



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA  
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PAUL TILLICH'S LIFE, THOUGHT AND GERMAN LEGACY

(1886-1933)

by

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## **PAUL TILLICH'S LIFE, THOUGHT AND GERMAN LEGACY: (1886-1933)**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1. AIM OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study is to investigate the contribution of the German years from 1886 to 1933 in our understanding of Paul Tillich's Life, Thought, and Legacy. The formation of a historical frame of reference and a historical philosophy will be formed where possible. This will aid the historical investigation in terms of the needed historical perspective. The importance of Tillich's years in Germany has been overlooked by ecclesiastical writers. These years are often listed without giving them their proper emphasis and historical interpretation.

Tillich is a very colorful figure with his birth in the nineteenth century in Germany. He lived in Germany until he was forty-seven years of age. He was dismissed from his last university post by Hitler in 1933. His academic training was very impressive with a doctoral dissertation on Frederick Schelling. Tillich wrote a second dissertation on the guilt concept of Schelling for his licentiate in theology. The impact of the theological career of Tillich has been overlooked especially the year 1929 when he sought to fill a teaching post at the University of Frankfurt.



## **2. REASON FOR THE STUDY**

American ecclesiastical writers in writing the biography of Paul Tillich have failed to realize the importance of the German years from his birth in 1886 to 1933. They emphasise the American years at Union Theological Seminary, Columbia University, Harvard University, and finally the University of Chicago. Tillich was a German whose theological thought had been formed from the thinking of Frederick Shelling. He had developed a political philosophy as well from the writings of men like Karl Marx. Tillich's emphasis on existentialism was formed from his European background. Tillich sought to address religious problems. American pragmatism and the input of John Dewey have contributed much to the current misunderstanding that prevails in society concerning Tillich's life, thought, and German legacy. His years in Germany are listed but without historical research, interpretation, and meaning. Tillich is viewed in an American postmodern world as merely a philosophical theologian. The German years given their proper emphasis will show that Tillich the apostle to the intellectuals was a product of his German background. Tillich will be properly placed within the ecclesiastical spectrum.

## **3. HYPOTHESIS**

Paul Tillich's biographical details are the key to understanding his life, thought, and legacy. Our hypothesis is that Paul Tillich's German years 1886 to 1933 are necessary to understand Tillich's life, thought, and legacy.

#### **4. STATEMENT PERSONAL**

The writer approaches the life, thought, and legacy of Paul Tillich with great interest. Paul Tillich is one of the theological thinkers upon which modern religious and theological thought is based. The writer admits absolute objectivity does not exist. Secondly, the writer admits his own subjective context in the writing of the thesis. The Harvard system of documentation is to be followed.

I have a theological background with an earned Master of Theology degree from an accredited seminary. My Master of Arts in Humanities was with a concentration in Religion and Philosophy from California State University, Carson, California. I was ordained to the Christian ministry in 1976.

#### **5. HISTORIOGRAPHICAL APPROACH**

The writer will consider the older historiographical method at the outset of Chapter 2. This provides valuable tools which contribute to our historical insights and understanding in the writing of history. Our historiographical approach will turn then to consider modern historical issues in writing contemporary history. The definition of contemporary history, the problem of objectivity, the admission of the historian's own subjectiveness, historical progress, the ecumenical perspective, the destination of history, the end of history, the role of ideology, and the relationship of church history to world history will be discussed and summarized. The thesis will be judged by historiography where it is applicable in the argumentation.

#### **6. LITERATURE REVIEW**

In the area of primary sources reference will be made to the works of Tillich (1910, 1912, 1919, 1922, 1923, 1929, 1933, 1936, 1948, 1959, 1966, 1967, 1977).

The older historiographical works with which reference is made to are Nevins (1938), Gustavson (1955), Bentley (1999), Gottschalk (1963), Ainslie (1921), Garraghan (1946), Meyer (1960), Schilpp (1939), Rouse (1948), Blackburn & Eley (1984), Von Ranke (1973).

In the area of contemporary history reference will be made to the work of Gaddis (1995,2004), Barraclough (1975,1979), Hall (2004), Keohane (1986), Jenkins (1991,2004), Spitzer (1996), Furay & Salevouris (1988), Chabey (1994), McCullagh (1998), Conde (1999,2001), Callinicos (1995), Hobsbawm (1998,2004), Southgate (1996), Hughes (1997), Fulbrook (2002), Latourette (1953), Therbon (1999), Rigney (2001), Lambert & Schofield (2004), Higashi (2004), Lemon (2003), Collier (2003), Duncan (2007), Outhwaite (2004), Butterfield (1955), Collingswood (1994), Wright (1992), Kennedy (2002), Focault (2001), Harrison (2004), Bertens (1995), Hawkes (1963), Freedman (1990), Vernon (2004), Holter (1983), Prakash (2002), Storry (1999), Wilson (1999), Turiel (2002), McCallum (1999), Patterson (1999), Oden (1964), Mandela (1995), Juckes (1995), Smith (1981, 1994), Dickens & Fontana (1994), Holub (1992), Page (1993), Duff (1956), Cunningham, Del Colle, Lamadrid (1999), Barnes (2002), Graziano (1999), Campbell (1996), Brown (1978), Bultmann & Ogden (1960), Sagovsky (2000), Mazlish & Buultjens (1993), Safran (2003), Afansayen (1987), Harrison (1908), Coleman & Eade (2004), Hodgson

(1999), Sim (2001), Parijs (1997), Heilbroner (1985), Gray (1999), Halliday (1994), Chilote (2000), Rude (1995), Praeger (2000), Fitzgerald (2000), Comaroff (1991), Ross (2006), Hesselgrave & Rommen (1992), Bowden (1991), Gilbert (1998), Schofield (2004), McIntyre (1974), Healy (2000), Lambsdorff (2004).

In the biographical account reference will be made to the work of Pauck & Pauck (1976), Tillich (1936, 1967), Armbruster (1967), Adams (1965), Lyons (1969).

Reference will be made to the work of these secondary sources Carey (1984, 2002), Horton (1952), Dorrien (2003), Donnelly (2003), Martin (1963), Crockett (2001), Strange (1971), Cooper (2006), Bove (1995), Hamilton (1963), Brown, Collinson, Wilkinson (2000), Leibrecht (1963, 1972, 1979), Hutchinson (1953), Vogel (2003), Falk (1961), Wheat (1970), Adams (1971, 1976, 1981), Roberts (1952), Clayton (1980), Thomas (1963, 1988), Rowse (1984), Harris (1996), Niebuhr (1952), Freedman & Schilpp (1967), Siegfried (1952), Wiebe (1999), Ratschow (1980), Dourley (1975), Killen (1956), Taylor (1991), Church (1978), Stumme (1978), Coles (1999), Ashbrook (1988), Bandy (1999), Stone (1990), Glazier (1993), Bulman & Parrela (1994), Richards (1995), Powell (1980), Re Manning (2005), Kegley & Bretall (1952), Herman (1952), Niebuhr (1956), Turner (1994), Reisman (1990), Donnelly & Long (1995), Adorno (1990), West (1958), Alsayyad (2003), Heiman (1952), Siegfried (1952), Braaten (1968), Randall (1969), Troeltsch (1924), Runyon (1984), O'Keeffe (1984), Jay (1973), Fromm (1973), Morrison (1984).

These secondary sources will be especially helpful:

Adams, J L 1965. *Paul Tillich's Philosophy of Culture, Science, and Religion*. New York: Harper & Row.

Carey, J J (ed.) 1984. *Theonomy and Autonomy: Studies in Paul Tillich's Engagement with Modern Culture*. Macon: Mercer University Press.

-- 2002. *Paulus Then and Now: A Study of Paul Tillich's Theological World and the Continuing Relevance of His Work*. Macon: Mercer University Press.

Kegley, C W & Bretall R W (eds.) 1952. *The Theology of Paul Tillich*. New York: Macmillan.

Leibrecht, W 1959. *The Life and Mind of Paul Tillich*. New York: Harper Brothers.

-- 1972. *Religion and Culture: Essays in Honor of Paul Tillich*. New York: Walter de Gruyter.

Re Manning, R 2008. *The Cambridge Companion To Paul Tillich*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

There are considerable resources available in the form of journal articles.

Journal articles will be listed in the References in accordance with Schwertner's *Internationales Abkürzungsverzeichnis für Theologie und Grenzgebiete* (1992).

Archival sources will be available on the web ([www.napts.org](http://www.napts.org)). The German Paul Tillich Society is on the web ([www.uni.trier.de/uni/theo/tillich.html](http://www.uni.trier.de/uni/theo/tillich.html)). A further archival source is at Andover-Harvard Theological Library on the web ([www.hds.harvard.edu/library](http://www.hds.harvard.edu/library)). Carey's (2002: 117-126, 127-140, 141-150) work will prove to be valuable reports both on the Harvard and German archives, and the North American Paul Tillich Society.

## 7. RESEARCH GAP

The University of Cambridge defines research gap as follows:

Gap analysis consists of defining the present state, the desired or ‘target’ state, and hence the gap between them....In the later stages of problem solving the aim is to look at ways to bridge the gap defined and this may often be accomplished by...intermediate states from the desired state to the present state. [G]ap analysis alone however is not adequate for all problem situations as goals may evolve and emerge during the course of problem solving, ‘what ought to be’ can be a highly variable target (<http://www.ifm.eng.cam.ac.uk/dstools/choosing/gapana.html>).

The present state is a lack of a historical thesis written on Tillich’s German years (1886-1933). Tillich’s life, thought, and German legacy during these years needs to be historically researched, given the proper historical meaning, and interpretation.

The desired state is a historical thesis on Tillich’s German years (1886-1933). This historically researched thesis would focus on Tillich’s life, thought, and German legacy from the years (1886-1933). The research gap between the present state and the desired state is the intermediate state. The research gap between the present and desired state is outlined under ‘Literature Review’. The secondary sources listed as proving especially helpful are included in this intermediate state. The shortcomings of these fine works is that they are thematic, topical, and written in a deductive manner using the quantitative research method. Paul Tillich’s life, thought, and German legacy is a historical thesis which is written using the inductive approach of qualitative research.

## **8. CONTROVERSIAL ISSUES FROM THE GERMAN YEARS (1886-1933)**

The German controversies surrounding Tillich’s German years (1886-1933) are not the scope of our thesis. The German controversies during the German years have been included when they are a part of the historical context and background of Tillich’s life, thought, and German legacy. The historical context and background includes

Tillich's chronology and autobiography, Tillich's contemporary historical views during the German years, the Paucks biographical account of Tillich's German years, the Frankfurt years (1929-1933), major influences upon Tillich, Tillich's German legacy, Tillich's historically inherited ancestors, principles, and his theological concepts formed during the German years. The major controversies during the German years are part of the historical context and background of Tillich's life, thought, and German legacy from (1886-1933). These major controversies are part of the historical context and background. These major controversies are his marriage to Hannah Werner, Tillich's religious socialism, the theological suspicion of heresy which caused Tillich to seek an adjunct position at Leipzig in theology during the Frankfurt years, the unfortunate incident at Frankfurt, the controversy generated by his books *The Religious Situation* and *The Socialist Decision*. The German controversies could be an additional thesis on Paul Tillich.

## 9. WHAT IS NEW?

**Paul Tillich is allowed to tell** his own story through the harmonization of his own autobiographical accounts. The primary and secondary sources throughout the thesis are allowed to speak for themselves. The thesis uses the qualitative method of research methodology. The qualitative research method makes use of the inductive approach to the study. The quotations which are rather lengthy if need be are given analysis and explanation as the argument is advanced. This is in stark contrast to the deductive method from the quantitative research method. Scholars who use this method approach Tillich with a preconceived idea. The material on

Tillich is then quoted or referred to support their idea. The difference is that the material used to fit the preconceived idea is taken out of context. The quotes and reference are made to say something that they do not say. The quantitative method of research methodology with its deductive approach impose upon Tillich a meaning that is not intended by the sources. My approach using the qualitative method of research with the inductive method allows the sources to speak for themselves. The use of the deductive method of quantitative research methodology is an eisegesis of Tillich. The study on Tillich is made to say something that was never intended to be said. The contrast is to be seen in the exegesis of qualitative research which uses the inductive method. The ideas from the study are lifted out of the document. The meaning comes from the sources rather than from the preconceived idea of the scholar. The kind of research methodology used for the study is important.

The new knowledge contributed to studies on Tillich is that Tillich's life was determined in Germany during the German years because of his ever increasing commitment to religious socialism. His thinking was formed during the German years because of the numerous influences upon him. Tillich has left us a definite German legacy from the years (1886-1933). Tillich was a product of his German background. Paul Tillich was a German. He received German academic training in German universities. The thesis demonstrates the development of his thought during the German years. He was ordained to the Christian ministry based on German ministerial standards. He left us a German legacy from those years.



The new knowledge from our research findings will show Tillich's life was determined in Germany, his thinking formed, and a definite legacy bequeathed to us from the German years (1886-1933).

The American perspectives on Tillich omit the German years (1886-1933).

The issue is not a matter of the controversial issues surrounding the American perspective on Tillich. This fine idea could become the basis for an additional thesis on Paul Tillich. The focus of our thesis is the German years of Paul Tillich (1886-1933).

It needs to be emphasized again that it is necessary to quote the sources because of the inductive method of qualitative research methodology. It may appear that such lengthy quotes are not necessary at times. However, it is necessary to allow the sources to speak for themselves because qualitative research calls for the use of the inductive method rather than the deductive approach of quantitative research.

## **10. THEOLOGICAL METHOD**

Tillich's theological method during the German years was that of correlation. This has been argued in the thesis. This scheme is from Schelling. Tillich's concept of being in relationship to his theological concepts formed during the German years is argued in Chapter 7. It is an ongoing debate which is beyond the scope of this thesis as to whether Tillich received his existential theology from Heidegger.

Tillich spoke of Schelling as having developed existentialism long before Kierkegaard. This is argued in the thesis. Tillich's emphasis on the New Being is beyond the scope of this thesis. This formed the basis for his lectures at

Union Seminary in New York during the American years. Tillich's existentialism of being depicting man's predicament is from the German years. Tillich saw in Kierkegaard's thought mankind's despair with outward reality. Tillich combined Marx's thought with Kierkegaard's thought. Marx pointed out the external tensions of the social process in which the individual exists. Karl Marx saw clearly the social contradictions in the individual's experience because of the capitalistic system.

Tillich's systematic theology began in Marburg in 1925.

## **11. CHAPTER OUTLINE**

My hypothesis is an idea to be proven. Chapters 1 and 3 argue for the proof that Tillich's life was determined in Germany. Chapters 4 and 5 argue for the proof that Tillich's thinking was formed during the German years. Chapter 6 argues for a definite German legacy from those years. My chapters are points to prove the hypothesis/idea. My thesis follows a topical pattern whereby the main head is stated and the chapters become divisions/proofs of that topic. Chapter 2 is the discussion of the historical method and historical issues in the writing of contemporary history. The old historiography gives us valuable tools which contribute to our historical insights and understanding in the writing of history. These historical particulars will become useful where applicable in the argumentation of the thesis. Tillich has been judged throughout the thesis where applicable by the new historiography in the writing of contemporary history. As part of the older historiography, Von Ranke's thought has been helpful pointing to the need for the hypothesis/guiding principle which the particulars of the study

will fit. Chapter 7 is as well a point to prove the hypothesis arguing for Tillich's inheritance of historical principles and intellectual ancestors from 1886-1933. My thesis progresses from a problem to a solution. The problem Tillich's German years have been passed over without the necessary historical interpretation. The result is that Tillich is misinterpreted and misunderstood. My hypothesis is that the German years are necessary to understand Tillich's life, thought, and German legacy from 1886 to 1933. The new knowledge to surface is that Tillich's life was determined in Germany, his thinking was formed, and a definite German legacy defined from those years. Tillich will be properly placed on the ecclesiastical spectrum. The logical progression of the thesis is different than the division of analytical philosophy would be within the subject of Philosophy. This Church History thesis demonstrates its logical progression in the historical movement from Tillich's life, to his thought, and then to his German legacy. It is demonstrated as well by analysis (synonym is logic) interacting with the sources throughout the sub-headings of the various chapters, chapter summaries, and by the final chapter.

The conclusion will present the research findings and the new knowledge.

Chapter 1 will focus on Paul Tillich's life based on his own chronology and autobiography.

Chapter 2 will survey the older historiographical method and the newer historical issues in the writing of contemporary history.

Chapter 3 will consider the biographical details of Tillich's life in Germany from his birth in 1886 to 1933 when he fled from Hitler.

Chapter 4 will examine Tillich's years as 'Professor Ordinarius of Philosophy in Frankfurt-on-the-Main' (Tillich 1936:40). Tillich's thinking was further developed at Frankfurt from 1929 to 1933. The thesis will seek to show Tillich's purposes while teaching at the University of Frankfurt.

Chapter 5 will consider the influences which formed Tillich's life, thought, and legacy.

Chapter 6 will deal with a discussion of Paul Tillich's legacy from the German years.

Chapter 7 shows the wide variety of American value judgments on Paul Tillich. Scholars like Adams, and Leibrecht, Runyon, Carey and O'Keeffe argue that the German years are essential to a historical understanding of his life, thought, and legacy.

Chapter 8 will seek to summarize the thesis drawing the conclusions from from the body of the thesis. Tillich will be judged by the standards of historiography. Concluding statements will be made concerning the Ontological question, and Paul Tillich's German years (1886-1933). The thesis will end with the statement of the New Knowledge contributed to Tillich studies. The new knowledge will be stated in terms of the new historical insight gained from the study of Paul Tillich's life, thought, and German legacy from the German years (1886-1933).  
the body of the thesis.