William H. Poteat's Anthropology: "Mindbody in the World"

Polanyian Meditations: In Search of a Post-Critical Logic by William H. Poteat (Durham: Duke University Press, 1985).

A Philosophical Daybook: Post-Critical Investigations by William H. Poteat (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1990)

Recovering the Ground: Critical Exercises in Anamnēsis by William H. Poteat (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1994). The "Appendix" of this volume (187-221) is an earlier published essay by Poteat, "For Whom Is the Real Existence of Values a Problem: Or, An Attempt to Show That the Obvious is Plausible." This essay appeared first in *Mind, Values, and Culture: Essays in Memory of E.M. Adams* edited by David Weissbord, (Atascadero: Ridgeview Publishing Company, 1989).

"The Incarnate Word and the Language of Culture," in *The Christian Scholar, 37,* (March 1954), 113-30. Included in James M. Nickell and James W. Stines, eds., *The Primacy of Persons and the Language of Culture* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1993)-hereafter cited as *PP.* Pages 92-114.

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(Works cited in text by date.)

I. The Indeterminate Anthropological Center

> "If you place mystery at the center of existence, the rest will fall into place. However, if you place reason at the center, all will be chaotic." (Paraphrase, by unknown author; of G. K. Chesterton.)

In his "Prologue" to *Polanyian Meditations* (1985), William Poteat notes that it was his discovery in 1952 of some of Michael Polanyi's early philosophical writings that "accredited and greatly enriched the context within which initially to obey my own intimations." (6) This same year marked the beginning for Professor Poteat of now more than four decades, innumerable lectures, more than thirty articles or chapters, and three books in obedience to those intimations.' Polanyi's influence throughout is obvious, but it served primarily as a catalyst. Poteat's intimations were his own. From the

beginning Professor Poteat articulates a conceptual framework and addresses issues that extend his post-critical reflections well beyond the Polanyian corpus. Still, even his most original insights, by his own assessment, consistently retrotend (to use one of Poteat's seminal concepts) "deeply interiorized Polanyian motifs." (1985, *8)*

Although the general thrust of Poteat's works, like Polanyi's philosophical writings, is epistemological, one of his major contribu- tions is his articulation of an anthropology consistent with his post-critical epistemology. Having started with, and explored through his own conceptual categories, the Polanyian realization that all knowing is tacitly grounded, that is, radically tacit; he then asks what is the nature of this tacit radix? His underlying assumption, like Polanyi's, is that

> the structure of our way of *knowing* in the world reduplicates our way of *being* in the world-at least in the sense that an integral analysis of neither can be abstracted from time. (1985, *25)*

Therefore, a "theory of knowing must be inextricably implicated with a theory of being." (1981, *80)* It is significant that Stines and Nickell chose to entitle their edited collection representing the vast range of Poteat's scholarship *The Primacy of Persons....* Michael Polanyi suggests, in *Personal Knowledge,* that

> in order to express correctly this kinship of knowing and living, fields must be interpreted throughout biology...as fields of opportunity and of a striving directed towards this opportunity. Biological fields normally belong to a center to which both the opportunities and the strivings are attributable....These strivings...are [at the lower biological levels] neither *conscious* nor deliberate. By contrast to a field of forces operating in an inanimate system, a field of *biological* striving stands defined by the fact that we attribute its operations to *an active center.* [2] (Latter emphasis added.)

Polanyi describes the field of forces in inanimate matter as "intrinsic," relatively dispersed.

> At the vegetative level...individuality is still weak.... The [field center] of the individual becomes more pronounced with the rise of animal activities, and more marked still in the exercise of intelligence.'

It is at the level of human personhood that we find these tensive, field forces most consolidated and concentered, or individualized-where they have become conscious, deliberative, deliberate, and committal. At this level, Polanyi identifies the field center itself with human personhood.

Upon these insights Polanyi proceeds to develop his dynamic understanding of developmental hierarchy-not only phylogenetic (evolutionary) but ontogenetic, and not only *developmental* hierarchy but also a functional and ontological hierarchy; all of these hierarchies are contained within the Polanyian concept of "emergence": the appearance of higher life forms through a process not manifest in the lower levels. Poteat's insights are clearly beneficiary to these and other related rich Polanyian conceptual resources-for example, the concepts of boundary conditions and marginal control, tacit and explicit knowledge, interiorizing and indwelling, subsidiary and focal awareness, attending from and attending to, the proximal and the distal terms of knowing, heuristic intimation, and the fiducial aspect of knowing. Poteat does not, indeed, literally employ all of these same terms, but he incorporates their meaning to various degrees in his own, often more radical terminology and vision. For example, Polanyi's subsidiary-focal, from-to dynamic of knowing becomes Poteat's pretensive-retrotensive dynamic, grounded in memory but impelled and directed by imagination. Professor Poteat urges that if I am to recognize fully the radical nature of the world and its epistemological ground, my concentered mindbody, if I am to grasp the full dynamics of the pretensions and retrotensions of my mindbody in its transaction with the world," I must realize that these "intensions" (sometimes he uses the term "reflexions"), although derivatively manifest in my deliberate and conscious reflections, are grounded "well below the surface of reflective life, beyond the suasions of volition,... (1994, 26)

On this point, as on others, Poteat has no quarrel with Polanyi. He simply feels that his mentor "through the tacit logic informing [his] unwitting feats of conceptual innovation," (1981, 78) has said and implied radically more than he fully *knew* that he was saying::

> As radical in relation to the tradition of critical philosophy as is *Personal Knowledge,* taken on its face, I believe the "argument" that is implicated with its rhetoric-in the "logic" of its language, the vectors of the intentionalities of its metaphors-is even more archaic and therefore yet more potent. (1981, 75)

At only one point in all of his writings (on which I shall comment in Part II) does his thinking contradict what appears to be implicate *in* Polanyi's own thinking; and even there Poteat suggests that his thesis is not inconsistent with Polanyi's "obvious" and larger intentions. This is not to overlook a few other instances where, I shall indicate later, there are, in my judgment, implicit substantive differences and some significant differences in emphasis and focus between the two thinkers.

After interiorizing the concepts of both Polanyi and Poteat, it is easy to forget precisely where the former has left off and the latter takes off, so great is the continuity between them. However, in going back to the Polanyian works, it becomes clear that, however richly suggestive Polanyi's treatment is of the anthropological question, he does not go very far with it. Poteat takes it much farther, both extensively and intensively, by adding his own interpretive categories to Polanyi's. I am referring especially to Poteat's focus upon both temporality and corporeality as he conceptualizes both knowing and being. He subjects the Polanyian insights to interpretation and elaboration in terms of a paradigm-itself tacitly implicated by Polanyi's own rhetoric -that is derived from the essentially temporal logic of audition instead of the visually and spatially derived paradigm that has dominated some *2500* years of Western thinking. Consequently he is able to develop a holistic understanding of person that rejects the mind / body, "idealistic" / "materialistic" dualisms that have had an equally extended impact upon Western thinking, and most emphatically since the formalization of these in

the seventeenth century by Rene Descartes. Poteat's appreciation of etymological roots and derivations provides him with particular sensitivity to the temporal dimension of being and meaning and to the gradual loss of appreciation for this dimension with the ascendance of alphabetic literacy. By perceiving time as an inextricable part of the fabric of our spatial existence-not isolable, as Newton assumed-Poteat does to philosophical anthropology what Einstein did to physics. Taking "time"-actually, mindbodily tonicity-as his radical "constant," he interprets all else, even space ("It takes `time' to see." [1985, 61]), in terms of it. His refinement specifically of the corporeal dimension of self, similarly by temporalizing it (that is, by defining it in terms of tonicity), we shall treat shortly.

G. K. Chesterton observed that "one may understand the cosmos, but never the ego; the self is more distant than any star."[4] Poteat appears to agree with Chesterton when he (Poteat) acknowledges the seeming incongruity of his attempt "to grasp *in* reflection that which is itself the radix and provenance *of* reflection." (1994, 166) "The gestalt...laid down in the most primitive intentionalities of my mindbody [is] far beyond the reach of reflection." (1994, 170) In a more linguistic analysis of the elusiveness of the self, Poteat observes that

> "I% *for me is* elusive...for when I use "I" in order to say something about myself at one logical level, there is the fact of my activity of saying this about myself at another logical level yet to be reported. (1960, 174-75)

And:

> "Mindbody" is not an ordinary concept...since it always makes reference to the antecedent of *all* concepts, that which devises and interprets the use and application of all concepts. [5]

As a thinking, reflecting being attempting to articulate his insights to other thinking, reflecting beings, Poteat must rely on concepts. Yet, the ground to which he would point us is preconceptual. Therefore, "the user of language can...never be objectified in language.... He is only found `behind' the language *just now being used."* (1954, 105-

106) Therefore, actually, this mindbodily" 'ground'...is *not* a ground but rather the systematically elusive background that is our primordial dwelling in time and space."[6] However, changing his perspectival imagery further, from "background," to "ground," and then "foreground," Poteat suggests that "as the ground of the meaning and the intentionality of my asseverations, my mindbody is in the foreground, too close at hand readily to be perceived." (1994, 138) Therefore, in a very real sense, *not* more distant than any star. He warns that "so far as reflection from out of our mindbodies seeks itself as an object among objects, it will fail to find itself." (1994, 147) But he also assures us, with a twist on the Augustinian phrase that perhaps suggests a divine dimension to our definitive grounding, that properly, preconceptually sensed, our mindbodies are "closer to us than we are to ourselves," that is, presumably, ourselves "objectively" perceived. (1994, *xiii,* 44)

Fully aware of the obstacles and dangers in the path of self-reflexion, Poteat sets for himself this highly introspective task. Whereas Plato would have us look reflectively and aggressively outward and upward to find and, hopefully, define the *arche,* the originating and ordering principle of being and knowing, the thrust of Poteat's thought is always to turn us backward and inward into ourselves, penetrating into the archaic center of our prereflective and tacit existence, the epistemological "pineal gland" (not literal, or Cartesian, of course) of our primal consciousness, there yielding obediently and humbly to the reflexive rhythms and subtle intimations of our sentient, motile, and oriented (intentional) mindbodies.

> My acts of seeking, coming to know, accrediting, holding, and upholding my knowledge in the world...are reflections of, that is to say, they are "back-upon-bendings" or "inwardcurvings toward" my hitherto unreflected acts of living-in-the-world. (1981, *80)*

One might argue that the Platonic exercise in *anamnēsis is* essentially introspective. However, Plato's imagery for this noetic excursion is usually beyond the self an upward and outward climb from the Cave, in the *Republic;* a movement up and away from the

incarnate world to a discarnate realm of the Agathon in his myth of the Divided Line, also in the *Republic;* the charioteer's ascension to the outer spheres of the universe as the discarnate soul seeks the vision of Truth that provides for the possibility of *anamnēsis,* in the *Phaedrus.* Certainly it was Plato's aversion toward the corporeal that played a large part in deterring him from locating the ordering principle of reason within the *psyche,* as embrangled as it was in temporal corporeality. Also, as long as Reality itself could be conceptualized only in terms of spatiality, the direction of the noetic quest, like the dominant metaphor of Western (and Greek) language, was destined to be represented in terms of extension as opposed to intension.

William Poteat candidly acknowledges, indeed, enthusiastically embraces his radical challenge to "the regnant view." (1981, 78) His very style of writing in both A *Philosophical Daybook* (1990) and *Recovering the Ground* (1994) has been regarded by most, with considerable puzzlement, as no less radical. However, his revolutionary and radically introspective task justifies, indeed, recommends, his "daybook" style of reflection. The objectifying and abstracting culture and traditions of alphabetic and linear literacy that constantly intrude upon such incursive reflexion, require the temporal-spatial orientation, concreteness, and repeated beginning of this style. And, despite the inherently static, atemporal, and abstracting proclivities of his medium-the printed word, ironically, it at least offers, better than oral/aural discourse, even if it does not incorporate it as well, the *time* the reader requires if the interiorization and assimilation (indwelling) needed for real reflexion / reflection are to occur.

Despite the inherent elusiveness of our task, Poteat advises that, if we indwell our mindbodies, we can "know" them as at [our] backs"...just as "dualism is healed by being shown to be derivative of the bedrock pretensions and retrotensions of our convivial mindbodily being." (1994, 116) Sometimes, by indwelling that which we can directly experience-such as our heartbeats, our remembering, and our imagining-we get a sense of the primitive, prereflective intentionalities that constitute our mindbodies. It is

the *reconciling* of the two "parts" of a dualism-not the elimination or ontological demotion of either "part"-that brings us closer to truth, to reality, and to ourselves. The healing, or reconciling, of the dualisms, like the "knowing" of our primal selves, or mindbodies, is simple, we are told, because it merely requires us to do what we always-and quite naturally-do: indwell. But to *say* what we thereby come to "know" is quite a different and more difficult matter. We must struggle, through a process that Poteat alludes to as "reflexive phenomenology" (1990, *82),* to bring the unreflected and tacit to the level of focal and explicit reflection. But much of the unreflected is unreflectable, unexplicitable. And even that which profitably lends itself to differentiated reflection risks being torn from its meaning- and life-giving prereflective and undifferentiated roots. Therefore, Poteat warns that while

> the radical truth about our being in the world is...simple,...it is not simply said; since it can be said at all only by means of a feat of estrangement from that [truthful] simplicity. (1985, *22)*

Professor Poteat tries to assure us that our world-creations that are reflections, therefore relative abstractions, are no less real than the prereflective concretions from which they derive-only *derivative* realities. Even the static,"dead slice," second-order representations of space and time that Poteat spends so much time warning that we not take as exhaustive of our understanding of temporality, better-tonicity, appear to have their proper place in our "world creating." Although "derivative" and "not as radical as that from which they derive...the primordial [mindbodily place and time] whence all times and places are pretended, that every time and place retrotends," these reflected, abstracted times and places are no less real. (1990, 68) The crucial condition that gives these derived concepts reality, or authenticity, is our *awareness* of their derivative, therefore "second-order," nature. Within this perspective they can serve us well in our "quotidian doings and sayings."

Similarly, in his effort to avoid the shoals of philosophical idealism, Poteat stresses the primal homogeneity of an undifferentiated mindbody. Still, the "mind" (or "body" or "world") of the

differentiated, abstracted self, while derivative-both etiologically (that is, in terms of ontogenetic and phylogenetic evolution) and ontologically (that is, in terms of its abstraction and differentiation from a more concrete and undifferentiated mindbody)-is also claimed to be fully real. We must ask, first: *Can* one, without contradiction, simultaneously assign something an ontologically derivative status and still claim for it equal, therefore implicitly commensurable, reality with that from which it is derived? Second: Can one assign *full reality* to both terms of an assuaged but still differentiated dualism while maintaining-as, clearly, Poteat intends to do-an ontological hierarchy, whether among levels of motile and/or sentient being or among our mindbodily world-creations? Or does this conflict with Polanyi's understanding of either reality (an entity's "independence and power for manifesting itself in yet unthought of ways in the future") or ontological hierarchy, according to which "minds and problems possess a deeper reality than cobblestones"?'

It is a sign of Professor Poteat's successful struggle with the first problem that we can detect some significant evolution of terminology over the forty year course of his writing, particularly in regard to anthropological definition. There seems to be a gradual movement from an almost exclusively "carnal" depiction of self to-beginning about halfway through that period-the more balanced image of "mindbody." Throughout the 1950s and the 1960s, Poteat's analysis of the dynamically conceived primal self was largely in terms of the existential-linguistic implications of the personal pronoun "I", referring to the "logically extended concept I" and the "private self," but he also made frequent reference to the self as "body," "body-in-the-world," "being-in-our-own-bodies-in-the-world," and "carnal being"; in the late 1960s the less explicitly visceral "ground-meaning" and "ground being"; then, in the early 1970s, "concrete knower" and "human heart." We can find some precedence for Poteat's profoundly carnal challenge to discarnate Cartesianism in Polanyi's frequent references to brain physiology; for example, Polanyi's statement *in The Tacit Dimension:* "We may venture...to extend the scope of tacit knowing to include [as one among numerous phenom-

ena] neural traces in the cortex of the nervous system." (15) (In similar fashion, Poteat later tells us that, for him "knowing [is] not one but many sorts of things." [1981, 80]) However suggestive Polanyi's extension of "knowing" to include observable, physiological, electro-chemical "traces" for a carnal depiction of self, he seems to have resisted translating his epistemological leap ("venture") into a corresponding anthropological leap. Poteat, most explicitly in the early period, makes this leap -at least terminologically: he quite readily refers to not just one dimension of the differentiated self, but to the undifferentiated self, the primal core or ground of selfhood; simply as "carnal being" or "body."

In so far as I can determine from surveying Professor Poteat's writings, it was not until 1973 ("Moustakas Within His Ambience") that he uses the term "mindbody" (also "psycho-somata") to refer to the primal self. This term, together with "mindbody in the world," and, perhaps the most frequently reiterated of all his phrases, the "sentient, motile, and oriented mindbody," sometimes including among these adjectives "tonic"or "intentional" and often completed by "...in the world," promptly permeates his writing, including all three of his books, from thereon. Where the more exclusively carnal imagery reappears, it tends to come with a caveat. For example, in 1974 he reminds the reader that "body," as he uses the term, has no extension: "Even my `body' as *my* `body' is not in space." (1974, 33) "Body," rather, is the paradigmatic, primordial place, the *whence* from which all orientation derives. (We shall examine this concept later.) When-writing in 1992-he presses to our most primal experience of the tensionality of our mindbodies, he points to the experiencing of our heartbeat (and even before that, our mother's "beating heart rhythmically [pumping] the blood of life through [our] foetal bodies"). (1973, 275; 1981, 87) Even to apprehend our heartbeat as *a beat,* he reminds us, means attributing to our "flesh" a preconscious "imagining" and "remembering" in the form of its autonomic pretensions and retrotensions.

> At this remove from ordinary awareness it is *my flesh* that imagines; my *flesh* that remembers-not "flesh" as this is

> mediated through the categories of gross anatomy, physiology, molecular biology, but flesh as this appears unmediated in the tonality of my living mindbody. (1994, 169-70) (Emphases are Poteat's.)

And, of course, he has made it clear that this "carnal" "imagining" and "remembering" is not in the commonsense and derived (mediated) understanding that we have of these latter two terms.

It finally becomes evident to the reader that Poteat has loaded his terminology, from both ends ("mental" as well as "physical"), to its metaphorical limits; and that the earlier, less refined, more carnal terminology, "loaded" perhaps to excess, carried the same intent. In 1974, he offered another of his all-important (although in a footnote) caveats:

> It should go without saying that..."body" as the ground of the primordial sense of space has, as well, a primordial sense not to be assimilated to any derived sense. (1974, 30, footnote 8)

Poteat's "It should go without saying..." certainly underscores the fact that he has held this assumption all along. Further, his existentially probing treatment of the pronoun "I" and of "person" makes this assumption, indeed, obvious. But now more comfortably subsumed under the dominating metaphor of "mindbody," the same words-"body," "carnal being," etc.-are less jarring and less groping because of their more explicit reference, as we noted in his treatment of temporality, to a reconciled dualism.

By the time of publication of his first book, in 1985 *(Polanyian Meditations),* the concept of "body," in its assumed, underived, primordial sense, had virtually yielded to the concept of"mindbody," in its only, but identical-that is, underived, primordial-sense. Perhaps feeling that by now he had laid to rest in the minds of his readers any tendency to perceive "mind" in terms of abstracted Cartesian-or other-idealism, he suggests functional considerations, perhaps not totally dissimilar from those that motivated his earlier retention of both "body" and "mindbody," that would seem to justify his currently retaining both "mindbody" and "mind,"

although his use of quotation marks around only the latter term indicates that. "mind," while rooted in the primordial mindbody, is nevertheless derived..

> `Beliefs "valuations" "assumptions", "premises" are "held" not merely by the "mind", whether reflected or reflectable, but also by the mindbody an assumption in the mindbody...is neither explicit nor, strictly, explicitable, and one in the "mind'...maybe explicit but is certainly explicitable. (1985, *32)*

Through his numerous; essays and books, down to his most recent *(Recovering the Ground,* 1994), Poteat. has taken us far back-or inward-in our search not only for primal origins but for a current archaic core or center of our sentience. He speaks in the familiar terms of "memory" and "imagination." But at one point in our "back-upon-bendings" and "inwardcurvings" we realize that it is no longer mind (as we commonly understand this term in its derived sense) but "flesh" (in its underived, mindbodily sense) that imagines and remembers. Indeed, it is not precisely even remembering and imagining, at least in their familiar (derived) sense, that we experience at this primal-archaic level of our sentience / being,, but something more accurately and less derivatively expressed in terms of "retrotension" and "pretension."

Just as at some point in our "back-upon-bendings" our familiar sense of imagination and memory becomes submerged in the less differentiated, pre-critical tensionalities of mindbody, similarly not only these but even what we have differentiated as "will" finds its radix in heartbeats and mindbodily rhythms. At this very center of our being we suddenly realize, as indeed Professor Poteat cautions us, that not only are differentiations and dualisms blurred but also essential human qualities are lost. To assume that we are still speaking of human beings when we have reduced life to visceral tonicity, ,or that we can refer meaningfully to thinking or willing in categories of mere tensionality, is to fall into various of the reductionist fallacies of the modern period. Therefore, even though Poteat finds "flesh" terminologically more appropriate than "mind" while referring to this archaic center, he cautions that it is not the "flesh"

of the physiologists and microbiologists, and that retrotension and pretension must not be totally dissociated from a sense of recollection in memory or imagination. While he warns about the dangers of taking our familiar anthropological and epistemological differentiations at their face value, thereby losing sight of their derivative, abstracted, "second-order" nature, he at the same time cautions against totally abandoning them, even our mind/body dualism, at least in its reconciled-that is, consciously derivative-"mindbody" form.[8] Even the archaic center, which provides the proximal ground and therefore meaning of our distal focus; depends for *its* full meaning upon our perceiving the continuity that exists between it and the evolved, derivative, and more differentiated whole. His rationale for assigning full reality to the ontologically derivative now becomes more apparent and compelling. (We shall pursue this further in Part II.)

To sum up, it must be said that in applying our predominantly Cartesian-and only vocabulary to uncover and recover its pre-Cartesian' roots in the pre-articulate sinews of our mindbodies, Professor Poteat has succeeded admirably' and with exceptional eloquence. He has thereby effectively challenged not only materialistic reductionism but also the discarnate rationalistic and alphabetic assumptions of both Cartesian idealism and Platonic logocentrism (to borrow from Derrida). However, his assumption that ontological hierarchy can be maintained while assigning full, or equal, reality to *both* the archaic and the more ontologically "evolved" and differentiated manifestations of our knowing and being will require further examination.

II. The Protensive "Radius"

> "Consciousness.. requires...a center and periphery that are dialectically...in pretensive and retrotensive communion with each other." (1990, 79)

Michael Polanyi, in *Personal Knowledge,* observes that active centers characterize all forms of animal life: from the greatest man down

to the lowest animal "we find a continuous series of centers whose a-critical decisions account ultimately for every action of sentient individuality." *(397)* Indeed, he suggests, as we observed earlier, that all "biotic achievements are those of an active center" *(402)* and that "the emergence of man and of the thoughts of man...reflects the gradual rise [through the evolutionary hierarchy] of autonomous centers of decision." *(403)* Although vegetative life participates in a "primordial" level of "commitment," and lower animal life in "primitive commitment," it is only at the highest-human-level that commitment, being-as we have noted-both fully conscious and deliberative, is "responsible." *(363)* However, the autonomous striving of active centers at all levels of biological existence "towards an unspecifiable achievement,... [each center] seeking satisfaction in the light of its own standards" *(398),* occurs within "biological fields"-at the human level, "heuristic fields"-defined by the directionality, or intentionality (Poteat: "pretensionality") of the striving. (404)

Professor Poteat, like Polanyi, begins with the observation that all sentient life evidences, in various degrees of sophistication and evolution, an irresistible effort to detect and embody some kind of ordering principle, *arche, or* meaning in its being in the world. In all sentient life there appears to be a primal prejudice toward coherence, the "hanging togetherness of things." In this sense, Poteat suggests, sentient life at its radix is "axiologically determined-that is, through and through ingenuously disposed toward value." (1990, 113) However, this is manifested not only in meaning seeking but also in a prior meaning discernment. There is a prereflectively *given* sense of value *so* that, even at the level of human sentience

> form, wholeness, meaning, hence organism are the very modalities of my being in the world long before I have words or concepts to embody, therefore, reflectively to know of these. *(1985,* 186)

This primal orientation or sense of value is "in principle" beyond all doubt-unless, of course, my consciousness has been estranged, by

abstraction, from its primal roots. Even at the lowest level of life, the vegetative, we can detect in its most archaic form such a "given" orienting or ordering of life in its "commitment" to function and growth. Poteat's and Polanyi's terminologies coincide here. At the sentient level we observe the emergence of an "active-perceptive center" capable of appraisal, or meaning. For example, Polanyi tells us that

> a floating amoeba will emit pseudopods in all directions until...when one of the pseudopods touches solid ground, all the others are drawn in and the whole mass of protoplasm is sent floating toward the new point of anchorage.'

Our very recognition of the amoeba-indeed, of any organism or any individual whole-occurs only because we have been able to submerge our awareness of its "molecular" parts (whether at the level, for example, of its individual chemical components or its individual pseudopods) to a subsidiary awareness and to perceive focally their "higher," comprehensive, or "molar," function or achievement-in the case of the amoeba, a directional motility. Whatever the other functions of the organism or individual are at the level of *human* being and knowing, Polanyi suggests that the moral function is the highest and, being a comprehensive, or holistic, function, it is not reducible to, or specifiable in terms of, molecular particulars. That is, in fact, *why* it is recognized as a higher function and why the human being is recognized as a higher form of being.

> We can reach this conclusion directly by recalling that the understanding of a whole appreciates the coherence of its subject matter and thus acknowledges the existence of a value that is absent from the constituent particulars.'°

For Poteat, as for Polanyi, at the level of intelligence, appraisal- or commitment-is made by a "consciously deliberative center, which-in its highest, or human, expression-can be assigned responsibility. In other words, the prereflective givenness of a sense of value, at the human level of sentience, does not constitute commitment. Nor does it preclude the ongoing task of meaning

discernment and meaning giving. Indeed, commitment is meaningless apart from my reflective explicitation or, to use Poteat's terms, my "bodying forth" "asseverations" and my subsequent "standing behind," these asseverations before others in the context of a specific time and specific place and specific circumstances. But the "standing behind" or commitment transcends even the meaning of my words: *That I* have authored (am authoring) and have endorsed [my] words is not assimilable to the logical grammar of *what* I have said."[11] Both Polanyi and Poteat insist that it is only through this act of world-transcending, willful commitment, at this level, or mode, of moral existence, that I become "I", that is, a person. But this subject will have to await further treatment in the latter part of this essay.

The point to be made at present in regard to the phylogenetic levels of existence-from the vegetative to the (merely) sentient (as in the case of the amoeba), to the intelligent, and the moral (in the human person)-is that at the highest level, that of human existence, *all* the levels of being and knowing are inextricably co-present, not only ontogenetically but at every given moment. As Polanyi states it in regard to human knowing, all explicit thought, even in its most formal expression, is tacitly grounded. However, the way in which we express ourselves verbally is not totally predicable in terms of the "rules" or principles of this grounding because of what Polanyi calls an openness of their "boundary conditions." Even though the way in which we employ our words, etymologically grounded as they are in a rich and largely tacit heritage of meanings, is to some degree constrained by this heritage-much as the physical and chemical principles of steel constrain the uses to which it can be put-still there is a range of applications or constructions (an openness of boundary conditions), whether defined in terms of the science of mechanical engineering or the syntactics of good writing, to which these "lower level" principles, whether semantic or physical, can be made to submit. Although higher levels of organization-e.g., biological, mechanical, linguistic-must respect the laws or principles operative at the lower levels, it is the principles of the higher levels that hierarchically organize and control (Polanyi: "marginally control") the particulars of the lower levels and thereby permit more

comprehensive and qualitatively higher levels of being and knowing. Poteat, utilizing such seminal Polanyian concepts as "open boundary conditions" and the "principle of marginal control," represents the complex and dynamic integration of the diverse levels of the human mindbody.

> I cannot explicitly say what it is to be a self (person) because it is always an integration of the particulars of my body-in-the-world with (from the natural standpoint) its many different levels of reality and the principles governing the integration of each level through the determination of the boundary conditions left open by the principles...at the next lower level. Also, it is an integration of all my skills....And finally, it is the integration of all these to anticipatory, heuristic powers.... (1968, 47, footnote 4)

In as much as human *being* is inseparable from human *knowing* (this distinction itself an abstract, alphabetic dualism), the self is epistemologically and ontologically (again, an abstracted distinction) hierarchical. Therefore, "my language is continuous with gesture, as gesture is continuous with [prereflective] sentience and orientation." (1990, 111) And our gestures, our elaborate musical or graphic art forms, our language, and even our most intricate mathematical theories not only have their primal origins but derive their present meanings from "the sinews of our bodies which had them first." (1994, 173)

At least by the time that life reaches the stage of animal existence and sentience, the vital meaning-discerning center of life, that is, mindbody, has-better: is-in addition to orientation, what Poteat characterizes as "tonicity" and "motility." All three of these characterizations require a conceptualizing of mindbody as *distended* in *time.* However, as we have become aware of by now in reading Poteat, these last two (underscored) terms-like virtually all of his key terms-although inevitably the product of alphabetic literacy and loaded with discarnate post-Cartesian colorations, must not be interpreted in their conventional, second-order, alphabetically abstracted meanings. Distention does not mean extension, and time

does not mean duration. In other words, Poteat's conception of mindbody involves neither spatial nor temporal extension.

Mindbody distention-like temporality, a precondition of tonicity, according to Poteat-turns out to be characterized, as we have seen in the case of mindbodily temporality, precisely *in terms of* tonicity. We have apparently reached semantic bedrock in our depiction of the mindbody as "tonic," "tensional." The distended mindbody, we are told to think of as "infinitely dense," with no extension, like a cosmic "black hole." (My term, not Poteat's.) And the temporality of mindbody is similarly perceived by Poteat as "infinitely compacted"-past and future contemporaneous "within" the present, or co-present. The mindbody, although explicitable only in dimensional terms (that is, metaphorically), at its infinitely compacted, existential primal core (that is, properly, or qualitatively, perceived) loses all dimensionality, becomes a point without extension. Its tonicity-again, not a characteristic that the mindbody *has,* but what it is-is best described in the dynamic concepts of latency, potency, energy, intentionality, protension. Indeed, our sense of `intending," "stretching forth," "reaching out," we are told, are paradigmatically "given" in our prereflective mindbodies. Further:

> Because of [its] *pretensions* there is *a not-yet* that is nevertheless contemporaneous with *now;* and because of [its] *retrotensions* there is *a no-longer* that is similarly contemporaneous with *now.* (1990, 106)[12]

By derivative (because temporally extended, not distended) analogy, we gain a sense of this in the experiencing of a melody through the co-presence, or contemporaniety, of the individual notes that comprise the melody by pretending and retrotending each other in our remembering and imagining as, for example, in the notational sequence of E, G, and C, the note G (that is, our hearing of it) pretends C, as it retrotends E, and E pretends Gas it retrotends what precedes it, etc. The co-presence in time of these notes, as among words in a sentence, according to Poteat, is precisely the worldly, palpable retrotensive/pretensive *bond* among them, the intractable, irresistible *dynamism* of these tensional forces.

But, having denied that our mindbodies can be characterized in terms of spatial or temporal extension, Poteat now insists that mindbody "does not exist in an instant," just as the notes in a melody, in their co-presence, are not simultaneously sounded or heard; and, further, that mindbody, by virtue of its tensionality, is the paradigmatic case not only of time but also of space-better termed "place" to distinguish it from its derivative abstraction. "...I take my stand in space expressions affiliated with my immediate sense of having a place-visual, audial, tactile, proprioceptive-in the world." (1985, 268) Even though we speak in terms of distention, we cannot (and should not) dissociate ourselves completely from second-order concepts of time and space. However, when we use these terms, we should do so self-consciously-that is, with caution and metaphorically, substituting new terminology-such as "tensionality" or "place"-when this serves metaphorically or otherwise to remind us of, and thereby ameliorate, our linguistic limitations. Still, even as we grope here for more adequate terminology, we sense that we have approached the inevitable point of semantic overload. (Poteat refers to this as the "surplus of meaning" that characterizes language as acknowledged in metaphor, especially as we engage in reflexive contemplation. And, *a fortiori,* when we speak in the declensional first person: " though accessible for use by every speaker of English, is not a token assimilable without remainder into the logical grammar of our language."[13]) Poteat's intention is clear: "I" can never exhaustively explicate what "I" is; my mindbodily self can only "show itself." In as much as the mindbody is tensional, that is, meaning discerning and meaning giving, its reflective explicitation-to the limited extent that it is explicitable-can only be in terms of narrative, that is, in the context of a living history, both my own and the world's. And, again because of the mindbody's axiological, meaning-discerning and meaning-giving nature, it can be understood only in reference to "where" it is "at home"-that is, in the context of that part of the world, those places, objects, and events upon which its has (I have) left its (my) imprint and which most closely comport with, reflect, embody, its prereflective, archaic sense of meaning.

Poteat illustrates his understanding of mindbody-the *whence* from which all orientation derives-by suggesting that we imagine ourselves to be in the midst of a typically aesthetically and architecturally arid shopping mall, one that is a replica of virtually every other shopping mall we have visited.

> Struck by the radical substitutability of this mall, by its...utter abstractness, I for an instant become an abstraction, no longer myself the paradigm place from which all my efferent pretensions arise, to which all my afferent retrotensions refer. I am become a spatial entity in infinite space...deplaced. (1994, 78)

Like mindbodily time, which-to be commensurable with the dynamic tensionality of the mindbody-must itself be conceived in terms more dynamic than those of static endurance, our mindbodily place cannot be understood as a mere abstract spatial intersection of vectors.

> It *is...the archaic place* from "within" which all my *acts of* placing-both gestural and spoken-proceed....It is *awhereon-to-stand* from which you and I...jointly make our mindbodily appearance with one another in our mutual world. Place is a *provenience [* in the sense of place of origin]...in virtue ofwhich I am oriented from within my mindbody.:.. It is "within" this oriented *whence* that primordial spatiality lies....All the forms of spatiality within which our conjoint sensory world appears are derived from this archaic provenance of our...mindbodies. Space presupposes place: reflected spaces presuppose antepredicative, unreflectable places. (1985, 271)

If my meaning-discerning, archaic mindbodily center does not find the meaning it seeks in its worldly surroundings, that is, in a convivial environment that represents a qualitatively commensurable continuitywith the innermost provenance of my mindbody; its retrotensive and pretensive activity is deprived of a meaningful and supportive environment and my protensive mindbody itself withers. In the midst of the abstract environment of the shopping mall that Poteat has depicted, I may know perfectly well, spatially, where I am. But,

devoid of an environment that permits my relating to it in a dynamically and protensively meaningful way, I myself become an abstraction, mindbodily deprived of the reflective / reflexive tonicity and sentience that gives me substance-better: *life.* Recent studies pointing to the enhancement of learning capacities in children who, in their earliest months, experienced visually, auditorially, and tactilely rich environments, provide further evidence in support of Poteat's observations.

Inevitably having to rely upon, a vocabulary conceptually representative of our second-order spatial-temporal dimensionality, we find that the most elucidative concepts or images are those that are most reflective of their grounding in the mindbody's dynamic activity of retrotending its prereflective center and pretensively projecting outwardly as its "world" the meanings thus derived. The image of a circle, or sphere, with its center and circumference, or periphery, immediately suggests itself. "Consciousness," Poteat suggests, "requires at any given moment a center and periphery that are dialectically...in pretensive and retrotensive communion with each other." (1990, 79) We indicated earlier that the primal, axiologically radical mindbody cannot be objectified. Ultimately this prereflective "radix of all meaning and meaning discernment" can only be experienced directly in the act of indwelling and referred to, indirectly, through those "objects" or events in the world that the self distinguishes in terms of its previously inexplicit, sometimes inexplicitable, mindbodily motifs. We are reminded of the Polanyian insight that the meanings we indwell subsidiarily tend to be "displaced away from ourselves,"[14] that is, "objectified" and externalized, as the sensations in the palm of my hand are experienced in terms of the world that presents itself at the end of my probe. Or Polanyi's suggestion that we can know the particulars in which we dwell with tacit awareness only through the joint meaning that is achieved by their convergence as we direct our attention from, or through, them to the more comprehensive object on which we focus. At our primal core, Poteat reminds us, there is no separation between fact and value. The articulation, or "bodying forth," of our mindbodily meanings confers facticity-in a sense, involves us in

"creating" a world-"outside" our prereflective, undifferentiated mindbodily centers. Conscious reflection, in other words, presents us with a sense of "other," a world over against the self.

There is nothing "illicit," Poteat assures us, about this conceptual dualism, even though it is an abstraction from the more immediate, prereflectively "given" and therefore less differentiated (from the reflective perspective, undifferentiated) pretensions of the archaic mindbody. "Licit" in the sense that even a conscious reflective "knowing" of the mindbody as it situates itself in a larger "world" need not estrange itself from its prereflective center. Consciousness, whether "licit" or "illicit," requires at each moment a continuing shifting between retrotensive and pretensive awarenesses; between, respectively, the mindbodily grounding center and that which it focally apprehends on the pretensive periphery. (Of course, our examination of the concepts of both co-presence and indwelling suggested that this process is not only sequential but that our reflections can be-in fact, invariably are also-simultaneously pretensive and retrotensive. [1994, 51] As Poteat states this latter point: "As we pretend our focus *distally,* the *proximal ground* of this pretension is retrotended." [1994, xv]) But as the distance increases between center and periphery, and the protensive "radius" becomes stretched to the extent that the "world" at the periphery loses contact with its primal meaning-seeking and meaning-conferring logos (we might say that, at this point, it has become qualitatively, or axiologically, "decontextualized") and thus deprived of its vitality, the world thus abstracted becomes static, dead-merely quantified and extended space and time.

My first parenthetical comment in the previous paragraph suggests that there are indications in Poteat's thought that when he refers to the tacit, or prereflective, level of awareness as "undifferentiated," he intends *a relative* distinction; and that the protensive dynamic he finds in all levels of life, even in the orienting and growth-directing functions of vegetative life, precludes the stasis that would accompany an absolutely undifferentiated state of existence. Both he and Polanyi have clearly stated that life is inherently ontologically hierarchical. Even the single-celled protozoan exists as

a life form because of a complex juxtaposition of molecular, chemical, and organic principles in dynamic and supportive relation to each other through a hierarchy of boundary conditions. And where there is hierarchy, there is differentiation. All the more so in the case of the human mindbody, even at its prereflective radix. "My being," Poteat reminds us again, is marked by a pretensive / retrotensive cadence "far below the level of ordinary awareness." (1994, 168-69) And he describes our tacit "knowing" in terms of "archaic and usually unreflected hierarchies." (1985, 193) He vividly reflects upon his own process of bringing words into existence: there is a sense of incipient, tacit differentiation just prior to their emergence into articulated differentiation. Even though the mindbody is generally depicted as the "whence" of the protensive dialectic, not its explicit focus-that is, the "arena" of prereflective indwelling, Poteat curiously alludes to the mindbody's "prereflective apprehending of itself' by "attending to" itself. (1985, 221) What this seems to suggest is that even our act of indwelling is experienced as a prereflective but nevertheless protensive dialectic and therefore involves the degree of differentiation required for a tacit, prearticulate orientation or "focusing," that is both primal and paradigmatic relative to what we experience in our abstracted reflection.

It is always the concrete "undifferentiated," prereflective and retrotended pole of our protensive dialectic that is paradigmatic, in Poteat's thinking, for our abstracted, "differentiated," pretensive reflections. "Formalized rationality derives from and remains parasitical upon [our] `sense making'," ...our prereflective intimations of a " `hanging togetherness'," (1985, 9)...of " `rules of procedure' and "substantial beliefs about the nature of things'," (1985, 12) of which we can be certain, (1968, 46-47) but

> which we cannot or at least do not [reflectively, explicitly] know and, in any case, may not, cannot, need not know prior to the beginning of an inquiry. (1985, 12)

Interestingly, this latter observation, that we cannot know our primal beliefs *prior* to the course of our reflection, leaves open the question of what effect the reflective process may have upon the character and

quality of our prereflective intimations.

There is no question that at our most inner core, at that dimensionless point of "infinite density" of our being and knowing, our awareness can only be in its fullest state of prereflective, undifferentiated concretion. But even the dichotomy suggested by "prereflective" versus "reflective" belies the underlying continuity of sentience. Poteat acknowledges this by occasionally substituting for "prereflection" and "reflection" the common term "knowing" and placing that word within quotation marks only when alluding to prereflection. The distinction between, or among, the mindbody's levels of awareness is better represented in terms of a gradient than in terms of boundaries.

However, as we indicated earlier in addressing the problem of dualisms, in reflective thought we inevitably find that we cannot avoid thinking and speaking in conceptual differentiations, dualistic or other. To recognize the temporal dynamic of mindbody, we find that conceptualizing this dynamic in terms of a dialectic, in the terminology of "pretension" and "retrotension," is helpful. And these latter terms invariably point us to that which we pretend, or imagine, (the "object" of our focus) and that which we retrotend, or indwell. Therefore the terminology of "boundaries" can also be useful, as long as we remind ourselves of its abstraction from the more fundamental continuum of all awareness. (Note: In designating the mindbody's pretensive "reach," I shall use the terms "boundary," "periphery," and "circumference" interchangeably, although Poteat generally employs, for this purpose, the term "horizon"-perhaps to distinguish this from Polanyi's use of "boundary" to designate different levels of ontological / epistemological hierarchy.) To think is to abstract. And, at the human level of our mindbodily existence, it is merely an extension of the mindbody's innate attempt to find coherence and meaning, to seek a reality commensurate with the "given" order that is its most inner, archaic being. Professor Poteat tells us that

> only when our usual devices do not issue in that coherence demanded by our intentional mindbodies in the world...do we

adopt a more reflective mode. (1994, 191)

In strictly vegetative forms of life, the protensive energies-limited as they are to anticipating and reacting to the needs of growth and the functions of self-maintenance-are easily confined within the closely drawn "boundaries" of a prereflective organism. In low-level sentient animal systems, the added demands of motility are similarly easily met by the prereflective mode of knowing and being. But at the human level of existence, the universal quest for coherence is not so easily met. It appears that the task of bringing coherence and meaning to a "world" greatly enlarged and complicated by man's expanded prereflective awareness requires the extension of his / her protensive energies beyond their prereflective radius. Evolving consciousness, with its increasing reflexive sense of its own protensive activity, becomes increasingly aware, in its prereflective dialectic, of what was mathematically demonstrated by G~del regarding our most formally abstracted reflections: namely, that neither the coherence of our thought nor the meaning / rationale for its fundamental orienting principles can be reflectively grasped (even when sensed primordially) without advancing to a higher and more encompassing mode of thought. But long before we arrived at the highly abstracted mode represented by mathematics, the human quest for meaning had reached the limits-run up against the boundary conditions-of the prereflective mode. To the human intellect it is apparent that the "given" prereflective sense (what Poteat, in the previous quotation, refers to as "our usual devices") of "hanging togetherness" does not suffice, and reflection must complement it.

Reflection, whether cognitive or aesthetic, does not *supplant* the tacit, prereflective process, but carries it further. Both the recognition and the resolution of incoherence remain rooted in the prereflective mindbody. Underscoring this, Poteat reclaims from our post-Cartesian, alphabetic culture its constrained use of the word "criticism" (a usage both he and Polanyi had employed, without challenging, by their inclusion of "post-critical" in their books' subtitles, until Poteat's *Recovering the Ground: Critical*

Exercises in Recollection) and expands it (arguably, even *beyond* its etymological roots in the Greek *kritikos)* to include the tacit and prereflective:

> Criticism is the tacit, mindbodily recognition of incoherence in the course of my quest for coherence. This criticism is incessantly being carried out instantaneously in my mindbody. (1994, 113)

In the light of this "criticism" the mindbody prereflectively engages in the task of discerning and creating greater coherence by grasping and forming gestalts: "Seeking coherence is the feat of grasping gestalts [and] dissolving them for the sake of a more inclusive coherence." (1994, 113)

However, as we have noted, this process must be carried into reflection, but "reflection" far more broadly conceived than Poteat generally uses that term. For, at this level, Poteat speaks of the task of theory construction. And "theory," he informs us, includes not only what is usually assumed by that term (scientific theory, philosophical theory, etc.) but also works of art and architecture, musical compositions, maps, metaphors, language, even gestures-for all of these, like gestalts at the prereflective level, serve to provide us with a sense of meaning and coherence. This inclusion of art and music in theoretical reflection is an interesting development in Poteat's thesis. Although he recurringly, throughout his writings, reminds us of the rootedness of our sentience in the tonicity of our very "sinews" as he portrays the mindbody's prereflective / reflective dialectic in its unremitting quest for coherence and its related "world-creating" activity, Poteat's description of the more expansive and evolved pretensive terminus of this mindbodily activity, for the most part, is in terms of essentially cognitive and discursive activities and constructs: formal reflection, abstraction, objectification, science, philosophy, cartography, language, (conventionally understood) "theories"....

But now we note that when he speaks of our world-creating in terms of theory construction, he does include among "theories" works of art and musical compositions. Michael Polanyi, in fact,

suggests that music and art (as both appreciative and creative endeavors) are probably the most satisfactory and satisfying means we have for expressing the coherence we seek, since these are the least abstract and, at a deep level, most unifying of our modes of expression for they have an innate commensurability with and affinity for our prereflective roots.

> Owing to its sensuous content a work of art [including musical works] can affect us far more comprehensively than a mathematical theorem. Moreover, artistic creation and enjoyment are contemplative [i.e., not logical, discursive] experiences more akin than mathematics to religious communion. Art, like mysticism, breaks through the screen of objectivity and draws on our pre-conceptual capacities of contemplative vision.[15]

(This is in stark contrast to Michael Oakeshott, who, as we shall see later, characterizes the arts as merely one of the abstract, arrested "modes of experience.") It would appear that, unlike philosophical or mathematical theories, music and art achieve their resonance with our prereflective and preconceptual mindbodily tonicity because they themselves *are* prereflective and preconceptual, If this is the case, is it appropriate to include the arts within the categories of theory and reflection? Also, we have to ask, if we do not assume such inclusion, can we still assert that our mindbodily meaning-seeking activity needs for its fuller realization to be carried into reflection, assuming-as Poteat suggests-that the arts accomplish this? And, in this endeavor, how do the arts relate to reflection as the latter is more narrowly and commonly understood?

Poteat never does appear to explain how he manages to place music and art (or gestures) among the other, more cognitive expressions of the mindbody, although his rationale for wanting to present these among the other mindbodily means for achieving coherence is clear. "Theoretical" reflection, in any of the above-mentioned forms, facilitates the task of bringing coherence to the world of man's expanded awareness because theory, by systematically and selectively contracting the *scale* of the particulars of our experience is able simultaneously to enlarge the *scope* of our experience, our vision, in

the same way that a map, by reducing the number of geographical entities to be represented and the distances among these entities (cities, rivers, etc.), can give us a comprehensive view of a country that would be unattainable if we had to look at it "full scale," standing in the midst of it. Similarly language, in addition to the creative potential represented by the richness of its grammar, syntax, vocabulary, and etymology, by introducing abstract, general terms that vastly reduce the number of "tokens" we would otherwise have to commit to memory, enhances our control over our prelingual experience.

Reflection, therefore, clearly enriches our prereflective intimations. And to the extent that the reflected and the prereflected are dialectically related in pre- and retro-tension, does it not make sense to suggest that certain prereflective awarenesses are thereby raised to a higher (less undifferentiated) prereflective level, and that some are actually brought to the level of reflection? It is in this sense, it seems to me, that-to rejoin a query we initiated in Part T-we can more fully understand Poteat's assignment of full reality to that which is derivative, that is, abstracted in reflection. For our abstractions-as long as they have not stretched their bonds of retrotension so far that they break from that archaic center which both initiates and continues to give primal direction and sustenance to our quest for coherence-substantively contribute to that quest. They have no less, and no less legitimate, claim-as an integral part of the pretensive and retrotensive "activity" that I *am* in the world, and as an integral part of the prereflective and reflective continuum that I similarly represent-in determining who we are, mindbodily in the world. However, because our reflections are always derivative, they cannot be paradigmatic. in the *ultimate* sense in which Poteat appears to employ that term.

Yet, from a penultimate perspective, it would not seem-from what we have just said-inappropriate to refer to our pretending / retrotending reflection as paradigmatic. To the extent that our reflective efforts succeed in achieving a greater degree of integration and coherence, as, for example, in our "theory" building (what we might call the "formalizing of gestalts"), and this, in turn, enforms or

enriches our prereflective awareness (in the sense that Polanyi suggests that our focal awareness gives meaning to our subsidiary, tacit awareness; or that the higher ontological level of being-for example, the biological-provides the organizing principles for the next lower, the chemical-molecular, through the boundary conditions left open by the lower), reflection reflexively impacts upon our prereflective process "of grasping gestalts [and] dissolving them for the sake of a more inclusive coherence." (1994, 113)

But this recognition of the dialectical relationship between the reflective and the prereflective processes does not support Polanyi's assertion that

> logical antecedents derived from the prior acceptance of their consequents are necessarily less certain than the consequents. It is clearly unreasonable, therefore, to regard these antecedents as the grounds on which we accept their consequents.'[6]

Ultimately, it is our prereflective, tacit awareness that is paradigmatic. Poteat's, to my knowledge, *only* rebuttal of Polanyi is warranted: that, contrary to his intentions and the implications of his own articulated epistemological assumptions, he has unwittingly slipped back into the Enlightenment perspective which equates certainly with clarity, and logic with explicit formalism. (1985, 229) What I am suggesting must be amended to this critique, however-and is suggested by Poteat in other contexts-is Polanyi's proper recognition, in the above quotation, that the dialectic of our prereflective and reflective processes is a dialectic, that is, a relationship of mutual influence," although not in the same way that our retrotensions and pretensions-as, for example, when we hear a melody comprised of the notes E, G, and C -relate dialectically and mutually to each other. Not only do our prereflections give form and meaning to our reflections, but our reflections, *having thus been derived and influenced,* in turn influence our tacit, prereflective awareness. Is this not a reasonable interpretation of Poteat (if we read "silence" to mean the prereflected and "speech" to refer to the reflected) when he says, "It is silence which gives to speech its depth; it is speech which gives to silence its weight." (1972, 262) I do not

think that I am retreating to Enlightenment captivity when I venture to suggest that the nature of the influence of our reflections upon their prereflective ground might, guardedly, be described as the evolving of our tacit gestalts in the direction of less undifferentiation (in *this prereflective* sense, more clarity). This does not increase the *certainty* with which we hold our tacit "beliefs." Whatever certainty we have always remains radically fiducial. But it enhances our ability to "know' that which we hold as certain; and, indeed, to know (without quotation marks) *explicitly* to the extent that our tacit gestalts are moved by our reflective retrotension across the threshold of the tacit into reflection, that is, the articulable. This latter development Poteat clearly acknowledges:

> I *now* accept a reflected formulation of my hitherto *tacit* believings, *after the fact of my having relied upon them* as the (logical / ontological) grounds of my coming to achieve my presently *explicit* beliefs, because now I have come to see *these* believings to be implied in my presently achieved explicit beliefs.(1994, 198)

III. The Indeterminate Anthropological Center

> "To behold and in beholding to be beheld by a landscape of Cesanne is to recover something of the penumbra of one's own mindbody." (1994, 150)

The first sense or intimation of order experienced by the prereflective and unreflecting mindbody derives, one might say, both "internally" and "externally." The internal source is the tonicity, phylogenetically devolved, that is found even in the individual cellular-perhaps even molecular-physiology of the body and, in turn, in its more complex organs. But also, Poteat reminds us that, even before the embryonic heart has been formed and begins to function, it is the rhythm of the mother's beating heart that pulsates through and envelops the ontogenetically developing human form, imbuing and integrating it with what will become its first sense of comprehensive

order. My primal, prenatal mindbody-perhaps Poteat's earlier concept of "body" comes closer here, because I am speaking of the self before it is a knowing person-is ordered by the rhythm of its experienced cosmos-my mother's beating heart. But once these rhythms, this tonicity, becomes its own tonicity, and therefore the mindbody its own cosmos-that is, once the tonic "torch" has been passed across the generations-from that point on, it is no longer the larger cosmos that is *ultimately* paradigmatic, but mindbody. Both phylogenetically. and ontogenetically, the locus, the primal source, of the "archaic prejudice, far older than I am," is in my own mindbody. (1973, 276; 1981, 88; 1985, 23) This archaic prejudice of the mindbody, as we noted earlier, is to find coherence and meaning, that is, "to seek *a* reality commensurate with it." (1994, 205) My mindbody, in this sense, is paradigmatic not only of time and place, but also of meaning, and also of that which *has* meaning, or reality, itself. Therefore, all authority for the uses of *Being, being,* and *real* descends from [my mindbody, *as* paradigm of reality]" (1994, 26), and, as paradigm of the real, my "mindbody pretends the *figure [i.e.,* "object," "fact," "relation," or "event"] it formally apprehends even as it is retrotending itself as *ground."* (1985, 233)

Polanyi has informed us that the integration required for coherence, or understanding, can be achieved only by the process of indwelling, that is, by treating the particulars of our reflected, unreflected, and unreflectable experience in a subsidiary manner, attending *from* or through them-to some explicit "other" *on* which we bring our focus. We are even able, Poteat reminds us, "to integrate in our mindbodily feats of knowing," that is, by indwelling, "what does not cohere *logically* in itself' (1994, 101), such as different universes of discourse, different levels of ontological hierarchy-for example, our simultaneous integration of the principles of physics, chemistry, biology, and morality in our knowing of the human person.[$] I am able "to indwell all form and order in the [larger] cosmos *as* kindred of the first order I have known," (1973, 276) according to Poteat, because I have first achieved integration by indwelling in my own prereflective mindbody in "its many different levels of reality." (1968, 47, footnote 4) It is for this reason that *a*

computer, in principle, cannot provide or experience meaning or coherence, for it

> is without sentience, motility and orientation in the world, powers that I possess because my mindbody is in "communication" with itself throughout the whole range [i.e., hierarchy] of its being. (1985, 180)

But, as we have noted, the integration of subsidiary particulars-the success of the mindbody's unrelenting search for meaning-requires an explicit "other" on which to reflect, to focus its attention-toward which to extend its pretensive radius. Even before the process of integration has moved beyond merely prereflective dialectic, we, of course, must assume the "positing" of an "other" to give "focus" and therefore movement and direction to this process. However, the "positing," "other," and "focusing" at this primal level of our ontological / epistemological mindbodily hierarchy are not our second-order and familiar understandings of these terms, but instead are paradigmatic. At the higher sensate level of mindbodily existence to which we now refer, these terms must be understood in their explicit and reflected sense. To summarize a number of our previous observations: Confronted with the task of bringing integration, coherence, and meaning to a prereflective "world" greatly enlarged and complicated by the mindbody's concentering evolution toward an expanded prereflective awareness, the mindbody attempts to achieve this integration by indwelling the multitude of particulars that comprise this prereflective experience. However this, in turn, requires the positing of an "other"-understood now, at the mindbody's evolved level, as an explicit "other"-that is, a reflected, derived, abstracted and more differentiated "object" in the "world," multitude of "objects," an increasingly expanded "world" that is commensurable with, and retrotensively rooted in, the less differentiated, prereflective, and archaic order and tonalities of the mindbody. In this sense, Poteat tells us,

> all my knowing is a bonding [to the world].... For me to be

> bonded is for me to indwell [the particulars of] an "other"...from within my mindbody. In mindbodily indwelling an other..., I grasp its meaning as it answers to the form, logos, and meaning of my own integral and intentional mindbody. (1994, 208-209)

In its reflective, meaning-discerning endeavor, "the mindbody...pretends and through imagination, in a sense, forms an emerging reality over against itself, that reality in turn retrotends." (1994, 166)

My mindbodily quest requires not only that I engage in what both Polanyi and Poteat refer to as "world creating" activity or reflection, but also that this derived, second-order world be continually enlarged and refined (differentiated) to provide focus for my expanding prereflective awareness and the continuing prereflective / reflective dialectic. Indeed, this dialectical process itself issues in an expanded "objective" world by bringing, as we have seen, more of our prereflective awareness to the level of conscious reflection. And this reminds us, once again, of Polanyi's observation that the new meanings we indwell subsidiarily tend to be "displaced away from ourselves."[19] To summarize further: As our prereflective centers expand byvirtue of their becoming increasingly concentered, our capacity for a more comprehensive indwelling of particulars increases, thereby expanding our ability to focally embrace and comprehend more comprehensive wholes, or-again-a larger "objective" world.

The mindbody, further, engages in this "world-creating" activity by "summoning forth from the matrix of the `indeterminate other-(1994, 95) those entities or meanings that are to constitute our world. To be sure, we do not act, as individuals, with complete autonomy in this "world-creating" endeavor. It is a convivial, or communal, act, and in addition to my relying acritically

> upon the fact of the prereflective and unreflected givenness of my being as the ground of reflection, [I also] acritically rely upon the circumambient culture and its language as the medium of reflection. (1985, 139)

In other words, elements of both the self and the culture must be assumed as "givens" in this task. And even though language has provided us with preeminent power in this "world-creating" task, our world is comprised also by our

> beliefs, expectations, habits, wonted gestures;...the pace and mode of our travel; the rhythms and horizons of our technology; the music, sculpture, architecture that, by forming spaces in which we dwell, will frame the spatiality of our mindbodily apprehensions. (1994, 54, 55, 166)

Polanyi insists that his "personal knowledge" is not mere subjectivism. Just as he has concluded that biological fields "must be interpreted...in accordance with *their finalistic character,"*[20] he detects an "objective" directionality in the intimations that guide reflection, which he attempts to capture in his concept of a heuristic field. Similarly, Poteat observes that the words, acts, "beliefs, expectations, habits, wonted gestures, the styles and pace of my movements, and so on... [cohere] as a world in my lively mindbody." (1994, 51) The retrotensive and pretensive bonds that give copresence and therefore meaning to these various types of experience and expression, he insists, are intractable and substantial, and these same bonds give meaning, definition, intractability, and substantiality to me, my mindbodily being that indwells and "continually asseverat[es] itself' in the constantly emergent world. (1994, 56) It is only because I first experience the intractability and substantiality (scholastic philosophers called *it"hecceity,"* or "thisness") of my own mindbody that I am able to discern it in the world. As Poteat states it, our perception of the world as intractable and substantial, although still "not static and determinate, " is drawn as an ontological conclusion, not posited as an ontological assumption, as we observe the manner in which this world-convivial product of "our own devices"-unfolds. This intractability and substantiality of our "external" world, he says, is evidenced in the "surplus of meaning" that inheres not only in the world we summon forth, as demonstrated by the inexplicitable tacit meanings in which our summoning words are grounded, but also in the as-yet unreflected or unreflectable

mindbodily background, or "indeterminate other" from which our world is summoned-and which constitutes, as we have seen, the as-yet unreflected or unreflectable infinite density of the primal self, in which our world even in its articulation remains rooted. William Poteat tells us that

> the poem points beyond itself to another reality.... [A poem] alludes to the mystery which our minds sense, but about which nothing can be said other than that there is "something" about which nothing can be said. (1956-57, 197-98)

The `logical' connection between the tacit and the explicit cannot be expressed in a formalism in which the terms are logically (and temporally) homogeneous." (1985, 199) The translation of our prereflective intimations into the reflected "objects" and "events" that constitute our lived-in world, when the medium is language, relies heavily upon metaphor and circumlocution.' Other, less verbal forms of bodying forth are usually characterized by even more indeterminacy and ambiguity. In all instances "the preeminent `intellectual' power of our integral mindbodies is the power of analogizing...rooted in the tonic, oriented, ordered, sentient motility of our mindbodies." (1985, 179) The relation between the tacit and its explicit derivative, in other words, is intentional, "hence attenuated within time." (1985, 199) Our reflected world finally "hangs together" because its connectedness is tacitly provided by the protensive and dynamic intentionality of our mindbodies, the ultimate ground of our indwelling, in the same manner that we are able to connect heard musical notes into a melody. Even our most abstract worldly constructions, we have noted, are thus ultimately grounded, if they have meaning.

According to Poteat, the self emerges from its prereflective and indeterminate background in the same act by which it summons forth the world from its prereflected and indeterminate background.

> For me, [my] self is experienced at bottom and throughout the hierarchy of its modes of being as a pretensive / retrotensive

> mindbody, concentered and defined by the momentary object of one of its pretensions. (1994, 116)

If, as we have suggested, our being is ultimately, primordially inseparable from our knowing, and to know is to comprehend the meaning of the particulars in which we dwell by attending to, or focusing on (pretending), an object in the reflected world, the quoted statement makes sense. Both self and world have their origins and roots in an indeterminate background. However, since in their archaic roots there is no separation between mindbody and world, we might say that the world initially is no more than the indeterminate background from which the indeterminate self has not yet emerged, that is, not yet differentiated itself in its "infinite density." With no separation of ground from background there cannot even be tonicity, or the dialectic of retrotension and pretension. Since self, or mindbody, prior to its emergence lacks tonicity, it does not make sense to suggest that it "summons itself' from its original indeterminacy into existence. It must *be* summoned forth. Once summoned forth; it begins to define itself further by its protensive activity, which in time becomes inseparable from its act of calling forth the world. Since we have already defined the mindbody in terms of its meaning-discerning and meaning-giving activity and observed that this activity requires the positing of an "objective," or external, world, it should not surprise us that, according to Professor Poteat, there can, in fact, be no reference to self apart from such a determinate "other," or world: "The concept of `self-reference' has and *can only have* its original meaning in our own mindbodily acts of self-reference, presupposing a worldly *other* over against us." (1985, 181)

However, to emerge as a primal self, even as a self that has, in its evolved quest for coherence, crossed the threshold into reflective protension, does not constitute the self as *person.* Poteat draws a distinction between mere asseverating, or speaking, words and *owning,* or standing behind, those words by taking responsibility for them. It is through the latter act that I become immersed in history, in "world-creating" activity, and make my "unique," "novel" appear-

ance in the world as *person.* Of course, this can occur only in a world of other persons who take my words seriously, that is, for the commitments they intend, or *are.* My freedom to will my words responsibly is what Poteat calls the "stubborn irreducible fact" of my existence. (1994, 77) My acting on this freedom is "world-transcending,"since it involves me in my highest capacity, even above the mode of "intelligent being," as moral being-guided by principles superordinate to and left open by the boundary conditions of all the lower ontological and epistemological levels. Whether as intelligent or moral being, not only my words, but the other media through which I act in history-my wonted gestures, my cries of pain, my expressions of joy, even my embraces-give substance to a world that reflexively shapes my self and other selves:

> The child who knows what it is to be securely and lovingly held lives...in *a very* different world from that of one who has never known this. (1959, 324)

From what we have said, it is evident that the relation between the mindbody and its world is thoroughly dialectical. Each has its very being inextricably in relation to the other. The sense in which it has been claimed that the self creates the world in which it dwells becomes, perhaps, clearer when we consider the world qualitatively, in terms of values and meaning. Poteat does not deny the existence of a physical universe, in a sense, "out there," that lends itself to empirical investigation, guided by the procedures of scientific methodology. But even when we speak of scientific methodology, both he and Polanyi remind us, we have entered the realm of normative judgment; and the scientific "data" themselves reveal their normative presuppositions when we find ourselves bringing to bear our judgments, as inevitably we must-either explicitly or tacitly, when we decide what we choose to call "data" or "facts." In Poteat's words,

> even what we call facts are the outcome of our sentient, motile and intentional mindbody's exigent pursuit of the most rudimental of all values: meaning, order, coherence, and the real.

(1994, 189-90)

Therefore, when we seek to locate the radical roots of our knowing and being, we must look reflexively "within" to the prereflective and tacit workings of our sentient, motile, oriented, and intentional mindbodies.

However, the very intractability of the world within which we-our mindbodies, which Poteat also has described as intractable-find ourselves requires that we say more about the relation between self and world. We have, following Poteat's lead, spoken in terms of mindbody both "in-the-world," that is, as part of a larger world (in which case we-both Poteat and I-have sometimes referred to that part of the world which lies beyond the boundaries of the mindbody as the "external" world) and "over against the world," that is, quite apart from the world (in which case we have referred to the world as "objective" or "other" in relation to the mindbody). Specifically, the question that confronts us here is: Wherein lies the boundary between the self and its world? Indeed, we can ignore defining such a boundary only by assuming one of three conditions. The first would be a totally prereflective and tacit condition, that which we described as anterior to the appearance of intelligence, prior to explicitation, and therefore lacking both a knowing person and a knowable world. The second condition would be a totally unreflective existence, the condition of the world prior to the emergence of *any* self, therefore a condition lacking any sensation or tonicity, therefore a totally static, dead situation in which it would be impossible to conceive of either self or world. The final alternative would be the condition prescribed by the linear rationality of Enlightenment thought: a condition of total explicitness, total lucidity-a world in which, as Poteat describes it, all background (the tacit and subsidiary) has been brought into the foreground (the explicit and focal), a totally spatial world, devoid of all temporal depth. This last offers; at best, a world of illusion, but still-like the second alternative-a world that, deprived of its prereflected roots, is static and dead. Therefore, the question of boundary seems an appropriate one. Certainly, Poteat reminds us, "in our quotidian lives, we may

be said at [any] moment, however unreflectingly, to appreciate and to act upon the assumption that there are boundaries between `ourselves' and the 'world'..." (1994, 166-68) Here is an instance where having recourse to the language of abstract dualism, as long as we maintain our archaic, prereflective rootedness and realize the derivative nature of all dualisms, can assist our understanding of what it means to be mindbodily-in-the-world or, alternatively, over against it.

As Polanyi speaks of our "indwelling," Poteat speaks of our "pouring ourselves into" the particulars of the world:

> I can pour myself into something *other* than my mindbody, as when I integrate a hammer to my hand and wield it, because antecedently and primordially I have been able to "pour" myself into my own arm. (1994, 186)

But when I have poured myself into (indwelt) something *other* than my mindbody, it is in that moment no longer an *other;* rather, that part of the world-in this instance a hammer-has become in that moment an integral part of my mindbody, my mindbody having expanded its boundaries to include, to in-corporate, it. At one moment, suggests Potēat,I may experience the hammer as something I *have* (that is, as something in the *external* world, an *other)* as I look at it; and in the next moment, as I swing the hammer to strike a nail, I experience myself *in* that hammer.[21] The frontier between mindbody and world, at that moment, as Poteat describes it, is where the hammer meets the nail. He similarly portrays the creative activity of Moustakas, his Greek sculptor friend, as an imaginative process, where "imagination has its being at the chiasma between [Moustakas'] mindbody...and the world.". (1994, 68) Initially, as the sculptor proleptically envisages the outcome, "the sculpture has its sole existence as the telos of his mindbodily intentions" (1994, 68), and as he proceeds to form his material, the chiasma, the frontier at which mindbody meets the world "is now in the muscular pressure of his hands upon the handles of the sheers,"...then where the hammer makes its blows." (1994, 69)

Poteat concludes that the boundary of a mindbody in lively

"coition" with the world is a constantly shifting boundary, "dynamic and mutable...'defined' at a given moment by the activity in which we are then engaged." (1994, 167) Even the way in which I relate to the same person may, in one circumstance, as in the act of love, be largely unreflected and, in another circumstance, as when I may be measuring that person's height, be highly reflected, in which (latter) case that person would be largely in the "external" world. The modifier "largely" here suggests that the boundary between self and world is not only fluid, or shifting, but also often not clearly defined-that there are degrees, themselves not precisely measurable, to which an "other" may fall within the compass of one's prereflective mindbody or outside of it and, therefore, "in the world," as Poteat phrases it while also putting these words in quotation marks, thereby warning against the kind of "untenable dualism" we discussed earlier.

> ...Just as certainly as my own mindbody, in the ecstasy of the act of love, is not *for me* a reflected entity in the world," so certainly is the "other" for me in these moments no such thing-equivocal or otherwise. (1985, 275)

And, further:

> ...Between that relation to another mindbody I have when I perform physiological experiments upon it, which I shall designate *highly reflected,* and my relation to one in the act of love..., which I will characterize as at most only marginally reflected, perhaps quite unreflected, there is a practically inexhaustible number of intervening cases. (1985, 276)

Hence, Poteat's appreciation of Cesanne's use of ambiguous spatial location, equivocal perspectives, and indeterminate boundaries-styles of representation that reflect one's own mindbodily status in the world.

In the same context as the above quotations, Poteat suggests that his relationship to his own mindbody varies as he walks unreflectively among objects that are comfortable or mortally dangerous to him or among people he knows or does not know. We might say that his

"relation to his own mindbody" is experienced as varying as his mindbody's boundaries are sensed as enlarging or contracting, as he finds more or less commensurability with the circumambient world. And, as in the instance where I find myself in an environment as aesthetically, intellectually, and spiritually arid as a shopping mall, the boundaries of my mindbody qualitatively "shrink":

> Drawn away from these concrete bonds to the concrete [that is, to our archaic centers and their meaning-conferring logos], my being is contracted into an abstract entity that is *nowhere* in particular at no particular *time.* (1994, 79)

Indeed, even in the midst of what offers itself as a mindbodily enriching environment-for example, Bach's *Magnificat* or Shakespeare's *Macbeth-we* can accomplish the same result by withholding our protensive participation and thereby failing to hear the words or the notes in terms of their meaning-conferring co-presence or the richness of their comprehensive syntactical, thematic, or melodic context and hierarchy. Michael Polanyi make the same point:

> You say "table, table, table..." until the word becomes a mere meaningless sound. You can destroy meaning wholesale by reducing everything to its uninterpreted particulars. By paralyzing our urge to subordinate one thing to another, we can eliminate all subsidiary awareness of things in terms of others and create an atomized, totally depersonalized universe. In it the pebble in your hand, the saliva in your mouth and the word in your ear all become external, absurd and hostile items. This universe is the counterpart of the cosmic vision, with despair taking the place of hope. It is the logical outcome of utterly distrusting our participation in holding our beliefs.[22]

Again, our mindbody's periphery appears to extend only to those "objects in relation to which we (using Polanyi's terms) retain a significant level of subsidiary awareness of (i.e., indwell) its particulars, or (using Poteat's terms) maintain a significant degree of unreflective, or prereflective, awareness. As these "objects" are

increasingly characterized by an absence of grounding in such awareness, they are increasingly perceived as "located" outside the pretensive reach of the mindbody itself and, therefore, as part of the "external" world. Poteat recurringly draws a contrast between "having experience," or "having the world"-and "being in the midst of experience," or "being in the midst of the world":

> To *have* experience, *while remaining* sensible of my *incarnation in the lively sentience, motility and orientation* of my mindbody, to make experience subject to an explicit reflection; while to be *in the midst* of experience is to loose the bonds of explicit reflection in order to dwell more fully in the pretensive / retrotensive dialectic where tacit reflection or a prereflective logos forms and discloses its order.[23]

In most of its sentient activity the mindbody is most appropriately perceived not as categorically separate from, or as standing in a sharply defined dualistic relation to, the "world," but rather in terms of a gradient that represents various degrees of participation of the one in the other; and to the extent there is such participation, each merges indistinguishably into the other. Again, we are speaking of fluid and indeterminate boundaries.

We can even imagine different parts of the same human body in the same moment to be differently "located" relative to the indeterminate boundary between the prereflective mindbody and the reflected external world. I might, for example, have a mindbodily integral, or indwelling, relationship to my right hand as I "externalize," by focusing on, my left hand while I remove a sliver from it, or as I trim the fingernails on my left hand. Here it is clearly a matter of degree, for in order to hold my left hand in a proper position as I work on it with my right hand, I must have some prereflective, kinaesthetic awareness of even my left hand. A more extreme example would be the alarming experience of my foot "going to sleep," losing all sensation, even kinaesthetic. In that moment, and in utter contrast to my other-sensate-foot, my insensate foot has all the characteristics, apart from its attachment to my leg, of an object in the external world, for it no longer is experienced as falling

within the reach of my unreflective, protensive mindbody.

Professor Poteat tells us that we experience and define the boundaries (as well as the center) of the mindbody in terms of the current "momentary object of one of its pretensions." (1994, 116) Therefore its boundaries vary as we variably experience the mindbody "throughout the hierarchy of its modes of being" (1994, 116)-or, we might add, throughout the hierarchy of its modes of knowing, willing, and intending since these are inseparable from what we have come to know as mindbodily being. Short of contraction into absolute meaningless abstraction, my mindbody may encompass at any moment a very small part of the world , as when I focus upon the task of driving a nail; or it may encompass a much larger world, as when I immerse myself in a great work of literature or philosophy or give myself over to theoretical reflection.

> Most of the time we move easily and continuously between the as yet unreflected and reflection, between our own mindbodies as the lived prior unreflected provenience of a world and our mindbodies as "objects," in many different senses, among "objects, in many different senses, in the "world," in many different senses. (1985, 277)

It, indeed, appears that the boundaries of our mindbodies are fluid and as indeterminate, although in a different sense and for different reasons, as the centers from which they receive their "definition."

We return to the image of mindbody that we introduced earlier, of a circle with its center and circumference. The center, we have said, is our primal and radical, simultaneously elusive and paradigmatic reference or source, to which we retrotensively turn for our grounding, and orientation, for our archaic and tacit, or prereflective, sense of meaning; and from which we pretensively eventually derive our more articulated, abstracted, and elaborated reflections. As the primal ground, this spatially and temporally dimensionless "whence" of our mindbodily tonicity and creativity is the protensive field center, the "point" at which concepts have not yet emerged through differentiation, words have not yet taken their articulate form, the creative sense has not yet evolved beyond a proprioceptive tonicity

felt in the sinews of the body or, perhaps, a groping intimation of form, where expression is still in the stage of an incipient reflexive indwelling, even though on the verge of bodying forth.

The circumference is where, in the present moment, my intentional, pretensive focus is fixed, through imaginative "objectification," on what my mindbody is reflectively differentiating, articulating, or identifying as objects, events, concepts, or relations in the "real" world, or even meaningful fictional constructs. This differentiating and objectifying, as we have noted, inevitably involves greater or lesser degrees of abstraction. What determines my mindbodily inclusion of these "entities" is not a question of their relative abstraction *per se,* nor a matter of their fictional or nonfictional character, but the fact that, as objects of our pretensive focus, they are the terminus of myretrotensively and prereflectively *grounded* and currently active and reflective protensions (in which case they could not be, of course, total abstractions). So, the compass, or circumference, of my mindbody can be conceived to extend only so far as, in the present moment, I am able, through my retrotensive indwelling of their particulars, to find meaning in the objects, events, relations, and so on, that define my pretensive focus. Therefore, for Poteat, the self is only what it is, or experiences, in the present moment. However, we must be aware that our present experience, understood in terms of our mindbodily *co-presenting,* assisted by memory and imagination, can draw extensively upon both the past and anticipation of the future. Although Poteat's understanding of the mindbody is strictly in terms of an experiential present, its focus-considered both temporally and spatially-can be either broad or narrow; that is, its circumference can be either greatly extended or very contracted. And even in its most contracted expression, its complex archaic hierarchy and its indeterminate radical grounding suggest something that-to transcend Poteat's conceptual limits, but not his implications-borders on the divine.

As we turn our attention from Poteat's concept of mindbody to his understanding of the "world," it is clear from what we have said that part of this world falls within the shifting circumference of my lively, protensive, and largely prereflective mindbody.

> My *mindbody,..is* the world...viewed from the perspective of what is proximal to it, focused in it as the concentering of its retrotensions-operative and active. (1994, 56)

This "inner" portion of my world consists in large part of my present, perhaps to some extent reflected but not fully articulated, "beliefs, expectations, habits, wonted gestures, the styles and pace of [my] movements, and so on." (1994, 51) Being in close proximity to my mindbody's retrotensively sensed center, even though these are to some extent derivative and "second order" relative to my most archaic intimations, there is no question of their being reliably grounded, and therefore part of "the world." It is also implied in what we have already said, that some of my world is that which lies at the periphery of my mindbody and therefore that which I perceive as more "objective," even "over against" me:

> The *world is* my mindbody...viewed from the perspective of what is more or less distal to it, dynamically over against it at the termini of its pretensions-both operative and active. (1994, 56)

This part of the world consists largely of my perceptions, words, and acts as they are presently differentiated, articulated, or elaborated in an "objectified" or "incarnate" mode-for example, in spoken or written form; or in objects or acts that can be pointed to. Poteat argues that, although these appear in varying degrees "external" and "over against" me, to the extent that they still lie within the meaning-conferring, retrotensive / pretensive reach of my mindbodily activity, and therefore are not only reliably grounded but also creations of that activity, they are part of the "world."

It is more difficult to interpret what Poteat intends as the worldly status of these same "objects" when they are no longer presently being perceived or remembered or expressed by me (for example, authors' words stored in books on my shelf and "objects" beyond my present sensory range), and therefore no longer lie even at the pretensive circumference of my lively mindbody.. However, it appears from what he says that the whole of existence, or "reality,"

consists of more than what I, in the present moment, include in my mindbodily protensions, even with all the assistance of memory and imagination. It would seem to be consistent with his thinking to suggest that he would consider (as would most people) these "objects"-assuming the reliability of their original grounding in my mindbodily radix-to be a part of my "world." No longer being, in the present moment, at the termini of my mindbody's validating and meaning-conferring pretensions, these "objects," of course, are vulnerable to total devaluing abstraction, which, it seems from Poteat's comments about the arid; "deplaced" shopping mall, would put these at the farthest margins of what we could qualitatively and meaningfully refer to as a "world."

Further, a major part of our world, he clearly insists, is what we can trust as the reliable, that is, reliably grounded, experience of others. My existential world would certainly be of very small circumference if I trusted as "factual" or true only that which I, myself, had thoroughly examined and reflected upon. As we noted earlier, both Polanyi and Poteat frequently remind us of the convivial, or communal, dimension of our "world creating," and therefore our critical reliance "upon the circumambient culture and its language as the medium of reflection." (1985, 139) Indeed, most of what we have come to embrace, tacitly or explicitly, as "reality" has come to us as a legacy of our society and culture, not as a result of our own singular, evaluative reflection. Most of what we accept as truth or fact we accept, implicitly or expressly, on authority and trust. This fiducial element, Polanyi reminds us, does not discredit our knowledge, for it is ultimately and at every stage of our sentient activity the grounding of *all* our knowledge, even that to which we have given prolonged and detailed reflection.

IV. Being Faithful to Intimations: Some Cautious Final Reflections

> "Our *ultimate* relation, therefore all of our *derived* relations, are fiduciary." (1994, 193)

In the preceding three parts of this essay I have attempted to provide a faithful representation of William Poteat's concept of mindbody in the world as I analyzed this seminal concept through the interpretive metaphor of a circle with its center, radius, and circumference. In this final section I shall attempt to address briefly some problems that appear to me to have emerged from this analysis unresolved and also venture some thoughts on how the inquiry so fruitfully taken up by both Polanyi and Poteat might be further pursued.

Question: Is coherence adequate as the ultimate criterion of meaning / value?

We have observed that Poteat, like Polanyi, detectsin all sentient life a primal prejudice toward value. This he elaborates in terms of a rudimental capacity prereflectively to discern and an irresistible urge to seek "meaning, order, coherence, and the real." (1994, 189-90) "Coherence" is probably the term that most accurately and comprehensively captures what he perceives as the meaning-conferring principle and goal of sentient life. When he redefines our understanding of time and space from the abstract, flat, and strictly quantitative manner in which we are accustomed to perceive these to a more mindbodily compatible, "tonic," or qualitative understanding of them, his seminal concept of "co-presence" is central to both redefinitions.

The concept itself, as Poteat introduces it to us through his illustration of notes in a musical composition, is radically temporal: to "co-presence" is protensively to bring these successively sounded notes into the present-together. But his reconfiguration of our understanding of space is made to depend equally upon this concept. (We noted early in this essay that, in a manner analogous to Einstein's, Poteat reinterprets all aspects of our mindbodily existence, even the spatial, in terms of time.) He first moves us away from our derived, "second order" conceptualizing of time as mere mindb'odily-detached, mechanical succession or static duration, to a "first order" mindbodily active, protensive, and coherence-seeking (recalling the musical notes example, I am tempted to say "harmonizing") co-presenting participation. Then he replaces our percep-

tion of space, as an equally mindbodily-detached and abstract grid of Newtonian vectors, with a prereflective ("first order") sense of the convivial co-presencing of mindbody in the midst of a coherent, compatible, and nurturing environment (which, as we have seen, he designates "place"). Just as the reconceptualizing of our perception of time and space depends upon our understanding of his conception of mindbodily co-presencing, our comprehension of this concept builds upon our appreciation. of the even more radically retrotended, first order (underived) sense of coherence.

As those who identify themselves with what they call the "coherence" theory of meaning are inclined to point out, there is something pleasingly simple, neat, and intuitively satisfying about the concept of coherence-what Poteat refers to also as the "hanging togetherness of things." Michael Oakeshott, in his-at the time of its publication in 1933-revolutionary examination of experience and meaning, *Experience and Its Modes;* suggested that meaning inheres at the macro level of our thinking:

> Valuation...is the attempt to make coherent, to make more of a world, a given world of ideas; and in this process each given value is qualified and modified by every other value...."What ought to be," should be, because the coherence of the world of "what ought to be" requires it to be in that world....And consequently there is no value, no judgment of value, nor anything valuable which, taken by itself and on its own account, may properly be spoken of as absolute .... For... absoluteness belongs solely to the coherent world as a world and as a whole. [2]

Meaning, or value, is a function of our comprehensive (or compre - hending) sense of context, our grasping of coherent, organic wholes, or gestalts.

Michael Oakeshott might have referred to what Polanyi later termed "indwelling," or he could have used Poteat's concept of co-presence, had he recognized the tacit and tonic, or prereflective, grounding of all knowing. However, twenty-five years would pass before such recognition was articulated by Polanyi in his *Personal Knowledge.* (Oakeshott's review of that book, characterizing Polanyi's

thought as "disordered, repetitive, digressive, and often obscure...[leaving] much to be desired," revealed that even then he failed to comprehend, much less endorse, Polanyi's major contribution.)[25] Although the logic and compelling nature of his own insights rest heavily on the assumption of the mind's tacit workings, Oakeshott totally fails to appreciate this. Instead, he repeatedly denigrates the idea of tacit knowing and insists that true knowledge is completely specifiable and explicit. For him, "the end in all experience is definition." (147) "Knowledge which falls short of definition" is defective. (53) "No experience whatever is inexplicable." (278) The reason, he says, we must judge all modes of experience (e.g., scientific experience, historical experience, practical experience; later-in 1959-he adds poetic experience, in which he includes all literary, artistic, and musical experience) to "fall short" is that they fail to achieve not only a comprehensive but also an "explicit assertion of reality." (304) It is no wonder that, as we observed earlier, he ends up diametrically opposed to both Polanyi's and Poteat's assessment of the arts as supremely capable of bringing unity, coherence, and concreteness to our experience.

Still, Oakeshott makes some invaluable contributions to our understanding of experience and meaning. He insists, as do Polanyi and Poteat years later, that all concepts, ideas, and meaning are products of the active and creative activity of our minds. Nothing comes to us, he says, as self-evident "givens." All-even the simplest "facts"-are consequent of human judgment. Even the simplest facts on their own, devoid of context, are unrecognizable, devoid of meaning. There are no unrelated, isolated ideas. If there were, he tells us, they would be without significance (meaning) and therefore not ideas. Our judgments are attempts to perceive things in terms of a larger perspective. Since our experiences are shaped by our judgments, "in every experience there is the whole of reality....In every judgment whatever something is asserted of the whole of reality."[26]

We observed earlier that our mindbodily striving for greater coherence, according to Poteat, can not be separated from a striving for greater comprehensiveness-what we depicted in our circle /

circumference imagery as the expanding of boundaries, both mindbodily and world. Coherence is always relative to *the total* configuration of our experience or knowledge: what appears coherent at one stage of our mental compass will likely no longer appear so as our experience expands or becomes more encompassing. Oakeshott writes in analogous terms, at least in regard to the "world" that is product of our mind's creations. And, as with both Polanyi and Poteat, he perceives this expanding world as hierarchical. His so-called modes of experience are characterized, in part, as we have noted, by their lack of comprehensiveness-therefore, also by a failure, from a more expansive perspective, to be truly coherent. It is for this reason that the modes of experience, in Oakeshott's thinking, represent "arrested experience" and are, in this sense, "abstract." However, each mode-be it scientific, historical, practical, or "poetic" knowledge-having achieved an impressive degree of coherence, perhaps even complete coherence *within its limited parameters,* is inevitably, he suggests, mistakenly perceived by its practitioners as wholly sufficient, absolutely coherent, and complete. The scientist assumes that *all* experience should be judged by his methodology and criteria, the moralist (whom Oakeshott includes in the "practical" mode) assumes that all experience should submit to his methodology and criteria, etc.

The achievement of true knowledge, he says, requires "supersession" to *a higher* order-not just *a broader* expansion-of conceptual awareness. To be sure, this higher order of awareness must also be comprehensive, but not in the sense of including the arrested modes of experience; it-unlike the modes-can *correctly* claim for itself total comprehensiveness and total coherence. This higher order of thinking Oakeshott designates "philosophy." Philosophic experience is experience without presupposition, reservation, arrest, or modification. It represents "the concrete world of reality" and, "as such, can...have no degrees.[727] This true knowledge and experience is not achieved by an additive process.

> The totality of experience is not a mere collection of everything which comes to us in the form in which it comes.... Everywhere

> in thought is involved a transformation of what is given.... [The given must be] submitted to the concrete totality of experience. [The reality of something] depends not upon its being given, but upon its coherence when seen in the totality of experience. Every experience is real-so long as we do not take it for less or more than it is.[28]

From what we have said, it is clear that the modes fail this test of coherence and reality, despite their practitioners' claims-or, more accurately, *because* of their grandiose claims. The major task Oakeshott assigns to philosophy is that of critiquing particular experiences, and especially the modes of experience, to keep these within proper perspective and limits. But even their exaggerated self-perceptions, Oakeshott admits, have not kept the various modes-e.g., scientific and practical knowledge-from achieving truly impressive results where each has focused on matters of its own proper concern. Where they have tried to cross the boundaries that separate their distinctive universes of discourse and method, for example, by attempting to make the study of history scientific, or psychology (a part of "practical experience") scientific, or science practical (as in "political science"), the results have been disastrous. Not only can the modes not successfully mix with each other. Neither can they successfully address, even in part, philosophical concerns since they offer, relative to philosophy, only "empty kisses of abstraction."[29] Nor can philosophy address theirs since it has "abandoned life [in]-the pursuit of...truth."[30]

I have outlined Oakeshott's thinking to some length here because-apart from his lack of appreciation for the tacit dimension of knowing and neglect of the real depth of dynamic mindbodily participation (beyond ratiocinative judging), and therefore his insistence upon a totally "explicit" model of experience and knowing his concepts and principles, especially that of coherence, are quite congenial with Poteat's. And even though Oakeshott's idiom is not as dynamic or seminal as Poteats idiom, his different approach provides its own insights.[31]

Returning to our focus on Poteat and his commitment to

coherence as his central criterion for meaning / value, we need to recognize that, as much as the "coherence" theorists in their contention with the "correspondence" theorists may want to claim Poteat as one of their own, Poteat manages to bring an element of correspondence, also, into his understanding of the meaning-seeking quest. For he suggests that in that quest we search in the *world* to find something that resonates to something-a heartbeat or whatever-within us. Although it appears that, for Poteat, meaning or value derives from the coherence that the mindbody discerns both retrotensivelywithin itself (that is, at its radical center) and pretensively in the world (that is, at its pretensive terminus, or mindbodily-worldly circumference), the *satisfaction* that we gain from our meaning seeking derives from the degree of coincidence, or correspondence, we experience between our pretended, prereflective, archaic intimations (Polanyi: our tacit awareness) and our more distal focus; or the degree of correspondence we are able to discover or create between our mindbodily radix and the larger world. Thus we are driven constantly to enlarge our mindbody's boundaries to encompass an ever expanding world, finally to reach the point where we cannot distinguish between the boundaries of the two, and mindbody and world have reached such integrity, or identity, that correspondence passes into a comprehensive coherence.

Oakeshott, Polanyi, and Poteat make a most impressive case for understanding value and meaning in terms of the concept of coherence. As I have suggested, this concept, as a central principle in axiological, or value, theory, is intuitively attractive. And in the context of an epistemology or ontology that incorporates the concept of comprehensiveness, "coherence" is a particularly compatible term. Yet, I am not fully persuaded that what we usually think of, or experience, when we refer to particular, concrete values-e.g., fidelity, kindness, love, justice-is completely exhausted or comprehended by our sense of coherence. Both Polanyi and Poteat often use the term "order" as if it were virtually interchangeable and synonymous with "coherence." Oakeshott says that something is coherent if it contains only that which cannot be avoided without self-contradiction.[32] Although this latter definition would certainly

be regarded by both Polanyi and Poteat as too abstract and explicit to capture what they rightly would suggest lies largely within the realm of our tacit, prereflective awareness, "coherence" still, far more than the terms that refer to our concrete experiences of value, entreats such abstraction. At best, it suggests, besides order, the equally formal concepts of coordination, compatibility, or consistency.

Thus understood, "coherence" impresses me as, at least, a *qualitatively* anemic, if not a neutral, concept. How can we assume that a situation described to us as coherent is necessarily, in itself, desirable? To determine this we need to know more about its *qualities.* The Third Reich was described as a totalitarian system because it was able, through a combination of psychological manipulation, administrative organization, and coercion, to bring about virtually total control and coordination over a large society. By contrast, free and democratic societies are known to be far more cumbersome and chaotic, much more difficult to govern. Those who have contributed to recent findings in "chaos theory" have come to the conclusion that situations dominantly characterized by coherence and order are static and lifeless, whereas creativity, evolution, and life itself occur only in situations characterized by a very fine and unstable balance between order and chaos. [33] As the ultimate criterion of valuation, "coherence" perhaps still serves adequately in the field of inorganic science (although quantum research may even cast doubt on this), but it appears inadequate for the understanding of life itself.

Even Professor Oakeshott suggests that, as we achieve an increasingly comprehensive and coherent view of reality, we are led to adopt "a new view of [our] criterion" of reality. [34] I am presently at a loss to suggest what concept would serve us more adequately as an ultimate criterion of value. However, whatever criterion one might offer as a substitute, we must be aware, as Poteat has reminded us, that any concept that adequately retrotends the radical and archaic core of our very being and knowing must have roots deeply imbedded in our tacit, prereflective awareness and, therefore, (contrary to Oakeshott) must itself border on the unspecifiable. Perhaps, in

articulating our criterion of value, we may be able to refer to not much more than that which is "satisfactory in experience" (interestingly, the criterion adopted by Oakeshott on page *33* of *Experience and Its Modes,* but implicitly abandoned a few pages later and for the remainder of the book in favor of his abstract and formally defined "coherence"). But, then, have we crashed on the shoals of subjectivism? Or do we fear those shoals, as Poteat has suggested, because we still think in terms of an illusory and outmoded dualism? To address this last question, we must first take up some others.

Question: Does Poteat's assignment of full reality to all things permit ontological hierarchy?

Early in this essay the question was posed: Does Professor Poteat's assignment of full reality to mind and body (by grounding both in an undifferentiated "mindbody") and to the "things" we perceive as constituent parts of our world as these are variously abstracted or "placed" relative to our fluid mindbodily and worldly boundaries, conflict with his or Polanyi's commitment to ontological hierarchy? Polanyi defines "reality" in terms of an idea's or entity's capacity "for manifesting itself in yet unthought of ways in the future," and his conception of ontological hierarchy is clearly based on his distinguishing among degrees of reality thus defined. Therefore he can conclude that "minds and problems possess a deeper reality than cobblestones.'"

Poteat just as clearly would assign higher ontological status to a mind, or mindbody, than to a cobblestone on the basis of the Polanyian criterion of capacity for future manifestations. But since he has already assigned full, that is, equal, reality to mindbodies and cobblestones, we are forced to conclude that either Poteat defines reality quite differently than does Polanyi or he contradicts himself. In fact, we have already observed that the "reality" of an idea or entity, for Poteat, lies in its being grounded in the mindbody's archaic paradigmatic center through its retrotensive and pretensive activity. If it is thus grounded, regardless of its relative abstraction, or distal placement from the archaic center, it is, according to Poteat,' fully "real." If not thus actively grounded, it is not "real," but mere

total and static abstraction.

Professor Poteat, therefore, does not appear to allow for the recognition of various "degrees" or "levels" of reality, as he defines it. So, whether or not his assignment of full reality to the great variety of entities in the world permits or precludes his commitment to ontological hierarchy depends on whether his ontological criterion is Polanyi's or his own understanding of reality. There would certainly be nothing logically or otherwise problematic with his adhering to his own definition of reality while using Polanyi's criterion of hierarchy-which is what Poteat appears to do although he is not clear about this. In fact, had Poteat not assigned full reality to the entire spectrum of *relative* abstractions constituting our articulated and differentiated world (I have already suggested that he provides sound rationale for doing so), his definition of reality could be seen as fully compatible with Polanyi's; the capacity for unpredictable future manifestations is arguably closely tied to an entity's or idea's degree of creative participation in its vital primal grounding.

Question: Does Poteat's understanding of the mindbody's "world creating" allow for a world whose "reality" is consistent with our intimations?

To ground the reality of our world-its "facts" and "values"-in nothing other than the creative tonicity of mindbody and, at the reflective level, in our personal, convivial (trusting, intimation-based) judgment can only appear suspiciously "subjective" and "relativistic" when viewed from the "objectivist" perspective of classical realism. Anticipating the objections of one oriented in this tradition, Poteat offers the following dialogue:

> Then are you saying that "value" means nothing more than whatever is convivially and intentionally valued?
>
> Well-yes. Such a claim becomes problematic only for that in ourselves that still trades on the dualisms of our tradition. We still hanker for a value that is more substantial; one that exists quite independent of its mere presence as the subject of

human judgment-as a boulder is wrongly imagined to be.

But...is not the claim "Values are whatever is intentionally valued by our mindbodies," value-relativism?

No more than the convivial recognition and acknowledgment of some state of affairs in the world as *a fact* is *fact-relativism*.... The whole of our convivial being seeks a coherence among these retrotensively grounded pretensions and brings us satisfaction-itself a value-when it is found, even if that coherence is but a fleeting thing. In saying, then that coherence, meaning, order and the real are rudimental is to say that the integrity of our unmediated mindbodies is achieved and sustained by them; and that all our values are derivative of and variations upon these or other such bedrock values....[36]

Professor Poteat's steadfast grounding of his argument in experience suggests not only a fundamental contrast with classical realism but also considerable kinship with philosophical idealism. Yet his strong crediting of the tacit dimension of experience puts him in conflict even with some of the idealists on the question of where we should look for our criterion of meaning or reality. Michael Oakeshott, again, provides us with a most interesting case in point. As we have observed, for Oakeshott, all of our experience, both concrete and abstract, consists of our explicit, rational reflections, mediated through judgment. Since everything is explicitable, all that is real is (to use Polanyi's expression) displaced away from us, to be discovered by looking "outward." The fully real world consists of our totally comprehensive and coherent-that is, concrete-reflections (the substance of philosophy), and these provide the ground or criteria by which we are able to identify and critique those experiences and worlds (modes) that are of lesser reality, of abstract nature, because they fall short of total comprehensiveness and coherence. For Poteat, by *way* of contrast, experience consists not only of our mediated, explicit reflections, but also of our tacit, prereflective, unmediated, mindbodily tonicity, or protensions. Further, the cri-

terion or ground of all that is real in the world is not to be found in the larger, articulated "world"-no matter how coherent, for this, as Poteat sees it, achieves its articulated expansiveness and coherence by its derivation and, therefore abstraction-in other words, through an outward projection-from that which we retrotend as truly primal and underived, therefore concrete and fully real: our inwardly discovered, prereflective mindbodily centers, which are the paradigmatic source of all meaning and meaning discernment, indeed, of all that is real.

So, certainly it is Poteat's position that we *do* create our world, of both "facts" and "values" (remembering, of course, that the two are not so neatly separated). But it is not a creation *ex nihilo,* for it derives from our *given,* archaic mindbodily resources and intimations, which are "there" for us to discover. At the same time, what we introspectively and prereflectively discover is by no means "full blown" in the sense of representing what we later, through our active, reflective creating / constructing, come to recognize as the "world." Still the primal intimations, if "real" according to Polanyi's definition, have within them the full "independence and power for manifesting [themselves]"-for being configured through our reflecting and acting-"in yet unthought of ways in the future." Drawing upon Poteat's terminology, we both "have" before us and are "in the midst of' the world even as it emerges through our mindbody's creative process, and the boundaries that define "where" we-our mindbodies-are in the midst of that process are both variable and indeterminate. And the "world" we create is, therefore, variably sensed as more or less proximal or distal, that is, as in our midst or "out there."

Earlier in this essay I referred to the fact that, whereas Plato's imagery suggests that we look primarily "outward and upward" to locate our grounding, Poteat's imagery points predominantly in the opposite direction, "backward and inward." Professor Poteat, himself, frequently draws the contrast, as he did most recently in a letter to me, in which he observes that Polanyi

> was not made blind to the tacit-explicit distinction as were

> philosophers who were acculturated to keep everything objective, that is, "out in front"-at a decent remove from themselves as thinkers lest what they saw would be contaminated by its proximity to themselves....[37]

However, we have noted that even Poteat uses terms of forward and outward directionality: "pretension," the world as "other" and "over against us." He speaks of our mindbodily "deployment *vis a vis* the indeterminate other," of the "alterity of all entities,"[38] and, as we have seen, of the *"hecceity,"* or "thisness," of objects. He answers an emphatic "No" to the suggestion that such things as "quarks, DNA molecules, quasars...exist only in the mind." He insists that, indeed, "they exist in the world"; and yet-lest, in his caveat against subjectivism,he be placed in the objectivist camp-he, in the same sentence, adds "...and the world appears in the articulation of our convivial, mutually copresent mindbodies." (1994, *53-54)* In other words, even the world's alterity, its "otherness" and *hecceity,* has no ontological-only a mindbodily fabricated, or conceptual-status.

> However useful-indeed, necessary-may be *a conceptual* distinction between an entity and the complex and historically dense web of signs, gestures, and meanings that bring it forth and sustain it, no fundamental *ontological* space exists between a thing and the vectors that bear it forth, save only its mute and opposing *thisness.* A thing's actuality, its concreteness overflowing language, is identical with its appearance within the textures of what we say and write. (1994, *59-60)*

Because of his employment of the seemingly less equivocal concept of "field forces" and particularly, at the human level, of "heuristic field" ("the gradient of a discovery, measured by the nearness of discovery prompts the mind toward it"),[39] Michael Polanyi's imagery is more suggestive of an existence that stretches ontologically beyond the mindbody's momentary (or even remembered) pretensive reach. His idiom permits us to think in terms of an "external" reference or terminus of our mindbody's prompting and provides an outward directionality of the mind's exploratory quest;

although he, too, warns against separating the effective working of the heuristic field forces from the active working of the mind. Discovery, he insists, does not occur as the result of our minds' being passively drawn by the forces of some epistemological "magnetic field." But even the concept of "discovery," with its more "objective" implications, although not ignored by Poteat, is much more frequently used by Polanyi, and generally yields in Poteat's writings to such concepts as "positing" and "world creating."

These observations are not meant to obscure the fact that Polanyi's dominant concepts-the "tacit," "indwelling," "subsidiary knowledge," etc.-definitely imply that he has taken a new and "inward" direction in his exploration of the grounds of our knowing and being, and that Poteat is not mistaken in perceiving this, nor remiss in expanding upon it. However, I would caution that, important as it is to perceive the substantial contrasts between the paradigms offered, on the one hand, by Polanyi and Poteat and, on the other, by the classical philosophers, especially Plato, the contrast should not be overdrawn. Interestingly, Polanyi in all his writings only rarely (seven or eight times) and briefly refers to Plato, and most often does so in a manner appreciative of an argument he is advancing. For even Plato, despite his dominantly "outward" thrust, objectivist commitments, and unremitting striving for the goal of explicit knowledge, sometimes suggests an imagery of looking within oneself for grounding. The Socratic "gadfly" is assigned, in the *Theaetetus,* the task of a midwife-of "giving birth to insights that lie, still unrecognized and unborn, within the mind of the interlocutor. And the concept of *anamnēsis,* of drawing from within one's memory knowledge that has been "forgotten," is invoked recurringly in the *Phaedo, Phaedrus, Mello, Philebus,* and *Theaetetus,* as Plato elaborates the imagery of his epistemology. Also, I have argued elsewhere that at the noetic, or highest, level of his ascent toward Truth, Plato abandons his previous recourse to formal, ratiocinative forms of inquiry and relies upon intuition-the fruit of which (a vision of the *Agathon),* Plato admits, is not communicable-that is, explicitable-among mortals.[40] Still, of course, the ideal remains that of fully explicit knowledge. The point I am making

is that, regardless of whether his emphasis is upon the "inward" or "outward" direction of the epistemological quest, each of these writers-Plato, Polanyi, and Poteat-feels compelled to incorporate within the dialectic of his epistemology symbolic reference, however qualified and circumscribed, to the opposite direction.

In the context of our examination of Poteat's thinking, what I wish to suggest is that his paradigm of the mindbody and its retrotensive and pretensive dynamics offers an extremely insightful and seminal alternative to, as well as corrective of, the Platonic paradigm with its (the latter's) failure to give due recognition to the essential continuity of "mind" and "body," of "self' and "world," of "material world" and "intellect," and to the radically tacit and fiducial grounding of our knowing. However, I wish to suggest also that, as I enthusiastically embrace the richness of the Poteatean paradigm with its prereflectively grounded intimations because I find it speaks profoundly to my own experience of being and knowing, these same intimations suggest that much of what I perceive as "real" has its reality, "thisness," or existence quite apart from, in the sense of being prior to, my own mindbodily creativity; and, indeed, even when I can claim the role of a creator, this existence or entity often maintains a continuity of existence quite independent of me, or of my-or others'-current or continued awareness of it.

It is Professor Poteat's contention that not only the "whatness" of our world-that is, what I can explicitly know about entities in the world, their various qualities or characteristics, which I can describe, but also the "thisness" of these entities-their actual *existence* as discreet "objects," "events," etc.-have been made to "stand forth" by our mindbodily protensions "against the background of the indeterminate"-"the indeterminate" apparently meaning that which is at the retrotended, primal radix of our being / knowing, and which, therefore, our mindbodies have not pretensively worked upon, or configured. We know both the "whatness" and the "thisness" of things over against us in the world only derivatively, that is, only because we have first (or simultaneously but primally) experienced each-that is, the "whatness" and "thisness"-unmediated, of our mindbodies. Verbal propositions are generally adequate to the task

of describing the "whatness" of an entity. As Poteat expresses it, "the *whatness of* an entity is *identical* with the sum of the modes of discourse that brought it forth."[41] But "its thisness...overflows all discourse" and therefore can only be sensed tacitly and intuitively. It is not only prepropositional; it is preconceptual. It merely "shows itself"-apparently much as, he suggest in other contexts, the color red "shows itself" or the first-person "I" "shows itself," inexplicitable to one who does not similarly directly experience it.

> [In] the highly concrete and dynamic matrix of the dialectical play of our mindbodies between pretension and retrotension, ...the *whatness* of objects is known and the *thisness* of objects shows itself.[42]

However, I am as certain about an entity's "thisness" as I am about its "whatness."" `Showing itself is the asseveration of an entity's *thisness."*[43] I am aware that determinate "others" (entities) exist in the world because (note: this is an epistemologically *causal,* not a *logical* "because") I am aware, more radically, more certainly than I am aware of anything else, that I exist.

The train of thought here is compelling. However, we should note that what Professor Poteat has demonstrated here, contrary to his intention and his claim that he has shown that the world, its very "existence," is derivative from-or created by-our mindbodily protensions, is only that our *concepts* of the world (and, of course, such things that we ordinarily think of as artifacts) are thus derived or created. Mindbody-from all that we have said in this essay-is, indeed, paradigmatic in regard to all of our *understanding* of the world; but it is a category mistake to conclude that the world's very *existence,* its "thisness" (not only our ability to understand what we *mean* by its "thisness") is *totally* a mindbodily creation.

In some ways, it certainly does simplify things to assume that the radical whence of our thought is also the whence of all being, that not only all reflective knowing but also all that is thus known is derivative from that whence. It saves us from the problem that appears to be inherent in the classical theory of epistemological correspondence: namely; how do we explain the correspondence between our

thought and a nonderivative reality? But research in both holography and cellular cloning has revealed that the configuration of fields at the micro or cellular level are replications of the field configurations in which they participate at the macro level; and this conclusion is reached without assigning derivative status to either level of existence. Much of the current thinking in both subatomic- and astro-physics is based upon such theoretical constructs as "anti-particles" and "anti-matter," which assume a nonderivative, mirror-image structural correspondence both within the universe and even among universes. Gottfried Wilhelm Leibnitz, building upon his concept of autonomous ("windowless") and intensional "monads," provided the philosophical groundwork for these developments-and for thinking in terms of a "reconciled dualism"-three hundred years ago.

William Poteat's idiom of looking within is extremely valuable for understanding how we can reliably *know* ourselves and our world in the midst of which we are, how we can credit both the "whatness" and the "thisness" of ourselves and our world. But it goes beyond what we have no reason to regard as other than our own radical, prereflective intimations by denying even *a partially* underived "thisness" to that world itself. (And, in doing this, it seems to me that he goes considerably beyond Polanyi's expressed ideas or intentions.) Poteat's "meditations," "post-critical investigations," and "critical exercises in reflection" have succeeded in exposing the ill-conceived rationale of epistemological dualism and even certain pernicious manifestations of ontological dualism. And his paradigm has been valuable in helping to put us in closer touch with our own intimations. Earlier in this essay, after taking note of his claim that he was assigning full and equal reality to both the mindbody and the entities of the world over against it, we concluded that he appeared to endorse the principle that "it is the *reconciling* of the two `parts' of a dualism-not the elimination or ontological demotion of either `part'-that brings us closer to truth, to reality, and to ourselves." However, our further examination of his thinking has revealed that his purported "reconciliation" of the mindbody and its circumambient world appears to have been accomplished by demoting the latter

through the elimination of its ontological status.

When we speak of the ontological status of the "circumambient world," we are of course, like Poteat, speaking of more than the physical "objects" of our world. We include the whole range of our articulated, or bodied forth, relations, values, and ideas. When we perceptively discover the ground of our meanings and values in the very tonicity of our sinews, it is too easy without an idiom of more telic dimension than is suggested by a retrotensive "back-upon-bending" or a "curving inward"-to assume (as Poteat clearly does not intend) that our values, etc., are *reducible* to such preconscious tonicity. Polanyi reminds us that the lower levels of our mindbodily / worldly existence do not contain within them the principles for their own organization or understanding, and that, because of the "open boundary conditions" of the lower levels, principles of a higher level are able to provide this ordering and understanding. Oakeshott's seminal concept of "supersession" suggests virtually the same thing. Although Poteat endorses these concepts, his idiom needs to be complemented or enlarged to take them fully into account and to be open to a more complex or problematic range of intimations.

Although his concept of pretension does suggest such an "outwardly" open or telic dimension, it seems to me that it is limited by unwarranted ontological preconceptions of what can be discovered at the pretensive terminus or, perhaps, that it is overridden by a misreading of what is intimated at its retrotended radix. As I have indicated, we do have a range of seemingly complementary paradigmatic ideas, from Leibnitz' and Oakeshott's schema to holographic and astrophysical theories, to draw upon. It is not inconceivable, although the suggestion is likely to appear heretical to some, that some of the necessary complementation might even be drawn from Plato's paradigmatic imagery, if approached with *both* caution and openness. Indeed, to dismiss out of hand an even cautious consideration of a paradigm that has dominated Western thinking for more than two millennia leaves us, if we are not to appear arrogant, with the enormous task of trying to understand *how* symbols so totally in error could have resonated so coherently and convivially *in* the

mindbodies of so many (and not only the philosophers) for so long.

Question: Is Poteat's conception of transcendence consistent with our intimations?

Such an outward looking, not sundered of course from our radical retrotensive / pretensive awareness, might well reopen the question of the full ontological status not only of what both Poteat and I have described as entities "over against us in the world," but also of what in both the classical Greek and Christian traditions have been regarded as extramundane entities. Not only are the former entities accorded at most a derivative and reflective status (that is, what we "make to appear" in our articulations) by Poteat, as we have seen, but the latter-if they can be said to be recognized as entities by him at all appear to be not credited with even a qualified or mediated status. He tells us, "the conception of an extramundane realm of meaning and truth...by definition...cannot be mediated in time." (1994, 22)

Here Poteat is being perfectly consistent with his understanding of conceptual meaning, which we discussed earlier: all of our words and concepts derive their meanings from their roots or origins in our retrotended mindbodily radix. Without such grounding, the concept of an extramundane realm, or any other, is devoid of concrete, or positive, content-totally abstract and empty. In other words, all of our meanings are necessarily radically mundane. We also observed earlier that, on Poteat's terms, for something to be *meaningfully* characterized as "real" or as a part of the "world" (i.e., to be assigned ontological status), it had, similarly, to lie-either at the present moment or, upon trusted authority or memory, sometime in the past-within the compass, or at the terminus, of our prereflectively grounded mindbody's retrotensive / pretensive activity. Since, for Poteat, the "world" is by definition mundane, the extramundane; also by definition, cannot be included within the boundaries of the world, that is, considered real. Somewhat anomalously making exception for the logically anomalous `I', " which, as we have seen, he feels compelled to assign some ontologically transcendent status because of its moral capacity to "stand behind" what it asseverates,

Poteat approvingly paraphrases Ludwig Wittgenstein:

> If we say, as Wittgenstein does in *Tractatus (5.6),* that the limits of our language (excluding the logically anomalous "I"-W.H.P.) are the limits of our world, then we can say that the limits of our language are the limits of ontology: the limits, i.e., of the sorts and nature of the entities the existence of which can be asserted.

By his very definitions, Poteat does not allow himself to be open "ontologically"-or even, in any meaningful sense "metaontologically"-to that which might transcend the linguistic and logical co-implicates of mundane dualisms or to the possibility that there might be a realm or a "higher" level on the hierarchical gradient of being (without correlative concepts) that is not exhausted by our mundane ontological categories, or even retrotensively intimated in our mundane, prereflective primal awareness. Of course, given his assumptions, he might argue that his definitions were well chosen for these very reasons. But it seems, also, that the categorical nature of his definitions, his occasional drawing of sharp-not fluid and indeterminate-boundaries between the "mundane" and the "extramundane" and (as we shall see immediately below) between the "concrete" and the "abstract," and his assumption of avirtually complete parallelism between these two sets of concepts, predispose him to view these qualities as mutually exclusive and, therefore, even to contradict his attempt otherwise to represent the mindbody and its circumambient world in terms of gradient and hierarchy.

To the extent that we still attempt to speak of extramundane, or transcendent, "entities" ("God," "eternity," the "Agathon," etc.), Poteat insists, our concepts can have no concreteness, or positive content, and are therefore totally empty abstractions

> ...formulated by taking the negate of those qualities that characterize embodiments of meaning and Being in the ordinary world (e.g., atemporal, aspatial) and imparting them to such [allegedly extramundane entities.] (1994, 22)

In other words, when we speak of "entities" like "God" or in terms like "eternity," "infinity," "immortality," or the "extramundane," we can do so only because we can understand their negates-like "humanity," "temporality," "mortality," or the "mundane," and we can never ascribe to the referents of these former terms any ontological-i.e., for Poteat, "worldly"-status or reality because they have no radical grounding in our temporal, mortal, and tonic mindbodies. Although his reasoning remains consistent with some of his themes that we examined earlier, again we notice that the mutual exclusiveness of his categories-total concreteness versus total abstraction, total "worldly" status or none-precludes the possibility of an epistemological or mundane / extramundane "in-between" where entities might be perceived as participating in various *degrees* of abstraction / concreteness or immanence / transcendence while still being credited as fully real. Therefore, the bottom line is, there can be no ultimate-i.e., ontological-distinction, graduated or otherwise, between the world and the "transcendent"-all that is is in the world. "Both the *concept of* an extramundane realm and the *extramundane realm* to which the concept refers are in-and *equally* in-the world." (1994, *23)*

It might be argued that Poteat has not thereby *eliminated* from his thinking that which we ordinarily include in the "extramundane" but, instead, has transposed it to the mundane-that is, immanentized the transcendent. But we would still have to wonder what such an "immanentized transcendence" could be if it, by his own definition, could have no meaning. Perhaps his treatment of the difference between "time"-conceived as the dynamic mindbodily retrotensive / pretensive activity, as when we experience the copresencing of notes in a melody, and "eternity"-conceived as mere static succession or duration, sheds some light on this. Having indicated that the difference between the two is not "ontological" (1994, 74), he says there is an "actual" difference between them that is *"not* merely conceptual": "Their actuality is that of different modes of *my* actual mindbodily being in the one and only world that is actual." (1994, 76) Just as "actuality" here is far removed from ontological status, "transcendence" bears no resemblance to the ancient Greek or

traditional Christian understanding of the terms. The extramundane concept of "eternity," as Poteat has immanentized it, is "actual" in that it represents a mode of my thinking / being-but not very lofty. And although it does have its valid practical usage, since we find it useful in our quotidian lives to account for the passing of minutes, hours, and days, it still has no reference to reality (i.e., it has no ontological` status) because, as a mode of *detached* experience it *is* not grounded in our prereflective mindbodily radix and is a mere static and empty concept. Professor Poteat quotes the poet Paul Eluard: "There is another world, but it is in this one" (source not indicated); the Psalmist: "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament showeth his handiwork" *(Psalms* 19:01); and also Jesus: "The Kingdom of God is among you" *(Luke* 17:21) to underscore his point that *"in this sense* transcendence is our melieu."[45] But given his other comments *on* the subject of transcendence, his special sense of the term, departing as it seems to from both *Old Testament* and *New Testament* understandings, appears only *more* ambiguous. And no further light is shed, at least for my understanding, when Poteat explains:

> In *talking* about that that lies beyond the limits of language, beyond the limits of the world-beyond ontology-I may be said to be doing a kind of metaontology, as we could say that Wittgenstein is in saying: For what the solipsist *means is* quite correct; only it cannot be *said,* but shows itself." *(Tractatus,* 5.62) And in the sentence that you have found puzzling and unsatisfactory [W.M. Poteat's assertion that the extramundane is wholly in the world] I am doing metaontology: declaring, i.e., that both the mundane realm and the extra-mundane realm are ontological categories that are hostages to Platonism-as is most (I'm tempted to *say all)* Christian theology-and necessarily derivative of *my* mindbodily acts of speaking to you before God.[46]

Poteat's use of the term becomes clearer and more persuasive when he decides to apply "transcendence" exclusively to the mindbody's logically inexplicable and anomalous capacity as a moral

being to "stand behind" what it asseverates; my ability to "not merely sound" words or even merely to understand their meanings, but to "own" them, "to accept responsibility for the world as mine." (1994, 76) As we have previously acknowledged, if there is any dimension of the mindbody that most emphatically sets it-that is, the human being-above all other sentient existence, it is this capacity for moral commitment. However, Poteat intends here by "transcendence" more than something that is above all other sentient existence; indeed, something that is, in a special divinely grounded sense, "world-transcending." He has already spoken of our archaic mindbodily centers, because of the radical grounding of all meaning and values and meaning- and value-discernment in them, as paradigmatic for all our knowing and for all worldly being. However, it is not this but our decision, or action, in "standing behind" our values to which Poteat, even with his great reserve in attributing "transcendence," attributes it. And it is only to this, the moral act-and the capacity for moral action: the "logically anomalous `I'," that he expressly assigns transcendence.

The paradigm for this moral agency, unlike the paradigm for all our values and meaning, he locates, at least partly, outside of human agency itself, in a committal act, or word, of God. It is "the *dynamic* space of our mutual appearance that is brought forth by Yahweh"s speech and Abraham's response which *as. present" provides* the paradigm.[47] We would be missing Poteat's *point* to raise here the question of how he can ground transcendence in the word of an "entity"-God-to whom he has denied not only transcendence but also, in *any meaningful* sense, either ontological or metaontological existence. For it is in the dynamic *act* that Poteat, much in the Hebrew tradition, finds meaning (and, in this case, transcendence), as we have seen-not, as the Greeks were inclined, in some static entity or being behind or apart from the act. So, let us consider further Poteat's depiction of the paradigm that confers transcendence to moral commitment and action.

> The exemplary model of covenantal speech in our tradition is in the meeting between Yahweh and Abram.... In answering

> the unique, underivable words of a world-transcending God with his own uniquely authored world-transcending words, [Abram became] Abraham, an incarnate spirit....Before an ultimately inscrutable God, Abraham now apprehends himself as ultimately inscrutable to himself. (1994, 39)

As we encounter the adjective "world-transcending" in this statement, whether the reference is to God or to His words, we must remember that Poteat here is alluding to God in as much as He is a *morally committing* God, and to God's words in as much as these are words of *moral commitment.* The divine Moral Agent or activity, further, is "world-transcending" simply because God's commitment is grounded in nothing other than the decision itself, that is, in His totally unnecessitated and gratuitous ("underivable"), therefore, "inscrutable" willing to thus commit Himself. For, absent the intimational imperatives of mindbodily protensions, God's will, unlike man's, has no prior, morally prescriptive parameters, apart from the terms of a divine covenant. Having experienced himself as the object of an ultimately inscrutable God's world-transcending act of covenant, Poteat tells us, Abraham discovers his own capacity to commit himself, to "stand behind" his own mindbodily-rooted and -discerned values. Knowing that his ability to discern these values does not entail his ability to act upon them committally because the former is grounded in his protensive mindbody and the latter is not, he realizes that even he, as moral agent, is ultimately inscrutable to himself, as God, as Moral Agent, appears ultimately inscrutable before him. This entitles us, therefore, on Poteat's terms, to characterize his-and our moral actions as "world-transcending."

Going beyond what I have perceived as Poteat's interpretation, I suggest that there is. also implied in that biblical narrative, especially if we view it in light of the account of God's later command to Abraham to sacrifice his son, Isaac, an additional and even more radical explanation of why Abraham, in experiencing God's act of covenant, now sees himself as ultimately inscrutable to himself, as moral agent, and why we can, therefore, characterize his-and our-moral action as "world-transcending." In his covenanting

encounter with God, Abraham realizes that not only God's *decision* to commit himself, but the *nature* of that, or any, commitment by Him, is not constrained by moral parameters-apart from the terms of covenant and those parameters that are (unlike man's mindbodily intimations) freely chosen by Him. Man can have no prescience of God's commands, even through the archaic retrotensions / pretensions of his mindbody in the world. Man's moral obligation to God, he realizes-as will be demonstrated later by Abraham's readiness to sacrifice his son-is far more radical than his obligation to obey the value discernments, however sublime, of his prereflective / reflective mindbody in its usual, mundane involvements. Therefore, Abraham, and we-in as much as we have encountered the same God, even this God of covenant-are brought face-to-face with the radical moral limits of our oriented mindbodiey, that is, with the fact of our inscrutability to ourselves. And the moral decisions that we may be called upon to make in these moments can only be perceived as "world-transcending" in the most radical sense.

As we have said, it appears to be Poteat's interpretation of the covenanting encounter between God and Abraham that it is the ultimate inscrutability of our decisions to stand behind, or act upon, our moral values that gives these moral commitments and us as moral agents the status of "world transcendence." Yet, it is a transcendence that can only be acted out or embodied in this world. Poteat writes:

> To the extent that we speak faithfully to one another [W.M.: that is, "stand behind" our words]-a great rarity, if we take God's speech as paradigmatic-we uniquely appear to one another through our wholly worldly words in an other-worldly present, in, if you like, a world-and-time-transcending eternity. (Cf. Wittgenstein: "...[E]ternal life belongs to those who live in the present." *Tractatus,* 6.4311)[48]

I find Professor Poteat's grounding of the moral act in an inscrutable transcendence totally persuasive. But, despite his reference in this context to a "world-transcending God" and his consequent assigning of "world transcendence" to the morally responsive words of Abraham-and, by implication, to all moral acts and moral

agents (the "logically anomalous `I'"), his more extensive philosophical reflections leave us with little, if any, sense of the exalted meaning usually associated with the concept of "transcendence." His broader treatment of the concept and of the ontological / metaontological significance of transcendence itself undermines the lofty implica ¯ tions that appear to be implicit in both the Abraham narrative and his interpretation of that narrative. As we have noted, Poteat has instructed us that *anything* to which we might be inclined to assign "transcendence" presumably this includes the moral act and the moral agent, divine or human-is, by definition, devoid of meaning and reality because "the limits of our [concrete, *positive]* language are the limits of our world...of ontology," that is, of what can be regarded as real. He makes a convincing argument that most of the nouns that we have commonly associated with the extramundane- e.g., Divine Being, the Kingdom, eternity, infinity because they are static, abstract, and empty, dissociated from moral act-are probably best abandoned in their familiar forms. But his decision, in his treatment of transcendence, to assimilate all reality to our own mindbodilycreations, goes well beyond the project of revitalizing our symbols and understanding of transcendence, or the extramundane. His brilliant exaltation of the lively, creative and active mindbody has been unnecessarily at the expense of denying reality to all that we might regard as transcendent and therefore, in effect, to the paradigmatic Creator and Actor.

It is, without doubt, Poteat's intention to assign exalted status to the moral act and moral agent, both human and "divine." At least to the extent that we know God as a moral (i.e., covenanting) God, and perhaps only in a sense that is derivative from this divine commitment, Poteat recognizes His "world-transcending" status. However, it appears that Poteat is, in fact, unable to assign such status to God not only because of what we have just said about his broader treatment of transcendence, but also because mystery ("inscrutability") itself which, he himself acknowledges, provides the vitality and grounding for the divine moral act-on Poteat's terms, cannot in any meaningful sense be experienced. And what cannot be experienced cannot be asseverated, much less affirmed. The con-

cept of *mysterium,* like that of transcendence, being in Poteat's semantic scheme a mere "negate," is totally meaningless. And the referent in each case appears to have no more reality than the negate has meaning. By his assumptions, his definitions, and the general course of his thinking, Professor Poteat appears to have separated from what he considers meaningful and real both transcendence and mystery.

Yet, ironically, he insists that it is mystery itself as we find it at the retrotended, prereflective radix of our mindbodily being and knowing that provides us with all of our meaning and meaning discernment. 'It is, for him, the mystery, the unspecifiable in the "surplus of meaning" which provides *hecceity* to the entities in our world. And it is the not even retrotensively accessible mystery of God that, Poteat tells us, makes His moral engagement with us paradigmatic for our relations with each other. I am in complete accord with both Poteat and Polanyi in their insistence that both our acknowledgment of God and our knowledge of ourselves as mindbodies in the world, even though assisted by intimations, are largely acts of faith. But it is, first of all, our recognition and crediting of the presence of mystery-both within us and beyond us-that makes faith possible. We paraphrased G.K. Chesterton at the beginning of this essay: "If you place mystery at the center of existence, the rest will fall into place." William Poteat, like Chesterton, explicitly recognizes and repeatedly refers to the mystery that lies within us, at the very center of our mindbodies, and he identifies it as the whence, or ground, of all our knowing and being. However, convinced that an "outward" perspective can bring into view only the abstract, explicit, and static "eternity" of the ancient Greek philosophers *(1994, 75-76),* Poteat finds no place in his conceptual scheme to give more than a passing andnotvery convincing recognition to a mystery not paradigmatically confined within us, a mystery described by the great theologians as "wholly Other" than us, a trans-termporal Being / Knower / Doer truly inscrutable beyond what He chooses to reveal and, to that extent, not even brought closer to our comprehension by our conceptual negates.

It is this mystery that Poteat needs to acknowledge unequivo-

cally and explicitly-that is, to affirm by including it in an enlarged understanding of the real. To thus explicitly acknowledge the mystery that is both within and beyond us requires the recognition of what we have called a "reconciled dualism"-perhaps better, a hierarchy that fully embraces transcendence, a gradient of fluid and indeterminate boundaries, a paradigm that speaks meaningfully of looking both "within" and "without," yet one that may well, because of the mystery encountered and of the inevitable spatial / temporal limits of even paradigmatic symbols, have to speak partly in terms of unreconciled paradox. The God that Jesus spoke of was one that he represented as both fully with us and not yet encountered "face to face." Similarly, the Kingdom that he proclaimed, he described as not only among us, but also not yet. The full presence of God and His Kingdom among us, it seems to me, is partly understandable in terms of Poteat's concept of pretensive copresence: "Because of [my mindbody's] *pretensions* there is *a not-yet* that is nevertheless contemporaneous with *now."* (1990, 196) But *only partly.* Central to the Christian concept of a God active in history (and, it seems, central to*any* concept of a Creator-Sustainer God) is the assumption that it is God Who acts and man who reacts; that it is God Who takes the initiative, Who is the paradigmatic ("metaontological," if we confine ourselves to Poteat's understanding of "ontological") Primal Being, relative to Whom man's primal mindbodily being is derivative, "created in His image." God is present among us first of all because He chooses to be among us. Neither His "Being" nor His words / actions are assimilable to our mindbodily pretensions, however radical and archaic. Further, this Presence among us, the "Not-Yet" that has become contemporaneous with now, we must remember, is still not yet, not "face to face" with us, still largely a mystery for now-and, as such, still deserving of our full accrediting.

Conclusion

William Poteat has insightfully and creatively furthered a discussion, started by Michael Polanyi in the middle of the twentieth century, that portends to engage and inspire philosophical inquiry well into the twenty-first century. Yet, up to the present moment, surprisingly

few-especially among the professional, or academic philosophers-have responded to the great intellectual and spiritual challenge that both Polanyi and Poteat have presented, a challenge that offers both to reconfigure and to revitalize the long established foundations of Western thought. Professor Poteat himself has remarked that it is significant that Polanyi "never was a member of the guild of philosophers"-just as Copernicus was not a "professional" astronomer-and therefore not captive to the rigid mindset that often accompanies such membership. Further, as a physical chemist, Polanyi's intellect was not formed even by "the regnant philosophy of science," but, because he was *a practitioner* of scientific experimentation and inquiry, he had a sense of how science, "through the agency of his mindbody," was actually *done,* and how discovery actually came about.[49] Professor Poteat, himself, although a (retired) academic theologian / philosopher, has generally not done theology or philosophy the way it was "supposed" to be done, according to the profession. Where his and Polanyi's ideas are most fruitfully taken up, I suspect it will be mostly by those who stand at the margins or in the interstices of the professions, at least until those professions begin to listen, and to hear, what they have to offer.[50]

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NOTES:

1. Most of these articles are included in J. Stines and J. Nickell (eds.), *The Primacy of Persons and the Language of Culture* (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, *1993).* Poteat"s chapter, "Myths, Stories, History, Eschatology and Action: Some Polanyian Meditations" in T. Langford and W. Poteat (eds.), *Intellect and Hope: Essays in the Thought of Michael Polanyi* (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1968) *is* also included in *The Primacy of Persons.* All essay citations included within parentheses in the text refer to pagination in *The Primacy of Persons.*

2. Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy (New York: Harper and Row, 1964; original, 1958), *404.*

3. Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (New York: Doubleday An-

chor, 1967; original 1966), 50.

4. Orthodoxy (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1974), 96-97.

5. "Memory and Imagination," unpublished 1992 manuscript.

6. Ibid.

7. Tacit Dimension, 32.

8. Owen Barfield speaks of this act of becoming conscious of the derivative and personally involved (Polanyi: "indwelt") nature of our assertions and assumptions as "final participation." He suggests that such deliberate acts are crucial because modern face-value assumptions are bereft of the rich meanings that were prereflectively embodied in such assumption in antiquity and the Middle Ages. *Saving the Appearances: A Study in Idolatry* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1965).

9. "The Nature of Scientific Convictions," *Psychological Issues,* v. 8, no. 4, monograph 32

10. Personal Knowledge, 327.

11. Letter from William Poteat to Walter Mead, March 2, 1994.

12. "Pretension" and "retrotension," key terms for elucidating Poteat's concept of mindbodily tonicity, or temporal distension, do not appear in his works until 1985, in *Polanyian Meditations.*

13. Letter from William Poteat to Walter Mead, March 2, 1994.

14. Tacit Dimension, 13.

15. Personal Knowledge, 199.

16. Ibid., 192.

17. Professor Poteat writes: "I am first and last-and all the time in between-an intentionalmindbody in the world dialectically moving back and forth between the prereflective and reflection." (1994, 205)

18. "The logic that underlies the coherence among the concepts of each of the modes [e.g.,' physics, chemistry, neurophysiology, etc.] *in* itself-strictly observed-does not hold between one such mode and another. There is no *logical* integration of the logic of one mode of discourse with another. Physics does not *strictly* imply chemistry; chemistry does not *strictly* imply biology. Their integration [in the *object* of knowledge before us] exists *ontologically. As* knowers we

integrate [noetically] in our *mindbodily* [(commonsense)] *feat of knowing* what does not cohere *logically* in itself." (1994, 100-101)

19. Tacit Dimension, 13.

20. Personal Knowledge, 404

21. Poteat says: "I both *have* and am *in the midst of* the world. Living mindbodily is both to be *alternatively* moving back and forth between living *in the midst of* the world" [as when I, in one moment, indwell the hammer and, in the next, focus on it] "and *simultaneously being in its midst* and *having* the world" [as when I indwell the hammer while focusing on the nail that I am striking]: (1994, 51)

22. Personal Knowledge, 199.

23. Letter from Willaim Poteat to Walter Mead, February 16, 1996.

24. Experience and Its Modes (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 278

25. Encounter (London) XI, September, 1958, 77.

26. Experience and Its Modes, 323.

27. Ibid., 67.

28. Ibid., 286.

29. Ibid., 356.

30. Ibid., 355.

31. It was not until Professor Poteat had completed his manuscript for *Recovering then Ground* that he discovered in reading Oakeshott's *Modes of Experience* "a writer engaged in doing somewhat the same thing I thought I had been doing in my books" (letter from William. Poteat to Walter Mead, November 10, 1995), and whose argument was "quite congenial" (letter from Poteat to Mead, November 1, 1995) with his own despite the fact that his idiom was deficient and "he does not consistently make his own mindbodily connaturality with the world the axis of reflection", with the result that "experience remains anonymous, *unowned."* (Letter from Poteat to Mead, November 10, 1995) Subsequently Poteat came to the conclusion that Oakeshott's epistemological reflections were even more inadequately grounded than he had earlier thought, but he continued to be appreciative of his several insights. (Letter from Poteat to Mead, February 16, 1996)

32. Experience and Its Modes, 347.

33. M. Mitchell Waldrop, *Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992).

34. Experience and Its Modes, 291.

35. Tacit Dimension, 32.

36. Letter from William Poteat to Walter Mead, February 16, 1996.

37. Ibid.

38. Ibid.

39. Personal Knowledge, 403.

40. "The Platonic and Polanyian Dialectic of Knowing." Unpublished paper presented at the annual meeting of The Polanyi Society, San Francisco, November 20-21, 1992.

41. Letter from William Poteat to Walter Mead, February 16, 1996.

42. Ibid.

43. Ibid.

44. Letter from William Poteat to Walter Mead, March 2, 1994.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid.

49. "Appendix" attached to letter from William Poteat to Walter Mead, February 16, 1996.

50. I think it has been obvious that, even in my critique of Poteat's thought, I am thoroughly indebted to him for his insights. I have been equally fortunate in profiting from his patience in responding, through conversations and letters, to my efforts at understanding his thinking. While he has suggested that I have faithfully represented his views in the descriptive sections I-III of this essay, he is unpersuaded by most of the conclusions I have drawn in the critical section IV; nor have I, at this point, been persuaded by him to reformulate those conclusions. What I have presented in this essay is intended merely to further, very tentatively the discussion to which he has so valuablely contributed-a discussion that I hope will be joined by others.