathan Blower (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2015), 20. Walter Benjamin spoke of Wölfflin's and Riegl's formalism as *strenge Kunstwissenschaft* ("rigorous science of art"). See Benjamin, "Strenge Kunstwissenschaft. Zum ersten Bande der Kunstwissenschaftlichen Forschungen," *Gesammelte Schriften* III, eds. Rolf Tiedermann, Hermann Schweppenhäuser (Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, 1982). An English translation of this essay was published as "Rigorous Study of Art. On the First Volume of the 'Kunstwissenschaftliche Forschungen,'" trans. Thomas Y. Levis, October , no. 47 (1988), 84-90. See also Mitchell B. Frank and Daniel Adler introductory essay to *German Art History and Scientific Thought: Beyond Formalism*, eds. Frank and Adler (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012) 1-12.
[429] Wölfflin, *Renaissance and Baroque* (1888), trans. Katherin Simon (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1961) 74.

mean that Wölfflin cannot detect patterns within the history of style. Indeed, all of his analyses come to revolve around one such pattern: the dialectic of the classical and baroque. Wölfflin anchors this dialectic in a particular moment of stylistic change, namely the flowering of High Renaissance classicism into the baroque.[430] The relationship between the classicism of the Italian Cinquecento and the baroque style of the next century anchors a general dialectic between classic and baroque, which Wölfflin then projects across the whole of art history.

Defining classical style by its simplicity and linear clarity, and baroque style by its complexity and "painterly" (*malerisch*) vagueness, Wölfflin see the classical turning over into the baroque, and the baroque back into the classical, over and over again. For Wölfflin, this cycle constitutes only a pattern. It does not contain the cause or the telos of stylistic variation. Wölfflin therefore is never able to say *why* styles change.[431] In the end, his commitment to the cyclicality of stylistic development, as Marshall Brown concludes, "marks a refusal to admit the possibility of either end point or a simple directionality in the historical process."[432]

Rosenzweig's idea of history in 1914, the date of his essay, "Atheistic Theology," is Wölfflin's idea of history: a cyclical dialectic without cause or direction. There are, of course, multiple precedents for this cyclical view of time. For instance Nietzsche's "eternal return," which is entwined in his own attack on historicism.[433] More proximate to Rosenzweig's historical context, we may point to Lamprecht, who Rosenzweig also

[430] Marshall Brown, "The Classic Is the Baroque: On the Principle of Wölfflin's Art History," *Critical Inquiry* 9 (1982) 381.
[431] He names an obvious binary possibility: either an "internal development, a development that, as it were, occurs of its own accord within the perceptual apparatus" or "an external impulse that determines the transformation, the changed interest, the altered attitude toward the world." However, to this dilemma, Wölfflin can only respond that "both perspectives seem admissible." *Principles*, 308-310.
[432] Brown, "The Classic Is the Baroque," 381.
[433] See Rosenzweig's praise of Nietzsche in the introduction to the *Star*: *Star*, 15-16; *Stern*, 9-10.

places in his pantheon. Lamprecht was, in some ways, Wölfflin's adversary in art history. He opposed Wölfflin's anti-contextualist method, defending a *Kulturgeschichte* of style.[434] However, like Wölfflin, Lamprecht conceives history as the consequence of relative, contingent, and organic forces, rather than a unified and necessary process of progressive development.

Yet, the more significant precedent for Rosenzweig's view of history may be Oswald Spengler. Rosenzweig names Spengler as an early influence, calling Spengler's *Untergang* "brilliant."[435] Spengler also views history as an aimless process of organic growth and decay. Cultures "grow with the same superb aimlessness as the flowers of the field," Spengler writes.[436] Like the historicist, Spengler sees history in a picture, but not a unified whole, but rather "a picture of endless formations and transformation, of the marvelous waxing and waning of organic forms."[437] Rosenzweig appears to have revised Part One of the *Star* in light of Spengler's own magnum opus, implicitly modeling the Star's descent on Spengler's figure of *Untergang*.[438] However, before Rosenzweig came to Spengler, he would have already learned to see history in terms of aimless cycles of growth and decay – from Wölfflin, his "real teacher" in history.

Wölfflin's influence might also be discerned in the *Star*'s efforts to *redeem* the temporal world. As we have noted, while Rosenzweig loudly protests Hegel's manner of

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[434] See Kathryn Brush, "The Cultural Historian Karl Lamprecht: Practitioner and Progenitor of Art History," *Central European History* 26, no. 2 (1993): 139–64. Lamprecht's legacy in the world of art history is marginal, but not nonexistent. Aby Warburg, Lamprecht's student at Bonn, owes his synoptic-symbolic method of juxtaposition in part to Lamprecht. Cassirer develops his own philosophy of symbolic forms under the influence of Warburg, a figure who is present everywhere on the margins of this study.
[435] As noted by Ephraim Meir, "The Unpublished Correspondence between Franz Rosenzweig and Gritli Rosenstock-Huessy on *The Star of Redemption*," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 9 (2002) 31.
[436] Oswald Spengler, *The Decline of the West*, vol. 1, trans. Charles Francis Atkinson (New York: Knopf, 1946) 21.
[437] Spengler, *Decline*, 22.
[438] Meir, "Unpublished Correspondence," 31.

inscribing the infinite into time, Rosenzweig himself comes to conceive the eternal in temporal terms. As Wolfson puts it, for Rosenzweig, "the eternal must be fully realized in time as temporal and not merely as eternal."[439] That is, eternity is temporality in the form of its "spherical fullness."[440] This spherical fullness of time appears in Part Three of the *Star*, in the cyclical time of liturgical life. Rosenzweig never breaks from a cyclical view of history. He transitions from a tragic to a redemptive perspective on cyclical time. In short, the redemption of the temporal world will not be wrought by the straightening of time, but from the centering of its aimless cycle. In the *Star*, time's center point is the act of revelation, which also becomes the vantage point from which the *Gestalt* of time eternal fullness may be viewed.

This total vantage point is a desideratum of the modern historical imagination at large. It receives an especially vivid treatment in Spengler's *Untergang*. There Spengler identifies Petrarch as the origin of modern western historical consciousness and ties this breakthrough to Petrarch's famous ascent of Mount Ventoux. Petrarch, Spengler writes, was "the very type of historically sensitive man, viewing the distant past and scanning the distant prospect (was he not the first to attempt an Alpine peak?), living in his time, yet essentially not of it."[441] This panoptic view is also present in the thought of Heinrich Graetz, whom Rosenzweig names his "ideal historian" and admires for achieving a "total view (*Aussicht*) over the entire expanse of history."[442] Further, he admires Nietzsche for

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[439] Elliot Wolfson, "Facing the Effaced: Mystical Eschatology and the Idealistic Orientation in the Thought of Franz Rosenzweig," in *Journal for the History of Modern Theology* 4 (1997), 68; cited in Biemann, "The 'And'," 64.
[440] Elliot R. Wolfson, *Giving Beyond the Gift: Apophasis and Overcoming Theomania* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2014) 40.
[441] Spengler, *Decline*, 14.
[442] Rosenzweig, "Geist und Epochen der jüdischen Geschichte" in *Zweistromland*, 532; see Biemann, "The 'And'," 81.

"rejoicing in his freedom and his limitless perspective (*unbegrenzten Aussicht*)."[443] As we shall see, the *Star* generates its own "limitless perspective" on time from within time. We will return to this theme below in consideration of the *Star*'s optics.

4.2.b Redemption – classical and baroque

Rosenzweig comes to Wölfflin's view of history only through his aesthetics. Taking aesthetics again as *aesthesis*, the most evident point of aesthetic confluence between Rosenzweig and Wölfflin is their common fixation on form itself. Like Tillich, Rosenzweig is swept up in the early-twentieth century (re)turn to *anschauliches Denken*. The *Star* is well known for its polemic against art, pursued in its first part. However, as Braiterman's work on Rosenzweig has emphasized, the "anti-aestheticism" of the *Star* is only apparent. Braiterman is correct to conclude that "(a)esthetics and aesthetic theory define a text whose elemental parts course into the total form of a six-figured *Gestalt* that renders almost everything that [Rosenzweig] has said against 'art' virtually irrelevant."[444] Wölfflin's stylistic categories of classical and baroque, which Rosenzweig transposes into the *Star*, are determined at this level of morphological formation.

Wölfflin appears to norm his aesthetics to the morphology of classical style. This would appear to put Rosenzweig at odds with his former teacher. In the first part of the *Star*, Rosenzweig describes a "protocosmos" (*Vorwelt*) akin to Buber's "It-world," devoid of relational, experienced existence. This is "the world of art," for Rosenzwieg. "This is the world of art. A world of mute accord which is not a world, not a real lively to

[443] *Star*, 15; *Stern*, 10.
[444] Braiterman, *Shape*, 47.

and fro connection of a conversation that goes back and forth."[445] More precisely, it is the world of *classical* art. Rosenzwieg explicitly associates the protocosmos with the classical, pagan epoch. More over the ontology of the protocosmos is shaped by morphological principles that could have been drawn straight from Wölfflin's lectures on classical style. It is "closed off by a crystal wall from all that it is not."[446] It has no "connection beyond," but is shaped by "inclusiveness in itself."[447] The principle of pagan deity is "indifference to everything that may be found outside of it."[448] Linearity, closure and proportional balance characterize Wölfflin's notion of classical style. Like the classical work of art, Rosenzweig's protocosmos is self-enclosed and perfectly (but lifelessly) balanced. Rosenzweig makes the classical artwork, specifically classical sculpture, the image of the protocosmos's underrealized reality: the "metaethical" self is likened to "the marble statue of Michelangelo," mute as stone and impermeable to spoken address.[449]

Part Two of the *Star* makes a turn to the baroque. Revelation brings lyrical dynamism to the sculptural equilibrium of the pagan world. Mute self-enclosure gives way to dialogical openness. The listless balance between the elements is overcome by a pathos-driven asymmetry between God and the soul. Where pagan deity was blissfully indifferent to the self, the revealed God now immerses himself in the beloved soul, coaxing the whole from the singularity of details.

If the choice were between classical *or* baroque, the baroque outburst of revelation would appear to position Rosenweig's aesthetics against classicism and contra

[445] Rosenzweig, *Star,* 90; *Stern,* 88.
[446] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 46; *Stern*, 41.
[447] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 69; *Stern*, 65, 66.
[448] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 46; *Stern*, 41.
[449] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 222; *Stern*, 230.

Wölfflin. Ostensibly, Wölfflin applies his dialectic of the classical and baroque descriptively, without subjective judgment. However, he clearly exhibits what Frederick Antal calls "an undisguised bias in favour of the classicist Cinquecento composition."[450] Rosenzweig's bias, by contrast, seems to lie with the baroque. In *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, Walter Benjamin characterizes the baroque in terms of "vigorous style of language," "the desire for a new pathos" and "archaisms in which it is believed one can reassure oneself of the wellsprings of linguistic life."[451] On this view, many features of the *Star*, especially its second part, would appear baroque indeed.

This oppositional stance between Wölfflin's classicism and Rosenzweig's baroque holds true, to an extent. So far as Rosenzweig is a thinker of revelation, his thinking *is* baroque, and, it would seem, quite *unwölfflinsch.* As Braiterman observes, "Renaissance [classicism] is to baroque for Wölfflin as paganism is to revelation for Rosenzweig."[452] However, for Rosenzweig and Wölfflin both, the classical and baroque are dialectically related. Their absolute opposition implies a degree of mutual dependence. This is the major insight of Marshall Brown's landmark interpretation of Wölfflin's formalism.[453] Wölfflin's writings clearly privilege the classical. However, as Brown says, "Over and over again, classic works triumph by breaking out into the values of the baroque, into energy, speech, life."[454] The baroque resides within the classical, as its source of life.

[450] Frederick Antal, "Remarks on the Method of Art History," *Burlington Magazine* 91 (Feb 1949): 49.
[451] Benjamin, *Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (New York: Verso, 1998) 54-55; cited in Braiterman, *Shape*, 47.
[452] Braiterman, *Shape*, 50.
[453] Marshall Brown, "The Classic Is the Baroque: On the Principle of Wölfflin's Art History."
[454] Brown, "The Classic Is the Baroque," 394.

Brown arrives at this conclusion only by first recognizing Wölfflin as a morphologist, against prevailing tendencies to view him as a mere taxonomist of style and thus fault him for reducing the richness of art history to a set of classificatory categories.[455] As morphologist, Wölfflin is concerned not primarily with the classification of styles, but with their inner formative powers. For Brown, this means that Wölfflin's notions of the classical and baroque refer to vital forces of form creation, not taxonomic categories of classification. Brown draws the distinctly sharply: "On the one side [the classical], we have absence, rest, law, silence, death; on the other [the baroque], presence, movement, freedom, voice, life."[456] These vitalistic terms recur throughout Wölfflin's oeuvre. Beneath the cool surface of Wölfflin *Kunstwissenschaft* lies a nearly Nietzschean dialectic of the Apollonian and Dionysian. On Brown's reading, "It could hardly be clearer that in affective terms Wölfflin's sympathies are entirely with the baroque."[457] That is, Wölfflin reveres the baroque *within* the classical as a form of life within death, voice within silence. Here too, in the baroque, is the source of Wölfflin's empathetic theory, his attunement to the feeling within form, which becomes fundamental to the formalism of Wilhelm Worringer in *Abstraction and Empathy*, and, in turn, Kandinsky's and Marc's Expressionism.

And yet, Wölfflin remains a classicist. Why? "That classicism is a mirage − a necessary illusion or, more technically, a regulative ideal − is one of the profound discoveries of that branch of Romanticism curiously known as German classicism," observes Brown.[458] For Wölfflin, strictly speaking, *"The classic does not exist.*"[459] The

[455] Brown, "The Classic Is the Baroque," 380.
[456] Brown, "Classic," 394.
[457] Brown, "Classic," 394.
[458] Brown, "Classic," 398.

classical does not possess the baroque's vitality, its principle of existence. Counterintuitively, so far as the classical work is real – present, alive – its reality must be dialectally derived from the principle of the baroque. As Brown provocatively concludes, "the classic *is* the baroque."[460] However, the classical remains necessary as a regulative ideal of form-creation, i.e. as the principle of order and proportion that allows the formless vitality of the baroque to take shape. Thus, while the baroque is life, the classical is the baroque's *form* of life. Similarly to Riegl, Wölfflin is convinced that the history of art develops through an inner striving toward this purely ideal, non-existing form.

Thus, Wölfflin yearns for a classical ideal that cannot be had because, strictly speaking, it does not exist. Of his beloved Cinquecento, Wölfflin writes, "One can compare classic art with the ruins of a building nearly, but never quite, finished, the original form of which must be reconstructed from far-scattered fragments."[461] What is given are the ruins, and the pathos and feeling for the ruins. However, the whole *must* be imagined for the ruins to be made form. The formless expressivity at the origin of artistic creation cannot appear on its own, but only under the order of the posited whole, the classical ideal. The Renaissance masters beloved by Wölfflin enact this dialectical process, leaning heroically toward the necessary ideal of formal perfection. But what these classical pictures make *present* to Wölfflin is not form in itself (which has not presence at all), but the formless, expressive power *in* form. Dialectically, the more the

[459] Brown, "Classic," 397.
[460] Brown, "Classic," 397.
[461] Wölfflin, *Classic Art: An Introduction to the Italian Renaissance* (1898), trans. Peter Murray and Linda Murray (London: Phaidon, 1952) xviii.

artwork strives for classical, formal perfection, the more it makes present the baroque vitality at the origin of art.

We now have before us a rather different picture of Wölfflin, in both method and manner, than the picture painted by Gombrich. Wölfflin is a baroque morphologist, driven by a romantic pathos that prefigures Expressionism. This other view of Wölfflin is captured in a memoir by Fritz Strich, another of Wölfflin's students:

> When I again … think of the twitching and the lightning around his eyes, of his restlessness and impenetrable reserve, of his speaking style, this never overloaded, never overbalancing, measured and rhythmic style that struggled upwards toward the light out of deep shafts and layers, then do I understand that classic art indeed brought him release, but release into the very thing that he himself was not.[462]

Which Wölfflin was the god of Rosenzweig's youth? Gombrich's "firm and self-assured" classicist or Strich's lightning-eyed Romantic in classicist's robes? Rosenzweig's recollections of Wölfflin are rather sparse. What is certain is that Wölfflin's spell gripped Rosenzweig more powerfully than it did Gombrich. One suspects that it drew Rosenzweig near enough to glimpse the baroque fire around his eyes.

Given this more dialectical view of Wölfflin, the baroqueness of revelation in the *Star* may not be so *unwölfflinsch* after all. Wölfflin's aesthetics itself is baroque, in a dialectally classical sense. In turn, it should not be surprising that the *Star*'s baroque moments issues in a reaffirmation of classical form. Rosenzweig's baroque tendencies do not reduce to what Braiterman calls the "hyperbaroque" quality of much German Expressionism, which takes a double helping of the pathos and vigor said by Benjamin to characterize the baroque. "The contrast between Rosenzweig's and Benjamin's baroque

[462] Fritz Strich, *Zu Heinrich Wölfflin's Gedichtnis* (Bern: Francke, 1956) 34-35, cited and translated by Brown in "Classic," 394-395.

could not be greater," Braiterman writes.[463] Unlike Benjamin's dismayed angel of history, Rosenzweig does not tarry long with the violence and the anguish of fractured form. Rather, he maintains an overwhelming desire for "a multiplex whole," which, like Wölfflin, he yearns to behold in tranquility. "Despite the author's own claims to the contrary, a careful look at *The Star of Redemption* shows that he never quite quit Wölfflin,"[464] Braiterman concludes. Indeed, Rosenzweig may lean even *more* toward the classical than does Wölfflin, the preeminent classicist who loves classical art for what it is not. Rosenzweig's journals reveal that he was largely unmoved by avant-garde movements in early 20th-century art. They are instead full of praise for the masters of the Italian Renaissance: Michelangelo, Giorgione – the gods of that god of his youth.

Classical aesthetics make a powerful return in Part Three of the *Star*. In that section, the theory of art and aesthetics is supplanted by the "sociology" of Jewish and Christian life. However, this supplanting of the aesthetic is also its redemption. The cyclicality of Jewish liturgy retrieves the closed-form aesthetics of the classical world. While in the pagan world, self-enclosure denoted uncertainty and unreality, just the opposite is the case with regard to the world of Judaism. This is because the baroque fire of revelation has potentiated Jewish life from within, rooting the people in its eternal origin and providing its circle dance with a centripetal center of movement. From this middle point spins out the "still and silent image" in which "the true eternity of the eternal people" is "pushed in front of the eyes of the peoples of the world."[465]

This is an image that would appear to Wölfflin's eye as a classical work *par excellence*. However, in true Wölfflinian fashion, the classicism of the *Star* only triumphs

[463] Braiterman, *Shape*, 47.
[464] Ibid.
[465] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 354; *Stern,* 372.

by means of the baroque. The holism of the redeemed world has its hidden source in the burning pathos shared between God and the soul, which individuates, immerses itself in the detail and brings the All to life. For Rosenzweig, as much as for Wölfflin, the classical *is* baroque. Or, to employ the "little word" that Rosenzweig places at the root of the All: redemption is both classical *and* baroque.

4.2.c. Optics: Forms of seeing eternally, eternal form of seeing

Wölfflin's formalist aesthetics ultimately subordinates form to a history of seeing. The formal style of the artwork derives from the artist's way of seeing, her mode of visually intuiting the world that she paints. The *Kunstwissenschaftler*, then, is trained to perceive in the artwork's composition the seeing eye that created it. We may recall Lambert Wiesing's observation that Wölfflin treats art "as a mode of episteme, for a relational logic of perception is to be derived from the relational logic of the image."[466] In this relational logic of the artwork, we can now also recognize the logic of the presentational symbol. We return to the equivalence of perceiving and knowing.

The aesthetics of Jewish and Christian life described in Part Three of the *Star* are ways of talking about religious knowing as modes of perception. The aesthetics of religious existence, then, must be parsed epistemologically. On the one hand, in the *Star*, Judaism and Christianity themselves constitute the truth-object of religious knowledge. They are the temporal realities in which the eternal is realized. The liturgical lives of Judaism and Christianity themselves make up the figure of the eternal in time. They

[466] Wiesing, *Visibility*, 88.

appear as "external visible form" (*äußeren, sichtbaren Gestalt*).[467] As has been noted, Rosenzweig conceives these liturgical figures on the order of the picture, as formed likenesses or icons (*geformten Abbild*).[468] The liturgies "form an image (*Bild*) of the people's destiny."[469] Such picture-talk about liturgical existence as the external visible form of the eternal truth suggests that, for Rosenzweig, the objectivity of revelation may be fairly be likened to an artwork. Braiterman is thus justified in treating redemption as a kind of *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total artwork) of the eternal in time, an image-object made of time, and meant to be beheld, in which is "refracted" the power of world history. [470]

However, Rosenzweig also describes liturgical life in specular terms. The liturgy is "the burning mirror that collects the sunbeams of eternity in the cycle of the year."[471] Specular language signals the correlationalism also found in Tillich, between the objectivity of religious truth and the subjective conditions by which it must be known. Indeed, Rosenzweig treats Jewish and Christian liturgies as distinct "eyes" for the truth. They are each distinct seeing subjects. A passage from the *Star* that construes Judaism and Christianity as two devices of vision-enhancing technology, a telescope and a spectroscope, describes the epistemic significance of Part Three's visual-pictorial rhetoric:

> Only that which lasts for more than a moment (*Augenblick*) can be seen with the eye (*mit Augen zu erblicken*); only the moment that has shut down (*stillgelegt*) through its becoming eternal permits the eye to see the configuration (*Gestalt*) in it. The configuration, therefore, more than that which is elemental, more than what is real, is the directly perceptual (*das unmittelbar Anschauliche*). As long as we know only elements of the path and laws of the path of a star, our eyes have

[467] Rosenzweig, "Das neue Denken" in *Zweistromland*, *Gesammelte Schriften* 3, ed. Reinhold and Annemarie Mayer (Dordrecht: Nijhoff, 1984), 156.
[468] Rosenzweig, "Das neue Denken," 155.
[469] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 335; *Stern*, 351.
[470] Braiterman, *Shape*, 203-205.
[471] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 327; *Stern*, 342.

> not yet seen it; it is only a material point that moves in space. Only when a telescope and spectroscope draw it near to us do we know it as we know a tool we use or a picture [*Bild*] in our room: with familiar visual perception (*vertrauter Anschauung*).[472]

The liturgies are the lived *organon* (instrument) of absolute knowing. And they are *optical* instruments. By use of the liturgy, the ephemeral, ever-new moment in which the movement of the Star has been revealed may be optically arrested. They convert ephemeral time into more enduring forms of time (in the case of Judaism, "the hour," and in the case of Christianity, "the epoch"). In doing so, they expand the blinking view of truth provided by revelation's *Augenblick* into two more optically stable views, by which the eternal truth of the temporal world may appear as *Gestalt*.

As with Tillich's "visionary science," the visual, *anschauliche* terminology of the *Star* consciously draws on late Idealist understandings of *intellektuelle Anschauung* (intellectual intuition). Benjamin Pollock has demonstrated this with regard to the epistemology of Part Three of the *Star*.[473] We recall that for Schelling, intellectual intuition names "the capacity to see the universal in the particular, the infinite in the finite, and indeed to unite both in a living unity."[474] It is a form of seeing with the power to form immediate, intimate unities out of parts and contradictions. The epistemic power of *Anschauung* in the *Star* certainly presumes something like this romantic-idealist notion of intellectual intuition.

However, we must also perceive Wölfflin's perceptual theory behind the optical terminology in Part Three. It is not only that Wölfflin is another thinker in Rosenzweig's orbit with ideas about intuition. It is also that this Wölfflinian hermeneutic better suits the

[472] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 313; *Stern*, 328.
[473] Benjamin Pollock, *Franz Rosenzweig and the Systematic Task,* 258-311.
[474] F. W. J . Schelling, *Sämtliche Werke* 4, ed. K. F. A. Schelling (Stuttgart: Cotta, 1859) 362. Cited in Frederick Beiser, *German Idealism*, 580.

full range of optical metaphors and motifs employed in the *Star* and better corresponds to the distinctions Rosenzweig draws between Jewish and Christian modes of religious existence and religious knowledge. As previously noted, for Wölfflin, an artwork's formal composition originates in an underlying "mode of visual intuition" (*Anschauungsform*),[475] which he tends to equate with the productive imagination and sometimes speaks of as a "mode of imaginative beholding" or "form of visualization" (*Form der Vorstellungsbildung*).[476] The artwork makes visible not only the what but also the how of the artist's eye. The artist's mode of vision, in turn, attests the world-view (*Weltanschauung*) of his time and place. Ultimately, Wölfflin attributes variation in *Anschauungsformen* to difference in national character.[477] The art of each nation exhibits a distinctive manner of visually intuiting the world. Rosenzweig would have been familiar with these basic features of Wölfflin's thinking (although their thematic exposition in *Principles* seems not to have held his attention for long). In lecture notes for the winter semester of 1906, Wölfflin probed the connection between gothic style and its "specific situation." "Style and costume. Style and performing arts. Style and (pictorial) art. The connection with non-figurative arts. − Style and situation. In the background there always stands a special optics. − Gothic eyes."[478] Wölfflin's students learned to look at art in terms of looking, to lead the picture back to the "special optics" at its root.

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[475] Wölfflin*, Grundbegriffe* (Munich: Bruckman, 1923) 80, 241.
[476] Wölfflin first employs the formulation *Form der Vorstellungsbildung* in the sixth edition of *Grundbegriffe*, ix. M. D. Hottinger's translation in *Principles of Art History* (New York: Dover, 1950), "mode of imaginative beholding," better captures the reflexivity of perception in Wölfflin's theory. Blower takes less liberty with "form of visualization," *Principles*, 78.
[477] Wölfflin downplayed the question of national differences in *Principles,* wary of the strident nationalism taking hold in German art history at the beginning of the First World War. Nonetheless, like many of his generation, he tended to consider aesthetic sensibility a property of national character.
[478] Wölfflin, *Heinrich Wölfflin, 1864-1945: Autobiographie, Tagebücher und Briefe*, ed. Joseph Gantner (Basel: Schwabe, 1984) 218.

For Rosenzweig, both Christianity and Judaism possesses a special optics of their own. A letter of 1913 begins to give us an idea of the optics of Judaism. Rosenzweig writes, "(t)he people of Israel, elected by its heavenly father, gazes fixedly beyond world and history towards the last most distant point where this its father will be 'all in all.'"[479] This forward-fixed gaze appears again in another letter, in which Rosenzweig depicts Synagoga personified, holding a broken staff and standing alongside triumphant Ecclesia. Ecclesia sees the world around her, while Synagoga is blindfolded. Devoid of world consciousness (*Weltbewußstein*), Synagoga's blindness only amplifies her self-consciousness (*Selbstbewußstein*) and the power of her "inner prophetic eye," which inwardly perceives only "the last things and the things furthest away."[480] On this letter, Biemann comments: "In a stark inversion of Pauline theology and internalization of a favorite anti-Jewish trope, Rosenzweig interprets the very 'blindness' of the Jews as a special form of vision."[481] "Blindness," paradoxically, is the power of far-sightedness.

The religious optics of Judaism are given more rigorous definition in the *Star*. The liturgy achieves "an overcoming of time in the fullness of time," as Wolfson explains, which is something "Rosenzweig describes in … ocular terms."[482] We can be more precise. Within the text of the *Star*, the inner eye of Jewish liturgical consciousness is generated by a subtle but systematic optical motif built around the perspectival figures of *Ausblick* (prospective view) and *Rückblick* (retrospective view). This oscillating motif culminates in a panoptic view of temporal, finite existence, i.e. Rosenzweig's version of

[479] To Rudolf Ehrenberg; Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, ed. Edith Rosenzweig (Berlin: Schocken, 1935) 73; cited and translated by Biemann in "The 'And'," 75.
[480] Rosenzweig, *Briefe*, 74-75; cited in Biemann, "The 'And'," 76.
[481] Biemann, "The 'And'," 76.
[482] Wolfson, *Giving*, 41.

the "limitless perspective" he so admires in Nietzsche and Graetz (see Section 2.i of this chapter).

It is possible to describe this motif with a good degree of systematic precision. It may be mapped onto the tripartite structure of the Star's composition (depicted in Figure One of the Chapter Appendix). To begin, the figures of *Ausblick* and *Rückblick* are prominent in the structural organization of the book. They occur in all three of the book's transition (*Übergang*) sections, each of which begins with a *Rückblick* to what came before and an *Ausblick* to what is yet to come. Rosenzweig adds these subheadings in the marginalia added to the text in its second edition of 1922. Their regular recurrence and the fact of their later addition suggests that Rosenzweig considered the *Ausblick-Rückblick* structure as a central organizing motifs. Taken together, they enact within the format of the book the hermeneutic principle that Rosenzwieg puts forward in "The New Thinking," that in philosophical books "a sentence does not follow from the preceding one, but more likely from the one following,"[483] and that the *Star* would be better read "backward and forward."[484] As Wolfson notes, this advice to the reader conforms to the underlying, circular logic of Rosenzweig's future-oriented eternalism. "The origin, on this account, is determined by the telos, the past shaped by the future, but in such a way that both termini of the spectrum are opened— the end in the beginning and the beginning in the end. By anticipating the past and recollecting the future, we are attuned to a mode of time that deviates from the conventional sense of a chronology determined by narrative linearity."[485] Wolfson is also aware that this circular account is facilitated by

[483] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 71.
[484] Ibid., 95.
[485] Wolfson, *Giving Beyond the Gift*, 44.

the optics of the book. The "panoptic" motif I am describing is only an elaboration on this point.

More than a framing device, this panoptic motif is rooted in the argument of the book. It coordinates the emergence of eternal time-consciousness in Christian and Jewish forms of religious existence. This mode of time-consciousness begins with the *Augenblick* of revelation. Revelation's durationless instant opens a view forward and backward in time. The eye opens onto the theological vistas of Rosenzweig's system: the past of creation and the future of redemption. The liturgical eyes of Judaism and Christianity are encircled by these forward and backward views. Only one eye encompasses this circle in itself.

Before turning to the liturgies, it is necessary to more firmly index the optics of Judaism and Christianity to their center-point in revelation. The *Star* is a centrally planned theology. It's rhetoric, motifs, concepts, and total vision turn upon the moment of revelation at its precise middle point. Rosenzweig approaches the topic of revelation through the category of miracle. Always "the favorite child of faith" and recently "the source of great embarrassment" for theology, Rosenzweig reclaims the miracle from the skeptics, on the one side, and the fanatics, on the other.[486] Rosenzweig reconceives the miracle not as an instance in which the inner laws of nature and history are suspended, but as a "sign" (*Zeichen*) by which the immanent providential order of temporal reality is fulfilled and demonstrated (*bewiesen*). These thoughts are developed in the transition

[486] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 103; *Stern*, 103.

section titled "On the Possibility of Experiencing [*Erleben*] the Miracle" that introduces Part Two, "the book of revelation."[487] In that section he writes that

> the success of the miracle demonstrates (*bewiese*) the miracle only in the eyes of those who were present as eyewitnesses (*Augenzeugen*) at the unfolding of the miracle and its *complete* unfolding, that is to say at the two decisive moments of its miraculous character, the prediction *and* fulfillment.[488]

The sign unfolds in time, bearing its proof or demonstration in the unity between two moments: the prediction and the fulfillment, the promise and its realization. The prophet, for Rosenzweig, "demonstrates the hand of providence" by *telling* the sign, by a verbal act that resonates with the oral-aural quality of revelation as described in Part Two of the *Star*. However, the telling of the miracle also contains the conditions of its *fulfilled* demonstration, its verification. These conditions of fulfillment and verification are coded visually. Specifically, they employ the language of the "eyewitnesses," which points ahead to the optical-visual quality of Part Three and the knowledge of the redeemed world that follows from revelation. Witnessing is tied to optics by way of a unified view of miracle's two temporal moments, future a past. Witnessing consists in a seemingly impossible optical act: a simultaneous view backward and forward.

It seems that Rosenzweig himself lived through such a miraculously simultaneous glimpse of the eternal when composing his book. Perhaps not by coincidence, he was given this miraculous vision precisely at the moment he completed this transitional section "On the Possibility of Experiencing the Miracle." Having worked late into the night, he writes to Margrit Rosenstock-Huessy: "All the spirits were so let-loose that I couldn't sleep anymore after midnight. These are the moments in which one see

[487] The pagination of the German edition and the pagination of Galli's English translation, used in this dissertation, align for the first time on the first page of this most pivotal of sections. See above note. Surely this too must be a sign!
[488] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 106; *Stern*, 106 .

double…because one is no longer glued right firmly in one's body….So it all happened that I was between two parts, and as a consequence the Star, which during the individual-work in the individual books faded for me, as you well know, suddenly shone as strongly as in the first days when it began."[489] In this moment, Rosenzweig sees with a kind of double vision, and through that double vision he is given an "immediate sight of the

[489] "Ich bin gestern Abend noch mit dem Übergangskapitel fertig geworden; es wurde noch ziemlich doll, und die Nacht konnte ich dann nach Mitternacht nicht mehr schlafen, so waren alle Geister losgelassen...das sind so Augenblicke wo man Doppelgänger sieht...weil man in seinem Körper nicht mehr recht fest angeleimt ist. Es kam alles daher, dass ich zwischen zwei Teilen war und dass infolgedessen der Stern, der während der Einzelarbeit an den einzelnen Büchern, wie du ja weißt, mir verblasst war, plötzlich wieder so stark aufstrahlte wie in den ersten Tagen als es anfing. Ich sah ihn wieder mit Augen und alles Einzelne in ihm. Wie Ichs nachher am Morgen aufzuschreiben versuchte, war es ganz dürftig und kaum mehr als was ich schon am Abend wenigstens fragmentarisch notiert hatte. Das kenne ich nun aber schon; diese Dürftigkeit des lendemain ist nur Schein; der Reichtum des unmittelbaren Schauens ist Wahrheit und bewahrheitet sich später bei der Ausführung...Also ich sah den Stern und merkwürdigerweise drehte er sich um sich selbst und darin war alles was ich noch zu schreiben habe, zu sehn. Heut früh habe ich dann die Einleitung zum zweiten Teil angefangen, ein kaltes Sturzbad nach der Nacht und schon nach dem 'Übergangs' Kapitel. Der Titel der 2. Einl. ist etwas verändert: statt 'Gott,' heißt es 'das Wunder'... Ich will dir der Komik halber die letzten Worte des I. und die ersten des II.Teils (also den Schluss des 'Übergang' und den Anfang der 'Einleitung') herschreiben: 'Dieses Offenbarwerden des immerwährenden Geheimnisses der Schöpfung ist das allzeiterneuerte Wunder der Offenbarung. Wir stehen an dem Übergang, - dem Übergang des Geheimnisses in das Wunder.' 'Wenn wirklich das Wunder des Glaubens liebstes Kind ist, so hat dieser seine Vaterpflichten, mindestens seit einiger Zeit, arg vernachlässigt.' U.s.w. in diesem frivolen Ton. Aber nun genug von der Eingabe ans himmlische Parlament. Diese Nacht 'zwischen den Teilen' wieder im unmittelbaren Anblick des Ganzen hatte ich nötig gehabt." [I was still finishing the Transition chapter last night; it became quite crazy, and all the spirits were so let-loose that I couldn't sleep anymore after midnight…These are the moments in which one sees double…because one is no longer glued right firmly in one's body. So it all happened that I was between two parts and as a consequence the Star, which during the individual-work in the individual books faded for me, as you well know, suddenly shone as strongly as in the first days when it began. I saw it again with eyes and everything individual in it. As I tried to write it down afterwards in the morning, it was wholly poor and scarcely more than what I had noted the evening before, at least fragmentarily. But I know this now already; the poverty of morning is only appearance; the wealth of immediate vision is truth and verifies itself late in the elaboration…Thus I saw the Star and strangely enough it rotated around itself and therein everything that I still have to write was to be seen. Early this morning I then began the introduction to the second part, a cold drop in the bath after the night and even after the 'transition' chapter. The title is somewhat changed: instead of 'God,' it is called 'miracle'... Just for fun, I want to tell you the last words of Part One and the first of Part Two (i.e., the conclusion of the 'transition' and the beginning of the 'introduction'): 'This revelation of the everlasting mystery of creation is the ever-renewed miracle of revelation. We stand at the transition, the transition from mystery to miracle.' 'If the miracle is really the favorite child of faith, then its father has neglected his fatherly duties, at least for some time.' Etc. in that frivolous tone. And now enough of the appeal to the heavenly parliament. I really needed this night 'between the pieces' again in the immediate sight of the whole."] Rosenzweig to M. Rosenstock in Franz Rosenzweig, *Die "Gritli"-Briefe: Briefe an Margrit Rosenstock-Huessy*, ed. Inken Rühle and Reinhold Meyer (Tübingen: Bilam, 2002),159-160. My translation follows Benjamin Pollock's, in *Franz Rosenzweig and the Systematic Task,* 258-259.

whole" (*Anblick des Ganzen*).[490] The complete figure of the whole will return at the very end of the *Star*, where it appears as a figure of knowledge in which is contemplated the "eternal truth." In his midnight vision, Rosenzweig beholds the whole through a mode of double-vision, but alone – in a state of solitary speculative rapture, as a private, out-of-body experience.

In the liturgical life of the Jewish people, this miraculous form of double-vision is united with a collective body in prayer. The Jewish liturgy turns the full orbit of *Aus*- and *Rückblick* from the vantage point of revelation's eternal *Augenblick*. In turning this circle, the liturgy generates a panoptic field of vision in which past and future are beheld at once. Rosenzweig weaves this perspectival motif throughout his description of the liturgical year in Part Three of the *Star* [the process described in this paragraph is depicted in the "Optics" section of Figure One]. His narration of the liturgical year begins with the "festivals of revelation," namely "the three pilgrimage festivals" of Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot. In this triadic cycle of prayer, the worshipper is made aware of the Jewish People's mythic history as "a fully compact present (*ganz dichte Gegenwart*)," as the "beginning middle and end of this national history, institution, magnitude and eternity of the people."[491] Rosenzweig then begins to develop the panoptic motif from its farthest horizon inward. The optics of revelation begin with a view backward, toward creation. In a characteristic reversal (*Umkehr*), the optics of redemption begin with a view forward. In Passover, "from the foundation of the people the prospective view [*Ausblick*] opens onto its further destinies, yet only as a prospective view [*Ausblick*]."[492] As yet, the eye lacks the ability to grasp this far point (*Fernblick*) in vision. In Shavuot, "the festival of

[490] Rosenzweig, *"Gritli"-Briefe*, 160.
[491] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 336; *Stern*, 352.
[492] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 337; *Stern*, 353.

revelation," the eye of the worshipper sinks away from any view of *Rück-* or *Ausblick* and sinks into itself. "Even the read-out passages of the Prophets offer no retrospective or prospective view (*Rück- oder Ausblick*), but lead the eye that is turned inward only still more deeply inwards."[493] In silence before the Torah portion, the eye "sinks within itself." It enters a "silent life without any side-glances" (*ganz seitenblicklosen Leben*).[494] This nearest, most inward life grants the eye its telescopic power of vision. "Prayer, of course, when it illuminates, shows the eye the farthest goal."[495] In Sukkot, the direction of the soul is turned backward again. While Sukkot is "holiday of supreme hope" in redemption, redemption is "only hoped for, awaited in the wandering."[496] In wandering, the soul must "must go back again directly into the beginning." The cyclical course has been circumscribed, but has yet to be fully encompassed by the eye.

This is left for the Days of Awe. The sentence to underscore from this passage is: "An entirely visible sign identifies [Yom Kippur] this keynote of the Days of Awe."[497] We must read the "sign" of Yom Kippur with reference to the sign-structure of the miracle. In Yom Kippur, the people become eyewitnesses to the miracle of redemption, beholding both its prediction and its fulfillment at once. The eye really sees all the way to this farthest point. In prayer, "(i)nstead of the felt nearness of the nearest, the sighted distance of the most distant is now experienced."[498] Out of the people's mythic history, Passover, Shavuot, and Sukkot draw a circular *Gestalt* before the eye of the worshipper. In Yom Kippur, the eye sees the circle all at once.

[493] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 339; *Stern*, 354.
[494] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 354; *Stern*, 372.
[495] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 288; *Stern*, 301.
[496] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 340; *Stern*, 356.
[497] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 345; *Stern*, 361.
[498] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 288; *Stern*, 301.

The act is not unlike one depicted in a scene from the popular film, *A Beautiful Mind*, in which a couple, holding hands, points to the sky to trace a constellation in the stars, lighting up the stars as they touch them. The scene depicts a convergence of eros and intellect, projected upwards toward the heavens. The liturgical vision of Judaism is also powered by an erotic act, the act of revelation at the center of the *Star*, which joins the soul and God as lovers. In the Third Section of *Star*, this eros is embodied not in a couple, but in a people. It is the collective body of the people that reaches, through prayer, to trace the Star in the sky. When the figure is made complete before the eye, as in the film, the constellation *flashes*.[499]

The liturgical optics of Judaism turn an eternal circle in time. The liturgical optics of Christianity do not, quite. For Rosenzweig, Christianity truly witnesses to the eternal in time. However, it does not live in the spherical fullness of temporalized eternity. Christian time is determined by "the epoch." It is perpetually positioned between the "boundaries (*Grenzen*) of time," between the two eternities on either side of temporal existence. Christian vision is thus suspended between "the *Rückblick* to the manger and the Cross" and the "*Ausblick* to the future of the Lord,"[500] between the coming and the

[499] This gloss covers over the gender bias in the scene. It is the character of John Nash (Russell Crowe), the troubled and (here literally) visionary genius, who guides the finger of the awe-struck Alicia (Jennifer Connolly) as they trace the constellation. I do so in order not to project the film's gender dynamics onto the *Star*. However, the *Star* has gender trouble of its own. Feminist readings of Rosenzweig's book have highlighted what Mara Benjamin calls its "heavily masculine economy." On this point, Benjamin directs attention to the center of the book, to the eros-act of revelation that takes place between the gendered figures of God and the soul. Benjamin comments: "Many scholars have assumed that one of the major themes of the Star is love. I must disagree. I do not think that love is what we find in the *Star*. The famous trope in the middle section of the second part of the Star is not a discourse of 'love; but rather of a violent and dominating eros." It is beyond the present scope of this study to address the issue of gender in Rosenzweig's (or Tillich's) thought in full. This admittedly leaves the project incomplete, as the question of the gaze in modern thought cannot be untangled from the question of gender. Indeed, the masculine economy of the *Star* may be directly correlated to its optical spectacularity, so far as it creates, as Benjamin discerns, "a hermetically sealed work" that "is spectacle rather than life itself." Mara Benjamin, "Love in the *Star*? A Feminist Challenge," *Bambidar* 4, no. 2 (2014): 10, 11.

[500] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 390; *Stern*, 409.

coming again. The in-betweenness of Christian time serves a redemptive purpose: it awakens the world to the "pure temporality" in which all things have their existence. The eternal moment of revelation is pure in-betweenness, pure present. The Christian liturgy captures and preserves the pure presence of ever-new, ever-in-between time.

To see the world in its pure temporality means to be immersed in world-consciousness, a state of being and knowing that Rosenzweig again expresses in optical terms. Christ "walks in the marketplace of life and compels life to keep still under his gaze (*Blick*)."[501] The Christian mode of optically arresting the moment depends upon the roaming, world-embracing gaze of Christianity's founder. As Rosenzweig writes in the *Star*'s concluding coda, *Tor* (Gate): God's "left eye" (Christianity) sees more "receptively and uniformly" than his "right eye" (Judaism), which "looks sharply focused on one point."[502] The eye of Christianity roams the nations, imparting the livingness of the moment.

However, the miraculously circumscribed shape of the eternal truth only becomes visible to those who fully comprehend (hold together in vision) the boundaries of time. Because Christian time does not make the complete turning of the "hour," its eye does not attain this panoptic view. The Christian stands lodged in a position of insurmountable center, "central point not of a horizon that he surveys, but as central point of a track which consists of nothing but central point."[503] The Christian eye is all pupil, all center-point, all present. Unable to survey the boundaries, Christianity truly witnesses to the eternal truth, but does not create *eye*-witnesses to that truth. It does not attain the immediately reflexive mode of truth-consciousness possessed by those who "see double,"

[501] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 437; *Stern*, 458.
[502] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 446; *Stern*, 470.
[503] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 360; *Stern*, 377.

who really see themselves seeing. It is a form of seeing eternally, but not an eternal form of seeing, not eternal in itself.

Rosenzweig thus divides the subjective pole of religious knowledge between Jewish and Christian eyes. We may regard this as a Wölfflinian distinction between the optics of redemption's two "nations," which Rosenzweig has loaded with epistemic (as well as ethical and political) freight. The differing epistemic capacities of Judaism Christianity are rooted first in their varying experiences of religious time, but rooted even deeper still in the variance between Jewish and Christian forms of faithfulness. The *vertraute Anschauung* at the center of *Star* Part Three's epistemology may be rendered "familiar visual intuition." It may also be rendered "*confident" or "trusting* visual intuition." *Vertrauen* is a recurring theme in Rosenzweig's thought. In an essay on Jewish education, Rosenzweig writes: "Confidence (*Vertrauen*) knows only that which is nearest, and therefore it possesses the whole. Confidence walks straight ahead. And yet the street that loses itself in infinity for the fearful, rounds itself imperceptibly into a measurable and yet infinite circle for those who have confidence."[504] The momentum to propel oneself around the whole circumference of the circle derives from this *Vertrauen*.

Behind these formulations stands Hermann Cohen's interpretation of *emunah* as *Vertrauen*. Cohen takes *emunah*, which literally translates "firmness," to mean "certainty, corresponding to the abstract word 'confidence' (*Vertrauen*)."[505] For Cohen, the self-sanctification (*Selbstheiligung*) of the soul depends upon its *Vertrauen zu Gott*

[504] Rosenzweig, *On Jewish Learning*, 67. Original: "Vertrauen weiß nur vom Nächsten. Und gerade deshalb gehört ihm das Ganze. Vertrauen geht nur geradeaus. Aber ihm rundet sich unvermerkt die dem Ängstlichen ins Unendliche sich verlierende Straße zum ganz durchmeßbaren und doch unendlichen Kreis." *GS 3: Zweistromland*, 500.
[505] *Religion of Reason: Out of the Sources of Judaism*, trans. Simon Kaplan (Atlanta: Scholars, 1995) 211; Hermann Cohen, *Die Religion Der Vernunft Aus Den Quellen Des Judentums* (Leipzig : Fock, 1919) 248.

(confidence in God), that is, its confidence that God will forgive confessed sin. "To redemption itself no other condition is attached," writes Cohen, "but the self-redemption of the human soul in its correlation with God and, consequently, in its confidence in God."[506] By confidence "the eternity of God" is made to correspond to "the eternity of man," as "an anthropomorphic consequence."[507] For Rosenzweig, in remaining confident in "the hope for the ultimate solution of contradictions,"[508] in staring unblinkingly at the future of judgment and forgiveness, Synagoga sees with such confidence. It thus "lays still" the moment with a totally firm gaze. Ecclesia does not quite make the turning of confession and forgiveness with the kind of movement that Rosenzweig would call *Vertrauen*.

The outwardly visible turning of the liturgies mirror the inward turnings proper to Jewish and Christian forms of faithfulness. For Rosenzweig, *teshuvah* differs from its New Testament translation*, metanoia*, so far as *teshuvah* implies a return to the same – *Rückkehr*, *Umkehr*, *Wiederkehr* – and *metanoia* implies turning from one thing to another, *Umwandlung*.[509] The distinction is dubious.[510] However, it guides the many oppositions Rosenzweig posits between Judaism and Christianity in Part Three of the *Star*, all of which turn on this distinction between Jewish and Christian forms of

[506] *Religion of Reason*, 336. Original: "Und die Erlösung ist selbst an keine andere Bedingung geknüpft als an die der Selbsterlösung der Menschenseele in ihrer Korrelation mit Gott. Daher in ihrer Zuversicht auf Gott." *Religion der Vernunft*, 397.
[507] *Religion of Reason*, 337; *Religion der Vernunft*, 397.
[508] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 352; *Stern*, 369.
[509] See Biemann, "The 'And'," 76-77, n. 78.
[510] Both traditional and modern understandings of *teshuvah* tend toward notions of complete transformation. Biemann cites the penitent of Hilkhot Teshuvah 2:4, 83a, who declares "I am another individual and not the one who committed those deeds," as well as Cohen's view that *teshuvah* implies the "Schaffung eines neuen Herzens und eines neuen Geistes." *Religion der Vernunft*, 237; Biemann, "The 'And'," 77, n.78.

faithfulness.[511] "Our 'stubbornness' (*Verstocktheit*) is our faithfulness (*Treue*)," Rosenzweig writes in another place, internalizing and reversing another anti-Jewish trope.[512] "Our 'apostasy from God' is healed ... only by return, not by transformation."[513] Stubbornness is the firmness of faithfulness, which propels the people around the eternal circle of return, *teshuvah*. In the same way, it the firmness (*Vertrauen*) of vision that propels the eye around the circle that contains the eternal truth of the All.

Jewish and Christian vision, then, for Rosenzwieg, are not two categorically similar modes of seeing. There is another type of vision at stake here, different from the *Sehenformen* that Wölfflin attributes to national groups. As we have seen, the Jewish eye, for Rosenzweig, a firm acuity of gaze that the Christian eye does not. On this point, we might liken Rosenzweig's notion of Jewish vision to the scientific vision of Wölfflin's *Kunstwissenschaftler*. Wölfflin's scientific eye for form has been disciplined to see artworks not for their pictorial content or material history, but for the visual structures that define their styles. Wölfflin meant to cultivate this gaze in his students, to breed a discipline of attentive looking. The pedagogical aim of Wölfflin's formalism was to train the eye to the point that form within the picture's presentation could be "recognized *immediately* (*sofort*) and *strikingly* (*schlagend*) and *completely* (*völlstandig*)."[514] The Jewish eye has the disciplined faith, *Vertrauen*, to perceive the *Gestalt* of the eternal truth

[511] Like Rosenzweig, Buber distinguishes *emunah* from *pistis* and links these oppositional terms of faith to notions of religious transformation, though he construes the relation differently: "*Teshuvah,* turning of the whole person, in the sphere of the world, which has been reduced unavoidably to a 'change of mind,' to *metanoia*, by the Greek translator – and *Emunah*, trust, resulting from an original relationship to the Godhead, which has been likewise modified in the translation to 'belief,' as the recognition that something is true, i.e., rendered by *pistis*: these two demand and condition one another"; Martin Buber, *Two Types of Faith*, trans. Norman P. Goldhawk, (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 2003) 26.
[512] Rosenzweig, *Briefe* , 78.
[513] Ibid.
[514] "…wenn in der vollkommendenen Darstellung die Form nach ihren entscheidenden Eigenschaften sich *sofort* und *schlagend* und *vollständig* zu erkennen gibt." Wölfflin, "Über Kunsthistorische Verbildung" (1909) in Heinrich Wölfflin, *Kleine Schriften (1886-1933)* (Basel: Schwab, 1946) 162. Emphasis original.

with this kind of striking and immediate completeness. Rosenzwieg differentiates between Jewish and Christian optics not only at the level *Sehenform*, but also at this level of disciplined perspicacity.

The difference between Jewish and Christian optics results in a difference in the way truth becomes objectively manifest. "Of course, a form of perceptual visualization is not something external," Wölfflin writes, "it is also of defining importance for the content of that visualization."[515] Vision makes visible. This is Wölfflin's neo-Kantian theory of intuition as an active and productive faculty. Jewish and Christian modes of seeing make the content of religious truth differently visible. Wölfflin's greatest innovation in the lecture hall was the dual projection of slides for the purpose of comparing two images. Part Three of the *Star* includes a dual projection of its own: the eternal truth as visualized by Jewish and Christian eyes. A comparative contrast.

There is, then, a difference in *content* between Jewish and Christian perceptions of the eternal in time. This is evident in the aesthetics of Judaism and Christianity described Part Three. Christianity's redemptive power is exercised within the "the broad basin of created space" and takes aesthetic form in church architecture and music. [516] From "ideal space" (*Raum*), Church architecture forms "a room" (*ein Raum*) for human mutuality.[517] Church music awakens individual souls to the pathos of suffering humanity, gathering them together into a common place. Christianity thus fills the space of the world with individual figures, binding them together in a community of feeling. Like a 19th-century art historian, the Christian eye sees the *Gesamtkunstwerk* of redemption for its *iconographic* and *affective* content. Christianity beholds the light of truth as it is

[515] Wölfflin, *Principles,* 78.
[516] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 381; *Stern*, 400.
[517] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 377; *Stern*, 395.

refracted through worldly *Stoff* (material) and *Gefühl* (feeling) in which it is immersed, continually making and remaking the world.

By contrast, the truth of redemption appears to Jewish consciousness as an artwork appears to Wölfflin's scientific eye: not for its pictorial figures, nor for its affective impression, but for its deep-level structures of form. In other words, the content is not seen. Synagoga is blind to the world, the stuff of which redemption is wrought. Thus, Rosenzweig's sociology of Judaism contains no aesthetics as such. Judaism is withheld from the ongoing reconfiguration of the plastic world. However, Judaism inwardly holds and perfectly beholds the eternal in whose form redemption is made.

This difference between the visible content of Jewish and Christian optics touches on Rosenzweig's view of Christianity's inherent temptation to idolatry and Judaism's miraculous freedom from it. "For the Jew alone," write Rosenzwieg, "there is no division between the supreme image that is placed before his soul and the people into which this leads him."[518] That is, there is no division between the image generated by the liturgy in which the worshipper contemplates the image of eternity and "the still and silent image" of Jewish existence. The gaze inward – toward the image of the Jewish people that abides within – is at once a gaze outward – onto the image of the eternal "other" that erupts into time and appears as "countenance" (*Antlitz*). "For the Jewish people, no discrepancy applies between that which is most their own and that which is the highest."[519] Idolatry results from the introduction of discrepancy into this perfectly equivalent correlation between absolute-Other image and absolute self-image.

[518] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 349; *Stern*, 365.
[519] Ibid.

For the pagan peoples of the world, discrepancy abounds. Paganism is pictorial pandemonium. The pagan spirit is a tireless image factory. Rosenzweig views Christianity as a monotheistic concentration of these pagan energies into a single image, the figure of the crucified divine man. There exists within Christianity, then, a struggle between the oneness of the true God's image and the multiplicity of paganism's many images of deity. In the process of incorporating the nations into the supra-national, universal Christian community, this internal struggle is projected outward. This process involves the awakening of the pagan spirit to dynamism of life in a truly revealed religion. However, Christianity's trouble with images is insurmountable. Since the advent of Christianity's "supra-national [*übervolkische*] power," the nations have struggled with the "suspect figure of the crucified man" (*verdächtigen Gestalt der gekreuzigten Mannes*), in which the Christian vision of the universal community is concentrated.[520] This figure of the suffering Christ "opposes all attempts" to assimilate him to a nation's own "desired image" (*Wunschbild*), whether "blond and blue-eyed, black and gracefully limbed, brown and dark-eyed."[521] However, Christianity occasions the proliferation of these images nonetheless, so far as it attempts to weave universal community around shared suffering with this figure. We will say more about why this is nonetheless the case in the next chapter, in comparing Tillich and Rosenzweig on idolatry.

This proliferation of *Wunschbilder*, for Rosenzweig, is the basis of Christianity's inherent tendency toward idolatry. Judaism does not have the same idolatrous tendency.

[520] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 348; *Stern,* 365.
[521] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 348-349; *Stern,* 365.

But, this is not because Judaism *refrains* from depicting the eternal and absolute. Rather, it is precisely because of Judaism's perfect power of pictorial visualization.

To bring this section on optics toward a conclusion, we may turn to an interpretive dilemma. Who is the subject of the Gate? That is, *who* exactly perceives the complete configuration of the All that completes Rosenzweig's system?[522] *Who* beholds the truth of God's countenance? It seems that it could be neither Jew nor Christian, because, as the *Star* professes

> The truth, the whole truth, belongs therefore neither to them [Christians] nor to us [Jews]. For though we indeed carry it in us, yet for this reason too we must first sink our glance into our own inside (*wir müssen deswegen auch den Blick erst in unser eignes Innre versenken*) if we want to see it, and there we do see the Star, but not − the rays.[523]

How does the Rosenzweig who vows "to remain a Jew" perceive the whole of the truth, if the truth is held between two distinct forms of religious existence? Pollock's proposed solution, which he posits "only as a possibility," is that Rosenzweig's exceptional identity as the "new thinker" allows him to stand "beyond life," and so to hold two partial perspectives at once.[524]

The dilemma can be unraveled by the Wölfflinian hermeneutic of this chapter. The aim of the *Star*'s quest for the truth is the reconstructed configuration (*Gestalt*) of the All. In Part Three, it is the *Gestalt* that is "more than elemental, more than real." It is the *Gestalt* that is the object of immediate visual intuition. It is the *Gestalt* that completes the system. The eternal truth appears to Jewish vision as *Gestalt*, as the eye of *Vertrauen* sees with a disciplined mode of vision. Rosenzweig may perceive the whole shape of the Star, then, precisely as a Jew. He may not see the rays in all their brilliance. However, of what

[522] See Pollock, *Franz Rosenzweig,* 264-267.
[523] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 438; *Stern*, 462.
[524] Pollock, *Franz Rosenzweig,* 303.

do the rays consist? Of the pathos and poiesis that flood the Christian eye with immediate sensation of the temporal world, blinding it to the *Gestalt* that abides as its eternal end and origin. The truth may therefore belong to both Judaism and Christian. However, only Judaism has the eyes to perceive its complete shape, because, strictly speaking, only the Jewish eye sees with *vertraute Anschauung*. The Gate of the *Star*, then, is nothing other than the gates of prayer before which all Jews stand on Yom Kippur.

Rosenzweig's "new thinking," then, is really a form and a discipline of seeing. For all the *Star*'s dialogical to-and-fro, Rosenzweig's *Sprachdenken* comes to rest in a single *Blick*. Wolfson and Biemann have both called attention to the visual culmination point of Rosenzweig's thinking in the *Star*. In the Gate, all "standpoints founder before the one steady sight [*Schau*]."[525] The panoptic vision of the liturgy presents a perspective of all perspectives, a fullness of standpoint. In the Gate, the variety of standpoint collapse before a singular, silent vision. The silence of the Gate, of course, is not the mute silence of the *Vorwelt*. It is a silence that resonates with speech. However, this is not the speech of two, but of the One; no longer dialogue, but Word. "No longer drama but vision," as Rosenzweig writes.[526] "The new philosopher, then, like the old philosopher," Biemann observes, "has returned to wonder and awe, to *Staunen*, a self-conscious, ennobled, enlightened *Staunen*, to be sure, unlike the paralyzing *Staunen* of the Hellenic *Augenmenschen*, but a *Staunen* nonetheless, a silent standing still and gazing, *Stillstehen* und *Schauen*, of what Heidegger would call *Sein-lassen*."[527] Put otherwise, the new

[525] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 444; *Stern,* 469.
[526] Of Judah Halevi's poem *yashen we- libbo er*. In Barbara Galli, *Franz Rosenzweig and Jehuda Halevi: Translating, Translations, and Translators* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002), 258. Cited in Wolfson, *Giving beyond the Gift*, 337.
[527] Biemann, "The 'And,'" 74.

philosopher returns to the pagan domain of *Theoria*, the place of silent speculation, contemplation, looking-at.

Unlike the old philosopher, however, the new *places* this act of silent spectation. He locates the eye in a place and time. From Wölfflin, Rosenzweig learns that seeing is relative, that every picture derives from a particular hour, a particular "place," and a particular habitus of seeing. It just so happens that, for Rosenzweig, the particular way of seeing relative to Jewish existence also happens to be absolute. That is the miracle of Jewish life and knowledge: the primordial and enduring correlation of the absolute and the relative (thus the eternal and the temporal, the infinite and the finite) in a particular and singular way of life.

4.3 Philosophical and Theological Consequences: A Confluent Confluence with Cassirer

4.3.a Knowledge, truth, validity

What are the theological and philosophical consequences of Rosenzweig's "new seeing"? Does the revelatory epistemology of the *Star* culminate in an optical illusion? A reflexive fantasy of the eye? If so, as Wolfson suggests, the vision of the Gate verges on a Feuerbachian moment for which consciousness of the infinite is but a projection of the human; for which, metaphysically speaking, God is *nothing* (and, per Rosenzweig's apophaticism, this nothingness is embraced). Such a conclusion would entail an ironic recursion of the "atheistic theology" that Rosenzweig sets out to overcome.[528] Put

[528] "In spite of his unfaltering effort to make a credible philosophical case for the theological belief in a revelatory experience that preserves the otherness of the divine vis-à-vis the human….does Rosenzweig, ultimately, succumb to the conversion of theology into anthropology along the lines of Feuerbach, for whom the consciousness of the Infinite (which is offered as a definition of religion) amounts to the consciousness of the infinity of consciousness, and hence the God of traditional monotheism is no more than an outward projection of human nature?" Wolfson, *Giving beyond the Gift*, 88-89.

otherwise, is the *Star*'s vision of eternal truth purely phantasmal? It must be, so far as a phantasm is something the "I" (or the "We") cause to appear. However, the phantasmic quality of revelation need not conflict with the objectivity – and thus the objective reality – of the truth that it causes to appear. It need not be a purely subjective reflection of self. At least, Rosenzweig has a way of making this argument – in his theory of knowledge and verification.

I approach these questions of truth and validity in Rosenzweig's philosophy by way of another confluence with Cassirer, which flows back into many of the streams of thought shared by Rosenzweig and Wölfflin. This may be an unexpected turn to take, as Rosenzweig explicitly rejects Cassirer's philosophy and distances himself from neo-Kantianism in no uncertain terms (as discussed in Chapter Two). In fact, Rosenzweig's emphasis on finitude, existence, and temporal being seem to draw him closer another of Cassirer's rivals, Heidegger.[529] The standoff between Cassirer and Heidegger at Davos in 1929 represented a splitting of ways in European philosophy and intellectual life. It would seem that the spirit of Rosenzweig's philosophy leads in Heidegger's direction. Or so it has seemed to many.[530]

The congruities between Rosenzweig's and Heidegger's thought may be framed in visual-optical terms. For instance, as we have seen, Biemann relates Rosenzweig's philosophical *Schauen* to Heidegger's *Sein-lassen*. Wolfson, too, notes a philosophical kinship centered around terms of vision and visibility. Both Rosenzweig and Heidegger, Wolfson observes, presume an "intermingling of truth and untruth, being and semblance"

[529] On the debate between Heidegger and Cassirer at Davos see Peter E. Gordon, *Continental Divide: Heidegger, Cassirer, Davos* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2012) and Michael Friedman, *A Parting of the Ways: Carnap, Cassirer, and Heidegger* (Chicago: Open Court, 2000).
[530] See, for instance, Peter Eli Gordon, *Rosenzweig and Heidegger: Between Judaism and German Philosophy* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003).

framed in terms of concealment (*Verborgenheit*) and disclosure (disclosedness [*Entborgenheit*], for Heidegger, revelation [*Offenbarung*], for Rosenzweig).

I would suggest, however, that the visionary subject of Rosenzweig's philosophy bears as much or more similarity to the subject of Cassirer's neo-Kantian philosophy of culture as to the *Dasein* of Heidegger's fundamental ontology. Cassirer's epistemology presumes an image-rich field of perception that mirrors Rosenzweig's starry heaven. Cassirer too shapes his philosophy of symbolic meaning under the influence of art theory, not Wölfflin's, but Warburg's. Yet, Cassirer and Wölfflin share great deal, by way of their neo-Kantianism. Both presume a subject who configures his or her experience of the world on the basis of self-contributed categories of time and space. Both link this world-constituting activity of the subject to a representational function of consciousness, what Cassirer calls *Darstellungsfunktion*. Through a form of *Darstellung,* the subject acts to generate intuitive worlds of sense perception containing inherent norms of objectivity/visibility.

Rosenzweig's theory of truth and validity mirrors Cassirer's in a number of ways. As we have mentioned, for Cassirer, validity depends not on the correspondence of our representations to a fixed point beyond them, but rather on their coherence vis-a-vis their inherent, holistic frame of reference. This view stands in contrast to what the neo-Kantians call the "copy" (*Abbild*) theories of knowledge that stem from Kant's phenomenal/noumenal split. Rosenzweig, too, wishes to replace the old thinking's " static concept of objectivity." He too turns to a concept of validity based on a correlational dynamic between the subjective and objective. This means that, for Rosenzweig, "*the* truth…must become truth *for someone*" and that it is "necessary that our truth is manifold

and that "the" truth changes into *our truth*."[531] This process of the truth becoming truth for someone is carried out in the liturgies. The liturgies are the intuitive *organon* of knowing by which the truth becomes visible as truth "for us." Through the liturgies, the truth "finally became clear *for us* as configuration."[532]

The validity of the Star, *qua* figure of knowledge, depends only on its wholeness or completeness, just as, for Cassirer, our symbolic forms of representation derive their validity from their degree of inherent wholeness or coherence. "Completeness [*Vollständigkeit*] is after all the true verification of the new thinking," Rosenzweig writes.[533] Specifically, for Rosenzweig, verification depends on the completeness of the figure of the ultimate truth *for someone*. This mean that the truth, more than being posited as the mere ideal of the whole, must become *actual* as the knowledge of some knower or body of knowledge. For the truth to be true, the fullness of truth must become actual in a really-existing body of knowledge, correlated to the truth's ideal wholeness. For Cassirer, that really-existing, unified body of knowledge, correlated to the ideal unity of truth is science. Science ever strives to realize the ideality of reason as objective knowledge. The objectivity of scientific knowledge ultimately derives from its correlation to this posited, ideal of completeness. For Rosenzweig, it is the life of the Jewish people. The people not only strive toward the unity of truth, but, in the miracle of their eternal life, always already possess that unity – really, inwardly – as a mirror reflection of the oneness of the Eternal.

Here Rosenzweig diverges from Cassirer, indeed in the direction of "the existential." For both Cassirer and Rosenzweig, "the" truth must become true *for us*. This

[531] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 98. My emphasis.
[532] *Star,* 441; *Stern*, 465. My emphasis.
[533] Rosenzwieg, "The New Thinking," 89; Rosenzweig, "Das neue Denken," 153.

correlation is a condition of the truth's objectivity. However, for Rosenzwieg, this correlational *for us* must be *lived* in a way that Cassirer does not require. The truth must be embodied in a form of life, not only a body of knowledge. Moreover, that form of life must, as it were, put itself on the line as witness to the truth it attests. The truth that concerns Rosenzweig is the type of truth that "costs the human being something," that the human being "cannot verify except with the sacrifice of his life," and finally "can be verified only by the commitment of the lives of all generations."[534] The final verification of the oneness of truth, then, rests with the oneness of all the generations of the Jewish people, which demands of each generation an absolute commitment.

The most fundamental point of agreement between Rosenzweig and Cassirer on this matter, then, has to do with their mutual rejection of Kant's "static concept of objectivity" and the re-founding of objectivity on a logic of correlational completion. However, the most significant point of agreement between them, for this study, has to do with how exactly this correlational whole is realized in consciousness. For Rosenzweig, the wholeness of truth becomes visible "for us" as a perceptual figure, as *Gestalt*. The verifying correlation is mediated by picture and configuration. So too for Cassirer. The world becomes objective to the subject through symbol and picture.

For Cassirer, the symbol is at the center of this process. In a symbol, "spiritual meaning-import is linked to a concrete sensual sign [*Zeichen*] and inwardly dedicated to this sign."[535] In the realms of culture, symbols correlate understanding to the truth by beginning from the concrete objectivity of the perceptual world. Symbolic formation describes the process by which the concrete, perceptual world becomes the means of

[534] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 99.
[535] Cassirer, "Der Begriff der Symbolischen Form," 67.

correlating subjective and objective spirit. However, symbol is not all. Cassirer relies on the language of the picture when referring to the holistic paradigms of meaningfulness in which symbolic understanding forms. The "image-worlds" of culture, spontaneously produced "beside and above the world of perception," function as the presentational order – what Langer would call the "perceptual whole" – in which the sensory symbol has its objective meaning, its intelligibility.

There exists a similar relationship between symbol and picture in the *Star*. The miracle of revelation is a sign (*Zeichen*). It coordinates every aspect of the *Star* synthesizing, dialectical movement. As in Cassirer's symbolic account of signification, Rosenzweig's master-sign of revelation forms a meaningful relational totality out of the perceptual stuff of experience, indeed, out of the pure experience and pure temporality that revelation makes possible. It transfigures the pure experience of revelation's moment into a temporal shape with a past and a future, with a past moment of "prediction" and a future moment of "fulfillment."[536] Within this temporal "sign," the mythic history of Judaism takes shape, as a people with an eternal origin and eternal end-point. This is the circular path of the Star. As it is lived within the flow of pure temporality, the path of the sign cannot be perceived for its total shape. Jewish life remains with the flow between origin and endpoint, prediction and fulfillment, the two polar moments of the sign.

However, this process of symbolic formation projects a unifying image-world for itself, above its head, as it were. As the sign of the miracle is lived in the liturgy, the Jewish people experience their own immediate experience of eternal existence. The eternal, infinite circularity of Jewish life is always already mediated by the mythic history of the people's origin and the endpoint, in which it has its unifying shape. However, in

[536] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 106; *Stern*, 106 .

the flow of life, this unifying shape is hidden. In the liturgy it is revealed. In the liturgy, the miracle of revelation is experienced reflexively – its originating moment of prediction in Passover, its moment of completion in Sukkot. In Yom Kippur, the sign becomes "entirely visible." That is, the figure that has always already been projected over the heads of the people now shows itself, completely and at once. The picture that the living sign projects, and in which it has its intelligibility, *lights up*.

Rosenzweig does not exactly argue for the validity of this picture. Rather, the truth of the picture stands or falls with the sight itself. Rosenzweig's philosophy of revelation, much like Tillich's, comes to rest in the enclosure of a pictorial-presentational symbol. Something like Wölfflin's notion of the picture as a crystallized form of visual intuition organizes this presentation. The picture must be seen, beheld.

4.3.b Philosophy of myth, philosophy of Judaism

The congruities between Cassirer's philosophy of myth and religion and Rosenzweig's philosophy of Judaism extend further, while revealing the limits of their agreement on these matters of truth and validity. For Cassirer, the knowledge of the human sciences must begin from cultural expressions of meaning, the most primitive of which is myth. We have now noted the significance of myth to Rosenzweig's philosophy of Judaism in a few places. Rosenzweig's and Cassirer's reconstructions of mythic, religious consciousness are strikingly similar.

In his *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, in Hegelian fashion, Cassirer gives an account of the progress of religious consciousness toward an awareness of an immanent rational truth. This account parallels, to a remarkable degree, the journey of the *Star*'s

pilgrim soul. Indeed, the very structure of the second volume of Cassirer's *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms,* devoted to "mythic thought," reflects the course of the *Star*: moving from "mythical space" to "mythical time" to a mythical awareness of "the I and the soul" and finally to "myth as a form of life" grounded in the religious cult. Within this process, mythic thinking engenders an acute awareness of the "gulf" between God and the human (mirroring the soul's awareness of God as Other in the *Star*'s account of revelation). This gulf is overcome as religious life comes to center around penitential sacrifice and prayer (mirroring the synthetic power of the liturgy in the *Star* Third Part). These religious rites "establish the meaning of the two extremes [of God and human being] and teach man to find it."[537] Religion *creates* the "gulf" that opens between God and human being, but only in order to close it through sacrifice and prayer. Mythic-religious consciousness "progressively intensifies the opposition between God and man in order to find in this opposition the means by which to surpass it."[538]

The absolute difference between God and the soul appears as a moment on the way toward their reunification in a moment of a perfect correlation between the extremes of God and human being. Within the history of religion, Cassirer finds an awareness of this correlational union in the language of the medieval mystics. Cassirer cites Angelus Silesus and Rumi, the latter of whom writes, "between us the thou and the I have ceased. I am not I, thou art not thou. I am at once I and thou, thou art at once thou and I."[539] Mystical religious consciousness possesses insight into the form of correlation that guarantees the truth. "For the mystics the question is no longer how the gulf between God and man can be bridged, for they recognize no such gulf; the whole conception is

[537] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Form*, vol. 2 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1955), 230.
[538] Ibid.
[539] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, vol. 2, 231.

contrary to their fundamental religious attitude. For them man and God are not mere separate entities; they exist together and for each other."[540] Of course, Rosenzweig's new thinking itself takes its cue from the medieval mysticism of Judah Halevi, whose poetic formulations turn on similar dialectics of disjunction and union between the human and divine. The *Star*'s ultimate vision of human-divine "countenance" is an image of correlation congruent with Cassirer's account of mystical awareness. "In the innermost sanctuary of divine truth where he would expect that all the world and he himself would have to be relegated to the metaphor for that which he will behold there, man beholds nothing other than a countenance like his own."[541] For both of Cohen's students, this correlational immediacy between God and the human is the end and the aim of religious consciousness.

Cassirer and Rosenzweig can also be seen to share a view of Christianity as a pre-philosophical form of religion shaped by an overpowering affective desire for immediate union with the divine. For Cassirer, the prayer of early Christian communities surpasses the opposition between God and human being by creating a "magical sphere" of "immediate union and fusion with God."[542] Christianity, for Cassirer, thus extends the purpose prayer as practiced in "magical," Vedic religions: to make the human God and God human. "The Vedic texts expressly state that in the act of act of sacrifice and prayer the priest himself becomes a God."[543] Cassirer finds the same "fundamental view" in the Christian doctrine of incarnation. Likewise, "innermost" to every Christian, Rosenzweig detects an "inextinguishable fragment of paganism" that "burst forth" in the Christian

[540] Ibid.
[541] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 446; *Stern*, 471.
[542] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol. 2*, 229.
[543] Ibid.

longing for incarnation.[544] "The pagan wants to be surrounded by human gods, it is not enough for him that he is himself man: God too must be man. The vitality that the true God of course also has in common with the gods of the pagans becomes credible for the Christian only when it becomes flesh in a particular divine-human person."[545] For both Cassirer and Rosenzweig, Christianity is animated by a desire not to correlate the human and the divine, but to mediate them. This desire gets ahead of itself by immediately equating the divine and human in the figure of the incarnate God.

Rosenzweig and Cassirer also share a view of what lies *beyond* Christianity. For Cassirer, this is the "'philosophical' prayer" of Epictetus, which "rises above mere human desire" and orients itself to "an objective good that is equated with the will of God."[546] Cassirer does not associate this philosophical mode of prayer with Judaism. However, in positioning a stoical, philosophical cognizance of God's oneness above a pathos-driven, Christian desire for mediating union, Cassirer's "philosophical religion" mirrors Rosenzweig's own notion of Judaism's higher faithfulness and its "still and silent" mode of contemplating the eternal truth.

Religious consciousness, for Cassirer, reaches its end in an awareness of the correlation between God and the human. At this point, it is brought to a double brink between fantasy and atheism, a situation that mirrors the phantasmagoric abyss at the culmination of the *Star*. Ultimately, for Cassirer, religious consciousness must either remain within its own mythic *Bildwelt* or be extinguished in the "nameless nothing" and "the form of formlessness" that lies beyond, i.e., the absolute as it appears to the *via*

[544] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 371; *Stern*, 388.
[545] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 371; *Stern*, 388.
[546] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol. 2*, 229.

negativa of the mystic.[547] The sensory images of religious consciousness form an insurmountable horizon of meaning:

> Here we find that correlation of "meaning" and "image" and also that conflict between them which are both deeply rooted in the essence of the symbolic, of meaning-image expression as such. On the one hand, the very lowest, most primitive mythical configuration proves to be a *vehicle* of meaning, for already it stands in the sign of that primordial division which raises the world of the "holy" from the world of the "profane" and delimits the one from the other. But on the other hand, even the highest religious "truth" remains attached to sensuous existence, to the world of images as well as things. It must continuously immerse and submerge itself in this existence which its "intelligible" purpose strives to cast off and reject – because only in this existence does religious "truth" possess its form of expression and hence its concrete reality and efficacy.[548]

The choice, for religion, is not between myth and truth, between image-world and reality. Rather, it is between a pictorial grasp of the truth or an abyss of unknowing, where religious consciousness must come to an end[549] – or, on Cassirer's ultimatum, become scientific.

Cassirer draws a stark division between religion and rational scientific thought. Religion may provide an awareness of the correlation between subjective and objective, the absolute and relative, which lies at the heart of reason. However, it cannot comprehend this correlation with reason's own equilibrium. This is because religion is affectively volatile. Religion is desire and irrational will, set loose in the image-world of myth. This irrationalism and volatility is inherent to religion's reliance on symbolic and sensuous forms of understanding, myth. In mythic consciousness, Cassirer writes, "(t)he spiritualization of the sensuous world results directly in the sensualization of the spiritual

[547] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol. 2*, 250.
[548] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol. 2*, 260.
[549] Wolfson's analysis in *Giving Beyond the Gift* is focused this apophatic aporia in the *Star*, suggested in the final section of Part Three, that beyond the *Gottesbild* in which the eternal truth is made objective resides the real God radically incompatible with all anthropomorphisms. *Giving,* 87-88.

world."[550] This reciprocal constitution of the spiritual and sensual is grounded in the productive-imaginative power of the spirit, its capacity to engender meaningful, pictorial worlds. "At this stage [of spirit's immanent development] there is still no detached objective reality in the sense understood by analytical theoretical cognition…the intuition of reality remains, as it were, fused with the world of mythical imagination." [551]

As with Hegel, Cassirer believes that while reason requires these mythic images, the mind must reason *through* their sensuous forms. Scientific reason remains a form of representing the world. It remains a presentational symbolic form. It thus remains a "picture of the world" that is not a "picture of anything outside the picture," as Michael Inwood has so eloquently put it.[552] Further, science remains a picture embossed with the form of the mythic images though which it has passed. However, as again with Hegel, this form is embossed as a negative image, by the negation of the mythic image's sensuousness.

Here, Rosenzweig and Cassirer diverge, in no uncertain terms. For Rosenzwieg, thought cannot, must not, surmount the mythical image-world of religious consciousness. Speculative knowledge of the absolute must be had *in and through* the spectacle of religion, *particularly* the spectacle of Jewish liturgical existence. Philosophy must be written in "Jewish words," as those words lead to the silent heart of the liturgy and the image that abides therein. Rosenzweig's own mode of philosophical *Schauen*, at once old and new, must be had through Jewish eyes, as those eyes behold the countenance of eternal truth. This form of speculative cognition rests on Jewish myth – i.e., the people's

[550] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol. 2*, 228.
[551] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol. 2*, 239.
[552] Michael Inwood, "Hegel, Cassirer, Heidegger," in *Hegel's Thought in Europe*, ed. Lisa Herzog (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013), 110.

mythic awareness of its origin, end, and the cycle of atonement in which that origin and end is eternally preserved. For the new thinker, this mythical basis of speculative knowing does not undermine one's grasp of the truth, but rather fulfills it. Rosenzweig's philosophy thus resolves to *remain* religious, just Rosenzweig resolves to "remain" a Jew. It embraces myth, image, and sensation as spirit's absolute means of self-presentation.

For Cassirer, the inner momentum of spirit does not allow for any such remaining. At the very limit of religious consciousness is a crisis: either to overcome its mythic pictures of truth or sink into the abyss of unknowing. The rational choice is to move beyond religion to a "new ideality," a new attitude that recognizes its images and signs "as such," i.e. as "a means of expression which, though they reveal a determinate meaning, must necessarily remain inadequate to it, which 'point' to this meaning but never wholly exhaust it."[553] The purpose of scientific understanding is not to exhaust the truth of these meanings, per se, but to do more than point. Its purpose is to determine the meanings expressed so indeterminately by mythic-religious images. To attain this determinacy, spirit must first assume a position of critical remove "detached" from the objective world it makes for itself.

Religious consciousness may accommodate this "crisis" of mythic consciousness while remaining religious in feeling and will. In other words, religion may abide at the limit, so far as it embraces a state of immanent critique. Even "at this stage there is still no detached objective reality in the sense understood by analytical theoretical cognition…the intuition of reality remains, as it were, fused with the world of mythical imagination." That is, even "critical" forms of religion remain fused to sensuousness of

[553] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol. 2*, 239.

the mythic image, precisely in critique of it.[554] Such critical reactions, Cassirer states, are bound to draw "the whole of empirical existence" into their new attitude. Thus, Cassirer's "dialectic of mythic consciousness" culminates in a critical religious attitude toward mythic-religious images, and, by extension, the whole of sensuous reality. Religion outgrows itself, as the critical mind yearns to overcome mythic thinking.

The "classical example" of this self-critical mode of religious consciousness, Cassirer explains, is the prophetic religion of the Bible. Cassirer sees the prophets locked in a struggles against Judaism's "own mythical foundations and beginnings."[555] "The entire ethical-religious pathos of the prophets," Cassirer believes, is concentrated "on this one point." It "drives them beyond all intuition of the given, the merely existent" and toward a vision of a purely nonexistent future, the Messianic. "This existence must vanish if the new world, the world of the Messianic future is to arise."[556] The messianic imagination is the catalyst that propels religion beyond itself and its mythic images, toward a new scientific attitude.

Prophetic religion, then, must completely shun the primitive form of mythical consciousness, which cannot recognize images as images, but uncritically intuits the world through its mythical images. "[The mythical image] is so deeply embedded in man's intuition of the world of things [*die Anschauung der Sachwelt*], of 'objective' reality and the objective process, as to appear an integral part of it."[557] The prophet sets his face against such intuitions. Thus, prophetic religion "injects into the mythical consciousness an alien tension," a radical form of image-critique "that now causes the

[554] Ibid.
[555] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol. 2*, 240.
[556] Ibid.
[557] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol. 2*, 238; Cassirer, *Philosophie der Symbolischen Formen*, 285.

image world of myth to be recognized as something merely outward and material" and insists that "there can be no relation between man and God other than the spiritual-ethical relation between the I and the Thou."[558] "The sensuous image and the whole sensuous phenomenal world must be divested of their symbolic meaning, for this alone makes possible the new deepening of pure religious subjectivity which can no longer be expressed in any material image."[559] Cassirer's prophet is a pure iconoclast of the spirit.

Rosenzweig's prophet, the one who "tells the sign," also sets his face against the image-world of a merely external reality (the pagan *Vorwelt*). He, too, announces a turning inward toward an inward religious subjectivity, constituted by the ethical encounter of I and Thou. He too projects far onto the horizon a messianic future, a *Fernblick* to the redemption that is ever not-yet. However, for Rosenzweig's prophet, this messianic future does not, in fact, lay "beyond all intuition of the given, the merely existent." Rather, it may be visually grasped in a form of intuition that remains sensuous and productive of figural shapes, namely the confident intuition (*vertraute Anschauung*) inherent in Jewish existence. As this intuition is magnified by the liturgy to the circular proportions of the infinite and absolute, it reaches out and really comprehends the faraway messianic future. Thus, for Rosenzweig, its prophetic spirit is precisely what permits Judaism to comprehend the messianic future in a form of sensuous intuition – and in an image (the Star) precisely of the sort Cassirer attributes to the mythical consciousness that prophetic critique is said to overcome.

Rosenzweig's theory of validity and verification comes to turn on this power of the prophet to comprehend the messianic future in a form of vision. Rosenzweig calls the

[558] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol. 2*, 241.
[559] Ibid.

view that the truth can finally only be verified "by the commitment of the lives of all generations" his "messianic theory of knowledge, which evaluates truths according to the price paid for its verification and to the bond that they establish between human beings."[560] Through the eyes of the worshipping people, the prophet sees all the way to end of the generations and their commitment. This end lies in the same eternal being in which the people have their origin. The end and beginning, prediction and fulfillment are perfectly, spherically correlated as a whole. Rosenzweig puts it in the terms of validity: in vision of the Star, the "eternally invisible presupposition" of the experienced reality of Jewish life returns "in the final clarity of the supraexperienced truth."[561] The fulfillment becomes it owns presupposition. Both are given to be seen immediately, in a picture.

Cassirer's dialectic of mythical consciousness turns away from the image in turning toward a prophetic-ethical religion of inwardness, which, in turn, propels spirit toward another, more critical mode of scientific cognition. By contrast, Rosenzweig's dialectic (per usual) turns a full circle *within* the mythic: away from one sensuous image-world (the pagan *Vorwelt*) to another (the eternal *Überwelt*). The eye of the *Star* turns from the externality of the pagan self-image to the inwardness of the revealed soul, then back again to an image that is at once inward ("the still silent image" of the people) and outward (the Star itself, emblazoned on the firmament and transmorphed into countenance). This dialectic of interior and exterior gazing is brought to its optical extreme in the declaration of the Gate: "The Star of Redemption has become countenance that looks upon me and from out of which I look."[562]

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[560] Rosenzweig, "The New Thinking," 99.
[561] Ibid.
[562] "Der Stern der Erlösung ist Antlitz worden, das auf mich blickt und aus dem ich blicke." *SR,* 446; *SE*, 471. Rosenzweig's mystical correlation of divine and human gaze stops just short of Meister Eckhart's

In the duality of countenance, the image has again become a way of looking, a form of intuition. In a kind of second naiveté, Rosenzweig's religion of revelation has returned to the most primitive stage in Cassirer's dialectic of mythic consciousness, for which the image is "so deeply embedded in man's intuition of the world of things as to appear an integral part of it."[563] "Here, too, there is originally no distinction between the real and ideal," Cassirer writes, "between the realm of 'existence' [*Dasein*] and that of 'meaning' [*Bedeutung*]."[564] As the complete image of the Star becomes a basic form of intuition, it casts its light over all that has come before. The end turns to the beginning again. It's light pervades every element of existence, from the last things to the everyday, "from death" and "into life."

4.3.c Pictorial hermeneuticizing

The intuition of these things is determined for consciousness by the perceptual whole of the mythic image. Of the primitive, pre-critical mode of mythic consciousness, Cassirer writes: "Here there is never a mere image, an empty representation; nothing is thought, represented, 'supposed' that is not at the same time real and effective."[565] For Rosenzweig, Jewish religious consciousness must again become mythic this sense. It must recover a mode of image-awareness that is immediately creative, immediately productive, and thus capable of yielding a real image of eternity. This recovery comes by

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absolute identity of the eye: "The eye in which I see God is the same eye in which God sees me; my eye and God's eye are one eye, one seeing, one knowing, one loving." Meister Eckhart, *Meister Eckhart, Teacher and Preacher*, ed. Bernard McGinn (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1986), 270. Correlation must not collapse into identity.

[563] Cassirer, *Philosophy of Symbolic Forms Vol. 2*, 238.

[564] Ibid.; Cassirer, *Philosophie der Symbolischen Formen*, 285.

[565] Ibid. Original: "Es gibt hier nirgends ein bloß Bildhaftes, eine leere Repräsentation; es gibt kein bloß Gedachtes Vorgestelltes oder 'Gemeintes', das nicht zugleich ein Wirkliches un Wirksames wäre."

way of a strong critique of the pagan imagination and (an only slightly softer) critique of the Christian imagination in which the pagan survives.

The theo-philosophical question remains: what kind of truth is secured in this picture? And is it adequate to the God whom Rosenzweig intends to know? Wolfson again sets the stakes:

> In spite of Rosenzweig's painstaking effort to espouse that the personal God of Judaism (and Christianity as well) cannot be "only an allegory," that revelation must consist of the unmediated bond between God and human that rests on the unique self-disclosure of the former to the latter and the consequent courage of the latter to bow down in worship before the former, it is not clear that theistic language for him is anything but metaphorical.[566]

Wolfson is right that Rosenzweig seems not to place his faith in "theistic language." Whether propositional affirmations about the being of God are "only" metaphor or allegory, the *Star* neither confirms or denies. This may be because, by the end of the book, Rosenzweig has lost interest in theistic language. He has instead placed his faith in a theistic picture.

But might the picture have it own way of affirming? Wolfson's skepticism regarding Rosenzweig's relationship to theistic language echoes Begbie's concern that Tillich is unable "to say in non-symbolic terms just what it is that is affirmed and negated in a religious symbol."[567] For Wolfson, this affirmational impotence would be the result of the metaphorization of God, or, following Habermas, "a postmetaphysical 'linguistification of the sacred' that would render the ontotheolgoical experience of the divine presence that [Rosenzweig] so passionately desired untenable?"[568] Wolfson concludes that, for Rosenzweig," (t)he metaphysical concept of actual presence is

[566] Wolfson, *Giving Beyond the Gift*, 86.
[567] Begbie, *Voicing Creation's Praise,* 71.
[568] Wolfson, *Giving Beyond the Gift*, 86.

transmuted into a semiotic trope of mythopoetic metaphoricization."[569] These conclusions seem largely correct.

However, the linguistic and semiotic lens slightly misses the mark. Rosenzweig's view of revealed truth depends upon a symbolically constructed perception, as this chapter has shown. It undoubtedly hermeneuticizes the divine object. However, I would propose that Rosenzweig's "semiotics" of revelation are not grounded in the discursive logic of linguistic symbols, but in the presentational logic proper to the picture.

Indeed, the terminology of "semiotics" may not be appropriate at all. In the neo-Kantian account I just have given, Rosenzweig's epistemology contravenes some of the principal "theoretical commitments" attributed by John Stewart to semiotic theory in general, namely: 1) the assumption of "a fundamental distinction between two realms or worlds, the world of the sign and the signifier, symbol and symbolized, name and named, word and thought" and 2) "(t)he claim that the relationship between [the] units of language and the units that make up the other of the two worlds is some sort of representational or symbolizing relationship."[570] This version of semiotics (if it fairly describes discipline) presumes Kant's two-worlds theory eschewed by the neo-Kantians.[571] It exemplifies exactly the kind of representationalism that both Rorty and Mitchell aim to overcome, the former by cleansing philosophy of pictures, the latter by devoting a (post-semiotic) science to them.

A picture has its own way of showing, as has been our theme. A picture makes for its own sense, for its own objectivity. How? To attempt a Rosenzweigian formulation:

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[569] Wolfson, *Giving Beyond the Gift*, 86.
[570] John Stewart, *Language As Articulate Contact: Toward A Post-Semiotic Philosophy of Communication* (Albany: State Press of New York, 1995), 6-7. Numbered 1 and 3 in the text.
[571] Presuming Kant ever held such a theory. See Chapter Two, Section 2.5, Note 90.

by presenting together and at once, in an immediate correlation, the perceptual whole from which the picture's inner elements and relations derive their ultimate "facticity" (*Tatsächlichkeit*).

For the sake of clarity, it is necessary to address Rosenzweig's concept of "facticity." In the technical idiom of the *Star*, "facticity" denotes the objective reality of the elements of Rosenzweig's cosmos: God, world, and human being. The "facticity" these elements, Rosenzweig holds, must be *engendered* from within the relational paths that emerge between them, i.e., the paths of creation, revelation, and redemption. Their objective realities cannot presumed at the start, apart from their real relations in time and lived existence. Neither can the whole that conjoins them be presupposed as an "Idea" that is merely yet to be actualized. (That is the mistake of Hegel's idealism, which has the result of instantaneously denying the ontic particularity of the beings it intends to comprehend).[572] Rather, their realities must *really* originate from the configurative encounters between these ontically irreducible elements. Prior to this engendering process there lies only "the nothing," an abyss of non-being. Playing on *Tat-sache*, the *Star* performs this generative process through dialectical cycles that cross-synthesize the substance (*Sache*) of one element (God, world, human being) and the act-ivity (*Tat*) of another element. The process presumes a doubled dialectics, by which each aspect of each element – *Tat* and *Sache* – is both affirmed ("Yes") and denied ("No"). (The process is visualized in Figures Two and Three of the Chapter Appendix). "It is not the thing [substance, *Sache*], it is not the act [*Tat*], it is only the fact (*Tatsache*) that is secure from falling back into the Nothing."[573] Only the full completion of this process can reactively,

[572] See Chapter Two, Section 2.4, Note 60.
[573] *Star*, 260; *Stern*, 270.

as it were, provide the ontic and objective presupposition that guarantees the reality of the cosmos and each of its particular elements, thus nullifying the threat of the nothing.

Of course, the configurative path of Star itself is Rosenzweig's presentation of this process. The liturgical apprehension of the Star's complete figure at the end of the book is the ultimate sight of the whole. In this perception, the eye rounds the infinite corner back to the beginning, guaranteeing – in the firm vision of the faithful – a firm ontological ground under their feet and at the ground of all that is. The inner, configurative coherence of this picture is derived from the eyewitnesses' perception of the whole – through the sign of the miracle of revelation. So too is the "facticity," the objective reality, of everything depicted in that that picture of the cosmos. The perceptual whole and the objectivity of its elements and relations must be given at once – in the immediacy of an *Augenblick* that has been enlarged to an eternal duration/dimension. That is the peculiar quality pictorial presentation, which we have now considered from multiple angles. The picture shows what it shows in the way that it shows it, and shows both the *what* and the *how* of its showing at once.

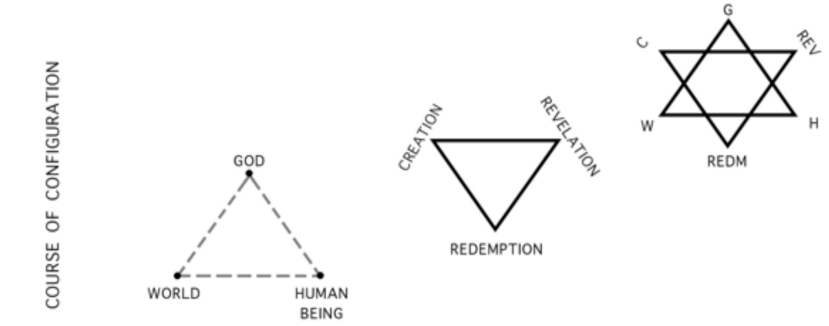
This realignment from the semiotic to the pictorial does not dispel concerns that what the picture shows cannot be shown otherwise, and therefore cannot be affirmed relative to some Archimedean point that lies outside the picture. The point is in the picture. At its dead (living) center. The picture is not arbitrary. Whatever Rosenzweig's picture of revelation shows, it certainly cannot be *phrased* – as affirmation or anything else. But the picture itself affirms, in its being confidently affirmed by the eye. In its looking, they eye not only beholds, but holds on to. Indeed, this optical hold on the picture is what makes the picture's content real and objective.

It is all in the looking. For all the weight that Rosenzweig places on the commandment to love and to act, ultimately what the mortal human being is given to do, precisely in his mortal humanity, is to live in the *sight* of eternal love – to look. *Zum Leben, zum Schaun*. *Lachay roi*. To live, to look. To that most Wölfflinian of slogans, *Sehen lernen ist Alles*, we may hear Rosenzweig whisper his "Amen." Seeing must be all, for the All has been given to be seen.

CHAPTER FOUR APPENDIX

FIGURE ONE: TRIADIC COURSES OF THE *STAR*

		Part One	Part Two	Part Three
a	Stage of the Star's Course	Elements of being (God, world, human being) emerge in mutual transcendence, ontic autonomy	Elements reverse into relation along paths of creation, revelation, redemption	Complete configuration (*Gestalt*) of the whole
b	Space-Time World	Everlasting Primordial World (*immerwahrende Vorwelt*)	Ever-Renewed World (*allerzeiterneurte Welt*)	Eternal Supra-World (*ewige Überwelt*)



TIME OF DAY: NIGHT ↓ NOON ↓ MIDNIGHT ↓

c	Form of Temporal Intuition	Everlasting (*immerwahrende*)	Ever-Renewed (*allerzeiterneurte*)	Eternal (*ewige*)
d	Form of Spatial Intuition	Euclidian	Fixed, Punctiliar	"Place"
e	Way of Knowing	Thinking (*Denken*)	Experience (*Erfahrung*)	Vision/Visual Intuition (*Anschauung*)
f	Mode of Experience	proto-experience	real experience	trans-experiential
g	Degree of Validity (subj)/ "Factuality" (obj)	Hypothetical	Certain	Confirmed (*bewiesene*)

Optics:

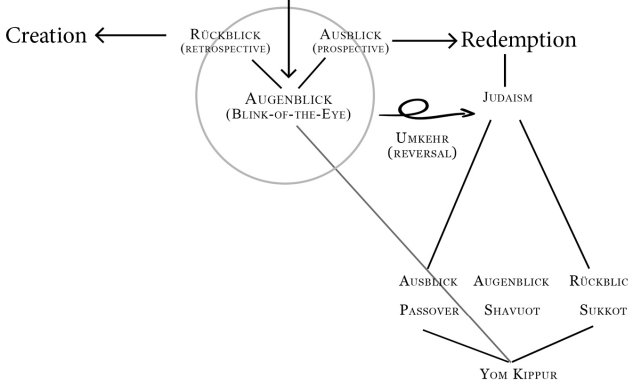
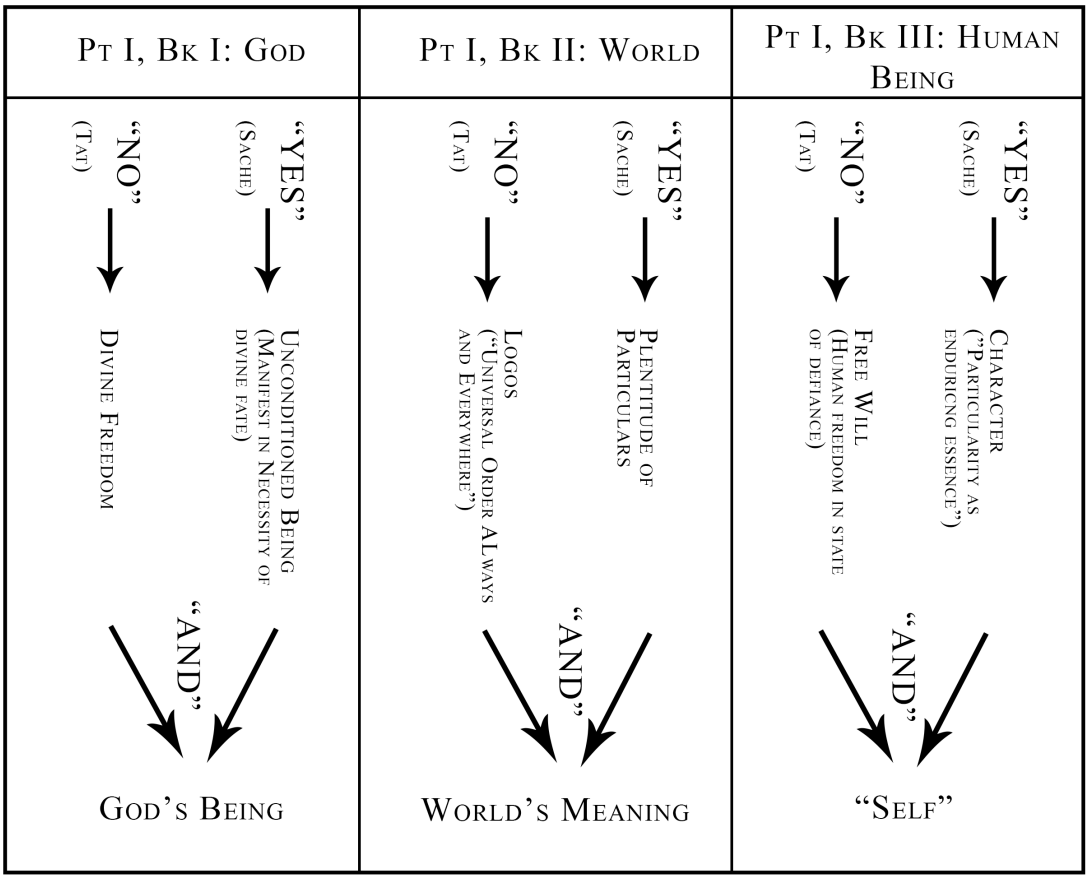
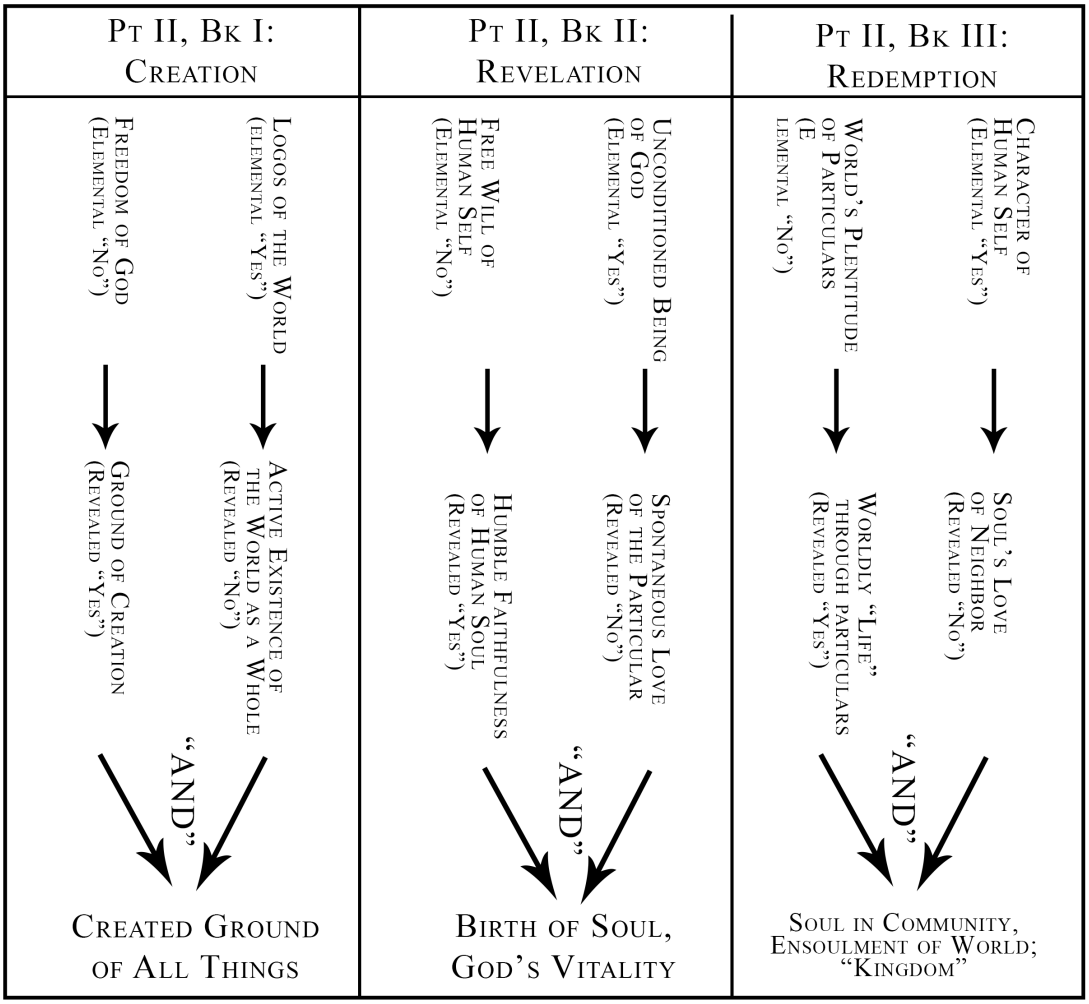


FIGURE TWO: FIRST (ELEMENTAL) PHASE
OF THE *STAR*'S "FACTUAL METHOD"[574]



[574] This chart and the next largely follow Benjamin Pollock's reconstruction of the *Tat-und-Sache*/Yes-and-No structure of Rosenzweig's "factual method" in *Franz Rosenzweig and the Systematic Task of Philosophy*. See especially pages 164-5, 167, 231-2.

FIGURE THREE: SECOND (RELATIONAL) PHASE
OF THE *STAR*'S "FACTUAL METHOD"



CHAPTER FIVE

RE-VIEWING AND EYEWITNESSING

CHAPTER FIVE CONTENTS

5.1 Recapitulating Claims

It will be helpful to review some of the principal claims of this study. First, I have argued that Tillich's and Rosenzweig's programs of thought evidence a modern "pictorial turn" in early twentieth-century German religious thought. Both turn to visual tropes in developing their understandings revelation, religious life, and religious knowledge. "The picture" becomes for them an organizing figure of knowledge, around which notions of intuition, perception, representation, truth, and validity are structured.

For Mitchell, every pictorial turn is paired to a kind of "image anxiety." We may recognize such moments of image anxiety in Rosenzweig's attack on classical art and the hammer he takes to the ideal image of the All. We find Tillich's image anxiety in his fascination with the ruptured figures of Expressionist art and the disfiguring dialectics that give rise to his own picture of Christ. These iconoclastic moments are, in many ways, reflections of the crisis theology of the time and its dialectical spirit. Rosenzweig and Tillich follow this dialectical impulse to set the absolute other, the eternal, and the uncircumscribable against the self, the finite, the circumscribed. However, both balk at the finality of this radical dialectic and its iconoclastic consequences, evident in Barth's early theology. They instead opt for correlations of paradox and co-presence, permitting

the infinite and unconditioned to be miraculously circumscribed within the contours of the finite.

Second, I have suggested a modest recalibration in the intellectual history of this period, challenging the verbal-linguistic paradigm that is often applied to German religious thought, both Protestant and Jewish, in the 1920s and 30s. Both Tillich and Rosenzweig are deeply modern in presuming that reality and religious truth must be mediated by some basic structures of consciousness. Language is one such basic structure. Rosenzweig, especially, is aware of language's reality-constituting power. Like Buber and Barth, Rosenzweig was keen to emphasize that revelation is verbal. Revelation is verbal both in the sense of being a pure *act* and the sense of being an act of speech. Revelation is acted, spoken, and heard. Tillich too understood language as a necessary element of cultural-spiritual life, capable of mediating revelation. However, for both Tillich and Rosenzweig, within the Word there is a picture to be seen. And it is the seeing that counts. It is the seeing that grabs, clings, and validates the object of revelation.

On these views, I have argued, revelation's truth-content cannot appear apart from the form of pictorial presentation proper to itself. The interpretive analyses of Chapters Three and Four stressed this presentational quality of revelation in Tillich's and Rosenzweig's thought. Pressing slightly beyond the theological and philosophical frames typically used for reading these texts, my analyses put Tillich's and Rosenzweig's thought in conversation with some modern art theory, specifically Wölfflin's formalism, and a number of related ideas drawn from philosophy of art and image theory. The approach has yielded a view of revelation as an act that correlates image and eye, pictorial presentation and pictorial perception.

I have detected and described this correlational structure of pictorial perception in Rosenzweig's theology of the eternal image and in Tillich's "picture of Christ." I have suggested that, for them, the revelatory power of these pictures lies in their ability to enact an *absolute* correlation between the perceiving subject and the pictorial object of its perception. The paradox inherent in this view stems from Rosenzweig's and Tillich's simultaneous insistence on the relative, finite, and conditioned perspective from which the religious subject must not only view these absolute images, but, in some way, must also *make them visible* through faith's creative seeing (*Anschauung*). The finite seeing eye engenders for itself an image of the infinite, and thus, an image with its origin beyond the self and its standpoint – an origin in an absolute Eye beyond the "I." That is the paradox. The validity, objectivity, or reality of this perception depends entirely on the absoluteness of the correlation (a category so decisive, in different ways, for both Tillich and Rosenzweig) held within the picture that makes the perception possible.

These views of revelation raise a few theological and philosophical concerns. First, can the truth inherent in these pictures be affirmed in any other way, say, by propositional language? Second, the closely related concern that, if it cannot, there is no *real* objectivity to the picture's truth, only the illusion of objectivity the picture creates for itself on the irreal plane of visual imagination (the incorporeal, neo-Byzantine space of the modernist picture). Another way to phrase this last concern: does the picture have the ability to make things present *to* the self that are not projections *of* the self? Even the ability to make present the absolute, in which the self lives, and moves, and has its being? This discourse of presence is common in the small body of literature that exists around

the matter of pictures in contemporary theology.[575] It is a discourse I have purposefully avoided, and not out of fear of the "onto-theological" bogeyman, but rather, because there are more interesting directions – perhaps even *objectively* more interesting directions – to take the question, as I will explore below.

5.2 Re-viewing the Diptych

However, before pursuing these "ultimate" questions, we must first re-view the comparative view of Tillich and Rosenzweig from which we began. It will be worth our time, for, as we have seen, the kind of viewing that is also knowing must be a kind of re-viewing. Cognition must be re-cognition. The diptych has amassed a great many more details than the miniature from which this study began. We may take a closer look, regarding it, in proper Wölfflinian fashion, as a dual projection.

With regard to the role of pictures in religious life, religious knowing, and speculative religious thought, we have glimpsed a great many congruities between Tillich's and Rosenzweig's thinking. For both, religious life coheres around an image that is held and maintained within a collective body of worship and scriptural devotion. In the "still and silent image" of the Eternal and "the picture of Christ," the Jewish people and the Christian community find centers of religious consciousness and paths toward the contemplation of the oneness of the truth. For both Tillich and Rosenzweig, these pictures are both self-images and Other-images. For Rosenzweig, the eternal image that abides silently within the Jewish people *is* the life and existence of Judaism; it constitutes the circulatory pathway around which the simultaneously mortal and eternal life of the

[575] As evident in the title of Natalie Carnes's, *Image and Presence: A Christological Reflection on Iconoclasm and Iconophilia*.

people flows. For Tillich, too, the picture of Christ is the form of the Christian's religious self-consciousness. It provides the pattern in which the many cohere as one, not only within the church, but in the church in culture as well.

However, on this matter of the picture as communal bond and self-identity, Tillich and Rosenzweig also diverge. And they diverge in remarkably mirrored fashion, as if creating photographic negatives of the other. For Tillich, the image at the center of the Christian community is paradoxically de-centered. The picture of Christ must be received from outside the community. Thus, the communal life of Christianity is, to borrow a phrase, a form of ec-centric existence.[576] For Rosenzweig, by contrast, Jewish existence is super-centric, encompassing both center and circumference. The eternal image that dwells within the Jewish soul guarantees that the course of Jewish life will not "lose itself in the infinite" as it spins its eternal circle from the center-point of revelation to the enclosing, messianic circumference of redemption. In this perfect correlation of center and circumference, Jewish life mirrors the oneness of God.

At this point, the diptych vibrates with contrasting contradictions. In picturing Jewish and Christian consciousness, Rosenzweig and Tillich counter-project images of the other's Judaism or Christianity (Rosenzweig more self-consciously than Tillich). The image anxiety of each is displaced onto these counter-projected images of the other.

For Tillich it is only the ec-centricity of the community's centering image that guards it from idolatry. This is because, for Tillich, the picture must be a picture of perfect personality, and only individuals not communities are capable of personality. The

[576] See David Kelsey, *Eccentric Existence: A Theological Anthropology*, 2 vols. (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009).

"the community has a sub-personal instinct…It does not have personal unity."[577] The community's greatest temptation toward idolatry is its tendency to picture the personality at the origin of salvation in its own (necessarily impersonal) image. "The pictorial thinking [*bildhafte Denken*], according to which communities imagine themselves to be acting people, has caused a lot of errors here. In truth, this picture is false."[578] Tillich would not consider historical Judaism subject to this temptation, but only because he subscribes to a one-sidedly aniconic view Judaism, i.e., the view of Judaism as pure ethical monotheism that Rosenzweig makes it his purpose to subvert.[579] Judaism, for Tillich, is "pure monotheism." It is "the height of the theocratic tendency" that protests against "the sacramental tendency" of paganism to deify conditioned realities.[580] This Jewish-Pagan dialectic, in which Judaism is the negative moment, is synthetically overcome in Christianity. It is a familiar scheme.[581] Should Tillich have read the *Star*, he likely would have regarded Rosenzweig's Jewish people as a personalization of community, in danger of absolutizing its own image.

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[577] Tillich, *Marburg Dogmatik*, 298.
[578] Ibid.
[579] See Batnitzsky's *Idolatry and Representation*.
[580] Tillich, "Philosophy of Religion," 96.
[581] Despite Tillich's personal and intellectual relationship with German Jewish thinkers and despite his aliveness to the present and the modern, the concept of Judaism found in his early thought takes no account of Judaism as a living tradition, makes no distinction between ancient and modern Judaism, and bears no evidence of having been developed in dialogue with Jewish thinkers. This should cause serious skepticism regarding Tillich's self-image as "Paulus amongst the Jews," a moniker given to him, and proudly embraced, because of his mingling Jewish intellectuals such as Adorno and Horkheimer. It may also occasion skepticism regarding the parallels of dialectic that Wagoner perceives between the Frankfurt School and what he calls Tillich's "emancipatory social critique" in his *Prophetic Interruptions*. Tillich's intellectual relationship with the Frankfurt School – and Adorno, in particular – was less than harmonious. Indeed, Adorno's attitude toward Tillich occasionally borders on contempt, as evident in a unsent letter of Adorno to Tillich, bearing the title "*Contra Paulum*," a translation of which is included as an appendix to Wagoner's book. Tillich's relationship with Buber is a different story. For an account of Tillich's and Buber's relationship see David Novak's chapter, "Tillich and Buber" in *Talking with Christians: Musings of a Jewish Theologian* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2005).

Rosenzweig, in turn, believes that the dynamic through which communities of individuals are conformed to the image of Christ, as the suffering divine man, perpetuates and in some sense amplifies the pagan tendency toward idolatry. Idolatry, for Rosenzweig, does not mean setting a false divine image in place of the true, so much as the proliferation of deities, inherent in paganism. On Halbertal and Margalit's now classic taxonomy, Tillich's notion of idolatry thus tends toward substitution and Rosenzweig's toward the error of multiplicity.[582] Christianity reins in the pagan drive to proliferate divine forms into the one image of Christ, which "opposes all attempts" to be assimilated to the *Wunschbilder* of the many peoples of the world. And yet, because the means by which the image of Christ must be appropriated is the pathos evoked by his suffering humanity, the proliferation of desired images cannot be helped. Pathos and desire are insufficient to guarantee the oneness of the eternal image. The Christian gaze that gives rise to the image of the suffering God is too volatile, too unstable with affect. (In this judgment we can sense the stoicism that Rosenzweig shares with Cassirer and the cool classicism he shares Wölfflin.) Thus, the idolatrous impulse, latent in Christianity's "inextinguishable fragment of paganism," is concentrated into the empathic image of Christ and, through that image, magnified. The very same empathic power that permits Christianity to fulfill its redemptive mission – spreading across the world, awakening the slumbering nations to the pure presentness of the eternal to time, seeding a yearning desire for the eternal *to stay* – perpetuates the error of idolatry.

On this score, Rosenzweig has Tillich's number. That is, Rosenzweig *sees* Tillich's Christianity better than Tillich sees Rosenzweig's Judaism. This is no surprise.

[582] Moshe Halbertal and Avishai Margalit, *Idolatry* (Harvard University Press, 1992), on substitution: 40ff.; on error and multiplicity: 110-11.

Not only is Rosenzweig the more unforeseeable thinker, he also had extensive practice in Christian imagination – having stood at the door to the church – while Tillich took only a few adventures in Judaism.[583] Tillich's eschatological moment of kairos, in which he stages the *Krisis* event of revelation, is precisely the kind of insurmountable center that Rosenzweig ascribes to Christianity: "central point not of a horizon that he surveys, but as central point of a track which consists of nothing but central point."[584] As all things are drawn into this center, it also becomes the site from which the ultimate picture of revelation, the picture of Christ, must be viewed. For Tillich, the real transforming effect of this picture is mediated by nothing other than the pathos that affectively bonds existence to the symbol of the suffering divine mediator.[585] "All the pathos that lies in the reality of the picture of Christ is, if it understands itself, pathos for the reality it expresses, for the concrete transformation [*Umwandlung*] of existence."[586] That *Umwandlung*, further, is precisely the kind of conversion that Rosenzweig contrasts with return, *Rückkehr*, suggesting that *metanoia* is an incomplete translation of *teshuvah*.

The epistemic consequences of Christianity's incomplete religious turning, for Rosenzweig, were made clear in Chapter Four. Without this form of circular *Vollständigkeit* – which existentially subsists in Jewish life, sustained by the confidence (*Vertrauen*, *emunah*) of Jewish faithfulness, and is made into a instrument of visionary knowledge by the liturgy – Christianity lacks the perception of the whole in which the All takes (complete) shape for knowledge. This verifying criterion of wholeness is something

[583] See Note 7, above.
[584] Rosenzweig, *Star*, 360; *Stern*, 377.
[585] There is here a great deal of Abelard's view that Christ saves by binding "us to himself by love; with the result that out hearts should be enkindled by such a gift of divine grace." Abelard, "Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans (An Excerpt from the Second Book)" in *A Scholastic Miscellany: Anselm to Ochkham* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1956), 283.
[586] *Dogmatik*, 312.

both Tillich and Rosenzweig espouse. It is a tenet of the romantic idealism from which they begin. To recall Schelling's formulation: "Only for reason is there one universe and to conceive something according to reason means: to conceive it as an organic member of an absolute whole, in a necessary connection with the whole, and by this means as a reflection of absolute unity."[587] For Rosenzweig, whether this whole is formed by an inner movement of returning or transformation makes all the difference.

Recalling this holistic criterion of reason provides an opportunity for a further point of philosophical contrast. Throughout this study it has been argued that Tillich's and Rosenzweig's epistemologies are shaped by some characteristic features of neo-Kantianism. However, as noted in Chapter Two, they each draw their neo-Kantianism from different sources, Tillich largely from the Southwest School (Rickert, Windelband) and Rosenzweig from Marburg (Cohen). It is not a deep divide. However, one can observe Tillich leaning toward Baden and Rosenzweig leaning toward Marburg at certain points in their thinking.

A distinction between the schools, relevant to the present topic, is the exact nature of the relation between cognition and the content of intuition. As stated in the introduction, both schools reject "blind" intuition and believe intuitions somehow to involve cognitive processes. However, for Rickert and the Southwest school, intuitions are not *immediately* cognized. There remains a moment of givenness, in which intuitions appears not fully cognized. In this state, the knowledge of intuition is given as recognition (*kennen*), but not yet cognition or understanding (*erkennen*).[588] Thus, as Rickert concludes, there remains necessary a "complete *transformation* of the given

[587] Schelling, *Sämtliche Werke*, vol. 4, 390.
[588] This is Rickert's view in "Knowing and Cognizing: Critical Comments on Theoretical Intuitionism," in *The Neo-Kantian Reader*, ed. Sebastian Luft (New York: Routledge, 2015), 384-395.

intuition through non-intuitive factors."[589] For Cassirer and Marburgers, by contrast, there is no givenness apart from intuition. Intuitions are immediately cognized as they come to consciousness. There is no separation between intuitive content and cognitive form.

Emil Lask captures this distinction as one between the "panlogicism" of Marburg and the "panarchy of logos" of the Southwest school, to which Lask himself belongs. In the former, the objective content and the conceptual form of an intuition are equated; the intuition and concept are immediately one.[590] In the latter, the categorical form, the concept, remains distinct from and dominant over the content of intuition. In the "panarchy of logos," the content of knowledge continues to require the transformative contribution of conceptual form. This view is closer to that of Cassirer and Wölfflin.

Tillich's emphasis on the dynamic transformation of existence through the pictorial form of Christ presumes something similar to the Southwest school's "panarchy of logos." The medium of religious consciousness – and with it, all of meaning-reality – must be continuously transformed into the form of the suffering logos. Only in this dynamic process of transformation is reality made real and spiritually intelligible. By contrast, Rosenzweig believes the categorical form of Jewish knowledge to be *immediately* given in the Jewish people's intuitive experience of their own life. The Jewish people's experienced reality is always already cognized through this categorical form (figured as the Star). When this experience is made self-reflexive and magnified by

[589] Ibid., 391. Emphasis original.
[590] Lask's formulation: "Panlogicism: The objectivity of the formal aspect pertaining to the objectivity of the objects coincides with the categorical truth-form, the whole constituted by the objects, the objectivity of the material aspect, the realm of objects coincides with the whole of the theoretical sense. Objectivity is identical to the categorical truth-form and the objects are identical to the theoretical sense." *Neo-Kantian Reader*, 408-409.

the liturgy, form and content appear in an immediately unified whole. This view presumes something similar to the "panlogism" of Marburg.

This contrast between neo-Kantian epistemic principles maps onto Rosenzweig's dubious distinction between Christian *transformation* and Jewish *return*. At the end of the Jewish quest for truth is an immediate unity of pure experience and cognitive form (panlogism), which had been there all along, that was in the beginning. The experience of Jewish life, then, needs no transformation to be understood, only a returning to. Christian liturgical existence, by contrast, is continuously transforming the Christian's receptive, emphatic intuition of the world into perceptions of the truth through its highest mythic-symbolic form (panarchy). But, because the form of the whole does not always already subsist in Christian self-consciousness, that truth can never appear in full, can never appear as *the* truth.

In the final analysis, however – and now we may leave beyond the contrarianism of Rosenzweig's philosophy of Judaism and Christianity, as well as the finer points of neo-Kantian epistemology – for both Tillich and Rosenzwieg, there is no mode of religious seeing that is not always already united (whether through transformative motion or in cyclical rest) to the whole by which the given content must be viewed and understood. This is what has been discussed as the "presentational" or "seeing-in" quality of religious knowledge in these modern renditions of revealed revelation. This glimpse of the whole depends on the prior pictorial rendering of the perceptible world, the pictorialization of the real, in which cognition is had in re-cognition. Only in the "re-cognition [*Wiedererkenntnis*]" of the Star is "cognition [*Erkenntnis*] perfected."[591] Only in the picture of Christ does religious consciousness – of the individual in the church, and

[591] *Star*, 441; *Stern*, 465.

the church in culture – "recognizes [*wiedererkennt*] its relation to the unconditioned," and thereby also the individual's relation to the cultural-social whole.[592]

5.3 Beyond Presence or Projection

We return to the question of what, exactly, this type of re-cognitional pictorial seeing gives to be seen when applied to revelation. The presence of the LORD? The voice of the Thou?[593] The form of the formless, invisible God? Perhaps the absolute *Archetype* (i.e., the figure (*typos*) of the principle (*arche*) of all conscious existence, in which being and thinking are one)? Or only the self itself, projected outward and upward? The subject objectified, over against itself, in answer to only to its own desires – and thus only addressable, response-able to itself?

Feuerbach, of course, is the proponent of this last view. "Religion is the dream of the human mind," he discovers. "But even in dreams we do not find ourselves in emptiness or in heaven, but on earth, in the realm of reality."[594] Dreaming, then, is truer than religion. Dreams cannot invent for themselves another realm, set against the reality we really experience. Their renderings are bound to that reality we experience, as the imagination is bound to what we may perceive. However, in dreams "we only see real things in the entrancing splendor of imagination and caprice, instead of in the simple daylight of reality and necessity."[595] Dreaming is not Feuerbach's goal. He intends to convert the splendor of dreaming into simple daylight. "I do nothing more to religion – and to speculative philosophy and theology also – than to open its eyes, or rather to turn

[592] *Dogmatik*, 88.
[593] Recalling the synesthesia of Exodus 20:15: "And they saw voices." See Wolfson, *Giving Beyond the Gift*, 56.
[594] Feuerbach, *The Essence of Christianity*, xiii.
[595] Ibid.

its gaze from the internal towards the external; i.e., I change the object as it is in the imagination into the object as it is in reality."[596]

Rosenzweig and Tillich, I would suggest, have allowed their eyes to be opened. Through the eyes of revealed religion, they do not wish to see beyond or against the finite, perceptible world, into the infinite beyond. Rather they want to see the infinite *in* the finite. They want to reckon and figure a new *capax* for modernity.[597] By contrast, one gets a different idea from Barth's early view of religion: as a standpoint in experience that renders us "competent to look…beyond ourselves, beyond what is in us and through us and of us, to smile and to weep at what we are." Perhaps if the smiling and weeping is absolute enough, for Barth, we may see to the end of our field of vision, where, by some miracle, and against every law of the visible world, "the competence of God, of the Spirit, of the Eternal can enter within our horizon….May this invisible vision be ours!"[598] Rosenzweig and Tillich, by contrast, do not want to see to the end of finitude's visible horizon – at least not without first seeing their way to its deep center, where an infinite plenitude of visibility abides. The visions they seek, then, are not invisible visions, but *visible* visions, views configured from deep within the visible world.

They follow Feuerbach even further (although, perhaps down a path Feuerbach does not know he is on). In converting splendor to daylight, Feuerbach also performs the reverse operation. Daylight is made into splendor again. In re-appropriating the attributes of divinity for the finite, natural world, Feuerbach lights up the natural, sensuous world

[596] Ibid.
[597] Agata Bielik-Robson seizes on Luther's *finitum capax infiniti* as figure through which to read much modern philosophy, including Rosenzweig's, in *Another Finitude: Messianic Vitalism and Philosophy* (London: Bloomsbury, 2019).
[598] Barth, *The Epistle to the Romans,* Second Edition, trans. Edwyn C. Hoskyns (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), 239.

from within. The real stuff of nature – bread and wine, flesh and blood – these are both simple and full of splendor. Disenchantment is simultaneously a re-enchantment. The real assumes something of the entrancing, irreal aspect of a dream. But it is a dream now defended against the speculative excesses of the religious imagination, which remains ever zealous to set its dream outside and against the world of real things.

Rosenzweig and Tillich run in this direction of excessive religious imagination, however, they heed Feuerbach's boundary. They do not set their images of revelation beyond the horizon of the sensuous and visible. Of course, Tillich's *Christbild* and Rosenzweig's Star are not perceptible to the physical eye. They do not hang on a wall in Berlin. To make them out of mere matter and contemplate them on a wall, while still assigning them the absolute speculative and cognitive power they possess as figures of spirit, would be either a reversion to the first naiveté of mythic consciousness, to which there is no returning, or a flight to the most speculative heights of romantic art mysticism.[599] While not physically perceptible, these pictures are yet fully imbued with *perceptibility*. They thus enact an irony that Feuerbach could not have foreseen: they attempt a retrieval of the divine object that he set out to dissolve, but from within the boundaries of the finitized, sense-bound world he brought to light.

So what about the "objectivity" of these new theophanies? What do they make objective to the "I" and the "We"? As the reader may suspect by now, there is no way to respond, because there is no way out of the picture. Self or other? Projection or presence? The answer is yes. Yes to presence and yes to projection. Yes to being and yes to semblance. Yes to the part and yes to the whole. The flood of yeses only provokes the

[599] Heights that received a philosophical defense, it seems, only once: in Schelling's 1800 *System of Transcendental Idealism*. See Chapter One, Note 66.

enquirer, the one who desires a particular affirmation. If I must affirm the whole in simultaneity with the part, what *in particular* have I affirmed? Other than my own affirmation? And, more to the point, what exactly is *there* to affirm? What is the object of my affirmation?

My yes is a simultaneous affirmation of the *how* and the *what* of the picture's mode of presentation, its mode of making objective. Is this tantamount to saying that religious "belief" is a matter of how one sees it? That belief is a matter of one's *blik*, to employ R. M. Hare's term for an empirically unfalsifiable worldview.[600] The *Augen-blicke* in which Tillich's and Rosenzweig's views of revelation have their standpoints can be justly considered such *bliks*. There is an undeniable relativism of perspective implied in these views of faith and revelation, which only makes their claims to absoluteness all the more laden with contradiction (a contradiction that can, of course, be absorbed back into the paradoxical coherence of their fundamental view of things).

In short, the question is indeed a matter of hermeneutics as much epistemology. Tillich and Rosenzweig indeed hermeneuticize revelation. That convergence of *aesthesis* and *episteme*, from which this study began, leads to this convergence of the hermeneutic and epistemic. However, hermeneuticization is not identical to linguistification. At least, it is not if Mitchell and Wollheim and many others are correct about the hermeneutic peculiarity of pictures and pictorial viewing. Thus, what Tillich and Rosenzweig have done is pictorialize revelation. This solves nothing with regard to the problems of affirmation and independent verification (if indeed these problems are problematic). Also, we should be careful not to make pictures an escape hatch from our late-modern,

[600] R. M. Hare, "Theology and Falsification," in *New Essays in Philosophical Theology,* ed. Antony Flew and Alasdair MacIntyre (London: SCM Press, 1955), 99-102.

post-metaphysical condition (if indeed that is our condition). While pictures are captivating, there is no reason they should be seen to have more (real) presence than novels, or treatises, or sonatas, which can also be captivating.

While nothing is solved, our perception is changed. The peculiarity of pictorial perception lies in the eye. What makes a picture different than a novel is that is exercises the eye to a greater degree, demands more of the eye and offers more in return. The interest and even the objectivity of these modern pictures of revealed religion, then, should be sought in the looking.

5.4 Eyewitnessing: The Embodied Eye

Tillich's and Rosenzweig's gazes mirror each other in the effort of looking. They heed Wölfflin's exhortation to look with dedication and discipline. Wölfflin staked nearly as much on looking as do Tillich and Rosenzweig. As Daniel Adler has shown, Wölfflin's formalist pedagogy in art history aimed to cultivate spiritual character through practice in visualization (*Anschauung*) and repetitive, attentive looking. It was a project of *Bildung* through *Bilder*.[601] In Evonne Levy's words, formalism thus aspired to serve as "a kind secular replacement of the instruction in theology that no longer dominated the modern university."[602] Wölfflin's vision for formalism contained "an element of the mystical, of the moral and the ethical."[603]

[601] As Adler also demonstrates, Wölfflin's agenda is not free from the *Bildung* tradition's enthrallment to a nationalistic image of the germanic spirit. See Daniel Adler, "Painterly Politics: Wölfflin, Formalism and German Academic Culture, 1885–1915," *Art History* 27, no. 3 (2004): 431–56.
[602] Evonne Levy, "Wölfflin's Principles of Art History (1915-2015): A Prolegomenon for Its Second Century" in Wölfflin, *Principles of Art History*, 21.
[603] Ibid.

The most basic of Wölfflin's principles is that looking is difficult, but rewards the effort with spiritual fruit. The spiritual, self-formative value of attentive looking has since become a trope of art history. For instance, Camille Paglia writes that "the only road to freedom is self-education in art…the only way to teach focus is to present the eye with opportunities for steady perception – best supplied by the contemplation of art. Looking at art requires stillness and receptivity, which realign our senses and produce magical tranquility."[604]

We can find this modern faith in looking reflected in Tillich's and Rosenzweig's eyes. Their practice in looking at the images of art, I have suggested, trains the gaze of the inner, contemplative eye by which the pictures of revealed religion are configured and beheld. The pictorial form of breakthrough that Tillich perceives in Expressionist art becomes the figure in which he thinks. As Braiterman has observed, the configurative imagination at work in the *Star* is prefigured in Rosenzweig's description of an encounter with Giorgione's *Tempest* on a trip to Venice in 1906. It is worth taking another close look at this act of look. Rosenzweig begins by absorbing himself in the pictures "wonderful details" (*wundervollen Einzelheiten*):

> the man standing and his shirt especially, the sitting-crouching woman and her movement, the cloud with the flash – and the indifferent or unpleasant details…And then you sit in a rococo armchair before it for a few minutes and then a miracle happens and everything that I was talking about disappears and you see without knowing what you see: you become total vision. Without passion, without agitation, without thoughts, without any knowledge of anything else or even about yourself: total vision….It is something so incomprehensible that one could found a religion upon it.[605]

[604] Camille Paglia, *Glittering Images: A Journey Through Art from Egypt to Star Wars* (Pantheon, 2012).
[605] "Mit wundervollen Einzelheiten als der stehende Mann und sein Hemd besonders, die sitzend-kauernde Frau und ihre Bewegung besonders, die Wolke mit dem Blitz;- und gleichgültige oder unangenehme Einzelheiten wie der Ziehbrunnen oder was es ist, und der glänzend gemalte, aber panoramenhaft stereoskopische Zweig vor der Frau, und die Stadt mit den hässlichen Häusern. - Und dann sitzt man ein paar Minuten davor auf einem Rokokosessel und dann geht ein Wunder vor und es verschwindet alles, wovon ich vorhin er- zählte, und man sieht ohne zu wissen, was man sieht; man wird ganz Sehen. Ohne

In this remarkable report we can detect that dual perception of presentational whole and it interrelated parts. We can also detect the objective indeterminacy of the parts as they appear: "you see without knowing *what* you see." And we can detect the particular manner in which Rosenzweig sees from part to part to part until arriving at a vision of the whole. The movement mirrors Wölfflin's description of "painterly" perception, in which the eye moves through the chaos of the parts, until it achieves a "total movement" (*Gesamtbewegung*), and then "(t)here comes the moment when the eye surrenders (*kapituliert*) and only sees the total wave (*Gesamtschwall*)." [606]

Rosenzweig and Tillich transpose these learned ways of looking into the perceptual medium of religious consciousness, and then again into the self-reflective medium of thought. The verification of the truth rests on the perception of the whole. And the perception of the whole demands the attentive looking of the beholders. Indeed, the pictorial whole itself depends on their act of creative visualization – "the intuition of the disciples of all time" by which the picture of Christ takes shape, the confident seeing the eternal people who make visible the Star.

"Eyewitnessing," in its use here, intends to capture this creative power of the seeing eye. "The eye too is constantly inclined toward sight," writes Schelling in the *Weltalter* (1811). "This can give rise to a true creation [*Schaffen*] of images outside of it,

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jede Leidenschaft, ohne jede Erregung, ohne jeden Gedanken, ohne jedes Wissen von etwas anderm oder von sich selbst...Es ist etwas so Unbegreifliches, dass man eine Religion darauf gründen könnte." Rosenzweig, *Der Mensch und sein Werke: Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. 1: *Briefe und Tagebücher* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1976), 47-48. See Braiterman's discussion in *Shape of Revelation*, 46.

[606] "…es kommt der Moment, wo das Auge kapituliert und nur noch den Gesamtschwall sieht. Das ist dann der entschiedene Sieg des Malerischen...Die künstlerische Absicht geht in erster Linie auf den faszinierenden Rhythmus einer flimmernden Gesamtbewegung. In *Logos: Internationale Zeitschrift für Philosophie der Kultur*, 4 (1913): 7. Cited in Adler, "Painterly Politics," 453, n. 13.

a way of focusing [*Zusammenziehen*] that is itself a kind of generation [*Zeugen*]."[607] Rosenzweig's "eyewitnesses" (*Augenzeugen*) to the miracle see with this kind of focused, generative vision. As do Tillich's disciples who stand before the Cross and, with the optical resolve imparted by it, continuously visualize its image. This study has explored a number of epistemic issues surrounding these revelatory gazes. In doing so, I have considered the creative power Tillich and Rosenzweig attribute to intuition primarily in a cognitive sense, specifically, with regard to intellectual intuition in absolute idealism, the correlation of intuition and productive imagination in romantic epistemology, and the active role of intuition in neo-Kantian theories of knowledge. Revelation's truth is given to be known by a form of seeing. And only within this form of seeing can its objectivity be affirmed.

However, the eye is not all form. The act of seeing is not mere cognition. The attentive gaze of faith is not only a speculative instrument. The eye is a member of the body. Eyes do not see. Whole bodies do. So through the eye the body may touch, and grasp, and cling to things, to pictures. [608] There is evidence of this in Rosenzweig's report on his viewing of Giorgione: after looking hard, the body must sit down. The eye needs an armchair to rest in.

For Tillich, the eyes of faith are founded in a "basic intuition" [*gründete Anschauung*] that actively decides for or against the fulfillment of the meaningful whole, a whole that encompasses the eye itself and every possible aspect of its existence. The eye that beholds revelation draws into itself the Christian's every active relation – to self,

[607] Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph von Schelling, *Die Weltalter. Fragmente. In Den Urfassungen von 1811 und 1813*, ed. Manfred Schröter (Munich: Biederstein Verlag und Leibniz Verlag, 1946). Translation: F. W. J. Schelling, *The Ages of the World*, trans. Joseph P. Lawrence (Albany: SUNY Press, 2019), 116.
[608] On "tactile looking" and the entwinement of vision with bodily touch see Margaret Olin, *Touching Photographs* (Chicago ; London: University of Chicago Press, 2012), 3.

other, church, and society – and draws them all toward the precise point of its pupil, with which it clings to the picture of the crucified Christ. The guiding purpose of Tillich's theology of culture is to generate a theonomous sketch or design [*Entwurf*] of culture, interrelating all its parts. This is an attempt to articulate the matrix through which the church may witness to the unconditioned. With the theologian's guidance, the church strives to become a theonomous "ecclesiola in ecclesia," i.e., a little church within the cultural community at large, a circle in which all of culture's "vital religious elements" are concentrated and deepened.[609] A member of a body of many parts. The Christian's vantage point on the picture of Christ lies within this ecclesial circle within the larger circle. The eye draws its energy from the Christian's involvement with every area of cultural activity and ultimately from that basic view, in which the eye takes a stance on the meaningfulness of cultural reality as such. The church's deep and concentered looking – its gazing in the picture of Christ, on all the spirits of culture – has the power to draw all of society toward a theonomous configuration, a theonomous way of being.

Similarly, Rosenzweig's vision permeates the whole body of Jewish life. The vision of the liturgy lifts the eye out of its mortal life into the firmament, where the Star shows itself as countenance, where cognition is fulfilled as re-cognition – but only to plunge the eye back again "into life." This ultimate "into life" is revealed to be, and to always have been, the ontological presupposition of every living moment and hour that preceded this moment of total vision. Thus, the perceiving eye that is fulfilled in the starry firmament draws its concentration and its steadiness from below, from the circulatory pathway of mortal existence eternally traversed by the Jewish people. In short,

[609] Tillich, "On the Idea," 38.

for both Tillich and Rosenzweig, the religious eye for revelation draws its perspicacity from the body. Vision must be *cast* by a whole form of life.

This is the force of *vertreten* – to represent, to stand in for – as a category of Rosenzweig's thinking, as Batnitsky has shown. In Rosenzweig's understanding of *vertreten* lived existence and representational knowledge are merged. Randi Rashkover has also discerned this fusion of the epistemic and the lived, ethical dimensions of religious life in Rosenzweig's thought. She considers the *Star* "a theology of testimony," that is, a theology that makes "ethical labor" the condition of possibility for the knowledge of God.[610]

Thus, for these thinkers, while witnessing [*Zeugenschaft*] may be a form of seeing that engenders figures of the truth, its figurative and perceptual power is not drawn from the cognitive region of spirit alone. It is drawn from the life and the body of religious existence, which, again, encompasses every aspect of being. The knowledge had in vision rests on the eye's patterns of looking. These patterns of looking are at once patterns of life, reciprocally ordering and ordered by the ethical and social bodies to which the seeing eye belongs.

It is also from this basis in life that the picture of revelation must draw its objectivity, validity, or its *credibility*. On this matter of credibility, and toward a conclusion, we may turn to an account of eyewitness testimony drawn from modern legal history. Andrea Frisch has distinguished between an "epistemic" and a "socio-ethical" notion of eyewitness testimony.[611] On the epistemic model, predominant in modernity,

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[610] Randi Rashkover, *Revelation and Theopolitics: Barth, Rosenzweig, and the Politics of Praise* (London: T&T Clark, 2005), 3.
[611] Andrea Frisch, *The Invention of the Eyewitness: Witnessing and Testimony in Early Modern France* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 38.

the credibility of eyewitness testimony rests on the witness's possession of some privileged, experiential knowledge. On the socio-ethical model, by contrast, predominant in early modern France – the setting of Frisch's research – credibility rests on the standing of the individual within an ethical community. On this socio-ethical model, "the 'verdicts' reached via testimony were not considered synonymous with objective knowledge about the facts under dispute."[612] The kind of eyewitnessing that concerns us here – the eyewitnessing of these pictures of revelation – certainly has epistemic significance, as we have been discussing. However, their criterion of validity rests nearer the socio-ethical ground of this earlier view of the eyewitness.

It is beyond the scope of this study to treat matters of politics and social ethics in full. However, it must be emphasized that, for both Tillich and Rosenzweig, religious life cannot be separated from the domain of political activity, nor can revelation be confined to the ecclesial domain. Tillich's ecclesial commitments do not conflict with his socialism. Rather, they go hand-in-hand. The ontological primacy that Rosenzweig assigns the Jewish people points toward a politics of redemption, which, for him, means nothing but the realization of God's reign of peace in every place and people. These eyes for revelation, then, stare deeply inward, into the soul and the community. However, what they see in these inward depths turns their gazes outward again, with new and ancient visions for fulfilling the biblical commandment to do justice and love mercy. Revelation is an act of power. The perception of its truth must also reside in acts of power.

Tillich and Rosenzweig, I have argued, stake the truth and objectivity of revelation on the recognition of the perceptual whole in which that truth is made to appear. The perceptual whole encompasses a whole way of life in relation, the same way

[612] Ibid.

of life from which the picture is projected. It may be that the picture's "objectivity" depends on the optical encompassment of the picture's presentational whole. However, the encompassing eye itself is encompassed by a living social body. Tillich and Rosenzweig construe this social body very differently, with regard to the interrelation of "church," "people," "community," "nation" and "society." However construed, the verification of the picture depends on its recognition in social, ethical, and political practice. This remains a cyclical kind of verification, outside of which there is no Archimedean point. However, it shifts the order of judgment from the purely rational to the practical domain.

For Tillich and Rosenzweig, the picture of revelation is lived into its truth. Its truth is made credible in the life of the picture.

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