



University
of Glasgow

Hargreaves, Hal Houston (1974) *A study of intersubjectivity in the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty and its bearing on the issue of transcendence*. PhD thesis.

<http://theses.gla.ac.uk/2736/>

Copyright and moral rights for this thesis are retained by the author

A copy can be downloaded for personal non-commercial research or study, without prior permission or charge

This thesis cannot be reproduced or quoted extensively from without first obtaining permission in writing from the Author

The content must not be changed in any way or sold commercially in any format or medium without the formal permission of the Author

When referring to this work, full bibliographic details including the author, title, awarding institution and date of the thesis must be given

A STUDY OF
INTERSUBJECTIVITY IN THE
PHENOMENOLOGY OF MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY
AND ITS BEARING ON THE ISSUE
OF TRANSCENDENCE

by
Hal Houston Hargreaves

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Faculty of Divinity
University of Glasgow
October 1974

ERRATA

P. 7, the last paragraph should read as follows:

Two related criticisms follow. The pure encounter theologian speaks of I-Thou encounters as self-authenticating; yet, he uses language in some instances which makes this contention questionable. On the one hand, an I-Thou encounter is described as the awareness of "numinous awful presence". This term qualifies as being appropriate to describe a self-authenticating experience. It is difficult to take exception to such non-specific, non-descriptive terminology; names for the Godhead are not suggested. The experience may be as the theologian claims. But other terms are also used to describe encounter and they present immediate questions. Terms such as "Father of Jesus Christ", "Creator", and others are used to describe the I-Thou encounter. They add - -

P. 66, line twelve - delete the word "vocational".

P. 133, the ninth and tenth lines should read: perceptual synthesis is incomplete because transcendency is never absent.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART ONE	PAGE
SETTING THE ISSUE	1
CHAPTER	
I. MARTIN BUBER'S PHENOMENOLOGY OF INTERSUB- JECTIVITY--MEETING	1
II. MARTIN BUBER'S ONTOLOGY AND CONCEPT OF TRANSCENDENCE	45
PART TWO	
ANALYTICAL STUDY: MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY	75
CHAPTER	
I. MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY: HIS METHOD AND THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN PERCEPTION	76
II. MAN AND THE OTHER: THINGS AND PEOPLE	120
III. PHENOMENOLOGICAL ONTOLOGY AND ITS BEARING ON THE ISSUE OF TRANSCENDENCE	171
PART THREE	
COMPARATIVE STUDIES	218
CHAPTER	
I. HUSSERL'S TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGY ITS BEARING ON THE STUDY OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY	219
II. HEIDEGGER'S <u>WITSEIN</u> : ITS BEARING ON THE ISSUE OF TRANSCENDENCE	264

PART FOUR	PAGE
CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS	302
CHAPTER	
I. THE FUNCTION OF METHOD IN DEVELOPING A PHENOMENOLOGY OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY	303
II. A PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE INTERHUMAN: ITS BEARING ON THE ISSUE OF TRANSCENDENCE	325
BIBLIOGRAPHY	361

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The following acknowledgments are brief only because I find it difficult to measure my appreciation with words.

Allan Galloway welcomed me to post-graduate studies. He spent hours with my first attempts at writing, goading, disciplining and encouraging. Dr. Galloway taught a healthy suspicion for jargon; he encouraged me to tackle difficult problems, and he set consistantly high standards. He is also a much valued friend; my only disappointment is that we have not had more time to explore common interests.

Herrick and Wanda Heitman have been much involved in this project. They offered a quiet place where research and composition came naturally. More than that; they shared their trust and love generously. Much of what is conceptualized here is reflective of the years at Glengary.

Victoria Lee and I met in the midst of the writing. She has typed endlessly, corrected and retyped; she is every bit as happy as I that "its done". My appreciation, however, goes much beyond her practical help. In an academic exercise it is easy to overlook the interpersonal dimension; with Victoria that option is unrealistic. Her curiosity and imagination worked upon me in the most routine tasks. Her care and sensitivity has encouraged patience; her drive to understand has reopened mine many times.

These and others have been immense aid. My own wonder, both intellectual and personal, has been kindled by them. I take full responsibility for the quality of this study, but as a study of the interpersonal it owes much to them.

The motivation for this study comes from the author's acquaintance with Martin Buber, a strong appreciation of his thought, and a long held assumption that theology today is justly indebted to his phenomenology of interpersonal relations.

The purpose of the investigation is, generally speaking, to ascertain the validity of my long-held assumption. More specifically, I seek to analyze the I-Thou typology critically. The phenomenology of personal encounter is cast in two categories, the I-It and I-Thou forms. What these forms specify about human interaction is of special interest. Secondly, his phenomenology is connected to a specific ontology and theology; I seek to analyze and evaluate those connections in order to understand viable relationships among phenomenology, ontology and theology. Specifically, I concentrate on how a phenomenology of the interhuman bears upon the issue of transcendence. What is its proper function, and how can theological study "make use" of such a phenomenology?

The study is a philosophical investigation; it seeks to clarify the proper use of phenomenology, and specifically how it relates to belief in God. The challenge in such an investigation is to remain sensitive to the insights offered in a phenomenology of interpersonal encounter, while retaining a critical approach to it and its connections with ontology

and theology. This complex of tasks suggests a particular procedure.

The first task is to ascertain which issues need to be isolated. This calls for a critical study of Buber before we begin the constructive effort. To ask questions about his phenomenology is, perhaps, as important as building a case for how a phenomenology should function in opening the issue of transcendence. I study Buber by dealing with the questions of a noted critic, Ronald Hepburn.

Following this I describe and analyze the phenomenology of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a distinguished phenomenologist of the interpersonal; reasons are given for selection of this thinker at the appropriate place. This is the beginning of the constructive effort, although the first priority is to describe the concepts germane to his phenomenology of intersubjectivity. I learn from him that a phenomenology of the interhuman can do justice to the insights of Buber while at the same time forming more viable connections between phenomenology, ontology, and theology. Alternatives are found at many points, which are more credible than those Buber allows.

There is also good reason for comparative studies which concentrate on two issues. The first is that of refining a method which will be proper for the construction of a phenomenology of interpersonal encounter. We investigate

the thought of Edmund Husserl and its relation to the thought of Merleau-Ponty to develop a method which will serve our overall objective. I also analyze the phenomenological-ontology of Martin Heidegger to sharpen the relationship between a phenomenology of intersubjectivity and ontology.

Finally, I undertake the constructive effort to bring together the findings of the analytical and comparative segments, and to suggest a relation between a phenomenology of the interhuman and faith which conforms to those findings.

The study is critical and constructive; though it is certainly not exhaustive of all the issues, it is hoped that it can be of use in the theological community.

CHAPTER I

MARTIN BUBER'S PHENOMENOLOGY OF

INTERSUBJECTIVITY--MEETING

It is our purpose in this first chapter to describe and interpret Martin Buber's I-Thou philosophy, paying special attention to his concept of interpersonal meetings. We single out this aspect of his thought in the beginning because it plays a central role in the rest of his work; his notion of the interpersonal gives us access to his ontological explications and clarifies his religious convictions. These will be discussed in Chapter II.

As for procedure, we shall follow a simple model, i.e. letting our reading of Buber be a response to criticisms, specifically those of Ronald Hepburn. The reason is twofold: too often we read theologians heavily indebted to Buber, both Christian and Jewish, who in applying his thought court a misunderstanding of the original.¹ The first task is to understand what Buber intends to say about meeting; we readily admit that it is our interpretation of what he says, and his intentions, but there is strong evidence to support our case. Second, we shall concentrate on responding to Hepburn's criticisms because this procedure

¹This is true in Buber's mind to be sure. See his, "Replies to My Critics", especially his criticisms of Wheelwright and Rotenstreich, Schlipp, Paul and Friedman, Maurice, (eds.) The Philosophy of Martin Buber, LaSalle, Ill., Open Court Publ. Co., 1967, pp. 689 ff.

should highlight the central tenets of Buber's philosophy rather than focusing upon details. Our objective is to uncover the structures of his phenomenology of meeting and to organize epistemological issues; response to objections should help us to see the major difficulties in his thought and the unique contributions.

Ronald Hepburn's book, Christianity and Paradox, contains serious criticism of many theological viewpoints, but his two chapters on "Encounters" have, to my mind, the most thorough and challenging objections to the I-Thou philosophy of any work read.¹ He cannot be considered an "enemy" to whom counter-attack is due; his questions strike at the heart of the I-Thou concept of meeting. He is a thoughtful and at times sympathetic critic. Understandably we will be asking if Hepburn has criticized Buber correctly but this is not meant to imply that his questions are irrelevant; rather we do so to rethink the I-Thou concepts of meeting and to reread Buber in light of thoughtful criticisms. What follows is an enumeration of the assumptions and objections Hepburn makes.

To begin, we cite Hepburn's primary assumption: it is that encounter theologians maintain that an ostensive definition of God is obtainable within their philosophy of

¹Hepburn, Ronald, Christianity and Paradox, London, C.A. Watts and Co., 1958.

meeting.¹ In Hepburn's words, the theologians say:

God cannot be pointed out, brought forward for identification, or indeed made perceptible to any of the senses. But He may be encountered as the Thou of my prayer.²

This statement points out that encounter theologians do seek to demonstrate the existence of God, not through reason, or empirically verifiable tests, but through the "gesture" of encountering Otherness as the supreme Thou. Prayer, as we shall see, is for Buber a gesture which grows out of meeting another person as a Thou. We emphasize now the assumption which leads Hepburn to his severest critique--the fact that Buber and others seek to demonstrate through a philosophy of meeting, that God exists. In Hepburn's portrayal of this objective, he specifies the way it is supposed to be carried out. Their procedure:

. . . if God is no object, if instead He is a person
 . . . another approach is demanded The one appropriate procedure is to entrust ourselves in prayer to the being who is properly only talked to not theorized about . . . Instead of depending on uncertain chains of reasoning, we should depend on a self-authenticating direct awareness of God; a knowledge by acquaintance from which all fallible inference-steps are absent.³

¹Hepburn does not address himself exclusively to Martin Buber; he includes those who, like H. H. Farmer, and Emil Brunner, are indebted to Buber. We shall record those places where he has someone else in mind; otherwise it can be assumed that Buber would be an object of his criticism.

²Hepburn, R., op. cit., p. 18.

³Ibid.

This procedure leads the theologian to use interpersonal I-Thou meetings as the central analogy to demonstrate God's existence. We meet others as particular thou's; we meet God as absolute Person. The important thing is the theologian's objective: as far as Hepburn is concerned, the theologian seeks to demonstrate the existence of God by this means. This assumption is central for Hepburn's critique; the effectiveness of a theology of encounter rests upon its ability to establish God's existence. It fails if it cannot produce such a result.

Later, in response to this assumption we shall ask if Buber pursues such an objective, either overtly or covertly. Does he believe that such an objective is proper? If not, what is the significance of I-Thou encounters? Specifically, what is Buber's conception of the linkage between interhuman encounters and divine-human meeting? We shall discuss this in Chapter II, but Buber's objectives should be made clear, if possible, in the present chapter. To fail to bring clarity here would be to court wrong assumptions about Buber's efforts. By establishing his objectives, the phenomenology of meeting will be put into perspective.

Hepburn's criticisms commence under the general heading of "possibilities for error and illusion".¹ His

¹Ibid., p. 30.

first concern is that the theologians being considered provide no checking-procedures in their assumption that interpersonal relations demonstrate the existence and nature of divine-human encounters.¹ When the encounter theologian argues that because such and such is the case in human relations, we can justifiably believe in God's existence, he says something which can be checked with regard to human relationships. But what he says about the interpersonal does not necessarily support his conclusion that God exists. The theologian makes a crucial transition; checking procedures, Hepburn says, apply to the premise but not to the conclusion. The latter sphere, the theologian contends, is beyond all "fallible inference steps"; that is, no checking procedures are admissible.² Hepburn responds, "Can we accept the sharp division--either arguments for God or personal relations, nothing in between?"³ In extreme cases (and Buber is an extreme in Hepburn's estimation) no checking-procedures are admissible in the sphere of interpersonal relations. Hepburn deals with Buber as a "pure encounter theologian". Buber, he says, makes no connection between the spheres of It and Thou;

¹The term "checking-procedures" refers to the phenomenon's being open to both empirical and logical verification. It must be available for the weighing of evidence.

²Hepburn, op. cit., p. 18

³Ibid., p. 30.

that is, checking-procedures apply only to the world where an interpersonal encounter is excluded, the I-It world.

In the I-Thou sphere, checking is irrelevant.

To Buber, the two 'primary words' I-Thou and I-It, describe two fundamentally different, mutually exclusive forms of our relation to our world.¹

In connection with this objection, Hepburn defines two terms he uses frequently in his argument, "knowledge about" and "direct awareness". The first term pertains to checking-procedures. We can have knowledge about another if we can look at behavioral patterns, physical characteristics, or evaluate discourse between two people. Knowledge about is the key in describing what kind of a relationship exists. Direct awareness is synonymous with Buber's I-Thou notion; it is the form of meeting or encounter. Hepburn argues that Buber separates such knowledge about another from the sphere of encounter by placing it completely in the I-It category. Direct awareness in the I-Thou sphere, is immune to checking procedures and knowledge about the other. This includes all forms of empirical or logical evidence. The two spheres in Buber's thought are mutually exclusive; this is fundamental to Hepburn's objection.

It leads us to ask if Buber does, indeed, make the I-It, I-Thou forms mutually exclusive? Does he argue that the sphere of knowledge about objects and persons is totally

¹Ibid., p. 26 (underlining mine).

divorced from the sphere of meeting? Is our experience of another person in the I-Thou form, something we can know anything about?

We anticipate our reading of Buber in saying that there will be no argument with Hepburn about the differences between I-It and I-Thou forms. But Hepburn perceives more than differences; he claims there are no connections between the two forms of relation. They are mutually exclusive; this is the argument that concerns us. If they are truly separate and totally divorced, Hepburn has found a telling criticism to the I-Thou phenomenology. The total absence of knowledge about another would seem to make I-Thou encounters a highly problematic form, unavailable for logical interpretation and divorced from the concrete world of experience. If Buber does not intend exclusiveness, what are the points of connection between the two forms?

Two related criticisms follow. First, the pure encounter theologian speaks of I-Thou encounters as "self-authenticating"; yet, he uses language which makes such a contention questionable. In addition to portraying I-Thou encounter as an awareness of a "numinous awful presence", the terms "Creator," "Father of Jesus Christ," and others, are employed. Whereas "numinous awful presence" is non-descriptive and therefore appropriate for describing a direct awareness, the latter terms are not. They add

descriptive interpretations to the experience; they describe the "Thou," and this leads Hepburn to observe that a "pure" awareness or directness cannot be claimed for an encounter if such terms are employed. The cherished beliefs of a religious community very likely influence the theologian's description. This is the first difficulty with the claim to direct awareness.

The second difficulty is the theologian's use of psychological terminology to demonstrate the existence of I-Thou encounters.

We shall also have to consider the objection that such certainty as the Christian claims for his encounter with God can only be had by 'subjective' or 'psychological' statements: statements not to the effect that such and such exists or is the case, but that I have such and such sensations and no more.¹

When this criticism is associated with the assumption credited to the encounter theologians i.e. that I-Thou events demonstrate God's existence, we can see the seriousness of Hepburn's objections. Pure encounter theologians, he implies, use a kind of "double-think" in their explication of an event; they claim God's existence an acceptable "conclusion" and they employ language which exposes reliance upon sensations and feelings. Understandably, Hepburn finds this to be contradictory.

¹Ibid., p. 31. We take note of the fact that Hepburn directs his criticism towards "Christians", and Buber was a Hasidic Jew. Still, the criticism can apply if Buber uses psychological statements appropriate to his tradition.

Concerning the use of both descriptive and psychological terminology, we are obligated to see whether Buber consciously employs them and if so with what objectives in mind. Does Buber use these two forms of language in his I-Thou category? Can a psychological rootage be uncovered in Buber's descriptions of the I-Thou form? Another consideration: if Buber denies that I-Thou encounters demonstrate God's existence, must we conclude that I-Thou encounters have only a psychological reference? We ask as does Hepburn: is there any middle ground between a case for God's existence and "sensations and no more"?

Hepburn's final, and most extensively described objection, concerns the method that theologians employ in relating the sphere of the interpersonal to divine-human encounter.

If the vital analogy here is that between meeting people and meeting God, have the theologians established this analogy firmly enough to bear the weighty super-structure they have reared upon it?¹

Encounters between people are supposed to serve as an analogy for the pure unfettered meeting between God and man. The way the theologians construct the analogy concerns Hepburn; it is in their interpretation of interpersonal relations that the theologian errs. They have not only misunderstood the problematics of belief in God; they have

¹Ibid., p. 30.

misjudged philosophically what can be said about human encounters. Certainly, if Hepburn is correct about the theologian's misjudgment of the interpersonal, it will be a telling criticism of teachings resting upon it.

Hepburn says that the encounter theologians construct a "scale of relative purity" to make the connection.¹ By this he means that a model is constructed; the lowest points on the scale indicate "impure" relationships, i.e. situations in which people use one another or treat the opposite party as an "object". There is reliance, at this point on the scale, on the other's behavioral characteristics, and on physical appearance; the predominant form of the relation is "knowledge about". At a higher point on the scale, perhaps, when the parties are well acquainted, the theologian claims there is a decrease in utilitarian aspects and, more important, a decrease in the function of "knowledge about" the other. The emergence of trust and concern begins to replace the "impure" characteristics. Persons observe one another not as objects, but observe "in order to enter into living relation."² At the highest point on the scale it is conceivable that the parties do not rely at

¹Ibid., p. 32. Hepburn singles out Emil Brunner here; but as we shall see the objection also applies to Martin Buber's I-Thou phenomenology.

²Ibid.

all upon behavioral checks, upon knowledge about. Certainly they say, there is no treatment of the other as an object. Both are "subjects", interacting; the impurities are absent; an I-Thou encounter exists.

The encounter theologian then extends the application of the model from description of the interpersonal to description of divine-human encounter. Purified of all utilitarian purposes or actions and of all "knowledge about", the interpersonal becomes an effective analogy for encounter with a Holy God.

Hepburn summarizes the position:

We can move in thought away from the imperfections of our human-encounter examples towards an idea of the perfection of meeting with God. This we do by thinking away all that remains of I-It, all vacillating between experiencing the other as personal and as an object, until there remains nothing at all of object-knowledge, only pure encounter with a Thou.¹

Hepburn's objection is not difficult to perceive; if the analogy is to effectively illustrate man's meeting with God, it is imperative that there be a decrease in one's treatment of the other as an object, and also a decrease of

¹Ibid., p. 31-32. We cannot see how Hepburn's first objection to encounter theology (the mutual exclusiveness of I-It and I-Thou forms) can be reconciled with this one--the "scale of relative purity". If the two forms have no relation, there could hardly be a scale which leads progressively from It to Thou, from the interpersonal to divine encounter. The notion of a "scale" is incompatible with the former objection; one or the other can apply but not both, and perhaps neither.

dependence upon behavioral checks or knowledge about. If both requirements cannot be met the interpersonal analogy will lead nowhere; it will be "like a car that stalls at the very start of the race".¹

Concerning the issue of decrease in the participant's treatments of the other as an "object", Hepburn registers no objection. His examples make it clear that he believes with Buber that there are human exchanges in which the parties relate as "subject to subject", i.e. in trust and intimacy. His criticism focuses on the second aspect of the argument; it is whether

. . . the physical events (hands, eyes, voice in movement and sound) have become less essential, or have they remained quite essential in each case, although approached, used, attended to, in different ways, or checked up on less and less frequently because of the increasing intimacy of the people concerned?²

His answer is obvious: he argues that knowledge about the other is still quite essential in trustful relations. Behavioral checks may be less frequent, but when so, it is because one is confident that the person trusted is someone who behaves in a familiar way. Moreover,

¹Ibid., p. 39.

²Ibid., p. 35.

On the occasions when I sit opposite a friend and observe his gestures and expression, I am neither looking at these as so many objects, nor in the belief that his entire being consists in such overt actions (behaviourism), nor am I looking 'through' these to a hidden personality, as I might look through a glass of a window, concerned only with the view beyond . . . I admit that his inner life, like mine, is more than gestures, speech, smiles; but I doubt if we know what we are saying when we declare that personality and knowledge of personality are possible without these: I doubt if anything recognizably personal can be left over once we have stripped all such behaviour away.¹

Because he believes that knowledge about remains integral to the most intimate relations, Hepburn concludes that the theologian's construction of a scale of relative purity is faulty. The pure encounter theologian has misjudged the nature of the interpersonal; his phenomenology of meeting is misconceived. Hence it is inappropriate to use it as an analogy for encounter with God. The inter-human analogy as the theologian constructs it, indeed, leads nowhere. "In face of these reflections, the theologian might well decide that the analogy between meeting human beings and meeting God is too weak to carry any apologetic weight."²

We have spent some time with this objection because it is important for reading Buber. Does he employ a scale of relative purity, or can one be perceived lurking behind

¹Ibid., p. 36.

²Ibid., p. 37.

his two-fold construction, I-It and I-Thou? If not, what part does knowledge about play in encounter situations?

We anticipate somewhat by saying that Hepburn's objection aids us in uncovering an often unnoticed aspect of Buber's phenomenology of the inter-personal--the positive connections he intended between I-It and I-Thou relations. His criticism will also point out a major difficulty in Buber's phenomenology. He never bothered to write an adequate philosophical explanation of the role that knowledge about actually plays in the interpersonal. We shall address ourselves to these points later.

Hepburn's objections are far from casual. Their general import is to challenge the theologian to use empirical and logical evidence in his descriptions and theories of meeting. We turn now to Buber to ascertain how Hepburn's objections apply.

Concerning Hepburn's first assumption, does Martin Buber court the notion that an ostensive definition of God can be obtained via his philosophy of meeting? Does he believe that his descriptions of the interhuman answer man's questions about the existence of God? This area of investigation is most important; we need to uncover, as best we can, the objectives or intentions he entertained.

Answers about intentions certainly do not cover the

issue. As with many philosophers, immediate intentions and later interpretations, do not always fall into logical order. We may find that Buber's stated objectives conflict with the actual structures of his work. Specifically, he may entertain no objective of demonstrating God's existence, but unless we assume it, Buber's position could be nonsensical.

The material we cite lends itself to this possibility.

Note the following passage.

Every particular Thou is a glimpse through to the eternal Thou . . . The Thou that by its nature cannot become It . . . What does all this mistaken talk about God's being and works (though there has been and can be, no other talk about these) matter in comparison with the one truth that all men who have addressed God had God himself in mind?¹

Buber wants, first of all, to make it clear that talk about God or descriptions of his being and activity are "mistakes". The term he uses, notably "talk about" is closely allied to Hepburn's phrase "knowledge about". He says, in effect, there can be no apologia for God's existence. If we take him at his word, descriptions of the inter-human will not lead to the conclusive proposition that God exists. He wants to avoid the classical argumentative characteristic in philosophic discourse.

¹Buber, Martin, I and Thou, New York, Chas. Scribners Sons, New York, 1958, pp. 75-76.

What does he intend? The following passage attempts to clarify this issue.

Of the relational event we know with the knowledge of the life lived, our going out to relation, our part of the way. The other part only comes upon us, we do not know it; it comes upon us in the meeting. But we strain ourselves on it if we speak of it as though it were something beyond the meeting.¹

A person can make claim to have experienced meeting. The key to this is the form of address. Though we cannot pretend to know something about the one who is met we can claim to "go out to relation". No claims about the Other have currency but claims do count when we say we are met in relation. The form of address constitutes the "relational event".

The "relational event" is known to occur simply by living it. It cannot prove the existence of God, but when we ask what it does demonstrate, we begin to catch the ambiguity of Buber's position.

On the one hand, he says that the relational mode of address occurs and is the basis of one's total life experience.

I proceed from a simple real situation: two men are engrossed in a genuine dialogue. I want to appraise the facts of this situation. It turns out that the customary categories do not suffice for it. I mark: first the "physical" phenomena of the two speaking and gesturing men, second the 'psychic' phenomena of it,

¹Ibid.

what goes on 'in them'. But the meaningful dialogue itself that proceeds between the two men and into which the acoustical and optical events fit, the dialogue that arises out of the souls and is reflected in them, this remains unregistered.¹

The significance of dialogue or meeting is his chosen issue. It is to be the focus for his entire philosophy; meeting, the "relational event", the "between", constitute ways of reordering of philosophical debate. He seeks to describe one unique event, and this precludes the necessity of describing the Holy God. Hepburn, he would say, wrongly identifies him as an apologist. He views his work as descriptive. If we were to choose an appropriate term for these objectives, it would be "phenomenology". Specifically, Buber should be called a phenomenologist of intersubjectivity when speaking of his declared objectives.

But can we take him at his word? When he speaks of the relational event does he exclude the presence of God? Certainly not. Divine presence is the apex of the event's meaning. We cannot be assured that apologia is absent when this is considered. The "eternal Thou that by its nature cannot become It", is integral to interhuman dialogue. Though description of God is eschewed, divine presence is assumed, and this alters our view of his claims to

¹Schlipp, P. and Friedman, M., op. cit., p. 698.

describe an interpersonal event.

Manifestly, the "relational event" is also a meeting between man and God, because the parties are, so to speak, identified. He never strays from the assumption that the interhuman puts man into relation with God. If we agree with him that there is no "apology" in this, i.e., if apologetic maneuvers are denied, that would contradict his own identification of meeting as a "glimpse" of the eternal Thou. Buber's work would make no sense apart from the divine-human context of meeting. Such an appraisal is necessary if we are to read him accurately.

Admittedly, no effort is made to force the conclusion that God exists. Buber assumes that God is present in the experience of meeting; perhaps, that is why he makes the disclaimer about doing apologetics. From his comment about mistaken talk, it is reasonable to assume he thinks argument is inappropriate. But to disclaim apologetics because he does not argue for the existence of God is to take a narrow view of the apologetic enterprise. And to assume God's existence is to short-circuit a very important element in philosophical discourse, that of making assumptions public.

There can be little doubt that this conflict between declared objectives and implicit assumptions does create difficulties in appraising his work; the relation between

theology and philosophy as distinct disciplines is clouded rather than clarified. We can never be sure whether he speaks as a philosopher who believes and is giving reasons for belief, whether he is a theologian who is developing a "complimentary" philosophy of religion, or whether he is a philosopher of religion who borrows from both disciplines to create a way of standing between pure philosophy and apologetic theology. Regretfully, we cannot deal with these broader questions here if we are to complete an analysis of his phenomenology of meeting. We shall deal with this in our concluding chapters.

We turn to Hepburn's objection that Buber's I-It, I-Thou categories are mutually exclusive. The connection between them, or lack of one, is an important matter in analyzing Buber's work. If there is none, it would be increasingly difficult to see the connection between mundane experience and the intimate experience of living relation. Moreover, it would become improbable, if not impossible, to see the connection between interpersonal encounter and divine-human meeting. Again, Buber's intentions, are of utmost importance. We must know whether or not he intended to relate the two forms, and we must also

know what evidence he provides to support his case.¹

We begin by asking, what if any are the positive functions of Buber's I-It form of relation? This question should give us access to the main issue.

Buber says that man's life is lived in both I-It and I-Thou forms; "to man the world is twofold in accordance with his twofold attitude".² Man, being who he is, is a creature of the I-It relation; it is the dominant form of his existence.³ It is the "exalted melancholy of our fate".⁴ In the I-It mode man is bound to act in two ways; he objectifies and analyses the objects of his world, and he treats things and people as instrumental objects. (As Hepburn so well said, the I-It relation is a composite of

¹We meet two difficulties in this endeavor. Buber's thought is disguised in poetic language. The little book I and Thou is a poetic product; systematizing the relation will not be easy for this reason. Secondly, Buber admits in a later work that readers are left with a negative impression of the I-It relation. Speaking about I and Thou Buber says, ". . . Indeed it does not do justice to it; because I am born in the midst of this situation of man and see what I see and must point out what I have seen. In another hour it would perhaps have been granted to me to sound the praises of the It; today not: because without a turning of man to his Thou no turn in his destiny can come." From Schlipp, P., and Friedman, M., eds., The Philosophy of Martin Buber, op. cit., p. 704. We repeat our earlier stipulation about this issue; we are asking whether the two relational forms are mutually exclusive or not. We do not contest that they are different.

²Buber, M., I and Thou, p. 3.

³Ibid., pp. 9, 14, 17, 33.

⁴Ibid., p. 16..

"knowledge about;" as well as the activity of looking upon others as objects). When it comes to treating people as objects, Buber's answer is obvious; he emphasizes that it is a negative relationship. But what about man's effort to know his world? Is it also a negative form?

Buber speaks of the act of knowing as a rhythmic passage from I-Thou to I-It, and finally to I-Thou again.

Take knowledge: being is disclosed to the man engaged in knowing, as he looks over what is over against him. He will, indeed, have to grasp as an object that which he has seen with the force of presence, he will have to compare it with objects, establish it in its order among classes of objects, describe and analyze it objectively. Only as It can it enter the structure of knowledge.¹

We are led to believe that the I-Thou form of direct encounter is supposed to be followed by the act of getting to "know about" what has been encountered. The I-It form becomes the inevitable successor to the I-Thou form. Buber goes on:

Now the incident is included in the It of knowledge which is composed of ideas. He who frees it from that, and looks on it again in the present moment, fulfills the nature of the act of knowledge to be real and effective between men.²

"Knowledge about" is fulfilled by its return to the I-Thou form where it becomes "effective between men".

¹Ibid., p. 40.

²Ibid., p. 41.

Buber's language of fulfillment stipulates that the I-It function is necessary. He says, in effect, that the initial sense of "presence" is not enough; the act of knowing matures as objectification and evaluation occur. Man's relation to his world is enhanced because he has analyzed and scrutinized things and people around him. As the fulfillment of this procedure, the object is attended to again, as presence, as a "thou".

Buber clarifies the importance of the I-It relation somewhat with the following:

It is not as though scientific and aesthetic understanding were not necessary; but they are necessary to man that he may do his work with precision and plunge it in the truth of relation, which is above the understanding and gathers itself up in it.¹

The I-It form in this example is far from being inconsequential and negative; it is both necessary, and is beneficial depending on its fulfillment in the I-Thou form. He goes on to say that only in its unfulfilled state is the act of knowing negative. That is, the purpose of objectifying and "knowing about" is not to conquer the world of others but to enter into relation with it.²

Given the foregoing examples, Hepburn's position

¹Ibid., pp. 41-42.

²Ibid.

courts a misunderstanding of Buber. Though the two forms are different, Buber states that they are not mutually exclusive. Rather, in the light of I-Thou encounter, the I-It form of relation is necessary, even complimentary to the I-Thou form.

Buber also speaks of the relation between the two forms in other ways. The I-It form is subordinate to the I-Thou: the other is not a "thing among things" in the I-Thou form; this does not mean "that nothing else exists except himself. But all else lives in his light."¹ The I-It sphere is not deprecated, but is subordinate to the I-Thou form. Because the I-Thou relation is an act of total self-offering of one person to the other, there is a "suspension of all partial actions and consequently of all sensations of actions grounded only in their particular limitation."² In this reference, the I-It relation is again subordinate; only in complete separation from the I-Thou encounter does it operate negatively. If meeting is to be understood as the primary mode of personal existence, the I-It form can be regarded as complimentary.

The subordinate but complimentary relation he writes of is made somewhat more explicit in the following.

¹Ibid., p. 8.

²Ibid., p. 31.

No system of ideas or foreknowledge intervenes . . . memory itself is transformed . . . No aim, no lust, and no anticipation intervene between I and Thou. Desire itself is transformed . . . Only when every means has collapsed does the meeting come about.¹

His poetic language does not conceal the conceptual implication: I-It characteristics are meant to be transformed, "taken into" the vitality of encounter. He is speaking of affective states but the model again applies. The I-It form is a subordinate form, but it is a necessary compliment to the form of living relation.

Almost in passing, he mentions that the characteristics of individual perception are not excluded in the experience of presence. Of a tree, the subject may say,

. . . it is not necessary for me to give up any of the ways in which I consider the tree . . . Rather is everything, picture and movement, species and type, law and number, indivisibly united in this event.²

Once more knowledge about is related directly to the I-Thou encounter. With regard to persons,

Good people and evil, wise and foolish, beautiful and ugly, become successively real to him: that is, free, they step forth in their singleness and confront him as Thou.³

That Buber intends no total separation is abundantly clear in the preceding quotations. The two forms are distinct; the I-Thou form is primary; the I-It form is

¹Ibid., pp. 11-12.

²Ibid., p. 7.

³Ibid., p. 15.

"demonic" only when divorced from its subordinate role. This much we can ascertain from Buber's early piece, I and Thou. But the language is poetic and there is no evidence which helps us to be more specific about the intended relation. Buber fails to explain systematically how the relationship between the two forms is to be conceived.

In his later works, where he undertakes explanation of the two orders and their application to specific issues, there is likewise no specific relation expounded. We have already noted that he did not count it his responsibility to "sound the praises of It". The absence of such "praise" helps explain why there is no specific relation expounded, but because there is no more specific information available on the positive structures of the I-It form, one can easily assume that no relation to the I-Thou form exists. This, it seems to me, constitutes a major difficulty in Buber's thought and explains why Hepburn offered his criticism. It is not that Buber intends a negative estimation of the acts of knowing about or perceiving; it is that he fails to describe them with the same rigour that he does the act of meeting. Hepburn is mistaken about Buber's intentions, but he is correct in seeing the consequences of Buber's failure to describe the structures of perception and ratiocination. Without an explicit phenomenology of perception and reflection it is difficult to maintain that I-It and I-Thou modalities

have a complimentary relation. That the two forms exist in unhappy tension is an understandable conclusion given the absence of systematic evidence to the contrary. In our concluding remarks we shall discuss why Buber did not articulate a phenomenology of perception, a phenomenology of "knowledge about".

Related to the above criticism we ask, is Hepburn's contention valid, that the I-Thou form is questionable as a "self-authenticating experience"? Hepburn cites the use of descriptive terms when Buber describes a pure encounter situation, terms describing the Other which indicate prior education and are attributable to the cherished beliefs of a community.

In order to understand Buber's response to this criticism, we cite two factors in his portrayal of meeting. The first is readily observed: Buber, of all writers in the encounter tradition, is most careful in his choice of language concerning an experience of the other. Strictly speaking, the terms he employs are not descriptive; they are indicative of the living relation he says exists "between". With regard to interpersonal encounters, the term is always "thou"; hardly a descriptive term. With regard to divine-human meeting, it is "Thou", "Presence", or "Word". These terms tell us nothing about the party in question; they do not give us information nor do they

determine the personal or super-personal characteristics of the one over-against the "I". Rather they indicate the relationship between the "I" and the Other. Buber, unlike those who are influenced by him, avoids terms which could be construed as descriptive of the Other. On this he is consistent; he is not an open target for Hepburn's objection. Describing meeting does not entail description of the Other. Object language is inappropriate in the description of meeting; such could be inferred when we recall Buber's objectives. It must be said of the interpersonal as well as of his notion of divine-human encounters. Buber concentrates on describing "meeting", not the one met.

There is a concept in Buber's poetry which should clarify this position somewhat. It concerns his use of the word "modification", a term which has a very different meaning for him than for the language analyst.

In I and Thou this notion is given poetic expression. With regard to divine-human encounter he says,

The revelation does not pour itself into a funnel, it comes to him and seizes his whole elemental being in all its particular nature and fuses with it. The man, too, who is the 'mouth' of revelation, is indeed this, not a speaking-tube and any kind of instrument, but an organ which sounds according to its own laws: and to sound means to modify.¹

¹Buber, M., I and Thou, p. 117. (underlining mine).

From this we can at least see the direction of his thought. In terms of the classic problem of the relation between subject and object, we might say that Buber's emphasis is upon subjectivity. In experiencing the I-Thou relation, the subject always injects himself into the experience. Living relation terminology is open to language about the subject's position, gesture, viewpoint, or involvement. This holds for the interpersonal as well as the experience of relation with God;¹ Buber's notion of modification expresses his attempt to recognize human subjectivity. Obviously, the concept is not supposed to rule out experience of a genuine relationship. That is, his recognition of subjectivity in no way implies "invention" on the part of the subject. Buber says of the religious experience: "I possess no security against the necessity to live in fear and trembling; I have nothing but the certainty that we share in the revelation."²

Buber's conviction about being bound up in relation, is the nub of his philosophical apologetic. One cannot demonstrate the object qua object--that would yield neither the real person nor the holy God. He must live in fear

¹Vide. Schlipp, Paul, and Friedman, Maurice, op. cit., p. 698.

²Ibid., p. 699.

and trembling, and he must reserve judgment about the object. But in so doing a person can still know he is bound up in meeting, and meeting is not a subjective creation. Buber's notion of modification is supposed to represent the subject's deep involvement in the experience of encounter.

Does this answer Hepburn's objection? Taken cumulatively, does Buber's hesitancy to employ descriptive terms for the object and his notion of modification, take Hepburn's target away?

Buber's "reply" can be summarized; one cannot demonstrate the existence of the object, only the experience of relation; in that context the subject's involvement and the existence of relation are inextricably mixed. "Knowledge about" the relation or description, is always partial and secondary to the lived relation itself; we are supposed to acknowledge the relation before we describe or demonstrate it. Experience of relation is the irreducible. Again, he seeks to be a phenomenologist whose primary datum is an event called "meeting".

Hepburn would be understandably dissatisfied with such a reply; description of the object is the only way to achieve reliable knowledge about a relationship and Buber's refusal to describe "the object" is an evasion of the issue rather than a clarification. We are at a point where it is difficult to pass off Hepburn's objections. We are not

given an argument to counteract Hepburn's claim to the questionableness of a self-authenticating encounter. Buber refuses to claim the existence of God in an explicit manner; he refuses to identify any "object" of experience. Yet, he willingly admits to the operation of human subjectivity. We have not seen what he means by human subjectivity and without a stipulation of that term, it would seem that we are on very unstable ground if we accept his affirmation of the self-validating character of experience.

Hepburn's questions about self-authentication pursue next, the use of psychological referents, i.e. the "I sense", "I feel" sort of language. From the above discussion of modification it follows that Buber acknowledges a psychological dimension in his descriptions of meeting. "Modification", I assume, includes expressions that indicate one's mental condition. But does his notion lead us to believe that meeting depends solely upon a subject's feelings and sensations? Buber's disclaimer is most emphatic.

I perceive something. I am sensible of something. I imagine something. I will something. I think something. The life of human beings does not consist of all this and the like alone. This and the like together establish the realm of It.

But the realm of Thou has a different basis.¹

Buber is saying that psychological or subjective referents do

¹Buber, M., I and Thou, p. 4.

not get at the heart of the experience of encounter; they are not dependable descriptive terms for that event. What is his alternative?

To clarify his limitation on the use of psychological terms we must go deeper into Buber's notion of subjectivity, what he calls "genuine subjectivity". He contrasts genuine subjectivity with the term "individuality".

The I of the primary word I-It makes its appearance as individuality and becomes conscious of itself as subject (of experiencing and using).¹

Individuality occurs when the I-It form is the dominant mode in a person's life. Clearly, individuality is a negative term, signifying differentiation of self from others, self-appropriation, and detachment.² Individuality is a kind of Pre-Copernican orientation to the world where the self is "concerned with My--my kind, my race, my creation, my genius."³ Everything revolves about the subject in this aspect of the I-It form. As Buber sees it, individuality centers on selfish motives and emotions. Individuality would then be a form of thinking and acting, as well as feeling. Anything which indicates alienation

¹Ibid., p. 62.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 64.

or complete dependence on the I applies. Subjectivism, if we were to use it in the sense that Buber uses individuality, would be a completely negative term. It would not answer to Hepburn's objection in that it stipulates one modus operandi in the I-It sphere. It does not even take up the question of human perception in Hepburn's terms.

Genuine subjectivity stands in sharp contrast to individuality. "The I of the primary word I-Thou makes its appearance as person and becomes conscious of itself as a genuine subjectivity (without a dependent genitive)."¹ The authentic person enters into relation with others; the primary gesture is out to relation rather than inward towards self. Genuine subjectivity represents an orientation towards relations; the person is a participant, cognitively and emotionally. Again, Buber describes a personal mode of existence and in so doing has given the term subjectivity a different meaning.

Where do psychological references fit here? They have a place, for Buber never counsels the loss of sense or feeling in encounter; they are meant to be part of a given relation. Buber gives us one example; it stresses the difference between expressions such as "I feel", and

¹Ibid., p. 62.

"I love" or "I trust".¹ Here, the "I feel" is wholly within the context of an "I" centered world, i.e. individuality; the latter two expressions illustrate the existence of a living relation and genuine subjectivity. Emotions and sensations (the "I feel"), can express a living relation if the other marks of genuine subjectivity are predominant. This is Buber's main way of responding to Hepburn. Within the I-Thou event, emotional life has its place, but not as its primary aspect. The relation is primary; emotions and sensations are expressions of relations but not exhaustive ones.

As before, Buber does not give a direct answer to Hepburn; he will not subject the event of meeting to any explanation, psychological or otherwise. He shifts the reader's attention to a peculiar type of phenomenology; the question "how do I know" is simply not as important as

¹The example: "Feelings dwell in man but man dwells in love. Love does not cling to the I in such a way as to have the Thou only for its 'contents' its object; but love is between the I and the Thou." Buber, I and Thou, pp. 14-15. As was true in our discussion of relations between the I-It and I-Thou forms, there is a relation between individuality and genuine subjectivity; they are not mutually exclusive. Again, this is expressed poetically. "The I that steps out of the relational event into separation and consciousness of separation, does not lose its reality. Its sharing is preserved in it in a living way. In other words, as it is said of the supreme relation and may be used of all, 'the seed remains in it.' This is the province of subjectivity in which the I is aware with a single awareness of its solidarity of connexion and of its separation. Genuine subjectivity can only be dynamically understood as the swinging of the I in its lonely truth." Ibid., p. 63.

the question, "What does meeting mean?" His apologetic effort focuses upon one kind of intersubjective event called meeting. We have already cited a major difficulty in this; he will not utilize any method which explains the nature of meeting in terms of perceptual activity. Now we find him again refusing to explain how the psychological dimensions are subordinate. His categories "individuality" and "genuine subjectivity" are suggestive of a different approach to an analysis of the intersubjective event, but they do not clarify the question pressed by Hepburn.

We shall not receive a satisfying answer if we press Buber on the question of a covert psychological foundation for his phenomenology. As we have said, such an affirmation could not satisfy Hepburn; there is no reliance upon empirically testable data. Buber's refusal to restrict intersubjectivity by submitting it to any means of verification has the unavoidable effect of leaving the reader without any means of refuting Hepburn's pointed questions and criticisms. Buber invites our acceptance of the unique I-Thou mode of relationship but he does not provide us with any means of understanding it in terms of traditional philosophical interrogation.

It becomes clear, even at this early stage, that philosophical activity is conceived quite differently by

the two thinkers. Buber is the apologist for meeting, Hepburn the critic. Buber measures all else by the intersubjective sphere. Human perception, judgment, and existence in general, is looked at through the relational event. Hepburn demands that we assess the value of the intersubjective by other means, namely, individual perception and judgment. We must know about these before we can accept the affirmations about the interhuman or the "between". The two start from different vantage points; it is understandable that their conclusions differ.

We come now to Hepburn's final objection, the theologian's use of a scale of relative purity as an analogy for divine-human encounter. While it is abundantly clear that Buber's relational event is rooted in and descriptive of a "religious event", this needs clarification.¹

We have already said that Buber does not seek to demonstrate God's existence, but assumes it when expounding upon the significance of meeting. This means that Buber's descriptions of the interpersonal sphere invite the acceptance of a religious encounter or meeting in which faith is born. Undeniably, Buber's work rests upon this conviction. What then of a scale? Is there one which "peaks out" in

¹vide. Buber, M. I and Thou, pp. 75 ff., and Schlipp, Paul, and Friedman, M. , eds. op. cit. pp. 741 ff.

this supreme event.

We would mistake Buber's phenomenology if we saw it as a progressive analogical scale leading the skeptic to accept divine meeting. Two reasons bear this out. First, the interpersonal events he interprets are not like divine-human encounter; they are not conceived of as encounters which need purification in order to fulfill their proper function. The I-Thou form is expressive of an authentic relationship in the intersubjective sphere. If we take this point seriously, i.e. that there is nothing to be added to I-Thou encounters, we see that no scale of relative purity is needed, implied, or expounded. I-Thou encounters between people are not analogies for something else; they are authentic modes of man's existence.

Another way is needed to express the religious aspect of the interhuman. Buber's way to express this connection between the interhuman and the divine-human is to say that the holy God is glimpsed in the experience of others.¹ Man experiences the holy in the context of the common. This may not seem too different from a "scale", but it is. Buber's refusal to talk about God in other-worldly terms is one clue. There is no experience of God apart from a

¹Schlipp, p., and Friedman, M., eds.; op. cit. p. 710.

mundane world. We shall go into what this means in the succeeding chapter. But now it should be emphasized that Buber's concept of divine Presence is always expressed in existential, historical, and interpersonal terms. Divine-human encounter is expressed in terms of talk about interpersonal encounter; to explicate the full measure of this is Buber's philosophical vocation.

We should also remind ourselves of the potentially positive role of I-It relations. When considered in light of an I-Thou encounter, what Hepburn calls "impurities" are always present even if they are subordinate. The act of knowing about can be beneficial and complimentary to living relation. We find it hard to discern any scale of purification in this; the I-It form can work for the deepening of man's sense of encounter and Presence. There is no need to "think away" one's perceptions, analyses, etc. Rather they can be taken into relation where they are "effective between men". There is no scale in this.

Lastly we cite Buber's concept of "duration"; it is his alternative to any suggestion of a scale. It helps specify the sort of religious heritage he employs in his phenomenology of meeting.

He says that the I-Thou event is "lived in a 'duration' whose purely intensive dimension is defineable only in terms of itself, and not as part of a continuous

and ordered sequence."¹ Such poetic language is highly suggestive of a distinction made by many theologians in their expositions of biblical theology. They specify a difference between chronos, and Kairos. Chronos is clock-time, duration in the sense of measured moments, Buber's "continuous and ordered sequence". Kairos refers to the impact of the event, its meaning in the lives and history of the participants. The affinity of this distinction with that of I-It and I-Thou is readily discernible. I-It is kin to chronos, I-Thou to Kairos. We can also see that history if conceived this way, has no progressive pattern, no necessary transition from chronos to the intensive dimension. Buber thinks of encounter moments in terms of Kairos which breaks in upon the everyday. The form is "meeting", and in it, no scale of relative purity is implied.

Once again it is evident that Hepburn and Buber speak different languages and employ diverse conceptual tools. Hepburn has not properly criticized Buber at this point, but as we shall see, Buber's response will not explain how the divine-human experience is related to the inter-personal or the mundane. We save further explanation of his theory for the next chapter as it is of central importance in our study.

¹Buber, M., I and Thou, p. 30.

OBSERVATIONS

Charles Hartshorne in describing Buber's metaphysics made the comment, "Buber has no metaphysics; Buber is one of the greatest of metaphysicians. . ."¹ To me this statement suggests an appropriate appraisal of Buber concerning phenomenology. "He has no phenomenology and he is one of the greatest of phenomenologists." Buber, in I and Thou, has written one of the classics on intersubjectivity. In contrast to the empirical--logical fixations which try to "arrive at" a concept of intersubjectivity through knowledge about the other, Buber begins with intersubjectivity. He shifts the ground of concern to an interrogation of what meeting means. In this he is original and suggestive. As a phenomenologist of intersubjective experience he shifts the philosophical burden from its concentration upon the logical-empirical criteria for demonstrating the existence of intersubjective interchange, to a descriptive-interpretive explication of that interchange. His goal is not to demonstrate "meeting" but to interpret its significance. In this sense his work is constructive or apologetic. He speaks primarily to the reader who affirms the occurrence of encounter. Buber's insistence upon this as the pivotal phenomenon in human existence carries impressive weight; for humanists and religious alike, Buber has selected the critical

¹Schlipp, P., and Friedman, M., eds.; op. cit. p. 49.

event which gives life meaning, the intersubjective encounter. At every point we have seen Buber redirect the criticisms, searching not for a proof but for a meaningful exposition of the irreducible phenomenon, meeting. He is a most significant phenomenologist of intersubjectivity.

Buber also brings home the suggestion that intersubjectivity plays a central role in a conception of God or transcendence. There is no question in my mind that Martin Buber has done more to focus philosophical explication upon intersubjectivity as it applies to the issue of transcendence than anyone before or since. One reads and rereads Buber because of this focus; it is his major contribution and is a major contribution to any investigation of "religious experience".

But just at the point of Buber's redirection of phenomenological concern, questions arise. The reservations come not at the level of acknowledging intersubjective encounter as central; they arise when we ask how it is to be understood or conceptualized as central.

There is little leverage one has for the claim that encounter is the irreducible foundation upon which phenomenology must rest. Buber affirms but does not give evidence that his work is non-apologetic. He says he does not seek to demonstrate God's existence but he assumes it, affirms it, and describes relationship with God.

How can we accept the "purely descriptive" objectives he claims to espouse?

Buber also intends no complete separation between the mundane I-It mode and the all important I-Thou mode. But he gives us preciously little evidence to understand how they relate. We are told to accept "differences" but we are not given the opportunity to distinguish differences from exclusivity. No patient investigation of the I-It mode is conducted to help provide the necessary links.

Psychological language is limited but since perception and affective states are dealt with so hurriedly it sounds vacuous to affirm a "self-authenticated, relational event".

No scale of relative purity is expounded, but the concepts of chronos and kairos hardly aid us in relating the interpersonal to divine encounters in any systematic way.

The most serious vacancy, however, is Buber's general lack of interest in relating human perceptual modalities to the interpersonal sphere. Without systematic investigation of this, we are left with the tempting invitation to accept meeting as the irreducible central phenomenon of human existence. In short, we are left with Buber's objectives and intentions, no more. We appreciate them but can we overcome the obstacles he leaves in our way?

Failure to take on the task of describing the relation between perception and the interpersonal must qualify

our estimation of Buber as a phenomenologist. There is no real "debate" between Buber and Hepburn. Buber's "invitations" to acknowledge the irreducibility of encounter, really avoid philosophical exposition or debate. In the context of any philosophical discipline, one can hardly accept his alternatives unless they are demonstrated as being better ones. By refusing to debate, he is hardly a phenomenologist as he declares.

One final observation: we said we would ask why Buber did not count it his responsibility to write a phenomenology of "knowledge about" which would compliment his concept of encounter. We make one suggestion based on our work here and will enlarge upon it in the following chapter. It seems an ironic one in light of our concern.

Buber's thought springs from the intensity of religious experience; he is closely related to the traditions of Kierkegaard, Hamman and Rosenzweig as well as being a most noted interpreter of Hasidic tradition. We have said, with his full consent, that the I-Thou phenomenology is an explication of the experience of faith. Religious faith plays a major part in his phenomenology, but what is its specific function? The clue to its specific function is found in Buber's discussion of faith and reason. His remarks on the subject of gnosis are revealing.

In so far as it (gnosis) originates in genuine personal ecstasies, it betrays its origin in which it has to do with no object at all, with nothing that could be legitimately made into the object of an assertion. Thereby it not only offends the transcendent but also human existence because it constructs a structure of knowledge which passes from now on as complete, which claims the absolute legitimacy of the transmutation in an allegedly finally valid appeal to the 'known' mysterium. That the being into which this structure is here transmuted ultimately signifies the annihilation of creation, is conclusive.¹

Obviously he is speaking of the misuse of reason, gnosis, but it is fair to say he thinks such an excess is fostered when one adheres to the modalities of reason. Buber's distaste for objectification leads him to eschew all arguments concerning the credibility of his views. Misunderstandings might follow, or the primacy of the encounter event would be eclipsed. He was a radical on this; encounter phenomenology stands or falls on the basis of its power to invite our acceptance and acknowledgement.²

I must say it once again. I have no teaching. I only point to something. I point to reality, I point to something in reality that had not or had too little been seen. I take him who listens to me by the hand and lead him to the window. I open the window and point to what is outside.

I have no teaching, but I carry on a conversation.³

¹Ibid., p. 743.

²That I view this position as lamentable should be clear. In the following study of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, it will be discovered that a phenomenology of perception and rational activity need not be either religiously based, or a closed system, in order to retain the central importance of intersubjective encounter.

³Schlipp, P., and Friedman, M., eds. op. cit. p. 693.

Buber chose the way of the biblical prophet; showing the positive role of reason was an empty endeavor.

The irony is that Buber's religious convictions encouraged his reluctance to explain how a phenomenology of intersubjectivity bears upon the affirmation^{of} transcendence. He seems to be saying that one must remain silent about the relationship between faith and reason in order to appreciate it. There has never been a more suggestive and imaginative exposition of the full potential of intersubjective encounter. But if we are expected to see the relation between intersubjectivity and transcendence, why are we left without conceptual exposition? Must faith, to be vigorous, remain silent about this most important issue? Our next chapter seeks a more complete answer to this question.

CHAPTER II

MARTIN BUBER'S ONTOLOGY AND

CONCEPT OF TRANSCENDENCE

From our previous investigation it is clear that Martin Buber's phenomenology of intersubjectivity sought to interpret phenomena much more significant than isolated or bizarre occurrences. Though he bases his interpretation on the conviction that meeting is a concrete event, it cannot be understood that meeting is inconsequential, however rare its occurrence. Meeting is central to man's existence and the key to his being. The purpose of the present discussion is to get at Buber's explication of meeting in terms of its ontological rootage and its central place in his theology. More specifically we aim to uncover the ontological significance of the relational event and to see the doctrine of transcendence which both shapes it and emerges from it.

The effect should be twofold: we will be able to see his phenomenology in proper perspective and we will approach the central question of this study. Namely, can a concept of transcendence be introduced because of its solid connections with a phenomenology of intersubjectivity? The first task in approaching the question will be to ascertain how Buber deals with the connections. We put the issue in general terms here, anticipating that the

following discussion will sharpen it considerably.

Buber, all agree, did not work out such questions systematically, but it is appropriate to take up the ontological question after having analyzed the phenomenology. I and Thou speaks entirely in poetic terms of the intersubjective experience; Buber's later works attempt to interpret his phenomenology and to apply it to many areas of concern; two important areas are ontology and theology. If we are to understand the ontological and theological dimensions of meeting, we must turn to his later writings.

Two important articles address the question of the ontological significance of meeting, "Distance and Relation" and "Elements of the Interhuman."¹ The first essay explicates the significance of the I-Thou phenomenology in terms of "the principle of human life, that is, its beginning".² Buber thinks not of a temporal point in time at which man emerges as man, but of a principle which grounds and characterizes all human life. The principle

¹Vide., Friedman, Maurice, ed. The Knowledge of Man, Harper and Row, New York, 1965. "Distance and Relation" was originally published in the Hibbert Journal, Vol. XLIX, 1951; "Elements of the Interhuman" appeared first in Psychiatry, Vol. XX, 1957.

²Ibid., p. 59.

is man's "special way of being" and as such, is a special "category of being".¹

. . . the principle of human life is not simple but twofold, being built up in a twofold movement which is of such a kind that the one movement is the presupposition of the other. I propose to call the first movement 'the primal setting at a distance' and the second 'entering into relation'. That the first movement is the presupposition of the other is plain from the fact that one can enter into relation only with a being which has been set at a distance, more precisely, has become an independent opposite. And it is only for man that an independent opposite exists.²

Distancing signifies a movement peculiar to man; it is his unique capacity to set apart a world, (Welt), as distinguished from the animal's limited capacity to live only in the immediacy of its environment (Umwelt). Man acknowledges the life-ways and existence of the "other". Otherness, spoken of generally, is the world over against man. In its most inclusive terms, otherness is a totality larger than immediately perceivable things. "With soaring power he (man) reaches out beyond what is given him, flies beyond the horizon and the familiar stars, and grasps a totality."³

Two characteristics emerge from these statements: the mark of being human is to recognize that things have

¹Ibid., p. 60.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 61.

independent existence; second, the world we set apart is not an "unsteady conglomeration", but a unity or whole. This is Buber's meaning when he describes distancing as a movement, the peculiar way distancing is accomplished reveals him who accomplishes it. Distancing reveals the human; it is the principle of all human existence.

Along with this, he says that distancing cannot be acknowledged as the principle of human life unless we also acknowledge the contact man has with the world. In order to see the distancing principle, it is necessary that we assume a primal relation. He puts it this way:

Only the view of what is over against me in the world in its full presence, with which I have set myself, present in my whole person, in relation--only this view gives me the world truly as whole and one.¹

What Buber seems to be getting at is that man is inextricably bound to his world as a perceiving, thinking, and imagining being; his way of being in contact is to set apart things and others.² If this is a correct interpretation, the distancing-relationship connection is clear: they are equally necessary and of equal importance in describing human existence. One cannot be had without the other; distancing and relation are two fundamental characteristics of human activity.

¹Ibid., p. 63.

²For the present we should not read his term "relation" as indicating the I-Thou form. It is a more general term and refers to either the I-It or the I-Thou form.

But some confusion occurs with the additional terminology he uses in describing distance. In addition to its being a "movement", it is termed a category.

. . . the great phenomena on the side of the acts of distance are preponderantly universal, and those on the side of the acts of relation preponderantly personal, as indeed corresponds to their connection with one another. The facts of the movement of distance yield the essential answer to the question, How is man possible; the facts of the movement of relation yield the answer to the question, How is human life realized. The first question is strictly one about category; the second is one of category and history.¹

Distance answers the question, how is man possible? It is not entirely clear how we are to take this specification. Conceived of as a human action, distancing would be compatible with the rest of his phenomenology; in its emphasis upon concrete experience, distancing serves well as a general label for the activities of hearing, seeing, i.e., for perception. Distancing describes one characteristic of the Lebenswelt.²

If he intends something else by calling distance a category, some confusion is generated. He could consider distance a kind of categorical imperative, a principle which attempts to explain how human experience is possible. This perspective would indicate a much different relationship between distance and relation. The terminology should

¹Ibid., p. 64.

²The term Lebenswelt, often used by Husserl and Merleau-Ponty is appropriate here. It specifies that categories are always drawn from the experiential world and are not purely mental contrivances.

be sorted. Once we clarify the confusion it will be easier to see how his ontology relates to the phenomenology of meeting.

Buber illustrates with two examples. Man uses objects as tools, and tools are created for specific tasks. Objects fashioned for a particular task, however, may also be set aside to perform different tasks. A knife can be used to kill or to carve. Two aspects of the concept emerge. In the first sense the tool, as "distanced", has an identity of its own. But at the same time it is always used "in relation"; i.e., it is an object which expresses man's relation to his world, a tool which serves human purposes, such as killing or carving.

Concerning humans, Buber says, "Man as man, sets man at a distance and makes him independent; he lets the life of men like himself go on round about him, and so he, and he alone, is able to enter into relation, in his own individual status, with those like himself."¹ As a significant other, an individual, man is capable of relating to others. He imagines the other as an "other", and this can be the beginning of what Buber calls "personal making present."² Making the other present is associated with

¹Friedman, M., ed. op. cit., p. 67.

²Ibid., p. 78 ff.

the occurrence of an I-Thou encounter. Distancing is the universal fact of mutual existence; men are individual and social beings; "making present" is the personal fulfillment of the two fold principle.

In both illustrations, the implication is that distancing is a movement characteristic of all human beings.

We must turn to Buber's last published work, if we are to receive further clarification. There, distancing is primarily a "movement". Taken cumulatively with the above, it gives us reason to think that his ontology is based upon an existential-historical perception of existence rather than upon some a priori principle which provides truths about man.

Man, as I have indicated, is the only living being that by its nature perceives what surrounds it not as something connected with it, as it were, with its vital acts, but as something detached, existing for itself. This 'first movement', which once constituted man as such, is in no way a 'reflective attitude'; it is the primal act, the primal attitude of man that makes him man. It is also the presupposition for man's entering into relation. . . . I cannot bring this primal constitution of man, without which there would be neither speech nor tools, into connection with a reflective attitude. Man, I say, 'is the creature through whose being the existing being is set at a distance from him.' Not through reflections but through human being.¹

Distancing is primarily a movement of existential character, established as a principle because it is the way man relates to his world. Comparison with other phenom-

¹Schlipp, P., and Friedman, M., eds. op. cit., p. 695.

ologists will help us further stipulate the meaning of distancing.

Buber has written little of the influence of Husserl, but one of Husserl's concepts applies. Eidetic intuition Husserl advises, is that capacity of man to see the essence of his existential activity. By reflecting upon the phenomenon (in this case, relations) the thinker sees the ongoing themes operative in various activities. The concept of distance, in this sense, is the essence of living experience. It can be called the form or eidos of all human experience.

Martin Heidegger's notion of phenomenology is also appropriate in getting at Buber's conception. Heidegger expressly counsels reflection upon man's pre-reflective activities (modes of existence) to gain access to ontological truth. The ontological dimension is deeply embedded in the existential actualities and can be uncovered, as it were, through critical reflection upon the themes which emerge in man's history. Buber, to my knowledge, never mentions the Heideggerian conception of phenomenology but there is a parallel; the distance-relation concept functions as the ontological dimension of an existential modality. Again, it is the essence of experience.

This may serve to clarify Buber's conviction that ontological truth is discovered in the phenomenal sphere.

Man's actual living is indicative of his being; we are not suggesting further similarities between Buber, Husserl and Heidegger. Buber's concept of human activity has led him to postulate the "principle of human life".¹ Perhaps, this clears the fuzziness of his terminology a bit.

To complete what Buber says about distance and relation, it should be said that the realization or fulfillment of the distance-relation principle returns us to the I-Thou phenomenology. The other who is distanced and who shares a common existence can become a "self for me". The beginning of a relation "is ontologically complete only when the other knows that he is made present by me, and when this knowledge induces the process of his inmost self-becoming."² Man truly becomes himself only in acceptance and confirmation of the other. The distance-relation principle is meant to be actualized in an I-Thou relationship.

Buber's conception of the relationship between phenomenology and ontology is "circular". His apologetic begins with and culminates with the affirmation of meeting; a brief restatement shows this clearly. Man's contact with the world is assumed in his discussion of distancing. Buber did not stipulate that a living relation was necessary

¹Friedman, M., ed., op. cit., p. 69.

²Ibid., p. 71.

in noting the distance principle, but we cannot conclude that it is unimportant. Distance would make no sense if it were separated from the two-fold form of man's relation to the world. The I-Thou encounter is pivotal in that phenomenology. The ontological theme, distance-relationship, rests upon the truth that meeting occurs. And as Buber openly affirms, the distance-relation theme is complete only when a living relation is its capstone. It becomes increasingly evident that the truth about man's being has one specific "home"; ontology arises out of the phenomenology's religious orientation and reaffirms that conviction in its fulfillment.

When Buber's ontology is brought into focus in this manner, our appreciation for it is heightened. Our questions about it are also intensified. We can appreciate the fact that his ontology is an outgrowth of his phenomenology. Ontology does not seem to dictate what he believes occurs in the phenomenal world. He does not care so much for metaphysical principles of human existence as he does for the "movements" which characterize human existence. The occurrence of interpersonal meeting dictates the phenomenology and eventuates in an ontological doctrine. This is as it should be; we shall argue below, that an adequate phenomenology is the only viable resource for ontological reflection and exposition.

Our appreciation of this pattern is qualified, however. For the truth about meeting is primarily religious as we have inferred above and will discuss below. Our questions about his phenomenology (and now ontology) take us back to the influence of theology. The pattern just described seems to rest ultimately upon a theological conviction. If so, it seems rather unimportant that the ontology grows out of a phenomenology. The whole structure stands upon the credibility of a religious affirmation. Despite his protestations, we have encountered nothing to mollify this growing suspicion. We turn now to his doctrine of the interhuman.

Buber singles out for special exposition the term, Zwischenmenschlich.¹ His exposition helps explain how the entire ontology is formulated in the context of the I-Thou relationship. It emphasizes the importance of meeting as being the key for man's capacity to be truly human.

The interhuman, Buber says, has to do with a "separate category of our existence, even a separate dimension, to use a mathematical term, and one with which we are so familiar that its peculiarity has hitherto almost escaped

¹"So far as I know, Buber's use of the word 'Zwischenmenschlich' which I have translated as 'interhuman' is the first recorded usage." Smith, R.G., "Martin Buber's View of the Interhuman", The Jewish Journal of Sociology, Vol. VIII, No. I, June 1966, p. 74. The article Smith refers to is "Elements of the Interhuman".

us."¹ Zwischenmenschlich, is the sphere of the "between"; it is dialogue which stands apart as an ontologically relevant sphere and indicates what is truly human about men.

"Being" man is contrasted with "seeming" man. The two modes of existence have to do with the question of authentic ways of relating. A glance can be manufactured or it can be spontaneous and genuine. The man who 'makes' his look is dominated by the mode of semblance; the spontaneous glance indicates that man is "being himself". In the being mode, men communicate the truth about themselves. I-Thou encounter, Begegnung, occurs if the being mode dominates the lives of those who come into contact.² There is no one way to bring about this mode of human interaction; one party may incite the other to be himself; one may struggle to regain self authenticity in order to communicate. However realized, the "being" mode is what is true about individuals as well as the authentic mode of interaction. This is Buber's first way of describing the ontological dimensions of meeting.

¹Friedman, M., ed. op. cit., p. 71.

²"Because genuine dialogue is an ontological sphere which is constituted by the authenticity of being, every invasion of semblance must damage it." Ibid. p. 86.

Buber's next contrast distinguishes between "inadequate perception" and "personal making present", two forms of man's awareness of the other. Inadequate perception is an awareness of the other in reductionist terms; e.g. we assert the other can be known fully in terms of his behavior, economic background, or parental influences. Personal making present on the other hand, is Buber's term for perceiving another's wholeness. More specifically it means to "perceive his wholeness as a person determined by the spirit; it means to perceive the dynamic centre which stamps his every utterance, action, and attitude with the recognizable sign of uniqueness."¹ Unity, uniqueness, and wholeness are the marks of personal making present.² The mode of personal making present is a key factor in realizing the truth about man and his capacity for interhuman exchange.

Lastly, he contrasts the mode of "imposition" with that of "unfolding". Imposition is the logical extension of inadequate perception; it is man's way of manipulating another. Buber's example is the propagandist. Such a man views the other as an object to be swayed; he seeks to bring the other into his way of thinking, his club, his sphere of

¹Ibid., p. 80.

²In connection with these contrasting modes, Buber makes special mention, as quoted, of the spirit; we shall return to this below, as it is an excellent illustration of the specific meaning which pertains to the interhuman.

influence. Contrasted with this are the actions of the educator; he goes out to the other in order that the other may become more himself. He seeks to encourage the other's potential. As in the former examples, the unfolding mode makes meeting possible; with imposition, meeting is of course, frustrated.

These three conceptual pairs specify how man fulfills what the distance-relationship pattern described as man's potential. They make clear Buber's contention that the interhuman is freighted with ontological status. They complete the apologetic circle. In this "realization" of the distance-relation principle the events of meeting are given proper ontological description in that they now pertain to a fully human way of being in the world. This is Buber's way of holding the connection between phenomenology and ontology. Put simply, man's acts indicate most deeply who he is; the I-Thou relation indicates man's humanity, and consequently, it animates the ontology.

We turn now to a discussion of Buber's notion, spirit. It will specify the place his doctrine of transcendence occupies in the phenomenology and ontology. We choose to analyze his use of the term spirit, for it easily illustrates the elements which make up Buber's peculiar notion of transcendence.

Buber gives us reason to organize two fairly distinct

notions of spirit. The first notion is shown in the article just discussed, "Elements of the Interhuman"; he is brief but the idea is significant.

A man cannot really be grasped except on the basis of the gift of the spirit which belongs to man alone among all things, the spirit as sharing decisively in the personal life of the living man, that is, the spirit which determines the person. To be aware of a man, therefore, means in particular to perceive his wholeness as a person determined by the spirit; it means to perceive the dynamic centre which stamps his every utterance, action, and attitude with the recognizable sign of uniqueness.¹

As above, personal making present is an authentic human mode of awareness, and this mention of spirit is to be identified with that kind of human awareness. To make another present is to utilize one's own uniqueness to see others; it is to perceive the center of the other's personality. Spirit in this context, is the stirring within a man to enter into relation. This does not mean that something in man drives him to relate, as a chemical would stimulate a given reaction. It means that man qua man is inclined to interact, and that inclination makes possible the rare I-Thou event. Spirit signifies the human capacity to "go out" to others; man can be aware of his going out as was noted in I and Thou.² Secondly, man who is aware this way consciously receives the other as a significant

¹Friedman, M., ed. op. cit., p. 80.

²Vide, Buber, M., I and Thou, p. 76.

other; there is acceptance of the other's peculiarities and differences.¹ The essentials of the movement are openness and receptivity. Buber is describing that which makes meeting possible in terms of the individual's mode of living. Spirit in this context, is a human movement, fulfilled in the mutuality of meeting. As meeting occurs, the two become human with each other.

Buber has placed his concept of spirit in the context of human capacities, and awareness; he has not introduced as he does elsewhere, the notion of a divine spirit. There is evidently room in Buber's thought for conceiving of spirit as a human mode of existence.

Though Buber does not mention a divine spirit, we would be hasty in concluding that spirit here can be confined to "man's spirit" or the "human spirit". Most surely, the phenomenon of meeting takes precedence; spirit is discerned only in the context of genuine human interaction--the interhuman. He describes the individual's capacities and movements from that vantage point alone. Personal making present indicates the modes of openness and receptivity, elements of dialogue. Spirit can be referred to as a human mode of awareness only in the context of the I-Thou phenomenology. Spirit is never circumscribed

¹Ibid., p. 79.

by a militant humanism.

The notion of spirit illustrates man's primal association with God. R.G. Smith states this well.

It is spirit, not simply as a category but as a mode of man's being which Buber wishes to disclose anew. So this realm of 'betweenness' is not a state, far less simply an idea derived from looking at men in relation. But it is an action and a source of action.¹

This second and more familiar reference to man's interaction with God has its home in the concepts of grace or transcendence. There are numerous references we could cite; we shall confine ourselves to a few relevant passages in I and Thou, interpreting them as far as possible with his later writings. The notion of spirit as divine grace or transcendence is communicated by Buber's use of many synonymous terms.

In every sphere in its own way, through each process of becoming that is present to us, we look out toward the fringe of the eternal Thou; in each we are aware of a breath from the eternal Thou; in each Thou we address the eternal Thou.²

There is Eros for man only when beings become for him pictures of the eternal and community is revealed along with them; and there is Logos for man only when he addresses the mystery with work and service for the spirit.³

Forms silent asking, man's loving speech, the mute proclamation of the creature, are all gates leading into the presence of the Word.⁴

¹Smith, R.G., op. cit. p. 76-77.

²Buber, M., I and Thou, p. 101.

³Ibid., p. 102.

⁴Ibid.

"Breath", "logos", "Mystery", "Word": these can be taken as the poetic synonyms for spirit or transcendence, the eternal Thou. All illustrate Buber's position that interhuman encounters and individual modes of living are grounded in God's action. They introduce us to the critical place transcendence occupies in the phenomenology and ontology we have outlined.

We are ready to ask specific questions about Buber's conception of transcendence. That it plays some role in his philosophy has never been doubted. The question is, what is its role? We have become increasingly suspicious that Buber's conception of transcendence dictates the content of the phenomenology and shapes the ontology. Our first question grows out of this suspicion. In line with Buber's second way of referring to spirit, is the acknowledgment of transcendence a prior requirement for understanding the I-Thou phenomenology? Our question, when posed this way asks if the acknowledgment of God's existence and grace is a prior requirement which determines the character of the phenomenology and resulting ontology.

The other alternative is that the acknowledgment of transcendence is not required to understand the I-Thou phenomenology and ontology; rather the phenomenology and ontology lead to and introduce acknowledgment. We ask, in line with Buber's first use of spirit, if a conception

of transcendence is the outcome of a philosophy of meeting. This is Buber's declared position; we shall discuss it first.

Two factors give evidence for this alternative. Buber speaks poetically about the event of meeting as a "gate leading into the presence of the Word."¹ He also says that "the relation with man is the real simile of the relation with God."² This would indicate that the affirmation of transcendence is possible because of the irreducible nature of inter-personal meeting. The phenomenology cites both the capacity for and the emergence of faith in God, as anthropological observations. He backs up this position somewhat by claiming that his work is primarily philosophical in nature.

. . . if that connection of experience (i.e. I-Thou meeting in the interpersonal sense, and I-Thou as acknowledgment of transcendence) is to be understood as an experience of faith, then its communication is certainly to be called preferably a theological one. But that is not so. For theology is understood, certainly as a teaching about God, even if it is only a 'negative' one which then appears instead of a teaching of the nature of God, a teaching of the word of God, the Logos. But I am absolutely not capable nor even disposed to teach this or that about God. Certainly, when I seek to explain the fact of man, I cannot leave out that he, man lives over against God. But I cannot include God himself at any point in my explanation, any more than I could detach from history the, to me indubitable, working of God in it, and make

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 103.

it an object of my contemplation. As I know no theological world history, so I know no theological anthropology in this sense: I know only a philosophical one.¹

He intends that the reader understand his work as a purely philosophical enterprise which does not exclude the experience of faith. It would seem that our second alternative corresponds to these objectives. The phenomenology of I-Thou encounter stands as the irreducible; faith is dealt with as an experience that is born of intersubjective interaction.

A second factor also lends itself to the latter alternative. It is seen in Buber's discussion of transcendence in the 1957 Postscript to I and Thou.

The question is, how can the eternal Thou in the relation be at once exclusive and inclusive? How can the Thou relationship of man to God, which is conditioned by an unconditioned turning to him, diverted by nothing, nevertheless include all other I-Thou relations of this man, and bring them as it were to God?²

The question, he insists, is not one about God, for that can never be answered. It is about man's relationship with God, and he insists that this is discernible in the I-Thou relation. He reminds us that the only thing that can be known about is the conversation man has with God. "Conversation" always pertains to historical living and social interaction; it will not be other-worldly talk.

¹Schlipp, P., and Friedman, M., eds. op. cit. p. 690. (underlining mine).

²Buber, M., I and Thou, p. 134.

Faith is an expression of the phenomenon of meeting; so "religious" language is the language of the everyday and the social.

Buber seeks to redirect the theological enterprise to embrace this-worldly talk, specifically to base any God-talk on the interhuman phenomenon.¹ This effort would seem to view acknowledgment of transcendence as a companion to, but not a presupposition for meeting. Again, this corresponds to the alternative under discussion; the theological domain is supposed to emerge from the phenomenological sphere. Theology makes sense in terms of meeting--in that order.

But this is not the whole story. Though he mutes the other alternative, it nevertheless remains. Our previous quotations indicate that transcendence is often the presupposition for his phenomenology: "there is eros for man only when beings become for him pictures of the eternal. . . only when he addresses the mystery." Acknowledgment of transcendence is here a prior requirement for understanding the meaning of inter-personal love. Acknowledgment of

¹"One must, however, take care not to understand this conversation with God--the conversation of which I have spoken in this book and in almost all the works which followed--as something happening solely alongside or above the everyday. God's speech to man penetrates what happens in the life of each one of us, biographical and historical, and makes it for you and me into instruction, message, demand. Ibid., p. 136.

transcendence gives the interhuman proper perspective, and in so doing serves as a presupposition for understanding the phenomenology of meeting.

Stripped of this presupposition, the phenomenology and the ontology would be without anchor. Faith could be "faith in whatever." And Buber is very clear that true faith is faith in "God, who cannot become an It." The theistic presupposition is essential; Buber permits it to operate alongside the other option.

In saying this, we take issue with Buber's claims. His protestations are acceptable as statements of his vocational intentions, but they are not accurate indicators of much that he writes in I and Thou. Once the experience of God's grace functions as the key to understanding meeting, it becomes a presupposition for the whole phenomenological-ontological structure. Whether he admits it or not, his phenomenology and the ontology are based upon a distinct theological premise. His philosophical work cannot be separated from what animates it; we are obligated to see the whole philosophical venture as the expression of a prior acknowledgment of divine grace.

Buber is not convincing when he describes his work as purely philosophical. His claim that the experience of faith induces a philosophical vocation different than the theological vocation, seems academic. Transcendence is

the presupposition for this "philosophical" venture; his phenomenology and ontology may be a unique kind of "philosophical theology" or a "theologically oriented philosophy" but it is certainly not philosophy per se. His conception of transcendence explains the philosophy and makes it credible.

It is an unavoidable observation that the two conceptions of transcendence which we outlined did not conflict in Buber's mind. R.G. Smith summarizes this quite well in his introduction to the second edition of I and Thou.

For Buber himself God's transcendence, his absolute otherness is so thoroughly involved in his whole understanding of the relation between God and man, that it is difficult to select one point rather than another in his exposition of this. The otherness which runs through man's whole relation to his world points to this transcendence, at the same time as transcendence is drawn into the whole world.¹

Smith says well that Buber's doctrine of transcendence functions as both an encountered reality in the context of meeting, and as a presupposition which lends the inter-human its phenomenological and ontological credence. The lack of contradiction, for Buber, is no more mysterious than the aforementioned intertwining of I-It and I-Thou spheres which characterized his phenomenology; "for our relation to him is as above contradictions as it is, because he is as above contradictions as he is."² This is another

¹Buber, M., I and Thou, from the translator's preface, p. x.,

²Ibid., from the author's postscript, p. 134.

dialogical truth in Buber's mind, a paradox, and not a contradiction.

SUMMARY AND STATEMENT OF

THE ISSUES

We asked in the beginning of this chapter how Buber related his phenomenology of meeting to his ontology. The answer is fairly clear. The phenomenology of meeting is grounded in the primal movements of distance and relationship. This two-fold movement rested upon Buber's conviction that the event of meeting occurs, i.e. it rests upon a conviction about human experience. Distancing functions as a conceptual principle which makes the occurrence of meeting understandable; "relation" is the conceptual capstone of the two-fold movement. The pivotal concept which gives the phenomenology ontological status is that distance and relationship describe the truth about man, i.e. his unique capability for being human with another. No philosopher has gone further in placing intersubjectivity at the center of his thought. Intersubjectivity really defines man; this is Buber's unique contribution to ontological thought.

We inquired about the function of transcendence in the phenomenology and ontology. While Buber declares that an acknowledgment of divine grace follows from the experience of meeting, we saw also that transcendence is the

sole means for understanding the true depths of meeting. Only by affirming it can we come to know what meeting means.

Though there is no problem in Buber's mind for holding such a position, there is in mine. If we were to confine ourselves to his declared emphasis, the "discovery" of transcendence could be considered on philosophical grounds. More specifically, we could render critique of the phenomenological-ontological structure to see if the acknowledgment of transcendence does have a place. Buber's position makes that approach impossible. We are required to interpret meeting in the context of a prior acknowledgment; its true meaning depends on a prior notion of divine grace. Can he have it both ways?

Because we cannot accept the ambiguous role of Buber's doctrine of transcendence, we are led to state the issue for study in the following manner. The following study seeks to ascertain the proper function of a phenomenology of intersubjectivity in answering our questions about transcendence. Does a phenomenology of intersubjectivity really lead to an affirmation of transcendence? If so, what sort of doctrine might be inferred from it? Will the proper function of a phenomenology be to encourage the affirmation of a transcendent God as conceived in Judeo-Christian terms or will another sort of conception be warranted? Will any affirmation or acknowledgment of

transcendence become credible? We must leave all the alternatives open if we are to learn from the introductory study. The issue is to determine how, if at all, a phenomenology of intersubjectivity affects our views about transcendence? Our study is investigative.

We have learned a number of things which should guide the investigation. It is of the utmost importance to relate "knowledge about" human relationships to encounter situations. If we maintain that encounters are irreducible and foundational forms for knowing others, we should be able to explain why and how. It will do no good to affirm relationships and leave knowledge about them in the background. We must attend to the problem of establishing a viable relationship between intersubjective encounter and knowledge about the other. Methodology will become a major consideration in this endeavor.

Secondly, if we do come to some way of affirming a connection between a phenomenology of human encounters and acknowledgment of transcendence, we must attend to the function of ontology. Though no assumptions can be warranted, it seems necessary to draw a coherent relation between phenomenology and ontology in the ensuing study. If the connecting links between phenomenology and ontology are weak or non-existent, it would seem presumptuous to affirm a theological perspective. The lesson of the fore-

going is clear on this. Buber's notion of ontology was built upon the phenomenology; the connections were clear and strong. If an acknowledgment of transcendence is warranted, its ontological rootage must be there. We cannot accept the contradictory roles theology played in Buber; we therefore seek to discover if a phenomenology of the interhuman should have an ontological status. If it does, some form of affirmation of transcendence may be possible.

These issues, I believe, are important for the theological community. Theologians have never been of one mind, especially with regard to our concern. Though I seek no final agreement among them, perhaps, some light will emerge to forward theological debate. The relationship between a phenomenology of encounter and the affirmation of transcendence is of central importance if it is not the only issue theologians discuss.¹

In our attempt to shed light upon these issues we shall concentrate on one philosopher's views, those of Maurice Merleau-Ponty. There are specific reasons for selecting him for the study.

Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological investigations

¹For a good example of the importance of our topic, vide, Macquarrie, John. God Talk, an Examination of the Language and Logic of Theology, London, S.C.M. Press, 1967, Chapter I.

argue for the centrality of the concrete world of experience; he is noted among French philosophers for presenting a Lebenswelt phenomenology. Though this in no way means that his thoughts coincide with those of Martin Buber, it does put the two philosophers in the same arena, in terms of their pivotal thesis.

Secondly, Merleau-Ponty concentrated on a phenomenology of perception as the vital artery for all phenomenological reflection. We shall see that the (Lebenswelt) presupposition and his study of perception are related; how they relate suggests that Merleau-Ponty cares very much about the connection between "knowing" and "knowledge about". He holds as does Buber that intersubjectivity is an irreducible phenomenon, but he does so not by apologetic means but by the more traditional means of philosophical argumentation. We shall see in our study a very different approach to the irreducibility of the intersubjective sphere, one which illumines if it does not "correct" the difficulties encountered in the I-Thou phenomenology.

Again, Merleau-Ponty is notable on the contemporary scene for his concepts regarding the way ontology relates to phenomenological research. He was a reluctant student of ontology, maintaining a first obligation to phenomenological interrogation, but his later work contains, without doubt, some of the most stimulating ontological explorations

ever written. We shall not find him as complete or as systematic in the later ontological research--he died too early; but the existing writings do give us valuable material for relating ontological research to the issue of intersubjectivity.

Finally, the place and function of transcendence was a recurring issue for Merleau-Ponty. What makes him so valuable for our purposes is that he considered himself outside the realm of faith; yet, he could not avoid the issue which motivates our study. At many different periods in his philosophical career, he took up the issue of transcendence. It was not a presupposition he could accept in any traditional manner. Still he attempted to describe its place in a philosophy of intersubjectivity with great attentiveness; he could not avoid the issue. We shall find important reflections, especially in the period just before his death, that bear directly on the problem we have chosen to study.

It must be borne in mind that the issue we have chosen cannot be attacked directly, as it were, without preparation. The phenomenology itself will have great bearing on the way the issue is eventually dealt with. We follow an outline much the same as our discussion of Martin Buber. Our first task is to clarify the contents and structure of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of inter-

subjectivity; we shall then deal with it in terms of the ontological, and finally the theological context.

PART TWO

ANALYTICAL STUDY:

MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY

CHAPTER ONE

MAURICE MERLEAU-PONTY: HIS METHOD

AND

THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN PERCEPTION

In undertaking a study of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology we do, indeed, enter a different philosophical world. Historically speaking, there is no relation between Martin Buber and Merleau-Ponty. Martin Buber wrote a major portion of his works before Merleau-Ponty began to write; neither gives any indication of having read the other. Martin Buber's philosophical heritage was primarily German idealism; although he was acquainted with Husserl's method he can hardly be called a student of that early phenomenology. He had read Heidegger but spent little time in criticism.¹ Merleau-Ponty on the other hand, learned phenomenological method as a student of Edmund Husserl; major principles in his work are borrowed from Martin Heidegger. His audience is the French academy. He was a colleague, and co-editor of a widely respected journal with John Paul Sartre;²

¹Vide. Buber, M., Between Man and Man, Smith R.G. trans., New York, The Macmillan Co., 1967. For comments on Husserl, pp. 159 ff, for those on Heidegger pp.160 ff.

²The co-editorship was for the monthly Le Temps Moderne, 1945 to 1952.

their concerns during the World War II period were broadly speaking, formative for French existentialism. Obviously, there is little reason to compare Merleau-Ponty and Buber on the basis of a historical kinship. Our purpose is to see if, and how, Merleau-Ponty's very different philosophical perspectives help elucidate the issues we outlined with respect to Buber.

Once we leave behind the quest for historical comparisons, it becomes evident that there is a common bond between the two. The language and setting may be different but they share a common presupposition about the philosophical vocation. One example illustrates this and introduces us to the method employed by Merleau-Ponty.

Speaking of the aim of phenomenology he says, "all its efforts are concentrated upon re-achieving a direct and primitive contact with the world, and endowing that contact with philosophical status."¹ Merleau-Ponty assumes that the world of experience calls the philosophical task into being and provides the issues with which it must deal. The world is "always 'already there' before reflection begins,"² and the philosopher consciously recognizes that his reflections are but efforts to bring that world into focus. Merleau-Ponty

¹Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, The Phenomenology of Perception, Smith, Colin, trans. London, Routledge and Kegan Paul 1962 p. vii.

²Ibid.

is a Lebenswelt phenomenologist. His discipline develops as it is given animation by the diversity and richness of experience, and its objectives are fulfilled only as it puts men back in touch with pre-philosophical experience. Lebenswelt phenomenology for him has no other credibility; it is a discipline which has a thoroughly social foundation. Merleau-Ponty's personal and professional interests support this notion of philosophy; he was a teacher and writer, a political commentator, a person deeply involved in the struggle for peace and social change. He was also an aesthete of great respect. His own life is a fine example of his conception of phenomenology. Both Buber and Merleau-Ponty strived to make their philosophical reflections responsive to the range of man's experience; in the performance of their respective Lebenswelt phenomenologies they differed much but they did hold this singular perception of the philosophical task.

Beyond their common commitment to do a philosophy of concrete experience, the two begin to part ways. Buber chose apologetics; Merleau-Ponty is confident that the discipline of method will yield a credible phenomenology. We faced constant difficulties with Buber in bringing his suggestive phenomenology into dialogue with Hepburn. The absence of method, was one source of these difficulties. We shall also face difficulties with Merleau-Ponty, but not

in this respect; he sought above all to elucidate concrete experience in the context of philosophical debate. The presupposition that man is deeply involved in this world with others is not an article of faith; it is a thesis which must be tested and eventually demonstrated. One must develop a method which speaks to others who might oppose. For our purposes, the development of method is an instructive and helpful alternative to Buber's apologetic. Investigating its forms is not an exercise of peripheral concern; it is essential in the study of intersubjectivity.

In debt to Husserl, Merleau-Ponty sought to pursue his objectives in the context of a phenomenological method.

Husserl had given modern phenomenology its dictum: "to the things themselves:"¹ this banner was supposed to distinguish phenomenology from the epistemologies of Hume and Kant. Borrowing on Descartes's concept of methodic doubt, Husserl developed a tool he called the phenomenological reduction. Anything outside the sphere of absolute certainty, that is, any transcendent object must be submitted to the philosopher's scrutiny. The phenomenologist "suspends" his judgment or natural acceptance of things in order to discover his essential relation to them. Objects and other people

¹Husserl, Edmund, Ideas, Boyce, W.R., trans., London, Geo. Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1952, p. 96.

particularly, come under the reduction. As the true essence of man's relation to things becomes available, phenomenology can proceed to become a fully "scientific" epistemology, one based upon certainty.¹

Merleau-Ponty also employs the concept of phenomenological reduction. But it may be suspected, he does so with different presuppositions and results. First, the epochè² is used to sharpen the phenomenologist's natural attitude rather than dislodge it completely. Merleau-Ponty chooses his terms carefully to convey this redefinition. "It is because we are through and through compounded of relationships with the world that for us the only way to become aware of the fact is to suspend the resultant activity, to refuse it our complicity (to look at it ohne mitzumachen, as Husserl often says), or yet again, to put it out of play."³

The movement of reduction for Merleau-Ponty is a "step back" to bring an otherwise common-sense world into

¹This is an extremely brief description of Husserl's phenomenological reduction. We shall leave it this way, anticipating a more detailed analysis in our comparative chapter on Husserl and Merleau-Ponty (Part III, Chapter One). We shall also leave until that chapter, the issue of Merleau-Ponty's regard for Husserl as the father of Lebenswelt phenomenology.

²From Greek, epechein, to hold on, check.

³Merleau-Ponty, op. cit. p. xiii.

focus; again, the epochè "slackens the intentional threads which attach us to the world."¹ Merleau-Ponty puts it this way, I believe, to communicate the difference between his existentialist use of the reduction and Husserl's. In less dramatic language we could say that the epochè is the phenomenologist's critical analysis of otherwise uncritical experience; it is reflection upon unreflective experience, or as Merleau-Ponty would say, the "pre-reflective." Merleau-Ponty cites Eugen Fink, "when he spoke of 'wonder' in the face of the world."² The phenomenologist employs the epochè in order to see more clearly "the forms of transcendence fly up like sparks from a fire."³

This concept of reduction is considerably different than Husserl's. First, the foundational principle differs: not once is the existence of the lived-world called into question. Merleau-Ponty saw that such a reservation of judgment was motivated by the spurious quest for certainty. It led Husserl to an excessive idealism.⁴ Consciousness, in Husserl's tradition represents the world to itself through the clear light of reason; in Cartesian Meditations .

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

⁴Ibid., p. xi.

consciousness constitutes the world. Husserl's idealism is argued in the context of a transcendental subjectivism--the world is the projection of a pure consciousness. For Merleau-Ponty such a doctrine implied that experience lost its opacity and concrete nature; idealism sacrifices any effectiveness in elucidating experience because it is committed to a philosophy of certainty. Merleau-Ponty did not accept the notion of a pure consciousness; one finds upon the most radical reduction a "subject destined to be in the world."¹ The reduction thus returns the phenomenologist to pre-reflective experience. When the cords of judgment are loosened we discover a vast complex of intersubjective exchange and involvement with objects. The reduction heightens the phenomenologist's understanding of the world. This is its primary result.

In addition, the reduction results in a new understanding of human subjectivity. It must be admitted that Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology is, at this point anti-scientific in a broad sense, and is particularly opposed to

¹Ibid. To state his difference with Husserl, Merleau-Ponty comments, "the most important lesson which the reduction teaches is the impossibility of a complete reduction." Ibid. p. xiv.

a rigid empiricism.¹ Merleau-Ponty's argument is that science mistakenly explains man as a bit of the world; it overlooks his subjectivity. The *epochè* serves to correct this view for to employ it is to know that human subjectivity is operative in any reflection. The Lebenswelt phenomenologist is aware that his perspectives, values, and perceptions, play a major part in philosophical debate as well as everyday experience. The reflective attitude or reduction is instrumental in bringing this to the fore of his thinking; to be a philosopher for Merleau-Ponty means to encounter anew one's own subjectivity. But by this he does not intend to repeat Husserl's error; the subjectivity that is encountered is not a transcendental subjectivity. There is no such thing. Subjectivity is rediscovered as being at root, an intersubjectivity. Articulating this one insight is our primary objective in the first part of this study. We but mention it in preparation for Chapter Two which deals with that subject.

It is appropriate here to note that the phenomenolog-

¹"I am not the outcome or the meeting-point of numerous causal agencies which determine my bodily or psychological make-up. I cannot conceive of myself as nothing but a bit of the world, a mere object of biological, psychological or sociological investigation. I cannot shut myself up within the realm of science. All my knowledge of the world, even my scientific knowledge, is gained from my own particular point of view, or from some experience of the world without which the symbols of science would be meaningless. The whole universe of science is built upon the world as directly experienced. . . ." Ibid. p. viii.

ical reduction tries to steer between both rationalist and empiricist extremes providing a credible alternative to both. The phenomenological reduction is in proper hands he says, with "existential philosophy."¹

The existential appropriation of the reduction does not mean that phenomenology thereby loses its field of concentration, the study of essences.² In the phenomenologist's reflection on raw experience he is opened to fields of ideality. The exercise of developing ideational themes, Husserl called eidetic intuition;³ this becomes for Merleau-Ponty, the second principle of phenomenological method. The principle can be described briefly as the phenomenologist's ability and determination to "bring the world to light."⁴ Two examples show how the eidetic reduction becomes an appropriate tool for Lebenswelt phenomenology.

The first example concerns the assumptions of the logical positivists.⁵ At least two themes present themselves when one

¹The context is as follows. "Far from being, as has been thought, a procedure of idealistic philosophy, phenomenological reduction belongs to existential philosophy; Heidegger's 'being in the world' appears only against the background of phenomenological reduction." Ibid. p. xiv.

²Vide. Merleau-Ponty, M., op. cit. p. vii and p. xiv.

³from Greek eidos, idea.

⁴Merleau-Ponty, M., op. cit. p. xvi.

⁵He refers specifically to the Vienna Circle, Ibid., p. xv.

reflects upon the nature of human consciousness. The first possibility, positivists assume, is that consciousness is described adequately by organizing our language about it. Language about consciousness is conceived of as being a field of ideas quite separate from one's experience of the world. Logical positivism assumes that linguistic meaning can be organized to form correct concepts of consciousness. Merleau-Ponty observes that separating language about consciousness from man's experience of self and world, is superficial. Positivism overlooks this relation in its concentration upon language.

An important task in phenomenology is to scrutinize the operation of consciousness which gives rise to our language about it. Certainly phenomenology must study language, but it does so in the context of its being dependent upon man's prereflective experience of the world. The eidetic reduction asserts that the philosopher wrests ideality from "dumb experience."¹

Cartesian idealism approaches the notion of consciousness quite differently: knowledge is the correlate to a pure consciousness; the distinct idea is the flower of consciousness. Again, human perception is put aside to build a structure of ideas; "truth" is comprised of the

¹Ibid., p. xv.

ideas we have of the world. Again, the lesson of the eidetic reduction is clear. Knowledge, for Merleau-Ponty, is not the correlate of consciousness or a capturing of the world in a thought form. We cannot possess the world in thought; the world always transcends our knowledge of it.¹ Moreover, any eidōs or essence is an abstraction of experience. Involvement, or being-in-the-world, precedes our ideas about that involvement.

If we recognize these limitations upon reason we are safe in our efforts to conceptualualize essences. Not only is the formulation of ideational themes "safe"; it is necessary. In order to understand the pre-reflective, reflection must be introduced. The sense of opacity in experience is not evident apart from thematization; wonder for the world which Merleau-Ponty seeks to reawaken, can only come with the rigour of describing its forms. "Sparks of transcendence" may incite fascination apart from eidetic reduction, but their meaning is untouched until thematization is applied. Eidetic reduction given its appropriate limitation, is not only a viable alternative to positivism and idealism; it is the proper exercise of reason.

This should give us aid in clarifying the relation between Merleau-Ponty's existential concerns and the peculiar

¹Vide., ibid. p. xvii.

role of phenomenology. Existential thought does not exclude a methodological "program"; in fact, it requires one if the phenomenologist is to be something other than a prophet. Merleau-Ponty's method and his subject matter are interdependent: when a method is specified that depends upon the priority of experience (Lebenswelt), and requires fields of ideality to scrutinize and interpret its structures, method and existential concern truly inform one another.

We may summarize this brief outline by saying that method is the phenomenologist's access--access to the meaning of the experience, of truth. If this summary sounds awkward, it is nevertheless, a fair synopsis. "Access" is paramount, in that methodology is used to serve an existential pre-occupation--the nature of man's involvement in a world of things and people. "Access to the meaning of experience" signifies that essences are derived from experience, and that the philosopher specializes, so to speak, in the sphere of ideational forms. The phrase, "experience of truth" conveys the notion that phenomenological method couches the question of truth in the context of human experience. Merleau-Ponty does not so much ask, "what is the truth?" as if truth could be captured apart from the phenomenon of human interaction; rather, he asks, "what in experience is encountered as true?" Experience is the context for truth claims; it provides for our questioning and affects

our answers.

Lest we assume that this notion of method issues in yet another form of subjectivism, we should be more specific about the subject-matter to which the methodology applies. This takes us to Merleau-Ponty's concept of perception.

The "lived-world" is a broad and, perhaps, vague category, similar to the term "experience". Merleau-Ponty points his investigations specifically to the nature of human perception. Dealt with phenomenologically, the problem of perception is the problem of the in-itself-for-us. Using Brentano's dictum, "all consciousness is consciousness of something,"¹ Merleau-Ponty particularizes the phenomenologist's objectives; "To seek the essence of perception is to declare that perception is, not presumed true, but defined as access to truth."² From the particular forms of perception which give access, the phenomenologist pursues the sense which is revealed where the paths of my various experiences intersect, and also where my own and other people's intersect and engage each other like gears. It is thus inseparable from subjectivity and intersubjectivity, which find their unity when I either take up my past experiences in those of the present, or other people's in my own. For the first time the philosopher's thinking is sufficiently conscious not to anticipate itself and endow its own results with reified form in the world.³

¹Ibid. p. xvii

²Ibid., p. xvi

³Ibid., p. xx.

Though this affirmation may not quiet all suspicion of subjectivism, it does advise us to acknowledge a different intention on Merleau-Ponty's part. Because the lived-world provides the fundamental subject-matter for phenomenology, and that world is never confined to an individual's private vision, subjectivism should be averted. The lived-world described here, is an intersubjective sphere; his descriptions disciplined by method attempt to make that affirmation philosophically credible.

His is a "grand program"; I ask myself if such a task can be realistic. He has set before himself a field of investigation which is supposed to encompass the forms of human perception as well as the general problem of being-in-the-world. Yet, his work is meticulous if not, at times repetitious, and from this we can learn a lesson; it is impossible to select a topic such as intersubjectivity without reviewing those topics which precede and surround it. This requirement, however, is not a superfluous one. We cited Buber's failure to develop a phenomenology of perception; it is possible that, in the analyses ahead, we shall see that it is this which makes a phenomenology of intersubjectivity understandable and credible. That is certainly one of Merleau-Ponty's aims. We go now to his study of perception particularly as perception pertains to the subject's knowledge of self.

What makes Merleau-Ponty so interesting to us will be the connection he sees between perception and a theory of intersubjectivity. The interrogation of human perception, for Merleau-Ponty, calls for a phenomenology of intersubjectivity. This is his way of surmounting what had become Husserl's mistaken preoccupation--the problem of human consciousness. Perception is the vantage point from which a theory of experience can be expounded; a theory of perception calls the phenomenologist to concentrate on the intersubjective as a cardinal form of human experience.¹ It is far too early in our study to demonstrate this, but it can be anticipated in the later chapters that Merleau-Ponty is notable in modern phenomenological research because of this perspective. More than any other, I believe, he will be seen as the phenomenologist of intersubjectivity--and for good reason.

Merleau-Ponty did not explore intersubjectivity in the narrow topical sense; his phenomenology is just as notable for its theories of freedom and history; in the final years he would also write the beginnings of an ontology. What we will see below as we begin to apply his method is that intersubjectivity was his guiding interest and the connecting thread for all his endeavors.

¹His closest ally in this perspective is Gabriel Marcel; why Merleau-Ponty did not speak of their kinship in thought is something of a mystery. We shall discuss their affinities below at the appropriate points.

THE PROBLEM OF HUMAN PERCEPTION:

THE THEORY OF THE BODY

Prior to investigating Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of the corps propre, it is advisable to outline how he poses the problem of perception. Omitting this would give the reader the impression that Merleau-Ponty's philosophical opponents, idealism and behavioristic empiricism, are false constructs rather than misunderstandings of real problems. He respects these two positions in so far as they respond to the knotty problem of perception; they are wrong not because they disregard the issue but because they draw wrong conclusions about problems inherent in the act of perception. The problems are illustrated by the following:

I see the next-door house from a certain angle, but it would be seen differently from the right bank of the Seine, or from the inside or again from the aeroplane: the house itself is none of these appearance. . . . I am trying to express in this way a certain manner of approaching the object, the 'gaze' in short, which is as indubitable as my own thought, as known by me. We must try to understand how vision can be brought into being from somewhere without being enclosed in its own perspective.¹

We can detail this by focusing upon two aspects of perception, first its spatial, and secondly, its temporal character. To see the house is to see it from an angle, i.e. from one point of view. Walking about the house, we

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., op. cit. p. 67.

see it from differing angles, "multiplying" them in our exploration. The formal expression of this is, every perception is singular in nature. But this is not the whole story. Perception's singular focus is complicated by the experience of the object "in context". Each angle of perception brings a unique scene; when we focus upon the roof, doors and windows "recede". When a view of the entrance is the primary focus, roof line and chimney "recede". The point Merleau-Ponty makes is that every spatial focus includes a "horizon"; in other words, every singular perspective has a context and this alters the theme of singularity. Both singular focus and context operate in the act of perception. More specifically, every singular focus calls into play the importance of its context, or horizon.¹ This is true in the spatial sense; it is also true in the temporal sense.

I see the house, as an object which is "there". Without critical reflection, I assume that the house was there yesterday and will be there tomorrow; as an object it has a permanent or static "thereness". But this pre-reflective assumption is called into question when I ask about the house in the past or the future. Perhaps I cannot remember its prior condition, or presage the deter-

¹Later in his discussion he refers to "horizon" as a "field" of perception. The Heideggerian sense of horizon is also used; we shall specify when that is the case. It differs somewhat from the present use of the term.

ioration of its paint, yet these "horizons" are part of the scene in the present. What we retain concerning the past and pretend about the future are involved in any present perception. The "duration" of perceptual fields is a problem phenomenology must confront as well as spatial contexts. When the thinker brackets the immediate perceptive act, the problems of space and temporality emerge, Merleau-Ponty argues that the excesses of empiricism and rationalism are born at this point.

Before we proceed with his criticisms, it is necessary to mention a formidable difficulty in making our critique. We have attempted previously to use specific examples of rationalism and empiricism as the objects of Merleau-Ponty's criticism. This is no longer possible in terms of his exposition. He uses these terms increasingly in an unspecified manner; names or schools of thought are seldom singled out for his attack. We are aware that there are different forms of the empiricist and rationalist traditions and often a specific author employs the insights of both traditions in his writings. Merleau-Ponty gives us little help in identifying "the opposition".

I lament this condition and consider it a shortcoming in his work. One small consolation is that Sartre, Heidegger, Marcel, and Husserl also commit the same mistake. It seems characteristic of existentially oriented phenomenologists

to generalize about the traditions they oppose. The best we can do with Merleau-Ponty is to risk a more specific identification on the basis of his writings taken as a whole.

The opposition on the rationalist side is the easier to identify. Cartesian philosophy is the main tradition in France. Husserl, Merleau-Ponty's mentor, titled one of his writings Cartesian Meditations, and consciously attempted to carry the Cartesian method to its logical conclusions. Husserl was anti-Cartesian in only two respects: he dispensed with the notion of substance which held up Descartes's metaphysics and he radicalized the notion of the cogito. In Husserl's version, phenomenology issues in a transcendental idealism; this is his form of Cartesian philosophy. Merleau-Ponty was not as critical of Husserl as he might have been, but he was critical of the Husserlian notion of transcendental idealism and certainly its Cartesian heritage. The rationalism or "intellectualism" which Merleau-Ponty criticizes should be identified as Husserl's doctrine of transcendental subjectivity, his idealism, and the notion of the cogito as expounded by Descartes. Merleau-Ponty is fairly explicit about his disagreements with Descartes's cogito, and we believe Husserl's form of idealism is opposed in addition to this. We shall elaborate the disagreement with Husserl in Chapter One of Part Three.

Empiricism is harder to identify. Merleau-Ponty seems to have had little contact with contemporary British empiricists. His training, however, included a systematic study of psychology, particularly of behavioral psychology and clinical experiments in America. His argument with behaviorist theory is that the stimuli which present themselves to human consciousness are thought of as being entirely responsible for human behavior. Behaviorism, he believes, succumbed to the sense-datum theory. Whether he was right or not is not our concern here, but it seems most likely that the term "empiricism" is associated with his study of psychology, and particularly with behaviorist theory.

Such identification of the opposition on our part should only be seen as an attempt to provide a context for argumentation where one is not specified.

Merleau-Ponty's empiricist treats the problem of perspectivism quite literally, attempting to correlate the object "there with sense impressions made upon the eye. Space can be objective if the perceiver is merely a "receiving station"¹ for sense data, or a bit of the world, as Merleau-Ponty would say. The excesses of empiricism are based upon

¹Vide. Marcel, Gabriel, Mystery of Being, London, Harvill Press Lt., 1950, Vol. I, Chap. 1.

the difficult problem of how perspectivism is to be overcome; behaviorism is its error. Space can never be objective in an act of perception, not if the subject is projector and actor as well as receiver. Merleau-Ponty, of course, holds this position.

Idealism also reacts to the same problem. If perspectivism is to be overcome, is it not the idea of the house which is public and objective? The idealist concentrates on the subject's ideas of space and time as ways of transcending perspectivism. Again, the explanation is offered because of problems inherent in the act of perception. Idealism's solution, however, fails to account for the bodily nature of perception; one cannot assume that the body is ever overcome by the clear and distinct idea. Any viable solution to perspectivism must deal with the issue of bodily perception.

These misunderstandings initiate the following statement of the problem. "We cannot remain in this dilemma of having to fail to understand either the subject or the object. We must discover the origin of the object at the very centre of our experience; we must describe the emergence of being and we must understand how, paradoxically, there is for us an in-itself."¹ In other words Merleau-Ponty seeks to find

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., op. cit., p. 71.

a way to retain a notion of consciousness for the human subject which does not borrow the problems of rationalism and idealism.

Consciousness as an ideational, form-making process, will play a central role in his theory of the body. The challenge is to give it a proper role apart from its being considered a "constituting spirit" in the Cartesian manner.

Likewise his theory must retain a recognition of the givenness of experienced objects without adopting the behaviorist notion of the body as a receptor object. His theory of perception must find a viable alternative to the sense-datum theory. The "in-itself" must be understood in terms of its meaning "for us"; the "for us" must be part of an exchange with objects and others that are truly "there".

The theory of the body is not a casual choice of topics for Merleau-Ponty. "The theory of the body-image is, implicitly," he says, "a theory of perception."¹ It will provide a foundation for the entire phenomenology as it speaks to the extremes of idealism and behaviorism. Merleau-Ponty is not the first to have seized upon this topic, but his theory of the body is sufficiently original to merit a

¹Ibid., p. 206.

place of respect in any phenomenology.¹

+

+

+

Three important concepts comprise his concept of the body. First, we shall deal with his picture of the body as a sense-giving organism; secondly, we shall address ourselves to his notion of "corporeal scheme". Lastly, we shall deal with his concept of the arc intentionnel.² In each of these topics we remind ourselves of the purpose Merleau-Ponty entertains: the theory of the body is the foundation not only for his theory of perception; it introduces the major theme of his philosophical career. Intersubjectivity is introduced at every turn.

Merleau-Ponty's first topic is somewhat peculiar, the experience of one's own body. The experience of one's own body will illustrate the sense-giving nature of the human organism.

His example is a man whose limb has been amputated. The patient claims to feel the limb; when a stimulus is

¹It is puzzling that Merleau-Ponty mentions Gabriel Marcel but once, by way of criticism. Marcel's studies of the body are the pioneering studies of the now familiar theory of the corps propre. Richard Zaner remarks that the absence of recognition seems to be a point of honor with both Merleau-Ponty and J.P. Sartre. Vide., Zaner, Richard M., The Problem of Embodiment, New York Humanities Press, 1964, p. 147
footnote.

²Our topical arrangement follows Zaner's. Ibid., pp. 154-180.

applied to the neural path between the stump and the brain the patient feels a pain in his "leg". Merleau-Ponty calls this phenomenon the experience of a phantom limb. Stimulus-response theory would explain such an experience in physical terms, but when a local anaesthetic is administered, the patient still feels the phantom limb. Behaviorism simply cannot account for this. The patient imagines the limb in the same position it was at the time of injury; the limb retains the same intense pain experienced originally. Behaviorist explanations rapidly erode in light of this circumstance.

The rationalist takes over. The patient supposedly thinks or imagines his pain, and the limb. But this explanation encounters severe difficulties as well, for when the nerve path to the brain is severed, the phenomenon of the phantom limb disappears. A physiological alteration affects the supposedly mental retention of pain. "What has to be understood, then, is how the psychic determining factors and the physiological conditions gear into each other."¹ The very failure of the traditional explanations suggest the need for a new approach.

Physiological and psychological elements of the experience Merleau-Ponty says, are aspects of a much more fundamental form. They both play a part in the patient's

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., op. cit., p. 77.

particular "world", his environment, but they indicate the need for a different description of that world. The major characteristic of the patient's world or environment is his "project". The project of the subject is definitive of the lived-world, and it provides the key to understanding both psychological maladjustments and physical conditions.

This new theme does not deny that physical stimuli are "real". Stimuli are seen as being introduced to a particular world, they are not thought of as instrumentalities which enter a vacuum. Even motor reflexes, share this subscription, he says; more than "blind processes, they adjust themselves to a 'direction' of the situation and express our orientation towards a behavioral setting."¹ The notion of project will play a fundamental role in the description of physical behavior.

With regard to psychological elements, the argument is similar. In anosognosia, where the patient fails to recognize his disability, the theme of project again corrects misunderstandings; the patient does not represent to himself an imaginary limb. On the contrary, he refuses to recognize his disability because his project has been upset. He cannot carry out tasks as he might have; he is not yet able

¹Ibid., p. 79.

to alter his intentions and desires. Anosognosia is not a mental decision or failure to conceptualize; it is the refusal to accept the new project world which has limitations because of the amputation.¹

The priority of project is called for because of the inadequacies of alternate explanations, and its priority makes it a fundamental concept of experience which can guide phenomenology. The phenomenologist begins his investigations of perception with the testable thesis that human activity is best characterized as a "project". He is saying, in effect, that this concept helps explain the character of one's pre-reflective perception of the world.

It is important beyond this to say what Merleau-Ponty means by this concept. His concern is not to say presently what projects actually are; he is intent on emphasizing that human perception has the character of a project. His term for this is mise en forme.

¹Edward Ballard's analysis of this material brings out an interesting and important distinction. We shall make use of it later. "The rejection of mutilation which the equivocal phantom limb signified is clearly not the consequence of a decision. It is rather indicative of an attitude, a posture, which underlies any kind of conscious decision-making. We are led thus, to one form of a fundamental distinction between two levels of bodily functioning. These are the habitual and actual levels, a distinction which parallels that between the 'knowledge of' and 'knowledge about'. . . .the first is lived, the second is more or less abstractly known." Edward G. Ballard, "The Philosophy of Merleau Ponty", Tulane Studies in Philosophy, Vol. IX, 1960, p. 174.

First, this means that everything we perceive bears the mark of "project". We do not have projects in the same sense that we have jobs; we are projects. Everything we see, hear, taste, smell, or touch is indicative of our active interchange with the world.

Secondly, our bodies are the medium of the human project.¹ This does not mean that bodies are chained to what Buber called the Umwelt. On the contrary, Merleau-Ponty's notion of the body can now be seen as emphasizing its sense-giving characteristic. Mise en forme specifies that the human organism strives to "make sense", to "make forms" of the jumble of experience. The person is conscious and self-conscious as we shall see below.

Third, Merleau-Ponty states that his concept goes beyond subjectivism. In the example the most subjective of all experiences was given a new context. The phantom limb was not "manufactured" nor was it a simple reaction to stimuli. The phenomenon occurred as part of a total interaction between subject and world. Sense-giving there, was protracted and minimal; the patient's adjustment had not yet been made. But it showed that supposedly subjective or

¹One may legitimately ask why Merleau-Ponty uses the term "body" exclusively in describing the human organism; we have seen that the notion of consciousness is integral to his theory. "Body" is an appropriate term if thought of in terms of the Greek word soma; consciousness is integral to that term as it is to Merleau-Ponty's.

completely private experience is more apparent than real. Even in pain this patient vies with his world. His healthy interaction is frustrated, and to adjust is to interact successfully again, with the limitation. Project or mise en forme then, is interaction with the world; subjectivism is combatted effectively in the sense that one cannot create a world of his choosing. He cannot withdraw from that which is over against him, apart from a complete psychosis.

Merleau-Ponty has another purpose in introducing this concept. Describing the body as a sense-giving organism gives him a way of articulating the relation, or better, the interrelation, of the "in-itself . . . for us." To see the body as an active sense-giving organism is to lay the foundation for a theory of perception with regard to external objects and others. In this case, it is the observation that one's own body cannot be divorced from one's project or worldly interaction.

One's body, in sum, is not just a tool we use to view the world; it is our medium for being in the world in a particular way. Our bodies are mise en forme.

Merleau-Ponty amplifies this introductory observation with his notion of the "corporeal scheme". The sense-giving element is but the first step toward a theory of the body; next, comes inquiry as to the larger context in which sense-giving is exercised. The topic will be confined to that

analysis of the experience of one's own body in terms of its movement or activity.

. . . . it is clearly in action that the spatiality of our body is brought into being, and an analysis of one's own movement should enable us to arrive at a better understanding of it. By considering the body in movement, we can see better how it inhabits space.¹

Bodily movements in a normal person exhibit coordination of the senses. For instance, we swat a fly on our forehead, or light our pipe without conscious attention being required. We know indubitably where the pipe is, where the fly alights. Merleau-Ponty argues that this is not to be explained in terms of cognition. We learn the "hereness" of our body apart from conceptualization. The body in normal persons is always orientated space.

But if it can be shown that this kind of orientation exists even in "abnormal" subjects, the position is strengthened. To introduce the theme of bodily space he uses the famous Gelb-Goldstein studies on brain injury. In the example we see that the mentally deficient subject retains a "corporeal scheme".

The patient, Schneider, has no ability to carry out simple commands to touch a given area of his body. He cannot describe the position of his head or limbs, nor can he identify the spot touched by someone else. Merleau-Ponty observes that psychology traditionally classifies

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., op. cit., p. 148.

brain lesions as a kind of "psychic blindness"; Merleau-Ponty prefers to say that the patient is unable to perform "abstract" movements.¹ The patient is as capable as a normal person, carrying out movements which are "concrete". Schneider, has no difficulty, for example, in performing actions which require coordination and agility when no conceptualization is required. He swats the mosquito, or uses his handkerchief with little difficulty.

Here is the opening for Merleau-Ponty's concept of corporeal scheme; idealism fails to account for such activity.

We have to create the concepts necessary to convey the fact that bodily space may be given to me in an intention to take hold without being given in an intention to know. The patient is conscious of his bodily space as the matrix of his habitual action, but not as an objective setting; his body is at his disposal as a means of ingress into a familiar surrounding, but not as the means of expression of a gratuitous and free spatial thought.²

The term corporeal scheme organizes what was said about sense-giving and it adds an important factor to the emerging theory; human activity is characterized as ingression into a familiar world or setting. Pre-reflective activities such as a daily routine, are known by their constancy or lack of surprise. For those with brain lesions, this kind of activity is the only kind in which fluidity and coordination are possible. For normal subjects, routine

¹Ibid., p. 103.

²Ibid., p. 104.

occupies a major portion of the day. We can learn from both. Whether normal or not, systems of worldly interchange characterize man.

What takes place in this familiar exchange with the world is the development of schemata or personal styles of activity. That is, the familiar world is appropriated, or "cleared" as Heidegger would say, by the development of styles, habits, individual preferences and prejudices. A viable theory of personality is based upon the development of schemes; what we eventually "know about" our world is based upon the constant pre-reflective acquaintance we have with it. Our style affects our reflection; our personality colors our observation.

The concept of corporeal scheme counters a possible misunderstanding of the previous concept. It was explained that "project" could refer to the various jobs we perform. That conscious intentional activity is included under the heading of project, is obvious; but the concept is not atomistic at root. The notion of corporeal scheme assures us that "project" is an essential form of human activity, the mark of personality, and not simply an occasionally perceived condition. He seeks to introduce us to the phenomenological significance of bodily activity and movement.

Two features can be further distinguished. The gradual development of a corporeal schemes he says, exhibits the "generalizing" capability of the human being. For example, certain modes of activity are more successful

than others, and they are retained; others are less so, and are not. The human subject is most surely generalizing and organizing experience as he develops his peculiar style of activity. Also, Merleau-Ponty suggests that a "sediment" accumulates with the subject and is utilized in ongoing experience. Styles build upon a past. Self-conscious remembrance may not occur, but a kind of recognition is, nevertheless, integral to this aspect of corporeal scheme. One "knows" that one's habits are his and not someone else's. The notion of a developing "fund of experience" or sediment, also means that some form of selection is going on. When tasks are performed successfully, they are used more frequently; when not, they are discarded.¹

It should be emphasized that Merleau-Ponty is not suggesting a cognitively oriented structure with his notion of the corporeal scheme. The "organizing" form, which is a good label for the above characteristics, is a form which

¹A lengthy discussion of psychological theory could easily ensue. Merleau-Ponty's interests are philosophical, so the relevance of his statement is not to be judged, primarily on psychological grounds. It should be said, however, that the development of corporeal schemata does not depend on the simple principle of success and failure. Negative structures are often retained because the world is perceived in a particular way. "Positive" schemes are not to be casually identified with successful performance of tasks. To discuss the full import of the notion in clinical terms would take a separate book. Merleau-Ponty contends that a personal scheme is developed; he does not care to describe its particulars.

gains its life in pre-reflective activity. It is not a "mindless" development but it is not a reflective one. Corporeal schema become sedimented as structures in acts of the most common nature. The Gelb-Goldstein studies attest to that.

The philosophical significance of the body as mise en forme and corporeal scheme can be put in general terms now. His objective has been to show an interrelation of the "in-itself . . . for us". The body is always "here" for us; it is "my body". This has been implicit in every example of the study and is especially important in the notion of mise en forme. The theory of the body amply illustrates the subjective order, the sphere of "hereness". The sphere of "thereness" has also been introduced in every discussion. One "knows" his own body primarily in terms of project, an interaction with the world, one that has certain limits. "To be a body is to be tied to a certain world."¹ The subject knows his body as being "there"; it is his access to the world.²

"hereness" and "thereness", though distinct themes, are not mutually exclusive in his theory of the body. A theory of the body cannot be isolated in the "subject"

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., op. cit. p. 148.

²Ibid., p. 149. "Body spatiality is the deployment of one's bodily being. . ." Ibid.

order; nor can it be confined to the "object" order. Subjective consciousness and worldly encounter are both essential to the theory.

This is to put Merleau-Ponty's theory in simplified form; but it does some justice to his objectives.

We come now to the third essential concerning bodily activity. The body must be thought of as intentional. The body transfers itself onto things. A theory of the body requires a theory of intentionality. Describing his concept of intentionality is a difficult but necessary task.¹

The most appropriate means of gaining understanding here is to contrast Merleau-Ponty's concept of intentionality with Edmund Husserl's. There can be little doubt that Merleau-Ponty borrowed Husserl's idea, but he makes one important revision.

Husserl notes, as does Merleau-Ponty, that we see the "same" object from many different angles or perspectives; consciousness is, in this respect, "a consciousness of something".² Consciousness is indicative of intentionality.

¹Zaner has marshalled a most coherent explanation of Merleau-Ponty's concept of intentionality. We cannot deal with it as thoroughly as he does, but we are indebted to him for his critique. c.f. Zaner, R., op. cit., pp. 172-197.

²c.f. Husserl, Edmund, Cartesian Meditations, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1962, pp. 39. ff.

But the intentional structure of consciousness merely poses the philosophical problem for Husserl. His question was, what constitutes "sameness" in the objects of experience? His answer was that intentional unities are results of a synthesis made by pure consciousness. Intentionality serves as the clue to a pure or constituting consciousness. That is, the "I think" explains the intentional structure of consciousness; the principle of transcendental consciousness becomes the solution because it explains intentional activity. Thus, the task of phenomenology is to describe the constituting nature of consciousness which in turn explains intentional activity.¹

This brief notation should allow us to see the different course Merleau-Ponty takes in his description of intentionality.

Merleau-Ponty is interested in the question of sameness also. But he observes that the sameness of experienced objects is rooted in the notion of task or project. We "know" the pipe beside us both visually and tactually. By bodily deployment we also "know" that this pipe, seen from differing angles or touched in different ways is the same pipe. The emphasis upon bodily deployment marks the point at which Merleau-Ponty differs from Husserl. His notion of

¹We discuss this in detail in Part Three, Chapter One.

the perceived situation as being the subject's project leads him to claim that Husserl's emphasis upon the constituting process of consciousness is needless abstraction.¹ One does not need to think the pipe in order to perceive it; rather one "knows" the pipe through praxis; the human's medium is his body.

The difference between the two can also be illustrated this way: Husserl argues that intentional activity, or consciousness of . . . , necessitates the positing of a pure consciousness; Merleau-Ponty says that intentional activity is itself the primary form of consciousness. Whereas Husserl believes that the eidetic reduction necessitates positing a transcendental consciousness, Merleau-Ponty argues that the eidetic reduction concludes with the recognition that intentionality is the essence of experience. We are a system of intentionality; it is the fundamental form of experience. The concept, therefore, becomes the phenomenologist's most important tool. Intentionality is the eidōs or form upon which the whole phenomenology rests.

Expressive of the importance of this, is Merleau-Ponty's notion of "general synthesis". Intentionality is not an abstract theme, but its presence does force the phenomenologist to observe that, "my history must be the

¹Vide. Merleau-Ponty, op. cit., pp. 152-153.

continuation of a prehistory and must utilize the latter's acquired results."¹ Every person expresses this unique heritage. A "general synthesis" has been made for him; man is man because he shares this inheritance. Merleau-Ponty is not interested in explaining how intentionality came to be, but he is interested in emphasizing its pervasive nature. Each perception is indicative of this deeply embedded form; once the phenomenologist sees how essential intentionality is in describing experience, he recognizes that the synthesis is not individual but historical and all pervasive.² Intentionality is the mark of being a member of the human race.

Husserl has nothing of this in his phenomenology. Intentionality is the clue to a transcendental consciousness. If we wish to call Merleau-Ponty an existentialist, we are obligated to see that he is one because of the central importance of intentionality in his phenomenology. Intentionality indicates "a communication with the world more

¹Ibid., p. 254.

²Merleau-Ponty, unfortunately, does not detail this concept. It is mentioned but not expounded. Our interpretation is likewise brief because of this.

ancient than thought".¹

Such is Merleau-Ponty's theory of the body. The viability of his alternative to idealism and behaviorism rests upon the concept of intentionality; his research has led him to submit it as the foundational concept in phenomenological studies.

OBSERVATIONS

Concerning Merleau-Ponty's method, two themes are most important.

First, the existential preoccupation so well expressed in the Lebenswelt notion is given focus by the use of method. Discipline is brought to the study of phenomena. Though it cannot be argued at this point that Merleau-Ponty is successful in every interpretive effort, it can be said that his objectives meet the standards required of philosophical research.

His stated aim to develop philosophically credible views of pre-reflective experience led to the adoption of

¹The extended quotation deserves our recording. "My personal existence must be the resumption of a prepersonal tradition This captive or natural spirit is my body, not that momentary body which is the instrument of my personal choices and which fastens upon this or that world, but the system of anonymous 'functions' which draw every particular focus into a general project. . . . Space and perception generally represent, at the core of the subject, the fact of his birth, the perpetual contribution of his bodily being, a communication with the world more ancient than thought." Merleau-Ponty, op. cit., p. 254.

ground-rules; phenomenological reduction and eidetic reduction specify the discipline which in turn opens the door to philosophical credibility. We can be more specific, however.

Phenomenological reduction brings to an existential interest, the discipline of objectivity. Distance is put between the philosopher and his subject matter. He cannot afford to exempt pre-reflective experience from constant questioning; the views, beliefs, and relationships of daily experience, the physical-emotional reactions to crisis or routine, are all brought under the critical eye. This is the purpose of phenomenological reduction. Even at this early point we can see a distinct difference between Merleau-Ponty and Buber. Experience for one, gives occasion for apologetics; for the other it gives occasion for an almost clinical investigation.

Another aspect of the reduction can also be seen if we turn the coin. Phenomenological reduction is attempted with the realization that it concentrates on the pre-reflective. Its subject-matter is experience, not the operation of the understanding or our ideas about experience. We emphasize this because it is so appropriate for our study. To say that Merleau-Ponty has an existential preoccupation is to say also that he intends to investigate the "encounter mode" found in such prominence with Buber. In fact, this is inferred in the notion of Lebenswelt, the "lived-world".

The very phenomena which matter to him are those which can be specified as encounters; the "encounter mode" is synonymous, I think, with "the pre-reflective". We have seen this in his study of the body; we shall see it more in his work on intersubjectivity. Phenomenological reduction demands the critical approach to the encounter mode. The door is at least open to gain philosophical credibility; it is fostered by the adoption of method.

Secondly, it should be observed what kind of credibility is possible in light of method. Eidetic reduction helps us specify it. Eidetic themes do not, and cannot claim the stamp of certainty. The quest for certainty has been put away, in that themes are checked by phenomenological reduction. This is one deterrent to the quest for certainty. Another is that eidetic themes are seen as being wrested from the lived-world; they have no independent status.

When the antipathy towards certainty is coupled with the concern to reach a philosophically credible view of the world, we can see what Merleau-Ponty means by philosophical credibility. Credibility is confined to proximate judgments. Proximate judgments are sufficient; we can only know for certain that we are involved in a world. We need not seek, as would some omniscient observer, absolute knowledge about the world. Method dictates that proximate "knowledge about" be an acceptable goal.

Whether this will remain a viable goal we can only see through his continued studies of perception, but it should be emphasized at this early stage that this is his objective. Phenomenological method is essentially a discipline for research; as we shall see, this is why Merleau-Ponty was such a reluctant student of ontology. He was constantly on guard to protect against "high-altitude thinking", a term used frequently in later years. We can expect eidetic themes to be tested and modified because of their non-absolutistic character.¹

Merleau-Ponty's theory of the body can be seen as his way of introducing a theory of intersubjectivity; it will play a central role in the discussions of object perception and intersubjectivity. Let us be as specific as possible about its importance.

The notion of human consciousness has been retained in the contest with behaviorism, but it has been given a new structure. Ballard's comment is appropriate: we "know about" the world primarily because we "know" it pre-reflectively; this is the fact which phenomenology must explicate. Inten-

¹We cannot afford the space to discuss whether this characteristic implies that Merleau-Ponty's idea of reason is adequate or not. Thomas Langan has a fascinating book which concludes negatively on this matter; Langan, Thomas, Merleau-Ponty's Critique of Reason, London, Yale Univ. Press, 1966.

tional, corporeal scheme, and mise en forme are attempts to conceptualize this fact. Most important, the conscious being knows the world by his projects, and he knows primarily through the medium of his body. Merleau-Ponty's idea hinges on the proposition that consciousness is "embodied"; it is activity; it is intentionality.

Such a doctrine of consciousness, it seems to me, provides a suggestive context for making the experience of others philosophically credible. We have not yet looked at that experience in detail, but I do not see how it could be articulated apart from a theory of the body which found encounter at the very roots of all experience. In other words, a phenomenology of intersubjectivity is groundless without a phenomenology of the human subject. We are not concerned at this early point to say that Merleau-Ponty's specific theory answers all the problems that we found with Buber, or any other encounter oriented phenomenology. But we are benefitted, I think, by Merleau-Ponty's insight that a theory of the body is a necessary component in a theory of intersubjectivity.

Merleau-Ponty's theory of the body "introduces" the phenomenologist to intersubjectivity in another sense as well. We are thrown into the intersubjective sphere because the theory of the body itself puts the subject in a world of social experience. There is no hint of solipsism, given the

centrality of intentionality; the world of projects is a world of others. His theory of the body implies that subjectivity is, as he says, an intersubjectivity.¹ The individual is always in contact with others. We shall see below how this is articulated but it is important here to recognize that a phenomenology of intersubjectivity is being protended by his doctrine of the body.

The distinction made between knowledge as encounter and knowledge about has another application at this point. Ronald Hepburn, we noted, said that knowledge about the other is a prime factor in estimating the worth of encounters. His aim was to induce the encounter oriented thinker to utilize checking procedures instead of apologetics. That effort would surely correspond to Merleau-Ponty's, with one important qualification. Judgment about the other grows out of relationships with the other. Merleau-Ponty can be expected to reorder the priority in this regard; his major objective is to emphasize the impact of the encounter mode in reflective judgments. Hepburn, on the other hand, argues that empirical evidence must be developed in order to judge either the relation or the other person. Distinguishing the phenomenologist's perspectives this way may not

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., op. cit., p. xiii.

solve the issues raised by Hepburn, but it does show us a different approach to analyzing human interaction. It highlights the fact that phenomenology will attempt to defend the primacy of the encounter mode without resorting to apologetics.

It cannot be said that he will accomplish his task but the alternative approach is worth pursuing. Intentionality is the central concept in this approach; we have seen its importance in the foregoing. It may well be the key to a viable theory of intersubjectivity.

CHAPTER TWO

MAN AND THE OTHER:

THINGS AND PEOPLE

We proceed to the area of Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology which is central to the issue of our study, the perception of external objects and other people. If the reader asks why we discuss his theory of object perception, the answer can be stated briefly. What Martin Buber called the sphere of "It" is ordinarily associated with the perception of objects, though the form is not confined to it. Knowledge in the It form, however, was exclusively "knowledge about". Very little was done to expel the supposition that the It sphere was separate from the mode of encounter. It is interesting that Merleau-Ponty deals with object perception in the same way he explicated the theory of the body; that is, he describes object perception in terms of a mode of encounter. "Knowledge about" objects is dependent upon "knowing" as an intentional activity. Explication of object perception, therefore, further introduces what Merleau-Ponty will say about intersubjectivity; it extends the foundation laid in his theory of the body.

"Primary experience" and the "perceptual synthesis" are the organizing themes in his discussion of sense experience and space.

Primary experience refers to the pre-reflective "receiving" of objects by the subject and his "taking them up" in intentional activity. We can assume from the foregoing chapter that this is Merleau-Ponty's fundamental category in describing the experience of objects. If one is to understand experience, however, reflective activity must also occur. His second category, perceptual synthesis, refers to our drive to understand primitive encounter. Perceptual synthesis is Merleau-Ponty's alternative to idealist and behaviorist explanations of object perception.

Our first task is to detail the aspects of "primary experience" as they are exposed in sense perception. Merleau-Ponty uses an interesting illustration to introduce the concept.

Just as the sacrament not only symbolizes, in sensible species, an operation of Grace, but also the real presence of God, which it causes to occupy a fragment of space and communicates to those who eat of the consecrated bread, provided that they are inwardly prepared, in the same way the sensible has not only a motor and vital significance, but is nothing other than a certain way of being in the world suggested to us from some point in space, and seized and acted upon by our body, provided that it is capable of doing so, so that sensation is literally a form of communion.¹

The paradigm is used for the sole purpose of emphasizing the intentional character of sense experience; no theological overtones are intended. The perceiving body "knows" objects and colors in a mode effectively illustrated

¹Ibid., p. 212.

by Christian communion. Two elements are in turn essential to this notion of primary experience.¹

In primary experience, the subject is caught up in the experience of the "in itself", for example in the perception of the blue sky.

As I contemplate the blue of the sky I am not set over against it as an acosmic subject; I do not possess it in thought, or spread out towards it some idea of blue such as might reveal the secret of it, I abandon myself to it and plunge into this mystery, it 'thinks itself within me'. . . .my consciousness is saturated with this limitless blue.²

The perceived thing "presents" itself to the subject. He finds no need to justify this notion of presentation; such would be folly in a phenomenology of pre-reflective experience. One assumes this is because the subject's consciousness is surely encountered in the lived-world. The notion of presentation is integral to a definition of "phenomenon". (In later years he will make much of "presentation" for ontological purposes; this will be discussed in the next chapter.)

¹We note that Merleau-Ponty discusses perception of objects and colors concurrently, i.e. he does not observe the distinctions of Locke that there are primary and secondary qualities in sense perception. The whole notion of sense qualities comes under attack by Merleau-Ponty, though he attacks without naming the opposition.

²Merleau-Ponty, M., op. cit., p. 214. In a footnote the translator appropriately appends the words of Valery's "Le Cimetière marin":

"Midi là-haut, Midi sans mouvement
En soi se pense et convient à soi-même"

A second factor compliments and clarifies the notion of presentation; the subject seizes upon or "takes up" what is presented. "It is my gaze which subtends colour, and the movement of my hand which subtends the object's form, or rather my gaze pairs off with colour, and my hand with hardness and softness."¹ As was true with the perception of one's own body, the perceiving subject is not passive. In pre-reflective intentional activity, the subject both responds and participates by "seizing" the object. He sees the blue sky because he is "sensitive to colours:", and not only for the moment. He engages the object because he is the inheritor of a primal human acquisition, intentionality.²

Both factors in primary experience work together to upset the idealist and behaviorist arguments. Sense perception cannot be confined to a sense datum theory; the object is seized upon by bodily activity. "Sensation is not an invasion of the sentient by the sensible."³ Our perception is not entirely determined by the thing; the body becomes party to the transaction. At the same time, Merleau-Ponty says that it is not the mind which assigns qualities to the

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., pp. 215-216. He is referring again, with the term "primal acquisition", to his position that the person grows and develops as an intentional being; note our discussion of the "general synthesis" in Chapter One.

³Ibid., p. 214.

sensation; the primitive transaction is nothing apart from the probing eye or exploring hand; no amount of thought can prepare the subject to describe the object out there. Rather the body heeds the presentation of the "itself" and perceives it "for himself".

Such a theory is suggestive but not quite convincing unless further refinements and qualifications are made which deal with the behaviorist and idealist positions. He says that the communal nature of sense experience is credible on two accounts.

First, every perception of the thing "takes place in an atmosphere of generality."¹ We do not decide to see a thing or hear a whistle; our perceptions occur apart from the necessity of a conscious act of will or intention. This is what he means by the phrase "atmosphere of generality"; we are participants because we are of that genre-- we cannot help but perceive. Presentation is also associated with his notion of general synthesis. The human is an intentional being by nature; he is the inheritor of the primal acquisition of intentionality. (This, of course, makes the notion of a constituting consciousness unnecessary; the primary fact is that we are perceivers who encounter objects.)

¹Ibid., p. 215. "My perception even when seen from the inside, expresses a given situation: I can see because I am sensitive to colours, whereas personal acts create a situation: I am a mathematician because I have decided to be one." Ibid.

Secondly, presentation is credible only if we admit that a given perception is "incomplete". In other words, bodily exploration is always approximate in its "knowing". Our hands and eyes explore the object, but they do not possess it; its plentitude escapes us. Or better, the object's transcendence becomes evident in pre-reflective encounter. Merleau-Ponty admits to a form of perspectivism here but only in one sense: sense perceptions are encounters which can always be improved, enlarged upon, and "refined" through further exploration. Moreover, we are never in full possession of the thing; the succession of exploratory activity necessitates this qualification. "When I see an object, I always feel that there is a portion of being beyond what I see at this moment, not only as regards visible being, but also as regards what is tangible or audible."¹ In contrast to both behaviorist and idealist explanations, Merleau-Ponty's theory of knowledge will be continually critical of the quest for certainty; knowing at the most primitive level is, for him, approximate. The notion of presentation enforces this position.

Primary experience can be capsuled as follows: the object presents itself to an intentional subject; the subject explores it through the medium of his body. He explores

¹Ibid., p. 217.

because he is by nature an intentional (perceiving) being; the object is explored but not known in its plentitude. This brings us to Merleau-Ponty's theory of the perceptual synthesis. The question of reflective knowledge has not yet been directly addressed, but the foregoing bears fairly obvious implications.

Turning to the nature of reflection, he says,

When I say that I have senses and that they give me access to the world, I am not the victim of some muddle, I do not confuse causal thinking and reflection, I merely express this truth which forces itself upon reflection as a whole: that I am able, being connatural with the world, to discover a sense in certain aspects of being without having myself endowed them with it through any constituting operation.¹

The resource for developing adequate descriptions of sense experience is the primary experience itself. Reflection is born of the drive to make sense of the objects we perceive. Stated as a principle of method this becomes: eidetic forms can be wrested from the lived-world. Perceptual synthesis characterizes an aspect of experience as did "sensory communion"; it is not a transcendental category in the Husserlian sense in that it has no independent status. Its credibility is based upon the experience of reflection. With this as a guide, perhaps,

¹Ibid., p. 217.

we can make clear its content.¹

He introduces perceptual synthesis by noting two forms of primary experience, the distinctness of sensory activities (touch and sight modes differ), and sensory cooperation (sight and touch "cooperate").

One objective is, as always, to demonstrate that the perceptual synthesis is preferable to the idealist and behaviorist explanations of sense experience. Concerning sensory distinctness, patients blind from birth who gain their sight by surgery, claim to experience "space" for the first time. The claim makes sense as a personal attitude, but is also credible in that spaces are still habitually "learned" by the patient's touching what is now seen. The world of sight is at first dependent upon the already familiar mode of touch. Merleau-Ponty observes that vision is facilitated by the "quasi-spatial tactile field, into which the first visual perceptions may be inserted."² Touch has its own distinct mode, sight perception, its own. The former activity is more limited in

¹Merleau-Ponty anticipates an objection to his method i.e. does the reflective consciousness differ significantly from the pre-reflective experience? He says "but the reflective I differs from the unreflective at least in having been thematized, and what is given is not consciousness, or pure being; it is as Kant himself profoundly put it, experience, in other words the communication of a finite subject with an opaque being from which it emerges but to which it remains committed." Ibid., p. 229.

²Ibid., p. 223.

its movements, sight being more inclusive. Space, perceived tactually, is circumscribed by the body's actual contact with objects, sight subtends "the afar off". "The whole significance of our life. . . would be different if we were sightless."¹ Though some substitutions for each mode can take place, we are sure, he argues, that the modes of touch and sight are not equivalent.

Sensory distinctness does not threaten, however, the "co-existence" of modes in perception. "Sight would never communicate directly with touch, as in fact it does in the normal adult, if the sense of touch, even when artificially isolated, were not so organized as to make coexistences possible."²

The common occurrence of sensory cooperation is expressed this way.

"One sees the weight of a block of cast iron which sinks in the sand, the fluidity of water and the viscosity of syrup. In the same way, I hear the hardness and unevenness of cobbles in the rattle of a carriage, and we speak directly of a 'soft', 'dull' or 'sharp' sound."³ These expressions may seem non-sensical to the language analyst

¹Ibid., p. 225.

²Ibid., p. 223.

³Ibid., p. 230.

but they do reveal how sensory perception operates at the pre-reflective level. A subject under mescaline reports that, sounds have colors, trees grow greener. Merleau-Ponty says that a synaesthetic experience is being undergone, and mescaline illustrates dramatically the way we ordinarily perceive. "Synaesthetic perception is the rule . . ." ¹ The senses do intercommunicate.

The question, of course, is not so much, "do synaesthetic and distinct forms of sense experience exist?" It is rather, in Merleau-Ponty's mind, "how are they to be explained?" Other studies of perception take the distinct forms into consideration, but they do not give credible accounts of the synaesthetic or intentional form of the operation. The notion of perceptual synthesis is his alternative, designed to explicate the drive to make sense of sensory experience. It is his answer to behaviorism and idealism; we must look again at the experience of objects.

For example, when holding the hand before the eye, as we look at an object some distance away, we see a double image of the hand.² Whereas the image of the remote object is single, the images of the hand are double or "divergent". If vision is directed from the object to the hand, the images

¹Ibid., p. 229.

²Ibid., pp. 230-231.

gradually "converge" or become unified. The idealist says that an a priori knowledge that the hand is "one", constitutes or "causes" the image's unification. That is, through a mental act we accomplish the convergence of the images; apperception shapes perception. Merleau-Ponty counters that thought cannot constitute the "fusion of images".¹ Were it an act of thought, the fusion would take place immediately; but, he says, we have "to wait".² The images fuse gradually. The idealist cannot account for this.

The behaviorist attacks the problem in another way: his explanation is based upon the physical or anatomical arrangement of our visual apparatus and its way of operating. Convergence of the images becomes a necessity because "focus" takes place. Focus, then, is the cause of the unified image of the hand, and this is because the anatomical structure of the sight organs dictate our reception. The behaviorist says that physiological conditions support the stimulus-response theory. Merleau-Ponty asks if the notion of "focus" can be accounted for apart from intentional activity. Of course, it cannot; "It is necessary to 'look' in order to see."³ Focus is not a strictly mechanical adjustment to

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 231.

double images. Focus occurs because the subject is an intentional being; the body strives to "correct" the double vision only when it fastens upon the phenomenon as a project.

We must be careful in stating the case for "perceptual synthesis"; the spectres of rationalism and behaviorism are but inches away from Merleau-Ponty's alternative. The question again, is not, what can we know about the single or double image of the hand? It is, what can we know of the experience of divergence-convergence? How should the experience be described? When this question is properly specified, it is obvious that,

The unity of the object is intentional. But--and this is the point we are trying to make--it is not therefore a notional unity. We pass from double vision to the single object not through an inspection of the mind, but when the eyes cease to function each on its own account and are used as a single organ by one single gaze. It is not the epistemological subject who brings about the synthesis, but the body, when it escapes from dispersion, pulls itself together and tends by all means in its power towards one single goal of its activity, and when one single intention is formed in it through the phenomemon of synergy."¹

An important clarification of intentionality is made here: Merleau-Ponty's concept is not to be identified with willed actions. The notion of perceptual synthesis is supported by the subject's primitive drive to make sense of his world. In fact, we may say that the synthetic act is

¹Ibid., p. 232.

the drive to make sense; the subject's attendance to the hand is the press for a concrete form. The action does not stem from a mental decision to seek meaningful forms; the look itself is the act of pressing for meaning. Merleau-Ponty often says, we look in order to see.

One way of explaining the concept is to distinguish between conscious action and self-conscious action. In terms of the above example Merleau-Ponty holds that the act itself occupies the subject so that he cannot, in the act of striving, be self-consciously aware of his striving. That is, the act occupies the subject; there is no room within it, for casual reflection. In another example he says, "my act of perception occupies me, and occupies me sufficiently for me to be unable, while I am actually perceiving the table, to perceive myself perceiving it."¹

His main concern in this important distinction is to counter the rationalist explanation of the phenomenon, namely the synthesis by apperception spoken of by Descartes. If perception is to be described adequately, that solution must be eschewed. To separate "consciousness of . . ." from pure self-consciousness is Merleau-Ponty's best option. His way of emphasizing that distinction is to claim that the perceptual synthesis is made by "the body". We shall

¹Ibid., p. 238.

return to this in our evaluation.

Secondly, the perceptual synthesis is partial. "Being supported by the prelogical unity of the body image, the per-ceptual synthesis no more holds the secret of the object than it does of one's own body."¹ We encounter objects and find them beyond total comprehension. Our knowledge of anything is rooted in encounter; therefore, "knowledge about" can never become complete, or full. The opacity or "density" of experience is affirmed; the perceptual synthesis is incomplete because transcendencies are never absent.

Merleau-Ponty also says that perceptual syntheses are temporal; one's own history is brought into play in each experience. The significance or forms of sense perception are conveyed through "the medium of time".² At this point Merleau-Ponty gives very little attention to what is meant by the temporality of perceptual synthesis. Temporality and transcendence are but mentioned in these examples; he will deal with them at a later point.

With these structures of the perceptual synthesis

¹Ibid., p. 233. Again, in this passage, he refers to the body image as the inheritor of an acquisition, and what he means is that it cannot be described apart from the corporeal scheme, a kind of familiarity that is more ancient than thought.

²Ibid., p. 241.

in mind, we can proceed to his discussion of space perception. We need not detail the many examples; our purposes are served by concentrating on the forms of temporality and transcendence which are mentioned more frequently in connection with his notion of lived-space. We shall see that description of these two forms forces the all important discussion of intersubjectivity.

The fundamental category for discussing space is lived-space; it is the primary mode of spatial perception. For example, when we look casually at someone's face upside down, there is at first nothing odd about it. But if we concentrate upon the spectacle, the person's facial expressions become almost frightening.¹ If we imagine an upside down position to be a "natural" position, the mouth is where eyes ought to be, the "head" is hairless, and so on. We have difficulty making sense of the spectacle; Merleau-Ponty uses the French word sens, which translates "significance" or "direction". "To invert an object is to deprive it of its significance. Its being as an object is, therefore, not a being-for-the-thinking subject, but a being-for-the gaze which meets it at a certain angle, and otherwise fails to recognize it."² "Natural space" is not a simple organ-

¹Ibid., p. 252.

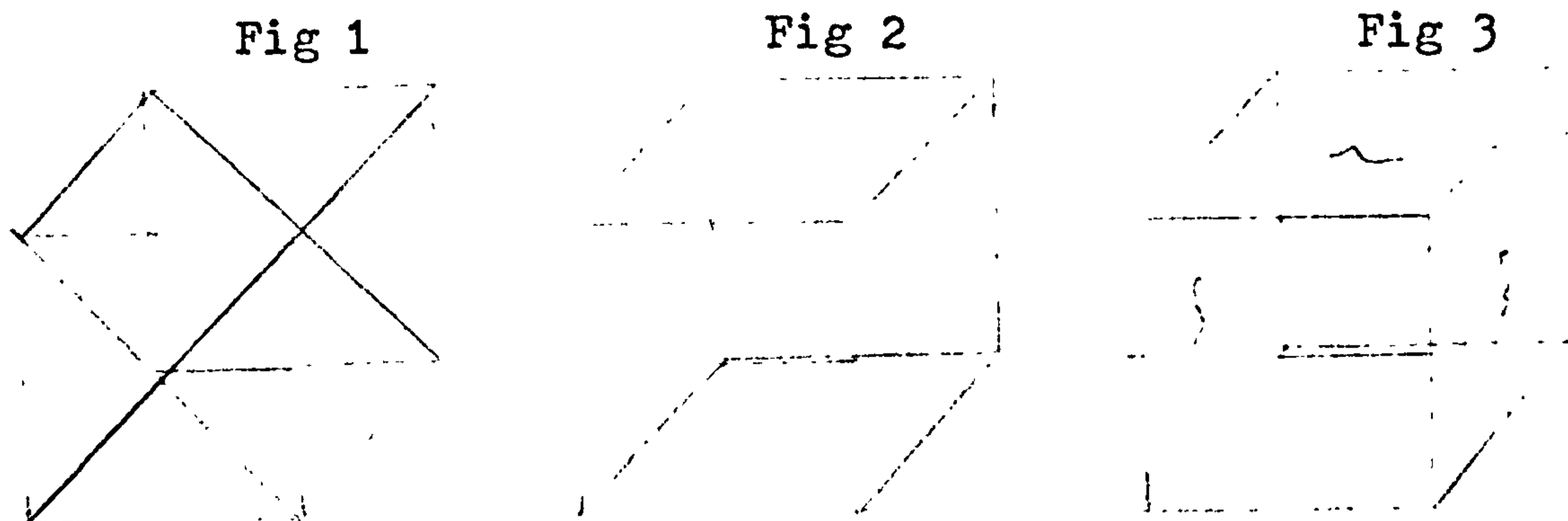
²Ibid., p. 253.

ization of things, unrelated to the perceiving subject. The unnatural spectacle must be engaged by the sense-making process of the look or it remains non-sensical, lacking significance. In one sense it is not even a spectacle apart from the look. Natural space is certainly not an arrangement constituted by the subject's thoughts; it is the arrangement of things as perceived or lived.

His concept of lived-space has the same twofold characteristic as did the primary sense experience. Objects present themselves; the subject seizes and makes sense of objects according to his project. Lived space is "orientated space", organized in terms of the subject's particular project.

His descriptions of lived space are more easily understood when he is talking about "geometrical space".

Geometrical space, illustrated in drawings of three dimensional figures on flat surfaces, is perceived first of all, by "the body". The rationalist argues that we constitute an understanding of geometrical figures by thought; the behaviorist argues that our look is determined by physical stimuli emanating from the figure. Both, he says, are unacceptable explanations of space perception.



Merleau-Ponty suggests that Figure one "recommends" itself as a cube seen either from below or above, or as a "mosaic", whereas figure two is quite clearly a cube. Figure three recommends itself as a cube even with the squiggly lines added. This mention of recommendation is synonymous with his notion of presentation; it simply emphasizes that the perceptive act is shaped by the object's presence, and by the figures' peculiar structure or properties. He says, "the circular trunks of trees had already, before Euclid, the properties, that Euclid discovered in them."¹

But "recommendation" is not a tip of the hat to behaviorist theory. The impetus to perceive a cube especially in figure one, or figures two and three, is not overriding. With each, we must attend to the figures in terms of possible ambiguities; the drive to make sense of them as three dimensional figures requires the subject's attention. Figure one may look like a square surrounded by triangles; or it

¹Ibid., p. 267.

may "take on depth" because we perceive it alongside the less ambiguous, figure two. Merleau-Ponty's point is: our concentrated gaze takes up what is presented and replies to it. Epistemologically speaking, we think of the figures as cubes in terms of a perceptual synthesis. We strive to see them organized before us; the figures are "lived"; this is what gives rise to concepts of geometrical space.

The mathematician may easily forget that universal concepts or theorems, are dependent upon lived experience. "The vertical and the horizontal, the near and the far are abstract designations for one single form of being in a situation, and they presuppose the same setting face to face of subject and world."¹ This statement makes explicit his criticism of the rationalist and behaviorist. Space is not merely the arrangement of objects, and we do not constitute space through pure reason. The most abstract concepts of geometrical space are rooted in lived-experience.

If this is the "beginning" or source of abstract knowledge, we must reaffirm what was said in the discussion of sense experience; the mode of synthesis, or making sense,

¹Ibid., p. 267. Again, he says, "Thus, depth cannot be understood as belonging to the thought of an acsomic subject, but as a possibility of a subject involved in the world." Ibid.

is a perceptual mode, and it is temporal.¹ Knowledge about objects depends on "knowing" by encounter, encounter is understood as the subjects' temporal "living of the object".

The notion of transcendence is further introduced; our partial grasp of two dimensional figures only dramatizes the fact that there is "more to be seen" in the figures or in three dimensional objects. Objects cannot be captured in perception any more than in the abstractions which arise from perception.

The same themes hold true with Merleau-Ponty's interpretation of movement. This phenomenon is, perhaps, the most suggestive, for it defies "objectivism" at every point. His descriptions are particularly directed to the threat of subjectivism, for that seems to be the characteristic feature of the phenomenon of movement. Let us see how both are countered.

When on board ship near a shoreline, we perceive the ship's movement by focusing upon a landmark. On the other hand, when we focus upon the handrail of our ship, it seems that the land is moving while the ship remains stationary. Another example: when we are sitting in a train, it is

¹Merleau-Ponty conveniently confines his discussion to the mathematics of geometry. We could ask if the same theory would apply to other fields of mathematics e.g. algebra. The findings might be much different when a thoroughly abstract field is interrogated.

difficult to say whether it is our train that is moving or the one on the adjoining track. We can "verify" only by fixing upon a stationary object. It seems in both examples that the phenomenon of movement depends primarily upon the gaze of the subject; is movement determined solely by the subject?

Merleau-Ponty's answer draws upon two conceptions cited in chapter One. Movement is, first of all, perceived within a given setting or situation.¹ Interestingly, the setting refers first to a notion of historical importance, not a geographical situation. The notion of setting, points to the fact of past experience; the one who sees the train or shoreline is familiar with it on the basis of his perceptual history. The corporeal scheme becomes an "anchor", which cannot be disregarded in a given situation. "We have been led to bring out, as the condition of spatiality, the establishment of the subject in a setting and finally his inherence in a world."² Movement and spatiality are understood not as isolated perceptions but as experiences which elaborate a personal environment. That environment includes the past; every present occurrence is perceived according to our history. Merleau-Ponty argues that temporality itself

¹He also calls the setting a "field".

²Merleau-Ponty, M., op. cit., p. 280.

is a sort of anchorage. Note that personal history is another word for temporality; movement is perceived in the context of a personal history of perceptual activity. He will emphasize this aspect when he turns to intersubjectivity.

Movement is also significant in terms of its broader personal geographical setting. The movements of Paris traffic, for instance, have significance in terms of the city's "whole being".¹ We perceive according to our broader experience of the city, so that one's perceptual familiarity functions not only in terms of personal history but also in terms of other geographical-personal settings. The specific experience is perceived according to the general familiarity we have with the city. Quite obviously, there is the possibility of being unfamiliar with a "whole", so that experiences of movement or space can be "new". The ambiguity of perceptions, he says, has to do with the nature and extent of our familiarity.

As was true in the preceding discussion, no single experience of movement can be complete; no "whole" is transparent, so no particular perception can be. The "new" forms and the "familiar" perceptions suggest again, the notion

¹Ibid., p. 281.

of transcendence.¹

These discussions of sense experience, space and movement have provided the background for an important transition, perhaps, the most important one in Phenomenology of Perception. One is quite aware that each area of human perception has a common form or theme. Though he makes the transition quietly, so to speak, it is the aim of the book to relate all topics to the fundamental theme of human involvement, and as we shall see, social existence.

We thus find ourselves led to a broadening of our investigation. Once the experience of spatiality is related to our implantation in the world, there will always be a primary spatiality for each modality of this implantation.²

The immediate reason for broadening the discussion is not hard to figure out; "primary spatiality" refers us to the involvement of man in the world. As was true in his discussion of sense experience, the theme of Lebenswelt is encountered at every turn. Now it must become a specific topic of discussion; he will concentrate increasingly on the interpersonal or intersubjective aspects of perception. A brief review will easily show how Merleau-Ponty comes to

¹At this point he leaves behind the discussion of movement. It does not seem to me that he has given it adequate treatment. We are left with the relativity of movement which may, in the end, be justified. But it still seems to depend on the domain of the subject and is not, as is true with space and sense experience, an adequate discussion of the "in-itself-for-us", the problem he posed in the beginning.

²Merleau-Ponty, M., op. cit., p. 283.

concentrate on "human space".¹

Both sense and space perception, Merleau-Ponty argues, must be characterized as communion, a kind of prereflective transaction between the subject and the object of perception. Objects of perception present themselves as objects in depth, movement, etc. The factor of human orientation and object presentation go together in his theory of object perception. Previously, the experience of one's own body revealed that the human subject is project oriented and is the inheritor of a perceptual history--a past. In object perception this was given an additional notation, the perceiver is one who perceives objects in terms of his relation to a total environment. At each level, the account points to the broad theme of the lived-world. Each subject of investigation is a way of further describing the notion of the lived-world. In the preface he offered the general affirmation that phenomenology studies man's being-in-the-world; his problem was to make that affirmation philosophically credible. In the preceding chapter, the affirmation was given specific application in the theory of the corps propre; Lebenswelt was described as the body's way of knowing itself in terms of projects. In terms of object perception there is further specification of the

¹Ibid., p. 287.

of the term; man knows objects primarily through living with them. Knowing oneself and things, therefore, forces a discussion of the history and environment of the individual. Historical existence becomes the next logical topic for the Lebenswelt phenomenologist.

Specifically, the two themes which give credibility to the lived-world are temporality and transcendence. Object presentation indicates a plenitude which cannot be fully grasped. The subject is an "explorer"; vision and tactility demonstrate orientation rather than full comprehension. Transcendence is an inescapable theme for human perception. About temporality: present perceptions call upon the subject's past; the particular calls upon a sense of the whole. Human perception is described as being pregnant with meaning because it utilizes a past. Consequently, if we are to understand the nature of perception we must look to the environment and to the history of the perceiver. Merleau-Ponty will describe temporality and transcendence as dominant forms of man's cultural and historical existence.

Lastly, it is evident that the very notion of historical rootage cannot be confined to the perception of self or object perception. The term itself points to the problem of social existence; the issue of intersubjectivity is posed the minute we take seriously the history of any particular subject. The next portion of our study will show how

Merleau-Ponty attempts to demonstrate this.

Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of object perception has tried to preserve the distinction between "knowing" (as encounter) and "knowledge about". He has done so with the following relationship in mind:

Perceiving is pinning one's faith, at a stroke, in a whole future of experiences, and in doing so in a present which never strictly guarantees the future; it is placing one's belief in a world. It is this opening upon a world which makes possible perceptual truth and the actual effecting of a Wahr-Nehmung There is absolute certainty of the world in general, but not of any one thing in particular.¹

Knowing in the encounter mode is the primary form of man's experience, and makes knowledge about possible.

In recognizing this structure he is, at the same time driven to state that knowledge about is contingent both because it is derived from an encounter situation and because it inherits the incompleteness of primary experience. If this holds true in the sphere of object perception, how much more true will it be in the sphere of personal and inter-personal history! We can expect Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of intersubjectivity to preserve both the primacy of encounter and the partiality of "knowledge about".

This should introduce us to Merleau-Ponty's most basic concern; it is a primary concern of this study, the description of human perception in terms of life with others, his phenomenology of intersubjectivity.

¹Ibid., p. 297.

"THE OTHER": PEOPLE

The topic is posed by drawing a correlation between the world of nature and the cultural world.

The world of objects has within it, cultural objects; the latter are there just as the tree or the sunset, so that the world I live in is a mixture of the human and the "natural".

Just as nature finds its way to the core of my personal life and becomes inextricably linked with it, so behaviour patterns settle into that nature, being deposited in the form of a cultural world. Not only have I a physical world, not only do I live in the midst of earth, air, and water, I have around me roads, plantations, villages, streets, churches, implements, a bell, a spoon, a pipe. Each one spreads round it an atmosphere of humanity. . .¹

The presence of a human world implies that intersubjectivity must become a phenomenological problem. It is a problem in this sense: the presence of others poses the question of how we know them, and they us. Merleau-Ponty is clear about their presence; other people are there to be known. The Lebenswelt is a world of human interchange. He does not assume that his affirmation has, as, yet, philosophical value, but the world of others is there; how are we to explicate our connection with it? "The cultural world is ambiguous, but it is already present. I have before me

¹Ibid., p. 348.

a society to be known."¹

In a more obtuse statement of the issue, he says,

"--how can the word 'I' be put into the plural, how can a general idea of the I be formed, how can I speak of an I other than my own, how can I know that there are other I's, how consciousness, which by its nature, and as self-knowledge, is in the mode of the I, be grasped in the mode of Thou, and through this, in the world of the 'One'?²

The clue to disentangling the problem in Phenomenology of Perception is found in his fundamental category, the body; specifically, it is his interpretation of intentionality which provides the opening for a phenomenology of intersubjectivity.

This observation is the guide: people's form of behavior is first of all "childlike". The term "childlike" should remind us of the way Merleau-Ponty began his analysis of sense experience. "Communion" designated the subject's prereflective transactions with sensible objects; it was a form of "faith", the unquestioned, naive form of perceptual experience. The present term is parallel. Bodily conduct reveals the intersubjective significance of intentionality and its childlike form. Merleau-Ponty illustrates: an adult playing with a child pretends to bite the child's hand; the child opens its mouth in imitation of the act. "'Biting'", he says, "has immediately, for it, and inter-

¹Ibid., p. 348.

²Ibid.

subjective significance."¹ The intersubjective impact is the immediate conveyance of the adult's behavior to the child; this provides the clue to the problem. Merleau-Ponty reviews the traditional opposition.

The behaviorists' interpretation of the phenomenon is that perception of others is, in the first instance, a behavioral confrontation. One form of behavior incites the other's. But behavior cannot be reduced to physical reflex; the child does not pull back as if the adult will inflict pain. Merleau-Ponty argues that the adult's intention is perceived by the child; the behaviorist has overlooked this.

On the other hand, the adult's intentions are not conceived; there is little sense in assuming that the child makes a mental note of the biting act and translates it as play in a conscious or deliberative manner. Instead of reaction by mental association, the child "reenacts" the intentions of the adult. The child's body, as pre-reflectively lived by him, is capable of biting in its various modes of eating, playing, etc. The adult's intentions are perceived, and immediately incite the response of the other. The adult's world slips into the child's; the child responds.

An important concept is developed to express the notion

¹Ibid., p. 352.

of childlike immediacy; he refers to it as the "intentional vortex". The phrase implies that a given individual's perceptual field swirls outwards, taking other people into its sphere of action. The world for us, is never private; it is intersubjective. The intentional vortex should remind us of the notion of project; the individual lives in a world as an acting-interacting being. He shapes and responds to his world as an intentional subject. The social aspect of intentionality fills in the meaning of project; the projects of one invade those of another. To act is by definition, to interact with others.

The notion of vortex infers that a given subject is affected by others; our projects are influenced and modified by the presence of others. Our world is no longer merely ours; it is shared by others and their projects influence ours. The things which we use are used by others. A fresh significance is added to the notion of intentionality. As we elaborate our environment so others become involved in and interact in the process of elaboration. The intentional vortex is a notion which bears the stamp of plurality, or better yet, of sociality.

These prereflective forms of experience provide Merleau-Ponty with the paradigm for dealing with the problem of knowing others. There is a pre-established system of interaction underlying the adult's question, "who is this

other?" The "basic δοξα"¹ is that we are situated in an intersubjective world, where interaction is the norm. The "adult" question of knowing others is dependent upon the fundamental "childlike" form of interaction. Knowledge about others is an issue only because we encounter others in the childlike form. Once again, as we found with the theory of the body and object perception, pre-reflective intentionality is the foundation for the philosophical description.

Moreover, Merleau-Ponty says, "--in reality, it must be the case that the child's outlook is in some way vindicated against the adult's. . . , and that the unsophisticated thinking of our earliest years remains as an indispensable acquisition underlying that of maturity, if there is to be for the adult one single intersubjective world."²

There can be little doubt, that Merleau-Ponty thinks the encounter form is central to his phenomenology. What he says in Phenomenology of Perception, is later clarified and developed. We shall review his later thought to see how this suggestive proposition is defended. The important

¹Ibid., p. 355.

²Ibid.

resource is a series of lectures delivered in 1960, just a year before his death.¹

His purpose in the lectures is to specify the phenomenological significance of intersubjective experience: first he seeks to establish an adequate relation between the intersubjective forms of experience and his theory of perceptual activity; secondly, he specifically intends to see the relation between intersubjectivity and the acquisition of language. The studies utilize experiments in psychology but they are reviewed for the sole purpose of developing an adequate phenomenology.² We shall see that the intersubjective functions as more than an appendage in phenomenology; it operates in fact, as the very backbone or nerve center for the whole.

Elsë Frankel-Brunswik's article, "Intolerance of Ambiguity as an Emotional and Perceptual Personality Variable",

¹These lectures are printed in the following: Merleau-Ponty, M., The Primacy of Perception, Edie, James, trans. Evanston, Northwestern Univ. Press, 1964, pp. 96 ff.

²Of his purpose he says, ". . . recent studies have tended to show that even external perception of sense qualities and space--at first glance the most disinterested, least affective of all the functions--is profoundly modified by the personality and by the interpersonal relationships in which the child lives. The second example has to do with the learning of language. Certain authors show that there is a very close and profound relation between the development of language and the configuration of the human environment in which the child develops." Ibid., pp. 99-100. The points he makes refine the theory introduced in Phenomenology of Perception; his thinking here is at its finest, most mature level.

utilizes experiments made on fifteen hundred school-children between the ages of eleven and sixteen, and their parents. This clinical study is Merleau-Ponty's prime source.¹

The link between perceptual activity and interpersonal environment is established by focusing upon the condition called "psychological rigidity". Rigidity is described as a condition in which the subject is unable to make fine distinctions or recognize conflicting conditions. He cannot accept ambiguities or ambivalences in experience. Rigidity, however, is but the symptom of an underlying difficulty; it is what the Freudians call a "reaction formation", a façade for thinly veiled conflicting attitudes towards parents, teachers, or peers. To illustrate: when given questionnaires which require little decision making, the children's answers indicate that parents are "perfect"; on the other hand when asked to list who they would take with them to live on a desert island, they exclude their parents from the list. Other rigidity traits established through testing include a mania for cleanliness, the acceptance of a "dualism of good and evil, virtue and vice, and an inflexible conception of masculinity and femininity."²

¹Vide., Elsie Frankel-Brunswik, "Intolerance of Ambiguity as an Emotional and Perceptual Personality Variable", The Journal of Personality, Vol. 18, Sept., 1949, pp. 108-143.

²Merleau-Ponty, M., The Primacy of Perception, p. 102.

The influence for such rigid perceptual attitudes, Merleau-Ponty believes, comes from the family environment, and indeed, when the parents were tested, traits such as authoritarianism, excessive reliance upon "training", and strict discipline, were characteristic. The correlation between the rigid personality traits of parents and those children who were most rigid (one hundred twenty were "extreme" cases) is easily established. There is he thinks, a link between the affective states of parent and child; the correlations are convincing.

Merleau-Ponty employs this correlation in asking, "how the type of personality and of interpersonal relations designated by the term 'psychological rigidity' express themselves in the anonymous functions of external perception."¹

All students were shown films in which the image of a dog is slowly transformed into that of a cat. The severely rigid children saw no transformation; subtle changes were not recorded. Merleau-Ponty observes that the psychologically rigid child is adverse to, or incapable of altering the first established mode of perception. Other tests confirmed this view. Rigid students were given problems in which a particular method of solution was recommended; later, they were

¹Ibid., p. 104.

given problems which appeared similar but could be solved more easily by another method. The students did not alter their techniques. Psychological rigidity, he concludes, is linked to perception in problem solving. In summary, the more rigid the "reaction formation", i.e. the more emotionally disturbed the child, the less able he is to alter his reasoning techniques or accept change in perceptual situations. Manifestly, "emotional ambivalence is what demands the denial of intellectual ambiguity."¹

Merleau-Ponty is careful that his interpretation will not be construed as affirming a causal sequence between the interpersonal and the perceptual spheres. He does not say that intersubjective influences (parent-child) "cause" loss of perceptive agility; neither does he hold that perceptual rigidity causes psychologically rigid relationships. The studies do not show this. What they do show is the intimate connection between interpersonal relations and perceptual abilities. The intersubjective sphere may not determine perceptual activity, but it cannot be separated from that sphere. The two interrelate.

. . . there is no moment at which you could grasp, in a pure state, his way of perceiving, completely apart from the social conditioning that influences him. Inversely, you can never say that the way the child

¹Ibid., p. 105.

structures (met en forme) his social environment is unrelated to the hereditary or constitutional dispositions of his nervous system. He himself is the one who structures his surroundings.¹

From this we can see that the personal activity and the interpersonal exchange are of equal importance to Merleau-Ponty in describing the lived-world.² He does not try to assign each form a "percentage of importance"; and this is by design. He wants to say that the individual and the interpersonal elements cannot be given proportional status in describing human activity; they are present in every activity, and they are tied together.

This is not the first instance in which Merleau-Ponty has emphasized the significance of the intersubjective, but it should be noted that the interpersonal sphere here plays a pivotal function in his phenomenology. This helps correct a possible misunderstanding of the earlier expositions. His theory of the body in Phenomenology of Perception seemed to "anchor" all descriptions of the interpersonal; the theory of intentionality was characteristically discussed in terms of his theory of the body. From the immediate study we can see that the concept of intentionality is formulated by two important factors. The interpersonal shapes the individual's domain and visa versa. It is much

¹Ibid., p. 113.

²" . . . the two orders are not distinct; they are part and parcel of a single global phenomenon. Ibid.

more evident from this study that Merleau-Ponty recognizes the fundamental importance of both elements in his phenomenology of perception.

Additional descriptions of the link between affectivity and language acquisition provide further evidence for this position. His examples are introduced by the generally accepted, psychological observation, that the second year of childhood is the sensitive period for learning language. If the child has no "linguistic model to imitate,"¹ he will have difficulty speaking as others do. Children forcibly separated from parents at this age often fail to gain normal speech habits in later life. "This allows us to presume that there will be a profound link between the acquisition of language (which would seem to be a strictly intellectual operation) and the child's place in the family environment."²

His example, concerns the study of jealousy in a "middle" child. When the new baby is brought home the child shows definite signs of linguistic regression. Only a new identification with the older brother seems to counter this regression; the older brother gives him a new sense of his role in the family by teaching him to be the "older" brother

¹Ibid., p. 109. His resource for this and the following illustrations is the article by François Rostand, "Grammaire et affectivité", Revue Française de Psychanalyse, Vol. 14., April-June, 1950, pp. 299-310.

²Merleau-Ponty, M., The Primacy of Perception, p. 109.

in relation to the new-born. When a fourth, even older child comes to stay with the family, the middle child is further aided in learning the relativity of "younger" and "older" roles in the family. He learns during this period to talk in past, present, and future terms. Merleau-Ponty notes with interest that the child's linguistic schema develop markedly; the child expresses himself in new terms: "I have been the youngest, but I am the youngest no longer, and I will become the biggest."¹

That there is an intimate connection between interpersonal environment and linguistic acquisition is obvious to Merleau-Ponty. The child learns to master words in new ways as he responds to his new environment. Again, there is no causal pattern suggested; no final sorting of the interplay between environment and linguistic development is possible. But the interplay between the two indicates that language acquisition is a matter of more than intelligence; it is inseparable from interpersonal environment. "In sum, the intellectual elaboration of the world is constantly supported by the affective elaboration of our interhuman relations. The use of linguistic tools is mastered in the play of forces that constitute the subject's

¹Ibid., p. 113.

relations to his human surroundings."¹

These observations lead Merleau-Ponty to formulate a personal, historical pattern when describing human perceptual development. He believes that a developmental pattern can be explicated that makes sense of the above mentioned interplay of forces. Specifically, he addresses himself to the relation between interpersonal exchange and self-awareness.

Phenomenology of Perception refers to the interplay as a "system". This was suggestive but we found little material describing that "system". As we said, it is easily taken that his theory of the body is the basis for a theory of intersubjectivity; the article under scrutiny has not enforced that view. We noted that intersubjectivity is linked to the development of bodily perception and language, not as a "cause", but as an important factor. The "system" as presently elaborated, gives the individual and the interpersonal equal placement.

We shall see in the following discussion, even more weight given to the intersubjective nexus. It becomes the central element in his phenomenology of the lived-world. This does not mean that his theory of the body is replaced or subordinated; it means that bodily intentionality is

¹Ibid.

itself understood as being infused with the intersubjective element. This was implicit in the first part of the article; it is now made clearer.

Periods in the child's development can be organized. The earliest period is characterized by a state of "pre-communication"; the new-born child is unaware of itself as being a separate entity in the world. Its attitude,

. . . is the attitude of a me which is unaware of itself and lives as easily in others as it does in itself--but which being unaware of others in their separateness as well, in truth is no more conscious of them than of itself.¹

"Syncretic sociability", a term used by Henri Wallon, also describes this period.² That is, the child does not distinguish himself from others. The consciousness of the body is at first fragmentary and is only gradually integrated; the consciousness of others is at first a sense of well-being in the baby and changes only with the beginnings of the extroceptive function. This first period is important in both the physiological and phenomenological sense. Physiologically, the baby's environment is shaped by the care it is given, warmth, milk, and holding. Phenomenologically speaking, the baby's life is incomplete apart from the care of others; it never lives as a completely independent being. Though there is no awareness of this on the child's part, the intersubjective field must be seen as a fundamental

¹Ibid., p. 119.

²Vide., Wallon, Henri, Les origines du caractere chez l'enfant, Paris, 1949. . .

factor in life-sustenance and influence.

The period, generally from six months onwards, is characterized by the gradual deliniation of self as a separate entity; it is also described as a period of "incontinent sociability", a term coined by Henri Wallon.¹ This term for sociability refers to the near explosion of the child's curiosity about others, its imitation and exploration of the other's body, its alertness to expressions and general environment. The importance of sociability can be seen in the following: the experience of beholding others in a mirror teaches the child about his own body.

Let us begin by considering not the child's image of his own body in the mirror but instead the image he has of other's bodies. One notices, in effect, that he acquires the latter much more rapidly, that he distinguishes much more quickly between the other's specular image and the reality of the other's body than he does in the case of his own body. Thus it is possible that the experience he has of the other's specular image helps him arrive at an understanding of his own.²

The child is taught gradually by means of intersubjective interchange to become aware of his own body. Using the mirror experiments, Merleau-Ponty argues that a kind of "reduction" become operative.³ The child first distinguishes

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., The Primacy of Perception, p. 125.

²Ibid., p. 127. He refers to the experiments of Henri Wallon, op. cit. and Thiery Wilhelm Preyer, The Mind of the Child, trans., H.W. Brown, New York, 1893.

³This Husserlian term is not used as a philosophical term in the present context; "distinction" would have been a better choice given his intentions.

between the image in the mirror and the other's body. He separates "the real from the reflection" first with others, then with himself. The important point is that in this "intellectual" operation, contact with others is vital; it is the intersubjective encounter which aids the child's perception of his own body. The beginnings of self-awareness are intimately tied to human interchange.

It is important to understand that the child's "reduction" or act of differentiation is not a rational abstraction, particularly when we speak of it with reference to the development of self-awareness. Contact with others should not be understood as a "context" which incites a subsequent intellectual maneuver. The intersubjective environment is "an actual structure in its own right."¹ Namely, it is more than a condition for self-awareness; interchange is the way that self-awareness comes about. Self-awareness is doubtless the child's own accomplishment, but he accomplishes it with another.

A helpful illustrative image is that of the physician or mid-wife attending a birth. The mid-wife aids the expectant mother in delivery; birth is, phenomenologically speaking, a cooperative venture of all concerned. Without interchange the birth is in jeopardy. With it, there is the prospect

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., The Primacy of Perception, p. 140.

of a healthy child and mother. So with the development of self-awareness. Others aid what the child does to gain a conscious perception of self. The reduction is the acknowledgment of the other as "over there" and the simultaneous recognition that "I am here". The exchange not only provides a context for perceptual activity; it is an integral part of the process of growing self-awareness.

Merleau-Ponty adds that we can readily see why the childhood state is never completely put away or replaced. The "adult" notion that consciousnesses are totally isolated entities is betrayed by the occurrences in later life of sympathy or transitivity. Merleau-Ponty describes transitivity as a relapse into childhood, the point being that we never completely put away the syncretic or incontinent sociability of the early years. In a similar vein, intersubjective environment can be expressed in healthy responses of sympathy. The child's growth, his distinctions between "me and the other" are as "fragile and variable as are our affective relations with others and with the world."¹

This does not mean that genuine intellectual activity is denigrated by Merleau-Ponty. Intellection, or what he calls the act of reduction, is the beginning of sophistication and will be developed much further, given normal

¹Ibid.

growth, and its development goes hand in hand with the modes of sociability, or intersubjectivity. Intersubjectivity continues to play a structuring role in the development of the intellect.

Reciprocity is a structure in adult life as well as in childhood; his comments on adult love illustrate this beautifully.

Could one conceive of a love that would not be an encroachment on the freedom of the other? . . . There is a paradox in accepting love from a person without wanting to have any influence on her freedom. If one loves one finds one's freedom precisely in the act of loving, and not in vain autonomy. To consent to love or be loved is to consent also to influence somebody else, to decide to a certain extent on behalf of the other. To love is inevitably to enter into an undivided situation with another.¹

Intimacy and trust are adult forms of intersubjective relations, and Merleau-Ponty believes they play a major role in the individual's perception of himself. Though there is preciously scant exposition of these particular forms it should be obvious that intersubjective modalities continue to shape concepts of individual consciousness.

This can be seen also with the forms of alienation. Disparity can occur between persons because one cannot fully know the feelings of the other. The lack of "knowledge about", however, exists only because one's personal sphere has already been invaded by the other.

¹Ibid., p. 154.

The normal, and non-pathological attitude consists in having confidence above and beyond what can be proved, in resolutely skirting those doubts that can be raised about the reality of the other's sentiments by means of the generosity of the praxis, by means of an action that proves itself in being carried out.¹

The adult capacity for self-differentiation is not complete in itself; the intersubjective is not only a structure shaping the child's grasp of himself, it is also a form in which adults continue to know themselves. In Merleau-Ponty's terms, the childlike forms of sociability are never put away; they reassert themselves continually.

The intersubjective form is a primary characteristic of the lived-world. Individual consciousness is infused with the forms of intersubjective relationships. Intentionality, therefore, is a mixture of the personal and the interpersonal. It is evident that the intersubjective must be considered a dominant form when questions about adult perception are being discussed. The interpersonal is a major form of living for the adult as for the child; the social is a primary source for "knowledge about".

Taken as Merleau-Ponty presented it, this latest position rests upon an interpretation of human growth or development. He utilizes tests and clinical experiments to trace the development of human consciousness from childhood to maturity. The theory of the intersubjective form is presented

¹Ibid. It is the forms of trust, love, and alienation we shall return to in our concluding chapter. Their further exposition is an important key to a phenomenology of the inter-human.

as a dominant form because human growth indicates it. Is this an effective means for demonstrating a phenomenological position? We cannot answer that question fully at this point, but one observation should be made. Any theory of human consciousness which disregards evidence which can be accrued from the study of human development would face the indictment of being "high altitude thinking". That is, it would pit phenomenological theory against other disciplines, especially psychology which employs theories of growth. This seems unnecessary. Saying this, I am aware that phenomenological theory cannot depend solely upon such evidence and this will be emphasized when we look at the method of phenomenology. The investigations of phenomenology cannot be confined to gaining evidence from psychology or any other discipline. But neither can we disregard such evidence. The question of the adequacy of Merleau-Ponty's theory will be taken up after we gain further perspectives on method.

SUMMARY AND OBSERVATIONS

Our analysis of Merleau-Ponty's study of the relation between man and others and its phenomenological significance leads to the following observations. When we remember that he addressed an audience of philosophers and we in turn sought to obtain a more philosophically credible view of the inter-human, guidelines can be followed in outlining his contribution.

In general terms Merleau-Ponty demonstrates that social existence plays a central role in the quest for knowledge. In particular he aids us in developing a credible connection between encounter and knowledge about encounter; the relation is best described as derivative; and can be summarized as follows. The specific character of experience, which serves as the foundation for reflection, is communion. We suggest that encounter is an equally appropriate term even when it is not identified with Buber's typology. We know about others, Merleau-Ponty says, because we interact with or encounter them. What we can know is deeply rooted in the kind of relationships we have. It is this aspect of his thought that is so instructive.

It infers that a phenomenology of intersubjectivity must, first of all, be attentive to the phenomenon of encounter in all its diversity and complexity.

Early works of Merleau-Ponty's did not establish the intersubjective as a primary form although it was certainly a component in his notion of the lived-world. We outlined the early position because it is evident to me that a phenomenology of the body is important in building an epistemology. It cannot be left to speculation how we become self-aware. But as Merleau-Ponty's thought developed he became convinced that social existence and the human project were intimately tied together. The interaction

between subjects came into the limelight increasingly as he studied the phenomenon of self-consciousness; he sought to describe how the two related. In his most detailed study of human growth we saw how the intersubjective became a dominant theme in the development of self-consciousness.

In "The Child's Relation to Others" the human subject is described as a social creature, and this is so in the context of an encounter form of living. Studies of early childhood disclose that sociality is the primary form of pre-reflective activity; intentionality, as well as Merleau-Ponty's broad notion of the lived-world, become infused with the theme of sociality. Sociality becomes a major way of describing the lived-world. With the importance of human exchange established during the child's first years, it is described as remaining a fundamental structuring factor for perception in later years. As Merleau-Ponty sees it, the human subject is always party to exchanges from which "knowledge about" is born.

The lesson should be clear. If one is to attempt writing a credible epistemology he must place the phenomenon of human exchange at the foundation level of reflective knowledge. In terms of our more specific question it becomes clearer than before just how central the phenomenon of interaction is, in claims to know about others. It will be even more evident in the next chapter that claims to know

God will refer back to our life with others, and particularly our encounter forms of living. The importance of the encounter mode could not have been stressed more forcibly. Merleau-Ponty became a phenomenologist of intersubjectivity, certainly in his later work.

But Merleau-Ponty was never able to write the particulars of a phenomenology of intersubjectivity; no typology was ever created which articulated various forms of interaction. He intended to write on this as we shall see below, but because he did not execute the particulars, we are not able to construct meaningful comparisons between him and Buber or Hepburn. This limits our ability to say e.g. how a particular mode of interaction bears upon knowledge about the other. We should remind ourselves, however, that we did not set out to describe exhaustively a particular form, such as the interhuman. We set out to answer whether or not such a form bears upon our knowledge of others and upon faith in God, and if so, how it should be understood in philosophical terms. We shall hold our comments on the ontological and theological implications for the next chapter and for our concluding chapter; but we can make an appraisal of the function of a phenomenology of intersubjectivity for knowledge about others here.

The importance of social encounter so well cited by Merleau-Ponty teaches that description of forms which conceptualize inter-

change is both necessary and instrumental in making claims to know about others. We are taught to deal with knowledge about others in a fairly specific context, I think.

Knowledge about others has a derivative or subordinate significance. We appreciate Merleau-Ponty's argument that subjects know about one another in light of their encounters. In plain terms, knowledge about others will be described in terms of encounters or relationships in which we play a part. It will not be a third-person description, but an "I-other" oriented description. This does not preclude a "we-other" context but the requirement in any description is that we remain party to the description. To say that knowledge about has phenomenological significance is to admit that it grows out of experiential modalities, i.e. our lived-world.

The first inference to be made from this insight is that certainty is by and large eschewed in any description of our knowledge about others. On the one hand we can say with Hepburn that knowledge about does have "checking procedures" and behavior is certainly a norm for checking the nature or significance of encounter. But we cannot rely upon behavior or any other checking procedure to demonstrate for certain that a relationship is thus and so. We can only look to it as an expression of the encounter mode; we can not conclude that our knowledge about the other is in any

way independent of pre-reflective interaction.

A better context for using behavior as a checking procedure is thus suggested. It is that behavior is itself an encounter mode, and that what we see in it as a factor for making judgments is our own deep involvement with others as social subjects. Just as behavior has a pre-reflective dimension, so it also has a reflective one, the latter is rooted in the former. This, it seems to me, is a correction of Hepburn's view that behavior is a primary way of asserting knowledge about the other.

With regard to Buber's typology one comment should suffice. Merleau-Ponty leaves room for such a typology and its credibility with one important qualification. Buber's I-Thou form cannot be accepted on the basis of its sheer appeal, and it should be viewed critically because Buber failed to integrate knowing with reflective knowledge. Specifically he failed to put encounter into a perceptual context. Our study of Merleau-Ponty makes that quite clear. Encounter is interaction at the perceptual level. When it is seen as a perceptual interaction, however, it neither loses its force as a possibly non-manipulative form nor does it face the threat of mystical typing so easily presumed about Buber. Merleau-Ponty, I think, would have expanded and refined this proposition had he lived to write of the particular forms of encounter. But he has given much in guiding our

effort this far. As we shall see, this phenomenology is expressible in ontological terms and aids us in approaching our main concern.

CHAPTER THREE

PHENOMENOLOGICAL ONTOLOGY

AND ITS BEARING ON THE ISSUE OF TRANSCENDENCE

"In the dark night of thought dwells a glimmering of Being."¹

We shall divide this portion of the study into two segments: first, we shall describe Merleau-Ponty's ontology as a phenomenologically rooted endeavor; secondly, we shall attend closely to what he says about the issue of transcendence, a topic that was merely introduced in the foregoing chapters.

Concerning the first segment, the ontological reflections of Merleau-Ponty cannot be capsuled easily--for two reasons. He was a reluctant expositor of ontology, perhaps, because he thought that ontological specialization would take him away from his primary concern; every early piece is intent upon interpreting pre-reflective experience, the distinctive phenomenon of the Lebenswelt.

Merleau-Ponty's early reluctance to do ontology, I think, may stem from a conviction that the intersubjective sphere could become a subordinate theme in the effort to elucidate Being. This may be speculated, but it is not

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., Signs, McCleary, R., trans. Evanston, Northwestern Univ. Press, 1964, p. 15.

speculation that he believed the science of pure ontology was "high altitude thinking".¹ When he eventually concentrates on the question of "Being", it will be by retaining his early commitment to phenomenology, and specifically to the intersubjective nature of the lived-world. We shall see this in the ensuing analysis of "Eye and Mind", the collection of writings entitled The Visible and The Invisible, and in a very brief comment in a working note of February 1959.² All indicate this perspective. His ontology will be a "phenomenological ontology"; it will never be construed as a self-contained sphere of discourse.

One consequence is that there is no system to his ontology. The ontology arises from reflections upon the diverse phenomena in experience, and what structure there is in his thinking cannot be called systematic. His observations are at best, heuristic, rather than systematic; the reluctance to write an ontological system remained to the end. Though this makes his thoughts more difficult to analyze, it is a perspective we may soon appreciate.

¹Vide., Merleau-Ponty, M., The Primacy of Perception, pp. 160-161 and Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible, Lingis, Alphonso, trans. Evanston, Northwestern Univ. Press, 1968, the Editor's Forward, Claude Lefort, ed., p. XXV.

²"Results of Ph.P.--Necessity of bringing them to ontological explicitation." Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible, p. 183.

A second reason for difficulties in analysis is that Merleau-Ponty died before his ontological reflections were ready for publication. We are left with unfinished texts and working notes; only "Eye and Mind" reached publication before his death and it cannot be taken as a final statement of his position.¹ Such a circumstance is assuredly lamentable for the analyst.

Still, the material now published does present the thought of Merleau-Ponty sufficiently to permit an outline of his ontology. We shall not attempt to spell out what he might have said had he lived longer; what he did say about phenomenological ontology will aid us considerably to see its bearing upon the issue of transcendence.

Merleau-Ponty did not make a smooth transition to ontology after writing Phenomenology of Perception; there are imaginative and provocative articles which precede "Eye and Mind" and The Visible and the Invisible. But it strikes the reader that he looked back to that first major work in writing these last pieces, seeing the need for further explication. Chapter One of Part Two explained Merleau-Ponty's concern to interrogate the perceptive act, to give a phenomenological answer to the problem of the "in-itself

¹"Eye and Mind" was a preliminary statement to be included in the second part of The Visible and the Invisible. See Merleau-Ponty, M., The Primacy of Perception p. 15^o.

for us". The lived-world is fundamentally a pre-reflective transaction between the seer and the seen, the sentient and the sensible. Merleau-Ponty did not reject this notion of transaction in the ontological writings but he did refine it. The effort to refine his phenomenology partially explains how he came to regard his phenomenology as having ontological dimensions. We shall explain.

Whereas we may characterize the early notion as a "transaction" between the perceiver and the perceived, his later concepts require other terms. "Entrelacs et chiasme", the title of a most important chapter of ontological writing, illustrates his effort to refine the early phenomenology. Entrelacs refers to the patterns of knotwork in embroidery, chiasme to networks or crossed lines; both are metaphors suggesting a manifold network of relationships between the perceiver and the perceived.¹ By this title, Merleau-Ponty seeks to explicate man's relation to the world as a subtle complex of interchanges; more complex than a transaction, it is the perceiver's many-faceted participation with things and others in the world.

Even more is involved. Though the human subject is always distinguished from "the other", the phenomenologically

¹Entrelacs et chiasme is translated "intertwinings and chiasm", by Alphonso Lingis, the translator of The Visible and the Invisible, See Chapter IV.

oriented thinker sees that the orders of subject and object need to be "broken down". Contrary to Sartre, the for-itself and the in-itself are not completely separate structures for Merleau-Ponty; as we shall see, the concept of networks illustrates his continued effort to force distinctions in concepts of massive being. The subject-object typology is a rigid categorization which crumbles under a serious examination of experience.¹ It introduces us to the ontology.

How does Merleau-Ponty describe intertwinings? We shall first follow his discussion of the relation between the toucher and the touched. Then we shall see the networks he seeks to explicate between the seer and the visible.

Concerning the act of touching, knowing that we are beings who touch is a primary phenomenological theme. Merleau-Ponty still calls this our opening onto a world. He also speaks of the act of touching, in terms of our being "touched" by the object. The object's course or smooth texture is given to us, so that we become the touched as well as the toucher. Our bodily activity is affected by touching the hot stove, or the furry rug. Phenomenologically speaking, we are "objects" in this occult transference.²

¹Vide., Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible, p. 130.

²This notion is a refinement of the idea of "presentation" introduced in Phenomenology of Perception.

Thirdly, he speaks about the experience of touching as a "touching of the touch".¹ It is a relation illustrated by the action of the right hand grasping our left hand as it touches an object. In this third dimension of the tactile act, we are simultaneously the "touching subject" and we are the one who is touched. These three elements, he says are experienced simultaneously; they are networks which exist in the single phenomenon of touching.

These networks are the thematic structures which pertain to the pre-reflective act. The rigidity of the for-itself and the in-itself orders break down if one attends to the event. Even more important, Merleau-Ponty is suggesting with his notion of networks that the experiences of the touched and touching belong together. They are part of one world; they are "two halves of an orange".² Much will be made of this.

It is the phenomenon of seeing, however, that interests Merleau-Ponty most. But before focusing upon seeing it is necessary to cite the connection between touching and seeing. They form another network if we understand his intentions.

¹ Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible, p. 133.

²Ibid.

We must habituate ourselves to think that every visible is cut out in the tangible, every tactile being in some manner promised to visibility, and that there is encroachment, infringement, not only between the touched and the touching, but also between the tangible and the visible, which is encrusted in it, as, conversely, the tangible itself is not a nothingness of visibility, is not without visual existence. Since the same body sees and touches, visible and tangible belong to the same world.¹

Once this intimate connection or "common world" is recognized, we can pass to a discussion of "the seer and the seen", and do so more knowledgably. The experience serves to support the notion of networks he seeks to convey. It will help in the following discussion to keep in mind what we have previously called "presentation".

What is the "virtue of the visible", he asks, "that makes it, held at the end of the gaze, nonetheless much more than a correlative of my vision, such that it imposes my vision upon me as a continuation of its own sovereign existence?"² Such questioning leads Merleau-Ponty to discuss the notion of quale, so common in Cartesian thought. His concern is to "put back, into the object", the qualities which Cartesian thought separated from it. He contends that qualities are modes of presentation and are not intermediate entities which lie between the receiver and the perceived.

¹Ibid., p. 134. Note that Merleau-Ponty is again using the model of the body as an intentional being to demonstrate his case. This is so obvious in his ontological writing that it hardly bears mentioning. When we meet his one reference to the body as the exemplar sensible, it should not surprise us.

²Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible, p. 131.

Color: one cannot separate it from the object, color presents texture; it creates identities, introduces depth, and line. (He is speaking of painting.)¹ Depth, likewise, is object locality, not a third dimension abstracted by determining height and width. The thing is sought by vision in terms of its locality; in depth the visible "comes to itself" before the viewer. Line also, is not an imitation of the visible thing; rather it is the thing rendering itself visible before us. The gaze, or perception, is captured by the visible world; the painter's secret science is to "render" the visible on canvass. His vision has been captured and he works to put that experience in visible terms.²

Three points can be abstracted from this odd form of description; first, the thing reveals itself in different manners simultaneously i.e. in form, color, depth, etc. In contrast to Sartre's concept of "massive Being", Merleau-Ponty attempts to capture the variation, diversity and interchangeableness of the object's presentation to consciousness. The thing is not simply "there" in one single manner.

¹Ibid., p. 132. See also, Merleau-Ponty, M., Signs, pp. 181 ff.

²Ibid., Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible p. 131. He says elsewhere, "With no other technique than what his eyes and hands discover in seeing and painting, he persists in drawing from this world, with its din of history's glories and scandals, canvasses which will hardly add to the angers or the hopes of man--and no one complains." Merleau-Ponty, M., Signs, p. 161.

Each mode invades another, and so on; every mode of presentation belongs to each other. Secondly, the visible exerts force upon the seer. In other words, the visible invades and shapes perception; the in-itself is not separable from its "magic" power upon consciousness. Objects "belong" to consciousness.

Lastly, the visible "radiates" beyond itself. The particular visible is a network, not compassable through any one mode of its presentation and is also not fully understood as an in-itself separate from other things. It is an expression of the total lived-world. Merleau-Ponty almost reverts to poetry to make his point in the following.

The red dress a fortiori holds with all its fibers onto the fabric of the visible, and thereby onto a fabric of invisible being. A punctuation in the field of red things, which includes the tiles of roof tops, the flags of gatekeepers and of the Revolution, certain terrains near Aix or in Madagascar, it is also a punctuation in the field of red garments, which includes, along with it the dresses of women, robes of professors, bishops and advocate generals, and also in the field of adornments and that of uniforms.¹

He is talking obviously, of an experience which is reminiscent and evocative of other experiences. The boldness of his statement, however, is not so simply captured. The thing, seen in its color not only "refers" to like others; it participates in forms of visibility beyond itself, i.e. the particular belongs to the whole and vice versa.

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible p. 132.

This last point is not entirely new; we saw previously how perception both opened onto a total world, and assumed it in each particular situation. The new element is the notion of "networks"; it says that there is an essential connection between experiences; a notion of universal patterns is being introduced. His phenomenology is leading him to make ontological observations.

The networks between the seer and the seen, between the sentient and the sensible, have revealed what Merleau-Ponty calls the form of reversibility. He does not expound the term in detail but it is evident that it pertains to the peculiar way the orders of subject and object are broken down. Reversibility is a phenomenological form, an eidos which is given its life by the experienced world. If "networks" is a general term for perceptual experience, reversibility is the peculiar form of those networks and, hence, experience. The toucher is also the touched, the seer is also the seen. The orders of subject and object are at least partially interchangeable.¹

¹It must be added that reversibility parallels the concept of perceptual synthesis in one important respect. As perceptual synthesis was partial, so "reversibility (is) always imminent and never realized in fact." Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible, p. 147. The form of reversibility is never complete experientially; I think Merleau-Ponty means by this that we can never be in any final sense, both object and subject in the lived-world. The form of reversibility is credible in his mind because the subject-order is invaded by the object-order, though it is never completely taken over.

Merleau-Ponty has discussed the emergence of this eidos in terms of man's perception of the natural world; reversibility is the fundamental truth of man's perception of the thing. There is no great transition required to say that it is also the fundamental form of man's relation to other men. The importance of reversibility is clearly evident in this domain as well. Merleau-Ponty does not discuss intersubjective experience in connection with reversibility, but were it described it would be highly reasonable to think he would have related intersubjectivity to the notion of reversibility explained here. We mention it here because it is not an oversight on his part; he died before the material was written.¹

In working notes he gives us some idea of what shape the discussion would have taken.

It is through it (reversibility) alone that there is passage from the 'For-Itself' to the For the Other--In reality there is neither me nor the other as positive subjectivities. There are two caverns, two opennesses, two stages where something will take place--and which both belong to the same world, to the stage of Being.²

This suggestive passage cannot be construed as anything more than a notation, an indication that reversibility will

¹Many working notes refer to his intention to write on intersubjectivity. See especially Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible, p. 165.

²Ibid., pp. 263-264.

call for a full ontology.

It is completely credible that his position on the childlike character of intersubjective encounter would have been used in the above context.¹ The point, if made, would have been obvious: reversibility is the way we experience the other; his world invades ours, and ours, his. There is exchange; we see the other and are seen by him, we touch and are touched. Moreover, we share the same world, and in this sense belong to each other.

What the concept of reversibility does make plain is that the connection between seer and the visible is not accidental. Intertwining is possible only because we are present in the world, not simply beholders from the outside. Merleau-Ponty makes an introductory observation as to the ontological character of reversibility. It is a key comment and we quote it in full.

Hence without even entering into the implications proper to the seer and the visible, we know that, since vision is a palpation with the look, it must also be inscribed in the order of being that it discloses to us; he who looks must not himself be foreign to the world that he looks at. As soon as I see, it is necessary that the vision (as is so well indicated by the double meaning of the word) be doubled with a complimentary vision or with another vision: myself seen from without, such as another would see me, installed in the midst of the visible, occupied in considering it from a certain spot. For the moment we shall not examine how far this identity of the seer and the visible goes, if we have a complete

¹c.f. Ibid., p. 180 and p. 269.

experience of it, or if there is something missing, and what it is. It suffices for us for the moment to note that he who sees cannot possess the visible unless he is possessed by it, unless he is of it, unless by principle, according to what is required by the articulation of the look with the things, he is one of the visibles, capable, by a single reversal, of seeing them--he who is one of them.¹

The sense of this quotation is put most briefly, j'en suis, "I belong to it". He has been preparing for this claim in every description of intertwinings and reversibility. The toucher belongs to the touched, the seer to the seen. Man is bound to his world at every level of experience; to know this is to discover the meaning of man's very being.

One avenue of clarification is to illustrate this affirmation, j'en suis, by the concept of a "circuit". Merleau-Ponty does so in "Eye and Mind".²

The painter is again the privileged expositor on the truth of belonging to the world. There is that which reaches his eye directly, (the object or scene) and there is that which ignites his imagination (vision). "Vision encounters, as at a crossroads all the aspects of Being."³ Eyes and hands respond in the creative act to render this world on canvass. No one can say of a painting, where "nature ends" and human expression begins. The work's visibility is bound

¹Ibid., pp. 134-135.

²Merleau-Ponty, M., Signs, pp. 159 ff.

³Ibid., p. 188.

to the painter and to the world; a circuit is formed between the painter's vision, his creative act and the painting itself. The world speaks and is spoken of on canvass. The painter has rendered a relation between himself and his world. The example reveals the magic of every perception. Given a means of expression, every perception is a rendering of the world we see, hear, or touch, and it is so because we are part of the circuitry. The concepts of networks and reversibility express the particular truth that man belongs to the world.¹

Before further pursuing the ontological dimensions of his phenomenological studies, it is appropriate to examine the concept Merleau-Ponty proposes as the principle which explains his claims thus far and gives him direct access to the ontological issue.

So far, we have said that the networks can be described in terms of one major characteristic--reversibility. Reversibility conceptualizes the circuitry binding human consciousness to its world. There is commonality between

¹Again our exposition is cut short if we are concerned to know what specific role human consciousness plays in this relationship of belonging. Merleau-Ponty was either unconcerned with giving specifics, believed that he had already done so in his earlier writings, or intended to and died before putting things down. I favor the second possibility; the human for-itself was characterized in detail in Phenomenology of Perception. The only addition required in his mind was to show how consciousness "belongs" to the world it perceives.

subject and world, and there is a connectedness between various forms of experience. A general term is needed to express this connectedness and commonality. The term Merleau-Ponty chooses is "flesh". Flesh is the "tissue that lines them (networks), sustains them, nourishes them. . . ."1

"Flesh" is obviously not a literalistic term; its synonym is "element" or "general thing".2 Merleau-Ponty says that flesh is designated as "midway between the spatio-temporal individual and the idea, a sort of incarnate principle that brings a style of being wherever there is a fragment of being."3 In other words, flesh is the eidos specifying the commonality of perceptual experience, and the connectedness man has with the world he perceives.

Perhaps, it is best to dissect this notion in terms of its application to experience. The notion of flesh attempts

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible p. 132.

²Ibid., p. 130. "The flesh is not matter, in the sense of corpuscles of being which would add up or continue on one another to form beings. Nor is the visible (the things as well as my own body) some 'psychic' material that would be--God knows how--brought into being by the things factually existing and acting on my factual body. In general, it is not a fact or a sum of facts 'material' or 'spiritual'. Nor is it a representation for a mind: a mind could not be captured by its own representations; it would rebel against this insertion into the visible which is essential to the seer". Ibid.

³Ibid.

to guard against what Merleau-Ponty calls high-altitude thinking, in that it is a principle required in the analysis of experience. A phenomenology of perception indicates for example, that seer and seen belong to each other; it does not imply that they are interchangeable in any final sense. The reason is simple: analysis of perceptual experience does not permit such a conclusion. Perceptual experience shapes the concept of flesh; that is why he calls it an "incarnate principle". The concept of flesh, as well as that of the networks, strongly infers that connectedness is not accidental. Reversibility and the networks only conceptualize the forms of perception; his position is that experience itself exhibits connectedness. "Flesh" attempts to bring its forms under one heading. Merleau-Ponty maintains his phenomenological perspective in this transition to ontology; the principle of flesh is not constructed; it emerges out of the structures of experience.

We are now ready to examine directly the ontological dimensions of the phenomenology. In a sense, the foregoing has bordered on ontology at every point; we have withheld our discussion of it only for convenience. There are a number of ways we could describe the ontology; the most suggestive approach is given in "Eye and Mind".¹ The prose there is

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., Signs, p. 159. ff.

difficult, but if we keep in mind the title of his posthumous collection, The Visible and the Invisible, the task may become easier.

The artists' vocation is to render his participation in a world visible to all. In the above accounts, we indicated a circuit in which world, vision and visibility could not be neatly separated. The network we described pertained to a relation between a particular painter's vision and the visible work of art. But the artistic act is also a paradigm for a philosophical view of existence.

Every visual something, as individual as it is, functions also as a dimension, because it gives itself as the result of a dehiscence of Being. What this ultimately means is that the proper essence (le propre) of the visible is to have a layer (doublure) of invisibility in the strict sense, which it makes present as a certain absence."¹

This bold claim can be organized in two ways. First, Merleau-Ponty is saying that perceptual experience cannot be confined to a simple relationship between the perceiver and the perceived. Networks are particular, but the perceiver is also led to "communicate through those things 'to all generations of the universe.'"² We are advised to take seriously the myth of the windows of the soul. The eye as the window, opens the soul "to what is not the soul."³ The

¹Ibid., p. 187.

²Ibid., p. 186.

³Ibid.

painter paints in the conviction that the visible thing discloses not only itself, but presents a dimension of universal meaning. That is, particular circuits relate to the whole, the world and Being. Vision opens us to a world in general, a universe of "sun and stars", he says. The visible shows forth the sphere of invisibility.¹

That leads us to a second way of organizing his concept of the ontological dimension of the phenomenology. The vision-visible network opens one to invisibility; that statement should be taken almost literally, and when so taken, it is not indicative of "reversibility" in the strict sense. That is, perception and vision do lead to confrontation with the invisible, but there is no suggestion that there is a

¹At this point it is wise to interrupt our exposition for the following observation. Just what the terms "invisibility" and "being" mean specifically, cannot be stated. Merleau-Ponty is fond of suggestive terms which remain undefined, but a few observations can be made. Whether we talk of natural things or social phenomena, the particular visional "openings" indicate a sphere of wholeness in which man lives. One gets the distinct impression that the Lebenswelt is ultimately conceived of as a totality of networks; its unity remains mysterious. Our author is certainly not a theologian in this respect; he gives no names to this sense of wholeness or unity; there is no God posited as the Being disclosed through things. Invisibility points to the mystery of the world, and not necessarily to a creator. Invisibility is a descriptive term and is not to be taken literally; it means first of all, that the whole is presented through the particular. The whole is "there" before him, yet it is not available for definition; it is in a certain sense, an absence. By this, he means, it is not to be possessed. Wholeness or invisibility is a mystery to the one who grasps it and is part of it. When we take up the issue of transcendence we should be aware of this perspective.

confrontation with, or conception of invisibility which gives access to the particular. No "reverse" is possible if we are to retain his notion of phenomenology as an opening to ontology. Perception opens onto vision, vision to the whole; perception is still the lynch-pin. Phenomenology leads the thinker to ontological observations. It is a one-way thoroughfare; ontology takes its life from an interpretation of experience.

This structure should not be construed, however, as limiting Merleau-Ponty's concept of ontology. Though phenomenology is access to ontology and supports it, we can say that the world does open itself as a totality through the particular perceptual event. "The world is in accordance with my perspective in order to be independent of me, is for me in order to be without me, and to be the world."¹

We acknowledge that the thing is "given" to us. It is there "for us" because it can be "without us". This is to say that vision is responsive to the thing beheld, in its independence; we recognize that what comes to view does so because it has its own being. Vision for Merleau-Ponty is not entirely subjective or projective; vision is a response to the perceived world.

Moreover the quotation attempts to express the experience of invisibility. What this means was never fully

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., Signs, p. 187.

explicated by Merleau-Ponty but one observation is warranted. Invisibility has to do with the being of the world; the mysterious even awesome nature of the experience is that the mystery of the world's being is opened to the viewer. "That it is there", this is what fascinates the thinker. We shall return to this theme below and in our conclusions.

This formulation is not a complete change from the early Phenomenology of Perception, but there is one important new emphasis. In terms of the above observation that invisibility affects the vision, a new idea of consciousness is being forged. It is one he intended. Briefly, human consciousness is no longer thought of as being solely a "seizing operation".¹ The ontological insight is that the world's wholeness shapes consciousness and vision, as well as the other way around. For example, what is not present, strictly speaking, in a given perception, does affect consciousness. The person is aware that what is before him does have its own

¹Speaking of the problems left unresolved in Phenomenology of Perception, he says, "they are due to the fact that in part I retained the philosophy of consciousness." Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible, working note, February 1959, p. 183. One of the specific problems was that the opposition considered consciousness as either a constituting operation or as a "receptor station". In responding to these alternatives Merleau-Ponty did not consider other philosophical options. Hence, he may have believed that his theory of that time was a compromise theory and not a full exploration of the place consciousness would have once ontology was possible. This new series of reflections would correct that deficiency.

Being, and is part of a broader environment. Consciousness in this new posture, "asks" the thing to reveal itself as it truly is.

In sum, ontology has no autonomous status; phenomenology is the conduit which opens us to Being. That is why we call it phenomenological-ontology. But once Being is confronted via perception, we must acknowledge that consciousness has not constituted it. Being has priority as a non-thetic dimension, discovered in the act of perception. This conception is a unique contribution to ontological studies.

No notion of apperception is required to acknowledge the presence of Being; Merleau-Ponty holds that the world's totality is encountered rather than anticipated or apperceived. His position keeps us in touch with phenomenological method and interpretation.

It is now left for us to spell out as far as is possible with the existing material, how relations with others functions as a fundamental opening to the mystery of Being.

As always, he begins with the body. The established truth of one's own body is that it is the exemplar sensible.¹ We have seen that reversibility is the peculiar form of all personal existence; the subject touches and is touched, sees and is seen. Merleau-Ponty first discussed this with the

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible, p. 135.

individual in mind. Everything about the subject suggests that touch and sight interact with each other and with "the thing". In this connection we concluded that human consciousness was "responsive" as well as "intrusive". It works with particulars in a context of wholeness. Consciousness is synergetic; it works with its world in order to discover its own significance and the meaning of its world. Merleau-Ponty now suggests,

Why would not the synergy exist among different organisms, if it is possible within each? Their landscapes interweave, their actions and their passion fit together exactly: this is possible as soon as we no longer make belongingness to one same 'consciousness' the primordial definition of sensibility, and as soon as we rather understand it as the return of the visible upon itself, a carnal adherence of the sentient to the sensed and of the sensed to the sentient.¹

He is speaking of perception in the presence of another. What one touches and what one sees is not only his own. It is better that we speak of objects perceived with another; the perceived world of one becomes shared with the other's; it "passes into him".² The visible is then perceived in terms of an "intercorporeality" and not just by a single body; it is truly a "for us".³ This notion of intercorpor-

¹Ibid., p. 142.

²Ibid.

³Merleau-Ponty did not live to give full exposition to the notion of intercorporeality. It is, to my mind, the most suggestive term yet in illustrating the significance of intersubjectivity. We shall utilize it in our concluding chapter.

eality becomes much clearer when we discuss it in terms of seeing another person. What occurs there exposes the heart of man's openness to Being, and it exposes most boldly what Merleau-Ponty believes true of the visible-invisible network.

The lesson of seeing things with another is not totally different than if we saw it by ourselves, but the inexhaustible depth of the visible, which is its proper essence, is made far more apparent.¹

In the presence of another the subject really begins to see that he is a seer; the other person confronts him with his own vision. In this experience the subject is redirected from beholding "the thing" directly, to the other person. In other words, his own vision is discovered to be incomplete; he turns to the other for the completion of an otherwise "individual" exchange. The other's vision of the thing becomes a necessary factor in there being an authentic perception.

This turning towards another also seems to have its own sphere of value for Merleau-Ponty. The two perceivers become preoccupied with each other much the same as two lovers would explore each other. A certain euphoria takes place.

¹ Merleau-Ponty, M., The Visible and the Invisible, p. 142. "What is proper to the visible is, we said, to be the surface of an inexhaustible depth; this is what makes it able to be open to visions other than our own." Ibid.

For the first time, the body no longer couples itself up with the world, it clasps another body, applying (itself to it) carefully with its own extension, forming tirelessly with its hands the strange statue which in its turn gives everything it receives; the body is lost outside of the world and its goals, fascinated by the unique occupation of floating in Being with another life, of making itself the outside of the inside, and the inside of its outside.¹

No more poetic means of expression than this could be found in philosophical writing. The exchange of look, the experience of reversibility, reminds us of the communal nature of intersubjectivity in Phenomenology of Perception. Merleau-Ponty's point is that the world of one is intimately shared by another, and is shared as an interpersonal exploration. But in addition to the euphoria of sharing there is the experience of seeing things as they are.

Beyond the euphoric sharing of vision (reversibility), the subjects "pass definitively beyond the circle of the visible."² The experience of reversibility brings us to the "world of silence", or invisibility.³

Again, we may regret that Merleau-Ponty did not live to spell out what he meant by these terms, especially "Being", but I suspect he would have avoided restrictive definitions. From the very beginning, he said that the philosopher's task

¹Ibid., p. 144. The brackets indicate that Merleau-Ponty had erased and the phrase was restored by the translator.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 145.

was to return us to wonder in face of the world. We are left with a series of references to encounter with Being which were never fully elucidated.

We emphasize here the extent to which encounter with Being is affirmed as a phenomenological truth. The perceiver is never an autonomous being; he is bound to his world and he is bound to others who make him aware of his belongingness. The aware person is inescapably a social person; there is no other way to describe him. To be bound to others, however, does not preclude the experience of being thrown open to Being. In fact, the very nature of man is, in a sense, fulfilled in his exposure to Being. In the, perhaps, rare experience of encounter with others, man faces the mystery of Being.

Put in technical terms we conclude that inter-subjectivity forms the backbone of the ontology. Encounter experience provides a major access to ontological reflections. Intercorporeality, in his terms, is a peculiar conduite to the sphere of Being.

We are fully aware that Merleau-Ponty never describes the sphere of Being. We have mentioned this frequently. For the purposes of analysis, therefore, it is risky and unwise to force a description at this juncture. We are given help, however, in his occasional discussions of transcendence. If we are to achieve some clarification on what Mer-

leau-Ponty meant by "Being" it is advisable to see what he meant by the term transcendence. Once that is accomplished we may be able to specify more closely, the meaning of such terms as "invisibility", "mystery", and Being.

We can proceed with strong indications that, whatever his view of transcendence, the intersubjective phenomenon will play a central role in uncovering its meaning. He will say little about its importance in the ensuing discussions but we can assume that his ontological reflections will inform his views on transcendence. It remains for us to say how.

PHENOMENOLOGICAL-ONTOLOGY AND

ITS BEARING ON THE ISSUE OF TRANSCENDENCE

As in the previous study, we shall outline the growth of Merleau-Ponty's thought; we hope that this is understood as a patient approach and not an overly laborious one. The growth of the thinker, in this case, shows us subtle changes which directly affect our appraisal of his concept of transcendence.

Three periods can be discerned with regard to his notion of transcendence. The first period centers about his first two works, The Structure of Behavior and the Phenomenology of Perception. We can be brief here in light of the

earlier investigation.

Phenomenology of Perception stated his conviction that transcendence is to be thought of as a "movement" integral to the perceptive act, a structure of consciousness. First, man "transcends" his own isolation by seeing other things and people; he knows himself as a subject in a world. He is a being in traffic with those over against himself. Man in the perceptive act overcomes the sphere of private subjectivity. He makes the movements of transcendence. The first notation we must make, therefore, is that man is identified with transcendence in that he is the one who "transcends" his own subjectivity.

The same concept of perception also led Merleau-Ponty to conclude that "the other" is always more than we can know of it. We transcend our subjectivity to gain communal contact and interchange, but we are constantly faced with the fact that the world we invade transcends our knowledge of it. Transcendence in this second sense, is the "more" of the world, i.e. the world beyond immediate or even extended perception. It can be the "more" of perceived objects or that which is beyond our knowledge concerning another human being. In either case, transcendence is a term which illustrates that the world eludes the perceiver's knowledge.

This two-fold conception of transcendence explains to some extent why Alphonse de Walens calls Merleau-Ponty's

phenomenology, a philosophy of ambiguity.¹ It becomes relevant to ask if the two notions mentioned above are adequately explained in that early period; or, was not ambiguity left as the major theme of perceptual knowledge? My belief is that Merleau-Ponty did not attempt to resolve the ambiguity until the period of his ontological reflections. We shall see that below.

Merleau-Ponty did address himself to the issue of transcendence, however, after Phenomenology of Perception and before the time of his ontological writings; it is quite useful to review those expositions. They explain in detail the issue he sought to resolve in the period just before his death. We shall label this his second or middle period; it is a period of transition.

Merleau-Ponty writes of Christianity in an article entitled "Foi et Bonne Foi"; he is considering an argument about social ethics in Catholicism.² Father Hervé had said that Catholic tradition as a whole, encourages conservative social attitudes. Merleau-Ponty agrees but holds that Catholic tradition does not explain the condition; he suggests a theological reason for the conservatism.

¹Vide., deWaelhens, Alphonse, "M. Merleau-Ponty et la Philosophie de L'ambiguite", Pensee, No. 68, July-August, 1956.

²The issue was suggested to him in an article by Father Pierre Hervé, "Action", Dec. 14, 1945.

There must be an ambiguity in Catholicism as a spiritual way of life to correspond to its ambiguity as a social phenomenon.

Catholicism posits a belief in both an interior and an exterior God. This¹ is the religious formulation of its contradictions.

The notions of interior and exterior God, he believes, expose a double standard in Catholic teaching. In Augustine, the theme of interiority is evident; "turn inward . . . truth dwells within the inner man."² God is discovered in the inner recesses of man's spirit; the experience of God is self-authenticating and adequate for faith. But Catholicism also teaches an "exterior God", a God learned through dogma and institution. The Incarnation and Pentecost are not only teachings which express one's faith; they are doctrines which call for blind obedience. The standard is that God has already decided how to make Himself known; one need only conform.

Quite obviously, Merleau-Ponty decries the latter form in Catholic teaching; but it is negative only in greater degree than the former. The latter he calls "bad faith",

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., Sense and Non-Sense, Dreyfus Herbert L., trans. Evanston, Northwestern Univ. Press, 1964, p. 173. Catholicism was Merleau-Ponty's heritage. In his youth he had been a faithful adherent. Understandably, Christianity and Catholicism, are interchangeable terms; they are synonymous for him.

²Ibid.

the former, simply "faith". Bad faith has the look of borrowed values, and authoritarianism; "faith" has the sense of sincerity or reliance upon one's own inclinations. The important point is that a Christian is not able to choose between the two forms; he floats between them. This is why his social stance is ambiguous. If the Christian senses the need for revolution as a private individual, he is restrained by the Church's values. If he holds to the Church's position he is plagued by guilt and the need to right wrongs. "He is a poor conservative and an unsafe bet as a revolutionary."¹

We need not go on with Merleau-Ponty's judgments; in light of Catholic teaching in 1945 he was probably correct.² Most important, Merleau-Ponty believed that theology gets in the way of responsible human action and commitment. It keeps us from recognizing the need for decisive action. In short, Christianity keeps men suspended, whereas what is called for is men who will not relinquish their responsibility to act decisively in this world.

Suspension immobilizes man; it limits "self-transcendence". Christians can not see things as they are be-

¹Ibid., p. 178.

²Vide., Kwant, Remy C., The Phenomenological Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty. Pittsburg: Dusquesne Univ. Press, 1963. Chapter 2.

cause of their suspension; in this sense, they are incapable of self-transcendence. In sum, the Christian notions of transcendence get in the way of authentic self-transcendence.

We interrupt exposition for one observation. Is Merleau-Ponty's brief critique consistent with his own early teaching on transcendence? Many commentators have seen an inconsistency.¹ Merleau-Ponty was sympathetic to Marxism at the time and though this need not discount his criticism of Christianity, it does indicate that he leaned toward a revolutionary stance regarding social movements. Particularly, his espousal of Marxism may explain his impatience at remaining content with the ambiguities of experience so well documented in Phenomenology of Perception. Merleau-Ponty never fully embraced Marxism,² but in this period he turned somewhat from his earlier notion that there are ambiguities involved in describing man's perceptual history.

¹Vide., Kwant, Remy, The Phenomenological Philosophy of Merleau Ponty and Rabil, Albert, Merleau-Ponty: Existentialist of the Social World, New York, Columbia Univ. Press, 1967, Chapter 7.

²"If the individual goes along with the party and against his own private opinion, it is because the party has proven its worth, because it has a mission in history, and because it represents the proletariat. There is no such thing as an unmotivated commitment." Merleau-Ponty, M., Sense and Non-Sense, p. 180. c.f. his article concerning Marxism ibid., pp. 99 ff. Eventually, such a critical reflection would lead him to turn away from the party.

His critique of Christianity may hold but it is a bit odd to read that he is not sympathetic with the man who holds conflicting perceptions about transcendence. He had earlier counseled such a position in his formulation of the two meanings of transcendence.

One other article of this period records what he is most concerned to criticize about concepts of transcendence, and it reveals more directly his then current concept of transcendence.

In the "Metaphysical in Man", Merleau-Ponty reasserts the earlier notion of ambiguity in human experience. But this time he is clear that the contingency of perceptual knowledge opens man to the "metaphysical".

Metaphysics is the deliberate intention to describe this paradox of consciousness and truth, exchange and communication, . . . From the moment I recognize that my experience precisely in so far as it is my own, makes me accessible to what is not myself, that I am sensitive to the world and to others . . . all the beings which objective thought placed at a distance draw singularly near to me. My life seems absolutely individual and absolutely universal to me.¹

This is a fine expression of his ideas in terms of social affairs. Man's acceptance of the partiality of his knowledge brings home the worth of that knowledge. He is a metaphysical being because he embodies a true conception

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., Sense and Non-Sense, p. 94.

of his own capacities for knowledge.¹ This interpretation of the human situation, much akin to the Phenomenology of Perception excludes any acceptance of absolutes, especially God. "Such a metaphysics cannot be reconciled with the manifest content of religion and with the positing of an absolute thinker of the world."² Acceptance of a transcendent God necessitates positing a world as man would like it to be. To introduce transcendence is to posit a force behind consciousness. "Vertical transcendence" cancels the essentials of "horizontal" or self-transcendence.³ He obviously rejects all concepts of transcendence which dilute the humanist notion of self-transcendence.

In this context it is a bit odd to read his comment that Christianity can be viewed positively. Christianity, he says, also rejects the "God of the philosophers" and teaches a "God who takes on the human condition."⁴ Merleau-Ponty's notion of transcendence is becoming clearer; if Christianity can be understood as teaching self-transcendence,

¹"The contingency of all that exists and all that has value is not a little trouble for which we have somehow or other to make room in some nook or cranny of the system: it is the condition of a metaphysical view of the world." Ibid., p. 96.

²Ibid., p. 96.

³Merleau-Ponty will use these two terms, "vertical" and "horizontal" transcendence in Signs; it is convenient to introduce them here.

⁴Merleau-Ponty, Sense and Non-Sense, p. 96.

it has positive value. Any doctrine which contains a humanist element is viewed with respect.

In an interesting footnote he clarifies the position further; he refers again to the conflicts between horizontal and vertical transcendence, and rejects the concept of "transcendence in immanence", which he attributes to Husserl. The explanation for his rejection is simple: "for I am not God, and I cannot verify the co-existence of these two attributes in any indubitable experience."¹ He excludes at this point, any notion of transcendence which would compromise its human origins.

The concluding article in Sense and Non-Sense, written especially for the collection, should fill out Merleau-Ponty's position adequately.² It corrects our suspicion that Merleau-Ponty had opted for a militant humanism, leaving behind the gnawing question of transcendence put forth in Phenomenology of Perception.

The models that one first considers when thinking of

¹Ibid., p. 96. The same footnote is interesting in another context. The phrase "transcendence in immanence" so emphatically rejected here is an appropriate label for his conception of transcendence in the period of ontological reflections. We need not say more about this at present; Merleau-Ponty's view in 1947 specifies that this title still smacks of postulational thinking. A God who transcends consciousness in any respect is not acceptable to the Lebenswelt phenomenologist.

²Merleau-Ponty, M., Sense and Non-Sense, pp. 182 ff.

heroism are those of Hegel and Nietzsche. Hegel's hero engaged in struggle to attain self-consciousness; he is the slave in the first instance, an unhappy consciousness in the second, and so on. Man's vocation is the struggle to gain absolute truth, but for Hegel the end is always in sight. He struggles only to "realize" the Spirit guiding him; his destiny is assured.¹ Nietzsche's hero on the other hand, has no such assurance, but he also struggles. Social morality must be overcome; death is the final opponent. His hero is the master, the overman, who overcomes all by the strength of his will.

These models, Merleau-Ponty says, are the heritage of every contemporary, but they do not live for us. Men today do not have Hegel's assurance, nor do they in light of the war, have Nietzsche's choice of raw power. They ask Nietzsche's questions about death, but they cannot accept the answers embodied in his model. What are the viable models for heroism?

Robert Jordan, the hero in For Whom the Bell Tolls, lies wounded. He tells Maria he must die alone, but his acceptance of death comes not from a sense of the Hegelian pre-determined destiny. Nor does his sense of purpose center

¹This is Merleau-Ponty's vision of Hegel to be sure, but an apt one. Ibid., pp. 183-184.

about the Nietzschean concentration on transcending all opponents. He will die alone but he loves life; his life is embodied in his relation with Maria. In this he is loyal "to the natural movement which flings us toward things and toward others."¹ The viable model is the man who attempts no final escape from solitary death through religion or the exercise of will. He is also unlike the egoist in that he rejoices in the rare experience of being with others. Merleau-Ponty's humanism is neither a militant individualism nor a blind utopianism. He says it is a humanism "without illusions".

No transcendent being exists to shape human expectations; nevertheless a kind of faith is suggested. The hero's faith centers upon "that very movement which unites us with others, our present with our past, and by which we make everything have meaning" ² Faith is an attitude of confidence that this life has meaning; assuredly, we bear the responsibility for making that claim and for realizing it, but we claim specifically, that life lived with others is worthwhile. In other words, faith is confidence in the worth of human interchange. The sphere of meaning is not the individual; it is the interpersonal. This is the focus for a faith "stripped of its illusions"; the hero has no God,

¹Ibid., p. 186.

²Ibid., p. 187.

but he does have others.

A summation of this period is now in order. Any notion of vertical transcendence is rejected. Merleau-Ponty firmly opposes any notion that would take away from man the responsibility for his own destiny. "Vertical transcendence" has been replaced by "horizontal transcendence". The peculiar character of self-transcendence is that it is not individualistic; it is social and interpersonal. In short, man transcends himself by seeing the social world as the center of meaning.

Social concerns were not forgotten during Merleau-Ponty's final years of writing but they were complimented by a renewed interest in phenomenological method and aesthetics.¹ His thoughts about the concept of transcendence during that time also shifted. He no longer sought to spell out the differences between himself and theologians. The few times he speaks of religion it is with a sense of appreciation, accompanied by his long-standing distaste for institutional practices.

His concept of transcendence, in fact, comes closer

¹Wids., Rabil, Albert, op. cit. Chan. 7; Kwant, Perry, C. From Phenomenology to Metaphysics: an Inquiry into the Last Period of Merleau-Ponty's Philosophical Life, Pittsburgh, Duquesne Univ. Press, 1966; and Bannan, John F., The Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty, New York, Harcourt Brace and World, 1967.

to a traditional Christian idea than before. We must keep in mind all that was said in the first segment of this chapter as we review this issue.

Two brief sources show the shift on transcendence. The first is an exploration of the relationships that are possible between philosophy and Christianity.¹ Merleau-Ponty reviews several alternatives: philosophy, as Maritain and Gilson conceive it, can have a Christian status; that is, thought can so mingle with faith in the thinker that it becomes integrated. Merleau-Ponty observes that it need not become so; philosophy has no one essence that dictates such an integration; the integration is a matter of praxis. But this leaves the theoretical questions of a relationship unanswered. Malebranche says there is an identity between philosophy and Christianity; what the philosopher "sees" is really "natural revelation".

"Natural philosophy's concepts invade theology; religious concepts invade natural knowledge."² Malebranche, Merleau-Ponty says, is a modern Augustinian.³ He can be appreciated but not followed; "he foretells the invasion

¹Vide., Merleau-Ponty, op. cit., Signs, pp. 142 ff.

²Ibid., p. 144.

³Augustine is quoted: "true religion is true philosophy; and true philosophy in turn is true religion." Ibid., p. 145.

of our rational being by religious reversals, introducing into it the paradoxical thought of a madness which is wisdom, a scandal which is peace, a fight which is gain."¹ Reason and faith are manifestly not identical; neither are philosophy and Christianity.

Maurice Blondel is considered last. Briefly, he holds that philosophy "asks" while Christianity "answers". Philosophy introduces the need for its own reversal; it questions what it cannot answer; its "negative" is fulfilled by religion's "positive". Merleau-Ponty asks how philosophy, if it is an authentic field of discourse, can yield its conclusions to theology. Of course, it cannot.

At this point he suggests a surprising alternative of his own; at least it is surprising in one aspect. "Philosophy's relationship to Christianity cannot be simply the relationship of the positive to the negative, of questioning to affirmation. Philosophical questioning involves its own vital options, and in a sense it maintains itself within a religious affirmation."² He does not explain what the "religious affirmation" is which exists in philosophy, and he goes on to say that presently, the two disciplines "play the

¹Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 146. (underlining mine)

role of warring brothers".¹ Nevertheless, there is a surprising notion of intimacy which was not present before. Religion and philosophy cannot have a neat boundary between them because their concerns are common. The common ground cannot be explained by the question-answer pattern or the theory of identity, or just by praxis. But philosophy and Christianity do share a common task. They both seek, when practiced wisely, to relate men to the truth.

One qualification is added to this otherwise general relationship. Theology must take upon itself, without reserve, the "task of mediation". Again, he does not explain the terms, but his sentiment is fairly evident. As always, he looks askance at "externalized faith", the faith that is no faith at all but blind obedience to dogma. There is no "mediation" in this form; he thinks of it more as a form of propaganda. Mediation is that function in philosophy of exploring with openness the forms which emerge in human experience; we cannot be far afield in saying that this is the vocation he commends to the theologian.

Elsewhere he elaborates the term mediation; in it we catch the shift in his concept of transcendence.

¹Ibid.

No philosophy has ever consisted in choosing between transcendences--for example between that of God and that of a human future. They have all been concerned with mediating them (with understanding, for example, how God makes Himself man or how man makes himself God).¹

Mediation is the peculiar effort of confronting man with the false extremes of vertical and horizontal transcendence. Neither extreme serves to give the truth about existence.

In saying this, Merleau-Ponty tacitly admits a change in his thinking; whereas, vertical transcendence had been the mal genie of the middle period, he now adds to it, horizontal transcendence.² Both blind faith, external faith, and self-transcendence are singled out as obstacles to truth. In light of his massive studies on human perception, this is indeed, an important change.

In the same passage he speaks about Christianity. And this time he states positively what he believes its contribution is for understanding the false extremes of vertical and horizontal transcendence.

. . . Christianity is, among other things, the recognition of a mystery in the relations of God and man, which stems precisely from the fact that the Christian God wants nothing to do with a vertical relation of

¹Ibid., p. 71. He refers here to "vertical" and "horizontal" transcendence.

²Had Marxism proven itself to be captive to the false extreme of horizontal transcendence? There is much to indicate this is his view. Vide., Merleau-Ponty, N., Signs, pp. 247-308.

subordination There is a sort of impotence of God without us, and Christ attests that God would not be fully God without becoming full man.¹

When we see this in contrast to the preceding period a marked change is evident. He has not given up his critique of external faith which would promulgate a God who had decided how man should believe. But he claims now, that there is a deeper essence to Christianity. It makes an authentic contribution to man's understanding of himself; Christianity is not, as we first suspected, captive to the theologian's errors. It teaches with regard to transcendence that man "becomes, strangely, its privileged bearer."²

Merleau-Ponty's work is not a detailed description of the issue of transcendence, but it gives an indication where we might begin in stating it, and how we might understand its relation to Merleau-Ponty's ontology. Philosophy and theology, both center upon mediation. The task of mediation does bear upon the question of transcendence; it is the key for specifying the meaning of transcendence.

To learn from the above that horizontal and vertical transcendence are false extremes. Mediation indicates that institutionalized dogmas about God's independence are erroneous;

¹Merleau-Ponty, M., Signs, p. 71.

²Ibid.

it also indicates that man's self-transcendence cannot embody all that is meant by the term in question. The concept of mediation specifies that transcendence would involve a relationship between man and God, one that does justice to man's responsibility and to the affirmation of meaning beyond his own creative capacities.

The term that is faithful to these guidelines is the very one Merleau-Ponty had rejected during his middle period; it is the term "transcendence in immanence".¹

OBSERVATIONS

To demonstrate the appropriateness of the term, "transcendence in immanence", we need to return to the form of his ontology. Specifically, men, in some encounters, are exposed to the mystery of Being. They are opened to each other, and through the other's presence, are opened to a new awareness of self. The experience may be termed a disclosure of one's own true nature or being; the disclosure forces an awareness of belonging to others and to a world at large. Finally, the experience is described as an encounter with the mystery of the world's being. When this description of the phenomenon is coupled with his remarks on transcendence,

¹c.f., Rabil, Albert, op. cit. Chap. seven. This term is used by Rabil also to describe Merleau-Ponty's position.

perhaps we can understand what is meant when Merleau-Ponty says, "man becomes strangely, its (transcendence) privileged bearer."

A person comes to know himself through the intersubjective experience as one who opens and is opened by others to transcendence. The parties encounter each other and themselves as being instrumental in disclosing the meaning of their existence. The parties also, in Merleau-Ponty's conception, participate in disclosing the mystery of Being; people in genuine interaction are the conduites to the experience of transcendence.

This is a different conception than was indicated in the early concentration on self-transcendence; the emphasis on the intersubjective exchange has grown in importance. Man does not so much transcend himself; he becomes aware that he offers and is offered "what is not himself," i.e. a new sense of belonging to another and to the whole world. This much is a reasonable inference when the ontology is emphasized. Man is a mediator.

Man the mediator: such an emphasis is strongly reminiscent of the entire phenomenology. The truth is a truth about man and his world; there has been no appeal to "outside force", i.e. vertical transcendence. But now that truth is broader and more mature; the new element is that man mediates a truth about himself that cannot be confined

to himself. He is a participant in a relationship which discloses new meaning about himself, others, and the whole of worldly existence; as such he has become party to something greater than self-transcendence or self-awareness. The focus is upon intersubjectivity itself and the awareness is that the interhuman is an important opening to the meaning of his existence, and to the mystery of the world's being.

The emphasis is still upon worldly existence; the realization of being a participant or mediator does not betray its humanist context. But the application of the term "transcendence in immanence" is none the less appropriate. It is, because the doors have been thrown open so to speak; the idea of mediation has provided a broader context than ever before. Man bears the weight of mediation but what he learns in it is that he is part of the mystery of Being. We shall discuss this aspect directly.

A second way of seeing the appropriateness of the term "transcendence in immanence" is to refer again to his ontology.

The experience of Being cannot be confined to experiencing another. When the ontology is brought to the discussion, the term mediation indicates that what is mediated is not simply another's personality or being. Mediation involves the disclosure of mystery, silence and Being. Put

shortly, mediation opens the participants to what is not themselves. It opens them to the mystery of the world's being; it opens them to wonder and awe.

If we remember this lesson from the ontology we can then say that transcendence cannot entirely be identified as the act of interhuman exchange. It would be much more appropriate to say that interhuman exchange is a conduite to transcendence. Exchange cannot be bypassed, as man does know himself in it as mediator. But, as mediator he cannot confine the question of Being to himself or to the experience of another. The mystery of Being is the mystery of transcendence; the two terms are interchangeable.

When we say this we realize very little has been done to define the term Being, or transcendence. But reflection yields this: "Being" does not pertain solely to the "fact" that the world exists, or as Merleau-Ponty said, the visible world. This is a minimal deduction; because Being can be identified with transcendence it must not be confined to a notation about the existence of the phenomenal world. Rather, Being is a term which indicates the philosopher is driven to ask questions about the meaning of existence; it forces him to wonder again; it leads him to ask that the mystery be disclosed in full.

The term Being means this also; Being is experienced as mystery, even silence. Not only does mediation open men

to ask about the meaning of the world, it faces them with its apparent mystery. Merleau-Ponty had something quite intimate in mind when he described men in exchange as floating on the waves of Being. At least he meant that men truly sensed the mystery of their own existence and the world's. The wonder that summarizes the philosophical vocation is an experience of awe, not simply the questioning of an onlooker. Merleau-Ponty did not have the opportunity to detail this aspect of his philosophy but it is quite evident in The Visible and the Invisible that man confronts the mystery of transcendence or Being. The philosophical questioner brings one thing to that experience: he interrogates the experience reflectively; he seeks to know mystery.

We have suggested two ways of viewing Merleau-Ponty's concept of transcendence. Both drew heavily upon the form and content of his ontology, and are compatible components when put in summary fashion: man opens himself and others to the mystery of transcendence.

If this summary is looked at critically, one question seems most important: haven't we come a long way from Merleau-Ponty's early concentrations on perception? Has something been lost in the long transition from militant humanism to the intersubjective? Can we speak with philosophical credibility about the experience of Being?

We shall save this for our concluding chapters.

PART THREE

COMPARATIVE STUDIES

HUSSERL'S TRANSCENDENTAL PHENOMENOLOGY

ITS BEARING ON THE STUDY OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY

The method of Merleau-Ponty was outlined briefly in an earlier chapter; but it was impossible to trace the development of the phenomenology's content and the methodology at the same time. Phenomenological method tends to become a subject in its own right.

We asked immediately above if Merleau-Ponty's ontology had lost touch with the earlier emphasis upon perception; we were, indeed, asking a question which involves methodological discipline. It is an example which should illustrate why we are taking space to discuss the function of methodology in phenomenological analysis.

Put briefly, it is often difficult to tell why Merleau-Ponty is making a particular point. When he speaks of the pre-reflective as the unique resource for philosophical judgments, why does he do so? The answer can be found in the principles of phenomenological discipline. Or when he speaks of the intersubjective as the dominant theme of the lived world, why does he speak of it as a theme or "essence". The answer, again, is found in knowing the principles of phenomenological analysis. Merleau-Ponty often uses the terms common to methodology but he does not inform the reader how he has reached his conclusions or observations.

If this is a fault in his work, we are obligated all the more to know the tools of phenomenological method. A disciplined application of method may help us decide that particular truth claims are appropriate. Or, particular themes may seem more questionable when evaluated from a methodological viewpoint. The proper function of method is an issue when evaluating Merleau-Ponty's work; to understand its function in his phenomenology is our first objective.

The best access we have to Merleau-Ponty's peculiar use of method is through Husserl. There is no doubt he fashioned his method from a close reading of the father of phenomenology. As a young philosopher Merleau-Ponty spent a year at the archives in Louvain where Husserl's work was being collected and translated.¹ His interest in Husserl was rekindled in the early fifties and his peculiar interpretation of him was argued more forcibly than before. We shall concentrate on Merleau-Ponty's use of Husserl's discipline. His modification of Husserl is of special interest to us.

Secondly, it is also important that Husserl's description of intersubjectivity come into focus. We shall attend to his view of how we can speak about intersubjectivity with credibility; this is also a matter dictated by method.

¹The Husserl Archives are under the direction of Fr. Herman Leo VanBreda.

Because Husserl is primarily a methodologist, we shall ask, does his discipline promote credibility in descriptive analysis; or must ideas be altered to retain sensibility in analysis? Our first concern is: what is the proper function of method in describing the intersubjective phenomenon? Related to this is the issue of Husserl's position on intersubjectivity: is a position adopted because of a methodological dictum, or does the phenomenon of human interaction inform method? Should the lived-world, as Merleau-Ponty said, act as the prime resource for reflection? If so, on what basis? Can there be a way of relating the lived-world concept to methodological procedure? The objective is to gain insights into method and its relation to intersubjectivity.

In order to get at the issue of intersubjectivity found in Husserl, we undertake first, the more general task, the exposition of his method. Husserl's method is his philosophy in one sense; he never ceased refining and expounding it. His objectives are easily stated. Husserl was a self-conscious inheritor of the Cartesian tradition. Not only is his most thorough exposition of method entitled Cartesian Meditations; his statements of purpose sound like passages directly from the master.

Philosophy is the supremely personal affair of the one who philosophizes. It is the question of his sapientia universalis, the aspiration of his knowledge for the universal. In particular, the philosopher's quest is for truly scientific knowledge, knowledge for which he can assume--from the very beginning and in every sub-

sequent step--complete responsibility by using his own absolutely self-evident justifications.¹

The purpose of his reflections is properly found in the last three words, "absolutely self-evident justifications". Merleau-Ponty remarked appropriately, that Husserl saw philosophy as a "rigorous science" and would strive to make phenomenology its most confident expositor. His goal, as Descartes's, is to construct a complete structure upon self-evident, apodictic truth.

For Husserl, this meant that philosophy was to be "presuppositionless". This is the driving force behind his method. His conviction was that philosophy differed from the other sciences, notably psychology and logic, in that it entertained no assumptions about the world or man. On the contrary, philosophy could be the universal science in that it discovers a unitary and primal fact about thinking--its essential structure or essence.

To make this understandable we should translate a bit. Husserl did court a presupposition; it was that phenomenology rests upon an unquestionable truth; when he says philosophy must be "presuppositionless", this is what he means. His watchword is the oft repeated statement, "to the things

¹Husserl, Edmund, The Paris Lectures, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1963, p. 4. An expanded version of this quotation is given in; Husserl, Edmund, Cartesian Meditations, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1960, pp. 2-3.

themselves" (zu Sachen Selbst). When this dictum is followed, he contends, no presuppositions are needed or permitted. And yet, the watchword itself involves a presupposition about the goal and capability of phenomenological discipline. We shall elaborate the content of this particular presupposition later in the discussion.

Though Husserl's objectives are clear, his method is not always so. As with many other thinkers, his thought is a changing and developing phenomenon. We cannot afford the space necessary to elucidate the changes which occur between Logical Investigations (1900), and The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology of 1934-37. We can only indicate the changes germane to our topic; it should be assumed that others occurred and are not mentioned due to practical considerations. We shall stress those points of method which remained more or less constant in his development.

Moreover, Husserl's language is not always precise. Richard Schmitt has documented this quite well in his article "Transcendental Phenomenology: Muddle or Mystery?"¹ We shall not cite the confusions in terminology but shall explain his method in as simplified a form as possible. This is not

¹Vide., Schmitt, Richard, "Transcendental Phenomenology: Muddle or Mystery?" Journal of the British Society for Phenomenology, Vol. 2, Jan. 1971.

because we think the confusions are unimportant; they do incite objections. But our main argument with Husserl does not concern the preciseness of his language; it concerns his concept of method and its conclusions. Our criticism can be made effectively without dealing with the issue of confusing terminology.

Husserl's method is founded upon his execution of "the phenomenological reduction". It is the first, and perhaps, most essential of the three reductions which he employs.¹ He is much more explicit than Merleau-Ponty ever was about it.

What Merleau-Ponty called the "pre-reflective", Husserl calls "the natural standpoint". When we are engaged in hunting for a red pencil amidst the shuffle on our desk, we are completely occupied. We never stop to question the act of searching; we invariably go about the hunt believing that the pencil exists. In more general terms, the desk, our papers, books, etc. are "there" as well. "The" world, as a fact is world always there; occasionally it is 'other' than

¹We choose to title Husserl's reductions as follows: the phenomenological reduction, the eidetic reduction, and the transcendental reduction. Husserl sometimes gave these an inclusive title-- the "phenomenological reductions". We think separate naming aids clarification, for there are different forms of reflection which will become evident.

I supposed, . . ."¹ This natural attitude characterizes all experience; we invariably accept the existence of the world.

This attitude also applies to the sciences: the object-world is studied by the natural sciences; the experience-world is investigated by psychology.² Hence, all sciences, save philosophy are referred to by Husserl as "sciences of the natural standpoint."³ In their descriptions and formulations these sciences automatically rely upon the presupposition that the world is "there". It is this standpoint that Husserl proposes to alter.

Instead now of remaining at this standpoint, we propose to alter it radically. Our aim must be to convince ourselves of the possibility of this alteration on the grounds of principle.⁴

What this "alteration" involves must be stated carefully; it is easy to misunderstand. Remember that Husserl seeks an unquestionable foundation for philosophy; this means that if evidence for truth claims is in any way partial or incomplete, it must be put out of play. Perfection of

¹ Husserl, Edmund, Ideas, Gibson, W.R. Boyce, trans., London, Geo. Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1932, p. 96.

²"The science refers to the world, and before that, our ordinary life already makes reference to it. That the being of the world precedes everything else is so obvious that no one thinks to articulate it in a sentence." Husserl, E., The Paris Lectures, p. 6.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

evidence yields apodicticity for Husserl, and this is what he is after.

We are advised to reconsider our acceptance of the fact-world. Is it not true that we suffer from illusions about the existence of particular things? The red pencil may not be there; certainly, my failure to find it opens the door to doubt. If doubt is possible with regard to a particular sensible thing, the evidence for its existence cannot be apodictic. And if this is true of particulars it can also be true of existence in general.

It sounds as if Husserl is employing the familiar tool of Descartes--methodic doubt. But once we amplify what he means by "altering" the natural attitude, the uniqueness of his method becomes apparent. The natural standpoint is "suspended"; we "disconnect" ourselves from it. Husserl means that judgments about the object-world are going to be withheld. We say neither, "yes, there is my desk", nor "no, I doubt that it is there". This is different than Descartes' methodic doubt; Descartes' ploy was to exercise active disbelief about existence until it could become grounded in certainty. Somewhat differently, Husserl counsels the philosopher to refrain from any attitude which might involve a presupposition about existence.¹ The philosopher

¹In addition to this small, and I think academic difference, Husserl emphasizes that Descartes' motivation to

is the truly disinterested one; only in that disinterest will objectivity become attainable.

The natural attitude is "bracketed"; Husserl views our ready acceptance of the world as "an unacceptably naive belief. We can no longer accept the reality of the world as a fact to be taken for granted. It is a hypothesis that needs verification."¹ Bracketing serves to neutralize our acceptance. The phenomenological reduction is an epochè, an abstention. Once existence is placed in brackets, it may be considered coolly and "objectively"; at least this is Husserl's intention. This is the purpose of the phenomenological reduction.

We can save our main criticism until we have described the other reductions, but I think it is wise to bring up one thing here. Husserl's phenomenological reduction involves something quite different than it did for Merleau-Ponty. It would appear the two agreed that suspension of judgment about existence merely seeks to uproot the presuppositions we have about experience. But does it do so here, as with

doubt existence is well taken. But he also says that Descartes' acceptance of norms derived from science and theology were never dislodged. Descartes' active doubt becomes an empty gesture in that norms, e.g. causality and substance, are never questioned.

¹Husserl, E., The Paris Lectures, p. 6. Elsewhere he says, "in spite of the continual experiencedness of the world, a non-being of the world is conceivable." Husserl, E., Cartesian Meditations, p. 17.

Merleau-Ponty, in order to sharpen our knowledge about experience, or does it move in a different direction?

A different direction is implicitly given with Husserl's notion of the world as "hypothesis". That we could regard existence as a hypothesis, carries with it an idea which will blossom in the next reduction, that is, Husserl's concentration upon pure consciousness. We shall explain this below, but it is evident even at this early stage, that the phenomenological reduction is not employed to put man back in touch with raw experience. It is not used to increase our knowledge of experience, or to reopen our wonder at the world. Rather, it is used to strip away a partially certain world, to gain a "scientifically certain" one.

What we discover upon using the phenomenological reduction is a lesson of central importance to Husserl. With the suspension of judgment about everything out there, it becomes evident that I have exercised judgments as a captive of the natural attitude. In other words, the subject realizes that he has hitherto exercised "a thesis" when accepting existence. This can only be realized when one adopts the reduction as a methodological device. Once the device is employed the subjective character of the natural standpoint becomes clear.

Two paths are now open to the philosopher; he can

study the ways in which this thesis operates e.g. in perception or imagination, as did Merleau-Ponty and Sartre. Or he can, as Husserl did, concentrate on finding principles innate to the subject which seem to explain how man comes to affirm a world. The search for the pencil illustrates these alternatives. The existentially oriented philosopher seeks to describe the subject's search in terms of its experiential modes; he concentrates on the ways we search for the pencil. His focus inevitably involves dealing with the subject's acceptance of the world; it describes and interprets the various ways that acceptance is carried out. This is not so with Husserl's alternative. We are advised to extract the meaning of searching from the phenomenon of searching. Finding what is essential in the phenomenon of searching does not involve dealing with the subject's "world-thesis."¹ Beliefs, actions, and memories are phenomenal forms which must be bracketed. The only thing essential to "searching" is that the subject initiates it and conducts it. His conclusion: the subject constitutes phenomenal forms; hence, the study will concentrate on the way we constitute forms. It will focus our attention on

¹Acceptance of the world is conveniently labeled as the "world-thesis". Vide., Husserl, E., Ideas, pp. 96-100.

subjectivity.¹

This is the meaning Husserl assigns to the eidetic reduction. The structures of subjectivity become increasingly evident through the persistent use of eidetic reduction; the eidōs is invariably, the "constituting" activity of the subject. The meaning of experience, rests upon this invariable structure; it is certain that "I think I see a house" even though it is not certain that "I see a house" or that "a house is there". Experienced objects have been bracketed, even the certainty of perceptions has been suspended; what remains is the "I think". This is the specific conclusion of the eidetic reduction; it is the certainty, the apodicticity of the ego cogito.

How Husserl interprets the ego cogito, takes us to the final reduction; it represents his most radical break with Descartes. He did not rest his case with the Cartesian concept of the ego. Descartes believed that his discovery signaled the "end" of methodic doubt. For Husserl, it signaled the call to an even more radical discovery.

In relation to this we must under no circumstances take for granted that, with our apodictic and pure ego, we have salvaged a small corner of the world as the single indubitable fact about the world which can

¹We disagree, but it is wise to be patient with Husserl on this. We are indebted to Frank Tillman for the illustration. Vide., Solomon, Robert, C., ed. Phenomenology and Existentialism, p. 33-37.

be utilized by the philosophizing ego. It is not true that all remains to be done is to infer the rest of the world through correct deductive procedures according to the principles that are innate to the ego.¹

Husserl holds that the Cartesian formula, cogito ergo sum, (je pense, donc j'existe) utilizes the notion of causality to reconstruct the existential domain.² Descartes' ergo, Husserl would say, attempts to connect a transcendental cogito to an existential fact-world. If the reduction is faithfully employed, Descartes' connection must be denied. The suspension of existential claims rightly includes the "I"; as an existential entity it cannot be inferred if the reduction is to be complete. Descartes' had come to the edge of a great discovery but he failed to press the reduction to its rightful conclusion. Husserl employs the reduction with a rigorous singlemindedness; every existential judgment is being bracketed. How Husserl conceives the ego can now be specified. "By phenomenological epochè I reduce my natural human Ego and my psychic life--the realm of my psychological self-experience--to my transcendental-phenomenological self-experience."³

The ego, under the transcendental reduction, is not a concrete ego, a self; it is a "purified Ego", "a consciousness

¹Husserl, E., The Paris Lectures, p. 9.

²Ibid.; vide., Husserl, E. Cartesian Meditations, pp. 25-26.

³Husserl, E., Cartesian Meditations, p. 26.

from which all transcendencies have been removed. We quote his rather surprising conclusion.

This Ego, with his Ego-life, who necessarily remains for me, by virtue of such epochè, is not a piece of the world; and if he says, 'I exist, ego cogito', that no longer signifies, 'I, this man exist'. No longer am I the man who, in natural self-experience finds himself as a man and who, with the abstractive restriction to the pure contents of 'internal' or purely psychological self-experience, finds his own pure mens sive animus sive intellectus; nor am I the separately considered psyche itself.¹

The consciousness that Husserl has in mind is a "pure" or "flowing" Ego. His ego is not the experiencing, valuing, doing ego, that is a self in touch with the world; it is conceived of as an ego which remains after all these elements are extracted. What is left over, he calls the transcendental ego.

It is not easy to find illustrative material for Husserl's notion. How can we, in principle use any worldly example? The closest we can come is by using an idea which Husserl himself rejected, the idea of substance so often found in the scholastics.² Substance is properly contrasted with material existences; it is a "general thing", a conceptual expression or principle underlying the material world. Husserl's consciousness is a principle or rarified "entity" which is supposed to explain a given ego's experience of the

¹Ibid., p. 25.

²Ibid., p. 24.

world. (I would not want to push the parallel further.)

By pressing the reductions to their ultimate conclusion, Husserl believes he has uncovered the one self-evident truth. Only consciousness as a transcendental consciousness, a disembodied ego, can observe disinterestedly, the experienced world and the psychic or individual ego.¹

The objective of phenomenology has been reached; the value of the attainment is as follows. The philosopher can now speak with certainty. Our world is subjectively constituted, both things and ourselves. Given this observation the thinker can base all else on certainty. The method has yielded its intended function, apodictic truth.

We are tempted to say that Husserl has chosen an odd way of justifying the claim that our experience of the world is subjective. But this does not go far enough.

The transcendental spectator places himself above himself, watches himself, and sees himself as the previously world immersed ego. In other words he discovers that he, as a human being, exists within himself as a cogitatum, and through the corresponding cogitationes, he discovers the transcendental life and being which make up (the) totality of the world.²

The effect of this is that the world appears to man not as an object but as a thought-object, a thought enter-

z.

¹"Therefore, the phenomenological attitude, with its epochè, consists in that I reach the ultimate experiential and cognitive perspective thinkable. In it I become the disinterested spectator of my natural and worldly ego and its life." Husserl, E., Paris Lectures, p. 15.

²Husserl, E., The Paris Lectures, p. 16.

tained and possessed in the transcendental sphere. Man's thought of himself must also be included; the ego is a thought possessed by a transcendental ego. Husserl's idealism is unrestrained.¹ His method has taken him to the limits of radical reflection; it now deserves interpretive comment.

Husserl's first proposal, to alter the natural attitude, is a necessity if one attempts description in a reflective manner. Whether we speak of this as an "alteration of the natural attitude", or not, it is still necessary to recognize that the experienced world is being thrown into question with the advent of reflection. When the ordinary language philosopher asks "what do you mean . . . ?" he is challenging us to interpret experience, to stand apart from it for a duration to become critical of it and our language about it. When the existential-phenomenologist counsels the phenomenological reduction, he is also asking us to withdraw from the naïveté of raw experience, to look upon it critically. Cartesian methodic doubt is perhaps the classic example of this move. It would seem that the phenomenological reduction with its specific objective of altering the natural attitude, is hardly "news" to the

¹"Carried out with this systematic concreteness, phenomenology is co ipso 'transcendental idealism'". Husserl, E., Cartesian Meditations, p. 86.

practitioners of philosophy; it is more a call to the critical attitude, and is shared by all who undertake to do philosophy. Husserl cannot be thought of as an original thinker at the level of his first proposal, the phenomenological reduction.

A small indication of Husserl's direction was given in that first move, however; it did infer that the world's existence must be a "hypothesis" for the phenomenologist. The outcome was further suggested in his second move, the eidetic reduction. Few existential phenomenologists would deny Husserl's contention that forms of consciousness become clear with the eidetic reduction. Merleau-Ponty would agree with Husserl on this. But Merleau-Ponty held fast to the position that the eidōs which was discernible pertained to our experience of objects and others, and not to the singular idea that the human subject constitutes perceptions, actions and valuations. Husserl and Merleau-Ponty part ways at this point. Merleau-Ponty held that, although consciousness "belongs" to the subject, it is always a consciousness of other things and people. Husserl failed to make this observation; it is easy to see how subjective constitution became his preoccupation. It stood out as an independent truth. Its evidence was indubitable, whereas "consciousness of . . ." indicated truths which could not claim certainty as their norm.

When we come to the final and radical reduction, the

transcendental reduction, Husserl's choice to concentrate on human subjectivity becomes clear. It strikes me as a choice for two reasons. The first is Husserl's conception of phenomenology; he conceived of it as a transcendental discipline. He calls his method a "transcendental phenomenology". The guiding principle behind this is the conviction that phenomenology must rest on indubitable truth; its findings must be apodictic. He believed because of this, that study of subjective consciousness was the only meaningful topic for phenomenology.

The second reason is that Husserl had to contend with a major finding in his own work. With the eidetic reduction we could see clearly that man "intends" his experience of the world; it is his consciousness of . . . things that characterizes all experience. That this is an activity of consciousness seems clear to both the existential and the transcendental phenomenologist. But Husserl held that this activity of consciousness was completely "within" consciousness; it had no reference to the world "out there". A comment by one of Husserl's most distinguished interpreters should make our point clearer.

Husserl interprets this sense 'for' consciousness as a sense 'in' consciousness. At the same time he makes a metaphysical decision about the ultimate sense of reality and exceeds the methodological prudence by which consciousness is interrogated. The Cartesian Meditations draw all the consequences of such a decision with an exemplary philosophic courage. The

return to the ego leads to a monadism according to which the world is primordially the sense that my ego lays out.¹

The turn toward the subject did involve a choice for Husserl. We think it was a wrong one, one which excludes all sense of interaction with a world, but it should be appreciated in light of his first decision. If phenomenology is to be apodictic, then the reduction must be taken as Husserl outlined. There is a certain logical strength in his persistence. By refraining from all existential judgments the phenomenologist is limited to what is "left over". And it is quite clear that the human subject is and remains conscious, once the world is put in brackets. His consciousness is all that is left over.

But should this excuse us from seeing the mistake of his decision? Need phenomenology employ self-evidence or apodicticity as the only measure of truth? If it is not committed to his first choice then the eidetic reduction need not single out transcendentalism as the one truth about the nature of consciousness. In other words, if we are liberated from the norm of apodicticity, we are permitted in the second reduction to see both sides of consciousness rather than one only. Merleau-Ponty is a fine example of that insight.

¹Riccoeur, Paul, Husserl: An Analysis of His Philosophy, Evanston, Northwestern Univ. Press, 1967, p. 36.

Consciousness is consciousness "in" the subject in a real sense. Our perception of objects or others is always ours; it can not be identified with another's consciousness or intentional activity. But equally true and, perhaps, more important, consciousness always beholds others and interacts with the world; if it is not the same as another's, it is nevertheless, always related to others and things. The truth of this claim is as evident as Husserl's. "Consciousness of . . ." is as primordial a truth about consciousness as "consciousness in". The difficult but necessary course for the phenomenologist is to show this by using Husserl's own tool, the eidetic reduction.

The dual truth about consciousness cannot be shown effectively by merely stating it; it can, however, be uncovered in every effort to "reduce". Merleau-Ponty attempted to express this when he said the main truth about phenomenological reduction is that it can't be completed. He could have stated his case another way; namely, the eidetic reduction when faithfully employed, does show that there are two "sides" to consciousness, i.e. "consciousness in" and "consciousness of".¹ It is through the second reduction that

¹For example, the subject's claim to "be conscious" holds within it the very exercise of consciousness toward an "object"; i.e. it is a consciousness of the self. The claim to have a consciousness of anything (even if we make no judgment about its existence) is eo ipso, a claim demonstrating intentionality. In the same sense, consciousness of the world cannot be bracketed even when judgment about its existence is.

one comes to understand the nature of consciousness. The counter argument to Husserl's is best formulated by using his own method, particularly the first two reductions.

A certain "price" is paid when phenomenological method is conducted this way. The notion of "self-evidence" may pertain to the phenomenologist's demonstrations of two sides of consciousness, but with that, certainty ceases to be an important measure in phenomenological reflection. That is, once intentionality becomes justified as the staple for a concept of consciousness, we enter the sphere of describing phenomena. The element of contingency is introduced. We can be certain about being conscious of the world but we cannot be certain about the "objects" which consciousness intends. Merleau-Ponty made this abundantly clear in Phenomenology of Perception; the contingency of our "knowledge about" the world is a necessary counter-part to our certain involvement in it.

A concept of "evidence" must replace Husserl's notion of self-evidence in phenomenological description. Again, this is the product of an effectively executed eidetic reduction. Eidetic reduction gives us the certainty of access to a lived-world and others, but it does not provide certainty about that world, not if intentionality is duly recognized.

With regard to Husserl, it is impossible for the

existentially oriented phenomenologist to follow him in the third reduction to transcendentalism. We are restrained because we take the conclusions of the eidetic reduction seriously. Merleau-Ponty did this, but quite often he neglected to explain his procedure. If eidetic forms are to be considered credible the procedure should be explained; there is no merit in the philosopher hiding his method.

And the conclusions are important when the eidetic reduction "ends" with consciousness of the lived-world. If consciousness of the lived-world cannot be put out of play, there is no such thing as a "pure ego", and there is no such thing as a purely transcendental sphere of reflection. Oddly, we agree with Husserl's comment that "transcendental subjectivity is an intersubjectivity" but we interpret it quite differently; the intersubjective nature of consciousness dictates that we put quotation marks over the term transcendental in his quotation. Merleau-Ponty's work does serve to make us aware of that requirement.

Before we proceed to analyze Husserl's notion of intersubjectivity, two topics should be discussed briefly. It is important that we understand Husserl's peculiar use of the concept, intentionality. Once we catch the significance of that usage, his work on intersubjectivity becomes more understandable. Secondly, we need to comment further on Husserl's notion of the "split ego", his distinction

between the transcendental Ego and the concrete ego.

Repeatedly, Husserl stresses the importance of intentionality for carrying out his method. This occurs in Ideas, is maintained in Cartesian Meditations, and is heavily emphasized in the "Crisis Lectures". Merleau-Ponty claimed that Husserl's concept of intentionality led him to tacitly give up transcendentalism in the last years of his writing.¹ We disagree with this view; we hold that intentionality, whether nominally observed or strongly emphasized, always functioned as "the clue" to a transcendental phenomenology.² Admittedly, the experienced world incites Husserl's reflections--it did so for his forerunner, Descartes. Intentionality, for him, is a phenomenon which must be explained and made philosophically credible. But when Husserl undertakes an explanation of intentionality, he is driven by his objective to obtain a "first philosophy", and that is fulfilled only by clinging to the rule of apodicticity. Intentionality, because it cannot obtain the element of certainty, must be put aside; it can function

¹Vide., Merleau-Ponty, M., Primacy of Perception, pp. 88-89, 92-93.

²Vide., Cartesian Meditations, pp. 47-53. He uses the term "the clue" there to justify his studies of intentionality; his position as we have noted, is an extreme idealism. The following illustrations for this same concept come from the "crisis" period in order to show that he retained the goal of transcendentalism even when he turned to an extensive study of the lived-world.

as an opening to "transcendental reflection", but no more.

That Husserl remained faithful to this position is evident even in the last period of his writing. It is not always clear, however, that the earlier call to certainty was heeded unequivocally; Husserl struggled in the "Crisis Lectures" to bridge the gap between the problems posed by a concept of intentionality and his life-long quest for apodictic truth.

The life-world is the world that is constantly pre-given, valid constantly and in advance as existing, but not valid because of some purpose of investigation, according to some universal end. Every end presupposes it; even the universal end of knowing it in scientific truth presupposes it, and in advance; and in the course of (scientific) work it presupposes it ever anew, as a world existing in its own way (to be sure), but existing nevertheless.¹

This emphasis upon the life-world, new certainly when viewed in light of his Cartesian Meditations, would seem to exclude the transcendental reduction and a concept of transcendental consciousness. The a priori is the lived-world and it cannot be put out of play. But Husserl also believed that a conflict occurs when the above emphasis is not balanced by an understanding of the philosophical vocation. He did not give up transcendentalism for a philosophy of intentionality and the Lebenswelt, because of his acute awareness for the following form of questioning.

¹Husserl, E., The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology, Carr, D., trans., Evanston, Northwestern Univ. Press., 1970, p. 382.

But now the paradoxical question: can one not (turn) to) the life-world, the world of which we are all conscious in life as the world of us all, . . . can one not survey it universally in a changed attitude, and can one not seek to get to know it, as what it is, and how it is in its own motility and relativity, make it the subject matter of a universal science, but one which has by no means the goal of a universal theory in the sense in which this was sought by historical philosophy and the sciences?¹

The immediate question was not answered fully in this last period; the "Crisis Lectures" were never finished. But the alternative form of inquiry suggested above is that of transcendental subjectivity. The passage's "changed attitude" infers his acceptance of the transcendental reduction. The fact that he eschews the metaphysics of historical philosophy, does not preclude the introduction of the science of pure consciousness.² Husserl emphasizes that his alternative is different from previous philosophies, and is different also from other sciences. Transcendentalism is a necessity if one seeks to fulfill the philosophical vocation. That vocation is to explain how man comes to understand his own order of consciousness. Merleau-Ponty's appraisal failed to emphasize Husserl's persistent objective.

What is new in the crisis period and must be recognized in light of Merleau-Ponty's interpretation is that Husserl struggles to expose the necessity for transcendent-

¹Ibid., p. 383.

²Ibid., p. 389-395.

alism on a different plane than before. In his reacquaintance with intentionality Husserl realizes that "the philosopher, . . . is in the position of not being able to presuppose any pregiven philosophy, his own or another, since the possibility of a philosophy as such, as the sole philosophy, is to be his problem."¹

Intentionality poses difficult problems when the objective is developing a doctrine of transcendental subjectivity; Husserl recognized them. Although we think the obstacles along the way are insuperable, and do preclude any notion of a pure consciousness, for Husserl they did not. "Later it will be understood," he says, "that none of the expositions of this work are dispensable to it and its task of leading up to a transcendental phenomenology."² As Husserl saw it, the immediate task of the phenomenologist is to expose the structures of intentionality; but the ongoing task is to establish intentionality as "the clue" to transcendental subjectivity. Everything about intentionality must be read with that in mind. This consideration alters Merleau-Ponty's appraisal and shows that the two thinkers are farther apart than Merleau-Ponty assumed.

About the egology: Husserl devised the notions of

¹Ibid., p. 351 (underlining mine)

²Ibid.

a pure ego and a concrete ego to satisfy the demands of transcendental logic. The "split" of the egos was the last essential step in formulating a purified transcendentalism.¹ It also set the stage for dealing with the problem of others; that is, the transcendental ego and the empirical ego, being separate, pose the problem of a transcendental solipsism. His concept of the transcendental (purified) ego was reached only through a persistent exercise of the reduction which cut it off from every transcendence, even Descartes' "I". The transcendental ego is "alone"; Husserl's critical eye misses very little here. Solipsism is a real problem for the transcendental phenomenologist.² And the first step towards reconstructing the world phenomenologically, is to reconstruct the relation between the transcendental ego and its "I".

The way Husserl reconstructs this relation must be understood, for the phenomenological reconstruction of the relation between self and others is managed in the same way.

¹"If the Ego as naturally immersed in the world, experientially and otherwise, is called 'interested' in the world, then the phenomenologically altered--and so altered, continually maintained--attitude consists in a splitting of the Ego: in that the phenomenological Ego establishes himself as disinterested onlooker, above the naïvely interested Ego." Husserl, E., Cartesian Meditations p. 35.

²"When I, the meditating I, reduce myself to my absolute transcendental ego by phenomenological epochè do I not become Solus ipse; and do I not remain that, as long as I carry on a consistent self-explication under the name phenomenology?" Husserl, E., Cartesian Meditations p. 89.

Heretofore we have touched on only one side of this self-constitution, we have looked at only the flowing cogito. The ego grasps himself not only as a flowing life but also as I, who live this and that subjective process, who live through this and that cogito as the same I.¹

He is again making use of intentionality as the clue; but now it is the clue to a reconstruction of the "I". The effect of this move, made in the context of a "purified" ego, is that the thinker retains both the certainty of his transcendental ego and the "possibility" of being a self.² Why does he say that the concrete ego is a "possibility"? Because certainty pertains only to the completely reduced or transcendental ego. He has opened the door, he believes; the concrete "I" is a possibility because the association is made solely by the transcendental ego. The ["pure I" sees itself as being associated with a self; the foundation of certainty has thus far been retained.

There are two ways, he says, of making this association: active genesis, and passive genesis. Active genesis is the purified ego's intentional activity; it is "productively constitutive"; in this form "belong all the works of practical

¹Ibid., p. 66.

²Ibid., p. 71.

reason."¹ Active genesis can never, of itself, yield certainty. It is an inference. Intentionality belonged to the same genre; all it could account for was the possibility of there being an empirical ego. But the occurrence of active genesis must be explained and this cannot be done on its own terms. "It is owing to an essentially necessary genesis that I, the ego, can experience a physical thing and do so even at first glance."²

Husserl suggests that it is inescapable and certain that there are eidetic laws governing active genesis. Those laws are "passive genesis", or passive synthesis. The ego knows itself as a predicating ego; this is an immediate, self-evident truth, discovered passively--without inference.³ Hence, passive genesis is the form of the ego's activity. This is an essential eidos; the world has been bracketed along with the self, but the Ego persists in knowing itself as a constituting or predicating Ego. In terms of the immediate topic, it is the law of passive genesis that explains the association between the pure Ego

¹Ibid., p. 77. His allusion to Kant is suggestive. Kant held that the sphere of practical reason was outside the sphere of knowledge or theoretical reason. Of course, Husserl will agree; he is interested in demonstrating the certainty of the association.

²Ibid., p. 79.

³Ibid., p. 80.

and the concrete "I", the self.

The principle of passive genesis is supposed to be the certainty-bearing form of association between a disembodied ego and a self.¹

Does this mental association produce the certainty of an empirical ego? Not so by his own definitions. Once the transcendental reduction has been made, the philosopher cannot revert to purely existential judgments. That is, the reconstructed self is contained as a thought in the pure consciousness; it is a self which makes sense only as a constituted self, a self given credibility by the transcendental Ego. "Precisely thereby every sort of existent itself, real or ideal, becomes understandable as a 'product' of transcendental subjectivity, . . ."²

Husserl must be admired for following his adopted method so rigorously; he has not made the Cartesian leap from transcendental principle to existential judgment. The "I" is a thought product of the pure Ego. Husserl claims, of course, that this association amounts to an authentic remarriage, a philosophically important one. When passive

¹"The universal principle of passive genesis, for the constitution of all objectivities given completely prior to the products of activity, bears the title association." Ibid.

²Ibid., p. 85.

genesis is established as the element of certainty in association, it can provide the foundation for an understanding of others as well as self. The I conceived of as a self is the opening wedge to a "transcendental intersubjectivity".

But it seems to me that the remarriage between pure and concrete ego is a peculiar one at best. The concrete ego is not "empirical" at all, if we take Husserl's method seriously. The self is given sense only as a thought-object. Apart from its being thought, it has no certainty and cannot be used as the springboard for understanding the life-world. Again, Husserl is aware of this problem, even though he settles upon a solution we deem inadequate. His method dictates that the outside world is always a "thought for us" and never an "in itself for us". We hold that Husserl will never succeed in developing the criterion of certainty in his reconstruction of the life-world. The notion of association, whether sustained as an eidetic law or not, is still a second-order law when compared to the self-evidence which establishes the transcendental ego.

A great effort is made to counter our evaluation and we shall follow him closely. The law of association explained above is also used to obtain an understanding of others. Particularly when he deals with the question of how others also "constitute", the law of association is cast in its most radical form. Husserl is acutely aware

at that point that his phenomenology encounters an obstacle: if everything is self-constituted, how can there be constituting by others? For there to be any convincing doctrine of intersubjectivity, the reality of the other's consciousnesses must be dealt with. But he does not attempt to explain the issue at this point. This to me, is a most serious shortcoming; he delays any solution.

First, he addresses himself to another problem, the problem of constituting others as objects. Are other people to be construed as thought-objects? Consistent with the transcendental objective, the first requirement to be met is the reduction of the sphere of others, to "ownness".¹ This term again refers to the bracketing of all transcendence, leaving the residuum as a transcendental truth. Other subjects and all data, which emanate from others (e.g. sense data) are suspended. "We disregard all constitutional effects of intentionality relating immediately or mediately to other subjectivities."²

The result of this reduction is similar to the remarriage of the two egos. All sense data are alien to

¹Vide., Husserl, E., Cartesian Meditations, pp. 92 ff. "Ownness" is a new term in the text. It is synonymous with the transcendental reduction.

²Ibid., p. 93.

ownness, as are all judgments pertaining to the existence of others. But it cannot be denied that the Ego-self retains in its consciousness, "a unitarily coherent stratum of the phenomenon world."¹ With all existential claims bracketed, he observes it is still true that consciousness sees itself as constituting a world of others. And this stratum of consciousness accounts for the possibility of an actual experienced world. He stresses that the objectivity of this truth is not to be found in immediate claims for the existence of others and their consciousnesses. The claim is still circumscribed by "ownness"; or the transcendental reduction.

Husserl is making two moves; the first is the bracketing effort which propels us into the sphere of ownness. All "objectivities" become constituted objectivities--"I know I think the table is there". Every bracketed existential becomes the possession of one's own consciousness. But with this comes the other side of that truth; what is in the possession of one's own consciousness is a consciousness of the other, or the world. On the one hand, consciousness of . . . , (intentionality) has been brought home, so to speak, to its proper sphere, transcendentalism. But transcendentalism, he believes, has been taken out of solipsistic

¹Ibid., p. 96.

captivity.

The logic is somewhat convincing. If the stratum of pure consciousness includes a consciousness of others, we are not solus ipse. The transcendental sphere is not divorced from the sphere of the consciousness of others. It must be remembered, however, that the merging of these spheres is understood transcendently; the knowledge of others is not yet a shared knowledge; it is self-constituted. But the latter move to "reconstruct" is nevertheless important. Husserl's attempt to prove that the two spheres are inseparable has taken us one step closer to his transcendently disciplined existential claims.

The first claim is found in the following passage.

Where and so far as, the constituted unity is inseparable from the original constitution itself, with the inseparableness that characterizes an immediate concrete oneness, not only the constitutive perceiving but also the perceived existent belongs to my concrete very-ownness. . . . Within this 'original sphere' (the sphere of original self-explication) we find also a 'transcendent world'.¹

The obstacle we referred to as the less serious obstacle, Husserl believes is overcome. Residing in consciousness is the consciousness of an external world. Transcendencies (existent things) have been re-introduced in the meditations.

We need not emphasize that the world for Husserl,

¹Ibid., p. 104-105.

is a constituted world, a world held in one's own consciousness. For us this priority makes the world's existence a mere thought-form and not an authentically external phenomenon. But Husserl has struggled mightily to give consciousness of others a place in the transcendental sphere.

The obstacle of there being other constituting consciousnesses now looms as the final problem of transcendental phenomenology. His program to solve this problem is patiently and meticulously worked out; he knows he must explain how the other is truly "another consciousness for me". Failing, he would be caught in a world devoid of intersubjective exchange.

The argument which attempts to explain how we can be certain of another's consciousness is a critical one. The other is present as an "immanent transcendency".¹ Nothing in the sphere of our perception of him can be certain; at the same time we can know that our perception of him is based upon the certain principle of constitution; Husserl terms that principle appresentation or apperception. As before, the transcendentially reconstructed ego derives sense about perception from the principle of apperception; in order to perceive another, he must have thought the other to be like himself. The principle of apperception is given

¹Ibid., p. 110.

the title, "analogizing transfer".¹ Its pattern is as follows: "I am a constituting consciousness and a concrete 'I'; I perceive another as a constituting subject; as a matter of principle, that body could be a constituting subject or consciousness." This is how one makes the analogy between self and others.

Several elements in this argument are questionable and deserve comment. "Analogizing" involves a transfer. He admits this and it is a revealing fact. If analogizing is a transfer from thought about one's self to thought about another, certainty about it is not attainable. He admits that knowing other consciousnesses involves a "certain mediacy of intentionality"; appresentation is a "making 'copresent'".² The very principle he has chosen to point to the self-evidence of others lacks certainty. How then can he hold that knowing others is as self-evident as the truth of one's own constituting consciousness?

He attempts to cover this problem by saying that apperception is not a thinking act, and that "analogizing" is not an inferential process.³ To say this borders on nonsense. The other is thought; analogizing is a mental

¹Ibid., p. 111.

²Ibid., p. 109.

³Vide., Husserl, E., Cartesian Meditations, p. 111.

transfer. If the term "analogizing" is to retain any of its ordinary meaning, we cannot accept Husserl's redefinition. But this objection must be coupled with his admission concerning the mediacy of intentionality. If the analogizing transfer is a mark of intentionality, it is difficult to see how it can, at the same time, be non-inferential. We shall return to this below. Most certainly, there is some confusion in his notion of appresentation.

The second slip in his argument is more serious. It occurs when he says, "To the extent that there is a givenness beforehand, there is such a transfer."¹ He is giving away his case if this is taken seriously.

"Givenness" is illustrated by the child's play with scissors; he "sees scissors at first glance as scissors."² The analogizing process is immediate, he says; no inference is involved; the subjects' relation to things is supposed to serve as an illustration of the immediacy or self-evidence of the apperceptive process. But the illustration speaks of something else. It witnesses to the immediacy of perception and this throws the apperceptive process, as a necessary principle into question.

Why is apperception necessary? The real a priori

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

is "everyday experience"; he admits it is the necessary factor in providing opportunity for the analogizing transfer. If that is so, the lived-world has not been bracketed in any final sense. Merleau-Ponty would observe that this notion of "givenness" leads us first to affirm, and then to interrogate perception and not the constituting consciousness. If the world cannot be totally subsumed under a transcendentalism, the principle of apperception has failed as a phenomenological fondement.

Though the scissors illustration seems inappropriate in Husserl's argument for recognition of other consciousnesses, a better interpretation of it can be made. The process whereby we recognize others as being like ourselves, is not dependent solely upon ourselves. We recognize the other at first glance because he presents himself to us as "other". Perception is the givenness which makes analogies possible--if analogies are made at all.

Husserl has seriously crippled his argument; the life-world has not been completely bracketed. The world is there; a true in-itself for us. Husserl has confused his case considerably by alluding to the priority of a "givenness", and he has given the lived-world phenomenologist an opportunity to offer a better argument.

It goes without saying that Husserl does not share our view of his conclusions. The process of appresentation,

made by the subject, is elaborated by the term "pairing". "Pairing is a primal form of that passive synthesis which we designate as association."¹ The "universal" character of pairing is that two data are given simultaneously to consciousness, ourselves and the other; a unity in consciousness is founded because of this simultaneous appresentation. This is Husserl's description of "a pair", and what follows is his peculiar application of pairing to the way we know others as conscious subjects.

Again, intentionality is his clue.

As a suggestive clue to the requisite clarification, this proposition may suffice: the experienced animate organism of another continues to prove itself as actually an animate organism, solely in its changing but incessantly harmonious 'behavior'. Such harmonious behavior (as having a physical side that indicates something psychic appresentatively) must present itself fulfillingly in original experience, and do so throughout the continuous change in behavior from phase to phase.²

Behavior is perceived and perception is a mark of intentionality; this much is familiar to the method.

It is peculiar that pairing is specifically defined as the presentation of "harmonious" behavior. Obviously he has in mind that human behavior is distinct from animal behavior, and whereas, animal behavior cannot be "harmonious" with human behavior, harmonious behavior is possible

¹Ibid., p. 112.

²Ibid., p. 114.

between two humans. This seems to be Husserl's reason for the terminology, but he does not say so. We are left with the following possibility.

A being over there must prove himself through his behavioral patterns to be "harmonious" with us. Then and only then are we able to apperceive that he has a consciousness. But Husserl's requirement for harmonious behavior could also stand in the way of the apperceptive association.

A psychopath could easily mislead the lay observer, or even a psychiatrist; behavioral patterns are often divergent. A deaf-mute would certainly not be given credit for possessing a consciousness if our sole criterion for such a judgment were harmonious behavior. These circumstances are possible given Husserl's terms; the "proof" of behavior could just as well lead us to conclude that the other over there, indeed, has no consciousness.¹

Husserl is willing to accept such a possibility: "the organism becomes experienced as a pseudo-organism, precisely if there is something discordant about its behavior."² The god of normality is in full sway here. It is

¹The requirement of harmonious behavior might not be so bizarre if it were balanced with other requirements. But it is an odd stipulation when, for instance, the physical appearance of the other is disregarded. Husserl's case, to be convincing, would have to utilize the perceptual realm much more effectively than he has. This again shows that his interest in intentionality was marginal.

²Husserl, E., Cartesian Meditations, p. 114.

difficult to see how contemporary psychoanalysis could function if such a stipulation were followed seriously. Perhaps, this is not a serious criticism philosophically, except to say that Husserl's transcendentalism remains uninformed by other disciplines.

The more serious criticism is that Husserl has adopted a way of understanding the problem of others which satisfies neither his own demands for certainty nor the insights of existential phenomenology.

Concerning his own demands, he has constructed a process which leads progressively to the realm of the uncertain. Harmonious behavior is the necessary beginning; in other words a "presentation" must occur prior to any apperception. This, as we commented earlier, is a give-away to existential phenomenology. Perception yields apperception and apperception is an associational pairing; when finally we "arrive" at the principle of pairing, we are a long way from the desired goal of apodicticity. Association is a second-order criterion for knowing others; it makes little sense to call "association" a self-evident, transcendental truth. He fails, therefore, to reach his own objective of certainty. Solipsism may well be the unhappy finale for transcendental phenomenology.

The claims he makes naturally dissatisfy the phenomenologist of the lived-world. When he says that inten-

tionality is a clue to transcendental subjectivity, we should take him at his word. His efforts to reconstruct a transcendentially purified intersubjectivity succeed only in convincing us that it is a transcendentalism, and not a serious theory of intersubjectivity. Husserl's transcendental subjectivity is not an intersubjectivity as he intended; his very persistence in employing the transcendental reduction denied him his goal.

Nevertheless, one must give due respect to this methodologist. The rigour he exercises in pursuing his goal is staggering. One cannot reject his thinking by disagreeing selectively with either his presuppositions or with his "conclusions"; a critique of Husserl necessitates dissecting his entire method as patiently as he devised it.

The lesson is obvious. It is that phenomenological method is critical for understanding the problems of intersubjectivity. Husserl's failure was ironically, a failure of method; the transcendental reduction is not a requirement imposed by the eidetic reduction. We emphasized that it should not be employed in light of the findings of the second reduction.

The different course, one which Merleau-Ponty so well exemplifies, is to pursue the experiential modes in which we come to understand our world. And the phenomenon

exemplar is that of relating to others i.e. the social and interpersonal realm. Phenomenological method confronts us with these very problems. It does not "solve" the problem of others as Husserl thought, but it does take us to a place where, through consistent use of phenomenological and eidetic reductions, we are confronted with the mysteries of inter-human encounter. Merleau-Ponty cannot be faulted for overlooking this interpretation of the philosophical vocation. He followed it faithfully.

The only criticism we have of Merleau-Ponty in light of our study of Husserl, is that he did not stress the methodological steps which permitted him to retain an existential phenomenology. Two articles are devoted to establishing his case for an existential phenomenology.¹ The other analyses of the political and social conditions of his day were performances of his method; brilliant analyses they are, but they remain questionable for some as philosophical pieces because the phenomenological method in them is covert.

This is a characteristic of existential writing.

¹Vide., Merleau-Ponty, M., The Phenomenology of Perception, preface; also, Merleau-Ponty, M., Signs, pp. 159-181. These are the main efforts to establish his peculiar method. Method is argued throughout his work but the references are spasmodic; concentration on the issue is lacking.

Sartre used drama and political journalism to exercise his phenomenological interpretation of the lived-world. Gabriel Marcel is another example of one who brought phenomenological analysis to journal and theatre. This trait is a mixed blessing. On the one hand there is no good reason why phenomenological analysis should be confined to the dry academic, "philosophical piece". Phenomenology is supposed to reacquaint us with the lived-world and there are many ways to accomplish the task. But when method becomes covert, it is difficult to see the philosophical importance of the writing. There must be those who wed phenomenological method and existential analysis; they need not be separate endeavors. A conscious and constant exposure of method in the performance of phenomenological analysis, is a needed vocation; we shall pursue this task in our concluding chapters.

CHAPTER TWO: PART THREE

HEIDEGGER'S MITSEIN:

ITS BEARING ON THE ISSUE OF TRANSCENDENCE

We have seen how Husserl influenced Merleau-Ponty on the matter of method. A new form of analysis was born as the rejection of the transcendental reduction became a positive principle for Lebenswelt phenomenologists. The pioneer in this form of analysis is without doubt, Martin Heidegger. His book, Sein und Zeit is a kind of "first fruit" for existential phenomenology. He had his own view of the purpose of phenomenological interpretation, but his analysis of human and interhuman modalities is classic. If we were to cite the one philosopher who most influenced Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, it would be Heidegger.

This does not imply that Merleau-Ponty borrowed Heidegger's system; the differences between the two are fundamental, especially with regard to our topic. The most basic difference lies in their respective conceptions of the intersubjective sphere. With Heidegger, the contrasts occur not so much over method; Heidegger uses phenomenology similarly to Merleau-Ponty, to address experiential problems,

and to gain access to the ontological dimension of the lived-world. The more critical differences occur with Heidegger's phenomenological findings i.e. the essences he selects as being interpretative of the Lebenswelt. There could have been a much more frank statement of differences on both sides, but both thinkers were more concerned to develop their own doctrines than to engage in critical dialogue; it is left to the student interested in comparative studies to draw the lines of their "argument". That is my intention.

This interpretive effort should clarify two aspects of a phenomenology of intersubjectivity. First, it should emphasize the critical function a doctrine of intersubjectivity has for the whole of phenomenology. Heidegger's contribution is notable; intersubjectivity is the key which unlocks the full range of phenomenological discourse.¹ If the philosopher understands the modes of intersubjective existence he will see how the question of man's own being must be posed; who man is, is largely determined by his relationship to others. This is evident in Being and Time; phenomenology begins with the social phenomenon. Whether we agree or not with his analysis of the social realm, its pivotal function must be recognized.

¹This appraisal implies that Heidegger was quicker to see the importance of the intersubjective sphere than Merleau-Ponty. It does not imply that his doctrine of intersubjectivity is superior. Quite the opposite is true.

A second contribution Heidegger makes, concerns the relationship of his phenomenology of intersubjectivity to ontology. Heidegger believed, as did Merleau-Ponty, that phenomenology was the access to ontology. We should state the relation more strongly, however. For Heidegger, phenomenology determines the question of Being. When we add that Heidegger's phenomenology is shaped by his characterization of intersubjectivity, its critical function for ontology becomes clearer. Intersubjectivity is the key to his understanding of ontology. Not many interpreters of Heidegger take this position, but we believe that a patient examination of Mitsein will show that intersubjectivity shapes the ontology he seeks to write. Heidegger eventually teaches that solitary thought opens Being to man, and man to Being. This notion, coming as late in Heidegger's career as it does, is nevertheless, presaged by his peculiar conception of the intersubjective sphere. The direction his ontology takes is the natural outgrowth of his early doctrine of intersubjectivity.

One final introductory remark: Heidegger is noted for having created a new philosophical language. His word studies are fascinating and we intend to make use of some; but it is impossible in this relatively short space to do justice to his complicated terminology. We propose, therefore, to use familiar ordinary language when it is at all

possible.

A description of Heidegger's conception of phenomenological method beautifully illustrates his peculiar way of doing philosophy; description of it will also introduce us to his concept of Mitsein, the intersubjective sphere.

The question which Heidegger intends to treat is the question of the "meaning of Being". "With the question of the meaning of Being, our investigation comes up against the fundamental question of philosophy. This is one that must be dealt with phenomenologically."¹

Heidegger claims to go beyond the traditional definition of phenomenology as a "science of phenomena", i.e. a science which he believes employs special devices or techniques.² Heidegger's way of delineating phenomenological method is to rediscover the terms' original meaning. No "devices" need then be employed; the philosopher, when given an understanding of the word "phenomenology", will automatically know the appropriate method. Here, his word study is the one means of gaining his methodological perspective.

The term phenomenology has two components, phenomenon and logos. The Greek noun $\phi\alpha\iota\upsilon\omicron\mu\epsilon\tau\omicron\nu\omicron\nu$ is a form of the

¹Heidegger, Martin, Being and Time, Macquarrie, J., and Robinson, E., trans., London, S.C.M. Press, 1962, pp. 49-50.

²Ibid.

verb φαίνεσθαι which means "to show itself".¹ The stem of that verb, φα, means "bright", and is synonymous with "visible" or "manifest". When we reconstruct the noun with this in mind, phenomenon means "that which shows itself, the manifest".² Heidegger argues that this redefinition supplants the current dictionary definition; there, "phenomenon" is the appearance or mere appearance of entities. The dictionary definition is encrusted with wrong-headed philosophical traditions that Heidegger believes must be overcome.

He argues that the "positive and primordial signification" is philosophically more significant than the traditional notions of semblance and appearance. To say that a phenomenon is a "mere appearance" means that we think it is not a manifestation. To be a manifestation, it must be more than a semblance of something; the notion of semblance divorces "the thing" from its self-manifestation. Heidegger's reconstruction of the term indicates that a phenomenon is a presentation; specifically, "the thing" is accessible to human beholding. If distortions or illusions occur, they are not to be attributed to the thing but to the beholder. The phenomenological dictum, "to the things themselves"

¹Ibid., p. 51.

²Ibid.

(Husserl's zu Sachen Selbst) is possible now because phenomena announce themselves.

The term $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ is dealt with similarly; its meaning has been distorted philosophically to connote reason or judgment, but its original signification is the more general idea of "discourse". Taken as discourse, $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ is associated with $\delta\eta\lambda\omicron\upsilon\nu$. Its meaning can then be specified: "to make manifest what one is 'talking about' in one's discourse."¹ In other words, discourse lets the objects being discussed become evident to the listener; discourse points out "the thing". Discourse is a vehicle which uncovers what is beheld by the thinker; one might say that $\lambda\acute{o}\gamma\omicron\varsigma$ is fundamentally a form of expression.²

The purpose of the redefinition is obvious: discourse recovers the phenomenon. It is a vehicle for pointing it out, thereby making it communicable. Heidegger emphasizes that authentic discourse lets the phenomenon "be" what it is, and this is the essence of phenomenology.

When we envisage what we have set forth in our interpretation of 'phenomenon' and 'logos', we are struck by an inner relationship between the things meant by these terms. The expression 'phenomenology' may be formulated in Greek as $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu \tau\alpha \phi\alpha\iota\nu\omicron\mu\epsilon\nu\alpha$ where $\lambda\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\epsilon\iota\nu$ means $\alpha\pi\omicron\phi\alpha\iota\nu\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota$. Thus phenomenology

¹Ibid., p. 56.

²Theoretically this redefinition could pertain to expressive acts, e.g. Merleau-Ponty's handshake, as well as to verbal expression, but he does not say so.

means ἀποφαίνεσθαι τὰ φαινόμενα to let that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself. This is the formal meaning of that branch of research which calls itself phenomenology.¹

Once a formal redefinition of phenomenology is established, its real task can be elucidated. So far, he has told us how phenomenology must work; he proceeds to tell us of the specific problems encountered when the new definition is accepted. The main problem it seems, is that phenomena do not always show themselves. Particularly, when we ask what a phenomenon really "is", we are often puzzled; what it "is" or means, is not always evident. Given Heidegger's objective to interrogate the meaning of Being, this is a serious obstacle. The meaning or Being of entities remains hidden to the questioner, at least in the initial stage of interrogation. He must first rediscover the Being of entities in order to pose the more general question about the meaning of Being.²

¹Ibid., p. 58. Introduction of the verb, λέγειν serves to get at the etymological rootage of λόγος. As the translators point out, the purpose of citing this rootage is twofold. Discourse is a vehicle; as such it addresses the phenomenon. Discourse is always about something. A second sense is also discerned; it is the phenomenon which incites expression, i.e. discourse arises because of, and is dependent upon the phenomenon. Other nuances are also cited but do not seem germane to Heidegger's purpose.

²We cannot enter into a long discussion of the difference between his endeavor to interpret the Being of entities and the meaning of Being per se. Suffice it to say that Being and Time is devoted to the task of rediscovering the Being of entities, and this is the essential

The peculiar entity which brings home this problem for phenomenological-ontological discourse is man. One reason is, briefly, that man has been thought of as a dualistic entity; the traditional Cartesian formula, the body-soul typology, leaves the real issue of man's being unanswered. That man is a body with a soul, is an unsatisfying answer to the question "who is man".¹

Heidegger suggests a different way of getting at the question of the being of man. It is introduced by a unique and imaginative redefinition of the term, "man". "Being-there", or "there-being", (Dasein), is Heidegger's label for man. The term does not seek to deny that man is an entity, but it reminds us that man is an entity in the world. Man, the object, is always "there", in the world.

More important, the new term specifies that man's essential nature is found by coming to understand the ways he lives in the world; behavior and social-life will be the essential resources for an adequate answer to the "who ques-

introduction to asking about the meaning of Being. "Because phenomena, as understood phenomenologically, are never anything but what goes to make up Being, while Being is in every case the Being of some entity, we must first bring forward the entities themselves if it is our aim that Being should be laid bare; and we must do this in the right way." Heidegger, M., Being and Time, p. 61.

¹Ibid., p. 72. This page reference contains a brief but effective criticism of Descartes.

tion".¹ Ironically, these are the same resources which non-philosophical man actually uses in estimating his own worth; he looks to his behavior and his social relationships to provide an answer to the question of the meaning of his existence. And this is where his problems begin. By accepting the answers which society provides concerning behavior and social life, the thinker is misguided rather than enlightened. This is why Heidegger says the phenomena remain "hidden"; the existing interpretations of human interaction withhold the truth from men.

To uncover an authentic answer to the meaning of man's existence Heidegger must undertake a phenomenological reinterpretation of his being-there. If experiential modes of behavior and sociality are essential to an answer and can be uncovered for what they really are, then an answer can be given to the "who question". In sum, a phenomenological interpretation of man's actual existence is the only way to uncover the issue of "his being".²

¹"If a being the kind of Dasein is said to be 'in' something, the relationship is not primarily 'spatial' but means 'to dwell' to 'sojourn' to 'stay' in the sense of the Latin Habitare, e.g. a match is in a box in the plain spatial sense, but if a man is in his home or in a seaside resort, obviously this relationship is not primarily spatial." Heidegger, M., Existence and Being. Intro. by Werner Brock, p. 42.

²The boldness of this position cannot be overlooked. Heidegger does not intend to make use of other disciplines in shaping his reinterpretation. In all of Being and Time there is no mention that sociology and psychology provide

Comment at this point is not premature, for Heidegger has set his program in motion with these redefinitions.

Though his language is obtuse, it must be said that Heidegger has rendered an effective argument for constructing an existential phenomenology. The effectiveness is evident, not so much in the way he deals with the Cartesian heritage or Husserl's reductions, but in the reasonableness of his redefinition.

For example, it is worth asking whether "phenomenology" is the science of "what appears" or what "presents itself"; the difference is one of emphasis but it may be an important difference. A conclusive answer may not be obtainable but Heidegger has done well to say that we could not study what appears unless there were an element of presentation. Heidegger is unique in his suggestion that behavioral patterns open up the question of meaning rather than explain it. Interpretation of behavior is necessary if phenomenology is to get beyond a superficial view of man. In this respect, Merleau-Ponty did not make his case for existential phenomenology quite so clearly. He used Heidegger's notion of presentation boldly but he did not take time to explain it

useful data concerning social existence. Such disregard could prove his undoing. Unlike Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger is his own sociologist and psychologist; it would be interesting to see how his reinterpretation is evaluated in those disciplines. Space prohibits such an endeavor here.

with reference to his phenomenological method. For Heidegger interpretation of behavioral patterns is an essential of method.

But Heidegger's appeal for an existential hermeneutic presents as many problems as it solves. Once we are introduced to the necessity of interpreting personal and social modes of interaction, we are opened to an unbelievable variety of "data". We are especially aware of this from our reading of Merleau-Ponty. Phenomenology, for him, risked openness to such experiential variety in the confidence that lines of interpretation were available that would do justice to the variety of lived-situations. His phenomenology could therefore be judged on the way it interpreted diverse and intricate material. That lesson should also apply to Heidegger. Philosophical themes are being sought in the intricacies of human, social interaction; we are asked to look at the "being-there" of man which is by definition, an inclusive sphere. We shall remain watchful to see if Heidegger's themes are attentive to the broad ranges of intersubjective experience; it is always possible that he will "select his material", i.e. fashion an interpretative theme which slights the full range of human existence.

Especially, we intend to see how phenomenology's "hidden essences" shape ontology; it is certain that there will be some influence. If man's being-there gives access

to the question of his Being and to the issue of Being in general, phenomenology plays the central role in shaping ontology. More particularly, if the forms of social interaction pose the issue of Being for man, a phenomenological interpretation of those forms is critical in shaping the ontological "answer". How he characterizes the forms of interaction is, therefore, not only an issue of phenomenological importance; it becomes in his own program outline, an issue for ontology. The conception of Being which he spent a lifetime interpreting, is prefigured in his interpretations of Mitsein.

We begin our analysis of Mitsein by recognizing its level of importance in the design.

By directing our researches toward the phenomenon which is to provide us with an answer to the question of the 'who', we shall be led to certain structures of Dasein which are equiprimordial with Being-in-the-world: Being-with and Dasein-with (Mitsein and Mitdasein). In this kind of Being is grounded the mode of everyday Being-one's-Self.¹

Mitsein is going to provide the clue to man's being, and we note, it is the only clue he will cite.

Being with others is distinguished from man's encounter with things. Phenomenologically speaking, things

¹Heidegger, M., Being and Time, p. 149. The quoted passage does not fully clarify Heidegger's intention. Mitsein is identified, for the most part, with inauthentic existence.

are encountered as object-entities; they are there "before us"--Vorhanden. And they are encountered as utensils "ready to use", Zuhanden. Heidegger emphasizes the latter characteristic. For man, objects are there primarily to be used in work or leisure. As utensils, objects indicate a social world; the tool indicates a maker and user, the pan a cook, and so on. Man easily distinguishes the tool and its use from the user, objects are objects whether just "there", or ready to be used. They are not the same as the people who use them. The main factor in man's ability to set apart objects so easily is the fact that objects evince no "concern"; other people do. That man is concerned is evident from the tools he makes; tools are made to facilitate human objectives. Man, is, of all beings, concerned, and this is especially evident in direct social interaction--where we come into contact with others.¹

We find it hard to distinguish ourselves from others because, no matter what particular concerns we or they may have, we are like them in that we live in the world "concernfully".

Heidegger pinpoints this element as the thread which binds the interhuman or social sphere. His word game is a bit bizarre: "with" and "there too" are not simply descriptive terms for location; e.g. we are not only with others in a given place. We are here, as others are "there", or

¹In general, this description of object perception was used by Merleau-Ponty. We cited it as his introduction to a phenomenology of intersubjectivity. Heidegger's thought was, evidently, an influence on Merleau-Ponty in this instance.

"yonder", because we are with others in concern. "Concern", therefore, is a most important theme phenomenologically, and gives proper perspective to the facts of location or particular tasks.¹ If the question is the autonomy of man's existence, it, too, is qualified by his being with others. Man can be described as being alone or by himself only because he is describable as one who lives primarily with others.² In other words, man's being-with constitutes the primary form of his existence; "being-with" is the essential mode of being-there. Understanding the social in terms of concern is our one clue to understanding man's everyday existence.³

Once "concernfulness" is established as the essence of Being-with in man's everyday existence, it is left for us to see the particular expressions of concern. Fürsorge or solicitude, is the umbrella term; the particular expressions of it form the typologies Heidegger wants to emphasize, so it is advisable to define Fürsorge.

Fürsorge is associated with the care of a social agency

¹Ibid., pp. 154-155.

²Ibid., pp. 155-157.

³The term concern will have other significant applications. What we have said here is but an introduction to its importance as an existential form; it will be used later to uncover the form of "care" which is essential in his phenomenology.

for its constituents; the soup kitchen or the hospital illustrate his idea. The notion conveys the existence of a social arrangement in which personal intimacy or commitment are misplaced sentiments. Man's everyday existence is characterized as Being-with others in a convenient arrangement to get things done or to solve problems. Everyday solicitude is a form of social indifference.

Heidegger then speaks of "positive" modes of solicitude; why he terms them "positive", I'm not sure. The first form is einspringen, or leap-in; this mode of solicitude is where one takes care of the other's concerns. One attends to the matter so that the other person will not have to bother with it. Heidegger says that this can lead to domination or dependence; we either take control of the other or accept his control over us. This should remind us of the way we deal with utensils; the other is an object which we use. This mode, again, "is to a large extent determinative for Being with one another . . ." ¹ Treating others as objects is normative in everyday existence. Indifference and manipulation as we shall see, account for the major themes of everyday existence.

The second "positive" mode of solicitude is the "leap-

¹Ibid., p. 158. Heidegger's notion of einspringen comes very close to Buber's I-It typology, but Heidegger does not pursue this mode even as much as Buber did his.

ahead" (vorausspringen). Heidegger says that it pertains to "authentic care"; it is intended as a category which indicates an answer to the who question. The mode is obviously of central importance. The surprising thing is that his discussion of it covers little more than a short paragraph. He gives one brief explanation; a common cause or project is possible only because one has been "taken hold of".¹ He does not say what that state of being amounts to, but in light of what follows, he is evidently thinking of a theme he calls "resolve". Later, we shall detail that concept, but the passage is misleading if Heidegger's concept of resolve goes unmentioned. "Anxious resolve" is Heidegger's title for authentic being-in-the-world; if one has secured that mode as his own, then it is possible to engage in this positive form of solicitude. Resolve is the prerequisite for authentic Being-with.

Vorausspringen is Heidegger's single category for authentic personal and social relations. Its importance becomes more evident when Heidegger cites its practical effects, i.e. what the mode means for the one's who live by it. "It helps the Other to become transparent to himself in his care and to become free for it."²

¹Heidegger, M., Being and Time., p. 158.

²Ibid. The resemblance between this concept and Sartre's concept of freedom is striking.

The authentically "resolved" person shows the other his potential. The Other beholding this exemplar of authenticity can then see his own way towards self-fulfillment or resolve. "They thus become authentically bound together."¹ Resolve provides for the conditions of authentic interpersonal and social relationships, and the main effect is the individual's own freedom. This is the clue to Heidegger's view of authentic Mitsein; individual freedom is its prerequisite and its fulfillment.

Other, more directly intersubjective themes such as trust, compassion, or love are not mentioned. We shall see why this is so in the following discussion but it bears mentioning now, in that this is the one place he discusses "authentic" intersubjective relationships.

For the thoughtful reader of Heidegger a question emerges; why, when he has specified that Mitsein is the key which unlocks the issue of man's being, is his discussion so brief?² Heidegger gives us no reason in the present passage and yet we believe there is a reason. The remainder of the phenomenology provides the explanation.

¹Ibid.

²One of Heidegger's most thoughtful interpreter's, remarks that Heidegger's description of authentic Mitsein is "truncated". Vide., Richardson, Wm. J., Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought, The Hague, Martinus Nijhoff, 1963, The Introduction.

The study thus far, has characterized the ways man may interact with others; the negative and positive, or inauthentic and authentic modes, each have a place. The next task of phenomenological investigation is to see which forms predominate in actual everyday existence. Heidegger believes it is essential to focus upon actual, social forms of behavior in order to make phenomenological discourse credible. We are about to hear a portrayal of everyday Mitsein; it is supposed to open up the issue first posed-- the question of who man truly is. The relevant phenomenon is what men actually do in human interaction, for, "they are what they do, (sie sind das, was sie betreiben)."¹

Ordinary man sees either that he lags behind others in their social concerns, or that he has power to influence others. No matter which form this self-appraisal assumes, a certain distance comes between self and others.

The state of distentiaity expresses the fact that others are remote from us in our own quest for meaning. The effect Heidegger says, is that others are not known and are viewed as a neuter, "they". The distance, however, is overcome in one sense; a certain kind of communication takes

¹Heidegger, M., Being and Time, p. 158. Again we emphasize that Heidegger will not employ sociological psychological insights or data. Heidegger is singularly unwilling to relate his interpretation to other disciplines. His interpretation of human behavior is very much his own.

place.

Social values dominate man; everyday man, for Heidegger, is entirely other-directed. Characteristic of the crowd, is "averageness". Its influence upon individuals is to level personal values. The "they" tells man what he should do and how; "every kind of priority gets noiselessly suppressed".¹ The label for society's averageness and manipulation is "publicness"; everyday man is a product of public values.

Not only is the conduct of individuals affected by the crowd; man's self-image is also stamped with the norms and values of the herd's morality. Because man is captive to the crowd, Heidegger says that he is a not-self; a "they-self".² He is both estranged from others, and is not his own man; he is the pawn of social pressures. In the context of the ontological issue "who is man", a preliminary answer is possible. Everyday Dasein is a "nobody".³

As a critique of social morality and conformity, Heidegger's phenomenological hermeneutic is, indeed, effective. The pathos of Nietzsche's commentary is not present, but Heidegger's observations are coolly and concisely enumerated; a sense of the demonic nature of herd morality and its effects

¹Ibid., p. 165.

²Ibid., p. 167., "The Self of every dasein is the They-self". Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 166.

upon individual life is progressively heightened. We can see clearly the alienated man who is sick himself because of his mindless conformity. Heidegger's picture of "social-ibility" is stark.

But Heidegger does not merely intend to criticize social mores and personal conformity; his critique is supposed to give access to the ontological issue. When he says that everyday man is a nobody, he makes an all-inclusive statement; man's life in the everyday form specifies who he is. His state of being is to be a nobody, and everyday Mitsein is the specific factor which makes him a nobody.

With this Interpretation of Being-with and Being-one's Self in the 'they', the question of the 'who' of the everydayness of Being-with-one-another is answered. These considerations have at the same time brought us a concrete understanding of the basic constitution of Dasein: Being-in-the-world, in its everydayness and its averageness, has become visible.¹

Heidegger's conclusion is familiar: everydayness in society has kept man from the real issue of his own Being. Mitsein is a prime example of man's condition and his problem. Phenomenological interrogation has but uncovered it; in this sense, Heidegger's commentary is a contribution to existential analysis.

But it is seldom recognized that Heidegger's interpretation of Mitsein specifies the ontological issue. As such, one should ask if Heidegger's phenomenology

¹Ibid., p. 168.

is as representative or interpretative of the full range of experience as it claims to be. If we were to restrict the idea of Mitsein to social influence on the part of the "crowd", and to borrowed values on the part of the individual, a much more convincing case could be made for its pervasiveness. But Heidegger is not talking about borrowed values only, or propoganda; he is talking about all forms of human interaction. All forms of social contact rob man of his identity.

If human experience is interpreted as being completely other directed, has not Heidegger introduced a bias that distorts rather than uncovers man's true state of being? Has he not unwisely telescoped the focus of phenomenological discipline? Is this form of everydayness the only aspect of Mitsein to be taken seriously?

Heidegger's program, I suggest, is a systematic narrowing of the interhuman sphere, fashioned to meet his individualistic conception of man's true being. He has structured his phenomenology to introduce a peculiar ontology. Though this is contrary to his stated definition of the discipline, i.e. phenomenology "lets be what shows itself"; there is no argument, if his phenomenology is truly representative. This is where we take exception. Mitsein is not given interpretative latitude; it is one-sided. If a phenomenology claims to be existential in character it

cannot afford to neglect whole segments of human exchange without explaining why they must be thought of as inauthentic. "Common causes" were not distinguished from the everyday mode; personal relationships such as parent-child, husband-wife, and lover to lover were totally disregarded. These sorts of relationships may have a social as well as a personal-private domain, and it seems a bit farfetched to assume they are completely other-directed forms. In any case, Heidegger's error is that he failed to deal with them in his discussion of everyday man. His rush to explicate the concepts of care and resolve has led him to bypass experiential modes which may have modified his phenomenology. His fault is that of narrow singlemindedness, and his phenomenology loses credibility because of it.

The case we are making becomes stronger as we follow Heidegger in his phenomenological explication of "Being-in". This theme is Heidegger's way of resolving the issue of man's being, i.e. of describing how man comes to confront his everyday state of being, and reshape it into an authentic of being-in-the-world.¹

Heidegger uses three sub-themes which serve to introduce

¹The term "reshape" is chosen with Heidegger's concept in mind. "Authentic Being-one's-Self does not rest upon an exceptional condition of the subject, a condition that has been detached from the 'they'; it is rather an existential modification of the 'they'--of the 'they' as an essential existentiale." Heidegger, M., Being and Time, p. 168.

the issue. The first theme, man's state of mind, is discovered through the phenomenon of fear. Fear is the specific form that reveals a general condition or state of mind. So the phenomenon does have ontological significance; the mood of fear illustrates how man is "there" and this in turn opens us to the issue of his "being".¹

State of mind is made more specific by observing that man is aware of his "thereness"; he cannot say why he is "there", or where he is going. He is in the world; that much is a certain fact. This "fact" has as its theme, "thrownness"; man resides in the world as an entity, but more important, he is thrown into relationships with others. "Thrownness" connotes man's immersion in society and his loss of self-identity. Fear illustrates this condition of mind in that our thrownness cannot be explained-away. Hence, being-there is threatening to us.

The second theme builds upon the first; the condition of thrownness also indicates that one understands himself in terms of his potential. In the negative sense, thrownness incites the understanding that one has passed up his potential by surrendering himself to social manipulation. Man sees that he has not confronted the issue of

¹Ibid., p. 173, and pp. 179-181. The analyses of fear are fascinating; we do not detail them because their main purpose is to show the connection between a phenomenal mood and the ontological issue.

an authentic, inner-directed life.

Heidegger's third theme is "Interpretation"; it serves to drive home, specifically, how man is exposed to this new self-understanding. It is the extension of his work on everyday Mitsein, and is Heidegger's way of "demonstrating" the above themes. Social discourse is the primary vehicle which incites an individual's self-interpretation, and discourse in the everyday sense is idle-talk. The state of mind of the "they" is publicness; idle talk and gossip predominate. Both are "groundless"; that is, they are superficial, and the effect is that the "thereness" of individuals is bypassed. There is a kind of restlessness in social discourse, so that an individual comes to see himself as "floating" and "uprooted".¹ Idle talk breeds this sense of floating; personal values are disregarded so that the individual does not receive the satisfaction of being taken seriously.

Heidegger begins explaining the emergence of self-awareness by saying that man's curiosity about things continues in face of social discourse; he cannot remain casually indifferent; he watches others and sees that the apparent "being-for-one-another" so often advertised in discourse really masks man's "being-against-one-another".²

¹Ibid., p. 213.

²Ibid., p. 219.

Because the individual is immersed in this mode, he sees himself as "falling". This has no negative connotation for Heidegger; it is the birth of self-understanding. He sees himself floundering in the midst of groundless idle talk; being passed by, he is now a nobody in his own eyes.

The progress of the program should be made explicit at this point. Everyday Mitsein is not only the general form of social living; it is a personal form in that it affects every individual. Phenomenological hermeneutic has uncovered the destructive interaction in its specific effects upon the person who seeks enlightenment.

Much like Nietzsche, Heidegger can now play the role of missionary. The philosopher has exposed a new access for gaining of self-identity, and the reader or listener is expected to heed the call to authenticity by following the next steps the philosopher prescribes. Phenomenological description, for Heidegger, has a mission; we are advised to accept his interpretation as the one way which can prepare man for authentic Being-there.

I use this form of critique advisedly, but it is difficult to avoid the missionary fervor in his writing. The façade of cool objective analysis is there, but the call to Heidegger's special notion of self-understanding is unmistakable. Two things become clear when his phenomenology is viewed this way: phenomenological description

is a call to a new way of life, based upon a particular appraisal of intersubjective encounters. Everyday Mitsein has not been "left-behind"; rather, its demonic features have given birth to the individual's self-understanding. What remains to be done is to change this condition so that a positive form of life can emerge. There can be no hesitations; man remains a nobody if he does not respond as Heidegger outlines.¹

We emphasize that everyday Mitsein, when internalized as one's self-understanding remains a negative form. There is no positive intersubjective exchange of which one can claim to be a part. The negative influence of intersubjective encounters is pervasive even as regards one's thought of himself. Though this may be manifestly true of much human interchange, Heidegger's error lies in making it the sole norm for self-appraisal. Mitsein is determinative of man's total existence. We can therefore, expect that some "divorce" will occur between the individual and intersubjective exchange in Heidegger's resolution of the "being issue"; it is obvious that intersubjectivity will play no positive part in one's recovery of there-being.

The acceptance of fallenness becomes pointed when

¹This activism in Heidegger is responsible in part, for a particular view of "existentialism", a view we find objectionable. We note it here and will discuss it in our conclusions.

it is seen that man really cares about his existence. That he cares is attested to by the phenomenon of anxiety (Angst).¹ Whereas falling is understood as one's reaction to social influence, anxiety shows that man cares about the issue of his own being. Though man is still very much immersed in social modalities, he now sees that "the world can offer nothing more and neither can the Dasein-with others."² The individual begins to understand that his own potentiality for authentic Being must take place apart from the social sphere. He gains the uncanny feeling of "not being at home".³

Whether he still attempts escape from these realizations or succeeds in living with them, a unique form of existence has been brought into the open. "Care" (Sorge) is the ontological structure of man's new awareness; no matter how he actually lives, it is now evident that he cares about living.

The obstacle to man's care is, of course, his state of immersion as it conflicts with his quest for meaning. He is tranquilized by the they and he is individualized by his new self-awareness. The either/or character of the

¹Vide., Heidegger, M., Being and Time, p. 227.

²Ibid., p. 232.

³Ibid.

"being issue" is firmly established.¹ Man may either acknowledge his care, or he may continue in the attempt to escape.

The analysis of care is concluded by citing the one "phenomenon which provides the ontological support for the unity of care."² That phenomenon is death, and it serves to hold Heidegger's whole program together. Death is both a fact, and it is an "existentiale"; that is, man is a being who exists in face of death. His care is focused upon caring about death. To detail Heidegger's analysis would take far too much space, but we are obliged to outline this most important part of the phenomenology. Its relation to Mitsein is especially important.

In the condition of "fallenness" man avoids the issue of death; he is distracted by the "they". Death, however, has factual certainty, even though that certainty is hidden by gossip and idle talk. The curiosity of man is both heightened and suppressed by the crowd. Heidegger observes that man's anticipation of death, which is an authentic mode of living, is just as possible as is indifference to the issue.

¹Either/or as a term is an appropriate term in this context, if not associated with Kierkegaard. If we restrict our usage to the way man faces existential alternatives-- i.e. "modes of life", the term is helpful.

²Heidegger, M., Being and Time, p. 241.

Anticipation of death (Being-towards-death) is the authentic form of care. Anticipation, however, is not a morbid death-wish or a pathological fear; it is, for Heidegger, the acceptance of death as being certain. One knows that he came into the world as one "thrown", and that he will die alone. The idea of accepting death goes hand in hand with a resolve to live apart from the illusions promulgated by society, i.e. "explanations", myths, or beliefs. The effect is to become free for death's advent, to be anxiously resolved to meet it whenever it may occur. Again, the mode of anxious resolve is a life-affirming modality; life is now accepted as a finite existence.

It is not necessary to detail Heidegger's descriptions of finitude and temporality. In terms of the phenomenology, finitude is synonymous with temporality; man is a finite being. The meaning of his existence is temporal and, the issue of his Being is resolved by accepting temporality. He lives in anxious resolve before death as a temporal Being. This is the authentic answer to the "who" of Dasein, the capstone of the program in Being and Time.

Man's new relation to others is mentioned briefly in the following:

Anticipation reveals to Dasein its lostness in the they-self and brings it face to face with the possibility of being itself, primarily unsupported by concerned solicitude, but of being itself, rather in an impassioned

freedom toward death--a freedom which has been released from the illusions of the 'they' and which is factual, certain of death and anxious.¹

No intersubjective exchange bears upon the individual's anticipation, even tangentially. Death anticipation is a possibility only for one's self, and is carried out by one's self. William Richardson aptly terms anxious resolve, "finite transcendence".² In the solitary acceptance of death-anticipation, man transcends the social sphere and its myths; his resolve is centered on the unique fact that he is a finite, temporal creature. We are reminded of Merleau-Ponty's thought during the late forties; "horizontal transcendence" is an appropriate term for Heidegger's concept of resolve.

Individualism is the backbone of Heidegger's ontological dictum. We must acknowledge that his theme of death-anticipation does "fit" the individual context, at least to a certain extent. Death is a unique phenomenon which pertains to solitary man; it is "private" and an understanding of it may rest upon the individual's solitary grasp. Heidegger has struck an impressive note by focusing upon death as an individual's personal affair.

The strange philosophical language he employs does not entirely mask, however, a very serious misconception of the human

¹Ibid., p. 311. (underlining mine).

²Richardson, Wm. J., op. cit., Pt I.

situation. That misconception was brought to our attention by reading Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological-ontology.

Namely, the anticipation of death may be one's own personal issue but it is not necessarily worked out, understood, or anticipated in a sphere apart from the social, as Heidegger suggests. The mystery of death as well as of life can be opened to us through human interaction.

We do not intend to write an alternative phenomenology to counter Heidegger, but we suggest that his phenomenology, and his ontological formulation is severely handicapped by insisting that everyday Mitsein must be transcended in order to authentically anticipate death. This is why he never returns to a concept of "authentic Mitsein" at the conclusion of Being and Time. The fact is, his phenomenology is complete with the portrayal of an individual's resolve. Interhuman exchange cannot affect resolve; intersubjectivity is finally put aside because it is replaced by a militant individualism.

Were he to have returned to explicate the notion of authentic Mitsein what would he have said? We are forced to put some words into his mouth, but what we say is not speculation; it is an extension of what is inherent in the program. His earlier reference about being "bound together" can now be made specific. One reference aids our explication.

Dasein's resoluteness towards itself is what first makes it possible to let others 'be' in their own most potentiality-for-Being, and to co-disclose this potentiality in the solicitude which leaps forth and liberates. When Dasein is resolute, it can become the conscience of Others. Only by authentically Being-their-Selves in resoluteness can people authentically be with one another--not by ambiguous and jealous stipulations and talkative fraternizing in the 'they' and in what 'they' want to undertake.¹

Heidegger is the advocate of a militant individualism in that resolute man is a conscience for others. Man is his own measure and the teacher of others. Put more boldly, he is both conscience and judge. Being "bound together" is reminiscent of Hegel's master-slave dialectic. But Hegel's intriguing dialogue between labor and lordship is not necessary for Heidegger. The resolute man is the master, pure and simple; he alone provides freedom for another, as he has provided it for himself.

The above allusion to authentic Mitsein seems academic, and unnecessary. Heidegger's brief reference shows that it is an afterthought in his program. The only essential is hard-won, individual resolve. We are left with a program which was given life by a phenomenology of intersubjectivity, and which essentially does away with its importance in the end. The reason: intersubjective encounter is an obstacle to self-knowledge; his ontology is based solely upon the necessity of overcoming the bad effects of intersubjective

¹Heidegger, M., Being and Time, p. 344.

encounter.

What about the relation between Mitsein and "finite transcendence"? Phenomenologically speaking, there is none. Individual man is the source and executor of finite transcendence; in the view of Being and Time, man is finite-transcendence. Heidegger's early claim that Mitsein is the one access to authentic Being-there is somewhat misleading. As an "access" it is at best labyrinthine; it offers no real direction of its own. One must see Mitsein as counter productive, negative, and enslaving. The order is, separate your self from others. That movement becomes the opportunity for the transcending act. Individual finitude has no reference to positive modalities of life with others.

This structure indicates a radical difference with the ontology of Merleau-Ponty.

We have made it clear that intersubjectivity is an access to ontological thought in Merleau-Ponty's thought. One of the reasons is that "the other" is fundamental in confronting the ontological issue; people in encountering each other can experience the "wave of Being". The difference with Heidegger is striking. Mitsein is not, in its inauthentic form, a presentation of otherness. The notion of "immersion" or of man as a they-self, makes that plain; meaningful intersubjective exchange never opens one to

transcendence.

Concerning "authentic" Mitsein, the same is true. Transcendence is confined to the individual's resolve; another person can only witness a resolute person, imitate his transcending act, and finally initiate his own self-transcendence. To say that intersubjective exchange plays a part in this response would be to distort Heidegger's position. The exchange may influence the transcending act but only because it is understood as an obstacle. Man is left to himself; intersubjectivity never functions as an "opening" in the creative sense.

The contrast between the two thinkers indicates the vastly different roles a phenomenology of intersubjectivity plays in shaping concept of transcendence. In our concluding observations we shall evaluate them.

Our interpretation of Heidegger does bring up the question of Heidegger's later work, and especially the changes in his perspectives on the problem of transcendence. An adequate survey of the material would involve an inordinate amount of space, so what is said here should not be taken as a full scale analysis of his position, but as a suggestion for the study of the "later Heidegger".

It is quite evident that Heidegger altered his view that man is the embodiment of transcendence. The change is

first noted in the 1929 essay, "Was ist Metaphysik?"¹ where he observes that "nothingness" is responsible for the human act of negation. In confrontation with "the nothing", man is influenced to make the transcending act of resolve. Much in this essay is an extension of the views in Being and Time, but there is a new element. "The nothing" is revealed to man; it is not produced by him but is the occasion for his response. Later, in 1943, Heidegger amplifies the concept of nothingness.² The peculiar experience of what-is-not, is the occasion for an encounter between man and Being. Nothingness is portrayed as the "veil of Being". That affirmation certainly contains a new notion of transcendence. Man responds to a disclosure. William Richardson's study of Heidegger titles the new conception, "dehiscence of Being". In ordinary terms, it means that Being presents itself to man; that revelatory aspect is the key to understanding Heidegger's later views on Being.

Heidegger also developed a somewhat different view of the activity of man as he sought to interrogate the meaning of Being. Reference to death anticipation was, for the most part, dropped in the later essays. In "Essays in Metaphysics: Identity and Difference", he observes

¹Heidegger, Martin, "What is Metaphysics?" Existence and Being, Intro. by Werner Brock. Chicago, H. Regnery Co., 1949.

²Heidegger, Martin, The Question of Being, Trans. William Kluback and J.T. Wilde. London, Vision Press Ltd., 1958.

that the disclosure of Being brings with it the experience of "enthrallment".¹ In the "pervading luminosity" which is Being's mode of presentation, Being is experienced as enshrouded; man cannot directly experience Being itself but he can think it. The concept carrying the weight of his explication is Logos; it becomes Heidegger's most mature expression of the meaning of Being for man. Being, though concealed, is nevertheless, effectively thought about. Moreover, Logos teaches that man's thought is his correspondence with Being. He learns in meditation that he belongs to Being. The notion of belonging is carried home by what Heidegger calls a reciprocal "challenge". Being challenges man in its presentation as a pervading luminosity; man challenges Being also by the leap of reason. The conclusion is, he says, that man and Being are alienated; at the same time--they belong together.

This new pattern of the relation between man and Being we take to be Heidegger's answer to the question he asked in the beginning of Being and Time, i.e. what is the meaning of Being? It would seem that an entirely new ontology has been written which could change our conclusions. But is this so?

¹Heidegger, Martin, Essays in Metaphysics, Identity and Difference, Trans. Kurt Leidecker, New York, Philosophical Library Inc., 1960.

Heidegger's new emphasis upon meditative thought as the access to confrontation with Being does not change our position for these reasons: the "leap" of reason is characterized as an experience of "keeping aloof" from the traditional modes of thought, particularly representational thinking. More important, it is a solitary act made for the purpose of experiencing "in our own person" the relation we have with Being. Being is domiciled in the private meditative man. The term which illustrates man's leap is the same one used in Being and Time, concern. It may not now refer to the anxious resolve cited earlier but it is never related to the notion of life with others. Mitsein is never brought into the picture of man's way of confronting the movement of Being.

Heidegger's essay, "Holderlin and the Essence of Poetry" makes our point quite clearly.¹ Man's correspondence with Being is demonstrated or actualized in language. He takes Holderlin's line, "since we have been a conversation",² to mean that each man, that is, the individual, is a conversation with the mystery of Being. The poet and the thinker have this in common; they stand before the gods as privileged recipients and spokesmen. Because the

¹Vide., - Heidegger, Martin, Existence and Being Intro. by Werner Brock.

²Ibid., p. 300.

thinker does confront Being, he, along with the poet, can pass the word of Being to others. Of course, he does not say that this sets the philosopher or the poet above ordinary mortals; but the parallel with the man of Being and Time is striking. The philosopher need never refer to conversation with others in this experience; rather he stands alone between Being and the crowd as the supplier of wisdom and truth. It is this picture of reason, functioning to inform the masses, which makes Heidegger's new position consistent with that of Being and Time. He has not reconsidered the intersubjective sphere as affecting the vocation of the philosopher.

Why? We suggest that the early phenomenology was never altered in the midst of all the alterations concerning transcendence and meditative thought. It remained the same; intersubjectivity played no creative part in shaping his conception of finite transcendence and it played no part in his later conception. The man, whether one of anxious resolve or of meditative thought, is still solitary.

Could it be that Heidegger's own life influenced such an intellectual position? We must not view him as a pawn of the age, for his brilliance is unquestionably rare, but this man who writes in his forest retreat is truly a man of solitude, if not of isolation.

We can now compare Merleau-Ponty's thought with

Heidegger's. It would seem that the two concur in their characterization of Being: Merleau-Ponty uses the terms "silence", "absence", and "mystery"; Heidegger, the term "luminosity". For both, Being cannot be described or effectively known about; Being is confronted. Man challenges to know its secrets; but no answers are forthcoming. In this much the two are alike. Both say that man "belongs" to Being; that man encounters the mystery and is, somehow, part of its mystery. Both argue that interpretation of living modes is the primary instrument for developing this claim; both seek a phenomenologically grounded ontology.

But the similarities end here. Intersubjectivity plays a major and positive role for Merleau-Ponty. Encounter is a social thing and is a conduite to a disclosure of Being. Man's interaction also leads Merleau-Ponty to say he, man, bears the weight of transcendence. For Heidegger, interaction simply gets in the way of Being's disclosure.

We suggest that man's encounter with Being is a very different phenomenon for the two thinkers. For Heidegger, the place of meeting is solitariness; for Merleau-Ponty it is the rare experience of intersubjective encounter. Will not that difference play an important role in man's claim to confront Being? If phenomenologists are to risk an affirmation of transcendence, it must follow that the phenomenology they articulate will affect the ontology

in a direct way.

One lesson from this study seems especially important. It is incumbent upon the thinker to examine the phenomenal forms which can be relied upon to effectively open the issue of Being. It simply cannot be true that all forms of living bear the same significance. A phenomenology which claims to be an opening to the issue of Being must delineate which forms emerge as conduites. This means comparing the various forms so that we may estimate their function,

In a modest way, we accept that task, and will attempt to delineate those forms in our concluding chapter.

PART FOUR

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS

THE FUNCTION OF METHOD IN DEVELOPING A

PHENOMENOLOGY OF INTERSUBJECTIVITY

Our objectives in these final two chapters can be outlined briefly. The present chapter will concentrate on describing how a credible phenomenology of intersubjectivity is developed. We shall argue that by remaining attentive to the discipline of method, a phenomenology of intersubjectivity which focuses upon encounter is both possible and credible. In arguing this approach we shall confine ourselves to the function of method in guiding a phenomenology through the complex materials necessary for a coherent portrayal of intersubjective experience. Chapter two will build upon this foundation; the relation between experience and method will show that intersubjective exchange not only opens the issue of transcendence, it leads the thinker to consider again the appropriateness of theological affirmation. The emphasis there will be upon the phenomenological forms themselves, that is, the specific themes of love and trust which can be utilized in posing the issue of transcendence. We will argue that Buber's insights need not be disregarded. Our main contention, however, will be that of the I-Thou form must be formulated differently to be philosophically credible.

We shall proceed as patiently as possible in this

chapter to apply phenomenological discipline to encounter experience.

First, we should review our criticism of Buber as a philosopher. Buber's conviction that intersubjective encounter provides the foundation for truth about man's world was quite plain. His unwillingness to submit that phenomenon to phenomenological critique was also quite evident. It left the truth of it questionable for us; specifically, he was reticent to utilize any methodological form of reduction or epochè to demonstrate the credibility of the I-Thou form. Perhaps, he should not be criticized for failing to employ a phenomenological reduction as it was conceived by Husserl; if he was acquainted with it, he surely knew that it led to transcendentalism, and that would have prevented its use. Buber was committed to characterize concrete experience. But this does not excuse the shortcoming; intersubjective encounter, apart from a methodologically informed attack, remains a fascinating but vague phenomenon.

We observed in our study of Buber a more personal reason for the reaction against method; the fact that transcendence provided, a priori, the foundation for the I-Thou form of encounter, helped explain why encounter experience was never interrogated. We found that the affirmation of a graceful God did indeed complicate his desire to be viewed as a philosopher. He assumed that a methodologically gov-

erned interrogation would somehow distort the contribution he sought to make. He chose the path of apologetics and of poetry, and we believe that choice affected his credibility as an otherwise brilliant phenomenologist.

If we were to state our criticism in one sentence it would be that Buber's forms failed to gain credibility because he employed no method to preserve the critical function so essential to all philosophical inquiry. If one is to pursue the description of phenomenal forms as a philosopher, method and discipline are essential.

Heidegger teaches important lessons in this regard. Heidegger embraced method. As a methodologically oriented thinker Heidegger's early prominence cannot be argued. He proposed to use the phenomenological reduction in a (then) new and important way; Being and Time began with the argument that phenomenological method could, of itself, uncover the truth of man's condition. The phenomenological reduction was supposed to be a way of getting at the question of man's true being. Our study, however, uncovered an unusual and questionable management of method.

Once his chosen themes were introduced, the function of phenomenological reduction was for the most part, forgotten. Our criticism is that he was not sufficiently rigorous in his use of the epochè. We demonstrated this by our frequent question, "why this theme and not another?"

Heidegger had no answer. He never questioned his selection of phenomenological themes; bracketing was all too soon discarded in the progress of his system. Specifically, once alienation and other-directedness are introduced by Heidegger, he settles upon them as the only relevant themes for phenomenology and ontology. Building his system solely upon these themes, his ontology became captive to individualism. We did not contest Heidegger's insights about alienation or otherdirectedness. We did say, however, that his phenomenology progressively lost sight of the use of phenomenological reduction; method gave way to proclamation.

Heidegger's program, when evaluated from this angle, is curiously enough, akin to Buber's. They saw different things in the existential sphere, but they both failed to submit their themes to reduction. Heidegger's systematic narrowing of the intersubjective to otherdirectedness, and the authentically human to that radical of individuality, is strangely like to Buber's apologetics when the issue is that of employing a methodological tool. Both Buber and Heidegger failed to compare their chosen themes with others. Interrogation which would show the significance of the chosen themes as compared to others, was never undertaken. This is a shortcoming which teaches an important lesson about phenomenological method--specifically the use of the reduction. Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, with respect to our criticism

of Buber and Heidegger, is a relevant corrective.

Not only did Merleau-Ponty embrace the principle of phenomenological reduction, he employed it constantly in his descriptions of the phenomenal sphere. His antipathy towards the scientific method did not stand in the way of his emphasizing the proximate character of all eidetic themes. There was never an attempt on his part to finalize or formalize the forms of interhuman relationships in the development of a phenomenology. On the contrary, his effort was usually directed towards opening the interpretive options rather than investigating one theme. For example, when the question is the type of humanism he espouses, he remains critical of both the Nietzschean warrior and the Hegelian man of destiny. He submits a different observation; the humanist is he who knows of interhuman support and is willing to die alone. No one form dominates. Though his method is discreetly hidden, it does bear upon his unwillingness to decide between philosophical extremes. Method dictates that where evidence of phenomenal forms exists, they must be dealt with rather than excluded from phenomenological critique. His "hero" is a fine example of the blending of themes and the proximate nature of forms. When Merleau-Ponty studies the relation between an individual's perceptual characteristics and his environment, he finds both operative. There is no need to decide between them. Again, he is not

the human sphere are thoughtfully analysed and compared. Secondly, use of the reduction requires comparisons and contrasts of differing modalities in its effort to specify dominant themes. The thinker asks, "why this theme and not another?" because he seeks to differentiate levels of importance. In so doing the significance of one theme can be demonstrated.

We emphasize the comparative function in the use of phenomenological reduction not so much as a guideline for method, but as its essential characteristic. Reduction requires comparison. Without comparative critique of the various modes of human interaction, it makes little sense to say we know which themes are phenomenologically significant. If the phenomenologist proposes to demonstrate a particular view about experience he must compare it to other views to make his case credible.

This comparative function is especially meaningful when applied to the development of intersubjective themes. A phenomenology of intersubjectivity must heed this norm if it is to gain credibility. Had Ruber's typology been worked out in relation to socio-cultural factors or perceptual patterns, to name only two, its potential for credibility would have been greatly enhanced.

The work of Merleau-Ponty again stands as an illustration of the principle. Not only was openness to various

constrained to pin-point one form and exclude another. The essence of phenomenological reduction is its characteristic openness to evidence. As we proceed we shall see why.

The exercise of blending themes is not indicative of indecisive thinking or an effort to please both existentialist and scientific analyst; it is an expression how the phenomenological reduction disciplines and affects descriptions of the phenomenal world. The one sure discipline is that phenomenological reduction necessitates the question "why this form and not something else". The reason is that forms are proximate; because they arise from our experience, they are never final. The effect should be a critical philosophy, instead of apologetics. The alternative Merleau-Ponty opens is an important one if phenomenology is to remain within the historic guidelines of philosophy.

Use of phenomenological reduction in existential analysis provides a specific perspective especially useful in the study of intersubjectivity: intersubjective themes, once introduced through use of the epochè, are the result of comparative analysis.

We should review why this comes to be. Lebenswelt phenomenology is clear in its affirmation of the "presence of the world"; because of this it must remain attentive to the diversities of human experience. The affirmation that experience is the proper subject for interrogation in philosophy is hollow unless the diversities of

the human sphere are thoughtfully analysed and compared. Secondly, use of the reduction requires comparisons and contrasts of differing modalities in its effort to specify dominant themes. The thinker asks, "why this theme and not another?" because he seeks to differentiate levels of importance. In so doing the significance of one theme can be demonstrated.

We emphasize the comparative function in the use of phenomenological reduction not so much as a guideline for method, but as its essential characteristic. Reduction requires comparison. Without comparative critique of the various modes of human interaction, it makes little sense to say we know which themes are phenomenologically significant. If the phenomenologist proposes to demonstrate a particular view about experience he must compare it to other views to make his case credible.

This comparative function is especially meaningful when applied to the development of intersubjective themes. A phenomenology of intersubjectivity must heed this norm if it is to gain credibility. Had Ruber's typology been worked out in relation to socio-cultural factors or perceptual patterns, to name only two, its potential for credibility would have been greatly enhanced.

The work of Merleau-Ponty again stands as an illustration of the principle. Not only was openness to various

forms counselled, he actually undertook comparative analysis to arrive at the dominant themes in his phenomenology. What emerged from his study was the point Buber had sought to establish; encounter is the ground upon which interpretations of human exchange are constructed. Philosophical truth claims do not arise by confining analysis to what we know about another. Quite the contrary, he says, what we know about an other is developed from forms of encounter. This important conclusion could not have been reached had different forms of man's relation to the world been disregarded. The problem of focusing upon the significance of encounter modalities depended upon the phenomenologist's ability to deal with them in relation to the traditional assumption that "knowledge about" was the prime source for estimating worth and importance. Through comparative description Merleau-Ponty argued effectively for the primacy of encounter modes. The inadequacies of the opposition, I suggest, could never have been made apparent if he had failed to compare and contrast the encounter forms with the rationalist and behaviorist alternatives. The method of reduction functioned mightily in this endeavor.

The epochè also functions to produce another result.

Merleau-Ponty made a valuable suggestion when he said that phenomenological reduction is a "loosening of the threads" which bind us to our world. Proper conduct of

the epochè is one way of developing an alternative concept of objectivity; phenomenological reduction is the key. The reduction constrains the thinker from simply affirming a particular view of encounter or the lived-world. For instance, if Buber's forms are, indeed, relevant for a phenomenology, they will be so because evidence is developed in their favor. The proximate nature of the forms need not be a deficit; on the contrary, the evidence which is gathered and compared gives the thinker access to viable judgments about them. Judgments are possible because there is no effort to obtain a completely detached version of experience. The phenomenologist seeks judgments which admit to the factor of subjective involvement; they are proximate and they rely on the force of evidence. "Loosening" is the by-word, not a complete separation of the reflective process from lived-experiences.

The drive for a pure objectivity is put away in Lebenswelt phenomenology. The contingency of experiential forms is implied in the very notion of diversity already cited; it is also indicated because the thinker acknowledges his own ties with the world. The reduction attempts to bring this involvement under scrutiny but does not pretend to obliterate it. The sensitive use of the reduction does away with the notion of absolute truth(s). This balance between the critical approach and proximate knowledge is

especially important for our study. By respecting this balance the thinker may gain a more accurate description of the subject-world relation. It is vital he recognizes that he is part of that relation.

In sum, phenomenological reduction is a microcosm of phenomenological method. It is the critique-oriented side of the discipline, and it shows the stance of the discipline towards its own theorizing activity.

We have not exhausted the question of the conduct of phenomenological reduction; it will come up again as we discuss the second phase of phenomenological method, eidetic intuition, or eidetic reduction.

We saw in our survey of Husserl that it is necessary to follow his reductions only where they acknowledged a primal relation between subject and world. Use of phenomenological method does not lead to transcendentalism; it leads elsewhere. Faithful use of the eidetic reduction redirects the thinker's efforts to question the subject-world relation. As part of this, we also saw that the eidetic reduction leads the phenomenologist to develop a phenomenology of intersubjectivity.

Merleau-Ponty demonstrated the former point, though he did not make plain its mechanics. We attempted to do that in our analysis of Husserl. The mechanics are simply that one cannot separate the I from self-consciousness or

from his world of experience; to attempt that maneuver is to reintroduce evidence which comes from the lived-world nexus. Phenomenological discipline when practiced responsibly is eo ipso "existential phenomenology". It is incurably bound to the subject-world relation for its continued survival.

A more specific focus was found in the application of method; the predominant form emerging from a study of the Lebenswelt was the intersubjective theme. We followed Merleau-Ponty's patient effort to show how social and interpersonal forms continually emerge in the most intellectual of maneuvers. Merleau-Ponty's position was argued effectively in "The Child's Relation to Others". That argument not only precludes a transcendentalism; it suggests the predominance of the intersubjective form in the subject-world relation. Method was instrumental in bringing such a focus. That focus came because the forms of interpersonal living were continually found in modes of intellection and perception. They emerged as being operative in the most abstract forms of perception. The interpersonal simply could not be disregarded in a phenomenology of perception. Significant for the philosopher, concentration upon the intersubjective sphere was not chosen through personal preference; it was highlighted because the method presented such forms. Eidetic reduction brings the intersubjective

to light.

If we ask, as we have sought throughout, how phenomenology poses the issue of transcendence, a third important function of eidetic method is found.

Merleau-Ponty's procedure in developing eidetic forms, contrary to Buber, precludes the right to use a particular concept of transcendence as a presupposition. This is germane to our issue: ideational structures are abstractions of experience, they are gathered and built in response to experience and this means that the phenomenologist can never presume a factor which a priori, serves to explain that experience.

This restriction applies only, however, when a particular concept of transcendence is used as a presupposition. There is a sense in which Lebenswelt phenomenology employs a general concept of transcendence in its investigations. The concept of the lived-world contains a notion of transcendence; it is that man confronts a world which is "already there". The lived-world concept pertains to the confrontation of man with transcendence, with things and other people. But this notion cannot be understood as falling under the afore-mentioned restriction. Lebenswelt is not a particular concept of transcendence concerning God or Being; it is not a presupposition which explains experience.

Whereas specific presuppositions about the nature of transcendence are not permitted, the objective of eidetic research is to develop concepts which clarify the experience of confrontation. This is how our question can be answered; eidetic research does not exclude themes of transcendence if such are developed within the context of phenomenological reduction. That is, the discipline presses to develop ideational forms concerning the subject-world relation and does not exclude concepts of transcendence unless they are presuppositional. To exclude concepts of transcendence which emerge in research would be as one-sided as would employing them as presuppositions. Development of concepts which bear upon the issue of transcendence is a specialty in eidetic research.

Merleau-Ponty understood that intersubjective exchange was a primary resource in this constructive endeavor. He understood that a phenomenology which was shaped in large degree by the intersubjective sphere, would have ontological levels of conceptualization. Eidetic formulation does not evade the issue of transcendence; its drive to bring the world to light necessitates coming to grips with the questions of universal meaning. The Lebenswelt phenomenologist, though wary of "high altitude thinking", is nevertheless brought face to face with the question of Being. For Merleau-Ponty interhuman networks of experience

open the question of Being.

+

+

+

If these observations on phenomenological reduction and the eidetic function are pressed further and brought into conversation with other methods, the question of the conduct of reason, arises. The method we have outlined, is not itself, beyond criticism. What are its strengths, and weaknesses? How does this method contribute to philosophical debates about perception and experience?

Mary Warnock's book Existentialism makes a strong case for being skeptical about Lebenswelt phenomenology and its conception of reason.¹ Hers, as Hepburns, is a thoughtful interpretation of the contributions of Kierkegaard, Husserl, Heidegger, Merleau-Ponty and especially Sartre; in the following quotation we can see her appreciation for them and the seed of her criticism.

There is an inescapable fact about the world, which is that Beings-for-themselves are separate from the rest of the world; and part of what they understand, in understanding the gap between themselves and the things around them is that the world is not wholly manageable, and might in the end turn and submerge them.

This is the truth which Sartre seeks to expose by the Concrete Imagination. No account of Existentialism

¹Vide., Warnock, Mary, Existentialism, London, Oxford Univ. Press, 1970.

which failed to emphasize this imaginative and descriptive aspect could possibly be complete. . . .

This may have been the strength of the Existentialist movement, which has sometimes seemed a desirable refuge from the aridities of other philosophy. But it has, I believe, also been its downfall. There is no real possibility of argument with the deliverances of the concrete imagination.¹

Though her criticism points to Sartre, her case against "concrete imagination" is also directed to the phenomenologists we have surveyed. Their concentration on intuition and existential insight forces their work into the category of oracularism; no real debate can take place, she believes, because the tools for investigation find their home in subjective imagination, and not reason. The drive to develop concepts which portray the "ultimate meaning of existence" is not an appropriate task for philosophers.²

She does not elaborate in this short essay what the appropriate task of philosophy is, but her criticism does not necessarily depend on having an alternative. It concerns the method of phenomenology; is she correct in specifying imagination as its singular characteristic? If not, is the method we have described truly capable of aiding philosophical debate.

¹Ibid., p. 139.

²Ibid., p. 140.

As to the first issue: it is not simply insight or intuitional sensitivity that led Merleau-Ponty to the eidetic formulations outlined in our research. Intentionality, for example, was not regarded as a self-evident truth of experience; it was regarded as a thesis which called for the gathering of evidence. In other words, it had to be argued and demonstrated.

Phenomenological reduction was also employed in his investigations to guard against criticism such as Warnock's. Without compromising the Lebenswelt thesis, Merleau-Ponty sought to demonstrate it through the use of the epochè. His case may be weak as Warnock argues quite well, but he is not a candidate for her major criticism. There are no "oracular" affirmations which remain immune from the discipline of reduction.

Another factor, already mentioned, is that Merleau-Ponty contests the various philosophical theories of perception and not necessarily the data they utilize. Admittedly, he is convinced that evidence is gained from the pre-reflective, but he argues particularly with those who theorize about experience and this marks his theory, it seems to me, as being within the traditional arena of philosophical debate. He claims no unique access to the truth of experience; he seeks rather, to demonstrate that his interpretation is more adequate than others. The idea

that experience dictates a theory of contingent "knowledge about" illustrates this well. His is no first philosophy as Husserl's sought to be; Merleau-Ponty is at least one "existentialist" whose method constrains promulgation of concepts about the ultimate meaning of existence.

These two points are preliminary, however, to answering the question of the method's adequacy in forwarding philosophical debate. I have no final answers but would offer observations.

If one's philosophical concern is to develop themes about intersubjectivity, phenomenological method has certain advantages. Where method leads to a concentration upon intersubjectivity, it can be looked upon as a discipline which gives direction to study and debate. This was seen by every phenomenologist studied, even by Husserl who realized the intersubjective question was a key one. Method does, indeed, lead to concern for concepts about intersubjective experience. Method, in this instance, specified a key issue for investigation; it was more than a general discipline for thinking.

If the inclination of the philosopher is, broadly speaking "existential", phenomenological method is an indispensable tool for acquiring critical perspective. It constrains the thinker from simply affirming truths about experience. Existential "truths" are not to be taken for-

granted; phenomenological method forces the distinction between encounter experience and theoretical knowledge.

Its objective is to draw an adequate relation between the world we know by encounter and the theories we have about it. This is a traditional venture in philosophy, and should be obvious in light of Merleau-Ponty's studies of perception.

What makes phenomenological method particularly helpful in debate is that it argues against the separation of the physical and rational in human activity. Warnock cites the rejection of the Cartesian typology as a major contribution of existential thought. We would go further. The constructive or eidetic aspect of phenomenology is not there by chance. If man should not be dealt with as a dualistic entity, a constructive role becomes necessary. Particularly, it is incumbent upon those who recognize the failures of Cartesian theory to weave concepts which do justice to a holistic conception of man. Merleau-Ponty's concept of intentionality is a serious alternative in the attempt to overcome the deficiencies of Descartes' theory.

Phenomenological method, I suggest, is right in risking itself with constructive theories about the subject-world relation. To remain inactive, convinced that a theory is broken, is to fail in genuine philosophical debate. If Descartes' typology falls short, is it not reasonable to think that alternatives are called for?

Merleau-Ponty attempts to meet the challenge; for that he cannot be judged as insensitive to philosophical debate.

In one sense, Warnock's criticism about phenomenology's anti-scientific bias should be appreciated.¹ We argued it was a shortcoming when Merleau-Ponty insisted his method was anti-scientific. His claim to be anti-scientific is a bit hollow; he strived to develop concepts while utilizing and integrating clinical-experimental data. To say he is anti-scientific given such a condition, is to court popular opinion.

His real argument with science is directed towards absolutistic doctrines and not to what is generally called scientific method. He seldom argues with the data employed in idealism or behaviorism; his critique concerns their assumptions and conclusions. This is where he is right, it seems to me, to espouse an "anti-scientific" bias. Idealism's failure is the assumption that man generates ideas without benefit of experience. Behaviorism sees man as totally governed by physical stimuli. Neither view provides room for each other. If these views are given the aura of being scientific, then an anti-scientific bias is commendable.

But that is a poor description of the issue. Phenomenological method is a valuable contribution because it looks to both sides of the debate to gain its own perspectives. It sees the rational and the environmental

¹Ibid., Chapter 7., pp. 131 ff.

aspects of the subject-world relation as being important aspects in a holistic conception.

It is also a valuable contribution because method dictates continual attentiveness to the diversities of experience and to the drive for conceptual coherence. In terms of our problem area this seems entirely appropriate. Human relationships provide a 'staggering range of diversity for philosophical investigation. If one sees the inter-human as a source of philosophical problems, then attentiveness to diversity is essential.

This need not cancel the drive for unitary structures. Phenomenological method is a press in this direction; it seeks to integrate diverse fields of experience. If themes are seen as proximate and diversity is attended to, there is no reason why unitary themes should be excluded. The drive for conceptual coherence, when properly disciplined is the philosopher's specialty. In phenomenological method the constructive function is given ample room for expression; ontological reflections are permitted to compliment a credible phenomenology.

This is one reason we chose to look at Buber from a phenomenological perspective. What he tried to do was frustrated by absence of method; we have suggested that presence of method makes his objectives more possible.

lation.

Stated methodologically, the value of phenomenological research is found in the tension between the epoché and eidetic formulation. This has been implicit in the above observations. The suspension of judgment about theories of experience in order to see encounters more clearly always stands in tension with the drive to develop new conceptual structures. Bracketing balances the constructive effort, and the constructive effort deepens the critical function. If phenomenological method is seen this way, then phenomenology carries on its own internal debate. It is a debate between the critical and constructive sides of philosophy; it gives expression to two necessary functions in philosophy. As an internal debate it nurtures methodological refinement and maturity, and as a specific method it aids the debate in other fields of philosophy.

We have taken time to state some specific advantages of the phenomenological method in developing concepts of intersubjective experience; though no final specification of what those themes are has yet been dealt with, a foundation has been laid. Phenomenological method, attentively applied, cancels the assumption that apologetics will yield a credible phenomenology. It also teaches that transcendentalism is neither necessary nor warranted in the development of themes. Lastly, it suggests that the constructive func-

tion in philosophy be taken in hand as a disciplined and appropriate task.

If we are ever to get beyond the "aridities of other philosophy" without falling prey to the temptations of oracularism, it will be because a method has disciplined and guided us. Phenomenological method used as a critical taskmaster and initiator of unitary themes can help us pursue the intricacies of lived-world encounter and remain credible as conceptualizers.

In our last chapter we shall attempt to demonstrate this with reference to our specific topic.

CHAPTER II

A PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE INTERHUMAN:

ITS BEARING ON THE ISSUE OF TRANSCENDENCE

If method is not only advisable but necessary for phenomenology, its most important function is its application to the constructive effort in research. Our study asks if and how a phenomenology of intersubjectivity opens the issue of transcendence. We are now ready to utilize the preceding research in attacking the question directly.

In so doing, we undertake a constructive effort. We readily admit that our research question was not dealt with systematically by Merleau-Ponty. But the research did demonstrate that his efforts in phenomenology and ontology do affect the issue. That in itself is an important contribution worthy of consideration for constructive attempts. Suggestive and viable alternatives have been submitted in Merleau-Ponty's work on the question we raised.

To some extent we shall have to tailor what Merleau-Ponty said, to our stated issue. As we said before, this will add to his observations, but will not stray from his intentions or conceptualizations. We intend to use his method and formulations in discussing our specific issue. To sharpen the issue, it is wise to review again the work of

Martin Buber.

His major contribution was to conceptualize an area of experience between persons that had been left in the background of philosophical inquiry. He asserted that the description of interpersonal meetings could not be confined to psychological explanations or behavioral actions. Philosophical inquiry had, in his mind, consistently attempted to reduce interpersonal exchange to subjective dimensions or objectivistic (behavioral) interpretations. In this criticism we agreed.

We accepted his intention to construct a conceptualization of exchange which encouraged phenomenological interpretation, one which preserved its unique characteristics and forced subsequent inquiry to recognize its central importance. This would call for a new form of discourse and a redirection for theological observations. Again, we appreciated his objectives.

In the execution of his task, questions arose. Generally speaking, he was reluctant to relate the notion of encounter to any theory of knowledge about others. Specifically, he was unwilling to interpret encounters as perceptual experiences; he left himself wide open to the indictment of mysticism, or prophetism, because he would not explain the connection between knowledge about and knowing as encounter. Buber, like others, recognized the difference

between pre-reflective experience and the reflective process, between direct awareness and ratiocination, but he gave us no way of explaining the difference. So we were left in a quandry with Buber. How could his insights about intersubjective meeting be retained while at the same time relating them to a theory of perception? If his objective is to be respected, we must attempt a description of the interhuman that affectively relates to forms of perception.

More serious, however, was Buber's failure to explicate the relation between intersubjective encounters and the acknowledgment of transcendence. Double-think was not intended, but became evident despite his efforts. We concluded that the acknowledgement of transcendence was a prior requirement for understanding the I-Thou form, as well as being an affirmation which emerged from one's understanding of I-Thou meeting. Though Buber saw no conflict in this twofold structure, I did. One cannot claim to be a philosopher and utilize a theological presupposition unless he is willing to justify that theological claim on philosophical grounds. Because Buber did not attempt a phenomenological argument for his typology, and because he utilized a theological presupposition, we became progressively suspicious that his theology was the determining factor in shaping the character of the I-Thou phenomenology. This relation between theology and phenomenology must be revised if we seek a

philosophically credible account of the interhuman.

Merleau-Ponty's early phenomenological research bears on the first problem we had with Buber.

The first point is that Merleau-Ponty chose to interrogate perceptual forms. In doing this, he made it abundantly clear that perception would not be dealt with in traditional terms. He set out to describe it without yielding to the Cartesian position on a priori thought forms; he also asserted that behavioristic interpretations failed to do justice to the perceptual event. The purpose in objecting to classical theories was to retain an interpretative option which accounted for the fullness of perceptual interaction. Most important and germane to our issue, the "fullness" of the perceptual event has at its center, an encounter mode.¹ Merleau-Ponty termed it pre-reflective experience. How does this position bear on the issue of developing a phenomenology which respects Buber's insights and yet relates the interpersonal as a perceptual experience. First, we shall state the general importance of Merleau-Ponty's alternative; next, we shall use his concepts of project or intentionality, vortex, and intercorporeality, to construct a more credible theory about the I-Thou event.

The fundamental importance of perception as pre-re-

¹We are not now indentifying Buber's conception of encounter with Merleau-Ponty's term "pre-reflective". But ther is a useful connection and we shall elaborate it below.

flective encounter lies in the new relation Merleau-Ponty shaped between "knowing" and "knowledge about". The concept of "knowing" captures the point he sought to make against the classical theories. Hearing, touching, and especially seeing, are not just data-producing functions which tell us something about the objects of our perception. They are much more than vehicles for perception; they are our modes of encountering and dealing with the world. The term lived-world or Lebenswelt keynotes this. The subject-world relation is a network of encounters; the world is not just "out there"; we are intimately involved in and related to it. Objects and persons are perceived in terms of our position or condition. That "position" is inevitably social. We perceive according to our personal and interpersonal fields of experience. Merleau-Ponty strives to demonstrate that we cannot construct "clean" concepts of subject and object' the point is that perceptual activity is best interpreted as a network of exchange. The communal and "knowing" aspects of experience are the foundations for his work.

In addition to this, as its compliment, Merleau-Ponty develops a concept of perception which gives a new interpretation to "knowledge about". If knowing is the primary mode of perception, knowledge about must be classified as its derivative. In terms of the two traditional

positions, this is a radical alternative, and it affects our issue. His point is certainly arguable; we will argue henceforth that the rational dimension, i.e. a conceptualization of encounter, must grow out of a recognition of its "birth place", exchange.¹

As we have said consistently, the derivative nature of knowledge about implies that it is also proximate, never independent or complete. In phenomenological terms the implication is clear; eidetic forms are never seen as unchangeable; concepts are always open to the phenomenological reduction and to additional inquiry. This means that our application of Merleau-Ponty's work is admittedly open to other interpretations. We accept this as a discipline and will attempt to remain sensitive to other options. We turn to its specific importance.

Merleau-Ponty's alternative offers a new approach to Buber's typology and Hepburn's criticisms. These following concepts are Merleau-Ponty's "argument" for his position; they are particularly appropriate in specifying the meaning of interpersonal exchange.

The "project" character of perception was cast as an individual's total involvement in the object of his con-

¹We shall not attempt discussion of the function of knowledge about for other areas of inquiry, even though Merleau-Ponty's position could mean much for ethics and aesthetics. We shall restrict ourselves to intersubjective exchange as is only prudent.

cern. It seems to me that this concept has special relevance with regard to intersubjective exchange.

There is no reason to restrict the notion of project to an individual mode of perception. Merleau-Ponty would agree with the observation that individual projects which involve other people become "projects of relationship". That is, exchanges between persons form a set of relational projects. An individual retains his or her personal modes of dealing with the world, but he also participates in relationships which have interpersonal objectives or modes of dealing with the world.¹ There is, thus, a sense in which the concept of project is an intersubjective concept. That aspect is of special interest.

The notion of project calls for a holistic interpretation of relationships; we shall elaborate.

First, the project character of a relationship indicates that interaction shapes whatever concepts (or decisions) one party makes about the other. One is involved with the other prior to estimating the worth of the other, or the relationship. This is not to be construed as a time priority but as a priority of importance. If we take this priority seriously, it means that

¹We refer here to a "we" form of interacting with our world. We shall elaborate that concept below.

we describe a relationship in terms of its personal, behavioral, and environmental peculiarities and growth. We cannot view it as being confined to mental decisions made by the participants. The way a relationship grows and is nourished is of special concern whether that requires concentration upon physical expressions, or recognition of social influences. The notion of project requires that an interpreter look first at all kinds of interaction which constitute it as a "unique" relationship.

Once this is corrected, however, the behaviorist option is no more credible. An interpersonal environment includes personal decision-making. Project description is well advised to focus upon the inclinations, intentions and decisions of the participants, though it is certainly not confined to these things. Project modes are conscious modes, although not always self-conscious. This position on conscious interaction means that relationships should be described in terms of their mental dimensions if we do not attempt to make these aspects all-inclusive. The relational-emotional aspects of an interchange are important indicators aiding philosophical analysis or description.

Two themes emerge. If they

are seen operating together as they should be, we gain a different approach to philosophical evaluation. A relationship has its own unique forms; one relationship is not the same as another. We can never make complete generalizations by collecting data, e.g. about father-son interactions, mother-daughter relations, etc. A relation has its own specific environment. In this sense every relationship is unique; that much is evident if we properly utilize the concept of project.

But if a relation is to be seen as unique, it is also to be seen as being open to many forces which make up an environment. The intentions of persons in exchange are never explainable in individualistic or even interpersonal terms. They are related to social, physical, and intellectual environments. In other words, the project nature of interaction indicates that relationships cannot be isolated from that which goes on about them; they are social and they relate to a broader sociality, a cultural milieu.

If these aspects seem unimportant philosophically, we have missed the point of the phenomenological approach. In evaluating relationships, or undertaking eidetic forms as the phenomenologist would say, recognition of the project aspect is a good beginning. The phenomenologist will remain aware of the uniqueness of relationships; he will submit concepts which describe kinds of interaction. In so doing

he will not be embarrassed about the proximateness of ideational forms. He will also take due account of factors which influence relationships because they are part of the participant's project. In sum, he will strive for themes which do justice to the broad theme of project.

How do these themes affect our appraisal of the I-Thou typology? Buber held up the I-Thou form as the only true encounter mode. To meet was to encounter a Thou, to be related in a specific way. The implication was that no other mode was a true encounter. The I-It form lay outside his notion of encounter. Our application of Merleau-Ponty's notion of project indicates that the I-Thou form's exclusive role is not viable; all projects fall into an encounter mode. It is obvious the two thinkers define "encounter" quite differently.

Encounter for Buber, is restricted to "being", "personal making present" and "unfolding". Encounter for Merleau-Ponty is all-inclusive; project is synonymous with an encounter mode. If we are to retain the priority of the project theme, we cannot at the same time claim that one kind of project is exclusively an encounter mode. I suggest that we begin to see I-Thou encounters as one type of encounter.

This revision of our view of I-Thou encounter deserves some attention before we proceed. One of the short-

comings of Buber's I-Thou typology is that it had no rootage in perceptual modes; he strained the form by implying that encounter was somehow different than perceptual interaction. Merleau-Ponty's concept makes that separation unnecessary and undesirable. All modes in the subject-world relation are perceptual, and in the encounter mode. If we think in I-It, I-Thou terms, both are encounter modes and are forms of perception.

Secondly, the project concept makes it possible for us to formulate the uniqueness of the I-Thou form: namely, description of the I-Thou form is important because it refers to a kind of interaction that has a distinct raison d'être and form of interaction. Within the context of project we can begin to sort out differing forms of relationships while not insisting that perceptual modes are missing or that encounter modes are absent in other typologies. With instruction from Merleau-Ponty we begin to see that involvement with another can be the kind Buber asserted. Perceptual, behavioral characteristics play a part, as Hepburn suggested, but the center of the relationship can still bear the forms of "personal making present" and "being" as Buber suggested.

Once these suggestions are dealt with in the construction of a phenomenology of intersubjectivity, the I-Thou form can be appreciated as a distinct option. There is no reason to think that what Buber sought to establish for phen-

phenomenological inquiry should be disregarded. The I-Thou form may play an important, even central, role in the interpretation of encounter situations. We shall speak of its actual relevance below, but it should be said here that the I-Thou form, "disciplined" as it can be by the concept of project, may still be an integral part of a phenomenology.

The task remains to show why the elements of the I-Thou form should be considered of central importance to the intersubjective exchange.

One of Merleau-Ponty's forms can serve as a transition to this issue. I speak of his use of the term "vortex". Merleau-Ponty used this concept to show that the individual's experience of objects encouraged the thinker to put social or intersubjective experience at the center of phenomenology. Vortex denoted, for example, that people's encounter with objects is an expanding experience, we begin to see tools as carpenter's tools; objects indicate social purpose or social usage.

The concept of vortex still applies once the intersubjective sphere is introduced; let us see how. Encounter with another at an acquaintance level may lead to deep personal interaction and social consciousness. The issues of ethics, of social responsibility, for example, may arise in what seems to be an isolated interpersonal problem or situation. The casual meeting may be followed by exchange

about family relationships; understanding an individual means encountering that person's environment. To carry it further, an understanding of the person's environment means that we encounter his circle of friends, organizations, economic and political forms of living. The personal is never separate from the social. These options are opened even though the relationship remains unique to us. Interaction, Merleau-Ponty suggests, throws us into a broader field of experience; the vortex theme attempts to conceptualize a centrifugal force in personal encounters. The same ideational thrust was spoken of often by Heidegger in his characterization of Mitsein.

The uses of the vortex concept are many; we cannot begin to consider them all. But one stands out. The meaning of vortex indicates that interpersonal exchange not only opens areas of broader communication; it opens those involved to the meaning of intersubjective exchange per se. That is, our experience of others shapes our view of what is both possible in interpersonal modalities, and our view of the character of the lived-world. Specific relationships shape our description of human experience.

If one form of encounter, no matter what its character, does have implications for the whole of intersubjective experience and for a world view, then specific forms of encounter must be examined to estimate their roles in opening

a view of the whole. This does not mean that the phenomenologist plays a game of elimination, i.e. that he find some forms important and others unimportant. He cannot afford to disregard forms which affect a description of the lived-world. It means rather, that he interrogates forms or types to see how they affect the total picture of man's interaction. His specialization is to understand given forms in order to gain unitary concepts about the whole of experience.

Vortex heightens the importance of inquiry into typologies such as Buber's and Heidegger's. We not only ask about the relevance of specific forms in shaping a phenomenology of the lived-world; we ask what the function of a form is in disclosing the sphere of intersubjective exchange, and our social world.

A most suggestive form for such an inquiry is Merleau-Ponty's "intercorporeality". Through the unique character of the vortex concept we have gained access, as it were, to the issue of man's total experience; it is left for us to characterize that experience with conceptually appropriate themes. Merleau-Ponty's notion of intercorporeality serves an important function. As a form, it has the distinct characteristic of "opening" and it also provides direction on how one evaluates other typologies. Buber's I-Thou form and Heidegger's Mitsein will serve as comparative examples. Through such a comparison, we are better able to see how

specific forms of intersubjective exchange shape the whole of our interpretation of experience.

First, we shall review Merleau-Ponty's concept. Intercorporeality is a form of experience between persons which opens them to what it means to be with another. Merleau-Ponty saw in the handshake and glance, a deep interpenetration of two personal existences. Subjects in this mode see things through the other's eyes; one's own world invades, and is invaded by another's. The impact is one of total involvement; euphoria occurs. The perspectives, joys or hatreds of one party become those of the other; lived-worlds are shared. Merleau-Ponty never lived to articulate the question of what kinds of experience were shared; he only said that whatever one encountered with the other became vitally important in one's experience of the other and of the whole existence. Individuals see themselves as sharing and belonging to a common world. This in itself is a vital experience. In simplest terms it means that one's privacy is broadened to include an understanding of experience from another's viewpoint or "project"; an encounter with whole of existence is, likewise, given an interpersonal meaning.

When this intensive, if rare, form of encounter is compared to the forms taught by Buber and Heidegger, the significance of intercorporeality can be estimated.

I could see Buber affirming Merleau-Ponty's concept; he would be very friendly to it. He would also employ it in the theological venture. Its philosophical importance, Buber would say, lies in the opening of private worlds to divine grace. Obviously the phenomenologist cannot readily adopt this position. Intercorporeality is rooted in perceptual contact; one might say that intercorporeal exchange is a perceptual exchange. The "leap" from the interpersonal to theological affirmation is neither called for nor implied in the form itself. At least Merleau-Ponty would not employ that usage; the meaning of this form, for him, is the opening of private worlds. While the two agree upon the networks opening those involved, they do not agree upon the necessity of theological affirmation.

If the concept's primary emphasis is upon the sharing of personal existences, we can afford a brief comment on Heidegger's Mitsein. As we described that form, Mitsein was the absorption of the subject in a social sickness. Identity for the subject was lost and he became possessed by otherdirectedness. There was never a mention of shared worlds. Because the Heideggerian theme is lostness and absorption for the individual, we conclude that his form is really foreign to intercorporeality.

To summarize the comparison: Buber's form, while friendly to the notion of perceptual interpenetration,

sought to appropriate its occurrence for other purposes. Heidegger's Mitsein plainly denied any real importance for such a form. Intercorporeality's primary significance amounts to the affirmation that human exchange can open one's life to others and can open one to a new understanding of the world. It is a challenging assertion this concept makes about our experience. It affirms that we experience with another, the truth of belonging to the world of others and to the mystery of the world as a whole. Without theological affirmation, yet with a bold ontological statement, Merleau-Ponty describes the intercorporeal as encounter with Being. To examine the truth of this claim we shall look into modes which will aid us in deciding upon the positive meaning of exchange.

Merleau-Ponty has directed us thus far, to consider how interpersonal modes actually bear upon our appraisal of the subject-world relation. We have reached the point where we should be able to specify how certain modes of exchange do open one to the whole of personal existence. The problem can be put this way also: we should be able to show which forms of intersubjective exchange are consonant with intercorporeality.

We assume here that intersubjective exchanges carry positive value personally and philosophically as they affect the individual, his view of self with the other, and a world-

view. Our problem: if intersubjective exchange does not alter our views or projects in relation to others, if it does not offer the option of "being opened" to the world in new ways, we are wasting our time talking about its phenomenological significance and its relevance to the issue of transcendence.

We shall deal with the characteristics of "opening" first, on a phenomenological level. Then we shall attempt to say how "opening" obtains an ontological significance. That is, we shall ascertain how intercorporeality becomes a disclosure to Being.

I suggest that we are at the stage in our inquiry where the themes of trust and love can be beneficially compared to those of alienation. Our description of these forms may serve to illustrate the above issue, for trust and love have always been used to highlight the opened person and alienation the isolated individual. The following phenomenological appraisal is, admittedly, an addition to Merleau-Ponty's conceptualizations but it is also consistent with the concepts he embraced.

Trust and love as forms of interpersonal exchange do not occur in the sense that a person adopts a mental viewpoint "about" them by concluding the other is loving or hateful, faithful or unreliable. One does not decide upon love or trust as a viewpoint at all. Rather the two terms

attempt to describe an intimate form of interaction, a deep penetration of one's own world by, and with, another. This theme is suggested by one of Merleau-Ponty's remarks in the article "A Child's Relation with Others".

To consent to love or be loved is to consent also to influence somebody else, to decide to a certain extent on behalf of the other. To love is inevitably to enter into an undivided situation with another.¹

The point about interpenetration of private worlds is widely accepted as a matter of common sense. Merleau-Ponty showed throughout his work that this same interpenetration bore phenomenological importance. The above remark says it well; the person who loves and is loved enters "into an undivided situation with another".

The specific import of this is that love and trust illustrate the breaking of barriers between people; this can be expressed in two ways. The person who loves, is aware that his own world is reshaped in terms of the relationship. The emphasis is here, upon the new way a once private world is shaped. Self-awareness in a love relation takes on the element of seeing one's self as one is seen by another. This can mean that a person merely compliments himself as being lovable; or more seriously, it may mean that the person sees himself as being truly accepted by

¹Merleau-Ponty, Maurice, The Primacy of Perception
p. 154.

another. In any degree the latter option constitutes a form of self-acceptance. To be loved is to see one's self through the eyes of the other party, and that is phenomenologically speaking, a new mode of self awareness.

Not only does the experience of trust and love signify the breaking of personal barriers; there is in trustful relations a distinct mode of dealing with the world at large. It can be put this way: the "I" form, meaning the subject's individual approach to others, becomes a "we" form in his dealings with the world. Many things can be articulated about the dynamics of trust but this theme stands out. A sense of interpersonal cooperation at the less intense levels of trust exists. Also, at more intense levels, persons deal with their worlds in the "we" form. They permit their partner to represent them; they are trusted to represent their mate. Nothing about the "we" form is static; it is dynamic and changing but trust and love cannot be described fully apart from the "we".

In short, not only is the person opened to another; the person's relation to the world is reshaped. In trust, a relationship forms a vital center for self-awareness, and a unique mode of being in the world.

Alienation is also a form of interaction. To be alienated is to be separated from someone; contact or interchange is assumed in that one cannot be alienated unless

there has been something experienced which suggests or encourages separation. The term connotes however, that one is separated from another's world in the sense that sharing is absent. As in the mode of trust there is a form of self-awareness that becomes evident in participants. Whether it be a sense of rejection or unworthiness, a person's self-appraisal is shaped by alienating relationships. We remember the "resolved" man of Heidegger's system: he says, in effect that when separateness is accepted by man, he can resolve the issue of death and solitary living. Alienation directs self-awareness towards the solitary "I". We take Heidegger's description's seriously.

Alienated man's approach to his world can be put in direct contrast to the trustful form of living. The "we" form is distinctly different than alienation; we might say that the logical outcome of alienation is the rejection of a "we" form. The "we" form is not possible if we take alienation at all seriously; one cannot be alienated "with someone". To say that is to strain our language. For whatever reasons, this form of relation pushes the individual into a tighter more private lived-world. Sociality, if rejected, means that one not only cannot accept the mind of the crowd. It also means that "opening" to the world is frustrated. To be solitary in the final sense means being cut off from the lived-world. Not only is autonomy an individualist

form; taken as an all inclusive form, it logically frustrates being open to the world as a whole.

It should not be assumed that the forms or types of relations we have outlined are always "separate", meaning that a given individual cannot experience both of them as well as other forms not discussed. Our point is that the experiential forms we have described are distinct. The phenomenological themes can be delineated. Our conclusions are based upon their distinct characteristics.

Love and trust connote the expanding of the private sphere; they are synonymous with "opening" as Merleau-Ponty indicated in his concepts of "project" and "vortex". Alienation connotes what we anticipated: it is a form of interaction which hardens the lines between self and others, and illustrates the absence of openness to the world as a whole.

When the phenomenological reduction is applied "why this form and not another", a fairly clear answer can be given. Our comparison of alienation with love and trust forms indicates that alienation simply cannot serve as an "opening" of the subject's lived-world. Love and trust can. Our conclusion is that the forms of love and trust are the peculiar forms which demonstrate what Merleau-Ponty said in other terminology. Man, in these forms is opened to self and others as a participant, and to the world in the

"we" form. Love and trust are the specific forms which most clearly illustrate the meaning of vortex, and intercorporeality.

Our explication of love and trust is surely incomplete but our purpose has been served. If these forms are of special importance in opening the subject to himself, others, and the world at large, if they have special relevance for a phenomenology of intersubjectivity, they can justifiably be considered as having a special role in opening the issue of transcendence.

One issue remains to be discussed: it is the question, how will the specific forms of trust and love bear upon the issue of transcendence? In any attempt to make these forms credible philosophically, books could be written. We will not begin to exhaust the possibilities in our argument, but we introduced one issue in our analysis of Merleau-Ponty's ontology which is critical in establishing credibility. It is the question we asked at the close of that chapter: if we utilize Merleau-Ponty's form of ontological observation are we abandoning, as he may have, all connection with a phenomenology of perception? Did Merleau-Ponty stray, in his descriptions of reversibility and intercorporeality, from the path of phenomenological discipline? That issue calls for resolution.

Intercorporeality was used above to conceptualize

the experience of a broadening self-awareness and a new approach to the lived-world in the "we" form. We held ourselves to the phenomenological context in those discussions because we believe it was essential before any ontological observations could be made. Intercorporeality, however, was employed in Merleau-Ponty's ontological reflections. Our task is to see if the types we have introduced make concrete the claim that intercorporeality is man's opening to Being or transcendence.

Two concepts suggested by Merleau-Ponty will aid our inquiry. They are, reversibility and mediation; they should help us to see the appropriateness of the love and trust types in fulfilling the requirements Merleau-Ponty set for the eidos, intercorporeality.

Intercorporeality, we said was the most suggestive of Merleau-Ponty's ontological categories. He submitted it "by title", however; reversibility was described much more fully. It connoted the many aspects of awareness in an intersubjective encounter; a person's lived-world is seen both as an individual domain, and as responsive to the experience of another; the person is described as seeing his own world through the eyes of another; he gains access to the other's lived-world and participates in it; he is aware that lived worlds are shared and that the whole sphere of his experience is shaped by this exchange.

Other things could be said about the networks of reversibility, but one theme is all important. The impact of reversibility is that the participants belong to each other and to a common world. The encounter brings home, through its many "reverses" of awareness, that the participants belong, in an almost literal way, to each other and to a common world.

It seems to me that trustful relations as we have described them are peculiar candidates for making this form of interchange understandable and concrete.

Trust and love connote the participant's willingness to submit their own private worlds to each other. We have described this previously in terms of "opening"; it still applies. Love is a particular way of sharing another's world. We mean by it that another's life has become a vital influence for our own project. More significant, we have been given something in a love relation that we could not possibly have provided ourselves; we become recipients of the other's outlook, his or her interests and commitments, in short his or her peculiar approach to the world. It is not so much that we behold another's lived-world; it is more that we participate in a common world with the beloved. We have opened ourselves and been opened.

That we experience this "reverse" is one part of the relation; we also assume that the other, the beloved,

is opened. This does not imply that we have been instrumental in the opening act, but we have offered ourselves in trust and the other has accepted. We claim an opening movement for the other primarily because we have been party to the action as one who is received.

These rudimentary observations on the networks of a loving, trustful relationship certainly indicate that it corresponds to what Merleau-Ponty noted about reversibility. In being opened, we "belong" to another.

The experience of a love relation uniquely fulfills the theme, j'en suis. It does so especially in the sense that man belongs to the world in which he lives and to its mystery.

In this way, the particular relationship of love between two persons is one which shapes man's grasp of existence and its meaning. We have said how the other "opens" the individual and how the subject submits his private world to another; this very interaction is itself an opening towards the world at large and to the issue of its meaning. The world is no longer a private sphere if we take this form seriously.

Moreover, once love is experienced, that form becomes a potential pattern for one's relation to the whole of existence. Let us be sure this is understood. I am not saying that a particular trusting relation is imitated in

other associations, or that one trusts everyone once he has known trust. I am suggesting that particular trustful relationships become the foundation for our way of coping in society, our view of others and our conception of the world at large. Once the risk of sharing another's world is operative, it can grow into a pattern and become the focus of our total project. No matter how momentary the experience, it is a network which demonstrates concretely that we belong to others and belong to the world. It is the unique forms of love and trust which connote "belonging" as Merleau-Ponty described it.

The term that comes to mind in elaborating this pattern, is "infusion". In trust one undergoes infusion: one's life is invaded by another and he lets his perceptions and values be shared and even cared for by another. If we step back from this experience, it seems evident that life-world's are shaped by this unique experience. Love for another infuses us with the awareness of belonging. We all experience alienation, but I am suggesting that the experience of love and trust forever affects our openness to the world at large. In it we have received and given; that pattern can become the norm for all others. Once belongingness becomes apparent, other forms of relation become subordinate.

Reversibility and j'en suis are given specificity

and concreteness by the form of love and trust.

The concept of mediation is also clarified by the love and trust forms. Especially when we attack the issue of how the interhuman confronts man with transcendence, are the connections important. Two elements in the love form bring us to a better understanding of mediation.

When the question arises, "what is communicated or mediated in a loving relation", the most sensible answer is, "the person, his or her lived-world". What love and trust indicate in the context of mediation is that the sharing of worlds is truly accomplished; it is not simply a matter of personal awareness. The concept of reversibility left that issue unanswered because it dealt with the interhuman as a matter of awareness. Mediation says not only "I belong"; it says life-worlds are given and received, truly shared. When this is particularized in the event of love and trust its meaning becomes clear.

The experience of facing the other and the world at large as one who is accepted, is considerably different than living as a solitary self. The "we" form is not a form for autonomous beings, but for persons who share and are different because of it. Once we have felt the impact of the other we do not hold ourselves aloof; we have become vulnerable, perhaps, more accepting. The point is we are different; in the mode of love we communicate differently,

behave differently and think differently than if we had not confronted the beloved. What we mediate to others in this form is an altered, opened self. Mediation becomes more understandable in the context of an I-Thou relation.

The second aspect is the nub of the issue in this study. Mediation is a two-way thoroughfare. The other who offers his world to us and is opened in the sharing of love, communicates a new sense of the whole. It is best here to speak of "being confronted", or of "reception" for that element in love is unmistakable. What Merleau-Ponty described as "floating on the wave of Being" is suggestive of the point. In love we experience the world as being disclosed.

The other has opened himself, we share and belong to that world. When the question of the meaning of existence is pressed, the response is, we have beheld and been involved in an experience of unveiling. We have been confirmed, accepted. For those who take this experience seriously, it is not a leap of the imagination that calls for the claim of truth about this event. Mediation means disclosure of truth, of Being; it is made concrete in the I-Thou form.

The two elements are: we mediate a changed self to the other in love, a vulnerable "I"; we also receive in the trust of another a sense of disclosure.

It should be clearly noted here that we have not attempted to pursue the specific meaning of disclosure.

That it seems to me, would take us into "high altitude thinking". We have not attempted to assign universal values or principles to the event of love and trust; we have not said that it is analogous to grace or that it reveals the love of God. Merleau-Ponty's reticence is well placed and so is ours. To proceed in that manner would be to present an explanation of the event and its conceptual themes.

We are especially mindful at this point that we are describing an interpersonal phenomenon; we see in that event certain forms and emerging themes but we do not attempt explanation.

We have not strayed far from the original insights of Merleau-Ponty; yet we have I suggest, made clearer the ontological implications of intersubjective exchange. In sum, we have said that the human subject is uniquely opened to the meaning of his being through love and trust; we have argued that the question of the meaning of existence per se is shaped uniquely by loving and trustful relationships, and we have observed that disclosure is a reciprocal affair. The world is not simply an entity such as Sartre's massive Being, but a "disclosing" world, a world which we find opening through intersubjective encounter. Particularly is this latter element important in our study. It is the ontological sphere we have affirmed when we say that, in love and trust man begins to have a true relation with the world

at large.

The ontological significance of love and trust means this: we affirm that the truth of man's existence is communicated uniquely through this form of relation. The truth of our being and the truth of existence is encountered uniquely in the love form of relation. The disclosure of Being may still be characterized as an encounter with mystery for we have not attempted to explain what is disclosed; we have not assigned to the mystery the name of love or any other name. That man confronts the meaning of his existence, that he belongs to the unveiling experience and to others in common wonder, this is enough. Interpersonal exchanges of love and trust become our access to the truth about the entire subject-world relation.

Our phenomenological description of intersubjectivity does not necessitate belief in God. That, it seems to me, is beyond the legitimate bounds of our discussion.

But we have gone much further than presenting a philosophical question which theology will have to answer. The constructive effort for a phenomenology of intersubjectivity is much more than the creation of a favorable atmosphere for theological affirmations. We have made the claim that the truth of the subject-world relation is disclosed in the experience of love. We have claimed that a disclosure of the truth of our being can be identified here as in no other

way. Without resorting to theological perspectives we have argued that there is something essential to be known about ourselves and our world in the context of the love-trust forms. The "new" knowledge about ourselves can be put clearly; as love and trust become the forms which yield truth, so we are taught to seek continued contact with self and others in that very manner. Through an experience of trust comes a continued awareness that we are meant to express what we have found as our truth.

From the phenomenological standpoint, the experience of love is the key to a concept of man as the mediator of transcendence. The unitary theme we presented is that man is a communicant and communicator; he both participates in relationships which present him with a new understanding of the world and he also offers others that which they themselves cannot provide. He presents himself as "the other" for the beloved. Man is a bearer of transcendence as he is its recipient.

Phenomenological discipline requires we emphasize that concepts discussed here are dependent upon the pre-reflective. They cannot be deemed absolute categories which we can use without reference to particular events. But if the experiences of love are permissible in phenomenological discourse we do gain what I have suggested above. This much "knowledge about" man is attainable within the

conceptual scheme.

Ontology, as we have attempted to develop it, is not divorced from a phenomenology of encounter. It is credible only if the phenomenology is so; encounter with Being is rooted in the interpersonal modes we have found to be central.

Our study is but one way of introducing a discussion of the issue of transcendence, but I believe it is an important approach. A phenomenologically oriented discussion can conform to Buber's objectives; discussion of transcendence as he suggested, will concentrate on the question of human relationships and will specifically take its cue from the love-trust forms. It will argue that concepts of transcendence should be rooted in that experiential sphere.

But as Hepburn rightly saw, it will not attempt either to "leap" to a concept of grace from its study of the intersubjective, and it will not permit a presupposition to direct its investigations.

The procedures outlined are not a simple compromise between theological affirmations and empirical philosophy. Phenomenological discipline and its resultant themes call for a radical reappraisal of both theological and philosophical viewpoints.

A phenomenology of intersubjectivity is, I believe, of central concern for other phenomenological studies.

Without overstating the case, it can be said that the recognitions argued heretofore should force any study of essences to regard the interpersonal sphere with utmost seriousness. We did not set out to explain every aspect of sociality and we shall not pursue that issue here, but mention of the task must be made.

Most importantly for this study, the effects on theological discipline should be reviewed. The following is a brief statement of position as dictated by this study.

Theological disciplines have continually sought to work out a right relation to philosophy. That concern lay in the back of my mind throughout this investigation.

Controversy has characterized every effort to solve that problem. No solution has satisfied this writer. Merleau-Ponty is significant because he persisted in a critical but constructive phenomenology. I do not think his ontological reflections betrayed his phenomenology of social exchange and I do not believe my portrayal of the I-Thou type as a form of human love and trust fades into oracularism. It certainly makes no theological affirmation necessary and it receives its vitality in the study of perception.

A phenomenology of the interhuman, however, can prod the thinker to ponder the appropriateness of faith in God. To face the other and be opened to the world is to face the

question of Being. How is that experience to be named? The Nietzschean man may persist to say "Nothingness", the Christian, "Father". There are, perhaps, many other names. But one thing haunts every utterance; we have opened ourselves and been opened. Our lives have been changed by loving and trusting. The experience, if fleeting, is unique and we are moved to utter words and concepts which approximate the impact of love in our lives.

The theologian who responds to this perspective is at once restricted and set free to make use of phenomenological studies. We have repeatedly asserted the restriction: there can be no assumption that divine grace is specified as the presupposition which directs phenomenological study to a given finding. And there can be no pretense, as Hepburn saw, to structure a phenomenology so as to reveal an ostensive definition of God either through analogy or the "gesture" of encounter. We have patiently sought to expose that objective as philosophically unjustified. But once it is recognized as an unwise attempt at natural theology, the theological vocation can be exercised.

We have argued that a phenomenology of intersubjectivity does involve a recognition of transcendence. We have described that recognition as an experience of Otherness or Being, intimately bound up with the experience of another person in love and trust. Otherness or Mystery, in phen-

phenomenological discipline cannot be named, that much is certain if we listen to Merleau-Ponty. But need that be a difficulty for the theologian? No. The relation is made clearer between phenomenology and theology because there is no complete connection between the disciplines, their methods or affirmations. The theologian becomes the "warring brother" in this sense: he names the experience of Otherness; he particularizes the experience of transcendence. There is no neat justification for his position. He sets himself free to affirm something the philosopher cannot be expected to affirm. Theology becomes a discipline which consciously risks affirmation.

In light of our study it is appropriate to commend to theological study, the concept of "transcendence in immanence". We shall not attempt to describe fully what that concept entails, but it is not beyond our bounds to say why the concept is appropriate.

If the interhuman is to be a vital artery in shaping a concept of transcendence, man's role as a mediator should be retained. Transcendence as a mystery intimately bound to the expressions of love does involve man's activity. That man possesses the power or divine spark need not be posited; the lesson of our study is that man, in exchange, communicates the truth of Otherness and is its recipient. Transcendence in immanence retains this focus.

A second aspect of the concept's appropriateness is that it makes room for the affirmation that Otherness is not a creation of man. Otherness is experienced with another; it is experienced but not contained in the interhuman event. Phenomenological discipline makes no claim which would confine the experience to a radical humanism. Again, transcendence in immanence conveys this.

These two elements are given prominence in our research. They shape theological affirmation if the findings about the interhuman are deemed credible.

The major influence, however, is a more general one. Phenomenological descriptions serve to remind the religious thinker that conceptualization is rooted in the pre-reflective interaction of worldly people. Faith is rooted in behavior if we take seriously the holistic concept of behavior. Perhaps, that is the main result of our study; it is the lesson that theological research needs to be constantly in touch with the lived-world. That lived-world, in the forms of love and trust, helps us articulate the mystery of transcendence.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Anscombe, G.E.M. "Modern Moral Philosophy," Philosophy, Vol. 33, 1958.
- _____. "On Brute Facts," Analysis, Vol. 18, 1957-1958.
- Bannan, John F. The Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World Ince., 1967.
- Barrett, William. Irrational Man: A Study in Existential Philosophy. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co., 1958.
- _____. Time of Need: Forms of Imagination in the Twentieth Century. New York: Harper and Row, 1973.
- Buber, Martin. Between Man and Man. Trans. Ronald G. Smith New York: The Macmillan Co., 1967.
- _____. Daniel: Dialogues on Realization. Trans. Maurice Friedman. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964.
- _____. Eclipse of God. New York: Harper Torchbook, 1952.
- _____. I and Thou. Second Edition. Trans. Ronald G. Smith. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1958.
- _____. The Knowledge of Man. Trans. Ronald G. Smith and Maurice Friedman. London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1965.
- Copleston, Frederick. Contemporary Philosophy: Studies of Logical Positivism and Existentialism. Westminster, Maryland: Newman Press, 1963.
- Cox, Harvey. God's Revolution and Man's Responsibility. London: S.C. Press Ltd., 1960.
- Doney, Willis (ed.). Descartes: A Collection of Critical Essays. London: Macmillan, 1968.
- Ebeling, Gerhard. Theology and Proclamation. Trans. John Riches. London: Collins, 1966.

- Edie, James M. Phenomenology in America. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1967.
- Eliade, Mircea. The Quest: History and Meaning in Religion. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969.
- Farmer, Herbert H. The World and God. London: Collins (Fontana Library), 1963.
- Ferre, Fredrick P. Language Logic and God. London: Eyre & Spottis Woode, 1962.
- Feurbach, Ludwig. The Essence of Christianity. Trans. from 2nd edition by Marian Evans. London: Trubner and Co.,
- Flew, Anthony and MacIntyre, Alasdair (eds.). New Essays in Philosophical Theology. London: S.C.M. Press, 1958.
- Friedman, Maurice. Martin Buber: The Life of Dialogue. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd., 1955.
- Galloway, Allan D. Faith in a Changing Culture. London: Allen & Unwin, 1966.
- Gilson, Etienne, Thomas Langan and Armand Maurer. Recent Philosophy: Hegel to the Present. New York: Random House, 1966.
- Heidegger, Martin. Being and Time. Trans. John Macquarrie and Edward Robinson. London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1962.
- _____. Essays in Metaphysics: Identity and Difference. Trans. Kurt F. Leidecker. New York: Philosophical Library Inc., 1960.
- _____. Existence and Being. Introduction by Werner Brock. Chicago: H. Regnery Co., 1949.
- _____. An Introduction to Metaphysics. Trans. Ralph Manheim. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1959.
- _____. Lettre Sur L'Humanisme. Texte Allemand, Traduit et. presenti, par Roger Minier (bilingue). Paris: Aubrier, 1964.

- _____. The Question of Being. Trans. William Kluback and J.T. Wilde. London: Vision Press Ltd., 1958.
- _____. What is Philosophy? Trans. William Kluback and J.T. Wilde. London: Vision Press Ltd., 1956.
- Husserl, Edmund. Cartesian Meditations. Trans. Dorian Cairns. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960.
- _____. The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology. Trans. David Carr, Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1970.
- _____. The Idea of Phenomenology. Trans. W.P. Alston and G. Nakhnikian. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1964.
- _____. Ideas. Trans. W.R. Boyce Gibson. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1952. (2nd Impression).
- _____. The Paris Lectures. Trans. Peter Koestenbaum. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1967.
- Jonas, Hans. The Phenomenon of Life. New York: Harper & Row, 1966.
- Kant, Immanuel. Critique of Pure Reason. Trans. Norman K. Smith. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1968.
- Kaufmann, Walter (ed.). Religion from Tolstoy to Camus. New York: Harper Torchbook, 1961.
- Kwant, Remigius C. From Phenomenology to Metaphysics: an Inquiry into the Last Period of Merleau-Ponty's Philosophical Life. Evanston, Illinois: Duquesne University Press, 1968.
- _____. The Phenomenological Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty. Pittsburg: Duquesne University Press, 1963.
- Langan, Thomas. Merleau-Ponty's Critique of Reason. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1966.
- Lewis, H.D. The Elusive Self. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1969.

- Loneragan, Bernard J.F. Insight: A Study of Human Understanding. London: Longman's Green & Co., 1957.
- Luijpen, William A. Existential Phenomenology. Pittsburg: Duquesne University Press, 1960.
- _____. Phenomenology and Humanism. Pittsburg: Duquesne University Press, 1966.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair and Paul Ricoeur. The Religious Significance of Atheism. New York: Columbia University Press, 1969.
- MacMurray, John. Persons In Relation. (Gifford Lectures, 1954). New York: Harper & Row, 1961.
- Macquarrie, John. An Existential Theology. Library of Philosophy and Theology. London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1955.
- _____. God Talk: An Examination of the Language and Logic of Theology. London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1967.
- Marcel, Gabriel. Being and Having. Trans. A.C. Black. London: Collins, (Fontana Library), 1949.
- _____. The Existential Background of Human Dignity. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1963.
- _____. Metaphysical Journal. Trans. Bernard Wall. London: Regnery Co., 1952.
- _____. The Mystery of Being. (The Gifford Lectures, 1949-1950). 2 Volumes. London: Regnery Co., 1950.
- Martin, C.B. Religious Belief. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1959.
- Marty, Martin J. (ed.). Frontline Theology. Vol 1. London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1967.
- Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. The Communist Manifesto. New York: Russell & Russell, 1963.
- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. In Praise of Philosophy. Trans. John Wild and James Edie. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, 1963.

- Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. The Phenomenology of Perception. Trans. by Colin Smith. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962.
- _____. The Primacy of Perception. Trans. James M. Edie. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1967.
- _____. Sense and Non-Sense. Trans. Hubert L. Dreyfus and Patricia A. Dreyfus. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1964.
- _____. Signs. Trans. Richard McCleary. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1964.
- _____. The Structure of Behavior. Trans. Alden L. Fisher. Boston: Beacon Press, 1967.
- _____. The Visible and the Invisible. Trans. S. Alphonso Lingis. Edited by Claude Lefort. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1968.
- Mitchell, Basil (ed.). Faith and Logic. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1958.
- _____. (comp.). The Philosophy of Religion. London: Oxford University Press, 1971.
- Niebhur, H. Richard. Christ and Culture. New York: Harper, 1951.
- _____. The Meaning of Revelation. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1960.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich W. The Portable Nietzsche. Trans. and selected by Walter Kaufmann. New York: Viking Press, 1954.
- Ogden, Schubert W. The Reality of God. London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1967.
- Oman, John. Grace and Personality. London: Collins, Fontana Library, 1962.
- Polanyi, Michael. Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958.

- Pole, David. The Later Philosophy of Wittgenstein. London: University of London, The Athlone Press, 1958.
- Rabil, Albert. Merleau-Ponty: Existentialist of the Social World. London: Columbia University Press, 1967.
- Ramsey, Ian. Religious Language. London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1957.
- Richardson, William J. Heidegger: Through Phenomenology to Thought. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963.
- Ricoeur, Paul. Husserl: An Analysis of His Phenomenology. Trans. E.G. Ballard and L.E. Embree. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1967.
- Robinson, James M., and John B. Cobb (eds.). The Later Heidegger and Theology. New York: Harper & Row, 1963.
- Rollins, E. William, and Harry Tohn (eds.). Men of Dialogue: Martin Buber and Albert Goes. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1969.
- Sartre, Jean Paul. Being and Nothingness. Trans. Hazel Barnes. New York: Philosophical Library, 1950.
- _____. Existentialism and Humanism. Trans. Philip Mairet. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1963.
- Schlipp, Paul and Maurice Friedman. The Philosophy of Martin Buber. LaSalle, Ill.: Open Court Publishing Co., 1967.
- Searle, J.R. "How to Derive Ought from Is". Philosophical Review. Vol. 73, 1964.
- Smith, Ronald G. The Free Man. London: Collins, 1969.
- _____. Martin Buber. London: Carey Kingsgate Press, 1966.
- Solomon, Robert C. (ed.). Phenomenology and Existentialism. New York: Harper & Row Co., 1972.

- Spiegelburg, Herbert. The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction. 2 Volumes. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960.
- Strawson, P.F. Individuals: An Essay in Descriptive Metaphysics. London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1959.
- Tillich, Paul. Systematic Theology. Vol. I. London: Welwyn, Herts, Nisbet, 1960.
- _____. Theology and Culture. London: Oxford University Press, 1959.
- _____. Ultimate Concern. London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1965.
- Van Buren, Paul M. The Secular Meaning of the Gospel. New York: Macmillan, 1963.
- _____. Theological Explorations. London: S.C.M. Press Ltd., 1968.
- Waisermann, Friedrich. The Principles of Linguistic Philosophy. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1965.
- Warnock, Mary. Existentialism. London: Oxford University Press, 1970.
- Wisdom, John. Paradox and Discovery. Oxford: Blackwell, 1965.
- _____. Philosophy and Psycho-Analysis. Oxford: Blackwell 1953.
- Wittgenstein, Ludwig. Philosophical Investigations. Trans. G.E.M. Anscombe. Oxford: Blackwell, 1963.
- Wood, Robert T. Martin Buber's Ontology. Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1960.
- Wolff, Robert F. (ed.). Kant: A Collection of Critical Essays. London: Macmillan, 1968.
- Zaner, Richard. The Problem of Embodiment. New York: Humanities Press, 1964.