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Joseph L. Roche

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The Human Person in Contemporary Philosophy

JOSEPH L. ROCHE

AMONG the variety of contemporary western philosophical currents, perhaps none would seem to be closer to Filipino culture and characteristic scale of values than the complex, many-sided approach known as *personalism*.¹ A serious study of this contemporary philosophy, western though it may be in its present development, seems pertinent to our situation in the Philippines for two reasons beyond that of the general need of man to know, sympathize with, and profit from, the ways of thought and living of other peoples. The particular pertinence of personalism for the contemporary Filipino is first, that it represents the philosophical approach stressing values strikingly manifested in his own language, customs and habits, and secondly, that it would seem to be the natural area in which the Filipino might be expected to make a genuine contribution of his own.

It would be a truism in the present day culture to point out the fundamental role played by the new appreciation for, and insight into, the unique value of the human person. In almost every field of activity, but especially in the fine arts,

¹ As a general movement, personalism can be described as "any philosophic doctrine affirming the primacy of the human person over the material necessities and collective mechanisms that sustain his development," (Mounier) or which, "based on human intersubjectivity, attributes to persons an important, central place in reality" (Nédoncelle).

literature, philosophy and current theology, there is constant reference to the person as the ultimate source and end of all meaningful activity. The reality and force of this phenomenon can hardly be denied in the midst of anti-poverty programs, anti-war demonstrations, race riots and college irruptions. What is clear is that many ways of acting which were accepted as inescapably part of human life but a generation or two ago, have suddenly become intolerable, often immoral, in the sight of a still small but ever increasing number of the highly articulate, educated younger generation.

Unfortunately, the very testimonies to this heightened consciousness of the person's inalienable value and dignity also give witness to an equally deep-seated confusion as to just what is meant by person, liberty, love. The following pages attempt to bring into some coherent focus many of the more fundamental elements of man's new appreciation of himself. The literature on this subject is enormous, and of very uneven quality. What follows does not pretend to even scratch the surface.² Yet rather than simply describe a number of different contemporary personalisms one after another, or merely survey current personalistic themes, we shall attempt one possible organized view of man that tries for a certain continuity. A minimum of order is needed to

² An attempt is made in the following notes to provide references to many of the primary contemporary sources and to some secondary works valuable for integrating the vast flood of material. Some of the recent studies in man are: M. Adler, *The Difference of Man and the Difference It Makes* (Meridian, 1967); R. Guardini, *The World and the Person* (Regnery, 1965); A. Heschel, *Who Is Man?* (Stanford Univ. Press, 1965); R. Johann, *Building the Human* (Herder & Herder, 1968); R. Jolivet, *Man and Metaphysics* (Burns & Oates, 1961); M. Nédoncelle, *Love and the Person* (Sheed & Ward, 1966); M. Polanyi, *The Study of Man* (Chicago Univ. Press, 1959); E. Schillebeeckx, O.P., *God and Man* (Sheed & Ward, 1969); C. Winkelmans de Clety, S.J. *The World of Persons* (Sheed & Ward, 1967).

Still very valuable are: E. Cassirer, *An Essay on Man* (Yale Univ. Press, 1944); J. Mouroux, *The Meaning of Man* (Sheed & Ward, 1948) and Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man* (Scribner's, 1943). See also B. del Valle, "Towards an Integral Philosophy of Man," *Int. Philos. Quart.*, 5 (1965), 414-35, and D. Browing, "The Problem of Man," *The Personalist*, 50 (1969), 35-104.

be realistically open to further expansion in areas left completely untouched, and to development in depth in many touched upon only briefly.

Basic Field of Investigation

The subject of our study is man: concrete existing man who is the center of movement, intention and agency, the source of all the varied activities of experiencing, understanding, judging and deciding. Thus from the outset we are not limiting our investigation to any one element of man as did many former philosophic treatises on man.³ Nor are we concerned here with the subtle scholastic question of the formal meta-physical principle of the person. Nevertheless there is a constant effort to get to the ultimate grounds of the psychological and phenomenological descriptions of man and his activity as a person.⁴ In the shift of categories in contemporary philosophy, some of the older disputes no longer pertain in any realistic manner to man's effort at self-understanding, while at the same time new problems arise over the precision in meaning and scope of the new categories. In grappling with this latter problem, a competent grasp of the tradition is universally acknowledged to be invaluable.⁵

³ The contemporary stress is on integrating man's vegetative and sensitive dimensions with his specifically rational. See S. Strasser, "Le point de départ en psychologie métaphysique," *Rev. Philos. de Louvain*, 48 (1950), 220-38, and M. Friedman's introductory essay in M. Buber, *The Knowledge of Man* (Torchbook, 1965), pp. 19-20.

⁴ The tradition may have overstressed the distinction between the two levels. Some today propose "to challenge any absolute distinction between psychological change and ontological change. Ontologically man is a rational nature, a psycho-physical entity and any knowledge he acquires... is a real development of his nature, an ontological growth in stature..." See J.P. Mackey, *Life and Grace* (Gill & Son, 1966), p. 58.

⁵ The caution against overemphasizing today's novelty by caricaturing the tradition is brought to mind by the positive treatments of S. Breton's "Problème actuel de l'anthropologie thomiste," *Rev. Philos. de Louvain*, 61 (1963), 215-40, and M. Buber, *Between Man and Man* (Beacon, 1961), pp. 121-26.

The concrete existing man is here taken to be both *subject* of his acts, and *object* of acts on or toward him, either from others or from himself. Thus he can be studied not merely from the spectator approach, from the outside, objectively, as any other object in the world might be considered, but also, by means of self-reflection, from the inside, subjectively, as a subject who is consciously aware of his own existence and activity.⁶ A person can be approached, therefore, not only as part of the universe (the cosmological approach, noted for its clarity, systematic logical build-up and homogeneous treatment of man with the rest of the world), but also as unique, i.e. man precisely as man, as different from all other things.

In this latter view, man is explored more in his proper environment, the world of culture which he creates himself, than in the cosmological world of matter and organisms.⁷ Thus the fields of language, law, art, history, morality, religion, together with man's so-called existential emotions (laughter, crying, shame, care, anguish) are considered prime sources for the data necessary toward answering the basic question: "what is man?" or better, "who am I?"⁸ From this it will

⁶ See S. Strasser, *The Soul in Metaphysical and Empirical Psychology* (Duquesne Univ. Press, 1957) and his "Phenomenological Trends in European Psychology," *Philos. and Phenom. Res.*, 18 (1957-58), 18-34. The metaphysical basis for this is supplied in R. Johann, "Subjectivity," *Rev. of Metaphysics*, 12 (1958), 200-34, and J. de Finance, "Being and Subjectivity," *Cross Currents*, 6 (1956), 163-78. As applied specifically to man, see R. Gerber, "The Objective and Subjective Study of Man," *Insight*, 6 (1967), 26-33.

⁷ See G. A. de Laguna, *On Existence and the Human World* (Yale Univ. Press, 1966), chaps. 4 and 6, especially pp. 109ff, 123, 150.

⁸ This manner of posing the question in no way reduces philosophy's breadth. See M. Buber, *The Knowledge of Man*, p. 19: "...asking the whole question, What is man...the unique question, Who am I... These are not smaller or more personal questions; they are larger and more comprehensive than the ones which science has been asking. This includes a larger view of man, as well as a larger view of history. They include man's personal being—my personal being and knowledge of myself—as well as my philosophical and scientific knowledge of what 'man is'..." See also *Between Man and Man*, pp. 123-25.

be evident how much the new view of man depends on the enormous progress made in the sciences of man, and the use that can be made of them to fashion a more relevant, more concrete and consequently truer *philosophic* image of man.

Paradoxically, the flood of new scientific data about man has increased the need for some philosophical, unifying, foundational conception of man.⁹ No amount of collected "data" on man can substitute for such a unifying concept, since the very selection, ordering and evaluating of the data presuppose just such a concept or image. Nor can any group of essential properties satisfy this need, since the question would still remain *why* these particular properties or characteristics are essential, and *how* man has them in the first place.

Plurality of Personalisms

What is peculiar to today's emphasis on the human person is the plurality of philosophical approaches and methodologies all pointing to a certain common consensus.¹⁰ To restrict our investigation to the contemporary philosophic scene, there are at least five major currents that can be said to be centered in one way or another on the human person. Perhaps the greatest in influence is still that of *existential phenomenology*.¹¹ The favorite themes of the existentialists have

⁹ This is one major point stressed by R. Zaner, "An Approach to a Philosophical Anthropology," *Philos. and Phenomen. Res.*, 22 (1966), 55-68, as well as by L. Feldstein, "Reflections on the Ontology of the Person," *Int. Philos. Quart.*, 9 (Sept., 1969), 313-41.

¹⁰ In an excellent article on "The Personalism of M. Nédoncelle," *Philosophical Studies*, (Maynooth) 15 (1969), p. 114, V. T. Liddle, C. M., divides the plurality of personalisms into two orders: one stressing the practical-ethical-political, exemplified in Mounier, and the other ordered more toward the speculative-critical-ontological and reflective (Nédoncelle).

¹¹ Two handy works for our purpose are W. Luijpen, *Existential Phenomenology* (Duchesne Univ. Press, 1960) and A. Dondeyne, *Contemporary European Thought and Christian Faith* (Duchesne Univ. Press, 1958). See also F. Copleston, "The Human Person in Contemporary Philosophy," in his *Contemporary Philosophy* (Burns & Oates, 1960), pp. 103-24; C. R. Bukala, "The Existential Structure of the Person," *The Personalist*, 49 (1968), 215-26.

always revolved about man as freedom, temporal, self-creative, situated in the world with others, and standing before death. Antedating the post-war explosion of existentialism was the personalism of *Emmanuel Mounier* and his review, *Esprit*.¹² Though showing many affinities with the later French existentialism, especially regarding the notion of liberty, Mounier's personalism was more directly practical, social, and politically-minded, engaged in controversy with both the Communists and capitalists of the 1930's. The personalism of Mounier did not pretend to be a complete philosophic system, but it did claim to be more than just an attitude of mind.

Another strong influence on Mounier, however, was the spiritual philosophy of the French reflective school, led by L. Lavelle, R. Le Senne, Aimé Forest and others publishing in the *Philosophie de L'Esprit* series.¹³ Playing on various themes such as interiority, recollection, act, value and consent, these French philosophers presented a highly sensitive, spiritually vibrant image of man that is awakening renewed interest today.

In the Anglo-American philosophic camp, personalism originally referred to the idealistic philosophy of Borden P. Bowne at the turn of the century and others, e.g., E. S. Brightmann, who followed him. But today the personalistic tendencies in America are mainly concentrated in the natu-

¹² See E. Mounier, *Be not Afraid* (Sheed & Ward, 1962) and *Le Personnalisme* (Presses Univ. de France, 1959).

¹³ Among the more valuable works produced by this group are: A. Forest, *La Vocation de L'Esprit* (Aubier, 1953); L. Lavelle, *Les Puissances du Moi* (Flammarion, 1958); *De L'ame humaine* (Aubier, 1951); and *La Conscience de soi* (Grasset, 1951); R. Le Senne, *La Destinée personnelle* (Flammarion, 1951); G. Madinier, *Conscience et amour* (Presses Univ. de France, 1947); J. Lacroix, *Personne et amour* (Ed. du Seuil, 1955), *Le Sens du dialogue* (Ed. de la Baconnière, 1955). A handy summary of their approach to the person can be found in I. Gobry, *La Personna* (Presses Univ. de France, 1961). For an indication of awakening interest, see J. Nicols, "Spiritualist Philosophy of Rene Le Senne," *Philosophy Today*, 11 (1967), 276-92; A. M. Weze, "Personal Dimensions in the Spiritualism of L. Lavelle," *Philosophy Today*, 2 (1958), 37-45, and the three articles on Lavelle, *ibid.*, 9 (Fall, 1965).

ralistic and social pragmatism of the followers of Dewey, W. James, and G. H. Mead, together with the growing phenomenological movement and continuing strong influence of such Europeans as Heidegger, Sartre, and Ricoeur.¹⁴ Somewhat parallel to the special position of E. Mounier in continental personalism is that of *John MacMurray* among the Anglo-Saxon personalists.¹⁵

Even this brief sketch of the variety of sources for today's personalism gives a fair indication of the depth and scope of the material reviewed here. Incorporating into one continuous account such a plurality of philosophic approaches and methodologies makes a certain amount of superficiality and misrepresentation all but inevitable. But perhaps this may be excused if there results a comparable gain in insight into the person. The general method adopted in this essay follows the natural order of questioning: first, a broad inquiry into the basic nature of the topic in general, followed by more specific analyses into particular elements of the topic, and concluded by a synthesizing effort to put the parts analyzed back into an integrated whole again, but now understood much more profoundly.

One more characteristic of contemporary personalism, which can serve as a final prenote, is its insistence on its own *necessity* for man. The endeavor to think out and formulate, at least in some implicit lived way, what man is, or who I am, is not some intellectual game for professionals who have nothing better to do. Neither is it just some abstract necessity built into human nature, which all men do automatically, with equal success. On the contrary, the task personalism sets out to perform is one which every concrete exist-

¹⁴ For a valuable introduction, see J. Smith, *The Spirit of American Philosophy* (Oxford Univ. Pres, 1966); also R. Roth, S.J., *John Dewey and Self-Realization* (Prentice-Hall, 1962). For an introduction into the older American personalism, see J. E. Barnhart, "Brightmann's Philosophy of the Person," *The Personalist*, 50 (1969), 53-59.

¹⁵ His major works are *Self as Agent* (1957) and *Persons in Relation* (1961). For an excellent critique, see D. D. O'Connor, "John MacMurray: Primacy of the Personal," *Int. Philos. Quart.*, 4 (1964), 464-84.

ing man finds himself doing with varying degrees of success, i.e., trying to make sense out of his life. What is rarely perceived clearly, however, is that a person's very being as a person is essentially dependent on this self-questioning, this "making sense" of his life. In the case of objects or things, the fact of "being known" makes no apparent change in their being. But for man, the quality and degree of being known by oneself and by others (the two are radically interdependent) effect an ontic change in the very being of the person.¹⁶

Starting Point

Perhaps the major characteristic of all personalistic philosophies today is their insistence on the human person as *relational*: man-together-with-others-in-the-world.¹⁷ There is definitely an attempt here to say *more* than the traditional "man is social by nature." The point is that man becomes a person—his self-becoming is a real process—precisely in relating to other persons. There is a certain analogy here with the Thomistic adage that the nature of the human soul is in a sense not to have a nature—not to be determined to one particular mode of existence alone—but rather to be able to be, in some sense, *quoddammodo omnia*, all things, by reason of its knowing and willing. So here a person is not just this particular, concrete human nature, but a *personal becoming* that is intrinsically dependent on its relations with others, and primarily with the human other.¹⁸ The becoming

¹⁶ See Zaner, *art. cit.*; Feldstein, *art. cit.*, and especially Laguna, *op. cit.*, p. 122. There is, of course, a close analogy here with Plato's "unreflected life as not worth living" and Aristotle's "wonder" as the basic characteristic of all men; but today there is the added connotation of self-becoming, growth, in one's environment.

¹⁷ See Laguna, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-20. This relational aspect of the person has inspired a tentative new interpretation of being and its transcendentals. See the searching article of R. Wood, "The Self and the Other," *Philosophy Today*, 10 (1966), 48-63. For man's social dimension, see M. Plattel, *Social Philosophy* (Duquesne Univ. Press, 1965), and J. Walgrave, *Personal Society* (Duq. U. Press, 1965).

¹⁸ This aspect of the person as process is a common theme today. See Sr. Aloysius, "Self-becoming and the Other," *Thought*, 41 (1966),

of a person means: first, that there is a real process of growth and development; secondly, that this process is not merely physical, nor "natural" in the sense of a maturing physical organism, but rather is open to risk, and to degrees of success or failure (in this sense it is possible to be more or less a person); thirdly, this process is effected in relationship with others (self-knowledge is always mediated through others); and finally, that these relations with other subjects are not just the necessary condition of, nor even merely the causal means toward, achieving the being of a person, but rather "being a person" is the being with, communion with and in, others.

This basic notion will be developed in the following pages under various specific topics such as language, knowledge, affectivity and love. But the immediate point here is that if man precisely as person is a process effected with others, then a proper study of the person must start with him actively engaged with others. Such is the act of dialogue.¹⁹

DIALOGUE AS CONTEXT OF THE PERSON

Dialogue has much to recommend it as a starting point for studying man. Not only is it a clear, easily accessible, indubitable phenomenon which entails no unfounded presuppositions and is necessarily implied in all search for truth. It also enjoys the additional advantage of being the natural meeting place of the two currently dominant philosophic styles, existential phenomenology and linguistic analysis.²⁰ To

412-37; T. T. Shannon, "The Evolution of the Person—Marcel," *Insight*, 6 #3 (1968), 15-24; K. Basil O'Leary, FSC, "The Renewal of Moral Theology," *Continuum*, I (1963), 310-28, especially 321-23.

¹⁹ On dialogue see: A. Brunner, *La Connaissance humaine* (Aubier, 1943), pp. 21-46; R. Howe, *The Miracle of Dialogue* (Seabury, 1965); Buber, *Between Man and Man*, pp. 1-39 and his classic *I and Thou* (Scribner's, 1958) and *The Life of Dialogue*, ed. by M. Friedman (Harper, 1960); A. Forest, "The Meaning of Dialogue," *Philosophy Today*, 2 (1958), 116-18; M. Deschoux, "Authentic Dialogue," *Ibid.*, pp. 118-21.

²⁰ See A. Brunner, *op. cit.*, pp. 21-23; also Smith, "Phenomenology of Encounter," *Philosophy Today*, 7 (1963), 194-208; and my "Philosophic Approach to Dialogue," *Int. Philos. Quart.*, 4 (1964), 595-610.

start with concrete existing man in actual dialogue with other persons is to start with man acting precisely as man. An analysis of man-in-dialogue reveals him to be at once *relational* with a plurality of others, yet with an *independence* of existence recognizable in himself and in the others as well. Moreover dialogue demands that a person be *free* to respond in this way or that, with a certain continuing identity throughout the temporal duration of the dialogue. In addition, the very means of carrying on dialogue, language, illustrates the unity of the material and formal, the sign and the signification, which man's very constitution manifests. Through language, the product of man's own creativity and historicity, the unity of the individual person is brought to light as participating in that of the community of persons. Language functions as both direct expression of objective facts and indirect expression of the subjectivity of the person,—his will, sentiment, affectivity as felt from within.²¹

Another important aspect brought out in dialogue is the person's dependence on perspective.²² The perspective of the I is different from that of the thou, yet this difference can be recognized and thus transcended. For if the relativism of perspective were absolute, no understanding between men would be possible. Human discourse and knowledge is thus phenomenologically manifested as situated between two extremes, the purely objective and the purely subjective.

In dialogue, then, we have an excellent starting point for a contemporary approach to man. Of course every act of intercommunication between men is not of the same importance or value. But a man capable of genuine dialogue has to be able to respond to others as they truly are, to listen

²¹ On language see E. Cassirer, *op. cit.*, pp. 41-62: "A Clue to the Nature of Man: Symbol". Also, M. Picard, *Man and Language* (Regnery, 1963); A. Brunner, *op. cit.*, pp. 31-35; F. Ebner, "World and Personality," *Phil. Today*, 11 (1967), 233-37, and articles on symbol by A. Vergote, P. Ricoeur and E. Biser, in *Phil. Today*, 4 (1960), pp. 53-70, 196-207, 238-49.

²² This has been developed by P. Ricoeur, *Fallible Man* (Regnery, 1967) especially pp. 29-71. Confer M. A. Schaldenbrond in *The Primacy of the Person in the Church* (Fides, 1967), pp. 1-19.

and learn as well as to speak and teach, to accept as well as to give. In brief, he has to be truly *present* and *open* to the other. In fact his willingness and ability to reveal himself authentically to others is directly proportional to his capacity and willingness to listen and receive.

Moreover, the giving of one's own subjectivity in dialogue, and leaving the other free to respond and initiate from the depths of his own subjectivity, are paradoxically enough the very things that demand a certain *objectivity* and *discipline*. Now the discipline which is indispensable for all genuine dialogue, indicates a second dimension of dialogue beyond that of intellectual experience, namely affective encounter.²³ While it is true that the dialogic character of all human knowledge and truth has thus recently been highlighted, not less important perhaps is the heightened appreciation of the role of feeling and affections in truth and knowledge.²⁴

It should be noted that it is not just the ideal dialogue, admittedly of rather rare occurrence, that can help us to understand man. Failures in dialogue can be just as revealing, perhaps more so due to their greater frequency. Popular slogans such as "be open," "treat the other as a person, not as a thing," take on more concrete meaning when seen in the light of an experience with a domineering conversationalist, an amateur professional logical analyst, an armchair psychiatrist, or any of the innumerable types from the progeny of the original "answer-man".

Genuine dialogue, then, shows a certain dialectic of appeal and receptive openness which demands, and is creative of, a real reciprocity. It is in this mutual give-and-take that the peculiar creativity sometimes experienced in dialogue, takes place. The outcome is somehow more than the sum of individual contributions, if not in terms of completely new ideas, at least in a new heightened personal consciousness of,

²³ See articles referred to in n. 20.

²⁴ The place of feeling in knowledge has been forwarded by the studies of P. Ricoeur; see *op. cit.*, chap. 4: "Affective Fragility," pp. 122-202.

and adherence to, some already known truth, or in a new quality of the truth's genesis in the mind. Dialogue is perhaps the most effective means in creating values proper to the person as such: the consciousness of self as at once situated, limited, yet free; an acceptance of oneself as one really is, without illusion or deceit, yet within a proximate source of encouragement, help and support.

From the preceding discussion of the concrete phenomenon of dialogue, a number of hypotheses about the person have been suggested which, waiting further confirmation and clarification in what is to come, could be summarized as follows. The person in dialogue reveals himself as first, an *exteriorized interiority*, or a being at once active/passive, productive/receptive, individual/related; secondly, as a *whole*, a radical unity and permanence that alone explains the possibility of active, perduring dialogue; thirdly, as *free* and *responsible*, for dialogue presupposes a give-and-take that is not predetermined, and for which each is held accountable; fourthly, as *unified* and *subsistent* in that each participant manifests himself as an independent source of activity; and finally, as *relative*, being dependent on others for language, culture, and motivation of various kinds.

Further Implications: the Self

But what precisely does this exteriorized interiority mean in the concrete? Essentially it means two things. Man first of all appears in dialogue as interiority, that is as conscious subject of his acts of thinking, listening, understanding. Yet he is such *only in dialogue* of some sort. He has no pure intuition of himself outside his acts, no awareness of himself which does not necessarily include within it some non-self. But secondly, there is within the very self a difference. For dialogue also reveals how a man reflects back on what he just said, how he gesticulated, in order to modify or change or reassert. This shows he is an object to himself—his body, his words, are open to his own scrutiny. Exteriorized interiority, therefore, means that man not only uses exterior things

to express his interior, but his own total interiority has an exterior dimension to it.

Thus the individual person reveals himself in dialogue as both the determining principle, the subject source, of all his acts, and the determined, objectivisable self, a composite of his body and all his acts which both he and others can face in a manner similar to the way any object is observed. The simple examples of a man washing *his* hands, combing *his* hair, feeling sorry for what *he said* previously, clearly manifest the person as both doer and receiver, as subject source and object.²⁵

Further reflection on the fact of these retroverted acts brings to light the characteristic *one-and-many* quality of the person. The whole person is constituted by a single perduring subject pole, the I, as concomitant consciousness of the person's multiple object pole, namely his body and many acts which, though extended in space and time, nevertheless are all *his*, endowed with meaning only as his objective exteriorization. So the person can say: "I exist in my body, and through my acts; they constitute my objectivisable self (that part of me that *can* be objectified as distinguished from the I as subject source which cannot); they constitute likewise the condition of possibility for my active insertion in the world."²⁶

The relationship between these two aspects of the person as subject source, I, and as object, me, is obviously reciprocal. One is immediately related to the other. Yet it is not reversible: the I is irreducibly subject source, and never just a part among other parts within the unity of the whole man. It is that experienced principle, that formative act of

²⁵This is the basic theme of S. Strasser, *The Soul in Metaphysical and Empirical Psychology*, especially pp. 79-85, *et passim*.

²⁶This shows the self is not absolute source of its acts, but needs to be complemented from the world of objects or quasi-objects. Retroverted acts are not perfectly immanent; there is always something that goes out to the world. This indicates the imperfect interiority of the human person—we have no intellectual intuition of ourselves. See Strasser, *op cit.*, pp. 85-86, 103-04, 142-46.

the fluid structured whole that is the total self, from which all members derive their unity, order and self-subsistency.²⁷

Now it is precisely this subject source which, upon further analysis, corresponds in large measure to the traditional concept of *soul*. This further analysis can take a number of different forms. There is the classical approach arguing from the transcendental receptivity of man's knowing and willing powers, a receptivity and intentionality that enables the person to go beyond his own limits and become "the other."²⁸ Thus I possess myself in conscious self-identity in the very acts by which I go beyond myself, transcend my determinable self and its world. Another avenue of access to the nature of this subject source is through a reflective analysis of self-presence.²⁹

These approaches are but indications of contemporary efforts that parallel to a certain extent the more traditional treatises on the human soul as the spiritual, simple, subsistent principle of man's life.³⁰ But important as are the similarities which manifest the continuity that any living tradition must exhibit if it is to be more than a passing fad, perhaps the dissimilarities, the novelties of the contemporary approaches.

²⁷ On man understood in terms of order and wholeness, see Laguna, *op. cit.* (n. 7), p. 150; Strasser, *op. cit.*, pp. 117-42; and P. A. Bertocci, "Person as the Key Metaphysical Principle," *Philos. and Phenom. Res.*, 17 (1956-57), 207-25.

²⁸ See Strasser, *op. cit.*, pp. 165-69; J. De Finance, *Existence et Liberté* (E. Vitte, 1955), pp. 33-35, 63-74; and M. Henry, "Does the Concept of Soul Mean Anything?" *Philos. Today*, 13 (1969), 94-114.

²⁹ There is a concrete progression of reflective analysis possible here. First, all my acts are subject to psychological reflection, i.e. looking back at them in a subsequent act. Second, many of my acts performed through my body are open to more intense concomitant reflection, e.g. when I try to perfect my form in sports, or my driving ability. Finally, in some of my acts I am present to myself in an immediate way, so that any subsequent act of reflection is useless; e.g. to judge my judgment in the act of judging is meaningless and unnecessary. See Strasser, *op. cit.*, pp. 159-65, 185-86.

³⁰ See A. Castell, *The Self in Philosophy* (Macmillan, 1965); also J. Ruane, S.J., "Self-Knowledge and the Spirituality of the Soul," *New Scholasticism*, 32 (1958), 425-42.

are even more significant. The most striking difference is found in the appreciation of man's body and consequent radical modification of one current in the classical tradition which tended to treat man as an angelic soul fallen on hard times and working toward release. While today's constant stress on the unity of man as essentially an *incarnate spirit* can be a bit naive at times, nevertheless its general thrust can only be acclaimed as a positive step forward in man's quest for deeper self-understanding.

THE HUMAN BODY IN TODAY'S PERSONALISM

A major shift in evaluating the human body arose out of the contemporary existentialist stress on man's *subjectivity*. Differing radically both from the ancient and medieval philosophy's basically *objective* approach to man as to all reality, as well as from the classical, modern critical philosophies of consciousness, the subjectivity of today breaks with tradition in giving a certain priority to the body, or more exactly, a certain primacy to incarnation over pure thought.³¹ Incarnation is the condition of possibility for all human thought as we know it. The new dimension in all of this is that to the older study of man's body as an object, as a body, the body any observer sees, there has been added the study of the body-subject, my body as felt and lived from within, the body which participates in my subjectivity. This is the force and significance of the term previously used, *objectivisable self*—that part of me that I *can* objectify, reflect back on as a quasi-object but which ordinarily I just live with. It is my *objectivisable-self-for-me*, as distinguished from my *objectivisable-self-for-others*, that which others see and act on.³²

³¹For contemporary studies of the body, see: Shrag, "Lived Body as a Phenomenological Datum," *Modern Schoolman*, 39 (1961), 203-18; H. E. Hengstenberg, "Phenomenology and Metaphysics of the Human Body," *Int. Philos. Quart.*, 3 (1963), 165-200; T. T. Shannon, "The Philosophy of the Body," *Insight*, 5 #3 (1967), 29-41.

³²Even when I objectify my body by turning back on it in a reflective act, or act on it in a retroverted act, it still does not become identical with a pure object; my body is still *mine*. I know and experience it in a way different from my knowledge and experience of *another's* headaches, strained muscles, etc. Thus the term *quasi-object*

The expression incarnated or embodied spirit, then, is not primarily a *spatial* image—a spirit that happens to be located in a material component called body. Rather it is a *qualitative* description: man is that kind of spirit whose very spirituality displays characteristics of non-spirituality.³³ And the reverse is just as true: man's material component is not just so much chemical matter, nor vegetative nor animal organism, that happens to be linked to a human spirit, but a body whose mode of being participates in the subjectivity of the human spirit.

Now it is through his body that the person is present to the world as a determinate field of his concrete activity. Man's original experience is one of "situatedness," of being-together-in-the-world-with-others. This is man's facticity, that fundamental perspective, the total concrete situation in which every man finds himself. It is the ever-present *déjà-là*, already-there, which is independent of his free choice.³⁴ Such perspective clearly limits and orients the manner in which reality is immediately presented to him. Yet facticity also functions as an *openness*, a potentiality, an invitation to transcend this particular perspective by concretizing, through particular acts, the transcending dynamism of his thinking and willing. A certain paradox results: the irrevocable element of always "being-situated," always acting within a particular perspective, is within man's concrete presence in the world, assumed within his *élan* to transcend, to go beyond, by free intentional acts.

The methodological starting point for these analyses of the human body is one that consciously attempts to get beyond the body-soul dichotomy by concentrating on the primordial, unified self-awareness of the whole person, the total self. Body, then, can no longer be viewed as detached from self, as something known only exteriorly, something "prob-

was coined. See Gevers, "Ontological Condition of Corporality," *St. Louis Quart.*, (Baguio), I (1963), 179-89, especially pp. 193-96; and Strasser, *op. cit.*, pp. 98-101.

³³ Gevers, *art. cit.*, p. 187

³⁴ Luijpen, *op. cit.* (n. 11), pp. 21-42, 180-95.

lematic," in Marcelian terms. Rather his body becomes part and parcel of his I-ness, as a mystery, and precisely as the means and medium of insertion into the world of being and having.³⁵ It is through his body alone that the person can be actively concerned with the world of bodies and possessions, while being invited in this very activity toward transcendent being. In this general dialectic of *having* and *being* Marcel finds his analysis of the double truth: I *have* a body and I *am* my body.

Man *has* a body in the sense that he, as a person, cannot simply be equated with his body. It is his "given," not the product of his free choice, but something that limits and defines his possibilities, his point of view. Its own determinations introduce a certain alienation within the very being of the person, an alienation that must not simply be suffered or tolerated, but actively assimilated and transcended.

Yet man also *is* his body. He does not "have" it like he has the clothes he wears, or a tool he uses. Once he thinks of his body in such terms he has effectively reduced himself to a function of what his body can produce. But the fact is that the human body has value by its very existence, independent of any function. For that reason man cannot dispose of his body as some material object, but rather simply by existing acts through his body, raising its corporeal aspect beyond the merely physical.³⁶

The significance for personalism of this new approach to the body is the possibility it offers in explaining a person's ordinary manner of living in the external world, creating "his world" by being the center of everything arranged about him, through his knowledge, his projects, his response. His very

³⁵ See R. Gerber, "Marcel's Phenomenology of the Human Body," *Int. Philos. Quart.*, 4 (1964), 443-63.

³⁶ The basic pertinent works of Marcel are: *Being and Having* (Harpers, 1965), chap. 2: "Outlines of a Phenomenology of Having," pp. 154-74; and *Creative Fidelity* (Noonday, 1964) chap. 1: "Incarnate being as the central datum of metaphysical reflection," pp. 11-37. See J. B. O'Malley, *The Fellowship of Being* (Nijhoff, 1966) for Marcel's general philosophy of the person.

body takes its shape in response to the encounters and interplay with the world. It is in these encounters that man, the shepherd of being, gives meaning to the world, personalizes it, makes it a home in which he can see himself mirrored and expressed in countless ways.³⁷ Through his body the person takes a dynamic stance toward the world, specifically by his act of human existing, communicating and responding to the properly human vocation of self-becoming through matter as the natural means for development, growth and expression. Hence the corporal component of man can never adequately be viewed merely as limitation, but rather as that principle which allows for positive human values impossible of attainment without it.

Nevertheless, this basic approach of French existential phenomenologists, particularly Marcel, Sartre and Merleau-Ponty, has been criticized as not going far enough.³⁸ Despite the initial insight into the primacy of incarnation over pure thought or consciousness in understanding the person, the traditional opposition between body and spirit seems to reappear under various new formulas—having/being, problem/mystery, or even in the notion of facticity which often is treated in a manner vaguely reminiscent of the Pythagorean theme of body as tomb. There still is little place for what preoccupies the physician. There still seems to be too much separation of human powers, too much of the traditional radical opposition between consciousness, thought, the order of signification and representation on the one hand, and the biological, lived body as object of science, of causal understanding, on the other. This seems to do less than justice to the simple concrete everyday effects of an aspirin, or a sleeping pill.³⁹

³⁷ See Luyten, "The Significance of the Body in Thomistic Anthropology," *Philos. Today*, 7 (1963), 175-93; and Gerber, *art. cit.*, p. 447.

³⁸ See G. Gusdorf, *Traite de Métaphysique* (Colin, 1956) Pt II, chap. 2; "L'Incarnation," pp. 210-49. See also H. Jonas, *The Phenomenon of Life, Toward a Philosophical Biology* (Harper, 1966).

³⁹ See R. Shinn, *The New Humanism* (Vol. 6 of New Directions in Theology Today) (Westminster, 1968) chap. 8: "Questions From the New Biology," pp. 77-86.

In contrast to idealist philosophies of the spirit which supposed the silence of human organisms, the task of an adequate philosophy of the person today must be to assume human reality in its totality, including the direct and indirect influence exercised by bodily organisms on the course of consciousness. The gap between the lived body as treated in the personalist philosophies and the same body's organic being in its material functions, must be spanned. There is a qualitative relationship between the two as is evidenced by the influence of certain organic states in producing particular rhythms of thought and affective tonalities. This has become all the more relevant today with the world-wide spread of the use of drugs.

Central to this phenomenology of the human body is the concept of *incarnation*, which philosophically refers to the conversion at every instant from the *objective* to the *personal*, the taking of the human body out of the world of bodies and conferring on it a type of radical privilege relative to that world. In this regard, it has been shown that human biological life shows a twofold serviceability and specialization for objectiveness that are unique.⁴⁰ This implies that the human body expresses total existence not by being an external accompaniment of man's spirit, but because man's total existence realizes itself in the body. His body represents the existential condition for the slow, difficult development of his personal being. Hence the incarnated power of sensing is the central, primary datum, regarding which body and spirit are but abstract moments.

Understood in this framework, the radical opposition between body and thought loses its *raison d'être*; the notion of man's body becomes a cultural theme rather than simply an expression of a physiological fact. Moreover this basic concept of incarnation has been prolonged in the developing study

⁴⁰ See Hengstenberg, *art cit.*, (n. 31), especially pp. 173-77. See also the review of Hengstenberg's remarkable work, *Philosophische Anthropologie* (Stuttgart: Kohlhammer, 1960) by A. Poncelet, S.J., *Int. Philos. Quart.*, 1 (1961), 333-46.

of man as *environmental*.⁴¹ Here the focus is turned from the fact of individual embodiment and insertion into a definite field, to the very relational structure between that field and the person, the *interface*. The current, sometimes rather bizarre experimentation in the plastic arts, music and the theater, does provide a whole new field for the personalist's search for understanding man. Practical consequences of some of these new influences are already visible in such varied fields as business ethics, religious sacramental practice and ritual, the theology of the Word and of spiritual asceticism, and in the very notion of objectivity and of truth.

Activities of Man as Person

In general we only get to know the nature, depth and structure of something through its actions, the way it manifests itself. Consequently, to delve deeper into the question of "who am I?" we must study those activities most indicative of the human person. Here we can only touch upon a few of the insights common to contemporary personalism's understanding of human activity.

Traditionally man's activities have been treated under two major headings, cognitive and appetitive, giving rise through the centuries to diverse philosophical systems stressing one or the other area, and labelled with varying degrees of accuracy "intellectualist" or "voluntarist". Now one underlying motive behind much contemporary reflection is the effort to get behind such a separation of man's powers, to try to grasp in a more adequate manner how the person—not his intellect or will—thinks and feels and wills as a unified whole.

Philosophy has been described with some accuracy as the science of *self-knowledge*, which is understood today in terms

⁴¹ See, for example, W. Kuhns, *Environmental Man* (Harper, 1969); M. McLuhan, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (Mentor, 1964); D. Fabun, *The Dynamics of Change* (Prentice-Hall, 1967); L. Mumford, *Technics and Civilization* (Harcourt & Brace, 1963). Even here there is a link with the tradition: see C. Dechert's "Cybernetics and the Human Person," *Int. Philos. Quart.*, 5 (1965), 5-36, which concludes with an appendix, "The Thomistic Model of Man as a Self-Regulating System," pp. 33-36.

of man's personal horizon.⁴² To ask about a person's horizon is to inquire into not only his intellectual view of himself, his fellow man, and the world in general, but also his *decision* or evaluation taken as a result of this vision, his commitment to this view rather than to some other. But this commitment is open to criticism; it must be able to be defended as reasonable, though not, of course, like some mathematical formula imposing itself on all. Moreover the defense of one's horizon can never be simply a matter of citing more facts, marshalling more information, for these presuppose to some extent, in their inter-relation and evaluation, precisely what is to be defended: the horizon in which they are viewed. At this fundamental level of man's thinking and willing, then, there is an exigency for justification of judgment and decision that can only be met by a deeper reflective understanding of the human powers involved and their proper operation.⁴³

This notion of man's horizon and the nature of man's cognitive and appetitive powers introduce a key category in today's description of man's activity: his *intentionality*.⁴⁴ Man is that being who ex-ists, stands forth outside himself, transcending any formal limitations of a determined nature by means of his other-directedness, his being-in and being-toward the world. Thus intentionality simply spells out on the level of man's activities, the essential characteristic of his very being as *relational*. Encounter, presence, participation, intersubjectivity—these are the categories which come to grips with contemporary man's concrete experience, and are thus, perhaps often more useful than the more traditional con-

⁴² See M. Novak, *Belief and Unbelief, A Philosophy of Self-Knowledge* (Macmillan, 1965), especially chap. 2: "Philosophy as Self-Knowledge," pp. 55-74.

⁴³ This has been one of the major themes of B. Lonergan, S.J., in his monumental *Insight* (Longmans, Green & Co., 1958). See also his *Collections* (Herder & Herder, 1967) especially chap. 14: "Cognitive Structure." More recently Lonergan has added new emphasis to the final step of decision; this will appear in his forth-coming work on the *Method of Theology*.

⁴⁴ The notion of intentionality is fundamental to the phenomenologists, though interpreted in widely varying ways. See Dondeyne, *op. cit.* (n. 11) and Luijpen, *op. cit.* (n. 11).

cepts of matter and form, substance and accident, quality, quantity and the like.

Only a very brief sketch of man's intentionality in his knowing and willing dynamism is possible here.⁴⁵ But taking man concretely in dialogue, a basic set of constants do come to light. There is first the out-going intentionality of the man listening, gathering information, observing, touching,—in general, gathering sensible data. This in turn raises questions. All of us have a built-in desire to know, as Aristotle pithily observed, and to which parents of young children can heartily testify. We find ourselves questioning, sifting all the data like some detective working on his clues, in order to resolve our doubts and conflicts. This spontaneous questioning implies that there is a "why" for things, or in the philosophers' terms, being is intelligible. Ideally the questioning issues in a break-through of understanding, often expressed, vocally or not, in something like "I've got it," or "Oh, now I see." The pieces of the puzzle have suddenly fallen into place in an act of insight or understanding.

This act of understanding, answering in general the question concerning *what* a thing is, leads to the further step of judgment: *is it so?* In dialogue, once we have understood *what* the other is proposing, we still have the further step of judging in a reflective act whether such *is* the case or not. Through this "is" of the affirmation we intentionally affirm the "is" in reality. But this is still not the last step in our total intentionality. For our language conveys not just meaning, but evaluation as well, not just "is it so?" but "ought it to be so?"⁴⁶ This brings in the dimension of value, of

⁴⁵ For man's cognitional structure, besides the works referred to above (nn. 42 and 43) see C. Cirne-Lima, *Personal Faith* (Herder & Herder, 1965); B. Miller, *The Range of the Intellect* (Herder and Herder, 1963); J. Peters, *Metaphysics: A Systematic Survey* (Duquesne Univ. Press, 1963). See also N. Lobkowicz, "Deduction of Sensibility: the Ontological Status of Sense-Knowledge in St. Thomas," *Int. Philos. Quart.*, 3 (1963), 201-26 and G. McCool, "The Primacy of Intuition," *Thought*, 37 (1962), 57-73.

⁴⁶ Luijpen is good on this point, *op. cit.* (n. 11), pp. 155-58, 214-31, 260-65.

ideals, of the good. Beyond the simple, purely intellectual assent that such a thing is so, there is the final step of decision, free self-position relative to such a thing.

This final step, consequently, involves the appetitive powers of man as well as his cognitive, that is, his intentionality as directed toward the good. As with his cognitive process, man's appetitive intentionality is, as is proper for an incarnate spirit, a complex of sensible and immaterial. But rather than be studied separately, man's affective drive toward the good, his feelings and sensitivity, are intrinsically linked with his intellectual dynamism in such contemporary categories mentioned above as encounter, commitment, intersubjectivity.⁴⁷ This brings up another major point of contemporary personalisms that is not always recognized.

The point is that there is more implied here than merely a new set of "relevant" categories, and indeed more than simply attempting a fuller, more adequate explanation of how men actually know, will, feel and love. There is, besides this need to understand how knowledge and commitment are interrelated, the more fundamental issue of the nature of reality itself,—the nature of the reality that "is known" as much as the reality of the knower. Now there has been a gradually dawning recognition of the theoretical (*de jure*) as well as practical justification of the *plurality* of views, of the dialogical character of all truth attained and attainable by man, of its historical, "perspectival" quality. All this has led to the hypothesis that the really real is not simply a "matter of fact," not simply "thing-like," but is ultimately *personal*, that is, that it has a depth and density that demands a personal orientation, an openness which includes a free commitment, an attitude of love.⁴⁸

At first glance this might seem to be the first step toward sheer irrationalism, even emotionalism. Yet fundamentally it is merely following out the implications that real-

⁴⁷ See reference in n. 24 for Ricoeur's work in this regard.

⁴⁸ R. Johann is the principal exponent of this, in *op. cit.* (n. 2), chap. 9: "Love and Reality," 154-70.

ity as we know it is dominated by persons who cannot be adequately known as mere objects. For persons to know one another, a certain reciprocal openness is demanded, a taking-into-account of each other's uniqueness. Only then can we know another "in person" or be known in person. In fact, only in this mutual free self-giving and responding to the other's personal appeal to him as a person, does a man really come to know and understand himself as a person.

From my own personal self-experience alone, then, I can realize that my own reality as a person depends to a degree on the openness and love of others, and so with the personal reality of every person. Consequently, the ideal of impersonal scientific objectivity cannot be adequate for grasping the *whole* of reality in its total depth; more, it is inadequate when taken alone for understanding the most important reality, the person, that which gives meaning and significance to all the rest. All this does not deny the great difficulty of steering between the ever-present Scylla and Charybdis of theories of knowledge, namely the reductionist common sense view of reality as solely objective, thing-like, straight-forward and factual, with no subjective dimension, and the opposite extreme of false subjectivism, irrationality.⁴⁹

Approaching the world as ultimately *interpersonal* rather than impersonal as the physical sciences do, means viewing it as a place inclusive of the person in his very uniqueness, the I precisely as I. This real world of men is more than a stage on which we fool mortals strut and play our roles; it is primarily the *cultural world* which is constituted in its very being by the interaction of freely giving, responding, initiating men.⁵⁰ For if the real world were completely impersonal, providing absolutely no invitation nor response to me in my uniqueness, then I would have no means of even knowing this uniqueness, much less developing it. The relationship absolutely necessary for such self-awareness and self-development is the openness, sensitivity and response characterized by man's freedom and capacity for love.

⁴⁹ See Lonergan, *Collections*, pp. 231-36.

⁵⁰ See G. Laguna, *op. cit.* (n. 7), pp. 123 f., 150.

In its wholeness, then, reality is always a synthesis of the self and the other which is not automatically given, but which in part is due to the free activity of the self. To be a person is to have stepped out of the primitive synthesis with one's environment, indicative of brute animals, toward a self-presence as distinct from, not simply part of, one's surroundings.⁵¹ The properly human relation with the world can consequently never be automatic, but rather must be a relating immediately dependent on man's freedom. Though the world of culture manifests this unequivocally, not quite so evident is the equal dependence of man's ordinary, daily existence on his freely taken stance before the other, both personal and impersonal. The reality that we experience, then, is not an already worked out fact, or a total system we have to accept, but more in the line of an on-going process demanding a personal position.⁵²

This in no way compromises true objectivity, for the truly objective is not merely that which exists "out there," independent of me, the same for all, publicly verifiable, in contrast to the subjectivism of my hallucinations and mental projections. If this were the only objectivity, then reality would be reduced to the impersonal, excluding persons as persons. Since this is patently false, there must be another meaning to objectivity that includes persons and involves them. Such, for example, is the objective reality of love. Here the objective means something which does not exist merely for me alone, but exists also for the *personal* other. Objective truth in this case, then, is not objective because it does not involve me personally, but on the contrary, it is objective precisely in involving me and the other as persons, as uniques, and in transcending each of us taken separately.

Opposition between objective knowledge and personal development must be seen as an aberration due to a misunderstanding of both. For certainly no one would hold that to

⁵¹ For example, see A. Brunner, S.J., *La Personne Incarnée* (Beauchesne, 1947), pp. 165-67.

⁵² See A. de Waelhens, "Science, Phenomenology, Ontology," *Cross Currents*, 7 (1957), pp. 167-74.

be a person, and to relate to others as persons in a genuine manner, can ever be separated from "knowing" that is real, not illusory; true, not erroneous; solid, not superficial.⁵³ The nature of interpersonal communication demands that we know who we are in order to show it, that we know who the other is in order to be present to him, that we know who we (I and the other) are becoming, in order to make authentic self-becoming possible. The opposition between the objective and the personal results rather from a misconceived, naive notion of both: of *objectivity* as negating all subjective dimensions of reality; of the *personal* as negating all objective norms and values, and typified by complete, total indeterminism. This indicates the pressing need today for a more precise grasp of what constitutes true human freedom and love.

Human Liberty

In stressing the self-becoming process of the human person, the existentialists fixed on freedom as man's essential characteristic. Freedom for them is not just a quality of one of man's faculties, some neutral power he possesses in addition to other capacities. On the contrary freedom defines man's very existence.⁵⁴ But they often go further and equate freedom with free choice, understood in terms of absolute gratuity, excluding any objectivity of value. Choice would then be free insofar as it rested on nothing but itself, as pure self-position in existence. Now this has rightly been criticized as a rather simplist view based ultimately on a physical image of choice as the disposition of a certain energy of the will, a question of pure causality. But in fact, any effective act of will is not simply a making-something-be, but a *wish* to make something be—not pure causality, but creative love, affective affirmation of the object as good. Every act of free choice,

⁵³ Lonergan, *Collections*, pp. 236-39; also Sr. Schalddenbrand, S. S.J., *art. cit.* (n. 22), pp. 19-22.

⁵⁴ See De Finance, *op. cit.* (n. 28); Laguna, *op. cit.* (n. 7), pp. 146 ff. This effort to get beneath the division of intellect and will is shown in stressing man's conscience as a harmonious product of man's total personality. See X. G. Colavecho, O. Praem., "Conscience: A Personalist Perspective," *Continuum*, 5 (1967), 203-10.

then, implies some knowledge of the value which the act sanctions. Free decision does not mean the refusal of every influence from objective reality, but rather negates only that which would make an adequate grasp of the reality impossible, and consequently prevent a genuine, authentic response to it.⁵⁵

Man's freedom, however, goes far beyond the possibility of choosing between limited goods. Taken in a deeper sense, every choice involves choosing oneself by orienting oneself toward such or such an end. Now given the historical process in the person's growth, the succession of free choices gives rise to another type of freedom called *fundamental* freedom.⁵⁶ It is no longer a question of any particular free act, but rather of the person's total state of being in his general orientation. It is the basic stance a person has gradually forged for himself by his concrete acts of self-determination, or the fundamental orientation and profound, total commitment freely self-imposed on a man's life and actualized in the particular free acts without which fundamental freedom could not exist. For it is only in, by and through his daily free acts that the fundamental option which constitutes man's essential freedom, is formed and manifests itself.

Since freedom is the person, then like the person it is a reality *in fieri*, developing in time throughout a long process of maturation. It is not something simply given to man, but rather something the person works at becoming—not a gift but a task, not something bestowed but something to be won, conquered through hard, prolonged, often bitter experience.⁵⁷ The self and freedom, then, are correlative in both being and

⁵⁵ L. B. Geiger "On Freedom," *Philos. Today*, 4 (1960), 126-36, 184-96; and *Rev. Science Philos. et Theol.*, 39 (1955), 387-407.

⁵⁶ See P. Fransen, "Toward a Psychology of Grace," *Cross Currents*, 8 (1958), 211-32; also his "Man and Freedom," in *Man Before God* (Kenedy, 1965), pp. 68-89, and his "Grace and Freedom," in *Freedom and Man*, ed. J. C. Murray, S.J. (Kenedy, 1965), pp. 31-69; Flick Alszeghy, "L'opzione fondamentale della vita morale e la grazia," *Gregorianum*, 41 (1960), 593-619.

⁵⁷ Sr. M. Aloysius brings this out in "Freedom and the I: An Existential Inquiry," *Int. Philos. Quart.*, 3 (1963), 571-99.

becoming. Freedom in this sense has been defined as "the capacity, the opportunity and the incentive to develop and express one's potentialities."⁵⁸ Two major aspects of freedom treated in contemporary philosophy are implied therein. The first is the stress on freedom as a multiple reality indicated by the various expressions: freedom *from*, freedom *to*, freedom *of*, and especially freedom *for*. When conceived dynamically primarily as a freedom for achievement, for self-becoming, there is implied a certain dialectic of affirmation and negation. For authentic self-becoming (becoming-free) will consist in the affirmation of participation in genuine human values of fidelity, hope and love, and conversely, in the negation of all pseudo-types of intersubjectivity.

But the second aspect constitutes perhaps a more radical change from the usual philosophic treatment of human freedom. It is the sharpened realization of the *social dimensions* of each man's freedom as he concretely experiences and lives it. Besides putting freedom's developmental character already described in the wider context of the social situation and national development, this aspect brings out concrete *environmental* and *dispositional* dimensions of freedom as lived. Under the environmental dimension, such tangible, factual realities as nutrition and health, barrio and kinship relations (e.g. the fiesta system!) and belief systems, essentially enter in to modify the concrete possibilities of man's life of freedom. Highly influential too are both *negative* dispositions such as emotional states of anxiety and fear, various defense mechanisms and authoritarian structures, as well as the *positive* dispositions connected with self-identity, adequate motivation and sense of personal worth, a sense of purpose and direction in life, a properly formed conscience, and interpersonal attitudes typified by openness, trust and respect.⁵⁹

This sharp increase in interest on the part of philosophers in phenomena usually pertaining more properly to psycho-

⁵⁸ See D. P. Warwick, "Human Freedom and National Development," *Cross Currents*, 18 (1968), p. 498; the author in turn refers to the work of C. Bay, *The Structure of Freedom* (Atheneum, 1965), p. 15.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 500-13; see also the Spring 1968 number of *Dialogue*, entitled *Christianity and Freedom*.

logy, sociology or cultural anthropology, is founded on the conviction that concrete existing man is *who* he is and acts as he does, partly but profoundly because he is *where* he is,—with and in a particular community, and *how* he is—in a certain physical, psychological and moral condition. Without reducing the properly philosophic conception of man to any eclectic mélange of psychological, sociological and anthropological data, this current tendency does seem to constitute a legitimate corrective to the common practice of treating human freedom in a manner largely isolated from the way in which the overwhelming majority of men actually exercise it.⁶⁰

Human Love

We are interested here in love as indicative of the person. Now if the person is essentially *relational*, then the highest type of human relation should be both the core of the person and the key to understanding what the person really is. Such is the importance of love for any personalism. But what precisely is the relation of love? Unfortunately few words are bandied about with such utter disregard for any precise meaning as is the word love. Despite a number of recent serious studies of this basic human reality, in actual fact there seems to be rather widespread confusion on the subject.⁶¹ The dif-

⁶⁰ Among the psychologists and psychiatrists who have contributed much to the philosophy of man are: C. Rogers, *On Becoming a Person* (Houghton Mifflin, 1961); P. Tournier, *The Meaning of the Person* (SCM, 1957); E. Erikson, *Insight and Responsibility* (Norton, 1964); A. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being* (Van Nostrand, 1968); R. May, *Man's Search for Himself* (Norton, 1953) and V. Frankl, *The Will to Meaning: Foundations of Logotherapy* (New American Library, 1968).

⁶¹ Some of the more recent works on love are: P. Tillich, *Love, Power and Justice* (Oxford Univ. Press, 1960); C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves* (G. Bles, 1960); R. Hazo, *The Idea of Love* (N. Y. 1967); D. Morgan, *Love: Plato, the Bible and Freud* (Prentice-Hall, 1964); D. O'Neill, *About Loving* (Witness Book, Pflaum, 1966); J. Guittou, *Essay on Human Love* (Philosophical Library, 1957) D. D. Williams, *The Spirit and Forms of Love* (Harper, 1968). Mouroux has an excellent treatment of love, *op. cit.* (n. 2) and likewise B. Miller, *op. cit.* (n. 45). The major sources for our treatment are the works of Toner, Johann and Fromm, cited below.

ficulty with many studies on love has been twofold: either they present a picture of love so idealistic that it seems to have little to do with the living reality experienced by men, or they talk all around the subject—the conditions, characteristics, qualities of love—without ever getting to the heart of the matter, or integrating all the details into a clear, coherent, unified whole.

The traditional approach to love has been dominated by the general division of *eros* and *agape*.⁶² Through the many interpretations of these two overall conceptions of love, the basic contrast remains: *eros* as tendency, desire for the good as perfective, and *agape* as simple, direct love of the other as good for and in himself.⁶³ In the first we deal with a drive for what can perfect a man by fulfilling the existential, objective needs of his nature. For as a finite, limited being, man has needs due to his natural insufficiency, and all his conscious elicited desires are ultimately grounded in the innate tendency of his nature toward the goods it absolutely needs for survival, growth and well-being. *Agape*, on the other hand, is that love which is not based on man's nature, but on his *personal insufficiency*, on his exigency as a person for active self-giving to other persons, in order to be, grow and develop personally.

Yet both these types of love are intimately interrelated, since every man both has human nature and is a person. Whatever I desire for myself or for another ultimately rests on my simple, direct love for self or that other: I want this good as perfective of myself or another because I love self or that other as good, as value in itself, not relative to something else. Moreover whenever I love myself or another, given the limitations and insufficiency intrinsic to everyman

⁶² The academic treatises on love have actually been grouped into two general theories, the physical and the ecstatic. As in other century-long disputes, both conflicting theories are solid in their affirmative positions, while rather manifestly weaker in their negations. It seems more profitable to try for a new *status questionis* which might be able to borrow judiciously from the riches of both sides. See the extensive study by John Cowburn, S.J., *Love and the Person* (Chapman, 1967).

⁶³ R. Johann, *The Meaning of Love* (Chapman, 1954), *passim*.

as nature and as person, this simple love will necessarily include a desire for the goods needed by the loved one. The philosophic tradition running right up to the present day has been largely concerned with *love as desire*, or source of desire, and with the relation of this desire to agape.⁶⁴ But with the proliferation of types and sub-types, replete with the most abstruse distinctions, many decided it would be more profitable to spend more time on studying the concrete experience of love as actually lived. The current phenomenological descriptions of love have tried to do just this.

Perhaps the best known work of this latter approach is that of Eric Fromm.⁶⁵ Making good use of the existentialist image of man as separated and alone, Fromm pictures love as the highest of man's active tendencies toward overcoming this loneliness. Yet the opposition he draws between mature and immature or symbiotic love (the latter sketched in Sartrean flashes of masochism and sadism) is so deep that any authentic use of love for the latter is denied. The difficulty with this is that such a denial might well eliminate the greater portion of concrete human experience of love, which remains the basic reality we are trying to understand. Despite this criticism, Fromm brings out with extraordinary clarity the elements of love that point up the superficiality and positive fallacies in the vulgar, romantic image of "falling in love."

Fromm describes love in terms of an *art* to be learned, an activity demanding painful sacrifice, a "giving-up" productive of human values, especially the other's answer in love. The basic elements of love are spelled out in detail: *care*, *responsibility*, *respect* and *knowledge*, and each is shown to be indispensable for any mature, adequate loving relation-

⁶⁴ See the superb work of J. Toner, *The Experience of Love* (Corpus Books, 1968) pp. 17-33. Toner gives a sensitive critique of Plato, Tillich, Freud, Scheler, Spinoza, Ortega y Gasset, St. Augustine, St. Thomas and E. Fromm, from the standpoint of his very precise point of view.

⁶⁵ E. Fromm, *The Art of Loving* (Harper & Row, 1956). See also his *Escape From Freedom* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1941); *Man for Himself* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1947) and *The Sane Society* (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1955).

ship.⁶⁶ Moreover, Fromm goes on to point out the practical consequences of this view of the reality of love—that the art of love is a demanding exigency. There is a *discipline* needed in both the *concentration* and the *patience* found in all concrete love, and especially in the *supreme concern* that is at the heart of the practice of love.

All this is woven into Fromm's basic notion of love as *union*. This union is described in terms of *giving*, of *active concern*, but unfortunately not sufficiently to distinguish it from a union, a giving, or a concern that is definitely not love. Still left unclear is just what makes love love, what distinguishes it from other human activities, what must be present in some degree in any act which can rightfully be called love.

In order to determine more precisely, then, what love is in terms which will hopefully include the basic insights of both conceptions of love, namely as desire, tendency, eros, and as union, agape, we can start with the general notion of love as a *response* to an appeal.⁶⁷ For there is an implicit "be with me" built into the very being of every person, if our analyses of the dialogical nature of persons are correct. The nature of this "be with me" is brought out in reflecting on the precise object of love as response. Love's object is admittedly complex, allowing for wide variation, but basically it must be said to be the total reality of the loved, that is, primarily his fundamental actuality as a person, and secondarily his qualities, acts, and expressions.⁶⁸ Now this response of love is both active and passive: it is experienced as a liberating of all of one's energies, yet at the same time as dedicating them to the loved, freely putting oneself at his disposal.

But love is not just any *response*; it is a response that aims at union of being-with and being-in, a union of *presence-to* and especially *presence-in*. This notion of personal pre-

⁶⁶ See Fromm, *Art of Loving*, pp. 22-27 (Bantam Book ed., 1963). On the notion of care, see the excellent article of C. Mayeroff, "On Caring," *Int. Philos. Quart.*, 5 (1965), 462-74.

⁶⁷ Toner, *op. cit.* (n. 64), pp. 87-99.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 99-109; see also Johann, *op. cit.* (n. 63), pp. 31-46 *et passim*.

sence to and in⁶⁹ another actually embraces a double reality: that of self-giving, and that of an *acceptance* or a consent.⁷⁰ The giving indicative of love is clearly not that of merely giving things; in some way or another it must be a giving of the self. This certainly involves a sharing of the lover's wisdom, emotion, strength,—in short a giving of self. Some authors go beyond this and describe love as a giving self directly, (not of self); this self-giving is the being-in and presence-in noted above, now seen under its essential characteristic as gift. Moreover the other aspect of acceptance or consent of the loved is accomplished in one and the same act as this self-giving. The very self-giving constitutes an acceptance of the loved, and likewise in that very acceptance of the fundamental actuality of the loved as person, the lover gives himself.⁷¹

Now from the testimony of many sources we know this giving-accepting action of love is experienced as an *affective identification* of lover with the loved. The lover is his loved. Yet in this very affective identification, the distinction of lover and loved is not erased. For love more than knowledge is that which touches the person as *unique*, never reducing him to a particular combination of general qualities. Love preserves and fosters this uniqueness of the person within the

⁶⁹ The difficulty of conceiving personal presence in anything but spatial, physical terms is manifest. Because of our condition as embodied spirits we are inexorably drawn to conceiving *real* presence as physical and intentional presence (in terms of knowledge and Love) as less real. This despite the fact that we are daily in physical contact with many without being personally present to or in them in any sense (e.g. in a bus, a theater), while we are personally present to many whom we know and love without any physical contact or proximity.

On the other hand, the fact that we *are* embodied spirits does demand that any *full* personal human presence entails some physical presence, at least in ordinary circumstances. See Toner, *op. cit.*, 123-24.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 124-29; see also, J. Cowburn, *op. cit.* (n. 62) in his description of ecstatic love as consent to the other as subject, as unique, as other, and the giving as a disinterested giving of oneself.

⁷¹ To illustrate this notion of present-in, Toner quotes Dante's phrases of I "in-you-me", and I "in-me-you". *Paradiso*, Canto IX, II, 80-81. See Toner, *op. cit.*, p. 119.

very relationship of communion that constitutes it.⁷² This paradox of love as "a community of uniques in their uniqueness," has been resolved by referring both unique, created, finite persons to their common unique source who constitutes them in their unique being. If human love somehow participates in divine creative love, this also explains why simple direct love can go to the very being of the person loved, the core of ipseity which alone founds his uniqueness as a person.

It may also explain in part the mystery involved in a person's deepest affective life.⁷³ Why does this love relationship often arise so unpredictably between these two and not between others? As incarnate beings we get to their selves only through the mediation of concrete corporeal activities through which the human personality is manifested. Yet our understanding of the genuine root self, both of our own selves and of others, always remains obscure, inadequate, tendential. We can never say of a human person, even of ourselves: "now I've got him perfectly, I understand him completely." This does not imply a sheer irrationalism of love, or some fatalism where we are at the mercy of drives and forces of which we are completely ignorant. But it does suggest that we react to connaturalities between persons of which we are but dimly aware intellectually; we "know" in some way more about our very being and that of others than we can ever consciously express. In the end, the ultimate reason why we love any particular person must be the loved himself—"because you are you."

Now if we try to understand love as affective identification in terms of this emphasis on the being of both lover and loved, then perhaps the best analogy we can have of love is man's very act of existing understood in terms of *self-affirma-*

⁷² This paradox of love is brought out by all the major authors; see J. de Finance *art. cit.* (n. 6); Johann *op. cit.*, (n. 63), pp. 27-28, 35-46.

⁷³ See B. Miller, *op. cit.* (n. 45), chap. 5, "Love," pp. 125-54. See also Prentice, *The Psychology of Love according to St. Bonaventure*, p. 100: "As a general proof of the fact that it is the ultimate individuality which is loved one might cite the inability of a lover to explain the reason for his love."

tion.⁷⁴ To exist for a man is to de-clare himself, affirm himself in and among beings. Analogous to his act of existing as self-affirmation, love is an act of *affective affirmation* not only of self, but of the other as oneself. When love is understood ultimately as affective affirmation, a number of perennial stumbling blocks associated with love can be overcome. For example, this allows for a love of self (affective self-affirmation) that is perfectly compatible with, in fact correlative to and necessary for, the radical love of another. If there were not a minimum of true love of self, it would be impossible to genuinely love another—affectively affirm him as oneself. This interpretation also explains the basis for love's creativity and liberating power. The lover is no longer alone; he has broken out of his own self-enclosure by affectively affirming the other's being.

More striking, perhaps, is the possibility offered for explaining the difference between true and false love in terms of the ontological reality of love itself, not just in regard to ethical morality. If love is an affective affirmation of the beloved, then it is true or false in varying degrees as it is in accord or not with the concrete total reality affectively affirmed. From this the intrinsic connection between love and knowledge is seen, and a sound basis for developing the "objectivity of love" is afforded.⁷⁵ Finally, this interpretation provides for an analogous predication of love not only to persons affirmed directly, for themselves in their totality, but also to the affirmation of persons totally but relatively, that is, in terms of another, and finally to places, activities, and the like affirmed neither absolutely nor in their totality, but only relatively and under the particular aspect by which they are good for someone who is loved directly.⁷⁶

The many details of this long analysis of love can be summarized as follows. The core of love is a *response* in which

⁷⁴ See Toner, *op. cit.*, in (n. 64), pp. 146-64.

⁷⁵ Completely true, perfect love would demand complete, perfect knowledge. Thus only God can love in a perfectly true, objective manner. Affective affirmation varies qualitatively with knowledge, and vice-versa; there is a mutual causality and interdependence between love and cognitive acts.

⁷⁶ See Toner, *op. cit.*, pp. 104-09; 177-83.

the lover *affectively affirms* the fundamental personal act of being of the beloved, thus making the lover's personal being present to and in, and affectively *identified* with, the beloved, so that in some sense the lover is the beloved affectively.⁷⁷

An essential element that must be added to this is the mutuality of love.⁷⁸ Everything thus far can be taken as describing love from the lover's point of view alone, prescinding from the response of the beloved. However, it is clear that love is ordered to a reciprocity of affective affirmation, and that the perfection of love is had only when this mutuality is not only had in fact, but is consciously experienced by both persons. The 'we' of communion is created only in a reciprocal affective affirmation of radical love.

Finally, since the actual concrete practice and experience of love is always had through the mediation of the constantly varying acts, moods, circumstances of human life, love must be essentially *historical*. This complexity and changeableness, while not wiping out the basic stability and simplicity of the core of the person and of his love, do bring out the historicity of love as of the person himself.⁷⁹ Human love pertains to the events of man's personal history, and especially to the never-again, never-replaceable quality of his temporal personal becoming. While it is true to predicate a certain timelessness or eternal quality to man's purest loves, it would be false to suppose that this aspect eradicates or removes the historical character of man's love and his destiny in general. The ultimate meaning and significance of man's love naturally leads us into the problem or mystery of the meaning of his whole life and death.

Historicity, Death and Destiny

In raising the question about the ultimate meaning and significance of his whole life, man is doing something unique. It

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 183.

⁷⁸ This is the principal point of Nédoncelle's approach, i.e., through the reciprocity of centers of consciences. Love thus becomes a *mutual will* to promotion, according to Nédoncelle. See *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 13-36, *et passim*.

⁷⁹ The historical character of love is stressed by J. Cowburn, *op. cit.* (n. 62).

is an act that in a sense defines him, points him out as different from anything else experienced in this world. His search for meaning is all inclusive, embracing the questioner in his very act of seeking. In contemporary personalist work, three major topics have dominated this philosophic quest for the ultimate intelligibility of life: the properly historical dimension of everything man does and is, the awareness of death as the termination of his life as lived and experienced (*homo viator*), and the openness of his present experience to something beyond this termination. A brief sketch of some of the major elements in each topic is all that can be attempted here.

Historicity is a complex notion describing the peculiar type of self-becoming proper to the embodied spirit in this world which is the human person.⁸⁰ The existentialists have strikingly brought out how man not only exists in time-already-constituted, but through his perduring consciousness, creates past, present and future, formally as such, that is, man's very existence temporalizes itself. His self-questioning, intrinsic to his progressive self-becoming as a person, indicates how change and temporality reach to his inmost being. Born into a particular family, locality and situation, with particular qualities of body and spirit, man's "human thrownness" or situatedness constitutes a "given" both individual and social, personal and cosmic, that nevertheless still must be incorporated and assumed by the individual.⁸¹ Through his personal acceptance or rejection of the given, and the almost limitless degrees and variations of both, man forms the horizon of his personal world and progressively creates his fundamental liberty. The given constitutes his past; the future is that towards which all his cares, dreams, hopes and fears are oriented; and the present is that which encompasses both the past as already given and the future as its possibility.

⁸⁰ For the notion of historicity, consult: J. Mouroux, *The Mystery of Time* (Desclee, 1962); C. Shrag, *Existence and Freedom* (Northwestern Univ. Pres, 1961), chap. 5: "Time and History," pp. 119-53; N. Berdyaev, *The Meaning of History* (Scribner's, 1963); T. Shannon, *art. cit.* (n. 18); Dondeyne, *op. cit.* (n. 11), pp. 36-66.

⁸¹ See Feldstein, *art. cit.* (n. 9), *passim*. For a treatment of Heidegger's concept of "thrown-ness", see W. Richardson, *Heidegger. Through Phenomenology to Thought* (Nijhoff, 1963), pp. 274 ff.

The human person is an historical being, then, because he has a temporal beginning and a temporal end; he exists and acts temporally, that is, with the dimensions of past, present and future, in an evolving manner, both bodily and spiritually, toward better or worse, under the active direction of his intelligence and freedom, toward a goal.⁸²

But perhaps even more characteristic of contemporary personalism has been its interest in *death*.⁸³ Heidegger has defined man as a "being-for death," by which he meant to focus on death as the necessary characteristic, the inner law, of man's life. It is man's daily confrontation with death that acts as a hidden spring for his self-realization and creativity, enabling him to give meaning to *dasein*, his human existence.⁸⁴ This view of death has been criticized by Sartre as giving too little account to death as necessity, as an objective given which must be suffered willy-nilly. Yet Sartre's own view seems to lack any adequate appreciation for the subjective, free aspect proper to the death of a person as distinguished from an animal's death.⁸⁵

The traditional concept of death as separation of body and soul also seems to have neglected the specifically human quality of death as something concerning the whole man, body and soul. It tended to focus all attention on the biological aspect of death (the end of man as a living animal) while omitting the equally important *personal* aspect of death as the temporal consummation of man as spirit. Both aspects of death, its

⁸² The notions of order and teleological purpose in relation to man is treated by Bertocci, *art. cit.* (n. 27).

⁸³ For some of the recent works on death, consult: L. Boros, *The Moment of Truth. Mysterium Mortis* (Burns & Oates, 1965); *Pain and Providence* (Burns & Oates, 1966) chap. 5; "Death," pp. 90-109; Rahner, *The Theology of Death* (Herder & Herder, 1961); Choron, *Death in Western Thought* (Collier, 1963); R. Troisfontaines, *I Do Not Die* (Desclee, 1963), and the special issue of *Continuum*, 5 #3 (Autumn, 1967) containing nine articles on death.

⁸⁴ See W. Richardson, *op. cit.* (n. 81), pp. 75-84, 276-79.

⁸⁵ See J. Pieper, "Death and Immortality," *Philos. Today*, 6 (1962), 34-44.

natural, objective, biological aspect, and its personal, subjective, free aspect, must be included.⁸⁶

Recent work has been particularly directed toward death as the supreme test of man's liberty, the act which consummates the effort of a life-time. This approach, usually called the *final option theory*, attempts to synthesize death as both *end* of the man's wayfaring state characterized by the possibilities of choice, and *achievement*, exhausting and completing the personal dynamism of the individual.⁸⁷ Death in this latter view is seen as the first fully personal act, the privileged place for consciousness, liberty, self-affirmation and realization.

Despite death's suddenness and unexpectedness, it is understood in this theory as a human act: man "accomplishes" his own death in a free decision which constitutes an evaluation of his whole life. From this point of view, dying is not merely the cessation of life function (as it is when considered from "the outside" as a natural biological event), but it is *also* an act which closes the wayfarer's life from within, putting a seal or signature to it as it were. In this sense, there can be no such thing as an untimely, premature death. Over and above the natural separation of body and soul, then, death is also a finalization of man's inner life in the form of a final free option which touches the whole of his life. This free option, however, implies that death is not only end and finalization, but also transition, non-end, direction toward a future, a hope in a goal. This is the mystery of man's ultimate destiny.

An interesting possibility regarding man's *destiny* is opened by one interpretation of this final option theory of death.⁸⁸ If death is the condition for the fulfillment of man's freedom, the final step in freeing himself from all the facticity

⁸⁶ This is brought out well in C. Geffre, "Death as Necessity and Liberty," *Theology Digest*, 12 (1964), 191-95.

⁸⁷ The final option theory is proposed by L. Boros, *op. cit.* (n. 83); see also, R. Troisfontaines, "Death: Test of Love, Condition of Freedom," *Cross Currents*, 7 (1957), 201-12; R. Gleason, "Toward a Theology of Death," *Thought*, 32 (1957), 39-68; Troisfontaines, *op. cit.* (n. 82).

⁸⁸ Troisfontaines, *art cit.*, p. 206.

imposed on him by his own body, then his whole life can be seen as a passage from the imposed to the personal, a progressive becoming free. Life then is a rehearsal for the definitive option of death. This allows for an interesting simile: man's earthly existence from the point of view of his spiritual being, is equivalent to his prenatal existence relative to his earthly becoming. In his prenatal existence, as modern science tells us, the child learns most of the movements he will need to survive after birth. So man's terrestrial becoming, (embryos of spirit) can be interpreted as initiation into the definitive act of our human existence in death.

This can be developed more matter-of-factly by careful analysis of man both as question and desire relative to himself. What is built into the very fiber of man as person is this search for meaning, and the equally innate implied supposition that there is a "why" for things, and consequently there should be a meaning for his life as well ("Otherwise, why do I exist. . .?"). Unfortunately, this destiny of man has too often been developed solely in terms of contrast or opposition to his present life, based perhaps on the universal, primordial feeling of man that something's wrong with him, that things are not what they should be. The present reaction against this inadequacy seems often a bit overdone, naive, and exaggerated. Nevertheless, the basic corrective envisioned remains sound: man's personal life on earth cannot be adequately viewed simply as a pure means to another type of life from which it draws all its value. Much of the traditional approach to this world and its value and meaning amounted to little less than a "short-cut" to heaven. Any destiny or openness to the absolute that would make sense to contemporary man, must be able to give full weight and value to man's commitment to this present life, to his earthly aspirations, to his freedom. What he does temporally must make a difference—his successes and failures must have an ultimate meaning that goes beyond their temporal limitations. For there is an absolute dimension to man's acts that cannot be relativized by anything, even a divine will. Just what this absolute dimension could be, and how it could be grounded, constitute the subject matter of our final section.

The Person and the Absolute

Man's basic perfection can be seen in his power to grasp his own reality against the limitless horizon of what he is able to think and will, the horizon of being.⁸⁹ This capacity to transcend himself constantly has been described already under the concrete activities of man's knowing intentionality, his freedom and his capacity to love. In all these a person manifests the paradoxical quality of both *nearness* and *distance*: he is with beings, identifies with them, yet capable of taking a distance from them, even in a way from himself.

But perhaps the central paradox of the person becomes evident when the question of definition is raised. It is obvious that a human person is a definite type of being on this earth, different from other beings, with a spiritual nature whose capacity for fulfillment is infinite in potential. From this aspect of the person, there seems no particular reason why an adequate definition could not be worked out in terms of finite, potential interiority (self-awareness, self-creativity) and relatedness to others.⁹⁰ But the person is not only a what, but a who, and the answer to "who is a person?" can only be given in terms of every *unique* I. The essential quality of myself as person is my very uniqueness; it is manifested in my being one with myself, standing firm in myself, and having myself in hand, as it were, throughout all my activities of knowing, willing, loving described above.⁹¹ Person in this central aspect of the "I" is never interchangeable, and hence not subject to definition; rather we have reached the level of the Marcellian mystery, the level of being, communion. This is simply but profoundly confirmed in the fact that to understand "I am I" is at once self-evident, yet inexhaustible.

Man as person, then, has a double constitution: the first, his spiritual nature, infinite in potential, the second, the actual,

⁸⁹ See J. B. Lotz, "Person and Ontology," *Philos. Today*, 7 (1963), 279-97; see especially pp. 283-86. See also Johann, *op. cit.*, (n. 2), pp. 76-79.

⁹⁰ See J. Alfaro, S.J. "Person and Grace," in *Man Before God* (Kenedy, 1966), pp. 174-98, especially pp. 186-87.

⁹¹ See R. Guardini, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 113-22.

full constitution developed in life's long struggle. A certain relationship can be seen between this double constitution, potential and actual, with the twofold dimension of his self as subject-source and object, and even with the consequent two dimensions of the human body as the lived body-subject I am, and the objective body I possess. Moreover the gap between the parts of this double constitution is precisely the area of *self-becoming* in *dialogue* with others, the place for the exercise of man's *freedom* and of his power to *love*. Traversing the gap constitutes man's *historicity*, with its term in *death*. But what is most important of all, perhaps, is what motivates, empowers, and attracts every man's journey of life: the *Absolute*.

Ultimately, the true root of the person lies in his openness for the Absolute.⁹² It is this openness which founds the real possibility for man's genuine communication of dialogue and true love for another. This means that each man can say "I" of himself ultimately only because he has an Absolute, God, for his Thou. Only thus can the person's proper significance and dignity, transcending any particular human relationship, be explained. For in the person there is an absolute dignity and integrity that does not yield place to any cause or purpose. Since every man is finite and limited, the source of this absolute quality of his innate dignity can only be founded in an Absolute of the same order of being, that is, personal.

The insufficiency of human interpersonal relations to explain man's ultimate value is experienced in two ways: first in the fact that I am called upon to pass judgment on all my particular involvements, and hence transcend all of them, and secondly, the all too manifest fact of the intrinsic limitation and imperfection in knowledge, freedom and love of every human, interpersonal relationship.⁹³ What man's interpersonal

⁹² *Ibid.*, pp. 141-43; *Johann, op. cit.*, (n. 2), pp. 107-09, 133; Lotz, *art. cit.* (n. 89), pp. 288-90; Alfaro, *art. cit.* (n. 90), p. 186 *et passim*; G. McCool, S.J., "The Philosophy of the Human Person in Karl Rahner's Theology," *Theological Studies*, 22 (1961), 537-62, especially pp. 539-42.

⁹³ See *Johann, op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 87-89; see also R. Troisfontaines, *De l'Existence a l'etre* (Vrin, 1953), vol. II, pp. 271-94. See also F.

experience does bring out is a complex set of paradoxes following on his basic double constitution: as *body*, dispersed, yet as *spirit*, present to self; *autonomous*, yet *dependent*; *existing*, yet in process of *becoming*; *subsistent* in and for himself, yet open horizontally and vertically.⁹⁴

It is God, then, as Absolute Thou of man's I, that is the ultimate focus of his life orientation, whether such a focus be explicitly conscious or simply implicitly lived.⁹⁵ Without this relationship, the tenuous difference between my genuine personal subjectivity and false subjectivism would in the concrete fast become untenable. Likewise, the distinction between a true community in which I live and work with others to promote the common good of all *persons*, and a collectivism which is essentially reductive of personal values, cannot be sustained unless grounded in this relationship of every person to a Personal Absolute. To be a person is to be one with the world of persons and things, yet within that very unity to be reaching beyond it; genuine self-awareness is correlative in the last analysis to a certain religious consciousness understood in terms of that openness to God which grounds personal freedom and creativity.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, a short summary of the principal points covered here may be useful. In this study of contemporary personalism we have seen that the characteristic focus of today is on man as understood *from within*, his subjectivity,

Copleston, "Man, Transcendence and the Absence of God," *Thought*, 43 (1968), 24-38.

⁹⁴ The paradoxes of the person are set forth in J. Donceel, S.J., *Philosophical Anthropology*, (Sheed & Ward, 1968); C. Geffre, O.P., "Structure de la personne et rapports interpersonnels," *Revue Thomiste*, 57 (1957), 672-92; J. Alfaro, *art. cit.* (n. 90), pp. 174-77; A. Burton, "The Authentic Person in Existential Psychology," *Pastoral Psychology*, 20 (1969), 17-26.

⁹⁵ See Johann, *op. cit.* (n. 2), pp. 185-88; on Rahner's theory, see A. Roper, *The Anonymous Christian* (Sheed & Ward, 1966) and W. C. Shepherd, *Man's Condition. God and the World Process* (Herder & Herder, 1969) especially pp. 100-19.

and as *relational*. From the perspective of these two basic elements, almost all the major insights into man as person follow.

Man is essentially *embodied spirit*: a *spirit* whose self-presence and self-becoming intrinsically depend on other selves; a *body* which as experienced from within is a body-subject, participating in the subjectivity of the I, and thus placing the person in the determined world of matter, of time and space, yet as a force raising the natural to the personal.⁹⁶ Precisely as spirit in time and with others, man as person is a *becoming*, creating his own personal *history* through his *freely* assumed position before persons, events and things, under the consciousness of *death* as term of his present existence. In his essential life-act of freely responding, the person manifests himself as an ineffable, inexplainable center of free initiative and of being, a mystery grounded in his *openness to an Absolute* whose personal call creates him as an I, as person.

Finally, it is this call that can offer some insight into man's understanding of his own self *gift*; that his vocation in life is truly a personal calling, not to any individualistic self-fulfillment, but to respond to the gift of life, which makes of ordinary human existence a grace-full event.⁹⁷ Such is the reasonable ground for the profound unshakeable joy and zest for life of a truly Christian humanism—that inside, beneath and ahead of, my very own being, is Love.

⁹⁶ This is a major theme in the work of Teilhard de Chardin. See his *The Divine Milieu* (Harper Torchbook, 1965); *The Phenomenon of Man* (Harper Torchbook, 1961); *The Future of Man* (Harper, 1964).

⁹⁷ R. Shinn, *op. cit.* (n. 39), pp. 174-81; see also M. Schmaus, *The Essence of Christianity* (Scepter, 1961), chap. 6; "Man as a Person," pp. 121-40.