

**THE NOTION OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY IN SOME
CONTEMPORARY EXISTENTIALISTS**

**A thesis written in partial fulfilment
of the requirements for the
degree of Master of Arts**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| INTRODUCTION..... | Page I |
| CHAPTER | |
| I. SOCIAL ORDER AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY..... | 5 |
| Social Structures and Intersubjectivity | |
| Contemporary Man | |
| II. COMMUNICATION, SPIRITUAL REALITY, AND INTERSUBJECTIVE SYMBOLS..... | 26 |
| The Unknown Subject | |
| Spiritual Reality | |
| Intersubjective Symbols | |
| III. TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY.. | 45 |
| Community | |
| Presence | |
| Responsibility | |
| Creative Act | |
| Toward a Definition | |
| IV. MEN OF GOOD WILL..... | 67 |
| Good Will | |
| Authenticity | |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY..... | 80 |

INTRODUCTION

This study proposes to examine the single word "intersubjectivity" in order to expose some of the meaning of the word and the implications which surround it. The first chapter provides the setting for the thesis and deals with the lack of communication between man and man in this age, as well as the alienation of man from man, and will trace some of the effects of these failings in the social context. Many subjects will then be discussed through the second chapter, as the thesis moves closer to a definition of the word. Some of these subjects which come up for discussion are necessary for an understanding of the thinking which underlies the subject under study. At times these subjects concern the implications which surround this word and at others they are only informative to provide a background which would allow the reader to follow the trend of thought in the thesis.

At no point in the paper will there be an exact definition of the word "intersubjectivity". It is of that spiritual category of subjects which defy easy conceptualization. At best, the meaning of the word only emerges through the bulk of the material and, though this meaning is summed up in a few words, there is still no exact definition.

The last chapter departs in a way from the subject under discussion. The "notions" on intersubjectivity are exhausted by the time the third chapter is completed. The last chapter is a revelation of the image of man needed to bring about the intersubjective situation and communication between man and man. This image of man is one which has the element of hope in it, a hope for better communication and relation between one man and the next.

This topic of intersubjectivity is not dealt with in a direct manner by any one of the authors used as reference material. It is a subject often mentioned by the various writers, but never dealt with specifically. For this reason, the material is as general as the topic of the thesis. Neither could be limited except by the individual choice of the writer. Other books, such as Father Lonergan's "Insight", were included as having information pertinent even though Father could hardly be called Existentialist. Father Labelle's unpublished notes were included since this topic is a corollary to his studies on the subjects of love and of the good of order. The Existentialists were chosen because it is these authors who deal with the topic more explicitly than any philosopher of this age. Particular stress has been laid on certain authors simply

because they have had more to say about some point or other which was under discussion.

The research material is not meant to be exhaustive. Indeed, the writer has no way of knowing the quantity of material available on this topic, for very often the subject is discussed obliquely and often under another title. However, as much material as possible has been included in this thesis. On many of the subjects under discussion the tone is meant to be preliminary rather than final or exhaustive. Much more definitive work is needed on many subjects discussed in this paper, such as the "Unknown subject" in Chapter II. However, such a study was not within the scope of this thesis although some notion of the subject was necessary.

The Existentialists whose works have received more attention in this thesis are those who believe in the possibility of man's communication with man and who admit to the reality of the spirit. Those, such as Sartre, who do not admit to this reality naturally do not deal with this subject. The subject of this thesis is concerned with the breaking of the bonds of subjectivism as man reaches out to man in loving communication. For Sartre this is not possible. "The word subjectivism has two meanings, and our opponents

play on the two. Subjectivism means, on the one hand, that an individual chooses and makes himself; and, on the other, that it is impossible for man to transcend human subjectivity. The second of these is the essential meaning of existentialism.¹

Three of the authors who are given special consideration in this thesis are of different backgrounds and religious convictions and they arrive at a conclusion that is other than Sartre's. Nicolas Berdyaev, Russian Orthodox; Gabriel Marcel, Roman Catholic; and Martin Buber, Jewish; all these men believe that it is possible for man to transcend his "human subjectivity".

As the reader will notice, the works of the three authors mentioned here revolve around the Christian religion. In this thesis the line between philosophy and theology is drawn thin and through the haze of the subject and material covered one can hear the echoes of the voice and teachings of Christ on what it means to live in this material world among other men.

¹Jean-Paul Sartre, Existentialism and Human Emotions (New York: The Wisdom Library, 1957)pp. 16-17.

CHAPTER I

SOCIAL ORDER AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY

Today the larger portions of the world's population are urban centered. The great metropolises of the various nations are increasing their population by startling proportions and we hear whispers of a "population explosion", high taxation, as a result of the need of increased public utilities and services, slum housing and redevelopment. All of these things are some indication of the increased centralization of people. Yet, while greater numbers of people are closer physically than they have ever been before in history, there seems to be something amiss, for physical presence is all we have, and these large centers of civilization seem to be hard and unfeeling. To the eye the administration and maintenance of these vast and complex centers seem marvelous; the city runs well but there is some human element missing, lacking, or astray.

Don't you feel sometimes that we are living... if you can call it living...in a broken world? Yes broken like a broken watch. The main-spring has stopped working. Just to look at it nothing has changed. Everything is in its place. But put the watch to your ear, and you don't hear any ticking. You know what I'm talking about, the world, what we call the world, the world of human creatures...it seems to me

it must have had a heart at one time, but today you would say the heart had stopped beating.¹

Within our cities, then, there are persons, isolated individuals, but not people. Nothing seems to hold these persons together. No one reaches out to help or to share. There are some isolated goals which are shared in only a subjective manner. Money, success and other allied material ends are goals which the bulk of our population have in common, but, alas, these aims are such that while all struggle, the struggle is "against" the other person and not "with" him.

In all past history there was a self-evident bond between man and man, in stable communities, in institutions, and in universal ideas. Even the isolated individual was in a sense sustained in his isolation. The most visible sign of today's disintegration is that more and more men do not understand one another, that they meet and scatter, that they are indifferent to one another, that there is no longer any reliable community or loyalty.²

Man, then, does not communicate with man and human nature becomes a matter of function. This man is a plumber, that one a doctor, the other a writer and that is all they are. Their function is not something being added to human nature which will allow

¹Gabriel Marcel, The Mystery of Being (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1950) Vol.I, p. 21.

²Karl Jaspers, Way to Wisdom (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1951) p. 25.

the human person to support itself and serve its fellow men in some manner; the person's function has become the person. Thus human personality and individual dignity is lost within the structure of the state as man becomes an atom which is subservient to the nucleus of the state. Man is no longer man in any humanitarian sense, but now assumes the properties and values of a machine.

Alienation is a fact. There exists a feeling of estrangement in modern man which has considerably increased during the last hundred years. It is connected with certain changes in human society, with the agglomeration of millions of people in great cities cut off from Nature, with the Industrial Revolution, and with the collectivizing trend bound up with machine production. The prophets of woe, like Abraham R. Seidenburg, tell us that this trend must lead in any society, whether democratic, fascist or socialist, inexorable to a condition of total crystallization in its structural edifice and to a final depersonalization of man.³

Technology and industrialization have become the life's blood of economic life in every country, but they have brought about a fearful change in man's relations with fellow man. They impede him by encouraging false values and goals and rob him of his unique individuality and personality as they reduce him to

³F.H. Heinemann, Existentialism and the Modern Predicament, (New York: Harper and Brothers, Publishers, 1958) p. 9.

mere function. Further, these developments have isolated man from man, as they have removed the bonds that bound when the historical circumstances were more human and natural. A man building a house today is a new statistic to the Federal government; a risk and a profit to those who deal in real estate and mortgages; a tax-payer to the municipality; in short he is anything but a person or a man. This situation is quite different from the one which existed in this country only two hundred years ago, when the building of a new home was a project for the entire community and gave each man a chance to help and thus act out his relationship with his neighbour. The technology and industrialization are needed to provide for the increased numbers of people in the world, but the necessity and its fulfilment have brought about circumstances which, in their way, threaten the very nature of man.

It was from the mind and will of man that these things grew. He planned them and built them and has watched them grow for the last three hundred years. A man who plants watches for weeds and pulls them lest they interfere with the "good" that is the crop. We have not done this with our changing social structure and the weeds and the crop itself have gone almost

beyond our control and have turned against us. "I have said that man is at the mercy of his technics. This must be understood to mean that he is increasingly incapable of controlling his technics, or rather of controlling his own control."⁴

Martin Buber says the same of man's control of the elements of his society. He, however, extends the explanation of these elements and he numbers three of them; technique, economic, and political.

Our age has experienced the paralysis and failure of the human soul successively in three realms. The first was the realm of technique. Machines, which were invented in order to serve men in their work, impressed him into their service. They were no longer, like tools, an extension of man's arms, but man became their extension, an adjunct on their periphery, doing their bidding. The second realm was the economic. Production, immensely increased in order to supply the growing number of men with what they needed, did not reach a reasonable co-ordination; it is as though the business of the production and utilization of goods spread out beyond man's reach and withdrew itself from his command. The third realm was the political. In the first world war, and on both sides, man learned with ever greater horror how he was in the grip of incomprehensible powers, which seemed, indeed, to be connected with man's will but which threw off their bonds and again and again trampled on all human purposes, till finally they brought all, both on this side and on the other, to destruction. Man faced the terrible fact that he was the father of demons whose master he could not become.⁵

⁴Gabriel Marcel, The Philosophy of Existentialism (New York: The Citadel Press, 1956) p. 31.

⁵Martin Buber, Between Man and Man (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957) p. 158.

Man, then, is lacking something. The lack of this something has driven him away from relationships with his fellow man and into himself. This something he had in other times and other circumstances. What this something is, is intersubjectivity. To gain some basic understanding of this subject we must view it in its historical social context.

SOCIAL STRUCTURE AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY

Man has the need of man. It is a part of his nature to communicate with and to live in relation with other men. Marcel call this the "ontological need". Of this need and modern man he says, "Generally speaking, modern man is in this condition; if ontological demands worry him at all, it is only dully, as an obscure impulse. Indeed I wonder if a psychoanalytical method, deeper and more discerning than any that has been evolved until now, would not reveal the morbid effects of the repression of this sense and of the ignoring of this need."⁶

Modern life has its many critics and movements which indicate criticism. Existentialism, as a

⁶Marcel, The Philosophy of Existentialism, p. 10.

philosophy, is one of these movements which indicate criticism. Although the philosophy finds its origins about a hundred years ago in the works of Soren Kierkegaard, it has flowered in this day and age because of its significance in terms of modern life. It attempts to solve the problems of this age by placing the philosophic emphasis on existence rather than essence. There is an attempt in this philosophy "to live", and the "hipster" and the "Beatnik", both pseudo-philosophical movements, are attempts to do this same thing, to somehow live or find a way of living in a very difficult world. This would indicate, then, that some, at least, within our society feel that we are lacking something in this short period of time in space which we call life.

To live in any true sense man must live so that he is able to fulfill his nature; so that he may live in accordance with that nature. The various political systems which man has evolved have all been based on some notion of the nature of man; they have been attempts to let man exercise this nature as it was known by this or that political system. Yet this problem of the alienation of man from man is to be found in all of the existing political systems of this age. Living in any political system where man is

reduced to atomistic terms is not enough. As Marcel says, "...when we are talking of human life the verb 'to live' cannot have its meaning so strictly circumscribed; the notion of human life cannot be reduced to that of the harmonious functioning of a certain number of organs...For instance a prisoner who has no hope of getting out of jail may say without exaggeration-though he continues to breath, to eat, to perform all his natural function-that his existence is not really a life."⁷

It is Lonergan who takes this intersubjectivity and places it in context, in its warm and natural context of human life of which it is a part.

Man is an artist. His practicality is part of his dramatic pursuit of dignified living. His aim is not for raw and isolated satisfaction...If he never forgets his personal interest, still his person is no Leibnizian monad; for he was born of his parents' love; he grew and developed in the gravitational field of their affection; he asserted his own independence only to fall in love and provide himself with his own hostages to fortune. As the members of the hive or herd belong together and function together, so too men are social animals and the primordial basis of their community is not the discovery of an idea but a spontaneous intersubjectivity.⁸

Here we have man, in love, in relation, in

⁷Marcel, The Mystery of Being, pp. 81-82.

⁸Bernard J. F. Lonergan, Insight (New York: Philosophical Library, 1957) p. 212.

community, living, intersubjective man. While intersubjectivity is best seen in primitive community it is still to be found to some degree on any level and in any age of the social structure. The latter does not cause disappearance of intersubjectivity, but does inhibit it. This is, as we have said, the problem of this age. Intersubjectivity is always there in the social structure as it is a part of man's nature; however, it is a part of that nature which can be interfered with by the society in which man finds himself, as can any part of his nature. Thus the quality and quantity of intersubjectivity depend upon the nature of the society in which man finds himself.

Thus, primitive community is intersubjective... Even after civilization is attained, intersubjective community survives in the family with its circle of relatives and its accretion of friends, in customs and folkways, in basic arts and crafts and skills, in language and song and dance and most concretely of all in the inner psychology and radiating influence of women... Finally, as intersubjective community precedes civilization and underpins it, so also it remains when civilization suffers disintegration and decay. The collapse of Imperial Rome was the resurgence of family and clan, feudal dynasty and nation.⁹

These institutions which Father Lonergan mentions do not exist today in society to the degree

⁹Lonergan, p. 212.

they existed in primitive community. Ours is the age of complexity where art itself, the mirror of any age, has become incomprehensible with its many new forms and highly complex style. Martin Buber, when speaking of the anthropological problem of modern man, says that the first of two factors which causes this problem is the breakdown of these forms of life which Lonergan has mentioned:

It is the increasing decay of the old organic forms of the direct life of man with man. By this I mean communities which quantitatively must not be too big to allow the men who are connected by them to be brought together ever anew and set in a direct relation with one another, and which qualitatively are of such a nature that men are ever anew born into them or grow into them, who thus understand their membership not as the result of free agreement with others but as their destiny and as a vital tradition. Such forms are the family, union in work, the community in village and in town.¹⁰

What of the home, the basic unit of our society? In our age there is much to destroy the solidarity, community, and intersubjectivity of the home; high divorce rates, children regarded generally as an economic hindrance and nuisance, the attitude which regards marriage as some sort of an economic partnership whose aim is the material well being of both partners. Marcel has some rather apt words to

¹⁰Buber, Between Man and Man, p. 157.

say on this subject:

I would say that we are living in a world in which the preposition 'with' and I might also mention Whitehead's noun 'togetherness'-seems more and more to be losing its meaning; one might put the idea in another way by saying the very idea of a close human relationship (the intimate relationship of large families, of old friends, or old neighbours, for instance) is becoming increasingly hard to put into practice, and is even being rather disparaged.¹¹

On this continent we hear constant remarks and humour on the subject of the roles of parents. The father is pictured as something between a bread winner and a part time maid, and the mother represents the triumph of a ridiculous independence, which women have in some manner attained. This image destroys the notion of woman as the child bearer and raiser of children. Psychology whispers of loss of father image as the role of the parents overlaps to a point where they can no longer be distinguished or called a specific role in any healthy sense. Children, too, move outside the home and seem to use it as some sort of rest and meal station.

Thus, our technical age has changed the communication pattern of man and family. A modern household is dominated by the different schedules of its various members. TV programs, school buses,

¹¹Marcel, The Mystery of Being, p. 28.

and commuter trains interfere with the formerly quiet breakfast communion of a family. For many families, even the daily gathering at the dinner table has been abolished. Only Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Passover are reserved for reunion and communion. In such an 'atomized' family, there is little true exchange of affection, little warmth, little kissing, little spirited conversation.¹²

Our notion of the family becomes vague as do our notions of the role of each of the members. Marcel says: "We are living today...in a world in which the notion of sonship, and the notion of fatherhood too, are tending to be emptied of that richness of meaning which they possessed for other societies."¹³

The role of woman in the home, that of the "mother", is one that has changed radically in the last fifty years. Fifty years ago the career woman was still a freak and the accepted role of woman was that of wife and mother. Today, however, this has changed and the career woman and working mother are altogether a too common phenomenon. Indeed, the career woman is the ideal and desire of women in general. Father H. J. Labelle, in discussing the good of social order, points out that one of the conditions for the good of order is status of people involved in that

¹²Joost A.M. Merloo, "Technology and Relationships", The Canadian Teacher's Guide, XII (Autumn 1961) p. 7.

¹³Marcel, The Mystery of Being, p. 198.

order; "Status-personal relations congruent with the structure of the good of order. v. g. By playing role of Mother, the woman enters into relation with other members of the family."¹⁴

As the relationships of the family break down there is a concurrent breakdown of the society, as society needs these relationships, for it is on such bases as the family that society at large is built. Intersubjectivity, which is an elemental part of the family unit, is also needed by the state and is taken into account by those concerned with the build-up and maintenance of these states. "Nor is the abiding significance and efficacy of the intersubjective overlooked, when motley states name themselves nations, when constitutions are attributed to founding fathers, when image and symbol, anthem and assembly, emotion, and sentiment are invoked to impart an elemental vigour and pitch to the vast and cold, technological, economic, and political structures of human invention and convention."¹⁵

This is hardly intersubjectivity in its finest or purest sense. This is an unnatural intersubjectivity

¹⁴H. J. Labelle, Toward a Metaphysics of Love (Halifax; Saint Mary's University, 1960) p. 23.

¹⁵Lonergan, p. 212.

brought about by the motive of preserving the artificial structure of the state. This intersubjectivity does not grow out of the natural bonds of human existence but out of conscious necessity. In distinguishing between the nation or state and society, Maritain says:

Yet for all the Nation is not a society; it does not cross the threshold of the political realm. It is a community of communities, a self-aware network of common feelings and representations that human nature and instinct have caused to swarm around a number of physical, historical and social data. Like any other community the Nation is 'acephalous', it has elites and centers of influence-no head of ruling; authority; structures-no rational form or judicial organization; passions and dreams-no common good; solidarity among its members, faithfulness, honor-no civic friendship; manners and mores-no formal norms and order. It does not appeal to the freedom and responsibility of personal conscience, it instills in human persons a second nature.¹⁶

Contemporary political theory could be divided into two categories; individualism, as represented by the Western world, and collectivism, as represented by Communist Russia and the Eastern world. Neither of these political theories provides a good context for the development and furtherance of intersubjectivity, for, as Will Herberg says of Martin Buber, "In his affirmation of true community, Buber rejects both atomistic individualism and totalitarian collectivism.

¹⁶Will Herberg(ed.), Four Existentialist Theologians, (New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1958) p. 66.

'Individualism understands only a part of man, collectivism understands man only as a part; neither advances to the wholeness of man. Individualism sees man only in relation to himself, but collectivism does not see man at all, it sees society.'¹⁷

No contemporary political theory or the material structure of state is ground which would encourage intersubjectivity. Rather it infringes upon it, eating it away, and as it is eaten away, the gap between man and man is widened.

CONTEMPORARY MAN

In this age of the computer, industrial psychology, motivational research, space exploration, and highly organized administration of large public and private offices and business concerns, man finds himself cut off from his fellow man. He is driven back in and upon himself to form a selfish and unhealthy ego-centricity where he walks, lonely and incomplete, lacking the communication with his fellow man which would complete him and enhance the dignity of both. Man in such a situation as this is alone and lonely.

¹⁷Will Herberg (ed.), The Writings of Martin Buber (New York: Meridian Books, Inc., 1960) p. 21.

Martha E. Williams sums the situation up well in her article on Marcel's notion of personal communication; "Man has lost the dignity which belongs to him as a human person...Collectivism, mechanization, and technocracy treat man as an individual object set apart and cut off from other objects, and because of this man is lonely."¹⁸

Modern man lives in a closed circle. This may be the circle of work and family along with a few chosen friends. Such a circle might be commendable under other circumstances, but for modern man such a circle is closed. Beyond the boundaries of this circle he admits of no communication, no responsibility, and no real interest. In such a situation as this man is not open to man but is open only to some men and we do not live in a world with some men, but in a world with all men.

Artificial levels within society either based on money or position also keep man from communication with men. Such artificial structures have been well plumbed by such writers as Ibsen and the more modern American, John O'Hara. Yet they exist and our way of life not only tolerates them but also encourages them.

¹⁸Martha E. Williams, "Gabriel Marcel's Notion of Personal Communication", The Modern Schoolman, XXXV (January 1958) p. 107.

No man can communicate with a man whom he feels is better or worse in some sense or other than he is. The grounds of this type of communication of which we are speaking here, are grounds of equality which exist in all men. When we remove the material trappings of existence all men are equal in the sense that they exist and they share in a very definite way this existence, so that no man can exist unto himself. To live, man must live "with" other men in a true sense. He cannot live within these small closed circles which Marcel well describes:

And yet it is clear that the normal development of a human being implies an increasingly precise, and, as it were, automatic division between what concerns him and what does not, between things for which he is responsible and those for which he is not. Each one of us becomes the centre of a sort of mental space arranged in concentric zones of decreasing interest and participation. It is as though each one of us secreted a kind of shell which gradually hardened and imprisoned him; and this sclerosis is bound up with the hardening of the categories in accordance with which we conceive and evaluate the world.¹⁹

Man does not live in a world with things alone. Another man is not a thing. He is another I, an I which has the potency of becoming a Thou, that is, a person who can communicate with the I and Thou of another man. These terms of I and Thou are Martin Buber's, but not

¹⁹Marcel, The Philosophy of Existentialism, p. 41.

his alone, for others, such as Marcel and Berdyaev, use them to explain the communication which is possible between one man and the next. Buber says that reality may be divided into the I, that is, the subject; the It, that is, the world of objects; and the Thou, that is, the I that is another man when the I and Thou enter into intersubjective communication. The Thou can become an It, that is, another object. Man is always capable of treating man as a thing to be used. Indeed, Buber admits the necessity of this but a more positive and dignified relation with fellow man must be possible and this is the I-Thou relation of intersubjective communication. "And in all the seriousness of truth hear this: without It man cannot live. But he who lives with It alone is not a man."²⁰

In this age man is forced into a position where he constantly finds himself using his fellow man as an object, as if other man did not have the same essential dignity as he has himself. As a result of this, the triadic relationship between the subject and God, and the subject and other man, this relationship which man has tried to solve through the ages, is never realized in a pure sense by a man in this day; because

²⁰Buber, I and Thou, p. 34.

the triad is damaged internally. As Will Herberg, in his introduction to Martin Buber's work, says, "Real relationship with God cannot be achieved on earth if real relationships to the world and mankind are lacking, but real relationships with other human beings are possible only in terms of a real relationship to God."²¹

There is not a whole man within isolated man himself. Berdyaev, with his writings on "personalism", makes a "total" human personality of the greatest value. "Man, human personality, is the supreme value, not the community, not collective realities which belong to the object world such as society, nation, state, civilization, church. That is the personalist scale of values."²² Human personality is not of itself complete, for, "Personalism transfers the centre of gravity of personality from the value of objective communities - society, nation, state, to the value of personality. But it understands personality in a way which is profoundly antithetic to egoism...Personality presupposes a going out from self to an other and to others, it lacks air and is suffocated when left shut up in itself."²³

²¹Herberg, The Writings of Martin Buber, p. 17.

²²Ibid, p. 133.

²³Nicolas Berdyaev, Slavery and Freedom(London: The Centenary Press, 1944) p. 42.

Communication with other man is a necessity to man. He must communicate, and "other man" is the natural subject of that communication. There are five things which interfere with communication, Martha Williams comments. These are: pride, by which man cuts himself off from fellow man; drawing away from God, by which man separates himself from universal communication; self-centeredness, which leaves man no real interest in others; tension, by which is meant the problems and stresses on man which interfere with communication, and language, which loses its meaning.²⁴ Each of these things which inhibit communication are to be found to a high degree in our culture. Science and wealth have made man proud; churchmen are crying man's religious apathy; the self-centeredness of man is too obvious in the economic and foreign policies of each nation; the personal tension of this age with the pace of living and constant threat of war is probably greater today than it has ever been before, since it is encouraged by the various forms of mass communication; and language is losing its meaning as advertizing and mundane conversation stretch the truth and normal meanings of words beyond all

²⁴Williams, Gabriel Marcel's Notion of Personal Communication, p. 110.

bonds, and relativity of truth makes each word have its subjective meaning; which it does, but relativity denies the overriding truth of absolutes. Still for all this man must communicate.

CHAPTER II

COMMUNICATION, SPIRITUAL REALITY, AND INTERSUBJECTIVE SYMBOLS

Through the many hundreds of thousands of years man has evolved many languages or systems of symbols by which he communicates with his fellow man. Though these systems of symbols differ they have that one common aim of communication. Besides man's language he has other systems of communication through which he communicates something of himself to the world of objects and other persons who surround him. He has music, painting, sculpture; all the various art forms which represent an attempt, and a partial success of communication. Full reality is of course not possible in any one communication or in one type of communication. Yet we attempt through many media to do this.

Communication is a main concern in this day and age. Business uses it for its ends; politicians and diplomats see its value in terms of a possible peaceful settlement, in place of what might be war; and some decry the lack of communication of man to man. One contemporary philosopher and Existentialist feels that communication is of prime importance to all men and as such is

within the realm of philosophic speculation and endeavour. This is Karl Jaspers, who says, "Communication then is the aim of philosophy, and in communication all its other aims are ultimately rooted, awareness of being, illumination through love, attainment of peace."¹

We are concerned with communication in this day and age, but we do not really know what communication is in terms of its context, man. Our science and much of the work done on communication is limited to its mechanical aspects. Man is considered to be something just a little more complex than our best mechanical brain. In fact, it is always noted in passing that man is never as exact as the machine which he created. A study of communication from this point of view is detrimental to the nature of man and is presenting a damaged view of human communication by ignoring its full reality. It is permissible to limit a study to one aspect of a topic, but the inadequate studies and texts written on the subject are those which present only a mechanistic view of human communication. Here is an example of such a view of human communication:

In our view, the communication apparatus of man is composed of:

- a) his sense organs, the receivers
- b) his effector organs, the senders

¹Jaspers, Way to Wisdom, p. 27.

- c) his communication center, the place of origin and destination of all messages
- d) the remaining parts of the body, the shelter of the communication machinery...

The limitation of man's communications are determined by the capacity of his intrapersonal network, the selectivity of his receivers, and the skill of his effector organs. The number of incoming and outgoing signals, as well as the signals that can be transmitted within the organism, is limited.²

The scientific isolation of an aspect of some subject, in order to explore its full meaning, is permissible, so long as the "aspect" is not taken as the "whole" subject. Marcel has the following to say on the mechanical attitude to man's communication.

Inasmuch as I look on myself as carrying on communications with objects or, if you like, with 'things' that are distinct from me, it is perfectly natural that my body should appear to me as interposed between those things and me, or, to be more exact, that it should be presented to me as preeminently the instrument of which I make use both for receiving and sending messages (which may, moreover, easily be reduced to simple signs. In a world constituted or at least marked out by stations in communication with one another, my body like other bodies, functions as an apparatus for signalling.) But when set up as an absolute this very simple and seductive interpretation gives rise to difficulties that are insurmountable.³

From here Marcel proceeds to a discussion of what can be known by and of the subject. The subject;

²Jurgen Ruesch and Gregory Bateson, Communication (New York: W.W.Norton and Company, Inc., 1951) p. 16-17.

³Marcel, Metaphysical Journal, p. 54.

the "I" which remains closed to those from without, is the topic which we will examine at this point.

THE UNKNOWN SUBJECT

How does one man know another? He cannot know the other as he does himself, for another man becomes an object for the knowing man. This is the problem of the "unknown" subject. How do we know another person? Johann quotes Maritain as saying, "Philosophy runs against an insurmountable barrier in attempting to deal with subjectivity, because while philosophy of course knows subjects, it knows them only as objects."⁴ Each man runs into this problem when he is confronted with the other man and, realizing his existential worth as subject, he wonders at his inability to know that man as other than object.

When we are asked for our opinion of someone we may reply by employing a few common adjectives. We might use the word "nice", or "intelligent", or "good-looking". In other words, we dismiss the total subject with a few inexact words. Marcel calls these ready made adjectives used to describe another person a

⁴Robert O. Johann, S.J., "Subjectivity", The Review of Metaphysics, XII(December 1958) p. 200.

"simulacrum".⁵

We cannot communicate this idea to ourselves for many reasons; there are the limits of our language; our personal knowledge; the problem of the unknown subject; and that range of subjects which defy conceptualization. These things which defy conceptualization belong to the realm of the unknown subject. We have a few words which form an inadequate concept of the subject; but these words are not enough, for though we may know more of the subject, and we do, we lack the words needed to conceptualize this knowledge.

Love and intersubjectivity, both of the realm of the "unknown" to the subject, are two of the topics which defy conceptualization. Both are concerned with things which cannot be communicated fully in words. To try to express the reality of a love between two people is merely to approach the reality. Here language fails

⁵"This summary, inexact judgment...begins to form what I have called a simulacrum. For it may paradoxically happen that this simulacrum obstructs or dims the fundamentally far more concrete idea we have formed of this person, an idea fundamentally incommunicable, and idea which we cannot even communicate in its pure essence to ourselves."

Marcel, The Mystery of Being, p. 54.

and we have Marcel's "simulacrum". The words of love seem hollow when spoken, and are not meant, but they remain hollow even when they are meant and are spoken. There is an element of love, one of relation and intercommunication which cannot be captured in words. The words ring hollowly and the reality of the love and its greatness and dignity escape the reader, listener, or viewer, and it is known in its totality only by those who love.

Possibly it is for the above reasons that books written of saints and by saints describing their mystical experiences and their love of God do not strike a note of reality in the mind of the reader. Such experiences are known by only the few, and for the rest of men, because they lack even the basic projection into such experiences, they lack the understanding of the richness of such an event. The love, the mutual relation, is understood only by those who enter into it, are immersed in it, and experience it. Those who do not enter the love remain outside the love and must remain so, for what is shared in the relation by the ones who love is incommunicable to one, who, by his stand in existence, is outside the love. Truly, love is understood only by those involved in that love and any attempt to communicate so personal and intimate a thing lacks the

transcendence from the world of objects which such a spiritual relation demands. Words fail us and the experience remains intact in the experience of those who love.

In the experience of love itself, however, there is intercommunication which goes beyond mere words. The love is understood in its totality, not in a totality of categorized thought, but in a totality of experience, and it is communicated in some way between the two concerned in this love. When the lover stutters words which he knows cannot express his love, he is uttering no sentimental and mawkish phrases. His inability to communicate his love is not through lack of sufficient vocabulary or skill in oral communication, but a meeting with reality which defies conceptualization. Of course his words fail, but the loved one knows the reality of the love, its strength and depth, its weaknesses and shallowness, its words and its meanings, in a way that can never be known to the onlooker. The love is known not as the result of some totality of acts and attitudes, but as a reality in its absolute human totality. For all this there remains a part of each of the subjects which is unknown. Father Labelle states, "Love seeks more than it can accomplish. Even in the deepest communion of love, the person remains profoundly isolated,

profoundly alone, thus the shocking sense of the words; human love is but a promise, which can never be fulfilled."⁶

There is a realm of communication, however, which transcends the insularity of the subject and where the subject can be known in a way in which it can never be in terms of conceptual knowledge. This is the realm which Martha Williams advocates when she states; "In order to live humanly and attain the best possible community life... the passage from the lui to the toi and thence to the nous must be made. Marcel finds the answer to the problem of human living and man's loneliness in communication and especially in the communion of love. Love of God, the Absolute Thou, is the best possible solution to the problem of the insularity of Man's personality."⁷ But, as Buber says, "Man cannot approach the divine by reaching beyond the human; he can approach Him through becoming human. To become human is what he, this individual man,

⁶Labelle, Toward a Metaphysics of Love, p. 33. The seeming inadequacy of human love is not really an inadequacy. Human love is enough for the appetite for human love, but our love reaches beyond the human to the level of the "Prime Being" and it is this reaching beyond which is the reason for this feeling of aloneness. We have been talking here of human love as the base on which is founded one's love of God.

⁷Williams, p. 115.

has been created for."⁸

This is the level or realm of the I and Thou. Here on this level a type of communication is possible which goes beyond the normal level of what is thought to be communication. Within the realm of being there is I and Thou, and I and it. The Thou can communicate itself to me; the it cannot but be known by me. It cannot communicate itself; it must be known by an exercise of my mind, for it is an object incapable of self communication. Thou can communicate itself, since Thou is another I. Thus I sense and experience Thou, and know Thou, but not in the sense in which I know it, for the latter cannot reciprocate.

Jaspers, in his "Truth and Symbol", demonstrates the polarity of the subject-object. The object for Jaspers includes both the It and the Thou. This gives rise to a problem. "Now there is finally the comprehensive and yet special task of grasping Being in totality in the subject-object polarity through the mediation of both, and to do so in such a way that both are immediately in Objectivity."⁹

The I-it must be known by an act of the I. It cannot communicate itself. It remains in polarity until

⁸Buber, Hasidism and Modern Man, p. 42.

⁹Jaspers, Truth and Symbol, p. 34.

I make it known by mental act. I can know it in a pure sense manner. That is, I can know it through my intelligent act as the sum total of material accidental characteristics. I do not know Thou in this way. The Thou may be it and thus known only in the manner of it, but when the Thou is known as Thou it is known in quite a different manner than is it.

Thou is known as presence, not as material presence, but as spiritual presence. The Thou, through the medium of his body, since the Thou is of the spirit of man and not of his body, has brought about that existential communication of presence to presence. The Thou who was in polarity because he was either unknown or was an it only a moment before, can now be the Thou, as there is the meeting of spirit with spirit in communication.

It is on this level that the subject which has been unknown can become known. That is, he can become known in a different manner than when he was known as mere object. Here he is, presence to presence, and the two subjects have broken the bonds of objectivity to rise to a level of intercommunication and relation. Here is reached that level of communication which transcends the more commonly thought of level of communication of object to object.

With this postulation a full concept of reality emerges, a reality which is composed of both the material, that part of the world which is so easily lent to conceptualization because of its accidental properties, and the spiritual, that part of reality which is not so readily conceptualized.

SPIRITUAL REALITY

Man wonders about himself. He asks himself who and what he is. He realizes in his inner self that he is not necessarily what others may think he is. As Berdyaev states it: "It is necessary to distinguish in man, the profound and the superficial ego. Too often, to other people, to society, and civilization, man presents his superficial ego, which is capable of various sorts of external communication, but is not capable of communion."¹⁰ But man is not only concerned with his own reality but with the world and all existence as he can know it. Philosophy is filled with various attempts to explain reality, as philosophy is the science of reality, of being, of that which is.

That which is, however, very often limits itself to that which is immediately perceivable, and what is immediately perceivable is the world of objects; the

¹⁰Herberg, p. 129.

material. Material reality is not reality, it is a part of reality. Yet man has difficulty in understanding anything beyond the immediately perceivable. It is for this reason that man too often attempts to set up a social order based on an incomplete view of reality. The world of objects is the reality for which he thinks his nature is made, and, indeed, it is in a certain limited sense. Extreme capitalism, socialism, or communism, based on the material world as an end is actually based on an incomplete view of reality. "While refusing to doubt the reality of immediately perceivable phenomena the world tends, on the whole, to deny the reality of spirit...The materialistic denial of spirit is ultimately an inexact description of the data of experienced realities."¹¹

The spirit, which is also a part of the reality in which man finds himself, is as real as the material. It is not as easily identified, but it is there and men through the ages have, through philosophy and theology, affirmed it and attempted to orient their lives in accordance with this affirmation. Berdyaev says, "Spirit defies conceptual interpretation, but nevertheless its attributes are apprehensible. Among these attributes

¹¹Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 7.

are freedom, meaning, creativity, integrity, love, value, and orientation towards the highest Divine world and union with it."¹²

A very preliminary examination of man's nature would tell him that it is not his body which directs his life. The body, left to its devices, would lead one to mere satisfaction of bodily appetites. It is man's mind which seeks satisfaction and the greatest satisfaction during this life is the security, harmony and love based on and with man's spirit. What man seeks he seeks with his mind, his highest faculty; the one which distinguishes him from other animals. This mind is a spiritual faculty, one with the body but not identified with it, but with the soul.

Man is something more than a thing; than an object among other objects. His nature and being have a dignity and value that is not to be found in the world of objects in which he so readily finds and identifies himself. As Marcel says, "We must maintain that in so far as we are not things, in so far as we refuse to allow ourselves to be reduced to the condition of things, we belong to an entirely different world dimension, and it is this dimension which can and must be called supratemporal."¹³

¹²Ibid, p. 33.

¹³Marcel, The Mystery of Being, p. 186.

Paradoxically, it is the lack of material evidence which keeps man from a full commitment to the spiritual. He demands of the spiritual the same evidence, the same empirical data which he has for the material world. This is not possible, of course, and yet this is what we demand. Still for all, "My life definitely transcends my possible conscious grasp of my life at any given moment."¹⁴ The meaning of this transcendence and its full significance, in so far as we are able to know it, is possible to man. We can know the reality of the spirit, but not in the same manner in which we know the material world. "The reality of spirit is quite different from that of the spiritual world. This reality is not demonstrated, but is revealed to those able to distinguish qualities."¹⁵

INTERSUBJECTIVE SYMBOLS

Man is a being who surmounts and transcends himself. The realization of personality in man is this continuous transcending of self. Man desires to go out from the closed circle of subjectivity and this movement always takes place in two different and opposite directions. Emergence from subjectivity proceeds by way of objectivization. This is the way which leads out into society... On this path there takes place the alienation of human nature, its ejection into the object world; personality does

¹⁴ Marcel, p. 167.

¹⁵ Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 32.

not find itself. The other path is emergence from subjectivity through the process of transcendence... on this path there takes place the existential meeting with God, with other people...It is the path not of objective communion but of existential communion. Personality reaches full realization of itself only on this path.¹⁶

Man is able to realize nothing of his nature or the nature of spirit if he remains in the world of things. If he is to know full reality he must be capable of transcendence. This means that man must in some way, through the evidence which comes to him through the material world, since all knowledge must come through the senses, be able to see beyond the immediate and perhaps accidental qualities of the evidence. He must be able to see the spiritual significance of the material world. This does not mean in any sense that he is reading into the evidence with which he is presented, although man is very capable of this, but that he read through this evidence to the world of spirit.

Man's existence itself is evidence of a greater significance. His existence gives rise to the question, "Why does this being exist?" Answers to this question have been posed by many down through the ages, and are far too complex and varied to delve into at this point. The fact remains, however, that man's very existence has

¹⁶Berdyayev, Truth and Revelation, p. 29.

a meaning beyond the existence itself. "Man is the bearer of meaning, although he is a fallen creature in whom meaning is distorted...Even in his fallen state he retains the mark of his origin and remains capable of a higher life and of knowledge which rises above the meaningless world of things."¹⁷

As we begin to speak of symbol and cypher it must be made clear that there is no Kantian or Platonic view of reality intended here. The view of reality here is that of being; that which is. This encompasses all that can be known by the human mind.¹⁸ This reality, then, is composed of the material world of objects; the world of the spirit; the body-soul nature of man; and the existence of God. The point of view supported here is that of Marcel, who says; "Thus, I repeat, the urgent inner need for transcendence should never be interpreted as a need to pass beyond all experience whatsoever; for beyond all experience, there is nothing."¹⁹ The word

¹⁷Berdyayev, The Destiny of Man, p. 11.

¹⁸We must distinguish here between theological reality and philosophical reality. Theological reality includes, because of revelation, much more information about spiritual reality than does philosophy, which must be satisfied with the little it can know of the spiritual through the processes of the human mind alone.

¹⁹Marcel, The Mystery of Being, p. 47.

symbol is used then not to remove the reality of the thing itself, but in order that we may communicate of the spiritual reality which lies somewhere in the transcendent realm of existence. Thus when we say symbol, we mean the thing symbolized has a real existence of its own, but that its existence is indicative of a further part of existence, one which does not so readily lend itself to intelligibility.

The following series of quotations sums up what Karl Jaspers has to say on the subject of what he calls the "cypher-symbol".

A reading of cyphers does not occur every time on the same level. It is not a matter-of-course procedure in which everyone simply accepts like every other person what the cypher says...They are not at all the simple thing which is at man's disposal at all times but they appear only in his transformation. They are that in which the whole man has a comprehensive understanding of what Being is. Therefore, cypher-reading is the primary requisite for manhood.²⁰

What has been said here is not so terribly awe-inspiring. This is a common experience after a period of time and a series of small insights have occurred on some topic or other, there takes place a synthesis, through which we have a sudden broad insight which allows us to understand some part of life, in a way which we have

²⁰Jaspers, Truth and Symbol, p. 39.

never experienced before. The process is itself one of transcendence as is any process of abstraction. Jaspers also says, on the character of symbol,

The symbol is communication...In the contact of the soul with Being it is the enkindling in which Being acquires communicative power. In this respect comprehension of the symbol is knowledge of Being; however, it is not a scientific knowledge of objects but a philosophical awareness of Being.

The symbol is the complete presentness of Being. In it is the strongest, most penetrating mode of being present of whatever is. Essential reality is more, is inwardly more gripping, than the empirical reality which only dominates my daily life...Being bound by the absolutism of empirical existence closes one off from the essential reality of the Divinity.²¹

What this amounts to is that from the evidence which presents itself to us we can see there is a spiritual existence in which man participates. It is in this realm of existence in which he is removed from the world of objects and finds himself in his highest form. It is as Marcel states; "I concern myself with being only in so far as I have a more or less distinct consciousness of the underlying unity which ties me to other beings of whose reality I already have a preliminary notion."²² On this same point Marcel states, "I have laid such stress upon intersubjectivity precisely because

²¹Jaspers, Truth and Symbol, pp. 39-41.

²²Marcel, The Mystery of Being, p. 17.

I wish to emphasize the presence of an underlying reality that is felt, of a community which is deeply rooted in ontology."²³

Between man and man there is a whole world of intersubjective symbols. Words are such symbols and the tone of voice and the expression of the face are also symbols of an intersubjective nature. The smile is the intersubjective symbol which most readily lends itself to discussion. There are many types of smile. There is the smirk, which is not intersubjective, but subjective; the sneer, which is the same thing; and then there is a certain type of smile which is intersubjective. A smile is never just the mere movement of facial muscles, it has a meaning which transcends this easy interpretation, and the intersubjective smile goes beyond the smirk or the sneer to where there is meeting and presence between two people as they briefly recognize the ontological significance of existence and share this with one another.

²³Ibid.

CHAPTER III

TOWARDS A DEFINITION OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY

It is not possible to give an easy definition of intersubjectivity. An examination of some of the elements of intersubjectivity will, perhaps, give rise to a partial definition. These elements include the ideas of community, presence, responsibility, and creative fidelity. They are mentioned often by these authors, especially Marcel, Berdyaev, and Buber, as they approach a discussion of intersubjectivity. Since these philosophers include these topics, and they are fundamental to their thought, it is well to include them here so that an understanding of this background may help in the formulation of a definition.

COMMUNITY

The word "community" has two meanings. One is the material community in which one finds oneself, such as the primitive community which Father Lonergan mentions.¹ The other meaning of community is the community of existence, or being, which is a part of that transcendental spiritual reality which has already been

¹v. pp. 12-13.

mentioned.² The first of these two meanings of community can be found in actual material communities; the family, a town, village, or group of people united by some common bonds, while the latter can exist between two people who are in communication with one another. Material community will be discussed here and the community of existence will be discussed under the topic "presence".

The material community emerges when men are brought in close contact with one another through the circumstances of existence. For example, where there are a few men, and the life is hard, or places demands on people for close cooperation, in order that they may exist, there must be intersubjectivity. In such a situation there is time for man to realize the ontological connection of existence. He realizes, because the way of life imposes the insight, not only the necessity of mutual help and assistance, but also, the underlying significance of this help. He feels united in existence with his neighbours and friends in a way that transcends the actual day to day meaning of the situation.

Martin Buber's notions on community are an

²v. p. 36.

example of this type of community where people are united through the circumstances of common ideals and aims and orient their lives in such a way that they are united and have community. Will Herberg comments on Buber's notions of community: "From early manhood, Buber has been a socialist of the communitarian (small community) school, poles apart from Soviet communism and West European centralist state socialism alike. Buber's social philosophy is closely linked with his basic religious teaching and the enduring interest of his life."³

Buber comments that, "The primary aspiration of all history is a genuine community of human beings, genuine because it is community all through."⁴ Thus, according to Buber, man through the ages has desired this type of community and the idea itself is not radically different from the "ontological need" which Marcel says is a basic need of man.⁵

Continuing Buber's comments on material community, he says that true community among men is to be found in work and that this community should be protected

³Herberg, The Writings of Martin Buber, p. 13.

⁴Ibid, p. 127.

⁵v. pp. 9-10.

from mawkish sentiment which Lonergan has said the state encourages as part of its efforts to build up the state.⁶

In the interests of its vital meaning, therefore, the idea of community must be guarded against all contamination by sentimentality and emotionalism. Community is never a mere attitude of mind, and if it is feeling, it is inner disposition or constitution of a life in common, which knows and embraces in itself hard "calculation" adverse "chance" the sudden excess of anxiety. It is a community of tribulation, and only because of that it is community of spirit; it is community of toil, and only because of that is it community of salvation... A community of faith truly exists only when it is a community of words.⁷

Further, this community must have a focal point or a center around which it revolves. "The real essence of community is to be found in the fact, manifest or otherwise, that it has a center."⁸ Community, as far as Buber is concerned, has no need to be founded, for it is. Nor is this community a hermitage for those who would flee the world, for it is a community in which there is, through the nature of the community itself, room for, and recognition of, other people.

Yet a community has no need to be founded. Whenever historical destiny has brought a group of men together in a common fold, there was room for the

⁶v. p. 17.

⁷Herberg, p. 128.

⁸Ibid, p. 129.

growth of a genuine community;...A living togetherness, constantly renewing itself, was already there, and all that needed strengthening was the immediacy of relationships...The danger of seclusion might hang over the community, but the communal spirit banished it, for here this spirit flourishes as nowhere else, and broke windows for itself in the narrow walls, with a large view of people, mankind, and the world.⁹

The type of community of which Buber is talking here is the Hasidic community. The basic idea of this community is that it is a community in the sense described above, but here, in the idea of the Hasidic community, Buber moves toward what would parallel the Christian Theocentric view of existence. Hasidism itself is a seventeenth-eighteenth century movement in Jewry. It advocated small well knit community life, but all in this life is to be hallowed. That is, it is to be offered to God and life is thus to become a continual prayer. "Every creature, plant, and animal offers itself to man, but by man all is offered to God. When man with all his limbs purifies and hallows himself to an offering, he purifies and hallows the creature."¹⁰

There is no element of asceticism in Hasidism. They advocate the "whole" man as he is created and for Hasidism asceticism has a negative element which is not

⁹Ibid, p. 125.

¹⁰Buber, Hasidism and Modern Man, p. 33.

in keeping with man's nature. Life is to be lived in a "whole" manner and man must respond to life in a complete way. The emphasis in this religious thought is on human nature such as it is and there is no element of reaching beyond what is within the grasp of man.

Hallowing is an event which commences in the depths of man, there where choosing, deciding, beginning takes place. The man who thus begins enters into the hallowing. But he can only do this if he begins just as man and presumes no super human holiness. The true hallowing of the human in him. Therefore the Biblical command, 'Holy men shall you be unto me', has received Hasidic interpretation thus; 'humanly holy shall you be unto me.'¹¹

The meaning and the teachings of the Hasidic faith are best summed up, according to Buber, in the two following quotes.

A stranger am I on the earth, do not conceal from me your commandment...You are, like me, a stranger on the earth and your indwelling has no resting place. O do not withdraw yourself from me, but disclose to me your commandment so that I can become your friend. God helps with His nearness the man who wants to hallow himself and his world.

The peoples of the earth also believe that there are two worlds; 'in that world' they say. The difference is this: they understand the two worlds to be removed and cut off from each other. But Israel believes that the two worlds are one in their ground and that they shall become one in reality.¹²

Emerging from these quotes, and this material,

¹¹Ibid, p. 31.

¹²Ibid, pp. 36-37.

one can see the bonds which bind in community. Bonds of work, of religious belief, of transcending through this life of community to the spiritual, which is not "beyond" but is present in a real sense. Truly, this type of community would much better suit the nature of man. It would provide him with time and space in which to realize his significance and relation to his fellow men and his God. Such a community would not fill his life with frivolity which would cloud his mind and soul with an excess of indulgent leisure.¹³ Whether such a community is possible in this present social order is rather doubtful, but as Buber says; "A real community need not consist of people who are perpetually together, but it must consist of people, who, precisely because they are comrades, have mutual access to one another and who are ready for one another."¹⁴ Here we have entered the realm of the individual meeting which is possible even outside the community; which is possible even in the complexity of our large cities. This is the realm of "presence". Here individual man can meet another in a manner which goes beyond mere physical proximity.

PRESENCE

Intersubjectivity exists, as has been said, on

¹³Labelle, Toward a Metaphysics of Love, p. 25.

¹⁴Herberg, The Writings of Martin Buber, p. 137.

all levels of human existence.¹⁵ It exists on the primary level of human existence, that of the primitive community and throughout civilization and society into the most complex of civilizations and technocracies. While intersubjectivity may be inhibited through a lack of physical community, it is possible to have the intersubjective arise through an individual meeting of man to man. Even in the case of individual man, though, the same things will inhibit this meeting as inhibit the community. The founding and maintenance of small communities, such as those described by Buber, have little chance of realization, with the complexities of civilization today. Man will not return to the small community, the general development of the age, the increase in population and increasing demands for greater supplies of food keep him from such a state. Thus the individual meeting of man with man has a greater statistical chance in this day and age.

Presence is a term very often used by Gabriel Marcel. It has overtones of empathy. That is, human worth and dignity, love and consideration of the next man. By presence is not meant the physical presence of another, but the spiritual or psychic presence of

¹⁵v. p. 13.

another. Two people can meet and pass by and neither knows or has known the other. They may even have met in terms of a handshake, but physical meeting is not presence. These people may have exchanged nothing, have realized nothing, as a result of the meeting. Two other people can meet and can communicate a wealth of themselves in a communication which will transcend the meanings of a few words or other gestures of communication. Thus there is meeting which is presence and meeting which is not. Marcel describes the circumstances and meaning of presence as he says:

There are some people who reveal themselves as 'present' - that is to say, at our disposal - when we are in pain or in need of confiding in someone, while there are other people who do not give us this feeling, however great is their good will...The most attentive and the most conscientious listener may give me the impression of not being present; he gives me nothing, he cannot make room for me in himself...The truth is that there is a way of listening which is a way of refusing, of refusing oneself; the material gift, the visible action, do not necessarily witness to presence...Presence is something which reveals itself immediately and unmistakably in a look, a smile, an intonation or a handshake... If I say that the person who is at my disposal is the one who is capable of being with me with the whole of himself when I am in need; while the one who is not at my disposal merely seems to offer me a temporary loan raised on his resources. For the one I am a presence; for the other I am an object. Presence involves a reciprocity which is excluded from any relation of subject to object to subject-object.¹⁶

¹⁶Marcel, The Philosophy of Existentialism, pp. 40-41.

Presence is not something which is one-sided. It is that which arises from the meeting of two who are open to one another. There is reciprocity of presence. This can not be one-sided, for there is no communication where there is no reciprocity. Buber, when speaking of presence, ("relation" he calls it) says, "Let no attempt be made to sap the strength from the meaning of the relation: relation is mutual."¹⁷ Presence is a meeting of a Thou and Thou; a "we" not just an I and Thou. In either case the other person has communicated himself to me not as an object but as presence. He has ceased to be an object, and this must be so if there is to be presence, for there can be no presence where one person regards another as object.¹⁸ "The moment I think:After(sic)

¹⁷Ibid, p. 24.

¹⁸J. D. Salinger, in his book "Franny and Zooey", describes a meeting between two people where there is no real presence or communication. Franny has met her boyfriend, Lane, for a big football weekend. They are now in a restaurant where Lane has displayed extreme egoism so natural to young and serious students and Franny has made signs of great mental and even spiritual distress. Lane has asked Franny about the book he has seen in her purse. Franny starts to explain it to Lane and it is obvious through her explanation that she is enthused and enthralled about this book, "Way of the Pilgrim". Franny concludes her little speech:

"And he tells all of them how to pray by this special way."

Lane nodded. He cut into his salad with his fork. "I hope to God we get time over this weekend so that you can take a quick look at this goddam paper I told you about," he said. "I don't know.

all, this is only a case, NO. 75,627, it is no good, I can feel nothing. But the characteristic of the soul which is present and at the disposal of others is that it cannot think in terms of cases; in its eyes there are no cases at all."¹⁹

Nothing suffices in presence except that there be mutual recognition of the dignity in which both of those involved in presence share.

RESPONSIBILITY

As well as the realm of presence, we have another concept which emerges from this idea of community and

I may not do a damn thing with it - I mean to try to publish it or what have you - but I'd like you to sort of glance through it while you're here."

"I'd love to," Franny said. She watched him butter another piece of bread. "You might like this book", she said suddenly. "It's so simple, I mean."

"Sounds interesting. You don't want your butter, do you?"

"No, take it. I can't lend it to you, because it's way overdue already, but you could probably get it at the library here. I'm positive you could."

"You haven't touched your goddam sandwich," Lane said suddenly. "You know that?"

There is no communication here nor is there presence. The two people are someplace else within themselves. Franny wants rather desperately to communicate and she tries, but her presence is denied by the lack of Lane's presence and response. He does not need communication in the state which he is in. He is complete within himself.

¹⁹Marcel, The Philosophy of Existentialism, p. 41.

that is the concept of responsibility. This particular concept is well handled by Martin Buber, who maintains that man must find himself responsible to meet that with which he is confronted. He must respond as it were to the world around him. His word seems reminiscent of the Romantic period of English literature, but perhaps they contain the fullness of what was only partly known by Wordsworth and his followers.

The idea of responsibility is to be brought back from the province of specialized ethics, of an 'ought' that swings free in the air, into that of lived life. Genuine responsibility exists only where there is real responding.

Responding to what?

To what happens to one, to what is to be seen and heard and felt. Each complete hour allotted to the person, with its content drawn from the world and from destiny, is speech for the man who is attentive. Attentive, for no more than that is needed in order to make a beginning with the reading of the signs that are given to you...We respond to the moment, but at the same time we respond on its behalf, we answer for it. A newly-created concrete reality has been laid in our arms; we answer for it. A dog has looked at you, you answer for the glance, a child has clutched your hand, you answer for its touch, a host of men moves about you, you answer for their need.²⁰

Perhaps the overtones of this quotation are a little mystical, but this is the way in which Buber very often expresses himself; partly because the subject matter is the spiritual, and thus difficult to write about, and partly because Buber is given to mysticism.

²⁰Buber, Between Man and Man, pp. 16-17.

Be that as it may, the idea of responsibility not only to all men but to all creation is a good one with a sound basis in reason and reality. What Buber has advocated here is a total responsibility and a total response to a total reality. This is the key-note of Existentialist philosophy; this response or "living", as it is often called, and the response to reality.

CREATIVE ACT

This response which we are able to make to reality is what Marcel and Berdyaev would call "creative act". Briefly, this creative act is a continuously renewed response to being. The first step in this response which we are to make is "recollection", which Marcel feels is absolutely necessary in order that one might exercise the responsibility of meeting the world. "I am convinced, for my part, that no ontology - that is to say, no apprehension of ontological mystery in whatever degree - is possible except to a being who is capable of recollecting himself, and of thus proving that he is not a living creature pure and simple, a creature, that is to say, which is at the mercy of its life and without a hold on it."²¹

²¹Marcel, The Philosophy of Existentialism, p.23.

Encounter with being is not at all a general experience. This happens infrequently to a single individual, yet it does happen. Nor, as Marcel says, does philosophy concern itself with such a meeting because such a meeting is of the realm of the "unknown" subject. "Say that I have made an encounter which has left a deep and lasting trace on my life. It may happen to anyone to experience the deep spiritual significance of such a meeting - yet this is something which philosophers have commonly ignored or disdained, doubtless because it effects only the particular person as person - it cannot be universalized, it does not concern rational being in general."²²

It is when Marcel is talking of hope as being a dependence on something outside ourselves that he mentions the two terms "creative act" and "fidelity". He says:

Could hope not therefore be defined as the will when it is made to bear on what does not depend on itself? The experimental proof of this connection is that it is the most active saints who carry hope to its highest degree; this would be inconceivable if hope were simply an active state of the soul. The mistake so often made here comes from a stoical representation of the will as a stiffening of the soul, whereas on the contrary it is relaxation and creation. The term 'creation', which occurs here for the first time is nevertheless, decisive. Where there is creation there can be no degradation, and to the extent that technics are creative or imply creativity,

²²Ibid, p. 21.

they are not degrading in any way. Degradation begins at the point where creativeness falls into self-imitation and self-hypnotism, stiffening and falling back on itself.²³

Further on "fidelity" and on what he terms

"creative fidelity" Marcel states:

So little is fidelity akin to the inertial of conformism that it implies an active and continuous struggle against the forces of interior dissipation, as also against the sclerosis of habit.

Creative fidelity consists in maintaining ourselves actively in a permeable state; and there is a mysterious interchange between this gift and the gifts granted in response to it.²⁴

Thus we have man meeting reality through creative act. This is a total or whole man, one who is alive to the world around him. He, through reflection, is able to perform the creative act of meeting reality. This attitude keeps this man open for the presentness of other men. There is the preparatory work, so to speak, that is necessary for a meeting between two men. They need to be open and present to one another, free of those things which would discourage their communication.²⁵

All of life is to be met. It requires the responsibility of response. But before one can make this response there must be recollection. Through

²³Ibid, p. 33.

²⁴Ibid, pp. 35 and 38.

²⁵v. p. 24.

recollection one may continually renew the creative fidelity which is needed to meet life and to renew presence. Again this very philosophy and thought seems to arise from the problems of this age, when there is little contact between the individual subject and the other subjects and the object world. There is lacking the intersubjective bond and meaning to communication which would allow and permit the approach to other man and to communication in a full and human sense.

TOWARD A DEFINITION

It is not possible to sum up intersubjectivity in some trite and categorized definition. Intersubjectivity is made of stuff that does not lend itself to categories; to some explanation, but never to categories. The meaning of the word escapes easy definition. It is of the realm of the unseen reality. This realm of the spirit, which is, in as true a sense, as is material reality. But the spiritual does not lend itself to even the concreteness of language. As Berdyaev says, "Spirit defies conceptual interpretation, but nevertheless its attributes are apprehensible."²⁶

One of the effects of intersubjectivity is

²⁶Berdyaev, Spirit and Reality, p. 33.

that where intersubjectivity is, there is communication. Thus, in a manner, intersubjectivity concerns itself with open channels of communication. This it has in common with human relations. When we speak of human relations we speak of the relationships which exist between individuals, an individual and a group, or a group and a group. The aim of human relations is to keep the channels of communication open. This is why, in this day and age, there is so much emphasis placed by world leaders on conferences and talks, for when there is no communication as the result of the poor "relations" as they are called, then the parties involved make no advance toward a solution and their only alternative is to retreat into their own subjectivity and the state of fear and suspicion that breeds war.

Human relations might be considered a single aspect of intersubjectivity. They are, in a way, a limited view of the intersubjective situation. Human relations have a connotation of "smooth" communication, the emphasis is on the smooth. Keeping channels open is the concern of human relations. It is superficial in its aims as it does not realize for what it must keep the channels open. It recognizes only the need

of communication and none of the ontological significance of communication. Indeed, on this continent business has exploited this notion of human relations to the point where it is coupled with public relations and the aim of the two seems to be to keep the "buying public" buying. Ideally human relations would be the maintainance of channels of communication so that the intersubjective situation might exist.

Mention of the word "intersubjectivity" immediately brings to mind the topic of "extra-sensory perception". Extra-sensory perception, as it is termed ESP, is not to be confused with intersubjectivity. The belief of advocators of ESP may be summed up in J. B. Rhine's comments of telepathy. "Telepathy was the first psychic capacity to be scientifically studied. It was reasoned that if thought can be transferred directly from one mind to another without the use of the senses, a man must possess mental powers transcending brain mechanics."²⁷

Certainly in the intersubjective situation there takes place a type of communication which would seem to transcend what is known of brain mechanics, but this is only another part of intersubjectivity. It is not intersubjectivity in its whole or total sense. Gabriel

²⁷J.B.Rhine, The Reach of the Mind (New York: William Sloane Associates, Inc.) p. 13.

Marcel considered these ideas of telepathy or ESP but he dismissed them as being beyond the scope of philosophy. "I will make no further insistence on such reflections as these. Though they are very interesting they do not yet permit of a philosophical elucidation that is entirely satisfying."²⁸ Intersubjective communication transcends the limits of the gestures of communication; the words, gestures, looks and intonations, but the meaning of the word itself spoken in context transcends the limits of the word itself. ESP is not intersubjectivity. It may be proved at some later date that it is part of the mechanical basis of intersubjectivity but it is not of itself intersubjectivity.

It would perhaps seem that intersubjectivity is existential communication, but it is not that purely and simply. There is intersubjective communication but intersubjective communication is merely what the words tell us it is, communication that is intersubjective. Communication of itself does not have intersubjective connotations. It is intersubjective in the sense that communication goes on between one subject and the next. But communication can take place without any intersubjective connotation whatsoever. Without presence there

²⁸Marcel, Metaphysical Journal, p. 190.

can be no communication in an intersubjective sense.²⁹ There can be words and the other symbols used for communication, and even something communicated, but it is only a partial communication and never intersubjective communication.

It is out of direct love, that love which recognizes the dignity and value of other men as being of the same value and dignity in which the subject himself participates, that intersubjectivity grows. If the subject recognizes himself as being good and having some value, he is forced to a recognition of the good of other men, as they are a participation in the same being in which the subject is a participation. Thus other beings have the same value which the subject himself has. "In loving myself, I love a participated good and at the same time I must also love other participated goods... every being loves itself, strives to conserve itself, defend, promote and increase its perfection. This is to acknowledge a value in itself and because of the communion in being, it also acknowledges a value in the other."³⁰

²⁹v. pp. 51 ff.

³⁰Labelle, Toward a Metaphysics of Love, p. 32.

As has been stated, love cannot be known by one outside the love as it is known by the subjects involved.³¹ The bonds of intersubjectivity can be viewed as the effects of direct love. As man recognizes God's love for man through the effects of this love, so too do we recognize the effects and reach some understanding of any love, for we cannot know love in which we are not directly involved in any other way. A stranger remains a stranger outside the love of strong family ties, and yet, can be a friend within the circle of friends of the family and come to know this facet of the family love through the participation of recognition and that actual participation which is permitted friends who are not actually members of the family itself.

Thus, to understand the implications of intersubjectivity, one must understand the notion of direct love and its implications. While intersubjectivity is a part of complete human communication, complete in the sense that there is something communicated and understood, not in a mechanical way but in a complete and human way, it is not strictly communication. It is rather the ontological significance of communication. That is, there is a part of human communication which

³¹v. pp. 31 and 32.

in some spiritual manner implies that behind any human communication there lies a greater significance than the actual mechanics of that communication. What is implied in part, is the ontological significance of existence and good will on the part of both subjects. By good will is meant a will which is disposed toward the good of the other as perfection.³² A good to which both are disposed and for which both are responsible and committed.

³²Labelle, p. 32.

CHAPTER IV

MEN OF GOOD WILL

As civilization increases its large cities and centers of population, and centralizes and develops the control over the large number of people who live in them, communication between man and man will follow the process of disintegration, that is, the intersubjective communication will break down. This is the fault, if you will, of the greater structures of civilization. They do remove man from close contact with other men by driving man into his own subjective shell and supplying only material values which are necessarily subjective since they are possessive. Communication will be there, but there will be less chance of an individual realizing his ties and responsibilities in being with other men.

This loss of intersubjectivity seems to be the inevitable outcome of increasing the stature of national states and their centers of population. This is well pointed out by Father Lonergan.¹ There is certainly little chance of the community within a community forming. There is no room for such a community in today's world.

¹v. p. 13.

They would be undesirable at any rate. These smaller communities, though they have greater intersubjectivity and many desirable virtues, also have their vices. Bigotry, small-mindedness, and superstition are the outcomes of this type of small community. The subjectivism of such a community gives rise to an insularity of outlook which is highly undesirable and is precisely what intersubjectivity, properly oriented, should overcome. We cannot return to such communities, nor is the loss of intersubjectivity inevitable.

The present expansion of the world's population alone would make such thoughts of a return to such communities impossible. The complexity of our present social order will increase. That is, of course, barring the event of another war. On the other hand, the loss of intersubjectivity is not something to dismiss as inevitable as the natural outcome of such social development. Intersubjectivity is a desirable element of human existence and thus it would seem reasonable to assume that man should do something about this problem.

This problem is man's, in the sense that it comes from within man. He has made the material circumstances of the problem and they would be extremely difficult to change. The increase in population will

continue and the large nation state will continue to grow and others, now just beginning, such as those in Africa, will add their voices to those of the already established nations. It is individual man who must overcome these problems of this complex age. That is, individual man as opposed to a group of men. It will take an individual revolt of the individual man to overcome the problems of communication as well as the other problems of this age.

Thus, while there is little chance of forming a community of the complex national states without entering into the problem of the subjective state, that is, one which does not recognize the value of the men of other states, however, there is the possibility of better communication between one man and the next, so long as these men are devoted men of good will. Many problems exist between man and man because of a lack of ontological recognition. Man fails to realize the ties and bonds which bind him in existence to the next man and he ignores the responsibility which one man must have for the next. The answer to the problem is individual men, properly trained, educated and committed, who will act in accordance with those commitments.

Where this solution begins is in the reflection which Marcel advocates.² Man is too rushed to learn in

²v. p. 57.

this age. The very pace of life drives him in exhaustion into himself and his sharing of the burden of existence is within himself. He gets little time to think and to reflect on the course of his life and the values which govern it. Thus his values are drawn from the world of things, the material world, and these values contribute little to a recognition of his dignity and the full significance of his life. His life seems to tend toward a useless collection of material goods and a perennial search for some happiness he feels should arise at some point in this collection. This is, of course, a delusion.

Man's reflections should lead him to an understanding of existence. He should come to an understanding of his relations with God and with his fellow man. From this understanding and judgment he should adjust his values and reach out in presence and communication with his fellow man. He should begin to penetrate some of the myths which surround his day to day existence. For example, the present attitude toward successful existence seems to be oriented in terms of material success. Man's worth and his dignity too seem to be measured in the same manner.

Through reflection man must reach the point where he is able to break the bonds of his own subjectivity. From this point nations made up of such men

should break their own subjective bonds and myths, such as the myth of the high standard of living. Politicians in many countries of the world, as well as the individual people of various nations, feel that responsibility to their fellow man is the giving of something, such as surplus food or the opening of the country to immigrants. The idea of concern for other nations and the people of other nations is basically correct in so far as it is a recognition of the ontological bonds of existence, but such offerings as these are not based on a workable concept of love. Within the spirit of direct love there is a notion of sacrifice which is missing in the aforementioned offerings. What our people are protecting is the high-standard-of-living myth which states, in effect, that giving is all right so long as the giving does not threaten our own economic development and standard of living.

Direct love is the appeal of communism; it appears as direct love. To the peoples who are approached by communists it seems that the latter are interested in the development of the dignity and worth of the individual. The underlying motives of power and subservience to the state are difficult to see; on the other hand the motives of profit on the part of the Western world are all too obvious. Nothing appeals to men like direct love;

love which will allow each man his own dignity and worth and will encourage the circumstances in which this dignity and worth may be fostered and developed.

Prudence is of course to be advocated in one nation's assistance to another, but there is a thin line between prudence and cowardice and man is all too capable of calling the vice a virtue. There is no workable solution between one nation and the next or one people and the next so long as vested economic interests are the prime motivation of world government. Disinterested love must be disinterested to the extent that it seeks nothing personal in its interest in the dignity and value of other persons. Will Herberg sums up Martin Buber's account of the intention which one should have in his dealings with his fellow man.

'Without It', says Buber, 'man cannot love; but he who lives with It alone is not a man...All real living is meeting.' As against the 'thingification' of men and the world involved in I-It, there is the self giving love of genuine relation, which does not, Buber emphasizes, by any means imply the suppression of the self; 'It is not the I that is given up, but the false self-asserting instinct...There is no self love that is not self deceit...but without being and remaining oneself, there is no love.'³

GOOD WILL

There can be little authentic communication

³Herberg, The Writings of Martin Buber, p. 17.

between men whose interests lie within themselves. Those who remain within and who deny their presence to another because of vested interest cannot communicate completely with another person. There is the old expression to explain why certain people get along well together, "They have something in common". This is what man needs. He needs something in common with his fellow man.

He has much in common with his fellow man, but he needs to come to an intellectual recognition of the bonds which exist between all men. It would be ideal to have all men oriented toward the good as "perfective" rather than "perfecting".⁴ The good as perfective is the basis of direct love and this direct love is the love which lets one man reach out to another and communicate with another. It is the good as perfecting which leads man to the self love of self seekers. What is needed are men who are so oriented to the good as perfective that their every action will be ordered by the intention which results from this orientation. Man is built in such a way so that he can communicate with those he can trust and love with the love of friendship.⁵

⁴Labelle, Toward a Metaphysics of Love, p. 32.

⁵In his book, "Hawaii", James Michener points up the type of communication which is possible between men of good will. Doctor John Whipple, one of the characters of the book has gone down into the hold of a ship bringing men from China to Hawaii to work in the fields there. The

Karl Jaspers makes communication the primary end of philosophy as he says, "Communication then is the aim of philosophy, and in communication all its other aims are ultimately rooted, awareness of being, illumination through love, attainment of peace."⁶

Without communication between one man and the next, man cannot live, and without good will, man cannot communicate. No nation can hope to bring about peace with another nation so long as either is concerned with the protection of its own economic interests. Nor can any man communicate in the full sense with another man in the same circumstances. Man, individual man, and men, the many individuals who make up the various nations, must be able to transcend these interests which lead not to peace but to war and the only way in which this is possible is through a recognition of the dignity and value of all men through the good as perfective.

Chinese have had several of their number ill and Doctor Whipple has treated them.

'In the next hour John Whipple made one of the two or three fundamental discoveries of his long and scientific life. He found that men of good will who could understand not a single word of the other's language could nevertheless communicate with reasonable accuracy and with profound perceptions that were neither logic nor sentiment.'

⁶Jaspers, Way to Wisdom, p. 27.

AUTHENTICITY

What are also needed are authentic men, men who have taken their stand in existence on the side of truth, and whose actions follow the dictates of their intellect. This is the great age of vacillation, of relativism and of lip service to basic principles whose meanings have long since lost their significance. Irwin Shaw has an apt description of the modern man as one character describes another in Shaw's book, "Two Weeks in Another Town". "What I'm saying is that your whole life is based on a system of hedging. So much commitment to love, but no total commitment, so much of a commitment in your work, but of course only an absolute idiot could commit himself there totally. The man of parts, in parts, the modern, disgraceful, useless, undependable, fragmented, vandalizing man..."⁷

For Jaspers:

The certainty of authentic being resides only in unreserved communication between men who live together and vie with one another in a free community, who regard their association with one another as but a preliminary stage, who take nothing for granted and question everything. Only in communication is all other truth fulfilled, only in communication am I myself not merely living but fulfilling life.

⁷Irwin Shaw, Two Weeks in Another Town (New York: The New American Library, 1961) p. 223.

God manifests Himself only indirectly, and only through man's love of man; compelling certainty is particular and relative, subordinated to the whole.⁸

There must be more than just communication between one man and the next. Men must have good will but Jaspers, as he talks of the hope of a teacher of philosophy, says, "His hope is that in the same measure he becomes a rational being he may acquire the profound contents which can sustain man, that his will, in so far as his striving is honest, may become good through the direct help of the transcendent, without any human mediation."⁹

While these words of Jaspers bring in Divine intervention the need of good will is still made clear. More than good will is needed. There has to be an inner authenticity for communication between one man and the next. The man without commitment is not a man in the authentic sense;

Instead of deciding, we vacillate and stumble through life, combine the one with the other (love and hate) and even accept such a state of things as a necessary contradiction. This indecision is in itself evil. Man awakens only when he distinguishes between evil and good. He becomes himself when he decides which way he is going and acts accordingly...He chooses the right, his motives become authentic, he lives out of love. Only when the three levels become one is the unconditional realized.¹⁰

⁸Jaspers, Way to Wisdom, p. 26.

⁹Ibid, p. 166.

¹⁰Ibid, p. 61.

Authenticity is needed in our communication with other men. We cannot say Thou and mean it.¹¹ Man must be able to say the primary word and mean it. He can do this through intention but the intention must come from within. For authenticity all must come from within man, his authenticity is the result of his own judgment and commitments. This is the basis of Existentialist thought that man must decide for himself the validity and meaning of the reality he meets. Others may direct our thoughts, but the teacher, professor, clergyman or leader of any sort cannot make the decisions for the other man. Each man must make these for himself, and this idea is not foreign, or to be found only with the Existentialists, for Father Lonergan's theory of knowledge makes this quite clear; that in any learning system the decision and the authenticity is the task of the individual educand and not the educator. The role of the teacher or professor is one of direction and not decision. The educand must decide, must commit himself.

Once a man has made his commitment and reached some degree of authenticity he should form a predominating intention which will underlie and govern the validity of all his acts. It is intention which permits us to transcend material existence and turn the very material

¹¹Buber, I and Thou, p. 34.

existence, in a Buberian sense, to spiritual existence.¹² It is through intention that we turn each day into a prayer of participation in the Divine Being. It is not enough to have intention, one must show one's intention in act.

It is through act that one is obliged to give testimony of one's intention. Marcel mentions this testimony in "The Philosophy of Existentialism".¹³ But there is a question of values in this topic of testimony. It is almost a question of "To whom or what do you pay testimony?" Do you love money? Then pay through the testimony of your daily endeavours. Do you love your body? Then seek its satisfaction to the exclusion of all else. Indeed, we show through the thin film of daily interests the basic orientation of our lives. Through intention a man can "hallow" his life in a Buberian sense, and thus pay testimony to a transcendence; to God, Who overrides and yet permeates in some mystical way all of our existence. It is only, for example, through the testimony of act to the transcendence of God, that a Christian man can say he loves his God.

For the individual man to reach this level of intention, as it has been described in the foregoing, it

¹²v. pp. 47ff.

¹³Marcel, The Philosophy of Existentialism, p. 94.

is necessary to have some form of reflection, contemplation, meditation, or recollection. Man must have time to withdraw from the immediate and material so that he may reflect and gather himself, in order that he might think, judge, and act accordingly.

Man must communicate with his fellow man if he is to live in the peace and harmony which is the result of direct love. If we are to live we must love first, and secondly communicate; and we must learn to do these things in this age which discourages them. The solution to the major problems which beset us, those of peace, and even economics, depends on our ability to transcend our own interests and seek the common good of all men. Nothing will solve our problems save the love that can give of itself and there can be no agreement of any sort reached without communication. If man is to approach other men and they are to love in mutual respect and dignity, we need communication of the highest sort, for as Buber says, "Only on the path of true intercourse with the things and beings does man attain to true life, but only on this path can he take an active part in the redemption of the world."¹⁴

¹⁴Buber, The Origin and Meaning of Hasidism, p.86.

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