

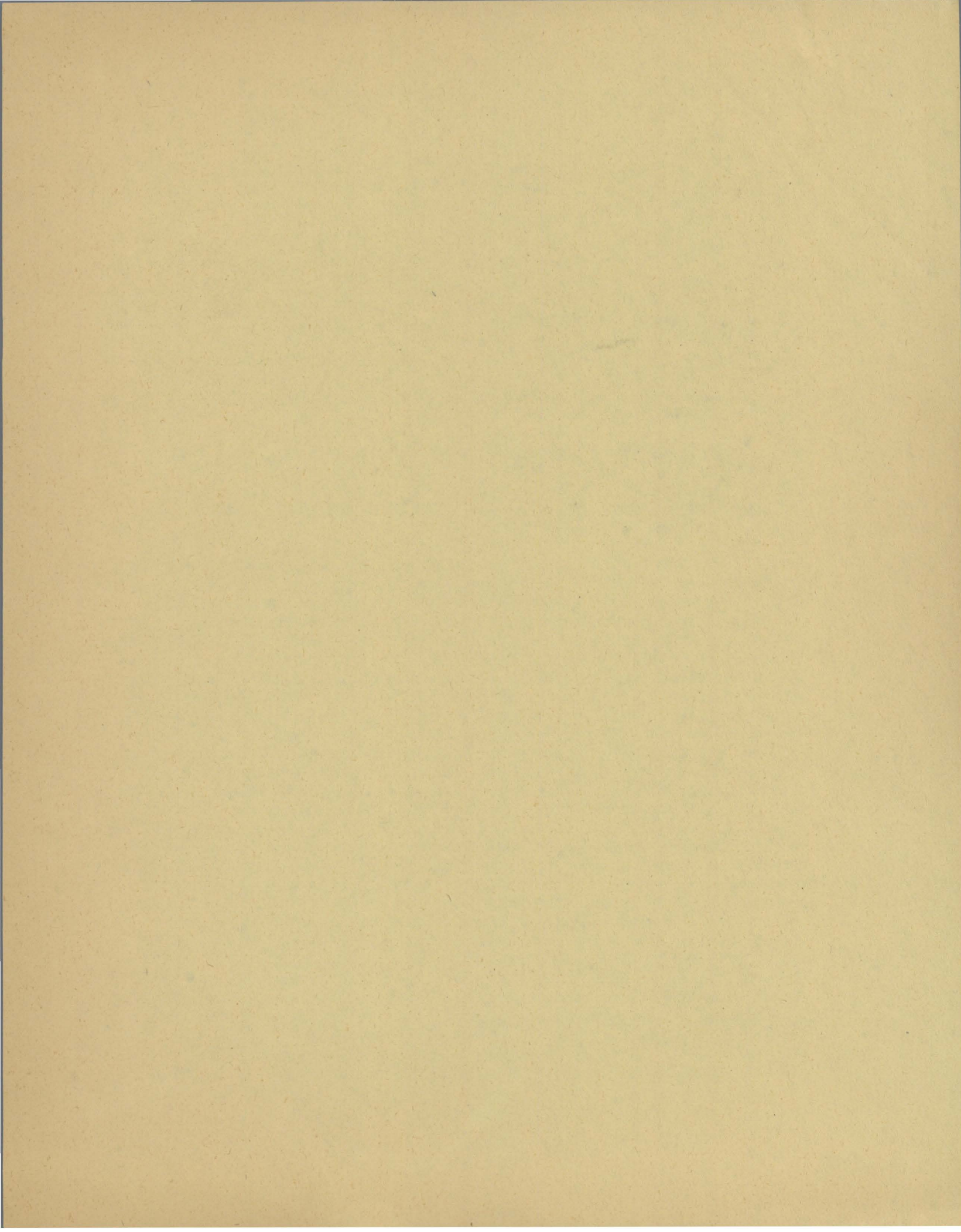
January 11, 1961

Professor H. Richard Niebuhr
Yale Divinity School
409 Prospect
New Haven, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Niebuhr:

The occasion for me writing this letter is to pass on to you a very interesting letter which I have received from Professor Bultmann. He has very kindly provided me with a very thorough, helpful, and constructive critique and appraisal of my dissertation. I thought you might be interested in it.

We left Perkins last summer after two very useful and stimulating years of apprentice teaching with that very exceptional faculty there. My work with students and my dialogue with Professors Harvey, Deschner, Ogden, Outler, Allen, and many others at Perkins was profoundly rewarding. After teaching in the summer term, I went to South Dakota for a Methodist Student Movement Leadership Training Conference which confronted me anew with some of the profound perplexities the student movement is facing today. Then we moved to Enid to begin the fall term here in this rather pleasant and unique setting. Phillips stands today at much the same kind of juncture that Perkins stood at ten years ago. It is a very exciting place to be. We are in the midst of a change of administrations here and a general re-study of the nature of theological education. My coming here is one of the evidences that this seminary, which is the only protestant seminary in Oklahoma, is beginning to move in an ecumenical direction, consonant with the Disciples' historic interest in ecumenicity. One of my most challenging colleagues here is Professor Eugene Peters trained in Chicago under the Hartshorne school with whom I have found myself in constant and edifying dialogue. I am trying to do some writing and I hope that a paper which I presented recently for a faculty colloquium on "Insight and Revelation" concerning the relationship of psychotherapeutic insight to a theology of revelation, will eventually be revised and published. I have been busy also in preparing a German translation, with the help of one of my German friends, of an article which I read at Princeton for Week of Work in 1959, "Is the Demand of God Ambiguous?" which will appear soon in the Zeitschrift fur Evangelische Ethic. I only wish we had in English a journal in Christian ethics as good as this one. I have talked some with Kelley Barnett about the possibility of the American Society for Christian Social Ethics beginning such a journal, but I am afraid that is rather far ahead in the future.



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I think of you often and appreciate the help you have been to me. I have been reading with great interest Radical Monotheism and Western Culture. I am delighted to see the Motive essay on "The Nature and the Existence of God" is now available for much wider reading since I have long regarded it as one of the best introductions to theology and to the questions of faith and God anywhere available. I have used it numerous times both for theological students and for lay theological education and always find that it thrusts individuals into the heart of the question of God and idolatry. I would welcome any comments you might have to the Bultmann letter.

Yours cordially and sincerely,

Thomas C. Oden

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